

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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ALTHOUGH the rejection of the Women's Disabilities Bill leaves women ratepayers still deprived of direct representation in Parliament, it must not be forgotten that the Municipal Franchise Act of 1869 has placed in their hands an engine of great power which cannot fail to produce important results in hastening the time when the full measure of justice shall be conceded. We look for the initiative of this movement not so much to the action of the newly-enfranchised class of voters on the existing political machinery, as to the action of the organised political forces on the class now first brought within the sphere of their operations. We believe that this order of action must always prevail where a class previously excluded from participation in political affairs is suddenly admitted within their pale, and that the case of women will prove no exception to the general rule. The elements of political life are akin to those of organic life. There are active germs assimilating and transforming the inert masses around them into living organised beings, and there is the pabulum capable of such transformation. Now we should as soon expect to see a mass of fermentable matter become instinct with life if withheld from contact with the vivifying germs as to see organised political life manifested in a class rigorously excluded from political influences. The learned President of the British Association, in his address delivered at Liverpool, stated that when a fermenting liquid was separated from one which was simply fermentable by a membrane which allowed only fluids to pass through, the fermentable liquid became impregnated with the results of the fermentation which was going on on the other side, but did not itself ferment, nor were any of the organisms which abounded in the fermenting liquid generated in it. This seems to us a very apt illustration of the position held respectively by men and women in the scientific and political world. Women are not so completely shut off from communication with the world of active thought and action as to remain uninfluenced by the ideas generated within it; but

the barrier of law or custom, which forbids them to enter on the sphere of active participation in its operations, and rails them off as passive spectators and mere recipients of the results of the work done by men, effectually prevents the development of political life among them. It would be very natural for a careless observer, especially one who believed in spontaneous generation, to conclude that the difference in the condition of the fluid on the different sides of the membrane was due to a difference in its constitution or inherent capacity; and it might be impossible to prove conclusively that such was not the case until the membrane had been taken away, and the behaviour of the hitherto separated portions of the fluid observed when the conditions had been assimilated. The reasoning of the objector who should refuse to remove the barrier until the separated fluid had become living during its continuance, appears to us exactly paralleled by that of those who refuse to remove the disabilities of women until the masses of women have become political in spite of them.

The admission of women to the municipal franchise has lifted a little corner of the barrier which cuts them off from the active world of politics, and we do not doubt that the influences thus brought to bear upon them will eventually develop in women's minds a political life, equally active, though probably it may assume a different form, to that which exists among men. But this cannot be fully accomplished until every vestige of legal disability has been swept away.

During the coming month preparations for the municipal elections will be going on; and the votes of the women burgesses are sufficiently numerous in every borough to form a serious element in the calculations of the contesting interests. They are numerous enough in the majority of cases where there is a contest, to turn the scale if they all voted together. If, therefore, on any question affecting the interests of woman, the women voters would unite in support of the candidate who favoured their views, they might return him, as the

municipal representation of the district would be virtually in their hands. It would be a matter for congratulation if women who feel the justice of their claim to vote in the application of the municipal expenditure to which their property contributes, would support the election to the Town Councils of men who would endeavour to procure them a vote in the application of the imperial expenditure to which that same property contributes.

If the Town Councils of all municipal boroughs in the kingdom were to follow the example of that of Manchester, and petition Parliament to pass the Women's Disabilities Bill, it would produce an appreciable effect on the mind of the House of Commons; and they would be very likely to do this if the women burgesses made them feel that votes depended on their taking such a course.

Most, if not all, municipal contests are now conducted on political grounds. Women are asked to vote for the Conservative or Liberal candidate, as the case may be. We would urge women to disregard the ordinary political parties, and to vote for the man who favours justice to women, be his political creed, in other respects, what it may.

The admission of women to the municipal franchise has, in a great many cases, altered the political character of the municipal representation. In boroughs where the parliamentary representation is in the hands of one political party, and the municipal representation has, by the admission of the women's votes, been handed over to the opposite party, this latter party will be naturally desirous to place on the parliamentary register the votes which have enabled it to triumph in the municipal elections. By this means a considerable addition to the forces of the Women's Suffrage movement will be secured. When the addition of the women's votes to the municipal representation strengthens the hands of the party already in possession of the parliamentary representation, it is extremely probable that the borough members, whatever their general politics may be, will be found in the same lobby with Mr. Jacob Bright when next he divides the House of Commons on the Women's Disabilities Bill. Therefore, quite irrespective of the direct or conscious action of women burgesses, we have an influence at work which will have a powerful effect in determining the votes of Members of Parliament, provided that the women go in sufficient numbers to the poll to make their influence felt.

We would urge women in every municipal borough which is also a parliamentary borough, where the members

for that borough voted for Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill, to support the political party which returned them. But the side on which they vote is of comparatively small importance provided that they appear in sufficient numbers to render it an object of importance to either political party to place their votes on the parliamentary list.

The experience of last year gives us reason to expect that they will so appear. As this was the first occasion on which they had enjoyed the privilege, no one could foresee to what extent they would take advantage of it. The change in the law had attracted so little notice when it was effected that the vast majority of the newly-enfranchised women were in complete ignorance of their right to vote till the very time of the election; and the candidates, accustomed to address themselves to men only, in many cases overlooked or ignored the feminine element in the electoral body. Under these circumstances it is both gratifying and surprising to find that in many of the largest and most important boroughs the proportion of women to men who voted bears a fair proportion to the number of each on the register, and that in some cases it greatly exceeded this proportion. Now that experience has demonstrated this fact, it is probable that we shall see in every borough increased attention on the part of candidates to the opinions of women, and an increased desire to do justice to their hitherto neglected interests on matters of social, educational, and political advancement.

We give in another column a report of some of the papers and discussions at the Ladies' Conference, in connection with the Social Science Congress, which has just concluded its session at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The limited space at our disposal compels us to curtail the valuable reports furnished by the *Newcastle Chronicle*, and to select from among the many social subjects discussed such only as bear on questions directly connected with amending the laws regarding women. We congratulate the conference on having this year admitted the representatives of the public press. Not only are the interest and importance of their proceeding greatly enhanced thereby, but it would, in our judgment, have been a grave misfortune had the women of this country given, by their example, any encouragement to the notion that questions affecting their interests could be advantageously discussed with closed doors.

Women have just voted for the first time at an election in the United States. An election was held a few days ago in Wyoming territory for a delegate to Congress, and for local officers, and under the new suffrage law women voted generally throughout the territory. In Chigram city alone one hundred and seventy-one female votes were cast.

WOMEN VOTERS FOR THE SCHOOL BOARDS.

The following letter has been sent to various newspapers by Mr. Thomas Hare:—

"It is desirable to call the attention of women throughout the kingdom who take an interest in education, of whom there are great numbers, to the following clauses of the Elementary Education Act, 33 and 34 Vict., c. 75, s. 29 and 37

"The School Board shall be elected in the manner provided by this Act in a borough by the persons whose names are on the burgess roll of such borough for the time being in force, and in a parish not situated in the metropolis by the ratepayers.

"37. The members of the School Board shall in the city of London be elected by the same persons and in the like manner as common council men are elected; and in the other divisions of the metropolis shall be elected by the same persons and in the same manner as vestry men under the Metropolitan Management Act 1855, and the Acts amending the same.

"The Act also gives the electors the benefit of the cumulative vote, that is to say, as many votes to every one as there are members to be elected in the district, all of which they may poll for one candidate, or divide among the candidates as they please. This enables an earnest and intelligent minority to secure the election of the member in whom they have most confidence, by concentrating all their votes upon that one.

"It is important that this state of the law should be known without delay, as the elections may probably take place during the present month, and those women who take an interest in it should be early in demanding their voting papers, which it is found are not always sent to them."

To the above we would add the hope that not only will women exercise their influence by voting in the election of School Boards, but that they will be elected to serve on them. When the Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons, Mr. Forster, in reply to a question by Mr. P. A. Taylor, declared that the clauses had been expressly framed with the intention that women should be eligible to sit on School Boards; and that in many instances he considered that they would be eminently fitted for the post.

We hope that no School Board will be elected without one or more women upon it; and we earnestly exhort all women electors, where a woman is a candidate, to use the privilege of the cumulative vote, and to concentrate their support on the candidates of their own sex, unless such candidates be, irrespective of sex, manifestly unfit for so responsible an office. We regard the principle of placing women in positions of public trust and authority as of incomparably greater importance than any question of detail in the working of the Education Act. We therefore earnestly advise women voters to disregard differences of opinion concerning these matters, and if they have the opportunity of recording their votes in favour of any woman whom they have reason to believe would conscientiously endeavour to promote the interest of education in general, and that of girls in particular, to concentrate their suffrages in such a manner as to secure her election on the School Board of the district.

THE EARL OF DERBY ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

At the opening meeting of the tenth session of the Liverpool School of Science, held at St. George's Hall on September 22nd, the prizes which had been gained during the past session were delivered to the successful students by Professor Huxley, President of the British Association. Among those who took part in the proceedings was the Earl of Derby, and in the course of his speech, as reported in the *Liverpool Mercury*, he made the following remarks:—"There is one other point I wish to notice, and that is that all teaching given in this School of Science, whether by lectures or classes, or in any other way, women are as freely admitted as men. (Hear, hear.) I am not going into any controverted topic. The question of what branches of industrial occupation women are fitted to succeed in is one which, in my mind, can only be settled by actual experiment, but then the experiment ought to be fairly tried, and the result ought not to be prejudged. (Hear, hear.) There is a very simple alternative in the matter. Any work of an industrial or scientific kind which women are fitted to do they ought not to be excluded from doing—(hear, hear)—any work which they are not fit to do they will exclude themselves from doing. (Laughter and applause.) You do not require—if I may take such an illustration—to make it a matter of law or a social custom that no man shall go into the business of a blacksmith who is not so many inches round the arm, because you are sure that men whose arms are weak will not go into that business; so, I say, shutting out women from any work for which they feel or think themselves competent, or refusing them, if they desire it, the necessary training for that occupation—in effect, shutting them out, though only in an indirect manner—seems to me rather a mean and unworthy piece of policy. I am very glad that in this institution no countenance is given to that feeling.

A LADY'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE SUFFRAGE PETITION.

In canvassing for the woman's suffrage we find much less opposition to it than has been expressed in former times. A gradual but certain progression in its favour is going on in the public mind. Instead of the flippant remarks which used to be made when a signature was solicited we hear people say:—"Yes, I'll go in for that, it's only right—why should not a woman vote as well as a man, specially if she pays rates and taxes?" "With the greatest pleasure; I'm glad to see the ladies are beginning to know the importance of female influence?" One tradesman said, "I have been a Reformer fifteen years and have often wondered that women did not make some effort to improve their political condition; well, I shall work now with redoubled energy." In one of our large shops, where numerous women are employed at the sewing machines, the forewoman remarked, "I hope we shall all sign here; I know what it is to feel the loss of the power of voting, as I once had a shop of my own, and paid considerable rates and taxes." She then said a few words to her fellow-workwomen, and all signed. One lady in a house of business, we entered, remarked, after adding her name, "I have just paid £12. 10s. for income tax, and feel it only just I should have a vote, for I argue if I pay to the support of the government I ought to have a voice in the administration of it." Others will observe, "Well, I am not so particular about it for myself, because I have a good husband, but I will sign it, because I know many who have none, and who wish for it." The working classes seem anxious for pamphlets, and like to read all they can on the subject. Many asked after the probable issue of the Married Women's Property Bill, which was signed so numerously last summer.

THE LADIES' CONFERENCE: ADDRESS BY
LADY BOWRING.

The Conference of ladies, which was this year thrown open to the representatives of the public press, was held in the Savings Bank, Westgate-street, at eleven o'clock in the morning. The important gathering was under the presidency of Lady BOWRING, who delivered an address. She said:—"My lady friends,—It affords me much pleasure again to meet you, and I venture to express the hope that our Conference may lead to satisfactory results. The special advantages of these Conferences may be easily enumerated. They afford opportunities for educating the female mind to habits of thought and expression; they afford a training school, in fact, for public work. These meetings may also be prized as giving occasions for the discussion of subjects which cannot be so freely, or perhaps so usefully, treated in mixed assemblies. Papers may be read upon any of the subjects included in the programme of the Social Science Congress. It is hardly likely that the whole of these topics will come within our range, and it may be the part of wisdom to avoid others. I trust that the greatest harmony may regulate our proceedings; perfect unanimity upon all subjects it is hardly likely, perhaps hardly desirable, that we should attain, but by orderly, business-like, and well-regulated proceedings we shall better grasp the views presented to us, and thus be in a position more calmly to judge them. I would recommend, while encouraging the greatest freedom of discussion, that each one present be satisfied in her own mind as to the grounds of opinions to which she gives expression. Illness and other painful events have in some measure interfered with my desire to keep myself duly informed with respect to the various questions of the day, as affecting the female community; yet I will seek, though possibly somewhat imperfectly, to glance at what has been done in these directions. The Bill for obtaining the parliamentary franchise for women has not passed; it would have been somewhat extraordinary had it done so, and such rapidity would hardly have been compatible with well-considered legislation. This failure, like other failures, may be to the ultimate advantage of the class whom it concerns, and lead our sex to a due appreciation of the importance of parliamentary privilege, and educate the mind to value the power of voting, should it hereafter be conferred. Her ladyship expressed regret at the unsatisfactory nature of the Bill, which has become law, with respect to the property of married women. We may naturally anticipate papers upon subjects which specially belong to the sphere of benevolent action. Any information bearing upon the best means of raising the poor from their sufferings, the fallen from their degradation, of relieving the destitute, or reclaiming the profligate and the criminal, will possess the deepest interest. We shall hope to be favoured with papers as to what is being done in the direction of the amendment of law, of providing occupation, of instruction, and of education in their many forms and appliances. Information upon the working of charitable institutions, nursing, the management of children, refuges, homes, reformatories, and industrial schools, or any other means by which it is sought to alleviate the miseries or increase the happiness of our race, will be much valued. But I doubt not there are those present who do not consider that purely benevolent action in the political area can be confined within such, or, indeed, any limits, but would deem it needful to consider that it is intimately associated with the attainment of the social advancement and proper position of woman, and more especially that she should enjoy absolute political equality with those of the other sex. Looking calmly and dispassionately at these so-called women's rights questions, I cannot but imagine that a time will come when the justice of their claims will be recognised. It may be

unnecessary to enlarge upon the advantages of education, or to say that women have not hitherto fully shared in the advantages accorded to the other sex. It has been too much the fashion to suppose, that any indefinite instruction would suffice for the girls of the family, while every nerve has been strained to procure for the boys adequate teaching. I am not of opinion that their education or training should be in all respects the same. Girls will still require to learn how to sew, to cut out, to assist in the management of the house, and various other domestic occupations, according to their condition in life. Public opinion has, of late years, awakened to the requirements of the age, yet not so completely with respect to all classes as might be desired. The daughters of our small shopkeepers and others still require to be stimulated to mental effort. In connection with the training of girls of this rank, I may mention that when the new Education Bill comes into operation, it is to be feared the supply of appropriate teachers will be found totally inadequate to the requirements of the proposed schools, and that this deficiency is much greater among female than male instructors. While admitting the inequality of the education that has been accorded to our sons and our daughters, I may observe that, notwithstanding these disadvantages, many women have obtained for themselves a remarkable position in the world in the wide field of literature, in art, and even in science. All, however, are not gifted as are some of these brighter ornaments of our sex; for example, Miss Aiken as an historian. Mrs. Austin and Miss Edgeworth as novelists, Mrs. Barbauld and Miss Browning as poets, Miss Rosa Bonheur and Miss Hosmer as artists, Mrs. Somerville as a mathematician, and many others who might be cited. I repeat we are not all equally gifted, but we all may take a place in the enterprises of the world; we all may have an individual mission. We need not go far to prove that those are the happiest who have occupation, especially if their calling be in consonance with the natural aptitudes, and it is to be hoped that, step by step, other fields of usefulness, and such as will afford honourable means of subsistence, will be opened to women. Less of frivolity, less of vanity, less of vice would assuredly result from a different mode of bringing up being generally adopted for girls. Even those most opposed to the advancement of women would, in the long run, reap the advantage of women generally being trained for work or occupation, for useful girls would make useful wives and mothers. It would be somewhat trite in the present day to repeat the oft-told tale, that "the proper sphere of woman is the domestic." Many, I fear, are doomed to occupy a less congenial position, and upon such the dignity of remunerative and self-supporting labour cannot be too strongly urged. But in all ranks of the community are to be found those who are in want of a means of subsistence, or who feel the necessity of adding to them. Ladies are now working usefully as medical practitioners, ere long they may be found numbered among other learned professions, or embarking in mercantile enterprise. Woman, with her tender sympathies and ardent nature, appears to be eminently fitted for being the physician of souls. Nor does it seem to me that the education engaged in as a qualification for any other pursuit would unfit her for the nearer and dearer relationships of life, should she eventually find them fall to her share; while the giddy idleness which unfortunately too often characterises the "girls of the period" can never conduce to domestic felicity. It has been recently said by a high authority that "the influence of woman might have prevented the present fearful continental war." If this be so, how powerful an action might she not have wielded on the destinies of nations? We can now, in the face of the bloody carnage of the battlefields of France, only deplore that it was not exercised at the proper moment,

and willingly shall we unite our voices with those of our sisters in other lands, who are appealing for the cessation of war. Fervently would we pray that even out of such seeming evil good may come—that the present fierce struggle may lead to a long-enduring peace—to the eventual disarmament of nations. In the midst of these conflicts we rejoice to think of the trained hands accompanying these devoted bands, who convey help to the sick and wounded of both nations. To all we would say, God speed them in their noble work. It is to be hoped that enough has been said to show, in a measure, the extent of our duties, and that while the social claims of woman can be no longer denied, all must recognise how intimately they are associated with her responsibilities. As true social reformers we should not seek to separate ourselves, but to endeavour to work hand in hand with the other sex, and as

In harmony—in harmony,
The universal work began,

so may each and all, following out the instincts of the better nature divinely implanted within our breasts, with harmonious and united efforts seek to accomplish the common end—the regeneration of the great human family.

The address was listened to with very great attention throughout, and frequently elicited expressions of the heartiest approval.

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION FOR WOMEN.

Miss ISABELLA TOD read a paper on "University Examinations for Women."

THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

Miss PORTER read a paper on "The Education of Girls." Lady BOWRING then invited observations and comments on the two papers which had been read, and mentioned in connection with this subject that a paper written by Miss Morsom would be read by Miss Wolstenholme during the present Conference, on Women as Inspectors of Schools. That appeared to be a most valuable suggestion, and one which if carried out would lead them to feel that the education which was now being given in some measure to women would tend to some end and purpose; and they could see in this suggestion means of honourable subsistence in one of the higher ranks of life for women. (Hear, hear.)

Mrs. R. S. NEWALL said she believed it was not generally known in Newcastle that the Durham University had granted examinations to girls. Four years ago, when their first examination took place, there were only nine candidates, but she was glad to say that the number had increased every year.

Lady BOWRING asked how many presented themselves at the last examination.

Mrs. NEWALL replied that nineteen presented themselves, and that sixteen of them passed, and several of those who did so took honours.

Miss WOLSTENHOLME said she should like to mention a few facts which would completely illustrate the growth of public opinion on this very important question of the education of women. Five years ago, when the friends of education, headed by Miss Emily Davies, asked the University of Cambridge to extend their local examinations to girls in one important town in the North of England, that movement met with the most determined opposition. She was sorry to say that in Liverpool the Local Examinations Committee, managing for the boys, actually memorialised the Senate of the University of Cambridge, imploring that they would not make the examinations ridiculous by admitting girls to them, and holding out, what practically amounted to a threat, that if the girls were admitted the boys would withdraw. Last Christmas an examination for girls was held in Cambridge with the unanimous approval of those very persons who five years ago memorialised against it. (Hear, hear.) The point that she would like to bring before

them was this, that in their work for the improvement of the education of women they had seemed to begin at the wrong end. There appeared to be a certain want of logic in their course of procedure. They began to test that which they had not the means of giving; but those who worked in this matter at the outset believed they had before them a scheme in which they could obtain practical help, that the University might be induced to give them these tests, and that if they were unable to meet them their incompetence would be proved, and that the interest excited in the women by the co-operation, the practical working of members of the Universities with ladies engaged in teaching, would lead to a larger practical co-operation. And so they had found out. She would just mention what had taken place in her own city of Manchester. When, five years ago, they had their first examination for girls, they had thirty-two candidates. That number had not been greatly increased in the city, the number of candidates at the last examination being fifty-six; but it had greatly increased in the county. The number of students examined at Christmas was ninety-nine. The result of the examinations, as examinations, had been the slightest part of the work. They found out there was so much need of improvement and co-operation amongst schools. They originated their Manchester Board of Schoolmistresses, which initiated the movement, in Manchester at least, for giving lectures and forming classes for the higher education of girls, and more particularly of girls above the school age of women. At every step they had found increased help. Success naturally produced success, and in this case that had been most emphatically proved. (Hear, hear.) In Manchester, at this moment, a course of lectures was being given by Professor Nichol, of Glasgow, on "English Literature," and they had also classes in such subjects as mathematics, Greek, political economy, and many others which she need not mention. But their greatest gain had been this, that they had, through these movements, so thoroughly interested the ladies and gentlemen of Manchester in the education of women, that the opinion of the city had decided upon it, and that decision had been embodied in an Act of Parliament—(hear, hear)—that henceforth, so far as concerned the city of Manchester, they should have equal opportunities of education for girls and boys. She referred to the fact that in the recent session of parliament the Owens College Extension Bill passed, and that contained a clause empowering the authorities of that college, originally endowed for the education of young persons of the male sex only, to make whatever provision might to the best of their judgment be found valuable for the education of young persons of both sexes. (Hear, hear.) The result of that was that, in some cases, separate classes would be established, taught by the same teachers, and giving the same tests; and in others mixed classes would certainly be experimented upon, though possibly with caution and under restrictions. When they considered that Owens College would be a great northern university before many years had passed, she thought they could say they had gained that as a sufficient proof of beginning that which might probably be considered at the outset an illogical mode of procedure. (Hear, hear.)

Lady BOWRING remarked that it had been admitted that parents remained somewhat indifferent to the education of their daughters, and, therefore, the next effort must be to raise the minds of parents to the necessity of giving a better education to girls, in order to fit them for some of the useful and remunerative avocations of life. Mrs. Newall had mentioned a fact which did not seem to be previously known, that the Durham University did accord examinations to girls, and that the number of candidates which presented themselves had increased

from nine in the first year to nineteen in the last year. That was a very gratifying result. (Hear, hear.) In Manchester, they seemed, according to what Miss Wolstenholme had told them, to have achieved great things. It might be said that greater facilities for education were offered in Manchester than perhaps in any other place in the kingdom, and it might be truly remarked of that city that women were in a position to obtain equal educational advantages with men.

Miss WOLSTENHOLME qualified this assertion of the lady president of the conference by reminding them that women could not practically avail themselves of the advantages of Owens College until the new building—the foundation-stone of which would be laid on the following day—was completed.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT.

Miss WOLSTENHOLME'S Paper on the "Married Woman's Property Act," was then read.

THE USE WOMEN WOULD PROBABLY MAKE OF THE FRANCHISE.

A paper by Miss JESSIE BOUCHERETT on this subject was then read by the secretary, and was most attentively listened to. At the outset, Miss Boucherett remarks that objections are often raised against giving women the franchise on the ground that they would make a bad use of it, and one way in which it is said they would misuse it is in promoting war. Their excitable temperaments, and the fact that its dangers and hardships do not fall upon them, would, it is thought by some, have this effect, so that to give women political power would be to add another inflammable material to the political fabric of Europe. To disprove this argument, Miss Boucherett quotes several extracts from *Le Droit des Femmes*, a French newspaper advocating the interests of women, which show that women in France were strongly opposed to the war, and had issued numerous protests in hope of arresting it. She also points out that if it was true that persons who are not liable to be exposed to the dangers of war are particularly fond of it, and that those who are liable to its dangers are peculiarly averse to it, civilians would be the most warlike part of the population, and soldiers the most peaceful, which is contrary to the known fact. Miss Boucherett remarks that if Prussia were to give full satisfaction to the French government on the Spanish question, it would not suffice. The object is to humiliate the King of Prussia. These questions of *amour propre* do not concern us. The two nations are friendly at bottom, and questions of dynastic interest ought to be considered after national interest. Let voices be raised everywhere against the war. Let us protest in the name of humanity against the pastime of princes, which causes the blood of the people to flow. And here women have not only the right to interfere, but it is their duty to do so. Let them protest, that is what they can do. Who will dare to say now that politics do not concern wives and mothers? When politics entail such consequences, they concern everybody. The protest of women ought to be placed by the side of the protest of working men. The truth is that women generally detest war, being inevitably shut out from everything that makes war attractive. To nurse the wounded and sick in the hospital is the nearest approach to active service that is possible for them, and how unattractive is this service! A full share of the disagreeable conditions of war fall on women, they suffer from the taxes just as much as men, and mothers are even more unhappy than fathers when their sons are taken by the conscription or enlist into the army for active service, while the worst evils caused by the existence of large standing armies fall heavily on women. Is it, then, wonderful that women hate war, and should protest against it? By excluding the most peace-loving element of society from representation, the warlike elements obtain an undue preponderance, and a nation is forced into

war when of the individuals composing it the great majority desire to remain at peace. It is generally recognised that men excel women in their comprehension of the material things of life, and that women excel men in their comprehension of moral influences. If we consider the civilisation of the present time we shall perceive that immense progress has been made in the way of material improvement, but that very little progress is made in moral improvement. Wonderful mechanical contrivances are invented, but we have not found out how to manage our poorhouses and prisons, and boys and girls continue to grow up wild in the streets of London, Paris, and the other great cities of Europe, and to turn into criminals. The reason is not far to seek. That section of humanity which best understands moral influences is deprived of political power. The present war is a singularly clear illustration of the effects of the undivided rule of the male sex. The engines of war employed in it are glorious triumphs of human intellect, but that a war should have taken place at all shows a wonderful failure of moral influences. If Europe can but read aright the lesson taught by the calamities into which she is plunged, such calamities may be avoided. The best guarantee for peace in the future would be to establish women's suffrage throughout the civilised world.

Lady BOWRING remarked that the paper they had just heard ranged over an extensive field, and evinced much thought in regard to the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women. It was difficult to say how intimately connected all these matters were; but Miss Boucherett, who had given great attention to the subject, evidently perceived a strong connection between the questions of the day and this particular subject of the extension of the political franchise to women. She (Lady Bowring) thought there were scarcely any amongst them who would desire to see the franchise conferred in such a manner that dual voting would be the consequence; and such would be the case if it were conferred upon married women. But still it did appear to the most thoughtful minds of the present day that those women who were situated in precisely the same position as men suffered injustice in not enjoying the vote. Those who paid rates and taxes might be said to have an injustice done to them, by being kept from the exercise of political power. This, she supposed, would be a battle-field, if she might use the term, for some time. Still there were many gentlemen who were quite of the same opinion as the ladies in advocating the extension of the franchise to women. (Hear, hear.) She could not see that the franchise would in any way infringe upon the duties of a woman, or that it would in the least alter her feminine position, or interfere with her domestic duties. She would merely go out for a brief interval to record her vote, and need not necessarily get into any confusion simply because she might have to walk through a crowd. Women did now sometimes have to walk through crowded streets, and on a future day many of them would certainly have to learn to stand alone in the great struggle of life. She should very much like to hear expressions of opinion upon the subject of the paper which had been read, and which opened up a wild field for discussion.

Mrs. G. W. HODGE thought that this was a subject upon which it would be desirable to obtain the opinion of the meeting by a vote. She confessed that for a long time she had not approved of the extension of the political franchise to women; but if, as the writer of the paper imagined, it would in any way improve the morality of the country, if it would have the slightest effect in checking the amount of drunkenness which continually, and not merely occasionally, met them in the public streets, she thought it would be one of the greatest blessings which could be conferred not only upon women but upon the country generally. (Hear, hear.)

Miss SUTHERLAND asked Mrs. Hodge if she would advocate the suffrage being conferred upon married women, or merely upon single women.

Mrs. HODGE replied that she would have it conferred upon both if it would improve the morality of the country.

Lady BOWRING: Then you would introduce a dual vote, and I quite object to that.

Miss SUTHERLAND: Does the writer of the paper advocate the franchise for single women only?

Lady BOWRING said the contention was that those women should have the franchise who stood in the same position as male voters in regard to the payment of rates and taxes, and to whom the refusal of the franchise was an injustice. At the same time it was as well not to be in a hurry about these things.

Mrs. HODGE thought that a single woman should decidedly have a vote.

Lady BOWRING said that those who studied the subject more fully would no doubt be able to form an opinion of the effect which female voting would have upon drunkenness. It would undoubtedly be a long time before its influence would be felt in matters of morality, or questions bearing upon social progress. Still, if they could see any means of improving the morality of our towns, or of diminishing error in any shape or way, it ought not to be lost sight of, and if it were thought that the extension of the franchise to women would have so desirable an effect, it certainly ought to be conferred. (Hear, hear.) That, however, was a matter upon which there might be differences of opinion. Mrs. Hodge had suggested whether it would not be advisable to take the sense of the meeting on the subject of the franchise being extended to women; but as many ladies had retired from the room, perhaps it would be better not to take a vote at present, with, as she supposed, the intention of making some representation on the matter. (Hear, hear.)

The conference then adjourned until three o'clock this afternoon.

A GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR ON MIXED SCHOOLS.

The Rev. C. F. Johnstone, Inspector of Schools, in his report for last year, speaks in favour of the system of mixed schools. Much has been said, he observes, as to the undesirability of mixing boys and girls together, as to the acquaintances which the girls may form, and as to the coarse habits and manners which they may contract; but he does not believe that the school is answerable for such things. If they occur it is in places where they would have occurred without the so-called facilities of school life, in places where a low tone of manners and morals prevail, and where the school is naturally found reflecting the general character of the people, but not infecting, rather being infected by, the surrounding population. The managers of the best mixed schools report that the greatest good results from the mixed system. The boys become in measure softened, and learn the practical lesson of consideration for others. The girls acquire confidence, and by the natural stimulus of rivalry are quickened in their studies. In all places where these schools would ordinarily be found the children are already acquainted with each other; they mingle at their homes and in their play; and it appears the wiser plan to allow this natural and healthy intercourse to be continued in their school, rather than to obtrude the ideas of separation and of difference by treating each sex as though they would corrupt the other.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY: MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

On Friday, September 23rd, a largely attended meeting of ladies and gentlemen was held in the Assembly Rooms, Westgate-street, Newcastle, for the purpose of hearing the report of the Executive Committee on the Married Women's Property Bill. On the motion of the Rev. S. A. Steinthal, Lady Bowring was voted to the chair.

Lady BOWRING, in taking the chair, said she had been called upon suddenly and unexpectedly to preside over that meeting for the amendment of the law in respect of married women's property. This was a very important matter, and was part and parcel of a much larger question affecting the rights of more than half of the female community of the kingdom of Great Britain. For a very long time the women of England had been much oppressed in a variety of ways, and they had only recently awakened to some sense of the false position in which they had hitherto stood, and, by the efforts which they had made, had succeeded in obtaining some amendment of the law concerning the property of married women. Perhaps the alteration of the law in that respect might not very materially affect many of those ladies present, as it did a large number of other members of the female community, because those who were happily situated in their homes, where the confidence between the husband and wife was complete, where the husband was kind and considerate and liberal, and where the wife was a good-tempered one, attentive to the interests of her husband, and tried in all ways to keep things in the household in order, possibly the question of separate property never arose, and they would probably be much hurt if such a word arose between them. But there was a very large class of women whom the Bill would materially affect. She referred to their poorer friends, some of whom unfortunately had to suffer very great hardships by the manner in which their property was confiscated when they married. As they were told the previous day in the very able paper on the subject which was read by Miss Wolstenholme, the recent legislation on the subject, the Married Women's Property Bill passed last session, which was hurried through parliament in a rather joocular manner, has been found to be totally insufficient for the purpose. Her ladyship said she would call upon the Rev. Mr. Steinthal to read the report.

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL then read the report of the Executive Committee on the Married Women's Bill, of which the following is an abstract:—"When, twelve months ago, your committee had the honour of presenting their second annual report, they had some cause to hope that the close of another session would see the close of their agitation, and the victory of their principle. How it happens that in spite of the passing of a Married Women's Property Act, containing several important provisions, and considerably modifying the action of the common law, they yet feel themselves compelled to continue the agitation, it is now their duty to explain. The strong support given to Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill by the House of Commons, and especially by members of the present administration in the session of 1869, led to the hope that the government would be prepared to adopt and bring forward the measure in the session of 1870. As the session approached, however, it became clear that although the Bill vitally concerned the personal rights of half of Her Majesty's subjects, and affected pecuniary interests to the amount of at least twenty million pounds sterling annually, the government did not think proper to take official action in this matter. Mr. Russell Gurney, therefore, in conformity with the notice he had given at the close of the previous session, again brought in his Bill during the first week of the session of 1870. This Bill, originally

prepared by the Law Amendment Society, and introduced the first time by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, proposed to abrogate the rule of the common law which vests the wife's property in the husband, and provided that every woman who married after the passing of the Act should hold her property in all respects as if she had continued unmarried. A rival Bill, entitled "A Bill to Protect the Property of Married Women," was introduced by Mr. Raikes, Mr. Stavely Hill, and Mr. West. Mr. Raikes, in this Bill, proposed to make every husband a trustee for his wife; but he was not to be allowed to sell property or to spend the trust money, even with the full sanction of the wife, without the consent of a County Court judge. As to earnings, the Bill provided that a judge should have power to grant a protection order for a wife's earnings, provided she could show that for the six months immediately previous to her application she had earned more than half the expenses of the family. Thus a woman with ten children would have had to earn much more than a woman with one child before she could profit by the Bill, and an idle and extravagant husband, by spending twice as much as his wife could possibly earn, would have retained his right of robbery. As it appeared that there was some danger lest it should be carried by the coalition of two sets of persons—those who desired no change at all, and who valued Mr. Raikes' Bill as a measure sure to be practically inoperative, and those who, though believing that some change in the law was necessary, could not resolve to accept freedom and justice—the committee felt themselves bound to offer to the measure the most determined resistance. With this object in view, a number of pamphlets were widely circulated, and petitions signed in all parts of the country, Mr. Raikes' own constituents causing him to present a petition, signed by 700 persons, against his own Bill. Mr. Gurney's Bill passed on May 31, no division on any of its provisions having been taken during its progress through the Lower House. The conduct of the Bill in the Upper House was entrusted to Lord Cairns, who, after carefully examining its clauses, expressed himself entirely in favour of the principle of the measure. The few alterations which he proposed to make did not affect this principle in the slightest degree. The hostility given to the Bill in the House of Lords disheartened Lord Cairns as to the possibility of carrying a Bill based on the original principle, and he consented to its being referred to a Select Committee with a view to proposing one which he thought would have a chance of passing into law. As soon as the Committee heard of the appointment of the Lords' Select Committee, they volunteered to furnish evidence of the evil effects of the existing state of the law, a task which the facts brought before them during their prolonged agitation would have rendered easy. They were, however, given to understand that the Committee did not propose to take evidence, but to proceed at once to modify the Bill. When the text of the Bill as amended by the Select Committee of the House of Lords was issued, the committee took into consideration the best course to pursue under the circumstance, and their objections were embodied in a petition, which was presented to the House of Lords by Lord Shaftesbury. The committee decided to appoint a deputation to proceed to London to watch the further progress of the Bill, in order either to obtain amendments according to their views or to procure its postponement to another session. The treasurer and two other ladies were named on this deputation, but only one of them was able to attend. Various suggestions were made for the improvement of the Bill, some of which were ultimately carried. It now became necessary for the promoters of the measure to consider whether it would be expedient to accept the Lords' Bill, or to move the rejection of the amendments in the

House of Commons, until such time as a complete measure could be passed. A meeting of friends and supporters of the Bill was held in the rooms of the Social Science Association on July 27th, to consider this question, when a resolution to the effect that, although the Bill was not what the supporters of the original measure desired, it would not be wise to reject the concession it offered, was carried unanimously. When the Bill as amended by the Lords came before the House of Commons, the only amendment not of a purely technical character which Mr. Gurney ventured to introduce was one giving immediate operation to the Act. The Bill received the royal assent on the 9th of August, 1870, and at once came into force. The committee object to the Act, first and chiefly, because instead of recognising the one only true principle, the principle of justice and freedom, it retains the unjust and barbarous rule of the common law, the confiscation of a woman's property by the act of marriage. But even as a measure of protection they object to the present Act, because it is wholly inadequate to the needs of the case, because it applies the complicated rules and decisions of the equity courts respecting the separate estate of a wife to sums of a most trifling amount; because it frees a husband from liability for his wife's debts contracted before marriage, whilst retaining the principle of confiscation of all her property earned before marriage; because in most of its provisions relating to property it requires a formal process of application on the part of a woman as regards each separate portion of her estate; and because, though professedly designed to benefit the poorest class of women, it is unintelligible without the aid of a lawyer. On all these grounds the committee decline to accept the Act as even a temporary settlement of the question, and desire to express their conviction that the agitation should be continued until a thoroughly just and comprehensive measure shall have become law. In presenting their statement of accounts they desire to call attention to the very small cost, compared with that of agitation for other political objects, at which the results achieved have been attained. The total amount received during the past year has been £152 11s. 11d. Of this £56 2s. 6d. was applied to paying off the outstanding accounts for printing from the previous year, leaving £96 9s. 5d. available cash. Of this sum £7 18s. remains in hand, so that the total sum paid during the year is £88 11s. 5d. The whole of this year's account for printing remains due, and this and other outstanding liabilities are estimated at £100. This sum is immediately needed in order to clear the committee from debt, and it is highly desirable that a fund should remain after all liabilities are discharged, to serve as a nucleus for the further agitation which will be necessary to obtain a complete measure of justice. The total sum received during the three years over which the labours of your committee have extended is £328. Were this sum raised to £500 all present needs would be satisfied.

Mr. HODGKIN moved that the report and statement of accounts just read be adopted and printed for circulation under the direction of the Executive Committee. He spoke on the nature of the Bill, and the hardships endured by females under the old state of things.

Miss TOP seconded the motion, saying that she thought she might congratulate the meeting on the very important change which had taken place in public opinion upon the subject. A few years ago very little was known about the matter, and much less was understood, and parliamentary action in such questions was at all times very useful, for though the Bill before the House of Parliament might be carried, it was through that agency brought under the notice of parties who before had known nothing about it. The Bill of Mr. Shaw Lefevre had

been especially important in this respect, and the members of the House of Lords had had an opportunity of learning about it, which might be of great advantage. But though, no doubt, much good had been effected in a material point of view by the Bill which had been passed, it was moral rather than material results which they most sought for. The majority feared that the Act which had just been passed would not have the desired moral result, though by securing to the women of the country £20,000,000, it would have a satisfactory material result. It would not tend to correct the feeling which prevailed amongst men, especially of the lower class, towards their wives. They might be good fathers and kind husbands, but they did not respect their wives, whom they looked upon as imbeciles in the matter of money. (Hear.) Protection had been given to the wives, but protection was not justice; and therefore she urged them not to relax their efforts to secure a more satisfactory measure.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Mr. HARE moved "That this meeting, being convinced that the Married Women's Property Act of last session, though effecting an important amendment of the law, is faulty in detail and unsound in principle, urges upon all fellow-workers in this movement continued exertions for the passing of such a measure as shall secure to married women the same rights to their own property and earnings as are enjoyed by married men." He said that the law which confiscated the property of a woman because she married had its origin in the early system of society, and had emerged from barbarism in a similar manner to the practice known as the law of capture. It had gone on till it became unbearable to those who were rich, and a special Act was framed for them; but all who were too poor to effect a marriage settlement were still subjected to this barbarous system till the protection order was introduced in the Divorce Court. He asked why there should be any difference between the property of a woman and that of a man, that she should have to lose all right in it as soon as she married, whereas the man could retain it. It was an encouraging feature that the House of Lords, in passing the bill last session, had recognised the principle, and there was hope that a satisfactory amendment of the law would speedily follow. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. PANKHURST, in seconding the motion, said the law which treated married women in the manner described by previous speakers was a remnant of a savage state of society; and, as it was inconsistent with modern usages, should at once disappear from off the statute book.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. HANCOCK moved the next resolution, which was as follows:—"That the following persons be appointed the Central Executive Committee for the ensuing year:—Lady Amberley, Jacob Bright, Esq., M.P.; Mrs. Jacob Bright, Mrs. Butler, Miss Becker, Thomas Chorlton, Esq.; Miss F. P. Cobbe, Sir C. W. Dilke, Bart., M.P.; Rev. Alfred Dewes, LL.D.; Rev. Septimus Hansard, Thomas Hare, Esq.; Miss Hacking, Dr. W. B. Hodgson, Mrs. Hodgson, J. Boyd Kinnear, Esq.; Mrs. Moore, Herbert Mozley, Esq.; Dr. Pankhurst, F. Pennington, Esq.; Mrs. Pennington, Mrs. Sutcliffe, Thomas Taylor, Esq.; Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood, and Miss Wolstenholme, with power to add to their number."

Mr. HERBERT MOZLEY seconded the resolution. He said it was stated in the report that the Act which had been passed would afford plenty of work for the lawyers, but he would defy any lawyer to understand it. It would take a long course of judicial decisions before anyone could be found to say what the Bill did mean, and such being the case the sooner it was improved the better it would be for all parties.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mrs. M'LAREN moved, "That the best thanks of this meeting

be given to the officers of the Social Science Association for the use of their room."

Miss WOLSTENHOLME seconded the motion, remarking that she wished also to draw the attention of the meeting to the fact that their committee could never have succeeded in the manner they had done had it not been for the Social Science Association. The Bill of Mr. Shaw Lefevre was drafted by the Law Amendment Section of the Social Science Association, and without their aid nothing practicable could have been done.

The resolution was carried.

Dr. PANKHURST proposed a vote of thanks to Lady Bowring for presiding, which being carried by acclamation, the meeting separated.

A LAWYER'S CRITICISM ON THE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT, 1870.

A paper, of which the following is an abstract, was read at the Social Science Congress in section B Municipal Law, by the Secretary of the section, Mr. Herbert N. Mozley:—

"In order to ascertain the principle of this measure, I refer first to that section of it which more clearly than any other asserts a definite principle—I mean the 11th. That section enacts that a married woman shall have all such remedies, both civil and criminal, against all persons whomsoever, for the protection of property declared by the Act to be her personal property, as if she were a single woman. I think the words of this section are so sweeping that a woman might, under it, prosecute her husband for larceny for stealing her property; and this is probably the intention, as appears from the emphatic words, 'all persons whomsoever.' From this section, it is clear that, so far as regards property within the scope of the Act, a married woman is to be regarded as to all intents and purposes as a single woman. So far, the principle seems tolerably clear, especially when taken in connection with the 12th section, that a wife's property belonging to her for her separate use shall be made liable to satisfy her debts contracted before marriage. Debts contracted by a married woman after her marriage would be a charge upon her separate estate, first, in pursuance of the well-known rule of equity that a contract by a married woman having separate estate binds that estate, as otherwise it would be nugatory; secondly, the giving property to a person implies in general the power of contracting with reference to it, otherwise the right itself cannot be fully enjoyed, for no one would be willing to supply goods to a person obviously unable to make a binding agreement to pay the price. I will first briefly recapitulate the classes of property subject to the operation of the Act in which married women are henceforth to enjoy a separate use:—1. Wages and earnings gained by her after the passing of this Act, but not before marriage, and all investments of the same. 2. Deposits in savings banks made after the Act, whether before or after marriage. 3. Money in the funds not less than £20, as to which a woman, whether before or after marriage, shall make special application to the Bank of England that the same may be treated as her separate property. There are similar provisions with reference to shares in a joint stock company as to which no liability is attached, and also to shares in a friendly society. These provisions are the subjects of different sections, but for our purpose they may be classed in the third class, together with that relating to money in the funds. 4. Property coming to a married woman *ab intestato*. So far as this property is personalty, it is provided for by section 7 of the Act; so far as it is realty, it is provided for by section 8. 5. Sums of money under any deed or will not exceeding £200. This is provided for by section 7. The 1st, 7th, and 8th sections of

the Act, comprising the 1st, 4th, and 5th classes above referred to, apparently exhaust nearly all the ways in which property may be acquired. Earnings acquired after marriage are absolutely protected by section 1; property coming *ab intestato*, absolutely by sections 7 and 8; and property coming by deed and will, not absolutely but subject to a very definite qualification, by section 7. There remain cases of gifts by agreements not under seal, as if a friend of a married woman agrees to give her stock or shares in the funds or in a joint-stock company or benefit society, gratuitously. Such gifts seem to be covered by the 3rd, 4th, and 5th sections of the Act, comprising the third class above-mentioned. What then is left? Assuming a property having come to a married woman in any of the above ways, so as to be protected by the Act, it is her property absolutely; if not, it is not her property. In the former case, the provision in the second section that she may deposit it in a savings bank, or in the tenth that she may insure her life, or the life of her husband with it, is superfluous. It is merely saying that it shall be lawful for her to do what she will with her own. But in the latter case, assuming to be, say, property in the funds which she has neglected to apply for under the provisions of the 3rd section, and has enabled her husband to reduce it into possession; or supposing it to be property bequeathed to her above £300 without a provision for her separate use, can she say to her husband, 'True it is that this property as it stands is not protected by the Act of 1870, but I want to deposit it in a savings bank,' or 'I want to insure my life with it, and that being the case, I claim to intercept it, under the 2nd or 10th section of the Act, as the case may be.' If this is not the true interpretation of these sections, they are simply nugatory; if it is, then the Act is practically as sweeping as the Bills of 1868 and 1869. A woman would have only to put her money into a savings bank, or claim to do so, in order to deprive her husband of it. But if this is the real object of the Act, it is difficult to see why the previous bills were rejected. The only effect has been to produce confusion and obscurity. On the other hand, certain benefits are unquestionably secured to married women by the Act; and it must not be forgotten that the assertion in the preamble in the bill of 1868, that the old law pressed with peculiar severity upon the poorer classes of the community, is practically and most conspicuously asserted throughout the new Act. It is hardly too much to say that all the benefits which the poorer classes could have derived from the Bill of 1868, they will derive from the Act of 1870. The new Act will make very little difference in respect to the wealthier classes; and any adventurer, who may desire to possess himself of the fortune of an heiress, will have the same facility for doing so now which he had before the Act was passed. I should not, however, consider a measure deserving of condemnation merely because it has not done all the good which we consider it might have done. But while I think the passing of the Act of 1870 a matter for congratulation rather than the contrary, I cannot but feel convinced that we have got, instead of a complete and well-drawn measure, an incomplete and obscure one."

The *Boston Journal* of the 3rd instant says: "Miss A. P. Ladd, of Augusta, Maine, has been appointed by the Governor and Council a Justice of the Peace and Quorum. This is believed to be the first appointment of a lady to this office in new England, and perhaps in the United States east of Wyoming Territory. She holds the responsible position of chief clerk in the United States' Pension Agency in Augusta, and is said to be a young lady of first-class business qualifications. This appointment qualifies her to administer oaths, take acknowledgments of deeds, solemnise marriages, &c."

THE LADY CONGRESS.

(Newcastle Chronicle, September 24th.)

By no means the least interesting, or the least characteristic, feature of the Social Science Congress is the Parliament of Women now in session. It is a sort of lower house of convocation, or a court of review, or possibly it has a function resembling that of a colonial legislature when engaged in accommodating imperial laws to exceptional circumstances. Any comparison, however, would be unjust which did not represent dignity, independence, and constitutional orderliness, combined with a free platform for debate. The president, or speaker, of this novel deliberative assembly is Lady Bowring; and it so happens that, in addition to those qualifications which, in common with all rulers of assemblies, she may be supposed to possess, such, for example, as self-possession, an air of authority, an intimate and ready acquaintance with the laws of discussion, and a strict impartiality of mind—her ladyship is conspicuous for that oratorical gift which is not usually thought to be indispensable to the president of other than feminine senates. Probably the model of the more general scientific association has been followed in the arrangement of its sub-congress; and the recommendations which determine, in the one case, the selection of presidents of departments, have had similar influence in the other case, when it was to be decided who should occupy the seat of authority and honour. The departments profit much by the ability with which the key-note of their respective proceedings is sounded; and there is every reason to believe that the Lady Congress has realised a similar advantage. Certain it is, that so far as the discussions have proceeded, the sub-congress appears to no disadvantage in any of those points which distinguish wise and useful discussion from vapid declamation; and had there been, in the course of debate, any exhibition of inconsequential arguing or of petulant contention for pet opinions, such conduct would have been rebuked by the example and good counsel, if not by the direct interference, of the soberly eloquent president. Her ladyship faithfully adhered in her inaugural address to the custom of her office, and, after reviewing the results of past efforts, rapidly touched upon the main points of Woman's programme for the future, thus playing over, as it were, the air into which subsequent papers would introduce all requisite and admissible variations. The line of thought in the opening address was the record from which the succeeding debates did not at any time widely diverge. The grand theme was Woman as viewed by women; and it naturally divided itself into the position, rights, occupation, and training of the sex. Under each of these heads, one paper, if not more, was read, and spirited conversation elicited that reserve of information which cannot fail to be accumulated by an essayist who is at once conscientious in preparation and considerate in utterance, or developed the critical faculty and the intuitive sagacity of the ladies present, who, improving the opportunity, abundantly demonstrated their fitness for arriving at conclusions on practical matters concerning themselves quite unaided by any suggestion or advice from that part of creation which, hitherto and in public, has retained something like a monopoly of wise talk on subjects equally important to both the branches of the great human family.

As might be expected in a gathering of which the very foundation principle is the axiom that the regulation of society is amenable to science, there was no trace of flightiness in the assertion of woman's rights, or in the demand for higher culture and occupation. The claim to the franchise, for instance, was analysed with rigour, and judging from Lady Bowring's philosophical objection to the creation of a dual vote, it would have

[October 1,
1870.]

stood a good chance of being renounced, had it not been shown to be only a corollary to principles already acknowledged and acted upon in the construction of the more advanced among political systems. Instead of passionate clamour for an equality which would be more apparent than real, and, indeed, rather a displacement than an exaltation of women, there was much shrewd reasoning on the general advantage to morality, economy, and peace which might be expected to accrue from the direct influence of women in national affairs, and a still deeper train of argument to show that, as matters now stand, sex is, in numerous cases, the sole disqualification for the Parliamentary franchise. Every other qualification is often found present in an individual member of the community; but independence, competent judgment, political intelligence, the payment of taxes, the management of business, experience, conscientiousness, and all that goes to the making up of civil responsibility, are of no account if their possessor happens to be a female. This is felt by many women to be a grievance, and, at the same time, the more sensible of our leading politicians have pronounced it to involve a dead loss to the community. The enfranchisement of the sex is far advanced, however, in respect of municipal government; and signs are not wanting that, on the grounds of justice and expediency, as well as for the sake of structural consistency, Parliament will soon cancel the ban which shuts out so much beneficent influence that it sorely needs to impel it in the path of progress, and to cheer it through the arduous task of dealing with the ills which society has inherited from ages of barrenness and gloom. As yet, it must be confessed, women themselves assign only a secondary importance to the question of their political position. Far more urgent, in their judgment, are the rectification of a married woman's relation to her property, which, notwithstanding recent legislation, remains in a most unsatisfactory state; and the problems connected with the occupation of the sex, as well as with the culture which shall fit them either for political influence or for civil employments, more definite, more diversified, more useful, and more profitable than are now open to them outside the domestic sphere. It is all very well, and highly conservative of a poetic estimate of woman, to pronounce home her sphere, marriage her destiny, family cares her discipline, and strict retirement her true glory. But even when she does stumble upon her destiny and subject herself to her appointed discipline as a wife and as a mother, there is usually an interval—and often a longer interval than she knows how to spend with advantage to anyone—between her school-days and the date of her appearance at the altar; and if that interval could be suitably filled up with world's work, the altar itself would not block out altogether the world's claim upon her sympathy, and help, nor would she fail to carry into the union which the altar inaugurates a rich dowry of practical wisdom such as a mere schoolgirl—and especially one who has left school just long enough to forget most of what she had learned—could not be supposed to possess. But what presses is not the importance of utilising an interval, but the absolute necessity of providing work, and perhaps a livelihood, for a lifetime. This subject naturally divides into two branches, according as the matter is looked upon with a view to remuneration, or merely with a view to the worthy employment of the leisure which fortune places at the disposal of woman. In the former aspect the question is becoming increasingly solemn; but, happily, it is also receiving most effective attention and has already received a partial solution. Deficient as the education of women is admitted to be, there would be small encouragement to raise the standard any higher unless new avenues to profitable employment were made accessible; for even the defective education of the present renders it hard to knuckle down to menial

service for the sake of getting a morsel of bread, and higher culture would but aggravate the misery of degradation. It may be quite true in theory that work in the scullery is as ennobling as work in the study; but, unfortunately, those who have been nurtured by the Muses feel a consciousness of abasement which, perhaps, they can neither justify nor explain, when they are driven by misfortune to the wash-house and the cellar. Thankfully do the ladies in congress acknowledge the partial change for the better which has come over the prospects of educated women when they happen to be overtaken by bereavement which leaves them to their own devices and to fight their own way in the world; but much remains to be done to clear away prejudice in both sexes before woman can be said to be in possession of all the advantages she has a right to expect from the moment she is thrown on her own resources. Such a hint as that there should be lady inspectors of schools is invaluable, and would of itself suffice to redeem the Lady Congress from all suspicion of being superfluous, and the shelter against the probability of such an imputation is completed by the eminently practical remarks which fell from some of the members on the availability for women of medical and other professional, as well as more specifically industrial, employments. And as to the worthy and honourable occupation of opulent leisure, it is a happy sign of the times that work is turning up in every direction, as may be learned from the reports of this very congress of ladies, and indeed from the very fact that such a congress is assembled.

But closely connected with the rights and occupation of women, is the question of improved training for the sex. In a day which is witnessing the development of university examinations for females, associations of schoolmistresses, advanced colleges like that of Hitchin, and a charter of sexual equality for a splendid foundation like that of the late Mr. Owens, at Manchester, this question must be declared to be in a fair way for satisfactory solution.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED SINCE JUNE 30, 1870.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Pogson	0	10	0
Mrs. Ransom	0	10	0
Mr. R. B. Kennett.....	8	3	0
Mrs. Russell Gurney.....	2	2	0
Mr. Walton	0	5	0
Mrs. Caroline Wood	1	1	0
Miss J. Boucherett	5	0	0
Mrs. Harriet Martineau	1	1	0
Mr. A. Leighton	1	1	0
Mrs. Cobden.....	1	0	0
Mr. J. Cropper	2	2	0
Captain Maxse	1	1	0
Mrs. Skerry.....	3	0	0
Miss Dracup	1	1	0
Miss Rawlinson	0	2	6
Miss Rigbye.....	2	2	0
Miss Swaine	1	0	0
Mr. Herbert N. Mozley	1	1	0
Mr. Hancock	1	1	0
Mrs. M'Laren	1	1	0
"An American".....	1	0	0
Mr. Cox	2	0	0
Mrs. Whitehead.....	1	0	0
Miss Faithfull	0	10	0
Mr. John Hodgkin.....	1	1	0

LYDIA E. BECKER, Treasurer,
28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

WINDHILL.

On Thursday, September 8, a large public meeting was held in the Co-operative Assembly Room, Windhill, Shipley, near Bradford. Mr. Thomas Longfellow in the chair. A petition to the House of Commons in favour of the Women's Disabilities Bill was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

BRADFORD MOOR.

A meeting in support of the enfranchisement of women was held in the School-room, Swain Green, Bradford Moor, on Monday, September 12th, 1870; Mr. William Willis Wood in the chair. It was very numerously attended, and a petition in favour of Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill carried without a dissentient voice.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—The annual general meeting of the society is fixed for Wednesday, November 23rd, 1870, in the Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Manchester. Further particulars in future announcements.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AS GOVERNMENT WRITERS.

We desire to call attention to the subjoined regulations, and the desirability of memorialising the Government to obtain the extension of the examinations to women and girls. Women are already employed by the Government as telegraph clerks, and there seems no reason for excluding them from employment as writers. The qualifications for the office: Handwriting, orthography, elementary arithmetic, copying manuscripts, writing a simple letter, will not be deemed by the most contemptuous opponent of women's right to remunerative occupation, as beyond the capacities of the sex.

Regulations (framed in pursuance of Her Majesty's Order in Council of the 4th of June, 1870) for open competitive examinations for the selection of persons for temporary employment as writers in various departments.

1. A register of persons eligible for temporary employment, as writers in such departments as may have occasion for their services, will be framed and kept by the Civil Service Commissioners.

2. Writers will be either *men* or *boys*. In each case the duration of service will depend upon the wants of the departments in which they may be serving, but no service, however prolonged, will confer any claim to superannuation or compensation allowance. Boy writers will not be retained as such after they have reached the age of 19 years.

3. Writers will be paid, either by the piece or by the hour, day, or week, according to the practices of the department to which they may for the time be attached, and at such rates of remuneration as may be from time to time sanctioned by the Commissioners of the Treasury.

4. Examinations for the purpose of selecting persons whose names are to be entered on the register referred to will be held by the Civil Service Commissioners from time to time as they may deem necessary, in the following subjects:—Handwriting, orthography, arithmetic (elementary), copying manuscript, writing a simple letter.

5. The fee payable by all who attend these examinations will be 5s. for each person.

6. The limits of age will be for *men* writers 19 to 30, except in the case of army pensioners, who will be eligible up to 45; for boy writers, 13 to 16.

7. After their names have been placed on the register, writers will be summoned for employment when and for such time as their services may be needed; the order in which they may be employed and the departments to which they may be assigned being determined on each occasion by the Civil Service Commissioners.

BAZAAR AND EXHIBITION IN AID OF THE FUNDS OF THE MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

It is proposed to hold a Bazaar and Exhibition for the above purpose at Manchester in October, 1871. The expenses of the agitation for the Women's Disabilities Bill during the coming session will be necessarily great, and whether it pass into law or not, a large expenditure of funds by the Society will be requisite. To meet this demand the Executive Committee have decided on holding a Bazaar, and earnestly request the aid of their friends in all parts of the country and all parts of the world to render the undertaking successful.

We hope to publish in a future number of this Journal a list of ladies in different towns willing to receive contributions. Those ladies desirous of so doing are requested to communicate with the Editor of this Journal.

It is proposed that the contributions shall consist of two sections. 1. Articles for sale, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of this Society. 2. Articles on loan, for exhibition merely.

Contributions of the following nature will be gratefully received:—Articles of plain and fancy work of all descriptions, for sale. Photographs, paintings, engravings, and other works of art, on loan or for sale. Curiosities, antiquities, and articles of *virtu*, on loan or for sale. Ornaments and articles of jewellery, for sale. Banners and decorations of all sorts, on loan. Ornamental plants, on loan. Perishable articles, such as fruit, flowers, and refreshments, for sale. Volunteer services in musical performances, and other entertainments. Laces, needlework, fans, and other products of women's artistic and industrial skill, on loan for exhibition, &c., &c., &c. Persons willing to contribute these, or similar things, are requested to notify such willingness to the Secretary, and articles not of a perishable nature may be at once forwarded to Miss Becker, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER, 1870.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Ogden	5	0	0
A Friend, Guildford	0	2	6
Mrs. Whittaker	0	1	6
A Friend, per Miss Rigbye.....	0	5	0
Mr. Alfred Fryer	1	0	0
Rev. E. Kell	0	2	6
Mrs. Gay	0	10	0
Mr. H. Woodhead.....	0	3	0
Miss Jenny Thorburn	0	3	6
Mr. John Scott	1	1	0
Mrs. James Lister.....	1	1	0
Miss Ellen Drewry.....	0	10	0
	£10	0	0

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

107, Upper Brook-street, Manchester.

Communications for the Editor and orders for the Journal may be addressed to 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester. Price post free for one year, one copy, One Shilling and Sixpence; two copies, Two Shillings and Sixpence.