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2. Facts versus Fancies on Women's Suffrage. C. Macmillan.
3. Women's Suffrage in Norway.
4. Women's Suffrage in New Zealand.
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7. Women's Suffrage in the Working. Answers from America.
8. President's Address I. W. S. A. Budapest. June 1913.
9. The World Movement for Woman Suffrage 1904 to 1911.
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**Why Women
Need
The Vote.**

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JESMOND HILL,
PANGBOURNE.

BY
'Mrs. A. C. Osler.

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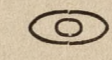
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WHY WOMEN NEED THE VOTE.



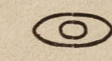
BY

Mrs. A. C. OSLER,

President Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society.



(Reprinted from the "Common Cause.")



"You cannot fulfil your task without liberty, which is a source of responsibility. You cannot fulfil it without equality, which is liberty for each and all."

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Mrs. A. C. OSLER.

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[Photo by Madame Lallie Charles.]

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The Existing Basis of the Franchise.

THE axiom of a recent scientific writer, that "there is no wealth but life," marks a revolution in our modern political thought. Until the nineteenth century, our laws and franchise were based on the assumption that the first duty of Government was the protection and representation not of humanity but of *property*: the vote was an appendage of property, exercised by any individual solely as the possessor of a material "stake in the country." So unquestioned was this view that, in the thirteenth century and after, *even a woman*, if she happened to hold property, might exercise, personally or by proxy, the right of voting. As long as it rested on this basis, the vote was rightly regarded as a trust exercised for the many by the few; and if the population in general had nothing to do with legislation, at any rate legislation concerned itself comparatively little with them. So long as they were content to lead laborious lives under the rule of their social superiors, they were alike unharassed and unhelped by Factory Acts, sanitary laws, compulsory education, Employment of Children Acts, and such necessary concomitants of our complex civilisation.

Early in the nineteenth century the middle classes awoke to the need of influencing their own government, and their demand for voting power took shape in the great Reform Bill of 1832. Doubtless this demand was met by the arguments familiar to us to-day—that the vote could not better their condition, that the ruling class was always ready and anxious to remove any injustice brought to its notice, that the stability of the country would be endangered by the ignorance of many middle-class men, etc. But the commercial element had become

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conscious of its own strength, and, by threatening to rise in rebellion, obtained its vote, and thereby took an important step in the transference of representation from property to *person*. Further steps followed rapidly, for the larger the number admitted within the pale of government, and the more attention these were able to command for their needs and interests, the more obvious became the neglect and helplessness of those still excluded. The enormous commercial development of the middle of the century, with its ruthless exploitation of the artisans, convinced these in their turn of the necessity for some balance of power, and they obtained their enfranchisement (not without violence) in 1868. The extension of the vote in 1832 had still been based on a considerable property qualification; but in 1868 the grant of the vote to practically every male householder established *citizenship* as the primary qualification for self-government. There still remained unrepresented the great agricultural labouring class, which for another sixteen years suffered the consequences of being a negligible quantity. Then these also passed within the pale.

It is exceedingly difficult, owing to the number of limitations and conditions, to give a clear and concise category of those who are qualified under the present law, to vote for Members of Parliament.

There is

I.—Owner's franchise, acquired by men possessing freehold land or tenements of an annual value of 40s., for which the rent or income must have been received for six months previous to the last 15th July. (There are some circumstances in which a woman of property may confer a vote for that property on her husband).

II.—Occupier's or Household franchise, under which any Householder (except a woman, minor, criminal, or lunatic) may vote, independently of the amount of rent

paid, and whether or not the occupier personally pays rates (provided these have been paid by somebody—usually, in the case of cheap houses, by the landlord). The occupation of the premises must date from twelve months previous to the last 15th of July. If two occupiers desire to qualify jointly for the same premises, however, they can only do so if the rent amounts to £10 each.

III.—The occupation of land or business premises of the yearly value of £10, provided the occupier lives within seven miles of the borough, or, in the case of London, within 25 miles.

IV.—Service franchise, for those men whose business makes residence on the premises compulsory, and who, if they lost their employment, would also lose their residence, such as shop assistants who are compelled to *live in*; but this qualification only holds where the employer does not live on the premises, so that if women were enfranchised, it would not apply to domestic servants.

V.—Lodger franchise, which, if claimed, may be granted to a male occupant of a room, the value of which (unfurnished) amounts to £10 a year. Two Lodgers sharing a room may both qualify, if the value amounts to £10 each; and in certain cases the lodger vote is granted to sons living at home with their parents; but this depends largely on the judgment of the Revising Barrister, and the law itself is very indefinite on the point.

VI.—University franchise, for graduates (males only).

For the election of Town and County Councillors the Ownership, Service, and Lodger franchises *do not confer a vote*; the Household and the £10 qualification do. In these elections women who hold the same qualifications as men are allowed to vote, as also for Boards of Guardians, and for Parish and District Councils. They are also eligible to sit as members of any of these local governing bodies, if qualified in the same way as men.

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Speaking broadly, the Parliamentary vote is now possessed by every owner or occupier of house or business premises, and (under certain conditions) by lodgers; with the exception of criminals, lunatics, minors, and women.

It should be borne in mind by students of our democratic system of government that, with the gradual substitution of *personality* for *property* as the basis of voting power, the meaning and nature of the vote itself has changed. A democratic electorate does not itself make laws, conduct foreign policy, or remodel its Constitution; it merely indicates the lines on which it desires these things to be done, and elects those whom it considers qualified to do them. If the will of the governed is to be consulted at all, it is obvious that they alone can adequately express it: not a Solomon himself can understand the thoughts and needs of the humblest toiler in his temple so well as that man's self, however better fitted Solomon may be to give them form and effect. The object of our existing franchise, therefore, being the indication of the people's will (which a democratic Government exists to carry out wisely), ignorance and a narrow outlook on public affairs are less mischievous than they would be with a restricted electorate, because the personal motives and interests of one section are counterbalanced by those of others, and a rough consensus of opinion is obtained, which is perhaps the nearest approach possible to what we aim at in self-government. Obviously, however, this consensus cannot be fairly attained unless *all sections* of the nation are included; otherwise, the larger the number of voters the heavier the disadvantages of the voteless, the more inevitably will they be submerged, and powerless to make their needs and desires felt. This is precisely what has happened in the case of women, and it explains why their demand for the vote has become more insistent with each fresh increase of the male electorate.

It would be beyond the scope of this pamphlet to discuss the merits of a democratic as compared with other forms

of franchise. Many alternative schemes may be and constantly are suggested, but, inasmuch as our question is one of practical politics, we are concerned only with existing conditions and such reform as is not incompatible with these. Accepting, therefore, without question the existing basis of the franchise, we merely claim that it should be applied justly and without invidious distinctions—that citizens who fulfil the conditions on which the vote is granted, should not be deprived of it solely on the ground of sex.

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Legislation and the Home.

There was a time when the functions of Government were supposed to be limited to little more than the keeping of order and the protection of life and property. But the interpretation of even these functions must vary with the conditions of civilisation: the keeping of order in a small agricultural community is not the same thing as in a vast city; the need for regulations and restrictions increases rapidly when people are herded in crowds and competing fiercely in the struggle for existence. With the rapid growth of population, that devotion to individual liberty so strong in English character has had to be modified in obedience to the social instinct, lest liberty for each might imply slavery for all. Little by little even sturdy individualists have admitted a necessity for Government interference with personal freedom of action, of contract, and of competition, which they would have denied half a century ago. At that time, indeed, this interference would have been resisted as tyranny, because it would have been arbitrarily imposed on the people without their consent. It is astonishing how rule and restriction become endurable if self-imposed; and since Englishmen achieved *Government by consent* they have shown themselves willing to submit to limitations which formerly would have driven them to rebellion. Now, this necessary inspection and regulation of our homes, our labour, our children, our health—what we call domestic legislation—touches the lives of women more intimately and directly than it does the lives of men. The law decides what trades a woman may work at, what hours she may work, how long she must rest after her children are born, how and at what age those children may be employed, and a hundred other details. The extent to which legislation concerns itself with domestic affairs

found amusing illustration not long ago in a Parliamentary debate on the methods to be adopted for preventing little boys from smoking cigarettes, and on the penalties to be inflicted on a mother for not providing a fire-guard, or for taking her baby to bed with her; also in the spectacle of a Departmental Committee on questions of Coroners' Law gravely considering the suitability of flannelette as a material for children's underclothing.

Legal restrictions on private action are rendered endurable to men because they themselves *assent to them* (as voters), but women have absolutely no voice as to the laws affecting them and their children, which are imposed on them by men. Men arrogate to themselves the right and the capacity to determine for women the conditions on which they may be allowed to live and work. This is a dangerous power to give to any class of human beings, but the danger is greatest when the dominating class is liable to be competing in the struggle for existence with those for whom they legislate. However upright and well-meaning human beings—men or women—may be, they are not, and probably never will be, able to take a wholly unbiassed view of questions which touch their personal welfare and advantage; and where the interests of men and women conflict (as in labour competition they not infrequently must do), it is inevitable that the judgment of men will suffer from sex bias, even though they will often persuade themselves that what is best for men must, through them, be best for women also.

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The Struggle for Existence.

The extent to which women have entered and are entering the labour market is still inadequately realised. Whether the facts are to be approved or regretted, they must be first recognised and understood. Statistics compiled by the Right Hon. Charles Booth show that in 1841 there were employed in a certain comprehensive group of trades 1,030,600 males, and 463,600 females; fifty years later (1891) the numbers were 1,576,100 males, and 1,447,500 females. Whilst the increase of men was 53 per cent., that of the women was over 200 per cent. This increase is still going on. In 1901, in the same trades, the numbers were 1,652,422 males, and 1,762,445 females.

From time to time restrictive proposals are made which strike arbitrarily at the livelihood of thousands of women. Many years ago an attempt was made to stop women sorting coal at the pit-brow in the northern mining districts, such work, it was declared, being "unsuitable" for women. The workers themselves, alarmed for their livelihood, sent a deputation to London to interview the promoters of the Bill in Parliament. The robust, healthy appearance of the demonstrators and their spirited resistance to their own crushing out produced such an effect on the politicians that their attempt was abandoned. A similar crusade was started more recently against the nail and chain-making industry, which was represented as "degrading" and "unwomanly." Investigation showed that there was in this case also a reverse side of the shield; that the women engaged in the trade were on the whole healthy, athletic, and contented, preferring their independent work at little forges in their own backyards to confinement in factories; while they pleaded that they were thus enabled to keep their homes and families under supervision. Again, there are philanthropists who are anxious to abolish the

employment of barmaids, seeing clearly the degrading and injurious conditions undeniably attendant on the trade, but less troubled by the injustice of depriving 100,000 fellow-creatures of a means of livelihood.

The above attempts may at any rate be ascribed to benevolent motives. Others, however, are still less justifiable. The flower trade would be generally conceded to be one specially suitable for women, a large number of whom are engaged in it. Many of the better-paid and more skilled are employed in decorating houses for balls and receptions, between the hours of 8 and 10 p.m. It was recently decided to bring this trade under the Factory Acts, and as these Acts forbid women to work overtime, this artistic and better-paid designing work must, by this edict, be thrown more and more into the hands of men (foreigners, moreover, as Englishmen, for some reason, seem to have neither taste nor aptitude for the trade).

One more illustration—at present prospective—must suffice. The Rt. Hon. John Burns, in the enthusiasm of his crusade against unemployment (for men), has publicly declared that the labour of women, especially of married women, must be enormously curtailed; and not a few organisations of men—keenly alive to the benefit to themselves of lessening the competition of women—are clamouring for legislation in this direction.

The foregoing instances are cited, not primarily as grievances, but to illustrate the precariousness incidental to the livelihood of any class whose liberties and actions are absolutely at the mercy of others. The extent to which it is justifiable to handicap the labour of adult women by "protective" legislation is a question on which women themselves are divided in opinion; but assuredly it is one on which they have a claim to a voice. Until this claim is recognised, women must be for ever on the alert, ready at any moment to initiate costly and laborious public agitation in defence of the livelihood of themselves and their families.

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The Right to Live.

To the plea of the destitute—"We must live"—was once given the rejoinder, "I do not see the necessity." But this conclusion is hardly applicable to the female half of our nation, *en masse*, nor even perhaps to the millions of them for whom any sort of life is dependent on permission to labour. Those who maintain the right of men to give or withhold this permission, seek to justify themselves by the assertion that the well-being of the race requires the protection of its mothers. It is noteworthy, however, that the conception of legislative protection never goes beyond restriction: no one proposes to supplement "Thou shalt not labour" by adding also, "Thou shalt be maintained." Neither has it yet been proposed to hold an investigation into the habits of life of *fathers*, with a view to State interference with any actions or pursuits of theirs which may tend towards physical degeneration of the race. But three years ago an investigation was undertaken at the request of the Home Office, by medical officers of health, with the object of showing the effect of industrial employment before and after child-birth on the health of mother and child.

Even those who dispute the right of government to deny women freedom to earn an honest livelihood have hitherto been under the impression that the employment of mothers in factories was one chief cause of the high rate of infant mortality.

It appears, however, that there are still more important factors in the case, chief among them, in the opinion of the Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, being the neglect by Local Bodies of proper sanitation.

The enquiries show that while Glamorgan, Northumberland, Durham, and Monmouth have the lowest proportion of industrially employed married and widowed women, they also have the highest infant mortality. Gloucester, Berks., Oxford, and Hereford have a high proportion of occupied wives and widows, and a low infant mortality.

In Birmingham the Medical officer, Dr. Robertson, was assisted in his researches by Dr. Jessie Duncan, and the area selected for the inquiry comprised two of the most densely populated wards, in which great poverty prevails, the housing conditions are of the worst, and at least 50 per cent. of the married women go to work before and after the birth of their children. Twelve hundred homes were kept under regular inspection during the year 1908, with the following extraordinary result:—

"The mortality among the infants born in 1908 of all mothers employed either before or after child-birth, was at the rate of 190 per 1,000 births, while among those not industrially employed it was 207 per 1,000 births."

(*Dr. Robertson's Report, page 7.*)

What these figures indicate is, of course, not that industrial employment is desirable for mothers or their infants, but that the mitigation of want and poverty resulting from that employment does more good than the work itself does harm. The statistics given are arranged so that they may be examined and tested in many aspects; but from every aspect the same conclusion is obtained. Close inquiry was made as to *why* the mothers went out to work. In the enormous majority of cases it was to supplement an insufficient income, only a very few working from preference. The earnings of the women made the difference between 20s. and 23s. income per week for the family.

It is this difference which apparently actually more than compensates for the deplorable deprivation of their

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natural nourishment suffered by the infants of working mothers. Whilst the importance to infant life of this natural feeding can hardly be overestimated, yet the facts placed before us constitute one more solemn warning that legislative interference may easily create greater evils than it removes. The reports quoted above certainly go far to remove any shadow of justification for further Government interference with women's right to labour for themselves and their families.*

*NOTE.—In the latest Report issued (of children born in 1909) the results are reversed, the figures being as follows :—

Mortality among infants of mothers industrially employed, 194 per 1,000.	Mortality among infants of mothers not industrially em- ployed, 147 per 1,000.
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This variation indicating the importance of big-scale enquiries extending over longer periods; but from diagrams published with the Report it is evident, to quote the words of Dr. Jessie Duncan, the investigator, that "the influence of industrial employment is quite small when compared with the influence of acute poverty. It would seem, therefore, that in so far as the mother's employment reduces the acuteness of the poverty, it may even tend to improve the infant mortality."

An Obstacle Race.

Whatever charm may attach in many minds to an ideal state of society in which every woman should be maintained without the need of engaging in any industrial competition, it is clear that such an ideal is beyond realisation for us here and now. Extremely interesting and instructive statistics have been compiled by Miss C. E. Collett, M.A., giving the proportionate numbers of men and women in England, and their distribution among classes and districts. Whilst in some working class areas men and women are approximately balanced (*e.g.*, men outnumbering women in Stepney and Bethnal Green), in Kensington and Hampstead the women are so much more numerous that 50 per cent. of them remain unmarried. This is confirmed by a writer in the *Times*, who points out that of the whole female population over 15 years old, not more than half are married at any one moment. Facing frankly, therefore, the fact that, under modern economic conditions, the preponderance of women and the increasing acuteness of the struggle for existence render it impossible for the women of our country generally to look to the men for maintenance, the question arises whether it is right or just that their field of choice should be limited to the less remunerative and less honourably esteemed careers, or whether they should be allowed to test their fitness, unhampered by any but natural disabilities, for honest work in any direction. Women ask for neither favours nor privileges; simply for the removal of obstacles; they are content to be judged as men are judged—willing to accept success or failure as the test of their fitness. If the world has no need of women as doctors, lawyers, scientists, lecturers, teachers, etc., the world will not employ them: if it does employ and welcome them, both they and the world have a right to the mutual benefit

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which results. Yet how far we still are from accepting this seemingly simple proposition! In place of a fair field and no favour, women in pursuit of an independent career find a veritable obstacle race prepared for them. As a Government official frankly admitted, "The law handicaps women, and you've got to accept that to begin with,"—a somewhat striking admission from the oft-repeated point of view that it is a woman's weakness which prompts a man to "protect" her by restrictive legislation! It is undeniable, alas! that man has struggled to maintain a vested interest in all the more lucrative and reputable careers hitherto monopolised by him, whilst freely appropriating to himself many industries once considered as peculiarly woman's sphere, such, for instance, as the salting and preserving of foods, cookery, weaving, spinning, tailoring, etc. Remarkable as has been the widening of women's opportunities in the last half-century, it has only been achieved by a never-ending struggle, without which no single point of advance is conceded; and the surmounters of each obstacle are immediately faced with a further one.

Women doctors—the demand for them being proved—are now suffered to qualify and practise, but their exclusion from many advantages enjoyed by their male colleagues is still maintained: women may train as lawyers, but cannot appear in court for their clients: women accountants are prohibited from becoming "chartered": women teachers are denied by our ancient Universities the hall-mark of an equal proficiency with men in the highest examinations. It is not too much to say that there is no career in which a woman is not at some artificial disadvantage as compared with a man. Where the law fails to handicap them, class interests and social prejudices step in to keep up the obstacle race, as in a recent instance at Preston, where the governors of the Park School for Girls recommended the appointment of a woman doctor for the care of the pupils. The local medical men combined to raise an objection, on the ground that since there

was no medical woman in the town, the importation of one might interfere with the men's field of practice. In this case the decision fortunately rested with the Town Council, and the Town Clerk having ruled that Medical Councillors, being pecuniarily interested, could not vote, the appointment of a woman was carried by the casting vote of the Mayor. Women have no desire to condemn or denounce men for the human and natural tendency to put their own interests foremost in the battle of life: they merely object to having their own hands tied, and their lives and liberties placed unreservedly in the power of their competitors.

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The Starvation Wage.

Let us impress on our minds two salient facts: (1) That there are computed to be four to five million women wage-earners in our country to-day; (2) that these women, even when doing the same work as men, and doing it equally well, are seldom paid more than from half to two-thirds the wages of men. This holds good of nearly all occupations, from the higher grades—*e.g.*, teachers, inspectors, clerks, and the like—to the factory hand.

Where men inspectors are paid £400 to £800, women discharging the same duties receive £200 to £400. In factories, for identically the same work with the same machines men are paid 30s. to 40s., and women 18s. at most, the average being lower. Evidence was given before the Fair Wages Commission concerning payment for certain stitching on riding saddles, to the effect that "you cannot tell whether it has been done by a man or a woman." The men were slower at the work than the women, yet the men received 9s. 6d. for work which took them twelve hours, and the women 4s. 6d. for the same work done in ten hours. The rate in the one case was 9½d. per hour, in the other 5½d.

For the most part it is accepted as right and natural that women should be employed only in the inferior and worst-paid departments of all trades; a Trade Union official explained that women would not be allowed to do a certain trade process, *because* the 36s. earned at the work is "too good money for women." It is sometimes stated that men are paid higher on the supposition that they maintain a family: if any such basis were really adopted, the difference should be made, not between one sex and the other,

but between married and unmarried, and between young men and women living at home with their parents, and those compelled to rely only on themselves. The argument might apply to a social condition where all women were supported by all men; but is assuredly not applicable to facts as they exist.

Nothing arouses such anger among the opponents of Women's Suffrage as any assumption that the possession of the vote would improve women's wages. Certainly prophecy is a weak weapon unless based on experience; but the grounds for our expectation are these. Wages depend on three main factors: (1) Demand and supply; (2) organisation; (3) status of workers. The first we may treat as common to both sexes; the second has unquestionably been a powerful lever in forcing up men's wages; at present it is of little use to women, because without money they cannot organise, and without organisation they cannot obtain more money. It is a vicious circle. In the one trade where women do receive equal pay for equal work (cotton spinning), they belong to the same union as the men and reap the benefit of their united power; but in the majority of trades filled by women, they are too poor to combine effectively. A woman working for a starvation wage cannot afford even the few weekly pence necessary for membership of a union.

Experience, however, shows that a rise of status among workers may have the same effect as organisation. Trade Unionism among agricultural labourers has never been comparable in strength to that among town artisans, yet since their enfranchisement their wages have greatly increased. As voters, they have become a power to be reckoned with and considered. We must also bear in mind the decreasing reluctance of Government to intervene in the labour market for the purpose of securing a living wage to workers. Once this right of intervention

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is admitted, the connection between votes and wages becomes a very practical one, and is illustrated by the recent Trades Board Act, by means of which the starvation wages of the nail and chain makers have been actually doubled. When this achievement was announced by Miss McArthur (to whom the credit for it is largely due) to a great gathering of the women workers, they are said to have laughed incredulously, crying out that it was too good to be true. Our opponents, of course, will rejoin, "See what can be done *without the vote!*" No one has ever denied that reforms have been and can be achieved without it; but that is no reason why the labour of agitation should not be lightened by the possession of direct and effective means. Doubtless a man with no plough to help him could dig an acre of land with a spade; but should he therefore not acquire the plough? Soldiers without firearms may defend or assail a position with sticks or stones, but rifles and bayonets are none the less to be desired.

The Domestic Queen.

Woman as wife and mother! We come at last to the one sole sphere, her right to which is universally acknowledged—in which we are always assured she reigns supreme. Surely here, if anywhere, we shall find nothing to criticise, nothing to condemn! Thankfully bearing in mind the number of happy homes in which love and harmony rule, to the exclusion of any question of law or individual rights ("for if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"), we recognise also that the ordinances of law and government are primarily required for the abnormal and exceptional, both in character and circumstances. If, then, we pierce through the halo of sentiment which, rightly enough, surrounds the marriage relationship, we find that even here, in her unchallenged kingdom, woman remains entirely in subordination to man, dependent on his pleasure, in the vast majority of cases, for the necessaries as well as the luxuries of existence, not because she might not have become economically independent, but because she has renounced independence in order to become for him housekeeper, life-partner, and frequently general servant. A woman recently told a Marylebone magistrate that for the past nine years she had only received threepence a day from her husband (a soldier) for the support of herself and two children. The magistrate said he could not send the man to gaol for not supporting his wife. He need only keep her from actual starvation. The same principle prevails, under different conditions, in the well-to-do classes. Few men consider themselves under any obligation to inform their wives of their financial position, or to allocate to them an income commensurate with that position. For the support of their joint household and family a man deals out to his wife what he pleases; rarely, indeed, has she at her disposal, to give or spend, one quarter of the means

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which he dispenses without reference to her. Ask a married woman to support by a five-shilling subscription a cause or charity in which she is interested; in ninety out of a hundred cases she finds it necessary to ask her husband. If a man be of a lavish or improvident nature he constantly lives up to or beyond his income, and when he dies, leaves his wife and family penniless, unprepared and wholly unfitted to provide for themselves. This crying wrong to women is not one easily dealt with by law; it rests rather on the accepted status of womanhood, and can be reformed only as a result of a juster view of the relationship of the sexes.

In the guardianship of her children a married woman has still only secondary rights, and the father can by will dictate their upbringing in the religious faith he chooses, or appoint a guardian for them irrespective of the wishes of the mother, who must act with the said guardian. This "immemorial principle of British jurisprudence," as it has been called, was clearly stated by Lord O'Hagan in a well-known case. "The authority of a father to guide and govern the education of his children is a very sacred thing bestowed by the Almighty and to be sustained to the uttermost by human law." (*In re Meade's Minors* Ir. Law Rep. 5 Eq. 103); while in the decision of such an important question as that of vaccination the mother's authority and wish are entirely ignored. Only in the case of illegitimate children, where parental responsibility may be considered as undesirable and undesired, are the full rights and responsibilities of maternity recognised and imposed.

In most European countries, a man has no legal obligations whatever in regard to his illegitimate offspring; by the *Code Napoleon*, any enquiry into the paternity of such children was expressly forbidden.

The inequalities of the intestacy and divorce laws are well known. An instance has been cited in which a wife

possessed of £17,000 died without a will. The whole passed by law to the husband, who left it to a second wife, away from the children of the first. Had the *husband* died intestate, leaving a fortune, one-third only would have passed to the wife, the rest to the children. By English law also "a man may make a will by which he leaves his wife penniless, even when she has borne him children and is left to support them." ("Common Cause," May 5th, 1910.) Fortunately, men are nearly always superior to their laws and creeds; and it is encouraging to note the signs of progress to-day in their attitude regarding these questions. In the evidence given before the recent Commission on the Divorce Law, 1910 (of which two women were members), while some men publicly declare that they "would not give the right of divorce to the wife for continuous adultery only on the part of her husband," yet a much larger number of lay and clerical experts are bravely maintaining the equal moral standard. By thus translating into law and custom the honour and reverence which at present are somewhat hypocritically professed for wifehood and motherhood, we shall approximate to the loftier ideal of marriage which is inspiring our reformers. We hear much hortatory eloquence from distinguished men on the perils of a declining birth-rate and the modern evasion of the burdens of parenthood. More effective than threats or reproaches would be a practical recognition of the dues of motherhood, and an ungrudging admission of women not alone to the duties but also to the honours and dignities of equal citizenship. This, more than any other influence, would awaken and maintain in them, as in men, the sentiment of public and national responsibility.

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The Problem of Social Morality.

In considering the historic claim of men to rule and legislate for women, it is inevitable that we should sooner or later be faced by the question—how has this rule been exercised hitherto in that domain of social morality, which is of supremest importance to women? It is an inquiry from which women have shrunk, with an instinctive and well-founded dread of the discoveries it might involve and the painful responsibilities it might impose. From the moment when they began to take their share of public service and to study social conditions, the ignorance which they, no less than men, had assiduously cherished, was doomed. Every woman reformer must, like the blind restored to sight, endure the piercing pain of the light of truth, revealing to her not alone a world of beauty, but also of horror, with its appeal, equally imperative, to her soul. Possibly it is the suddenness with which the knowledge of evil ordinarily comes to a grown and sheltered woman which makes acceptance of it less easy to her than to the man, who has grown into it from boyhood with the familiarity which breeds indifference.

Searching among some old papers, I came recently on a faded yellow copy of the 'Pall Mall Gazette'; and as I held it, experienced again the sensation of prostrating nausea—physical and mental—which most of its readers must have felt a quarter of a century ago. This, then, was how men cared for and protected women! The wave of horror sent sweeping through our country by that boldest act ever performed in the annals of journalism, carried on its crest through Parliament certain reforms

for the protection of child-womanhood, which no lesser force could have achieved. Then, exhausted by the shock, public opinion turned on its side and slept again, preferring the stagnation of the pool which conserves and conceals mud, to the turgid flood which struggles to wash it away. It needed an earthquake such as the revelations of Mr. Stead to procure by law *a maximum imprisonment of two years* (!) for the procuration or outrage of little girls between thirteen and sixteen years old; and even then, two easy loopholes of escape were provided for the criminal—viz., the provision that proceedings can only be taken within three months after the offence, and the excuse that the offender had "good reason to suppose" his victim over sixteen. In respect of money, no one under twenty-one is held legally responsible for parting with it; but the age at which a girl may "consent" to her own ruin still remains fixed at sixteen. A Bill just introduced into Parliament for raising the age of consent to nineteen, will, it is safe to predict, meet with strenuous opposition, as also will a proposal to make solicitation a crime in men, as it now is in women alone.

We cling to the conviction that an immense number of upright men are ignorant of the legal inequalities and indignities which they are responsible for inflicting on women; that if they did know of them, they would whole-heartedly echo the avowal of Mr. Gladstone: "Men have often been the most unfaithful guardians of women's rights to social and moral equality." For the most part, while the worst men do not desire to have the laws concerning social morality revealed or reformed, the best men avoid their consideration, and, judging their fellows by themselves, lay to their souls the flattering unctiousness that women's interests and honour are on the whole safe in their hands. I have neither space nor inclination here to enlighten and convert them by lurid revelations of the truth, such as have aroused thousands of modern women to the conviction that passive acquiescence in the existing condition of social morality

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has become an unpardonable sin; that to accept the privilege of individual protection, at the price of the perdition and agony of others, is a baseness and cowardice on which no judgment can be too severe. Those who dedicate themselves to the awful task of enlightenment may well appeal to their fellow men in the words of Coleridge:

“I have told
O Britons! O my brethren! I have told
Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
Nor deem my zeal or factious or mis-timed;
For never can true courage dwell with them
Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not look
At their own vices.”

Women are inspired by no Utopian hopes of revolutionising human nature, no blind confidence in any superior power of their own sex to accomplish a task in which men have so signally failed; but they recognise that this most gigantic problem of our civilisation—nay, of our national existence,—the problem which, of all others, most intimately affects both sexes,—demands the united judgment, intelligence and co-operation of our best, purest and most disinterested men and women.

Two Aspects to Every Question.

The foregoing chapters have touched briefly on some (by no means all) of the legal disabilities and injustices under which women suffer, and for which, in the opinion of Suffragists, the most effective remedy would be that political representation which men esteem as their most valuable privilege. This examination of existing grievances is a necessary, though distasteful, task for anyone undertaking to show cause “Why women need the vote.” But it is a relief to turn to another aspect of our question, and examine the benefits which not only women themselves, but the nation generally would derive from their full recognition as citizens, and of the claim established by their past services to their country.

Many people take the view that while men are by nature competent to deal with all public and national questions, the opinion of women is of value only when applied to matters solely affecting their own sex and the conduct of domestic life. Now if it is the case that the minds of the majority of women have hitherto been little occupied with large public questions, it is equally true that the majority of men are less experienced and well-informed on many of the points at which the State touches the private life and rights of the individual. Should we, therefore, be wise in attempting to differentiate these departments of government (a course which has been occasionally suggested), and leave either in the hands solely of one sex? On the contrary, there is not, we believe, one single domestic question, of however practical and intimate a character, in which the co-operation of men with women is not advantageous, whatever the ignorance of the individual man. It is not his technical knowledge, but his *attitude of mind* which

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is of value; and it is the necessity for bringing his mind to bear on all sorts of questions which may not appear to concern him directly, which has educated him to that broader, more comprehensive outlook which we recognise, and which is now most illogically used as an argument against extending the same broadening education to women.

While dissenting entirely from any such separatist theories, it is nevertheless worth while to point out that the enormous majority of the measures introduced into Parliament deal with questions of equal importance to both sexes, and that the subjects with which women are erroneously supposed to have no concern (*e.g.*, foreign policy and national defence), occupy a very inconsiderable portion of the time and attention of the Legislature, the first of these, indeed, being almost exclusively in the hands of experts, and seldom, if ever, submitted to Parliamentary deliberation. Looking back a few sessions, beyond the burning questions of taxation which have caused the recent political crisis, we find the chief measures occupying Parliament and the country were those of Education, Licensing, Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, the Children's Charter, Domestic Servants' Compensation, and Old-age Pensions,—all of them affecting women in at least an equal degree with men. Not only do we urgently need the woman's *experience* on these questions, but on many others also we need (as in the reverse case) the woman's *point of view* added to that of the man; while the effect on her nature and character of the call to study impersonal problems from a disinterested and altruistic standpoint must exercise the same educative influence on woman as it does on man. Hitherto public spirit has been regarded as an exclusively masculine virtue, except in the case of queens regnant, who have amply proved the prevailing view to be mistaken. It is not sex, but responsibility, which generates public spirit. Little of it has been shown by any class previous to its enfranchisement. Nowadays men are expected and

encouraged to qualify themselves to exercise the vote, but women lack this incentive to political interest. It is immensely to their credit that they have, nevertheless, in the last half-century, acquired for themselves channels of more or less effective influence in many directions. Patiently, laboriously, and under heavy disadvantages, they have taken on their shoulders a large proportion of the voluntary work—educational, philanthropic, charitable, and even political—of the country, and, steadily training themselves to proficiency, have performed it in a manner which has disarmed criticism.

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Public Spirit in Women.

The advance of women into the sphere of public service which marked the Victorian era did not, it must be owned, receive at first much encouragement or welcome from the majority of their brother-workers. They were generally regarded as intruders, and had to struggle not only for facilities for their own education and training, but for opportunities of serving their fellows even in subordinate positions. In this struggle, however, as women always gratefully remember, there were never wanting a few generous and enlightened men ready to brave public ridicule by acting as their champions in Parliament and in the country, without whose help it would have been impossible to achieve the remarkable series of reforms which marked the second half of the nineteenth century. For the information of a younger generation it may be worth while to tabulate some of these reforms, coupling with them the names of some of their chief pioneers:—

REFORMS.	PIONEERS.
Establishment of High Schools for Girls	Mrs. William Grey.
Establishment of Women's Colleges and Admission to Universities	{ Miss Emily Davies. Mrs. Fawcett.
Medical Degrees for Women	{ Dr. Eliz. Blackwell. Dr. Garrett Anderson. Dr. Jex Blake.
Training of Nurses	Florence Nightingale.
Protection of Wives from Assault	Frances Power Cobbe.
Protection of Married Women's Property	Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy.
Abolition of State Regulation of Vice	Josephine Butler.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK BY WOMEN.

For Street Arabs	Mary Carpenter.
Pauper Children	Miss Davenport Hill.
Domestic Servants	Mrs. Nassau Senior.
Emigration	Miss Rye, Mrs. Beddoe.
Temperance	{ Miss Lucas. Miss Isabella Tod.

IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Admission to School Boards..	{ Lydia Becker. Flora Stevenson.
Admission to Boards of Guardians	Louisa Twining.

It is worth noting that all these honoured names are those of Suffragists, and that innumerable philanthropic workers have been converted (in some instances reluctantly converted) to the cause by practical experience of the great difficulty of achieving necessary reforms without the power of influencing legislation.

Some of us can remember the odium incurred by the earliest women students of medicine and the first candidates for School Boards and Boards of Guardians; but little by little the value of women's co-operation in national service came to be recognised, and the distrust with which they were regarded grew less. The collapse of all the prophecies of evils which were to follow their entrance into public affairs has encouraged reasonable men to tolerate, if not to welcome, further advances. A feature of the twentieth century is the co-operation of experts of both sexes on Royal Commissions and Enquiries, such as those on the Concentration Camps in South Africa, on the Feeble-minded, the Poor Laws, and the Divorce Laws. Much of the work of public hygiene and sanitation has been done by women, as teachers, inspectors, health visitors, and members first of vestries and afterwards of more important local governing bodies.

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By the Qualification of Women Act of 1907 they were made eligible to sit on Borough and County Councils, and some twenty have already been elected. They may even be appointed aldermen or mayors. Shades of our grandmothers! What uproarious merriment and scathing satire would in their days have greeted the suggestion that a lady mayor would have to read the public Proclamation of King George V.! Nor have the public services of women gone unrecognised. The Baroness Burdett Coutts, and also, too tardily, in her extreme old age, Miss Florence Nightingale, have been presented with the freedom of the City of London; Miss Dorothea Beale with that of Cheltenham; and quite recently "Mrs. Councillor Lees" has become the first citizen admitted to that honour for Oldham.

In listening to the fulminations of Anti-Suffragists against the dangers of associating women in government, it is difficult to realise that all this and much more has actually come to pass, and that—

"What gave rise to no little surprise—
Nobody seemed one penny the worse."

It would indeed be hard to say whether this development of public spirit among women has been of greater benefit to the community or to themselves. The sum of disinterested effort expended in human service has been doubled, while the workers themselves have been awakened to a wider outlook, more impersonal ambitions and more beneficent ideals than were possible to them a century ago.

Patriotism.

Few words are oftener on our lips, and few, perhaps, less accurately used, than the word patriotism. Without challenging its relationship to the ideas commonly associated with it—"the Services," "the Flag," "Rule Britannia," Empire Day, Boy Scouts, etc—it is permissible to plead for the inclusion under the name of patriotism of other kinds of national service than defence and offence and popular demonstrations. To begin with, before you can defend a country you must have a country to defend; it must also be worth defending. A consciousness of this necessity has been recently causing searchings of heart among scientists and thoughtful people, who observe an increasing tendency in our nation to multiply from its least rather than its most desirable classes. Pace Mr. Roosevelt, the motives which have led to the restriction of families in the more prosperous and prudent classes are not all blameworthy. A quickened sense of responsibility for the health both of mothers and children, and the conviction that it is better to produce and wisely rear three children than to produce ten and bury half of them, are not to be deprecated and railed at; but it must be also admitted that such motives as luxury, love of pleasure, and fear of pain are potent in deterring many from contributing their due proportion to the population; whilst the thriftless, irresponsible, and often physically undesirable sections of the nation chiefly provide the coming generations. Lecturing and scolding at large will not avail to avert a national danger such as this. What is needed is to arouse in our citizens a sense of national responsibility strong enough to inspire the personal sacrifices demanded of them. It is obviously to the women of the country

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that we must look for salvation in this direction, on whose willing devotion and self-sacrifice we must depend: but it is wholly inconsistent and unreasonable to appeal to them in the name of patriotism and public spirit, and at the same time to deny them the incentives to those virtues which are powerful in the case of men.

We look to women not only to provide the manhood for the country's defence and maintenance, but to train and inspire that manhood from infancy to the high duties expected of it; we look to them to be willing to yield up to the risk of wounds and death the lives for which they have agonised and which are dearer to them than their own; we demand alike of the single and the widowed their full share with men of the cost of defence and upkeep of the nation, and even of aggressive military enterprises for which they may conceivably entertain the strongest disapproval. In time of war we look to women to perform (at personal sacrifice and peril) that succour and tendance of the sick and wounded which is as essential a part of military service as turning the handle of a Maxim gun or purchasing stores for the Commissariat.* All this share of national service is well and cheerfully performed by women; and yet they are denied the rights of citizenship on the ground (among others) that they cannot fight for their country. Division of labour is the sign of civilisation, and the absurdity of setting a student of science to do the work of a navy, or

*NOTE.—Accounts have recently appeared in the press of a Women's Nursing Corps and a Women's Convoy Corps, thus described:—"This Corps is intended to fill a gap in the Territorial medical organisation. As that organisation now stands, the care of the sick and wounded is amply provided for in the fighting line and at the base, but the intermediate link between the clearing hospitals and the base hospitals is not provided. Mrs. Stobart hopes that the women's corps will eventually be able to supply it, and will be able to render good service in helping to convey the sick and wounded from the clearing hospitals a day's march between the fighting troops and the big general hospitals, where the men can be treated until they are again fit to take their places at the front. . . . At present the corps receives no assistance from the War Office. All expenses are borne by the ladies themselves, but no doubt as time goes on Mr. Haldane or his successor will consider it advisable to assist it by providing the equipment necessary to enable its members to prepare themselves for the work they propose to undertake for the national benefit.—*Daily Telegraph*.

a policeman to act as Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be readily acknowledged by those who employ this irrelevant physical force argument against Women's Suffrage.

It is beside the mark to argue that under a restricted franchise the married women of the country would not generally be qualified to vote. The question concerns the education and status of womanhood as a whole, and the way women are taught to regard their patriotic responsibilities. Hitherto they have been trained to consider motherhood as a private and personal duty only, and from such a standpoint it is unreasonable to question their right to restrict their families, provided they and their husbands prefer so to do. Modern science is setting before us a wholly different aspect of parenthood as a national duty. To the men of the country it can base its appeal on their responsibility as citizens; but to the women this appeal is weakened, if not nullified, by the fact that no such direct responsibilities are in their case acknowledged or conferred.

The whole problem is a new one for the European nations; and surely there is significance in the fact that, coincidentally with its recognition, has arisen the International demand for the admission of women to the full status of citizenship!

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The Lesson from Experience.

Every reform of any importance may be called a leap in the dark. If history repeats itself, circumstances always differ. Nevertheless, the study of past tendencies, experiments, and results, if not looked at through a microscope but in their just relation to other historic factors, is the safest, indeed the only safe guide we possess. With regard to the advance of woman towards social, political, and moral equality with man, the points on which we may profitably examine history are the value attached by woman to these advances; the benefits they have conferred, on her specially, and on humanity generally; and the relative weight of any disadvantages which (as in all human affairs) may have accompanied the good accomplished. The subjection of woman is seen in its extreme forms in the East; but even there we find divergencies enough to be instructive. In the adjoining countries of India and Burma we have a startling contrast between the Hindu or Mohammedan occupant of the Zenana, absolutely dedicated to domesticity, and the Burmese woman, who is socially, legally and economically man's equal. It is possible that the morality (using the word in its most restricted sense) of the Indian woman may be superior (if any merely cloistered virtue can be so described!), but in kindness, family affection, and maternal devotion the Burmese woman is no less admirable; and in every other desirable characteristic—industry, judgment, cheerfulness, humour,—we must accord her the palm; while as to the comparative happiness and innocent enjoyment of life observable in the two countries, there is a concensus of testimony in favour of the Burmese. Turning to the Western World, whilst it would be invidious to discriminate by name, yet the least

acquaintance with European countries will convince us that the foremost in civilisation and prosperity are those where women are permitted the widest scope for their mental and physical energies. Some indication has been given in these chapters of their steady advance in our own country, which is being followed in other European States and in America, with results admitted to be beneficial by those minds best qualified to judge. The late Professor Romanes is such an authority. He said:

“Among all the features of progress which will cause the present century to be regarded by posterity as beyond comparison the most remarkable epoch in the history of our race, I believe that the inauguration of the so-called woman's movement in our own generation will be considered one of the most important. For I am persuaded that this movement is destined to grow; that with its growth the highest attributes of the human race are destined to be widely influenced; that this influence will profoundly re-act upon the other half, not alone in the nursery and the drawing-room, but also in the study, the academy, the forum, and the senate; that this latest, yet inevitable wave of mental evolution cannot be stayed until it has changed the whole aspect of civilisation.”

To estimate the effects of the crowning step of political enfranchisement, we must look to New Zealand, Australia, Norway, Finland, and certain American States, taking careful note of the racial and political differences, which count for more than those of sex only.

Firstly, is the vote valued and used by women?

Statistics from New Zealand (1908) give the total adult male population as 295,446, of whom (in round numbers) 99 per cent. are registered as electors, and 81 per cent. actually vote. Of a total of 243,504 adult females, 99 per cent. are registered, and 78 per cent. actually vote, showing the women's vote to have been

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about 2 per cent. below the men's. ("Morning Post," May 25th, 1910). A New Zealand observer comments on the figures as follows:—"The women not only recorded their votes—they took pains to prepare themselves to vote with knowledge and with judgment. Every political meeting held before the election consisted largely of women of voting age, all of whom took a keen interest in the subjects under discussion." (Stephen Guyon.)

In Australia, electoral figures published in 1903 showed that while the number of men on the rolls had shrunk in a little over three years from 86,000 to 76,000 (round figures), the women voters had increased from 68,000 to 71,000.

In Wyoming, after twenty years' trial, it was reported that 80 per cent. of women electors voted.

In Norway the numbers voting in the election of 1909 were: Women 72 per cent, men 70 per cent.

In Finland, in 1907, 55 per cent. of the votes given were by women.

We may now ask, what benefits have specially accrued to women from the vote?

Mrs. Napier (delegate from New Zealand to the International Conference of Women Workers at Berlin in 1903) reports: "No revolution but a steady evolution"; the legal standard of morality and the conditions of divorce made equal for both sexes. Women enabled to obtain recompense for slander without having to prove special damage. The profession of the law thrown open to women. . . . A Family Maintenance Act which prevents a man willing away his property without making suitable provision for his wife and children, etc.

So ardent an Anti-Suffragist as Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun, speaking in 1904 on Emigration, was forced to testify as follows:—

"There are many inducements to ambitious women to make the Colonies their home. In New Zealand women have the franchise, and, contrary to expectation, it has not turned their heads. . . . The legal position of women in Canada and Australasia is distinctly better than at home. The laws as to the protection of women's property are in advance of our own. . . . there are more liberal provisions on points connected with marriage, the custody of children, and the rights of married women."

The "Times" itself recently testified:—In Toronto two years ago the Woman's National Council carried on a strong campaign for pure water, and probably was the determining element in carrying a by-law for filtration. The recent victory for municipal honesty in Montreal was owing partly to the good work of Montreal women.

(How is it possible logically to contend that such good results may be achieved by the municipal vote, and no corresponding benefit accrue from the Parliamentary?)

One of the most useful things the women of South Australia have obtained is a law which enables the father of an illegitimate child to be proceeded against before the birth, and on due proof the Court orders him to arrange for a doctor, nurse, lodging and clothing for the babe. This law is said to have effected a distinct diminution of seduction and infanticide, and to have contributed to the fact that illegitimacy in South Australia is only about 3 per cent. ("Englishwoman's Review," October, 1906).

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The "Melbourne Age" recently stated: "The first Australian women to receive the franchise were also the first to conceive and adopt a practical scheme for stemming the appalling death-rate of babies, which is common to all civilised countries to-day."

With regard to the effect on Home Life of Women's Suffrage, Sir John Cockburn (late Agent-General for South Australia) declares that it made no difference whatever to home life; husband and wife, as a rule, voted the same way. His experience was that the franchise was a family franchise, and the vote was given in the direction which was best for the welfare of the family.

Mr. Percy Harris (writing to the "Westminster Gazette" on "New Zealand in 1908") observes:—

"The women do not appear to have any more leaning to either Liberalism or Conservatism than the men; the party divisions seem about the same. Nor have political differences broken up the home; families are inclined to vote together, but it is quite common for a wife to hold opposite political views to her husband with no more disastrous results than if she had different views in music or art."

Lastly, of the general good effect on the country of the women's vote, the consensus of weighty opinion is such that it is hard to select only a few examples.

Mr. Seddon, when Premier of New Zealand, declared to a deputation of Englishwomen that the results of Women's Suffrage had been the passing of laws beneficial to the Colony, and that women had not been in the slightest degree unsexed, but were more highly appreciated than ever.

The Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, together with the Premiers of every separate State, publicly testified in 1909 to the beneficial results of women's

political equality with men; and a year later the Australian Senate cabled the following resolution to the English Government:—"That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the Suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliament has had the most beneficial results. The women's vote in a majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of defence and imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

In Norway the political representation granted a few years ago has been confirmed and extended by the Cabinet. The American States, after long experience, have re-affirmed and approved it, wherever tried. Every Governor of Wyoming for thirty-nine years has testified to its good results, and the Legislature has twice passed unanimous resolutions to this effect.

In Colorado, a published statement that no ill-effects had followed Women's Suffrage and that it was "noticeably more conscientious than that of men" was signed by the Governor, Governor-elect, and two ex-Governors; the Chief Justice and all Justices of the State Supreme Court, Denver District Court, and the Court of Appeals; the Attorney-General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, all the Senators and Representatives in Congress, and a long list of distinguished citizens, including prominent clergymen. (Mrs. Julia Ward Howe; letter to the "Times," October, 1908.)

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As opposed to this overwhelming testimony, individual expressions of adverse opinion may doubtless be collected, and in American politics, at any rate, Women's Suffrage has undeniably its enemies. They are of a kind, however, to reflect credit on our cause. The promoters of financial trusts and rings, the Tammany Hall party, and the immense power known as the liquor interest, are all deadly foes of the women's vote. Why? Because that vote can neither be purchased nor propitiated! A Finland peasant woman spoke for her sex when she said, "Now I have a vote I want to use it as a means to protect the things I esteem as the highest good in this world—my religion, my fatherland, and my home."

The Status of Women.

We are sometimes told that in attempting to achieve a position of equality with men, women are in danger of losing something still more valuable—viz., a tradition of consideration and respect which apparently is the recognised reward for unquestioning subordination. If we ask to be shown more clearly the nature of this substitute for equal justice, we are met with the magic word, chivalry,—with vague allusions to opening of doors, raising of hats, yielding up of seats, and handing of tea-cups. And if we challenge the comparative value of these attentions, we are assured that they are symbols merely of a real veneration for womanhood which lies at the root of civilisation itself.

Now, women are certainly not prepared to sacrifice substance for shadow! Let us convince ourselves, if possible, of the genuineness of this professed respect for women as they are and have been under the social conditions hitherto assigned them! Do men actually respect women, or do they despise them?

The first thing to remember in regard to this traditional homage is that it is a matter of conventional observance, confined mainly to the classes in which such observances play a considerable part in life. There exists, indeed, a real and noble chivalry in human nature, which is the service of strength to weakness, and which may be found in all grades; but this chivalry does not depend on sex, and is a deeply rooted and permanent human virtue, closely resembling the "neighbourliness" of the good Samaritan. Traditional homage to womanhood, on the other hand, though it may spring from this true chivalry, is a plant which takes various forms according to

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the fashions of different epochs, but is perhaps equally superficial in all. Neither men nor women are deceived by it; and hitherto the underlying contempt for the belauded sex has been acknowledged and acquiesced in by women themselves.

It is less than eighty years ago since the Hon. Mrs. Norton, whose shameful treatment by her husband first drew public attention to the legal wrongs of mothers, thought it no shame in pleading her own cause, to express herself as follows:—"The wild and stupid theories advanced by a few women of 'equal rights' and 'equal intelligence' are not the opinions of their sex. I for one (I, with millions more) believe in the natural superiority of man, as I do in the existence of a God. The natural position of woman is inferiority to man. Amen! That is a thing of God's appointing, not of man's devising. I believe it sincerely as a part of my religion. I never pretended to the wild and ridiculous doctrine of equality."

And a century earlier Lady Mary Wortley Montague declared: "God and Nature have thrown us into an inferior rank; we are a lower part of the creation; and any woman who suffers her sanity and folly to deny this rebels against the law of her Creator and the indisputable order of Nature."

Only from a few very extreme Anti-Suffragists do we hear to-day utterances quite so abject as these. Intelligent women are no longer satisfied to be considered inferior beings to men. Higher education, wider opportunities of development, the possibilities of honourable independence, have inspired them with confidence and self-respect. Association for common aims and ideals has kindled in them an *esprit de corps* formerly conspicuous by its absence. Unfortunately, this striking change of sentiment and outlook among women has not yet been fully recognised and accepted by men. It is true we no

longer hear within the House of Commons the abominable gibes and jeers which in every debate on a Suffrage Bill used to be well described as "the noble sport of woman-baiting." Public opinion has at least moved some paces forward in this respect. On the other hand, an eminent legal gentleman is not ashamed to declare to a gathering of Englishwomen that to give them political representation would lower the intelligence and education of the electorate, and that a smart uniform or a title would be the determining factors in women's votes. (Sir Edward Clarke.) A popular novelist proclaims that "It is always the woman, tradition tells us, who persuades the man to be a coward, to stay at home, to shirk a difficult or a dangerous duty." (Seton Merriman.) A renowned mental specialist, giving evidence at a famous trial of a woman, sends flying over the world his expressed regret "that the legal code, whilst taking into account the mental inferiority of minors, did not do the same for the inferiority of woman, whose mentality was undoubtedly restricted." (This in face of the fact that the lesser criminality of women is abundantly proved by statistics.) A member of a Board of Guardians recently declared he would resign every public office he held rather than submit to the rule of a lady, who had just been appointed chairman of a committee.

Can it be denied that among a large section of the very men on whose lips the cant of chivalry is readiest, such opinions as the foregoing are freely expressed between themselves, or that they are inclined to sneer when a different type of man testifies to a different experience? One of the most humiliating ordeals a woman can undergo is to listen to a debate among young men on any question touching the relations of the sexes. After being stretched upon the dissecting table of their youthful eloquence for an hour or two, an intelligent woman might be excused for carrying away the conviction that any radical alteration or elimination of so contemptible

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a portion of humanity as her own sex must be an un-mixed benefit to the world! The very qualities which men subtly and sedulously encourage in women—frivolity, vanity, and devotion to display—are also those for which they jeer at and satirise them, and on the ground of which they pronounce them unfit for responsibility. It is true that many husbands and fathers, who take the pains to observe and appreciate the daily life and labours of their wives, feel a real admiration for their characters and capacities, and depend on their intelligent help and co-operation in affairs, to an extent which they often hardly realise; yet, in spite of this they will frequently join in the prevailing tone of disparagement.

“Do you really believe that *your wife* thinks and acts in that way?” asked a lady who was enduring remarks of this nature.

“No, certainly not,” was the indignant rejoinder.

“Then what right have you to assume that other women do so?”

The pertinent reproach drew forth an immediate apology; yet it is a fact that whereas the individual man, and not his sex, is held responsible for the credit or discredit of his actions, a woman's conduct is constantly ascribed to her whole sex, more especially when it is to be censured. A foolish action or utterance provokes the comment, “How like a woman!” whilst, *per contra*, the heroic deed or wise word is not allowed to redound to the credit of any but its author.

With an equal status would come also a juster individual estimate; and women would more easily find their fitting position and spheres in life; for, as Mill inimitably expressed it—“what women are by nature unable to do, it is quite superfluous to forbid them doing.”

In the face of theories and prophecies to the contrary, it is undeniable that gain, and not loss of status, has resulted from every increase of freedom hitherto achieved

by women. None of us wish to revive in real life the women so exquisitely portrayed by Jane Austen: amusing as they may be to read about, we should be ineffably bored by them. When men and women are brought into comradeship in public service and social effort, by the work as well as the play of existence, their mutual understanding and respect becomes a more genuine and lasting, because a better grounded, sentiment than the old tradition which spasmodically attempts to combine the goddess on a pedestal with a working partner in life's business.

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The Vision Beautiful.

Finally, what is the ultimate hope and aspiration which is stirring to the depths the minds of women all over the civilised world, and impelling them to the demand for a share in the direction and governance of human affairs? For this is the unmistakable meaning of what is vaguely termed the Woman's Movement, however various the particular forms it takes in different countries and under different stages of civilisation. Is it an ideal which can be transformed into a force for practical utility and human well-being, or is it merely the stuff which dreams are made of? Is this passionate altruism, which finds it impossible to acquiesce in the evil and misery which surround us, a guide to be trusted and obeyed, or a will o' the wisp luring us to destruction?

In the minds of many well-meaning and even high-thinking people, the answer would seem to be that it is both; a trustworthy guide up to a given point of progress, and from that point onward a dangerous illusion! The point of transformation, moreover, is invariably that at which we have arrived, and, like the foundation of the rainbow's arch, depends for location on the retina of the beholder.

How can women who have once awakened to the love of humanity, who have beheld the vision beautiful and dedicated themselves to the search for the Holy Grail, be content to model life on this halting hypothesis? They may admit that their ideals are improbable of realisation, that they will fail, as men have failed, to reform the world; and yet—and yet—

"The highest fame was never reached except
By what was aimed above it."

And the arrows we fit to our bow must be freely chosen, of the best and latest fashioning yet discovered, tipped and feathered by the collective wisdom of the ages. In the everlasting battle against suffering, cruelty, and sin, women, in common with men, have successively employed the weapons of ministration, individual succour, organised effort for improved conditions of existence, regulated and discriminative charity. The results of these co-operative efforts have led by degrees to enlarged conceptions of the sphere of government and the duties of the community to its members. The more thoughtful and public-spirited women can see no sufficient reason why, at this particular point in the long and arduous "march of man," half the advancing army should be denied the weapons which by natural development have become the most suitable and effective for the present needs of the great campaign. On the other hand there are many, by temperament the less enterprising, who shrink from the increasing stress and strain of the fight, and would gladly be relegated to a less onerous sphere of duty. There is room and use for all; but unless all are accorded freedom to decide on what lines and by what methods they can best fulfil their purpose in the world, much waste of power must inevitably result. That one half of the human family should have the right to say to the other half, "This function alone shall be yours, and from other enterprises you shall be wholly excluded," is for the hand to say to the foot, "I have no need of thee."

Perhaps the most vital factor in modern politics is the growing conception of society as a living organism which can only continue to exist and develop if all its various parts are healthy and harmonious. Out of this conception are emerging higher ideals of the relationships both of classes and of sex—ideals of "self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control," which have inspired poets and prophets; ideals of self-surrender and devotion which shall no longer, because of their one-sidedness,

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imply a coincident fostering of selfishness or tyranny; ideals of social solicitude and service which shall open up a far horizon to the most confined personal career; ideals of patriotism which shall rescue us from fear of racial degeneracy; ideals of comradeship which shall recognise "one equal temper of heroic hearts," in which shall be neither bond nor free.

These are visions hitherto tacitly assumed to inspire men only, or at least to reach women only *through men*. They were to live

"He for God only, she for God in him."

This long-accepted conception of man ministering at the altar of life, and of woman subserving him in his ministrations, is destined to be superseded by a nobler ideal of equal comradeship and free service. Division of labour there will ever be, but this must be determined by personal and natural fitness and inclination, not by the mandate of one sex over the other. Law, rule, and the governance of human life are not functions concerning one half only of the human family; and as woman continues to grow in learning, thought, and sense of responsibility (as she has undoubtedly grown in the last century), she will cease to shrink, afraid, from the mark of her high calling, and

"Choose to walk high in sublimer dread,
Rather than crawl in safety."

Such, most dimly indicated, is the vision which is inspiring those who are struggling to uplift the status of womanhood. It is futile to remind them that the mass of humanity moves on a lower plane, bounded by a narrower horizon; they will answer with Galileo, "Nevertheless, it moves." If they are humble, they are not abject; though they fail, they will never accept failure; because each step on the ascending pathway is in itself trivial,

they will not despise the firm foothold by which they climb, for thus only have heights ever been attained. A Revelation to men's minds—from Christ, Moses, Buddha, Plato; a Reformation of creed and conduct by a Luther or Savonarola; a Revolution for justice and liberty in modern England, France, or Italy—not one of these has changed the basic factors of human nature; yet few will deny that to the prophets and reformers whose souls conceived and whose hands performed these God-given tasks, is due (not individually but collectively) whatever of coherent progress is traceable in human history.

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FACTS VERSUS FANCIES ON
WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Where does the United Kingdom stand on this question of woman suffrage? Is she giving a lead to other countries as we are accustomed to expect of a liberty loving nation? Looking round, we find that she has for ever lost her opportunity of being well in the van. She has been outstripped by her own colony of New Zealand, where, this year, 1914, the people celebrate the coming of age of their fully enfranchised country; for, it was so long ago as 1893 that the women there were included among the qualified electors. She has been outstripped by Australia, where the colony of South Australia followed close on the heels of the neighbouring island by granting votes to women in 1894. The contagion of freedom spread rapidly, and, by 1908, when the bar of disenfranchisement was

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removed from the women for the Victorian State legislature, the basis of the political suffrage for both State and Commonwealth Parliaments throughout that great continent became the same for women as for men. When the Commonwealth was established in 1902, one of the first Acts of its first Parliament was a measure to extend the Commonwealth franchise to women.

The United Kingdom has been outstripped by the United States of America, where full freedom has been extended to women in nine States and one Territory. The map of that country shows that the whole of the Pacific coast-line is bordered by States in which the women are recognised as citizens. It is true that to-day these western States are neither of such importance nor so densely populated as the older States on the Atlantic. But they have a great future, and even now San Francisco is one of the most important cities in America. The possibility of future development may to some extent be indicated by pointing out that already more than one-third of the area of the country is included in these enfranchised States and Territory.

The first step was taken in Wyoming forty-four years ago. In 1869, in the first session of the first Legislature of the then Territory of Wyoming, a measure was passed conferring on women the right to vote for the Territorial Legislature. There was said to be some doubt whether the Territorial Governor, who had the right of veto, would refuse his assent to the Bill. The women, however, waited upon him, declaring that they would not go until he had signed the measure. Nor were they disappointed, for that Governor had the courage to take the step which set up in his Territory the first government truly representative of the people—men and women. It is interesting to note that in that particular area of the Earth's surface there has never existed—or at least only for a negligible time—a representative government which has not been chosen by women as well as men. Twenty years later, when the Territory of Wyoming made application to be admitted to the United States as a fully qualified State, strong pressure was brought to bear by those in power at Washington to drop the women from the State constitution, which had to be

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adopted before full State recognition was possible. What was the answer given by the men of Wyoming, who had had practical experience of woman suffrage for twenty years? Were they prepared to take to themselves the benefits of incorporation in the United States at the expense of their women? No! Their reply was: "We will remain out of the Union a hundred years rather than come in without woman suffrage." The opposition broke down and they were admitted on their own terms.

More than twenty years later three States, Colorado (1893), Utah (1896), and Idaho (1896), followed in quick succession, but for several years there is no further definite gain to record. Mrs. Humphry Ward, on returning from a visit of a few months to the United States, in 1908, announced woman suffrage, in that country, to be dead. Events have shown this to have been a remarkably healthy death. Synchronising with the revival of enthusiasm for the reform in our own country were the American campaigns, which resulted in an important series of victories. In 1910, the State of Washington on the Pacific coast

was added; in the following year came California; and in 1912, Arizona, Kansas and Oregon. Again, in the beginning of 1913, the first Act of the first Legislature of the newly formed Territorial Government of Alaska placed the women of that Territory on a political equality with the men. The anti-suffragists are fond of asserting that women do not want the vote. This is not the opinion of the men of Alaska. The reason there given for the passing of the Act to extend the suffrage to women was this. In Alaska there are few women. Some steps must be taken to make our country attractive to women. What can we offer them better than their political liberty? And the men of Alaska have proved, in a practical manner, their belief in the sincerity of the women by offering them this inducement to settle in their country.

Reference to the map shows that, as in Australia, the contagion spread till the whole country was included, so in America the fully enfranchised States are also contiguous. Beginning in the Central West, woman suffrage spread from Wyoming south and west to Colorado, Utah and Idaho. From Idaho it

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spread west to Washington and Oregon; from Colorado east to Kansas; from Utah south to Arizona; and connecting up Oregon and Arizona is the most populous of the enfranchised States, California. That whole western area, with the exception of Nevada, is now solid for woman suffrage.

We are outstripped by the Scandinavians, whose distinctive characteristic has always been the courage to explore new territory. In 1906, Finland gave votes to women on the same terms as men; and Norway, in the following year, granted them a limited franchise. It must be remembered that, because of the power taken to itself by the Russian Government, the Finnish Diet is hampered in its ability to secure the complete enactment of its measures, since the Grand Duke of Finland (who is also the Czar of Russia) exercises his veto with respect to much of the legislation passed by that body. The limited franchise of the Norwegian women was further extended in June, 1913, when they were placed on an equality with men as to the basis on which they may exercise that right.

These, then, are the countries where women already do vote, but even among countries where the struggle still continues some are before us. In Iceland, a Bill including woman suffrage has passed the Althing, as is necessary by the constitution of that country, in two separate sessions. Now it is awaiting the signature of the King of Denmark, which cannot be long delayed.

Then, too, both in Denmark and Sweden Liberal Governments have recently taken the step which the Liberal Government of our own country continues to refuse to its women, of introducing a Government measure which proposes to grant to women the parliamentary franchise on the same terms as men.

In the Netherlands, too, the importance of the question received formal Government recognition in the recent Queen's Speech, where it was intimated that proposals would be made to remove the constitutional obstacles to granting the suffrage to women. Not much, it is true, but still a step taken by the Government towards the recognition of women as citizens, and, therefore, more than has been done for the women of this country who are

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consistently refused any Government measure.

One point apt to be overlooked in the fancy portrait drawn by the anti-suffragist of the woman voter and the country in which she shares the responsibility of legislation is that the time is past when the question can be dealt with problematically. It is no longer necessary to draw on the imagination or to conjure up the possibilities. We have before us these many countries in which women already do exercise the vote. In not many, it is true, has it been in force for a sufficient number of years to make it possible to draw conclusions on every aspect, but women suffrage has ceased to be a purely academic question. The results can now be gauged by ordinary empirical methods. In the world, to-day, there are more than four million women who exercise the political franchise on the same terms as do men. The world's female electorate is as great as half the electorate of the United Kingdom. In the United States two million women are fully enfranchised, and, if we include the women of the populous State of Illinois, who this year acquired the right of voting for many State

and Federal officials, we find that the female vote in future to be cast on so important a question as the election of the President of the Republic can not be less than 3,500,000. The weight of the women's vote was recognised even in the 1911 Presidential election, when, in his bid for popularity, ex-President Roosevelt made Woman Suffrage part of the official programme of the new Progressive Party, when there were only about 1,500,000 women voters. In the British Empire more than a million and a quarter women have been recognised as political entities; of these about a quarter of a million are in New Zealand and more than one million in the Commonwealth of Australia. Europe contributes to the total more than half a million in Norway and nearly three-quarters of a million in Finland.

But we are told by the anti-suffragist, in his fancy picture, that women, even if given the responsibility of the vote, would fail to use it. Do they really mean that these women of Australasia, America and Scandinavia take more seriously the responsibilities of their citizenship than would the women of our own country, or, are they shutting their eyes to

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the facts? Official statistics have a relentless way of exploding arguments resting on the insecure basis of a limited imagination. In examining this point perhaps it will be useful to introduce a comparison with the percentages voting where the electorate is confined to men. At the recent Italian elections (1913) held immediately after the franchise had been very much extended and made to include all adult males, 58 out of every 100 voters were reported as having gone to the poll. In France, in 1898, the percentage voting for the Chamber of Deputies was 76; in Germany, in 1912, the percentage voting for the Reichstag was 86. In our own country the percentages for one of the 1910 elections were as follows:—the United Kingdom, 92 per cent.; England and Wales being 93 per cent.; Scotland, 85 per cent.; and Ireland, 80 per cent.; the figures in every case refer only to contested elections. No doubt the novelty of the privilege may account for the low figure in Italy, and possibly the more sparsely peopled nature of Scotland and Ireland for the differences between the different sections of the United Kingdom. Full official returns are available from Aus-

tralia, Finland and Norway. In New Zealand, at the election of 1911, of the men electors 84 per cent. cast their votes, and of the women 82 per cent. When the enormous distances which have to be covered in going to the poll in a new and sparsely populated country, and the difficulty of leaving their homes for the necessary time are considered, it is truly remarkable that more than eight out of every ten women voters should have recorded their votes. An interesting feature of the election returns of that country is the progress made by the men in realising their political responsibilities since 1893, at which election the women for the first time took part. In that election not more than 66 per cent. of the men took the trouble to cast their votes, whereas for the newly enfranchised women the figure was 85. The returns show a steady improvement in the case of the men, till at the last three elections the figures have settled down to between 2 or 3 per cent. in favour of the men, which would seem to be a normal difference in a farming community. In the elections to the Commonwealth of Australia, in Finland, and in Norway, the percentage voting, both of

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men and women, is very much lower, and is from 11 to 12 per cent. in favour of the men. The figures of the most recent available returns are, in the Commonwealth, in 1910, men 68 per cent., women 57 per cent.; in Finland, in 1911, men 65.3 per cent., women 54.8 per cent.; and in Norway, in 1909, at the first election of the Storting at which women cast their votes, the figures were for men 67 per cent., for women 55 per cent. These figures are a conclusive answer to the contention that women do not use their vote. They do use their votes in the countries where they have the right. On more than one occasion I have met New Zealanders and Australians who have stated that in these countries women pay no attention to their vote and do not take the trouble to exercise it. Such reporters are, like many of ourselves, ignorant of the truth about their own country. The official returns are a conclusive reply. I have not been able to find any comprehensive survey of the figures for the United States, but those available show that there, too, women do use their vote. In some cases, the percentage of women voting exceeds and

in others it falls short of the number of men voting at the same election. In the recently enfranchised States, the percentages are sometimes as high as 80, 90, or even more. There are some good figures in the *Times*, Pacific Coast Supplement, December 31st, 1913. Their special San Francisco correspondent sums it up in the words:—"It has always been a favourite assertion of the anti-suffragists that women would not vote even if they had the opportunity . . . this has been disproved in every state in the United States where women have the right to vote." This writer estimates the average of registered men voting at a recent election in California at 56.4 per cent., and of registered women at 61.3 per cent.

What of the calamities that are to result from woman suffrage as outlined in the fancy picture—the neglected homes, the quarrels between husbands and wives, the contamination of the political arena and the other consequences so vividly portrayed by the anti-suffragist?

What is the opinion of the men of standing in these countries? The Honourable John

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Shafroth, Governor of Colorado, is so often asked by people in all parts of the world what has been the effects of women's suffrage in his State that he has drawn up a statement of his experience in the form of a pamphlet which he sends in response to the various enquiries. From a copy of this pamphlet the following interesting sentence may be quoted :—

“For fourteen years active Antisuffrage Associations in New York and Massachusetts have been diligently gathering every scrap of evidence against it (i.e., Women's Suffrage) they could find. So far as appears by their published literature, they have not yet found, in all our enfranchised States put together, a dozen respectable men, in or out of office, who assert over their own names and addresses that it has had any bad results.”

What is the experience in our own Colonies? On two separate occasions has the Commonwealth Parliament passed resolutions setting forth their views on the subject, in 1906 and again in 1910. In November of the latter year the following resolution was passed unanimously in both houses of the Commonwealth Parliament, and was afterwards cabled

to Mr. Asquith as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom :—

“That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments has had most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last Federal election the women's vote in a majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by the men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of defence and Imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women.”

That greater prominence should be given to legislation more especially affecting women and children is what might be reasonably ex-

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pected. Much of the legislation that especially affects women deals with the better conditions of the homes of the country and the woman voter would be neglecting her very obvious duty did she not insist on the importance of this side of her political responsibility. The woman in her capacity as mother, nurse and teacher has a wider experience and a more intimate knowledge of the needs of the children than have the great majority of men, and it is well that through her vote the importance of this aspect of politics should become practically effective.

Never when women have taken a forward step has disaster not been prophesied. At every stage the Antis of the day would have held her back. Did she demand education? Her feminine grace would leave her for ever. Did she wish to enter the medical profession? What modesty could be left to a woman who had more than a superficial knowledge of her own anatomy. Did she think it unreasonable that marriage should take from her the control of her property, deprive her of her own earnings and reduce her to the rank of a helpless dependent on her husband? To let her

use what was her own would end for ever the peace and happiness of the married state. The Anti is by nature consumed with fear, fear of the unknown. Does he, or she, realise that in other countries where women have not yet even the rights which their efforts have brought them in our own, his counterpart is opposing severally and collectively every step she has already taken here. The Austrian Anti predicts the downfall of his country if women are given the legal right to attend political meetings or join political societies, the Greek that his home will be neglected if he is deprived of his right to take from his wife her property and earnings, the Frenchman the ruin of local administration if women are allowed to take part in municipal elections. As in our own country the prophesied calamities have not followed any one of these reforms; so, in Australia, the disasters which were to result from the full enfranchisement for women have not befallen.

Then there is the fancy picture of the neglected home of the woman voter. There are neglected homes in every country, and it is not easy to get a bird's-eye view of the

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homes either of a woman suffrage country or of another. There is, however, a considerable body of facts bearing on a question which is very much bound up with the general health of the homes of a country. I mean the question of infant mortality. The governments of all countries are beginning to be alarmed at the enormous number of infants which die before they are a year old. In England and Wales in 1911, the infant mortality was 130,¹ that is to say that of every 1,000 babies born 130 died before they reached a year old, more than one in every ten. What would be thought of a breeder of horses or cattle if he allowed such a mortality among his animals, or of a manufacturer who spoilt every tenth piece, and yet that is the mortality among the most valuable product of the nation, the children? What then are the causes of this enormous death rate? Within the last four years two very interesting Reports have been issued by our own Government on the infant mortality in England and Wales. These Reports go to show that the

¹ This was an abnormal year for England and Wales. The figure in 1910 was 105.

primary causes of infant death are dirt, insanitary houses, want of air and water, unpaved backyards, which make it impossible for women to keep their houses clean. It is often *assumed* that an important cause of a high infant death rate is the employment of married women at some wage-earning occupation outside the home. These Reports have not produced evidence which supports this theory. In the first Report, that of 1909, the district in which the greatest number of infants died was Glamorgan where hardly any women were employed outside the house. Broadly speaking, the rate was generally high where the prevailing occupation caused a great deal of dirt or dust in the air and invariably where the sanitation was bad. Another cause of infant deaths was brought out at the recent infant mortality Conference in London where the various English-speaking countries were represented. It passed unanimously the following resolution:—"In view of the large percentage of stillbirths and infant deaths directly attributable to venereal diseases, and considering that infant blindness and other congenital defects are in many

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cases due to the same cause, the English-speaking Conference on Infant Mortality urges the respective Governments of the countries therein represented each to appoint a Commission to enquire into the causes and prevalence, the provision of treatment, and the possibility of the prevention of these diseases." Dirt and disease, then, may be taken as the important causes.

How do the enfranchised countries stand this particular test? What is their position relatively to others? I have not been able to ascertain the figures for the United States, if, indeed, they are tabulated for the whole of that country. The country which, in 1911, had the lowest infant death rate was New Zealand, where it was 56, or rather less than half as much as England and Wales. Next on the list comes Norway, another enfranchised country, with 67; then the Commonwealth of Australia with 68; Sweden with 75; Ireland with 94; Switzerland, 105; Denmark, 106; Scotland, 108; France, 111; Finland, 114; and other European countries with more, some considerably more. It must be remembered regarding Finland that the veto of the Grand

Duke has prevented many of the measures passed by the Diet from being placed on the Statute Book. These figures show that on the average the enfranchised countries occupy an excellent position. New Zealand, the first on the list, is the country where women have been voting for twenty-one years. The first three places are occupied by woman suffrage countries. Finland is the only one not in the front rank. Compare these figures with those of a country in which the doctrine of restricting a woman to her home interests in the most limited sense obtains. In Prussia the infant mortality is 188, in the whole German Empire it is 192, or more than three times as high as in New Zealand. But it may be said to be unfair to compare a new country like New Zealand or Australia with the old European States, where, because of the old and crowded towns and the difficulty of securing land for healthy and airy houses, there are not the same advantages as in newer countries. It would, however, not be unfair to compare Australasia with another new, progressive country, peopled by the same race. Take Canada. The only Province for which I

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have been able to get the figures is Ontario, and there the number of infants who die before they are a year old is 117 out of every 1,000, or twice as many as in New Zealand. (Note.—In the above, the figures quoted are for the year 1911, except for the countries of Norway, Sweden, and Scotland, where the figures for 1910 are quoted.

What special legislation is passed in these enfranchised countries? Among laws more especially affecting women which are in force in each of the four American States where women have been enfranchised for some considerable time—Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho—are those which provide that (1) the age of consent shall be 18 or 21 years; (2) divorce shall be granted for the same causes to husband and wife, though the wife can also receive separate maintenance or divorce for non-support; (3) a husband or a wife's interest in the real estate of wife or husband is the same; (4) the professions and all public offices shall be open to women; (5) a wife and her minor children shall be entitled to the homestead and to a certain allowance out of the husband's estate, which shall have priority

over other debts. In New Zealand widows, or wives whose husbands are mentally incapable, with children under 14, are entitled to a pension of £12 for one child, and up to £30, if she have four or more. Throughout the Commonwealth of Australia the needs of the mother at the time of the birth of her child are provided for by means of a grant of £5, which is paid on application at the time of the birth. There, too, a very important principle has been recognised by the Commonwealth. In its first Parliament, in the same session in which the bill granting the suffrage to women was passed, another measure provided that in the Commonwealth Government service women and men should receive equal pay for equal work. It should be noted that this Act does not refer to the State Government service, but only to the Commonwealth Government service. This does not mean that the women have been introduced into all the grades, but it is a step in the right direction. It is a great thing to have had the principle formally recognised. It makes it possible gradually to break down the conservatism which tends to consider good posts as

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only suitable for men. The Arbitration Courts and Wages Boards also have more than once practically applied the principle by fixing the same rates of pay for women as for men. A further quotation from the *Times* correspondent quoted above is here in point. Speaking of the first Legislature (1913) in the selection of which Californian women had had a voice, he says:—"Many of the measures, such as the Red Light Abatement Law, which is directed against the owners of property used as houses of prostitution; the law which gives the mother equal rights with the father in the guardianship of children; the law which raises the age of consent for girls—raising the age at which a girl may consent to her own seduction—had been subjects of petition for years by the women. The very first Legislature after equal suffrage passed them—most of them without debate or dissenting vote—thus showed the difference between that indirect influence which male politicians tell the women is as valuable as a vote, and the real power of the ballot."

Of even more importance is the effect of the vote on administration. The release of

Jim Larkin, in November, 1913, is a case in point. The time chosen by the Government for the release was immediately after the loss of a seat at Reading, and a great fall in the Government majority at Linlithgow, and while two other bye-elections were pending. Compare this action with the present administration of the Acts which specially seek to protect women. The agitation which resulted in the passing of the White Slave Traffic Act, in 1912, proved that the general public were agreed in desiring the suppression of this nefarious traffic. Yet in the recent notorious Piccadilly Flat Case do we find a rigorous enforcement of the law? Not at all. In the reports of that case not only did the Prosecutor at the London Sessions, Mr. Travers Humphreys, state that "Letters found on the premises made it clear that the accused *was carrying on the trade of a procuress*" ("The Times"), but the Deputy Chairman of the Court, in giving his decision, said that there was some evidence that the woman had acted as a procuress. If there was evidence of this nature, as stated by the Government prosecutor and the Magistrate, why was no charge of

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procuration preferred against her? Why was the charge limited to one of living on the earnings of young girls? If bye-elections had been turning on the votes of the women of the country, would there have been so lax an administration of the law? One report tells that when this case came on, fourteen counsel were in the counsels' box. The questions which require to be answered are:— Who were the clients of these fourteen counsel? How much influence did they have, seeing that no charge of procuration was brought against the woman? If there was evidence of procuration, were the clients of these counsel liable also to be charged? Had any one of them "commanded the procuring or attempting to procure" young women? Why were the names suppressed? Why was the court cleared? The vote is required that women may be in a position to insist on answers to such questions on a matter so vitally affecting the community.

It is a commonplace that offences against the person, even serious sex offences against women, are often more leniently dealt with than are offences against property.

Consider now some examples of the effect of the women's vote on administration. A delegate from California to the recent International Woman Suffrage Congress at Buda Pesth, in June 1913, introduced her examples by saying that in California women had been enfranchised for no more than twenty months, but that they had been able to achieve more in these twenty months of voting than in the previous twenty years by influence. One of her practical examples is worth quoting. A certain judge had been in the habit of fixing very low bail in cases of men charged with certain serious sex crimes, in consequence of which the men became fugitives from justice. The women determined that this was to come to an end, and, as in that State the judges are elected, and it is possible at any time by means of a petition from a large number of voters to have a re-election of such judges (the Recall), the women set to work to procure the necessary petition. This was secured without difficulty, and when the vote was taken the judge was unseated. The delegate emphasised the fact that this will never again be necessary, because the judges have had their lesson.

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It is now sufficient that they know women have this power to unseat them, should they not be impartial in their administration of the law.

Miss Jane Addams, of Chicago, Illinois, where women have had a restricted franchise since June 1913, tells of the following success: "For three years we had been trying to get policewomen in Chicago. We had the Los Angeles policewomen there to talk; we tried every argument; it was no use. But directly after our June victory, the Mayor appointed ten policewomen." Comment is unnecessary.

One other example, this time from Australia. The delegate to Buda Pesth reported that the traffic in women in that country was practically unknown. One case had come before the courts, and the man had been convicted. The interesting feature of the case was the point of view of the judge in passing sentence. He said, as this was the first case of the kind that had come before him, he would treat the prisoner *leniently* and passed a sentence of *ten years!*

These—concrete examples that women do vote, that they are not unsexed, that they do

not neglect their homes, that legislation beneficial to the homes and the children is more easily placed on the statute books, that the administration of the law is more equitable as between men and women, however, are of small importance compared with common knowledge that the governments of these countries have definitely put into practice a fundamental principle of justice. They have recognised women as of equal value as citizens. Kant defined right action as treating everyone as an end in himself and never as a means only. The country which recognises the full citizenship of its women has for ever turned its back on the false doctrine that women are of value only in so far as they serve the ends of men. The State has put them in a position to help themselves and consequently they are more able to help the State.

In this country Parliament has many times affirmed the justice of the principle of woman suffrage; six times a woman suffrage bill has passed its second reading; but no serious step has been taken in the House to put into practice this principle of justice. It is time we followed the example of other progressive

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countries. Politicians speak of our democracy, all parties assume the justice of a representative government, yet here, to-day, in the beginning of the twentieth century, we have no true democracy, nor any real representative government, so long as one half of the people are denied a voice in the choosing of their law-makers. Though our country can no longer hope to lead in this reform, let it now come into line with these progressive nations, and by granting justice to women begin to profit politically by the knowledge and experience they would bring to the service of the State.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
IN
NORWAY.

BY
FRU ELLA ANKER.



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NOTE.

Many of those who had the pleasure of hearing Fru Anker when she was in England this summer desired to have her address in a permanent form. The Literature Committee have, therefore, asked her permission to publish it as a pamphlet. This permission she has very kindly given. It will, of course, be understood that the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies does not hold itself responsible for opinions on questions other than Woman Suffrage. As Fru Anker observes, the laws which suit one country do not necessarily suit another, but her pamphlet clearly proves that the interests of women and children are not overlooked in Norway.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
IN
NORWAY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The Suffrage movement in Norway is in a characteristic way connected with the two great historical events in our national struggle for freedom in 1814 and 1905.

In 1814 it was the first time that a woman demanded to vote, and it was for the first Parliament ever assembled in Norway. It was at the time of the great Napoleonic wars. Denmark, which had been on the side of Napoleon, was, at his fall, obliged to cede the whole united Kingdom of Norway to Sweden. When the news came to Norway that the country had been given away like another province, the people rose like one man, declared Norway independent, and chose their own king. It was a daring risk. The Swedish army was at the frontier, and delegates from all the great powers met in our capital to see the treaty of cession fulfilled.

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The Norwegians then made an appeal to the people to elect members for a parliament to carry on the resistance against Sweden. The people answered with great enthusiasm to this appeal; and the women were as patriotic as the men, they gave what they could of gold and silver to the State for the defence. All were alike anxious that Norway should be independent again after four centuries of union with Denmark. The election day came and all the men went to the churches to give their votes for Norway's freedom, while the church bells all over the country were ringing.

At that moment a peasant woman who owned seven churches, managed her own farm, and was accustomed to rule the district, dressed in her best gown, drove with two horses to the church, and demanded to vote. She was refused, as a woman. But, it is an interesting fact that a century afterwards it was the great grand-daughter of this peasant woman who was the first chosen woman member of Parliament in Norway—Miss Anna Rogstad—and her first speech was for the defence of the country.

The Norwegian revolution in 1814 ended in this way, that we at last agreed to a union with Sweden under the same king, but we were to have our own constitution, our own government, our own parliament. The English delegates had helped us diplomatically all the time to obtain this great result, and the Norwegians have always felt a deep gratitude to Great Britain.

The actual Suffrage movement began in the seventies, roused by the inspiring impulses from British women and men. John Stuart Mill's book, "The Subjection of Women," was translated and

introduced to us by the Danish writer Georg Brandes, and roused at once a great sensation. The ideas were taken up by our woman movement and were advocated by our writers, chiefly Björnstjerne Björnson. My mother has told me how women at that time came together to discuss this book, how they cried over it, and dreamt over it, as if a new age was dawning.

I remember a ball in my father's home in the seventies. There had been the usual speech for the ladies in the style of: "Wine, women, and song," when a young student rose and made a startling address: "We have done with these phrases about women now," he said, "comparing her to stars and to flowers, and anything but human beings. We want companions in life, an equal in our own flesh and blood, an equal in our needs and wants and ideals." Then he quoted John Stuart Mill and ended with "Votes for Women." There was an outcry. Some women fled frightened to the corners, and some men were very furious. Then I saw my mother walking up to the speaker thanking him with tears in her eyes.

This is the fine, the remarkable thing in the Suffrage movement in Norway, that the men supported us from the first moment. They welcomed us with open arms to public interest and influence.

The people were prepared for it by our broad, democratic education. Our constitution, which is a daughter of the French Revolution, had placed the power into the hands of the great mass of the people, so the average man had for a century been accustomed to share the political work of the

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country. The principle of our democracy is that every man who works and struggles for his life within the boundaries of our country, is entitled to influence legislation in his interest. It is the needs and interests of every grown-up individual who is dependent on legislation, which are to be represented by the vote. *The right to vote is based on the need for it. Government in this way does not only rest on the consent of the governed, but on the co-operation of the governed.*

This is not only simple justice, we argue. It is a benefit to the state, a strength to the nation, that all the forces and impulses from the brains and heart of the people combine to make legislation. In this way the greatest sum of intelligence and experience of life in the different conditions of society is represented. *The experience of life*, that is the education which counts for the vote, and is to govern the country. Therefore as soon as women demanded the vote, the men found it *a most natural demand*. No one can deny that women are as much dependent on legislation as men are, and they need the vote just as much as men to defend their interests in society, and their work and experience of life is as valuable to the state as the work of men.

It was a just and natural demand. But most of all, the men wanted women to get the vote to educate them in public interest.

They did not want women to remain at a lower intellectual stage than themselves. They did not want women to sit behind the closed doors of the nursery and the kitchen. They hoped and wished and encouraged women to be more broadminded and enlightened. Women would be more fit to

educate their children, they argued, if they knew more about the world in which their children were to live and struggle, and they would be better and more pleasant companions to themselves if they could be inspired by the same ideals as themselves, common ideals, which can make a home more happy than any money can make it. They wanted to get the whole level of the homes lifted by a more enlightened womanhood.

They did not like to see women so much absorbed by church interests and missionary work only, as was the case in Norway, to see women use their spare time to make clothes for children in India and Madagascar, not noticing that children were freezing and starving outside their own houses. They wanted to use the great charity force of women for the welfare of our own people, organised and made much more fruitful by means of the vote.

As Christians, who regard the soul of a woman of as much eternal value as the soul of a man, they could only rejoice at anything which might contribute to widen the views of women, and they wanted to lead the religious feeling of women into public life to inspire and purify public life.

They wished to see womanhood unfold her unknown forces side by side with man, the divine spirit of evolution working in them both for infinite ends. They did not say that women were not politically educated enough, because they realised that the vote and the responsibility was just the means of education for public interest.

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There was, of course, some resistance from men and also from some few women.

"If women get the vote, they will lose their womanhood, they will neglect their children, they will shake the foundation of the state and cause a disaster to the nation." It is so curious to hear these arguments repeated here, when we know that they have no reality. But the men as a whole trusted in nature and in womanhood. We shall never forget it. We are proud of our Norwegian men for their sense of justice, for their courage, for their trust in womanhood, their true manliness—"Das ewig männliche ziehet uns an."

The Suffrage movement in this way never became a sex war in Norway, and I believe there will never be a sex war, as women are mothers to sons as well as to daughters.

In 1885 the first Suffrage society was started in Kristiania by a young woman, Miss Gina Krog, who is now the Liberal candidate for a constituency in Kristiania.

Only some years afterwards the Labour Party took women's suffrage on their political programme. Both in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark it has been the Labour parties which first supported women. But the other parties came very soon afterwards.

In 1893 a Suffrage Bill was discussed in Parliament and got a majority. It was not passed into law, because a constitutional bill with us needs a two-third majority, and it was then rejected by the Conservatives. Some years afterwards the men got universal suffrage, and from that time the Con-

servatives began to favour a limited bill for women. Now a deadlock began in the Suffrage movement. The great national struggle for independence, which had lasted all the century, approached a crisis. We realised that we had to make a great effort to come out of the union with Sweden. At this critical time the Liberals did not dare to give women the vote, just as the Irishmen here. They feared the influence of new voters on this question. The Suffrage was postponed, but not forgotten.

Meanwhile our Parliament gave women admission to all the same schools and all the same professions as men. A woman in Norway can be whatever she likes, except a clergyman, consul, and officer in the army.

All the state schools, and most of the private schools, are co-educational. This has been a good way of preparing for the vote for women, as men have seen from their childhood that women are as intelligent and energetic as themselves. Women got municipal vote and were elected on the County Councils and as members of the jury. And women poured into all these new-opened departments of work and gave good evidence about their abilities.

Time was ripe for the vote, and then came our great year 1905. History repeats itself. The Norwegian Parliament dissolved the union with Sweden. Again the Swedish army was at the frontier. The people rose like one man, called to action as it were by the genius of the nation. Sweden said: "This is an arbitrary act of the Norwegian Parliament; it is not the wish and will of the people." Our Parliament answered: "We are not afraid of

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asking the people," and it made a referendum to the men of the country asking them to vote for or against the union with Sweden. Again the men of the country went to the polling places to vote for Norway's freedom, while the church bells were ringing.

At that moment the Norwegian women rose to the great occasion and made a referendum to all the women of the country asking them to vote for or against the union. After some days they presented a list of women voters to Parliament almost as large as the list of men voters; all of them voted for Norway's freedom knowing that we risked a war.

Our Parliament was proud to answer Sweden: Our act is sanctioned by the whole people, not only by the men but by all the women of the country.

This immediate national impulse of the women to back up the men at the most critical stage of our history won the vote for women. The first Parliament opened by King Haakon the Seventh of Norway and Queen Maud gave women the vote. The first act of free Norway was to honour the women.

The union was dissolved in peace, and this has prepared a better understanding between the two peoples, who now can fully appreciate each other. Common ideals and common dangers unite them now in a free natural co-operation. Next year we shall have a Peace Centenary between Norway and Sweden, and both peoples have collected a fund to erect a peace monument at the frontier in the form of Christ.

We got votes for women in 1907, but it was only a limited vote. The Labour and Liberal parties voted first for universal suffrage for women, but as this Bill again was rejected by the Conservatives, they voted for a limited Bill, based on taxation, a Bill which excluded two-fifths of the women. A woman over 25 years who paid taxes on an income of at least £25 a year, was to have the vote, and all married women whose husbands paid the same taxes. This Bill was carried by an overwhelming majority of all parties.

It was a magnanimous deed of the Labour Party to vote for this Bill which excluded their women. They sacrificed their own interest to open the way for women's suffrage.

The effect of the women's vote in Norway after two elections has been so good that now all political parties demanded universal suffrage, and *on the 12th of June, 1913, our Parliament unanimously gave universal suffrage to women over 25 years, that is on the same conditions as men.*

It cannot be said that the majority of women wanted the vote in Norway. Very few were opposed to it, but it was only a minority of the women, the enlightened women, who actually demanded it. I think a suffrage reform has never been demanded by the whole body, who was to profit by it. It is the free who must teach the slaves the value of freedom. It was the majority of men who deliberately wanted to share their privileges with women. There was no political necessity for it. The granting of the vote to women was therefore a victory of the men, a victory of justice and civilisation.

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May I tell you that in *Denmark* the Government has proposed universal suffrage for women as for men as part of a constitutional reform, which was placed before a general election in May. An overwhelming majority of the people voted for it, so it is certain that a women's suffrage bill soon will be carried.

In Sweden the Government last year proposed suffrage for women on the same conditions as men. The Bill was passed by the first chamber, but rejected by the second chamber.

It does not seem that the example of Finland and Norway has frightened the two countries which are nearest to us and can best judge on the effect of women's vote. Denmark is even ready to adopt universal suffrage at one stroke.

HOW WOMEN USE THE VOTE.

The first election was in 1909, and the women at once took a great share in it, and still more at the last election, when they voted in almost the same proportion as men. 73 per cent. in the towns; in the country 50 per cent.

There are more women than men in Norway also. We cannot help it! But the men are not afraid of the women.

In 1910 the number of women over 15 years was	826,097
The number of men over 15 years	699,467
Majority of women ...	126,630

The number of boys in 1910 below 15 years was	423,693
The number of girls below 15 years	408,533
Majority of boys	15,160

More boys are born in Norway, but more boys die early, especially in the first year, and women generally live to a higher age. This accounts for the majority of grown-up women. I have been told that this is also the case in England.

There is thus a majority of women voters, but women do not vote as a sex against men. We do not want to fight men. We vote on political lines. We have not formed any woman party against men. I think it would be quite impossible to form a united party of women against men. We work side by side with men as their friends. We share the general political work of the country in co-operation with men according to our different opinions and interests.

We have a striking example of this. Miss Gina Krog, who is the leader of the women's movement, the President of the National Council of Women, was nominated as the Liberal candidate in a rich constituency in Kristiania, and was defeated. The Conservative women here voted for her political opponent, a man, and we found that all right. There was a great political issue at stake.

We never see this majority of women voters anywhere. They are mixed up with the men between the parties. The actual effect of the women's vote is to strengthen the influence of the home and the

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family on legislation. Most women are married women, and generally husband and wife vote together on the same side of politics. They get their opinions naturally from the same sources. It is the married man who by the women's vote gets his vote strengthened or redoubled.

Generally the home and the family is considered to be the most stable foundation of the state, so the women's vote directly strengthens the foundation of the state.

And it works as a premium on good marriages! As an encouragement to husband and wife to agree! If they vote together the home is represented by two votes; if they do not agree they outweigh each other. I have never heard that the vote has broken up any marriage!

I think it is a danger to the state to have such strong women's organisations as here in England *without political responsibility*. It tempts women to stare onesidedly at their own grievances. They are now like an army of revolt against the government of man. Naturally this begins to threaten the foundation of the state. When they get the same rights and responsibilities as men, they will look at all questions more from the human point of view and in connection with general interests of society.

Women are members of the councils of all political organisations, and in this way they influence the party programmes with their interests, just as other sections within a political party. And all the parties are very ready to take up women's questions on their programmes. Their proposals are not directed against men, as we shall see.

The first direct effect of the vote is that women have taken up their home duties with greater respect and responsibility. They have worked to make women more able for their most sacred task as wives and mothers. There is no fear that women voters will refrain from marriage. They will certainly now, as always, find their highest happiness in marriage. As wife and mother a woman uses her greatest powers. In the wonder of creation she is nearest to God.

I do not think the Norwegian woman has lost her womanhood. It still holds good for us, I believe, the old ideal from the Bible:—

“Strength and dignity are her clothing and she laughs at the time to come; she opens her mouth to wisdom and the law of kindness is on her tongue.”

I will give a concentrated survey of the work of women in Norway, which has been carried out by the influence of the vote. There may, of course, be things that would not suit you. Every country must build on her own basis of development. But I think it will interest you to hear how Norwegian women have used the vote.

The first thing women have thought about is to stop *infant mortality* by a better provision for the mothers. As you know infant mortality has grown very high in all countries of late, chiefly because the women have been driven away from the homes into the factories, and often are obliged to leave their new-born children to others, so the children do not get their natural food. After the first election we got maternity benefit for all women

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directly engaged by employers. Childbirth is in our factory law considered as an illness, which entitles a woman to 60 per cent. of her usual earnings for six weeks after the birth of the child. This will make it possible for many a poor mother to stay at home at the time when it is most wanted. And she is *obliged* to stay at home during this time and nourish her child herself, if she is able to do it.

Women have worked to get this time lengthened to include two weeks before the birth, and to get *maternity insurance* for all married women whose husbands are insured. The Government has just now proposed to lengthen the time to eight weeks, and it proposes that every wife of a man who is insured in the State's invalidity insurance is to have one crown a day for eight weeks at the birth of a child. (One crown is like 1s. 1d.). That means £3 on the whole. These married working women are often as much in need of help as women directly employed outside their homes, and will now be able to take more care of themselves and their new-born children. If we in this way can stop or lessen infant mortality, perhaps there will be no majority of women voters after all!

The maternity insurance in our country is directly inspired by the insurance act of Mr. Lloyd George, so we are very grateful to him. It is the first acknowledgment of motherhood as a great service to the state.

Then the Government has proposed a Bill for a better provision of *illegitimate children and their mothers*. There are dying three times as many of these poor children as of ordinary children, only on account of the desolate conditions of the mothers.

The Government now proposes a greater responsibility on the father of the child, morally and economically.

The child is also to be entitled to take the name of its father and shall inherit alike with his legitimate children. The Bill has strict rules to ensure that only the real father will get the responsibility.

Women have established a complete practical education of women as *future housekeepers*. Practice in cookery—kitchen schools, as we call them—have been made obligatory in the elementary schools of the towns. Larger housekeeping schools are to be erected in all greater districts, supported by the state and municipality, and a high school for all housekeeping work is established by the state to educate teachers for all the elementary schools.

The men like that!

Information is planned to be given in the highest classes for boys and girls separately about the *health laws* and the *relationship between the sexes*. It intends to give the young people knowledge on this important matter in a finer and better way than they now usually get it. We hope it will make boys and girls more able to withstand immorality, which is as injurious to their character as to their health. The National Council of Women, an organisation which includes most of the women's associations, has awarded a prize for competition between medical women and men for the best book on this subject, which can be used by the teachers or by the parents in the homes. Women are most awake to this question of how to keep the young boys and girls pure and healthy—how to protect the fountain of life.

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Our writer, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson has in his drama, "The Gauntlet," raised the claim of an equal moral standard for men and women *before* as *after* marriage. We understand, however, that this question can only be solved in connection with great economic changes—higher wages for women, earlier marriages for men. The first thing is to raise an ideal; if man and woman have the same ideal they will be able to carry it out. It is our thoughts and wishes and wants that create the reality of the future.

Were it only for this one reason, to try to find a means of preventing women from the degradation of immorality, it is necessary that women have the vote.

The marriage laws are already very good in Norway. The wife has just the same right over the child as her husband. He cannot do anything with her child without her consent. She is considered as the partner of his fortune, as he is the partner of her fortune. Her work in the household is considered as a contribution to the family income. I have been told that in England the husband has the only right over the child when it is over seven years, and can even send it away from its mother.

We have got a *new divorce law*, which fully confirms the equality of the sexes on all divorce grounds. We have had equality in this respect in practice for many centuries; it is now only legally confirmed.

Women have generally in the state's employment the same wages as men for the same work. Exceptions are the women telegraphists and the teachers in the elementary schools. The last classes have now got their wages somewhat raised by the influence of the women's vote.

Women have used their influence on the juries to claim a greater punishment for immoral crimes against women and children.

Then the women have worked for *Temperance*, and this is perhaps the most important of all.

The National Council of Women has now adopted in principle *compulsory social service for women*. It will work out a practical economic plan to propose for our Parliament. This means that women of all classes shall serve the state for a certain period in their youth to learn to fight against the enemies of public health. For some months one summer, and some months the succeeding summer, they shall learn the eugenics of the family, the practical nursing of children and sick, and get information about the great national diseases—for instance, tuberculosis, which kills more people than any battlefield. The women shall learn to prepare their homes for this fight and bring up a more healthy generation. We think it better to build the safeguard of public health on the education of women to *prevent* diseases instead of building costly buildings and sanatoriums to *cure* the diseases.

I will quote some declarations from prominent statesmen in Norway about the effect of women's vote given this year.

The present Liberal Prime Minister, Mr. Gunnar Knudsen :—"In our country women have been entitled to vote at two political elections. They have taken part in the election in a rapidly increasing number. The experience acquired is very satisfactory, and all parties in Norway are now convinced of the justice of this reform, which first met some opposition from the Conservatives."

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The present Conservative leader, the Judge Mr. Hagerup Bull :—"The women's suffrage, which with us has been carried out by the co-operation of all parties, has not existed long enough for its direct result to be easily pointed out. But as it at once has been used to a great extent, I think that the influence already can be noticed in two directions. It has at once contributed to widen the views of women, and it has, by the mere fact of its existence, had a beneficial influence on the attitude of the national assembly on different questions."

The Liberal Cabinet Minister of Justice, Mr. Johan Castberg :—"The women's vote has proved to be beneficial. It is giving more weight to the moral side of politics. It has in equal degree strengthened all political parties. It has not in any way weakened the national and political force of the people. No section of the people want the women's vote abolished. On the contrary, all political parties demand now on their programme that it shall be widened from the present limited vote to universal suffrage."

The late Conservative Minister of Justice, Professor Fredrik Stang :—"Women's vote in Norway has been working well and has been increasingly used. The vote was carried out by the co-operation of all parties."

As you see, all political parties now claim the honour of having given women the vote!

The Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Thinn :—"I consider the woman suffrage established in our country as an act of justice to women and a benefit to society on the whole."

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The Reverend Eugene Hansen :—"The use of the women's vote has confirmed the justice of the arguments which led to its establishment. The women's vote is a natural consistent part of the people's vote, and is intended to introduce new views, judgments, influences and abilities, which are as indispensable and beneficial as those of man, into public life, and are bound to be added if the whole people is to be represented. Experience has confirmed this in the short time the vote has been working."

The vote and the political power has indeed roused the women to greater activity, self-confidence and responsibility. They read and discuss politics much more than formerly, to form responsible opinions, and the men pay much more attention to our opinions. I was at the country at the last election and saw them coming to the polling places, husbands and wives with their grown-up sons and daughters, with their maleservants and their maid-servants, each of them as much respected as the other. In several towns 90 per cent. of the registered women voted. A washing woman whose income was under the mark tried to get her taxes raised to get the vote!

They feel it as a case of honour. It is an honour which gives women more hope and energy. We are anxious to use our abilities to serve the state. Our help is wanted, and we are anxious to use our love and energy to make the world better. We have this feeling, that it is possible for us to do it.

And we want to show that we love old Norway more than ever.

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As we cannot share the general conscription of men, we have collected a voluntary fund and given to the state for the defence. And a voluntary institution is established to educate women to be employed as nurses all over the country in time of peace, and as Red Cross sisters in time of war, and we have worked out all necessary appliances.

It is true that women are a power for peace. We work for the peace movement and believe in it. We look forward in faith to the time when the causes of war will be decided by justice and arbitration. Women who give life in pain and travail, and forget the pain in joy that a child is born into the world—we know the price of life. We will not waste lives in vanity, in greed for gold. We will not plunge into reckless wars. We are a power for peace. But this does not mean that women consider physical life as the highest of human treasures. We do not want peace at any cost. We know that there are things worth dying for. We are willing to give lives for freedom and nationality.

We live in a time when all small nations feel themselves threatened to their lives by mighty neighbours, and they feel it necessary to strengthen the defence, the material defence, and still more the national culture, the education and the prosperity of the nation, which is the best defence.

One of the most enlightened peoples of Europe is now bleeding to death at our frontier in the north, but the Finnish people know that even if their freedom is to be crushed the spirit of the nation will survive and rise in better times to come. The high moral and political standard of the Finnish women

who have the vote is one of the best strongholds of their culture.

In the same way the Norwegians have realised that by leading the sources of women's impulses, energy and abilities into public life, *they have strengthened the political fabric of the state and fortified the national culture.*

The Norwegians have fulfilled the commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother." And I believe their days shall be long in our land.

ELLA ANKER.



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APPENDIX.

SOME INTERESTING STATISTICS.

The population of Norway is 2,391,782 (the census of 1910)

GENERAL ELECTION OF 1909.

Women voted at 73% in the towns.
Women voted at 46% at the country.

GENERAL ELECTION OF 1912.

Men electors (25 years universal suffrage)	502,284
Women electors (limited suffrage) ...	324,990
Electors	<u>827,274</u>

64% of the electors voted.

Men in the towns	... ..	72%.
Men at the country	... ..	67%.
Women in the towns	... ..	73%.
Women at the country	... ..	50%.

THE CENSUS OF 1910.

Boys born in a year	... ..	32,339
Girls born in a year	... ..	30,566
Men over 15 years	... ..	699,467
Women over 15 years	... ..	826,097

Men over 25 years	... ..	501,716	} The difference about 100,000.
Women over 25 years	... ..	607,709	
		<u>1,109,425</u>	

NEXT ELECTION, 1915, ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

A majority of women electors of about 100,000, out of about 1 million electors, out of 2½ million population.

WOMEN IN STATES EMPLOYMENT.

Women can be appointed to all the high State Offices except as clergymen, consuls and officers in the army. Women can be judges, magistrates, university professors, teachers in the higher schools, and get all sorts of positions in the government departments. The wages are fixed for the office and women have the same wages as men.

We have just got the first woman professor at the University, the first judge, and the first district physician. Several women have offices in the Government departments of justice, of war, and in other departments. All these officials are appointed by the King and can only be deposited by the Court.

In the **Post Office** women have always had the same wages as men. A recent attempt to reduce their wages was rejected by the Government with a large majority in Parliament—thanks to the indirect influence of the women's vote.

In the **Telephone Offices** only women are engaged so there is no competition.

The **Telegraph Offices** are arranged differently for men and women, so they do not compete except to the higher positions. The women have just got their wages raised, but they have not yet the same wages for the same work.

The **Teachers in the Elementary Schools**, where the majority are women, have recently got their wages raised, but they are still lower than the wages of men.

Several women are engaged in the bank of Norway.

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**WOMAN
SUFFRAGE
IN
NEW ZEALAND.**

By LADY STOUT.

**The Woman's Press
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VOTES FOR WOMEN!

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Newspaper: VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Colours: Purple, White, and Green.

The Women's Social and Political Union claim that there shall be equal franchise laws for men and women.

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**Woman Suffrage in
New Zealand.**

By
LADY STOUT (wife of the Chief Justice
of New Zealand).

FROM time to time one is met by the statement that the enfranchisement of New Zealand women has had no effect except on Temperance Reform. When legislation affecting women and children is mentioned one finds that complete ignorance of its significance and purport prevails amongst otherwise well-informed people. One reason is that law-abiding persons and others whose interests are confined to their own pursuits and amusements do not take the trouble to investigate the conditions of life by which they are surrounded. Another reason is that the women's vote in New Zealand has never been a "sex vote," and was secured by the goodwill and co-operation of men and women without arousing any bitter sex antagonism.

Men of worth of both parties have always been ready and willing to develop the woman's point of view in legislation for the improvement of the social, economic, and industrial conditions of women and children. Any restrictions, and there are many, that have been imposed

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upon women's labour and hours of work have been in the interest and with the full concurrence of the workers themselves.

What Woman Suffrage has accomplished.

The following list of Acts will show that it is well for the home and the State to be governed by the united vote of men and women :—

An Act to admit women to practise at the Bar.

University Act, making absolute equality for men and women in education, scholarship and degrees.

Education Act—equality of both sexes. (Co-education which is universal in the Primary, Secondary, and University education, except in High Schools and Private Schools, has proved an unqualified success.)

Compulsory Attendance at Continuation Schools Act—equality for boys and girls.

Technical Schools Act—equality for both sexes.

Old Age Pensions.

Servants' Registry Office Act.—This Act, which makes it compulsory for Registry Offices to be licensed, ensures the safety of young girls, especially in connection with the white slave traffic. A writer in the *Morning Post*, in belittling this Act, is evidently unaware of its significance.

The Adoption of Children Act.—No premiums being allowed to adopting parents, and a magistrate's sanction being required, safeguards children from cruelty and neglect.

The Protection of Children Act.—Strict regulations and the inspection of boarded-out children prevents baby-farming.

The Destitute Persons Act makes the maintenance of relatives compulsory, and removes burdens from the Charitable Aid Boards and the ratepayers, besides increasing individual responsibility.

The Testator's Family Maintenance Act empowers

the Supreme Court to cancel any will which does not make sufficient provision for the testator's wife, husband, or family.

The Succession Act provides a fair division of property to wife, husband, or family. There is no male entail, and landed as well as personal property can be equally divided.

The Inalienable Annuities Act ensures maintenance for defective and invalid children, and prevents their portion being seized for debt.

The Maintenance Act provides for the maintenance of wife and family, and makes provision for maintenance orders being enforced in adjacent colonies. It also makes provision for wages to be paid to prisoners for the maintenance of wife and family. A woman can sue for maintenance while living with her husband.

The Industrial Schools Act provides schools for criminal or neglected children, from which children are boarded out and their wages banked by the Government. Subsidies are paid to private bodies which maintain industrial schools and orphanages, but all such schools must be under Government inspection.

The Maternity Homes Act provides a fortnight's accommodation in a Maternity Home. Visiting midwives and maternity allowances to expectant mothers are provided for women in their own homes.

Subsidies are paid to the Salvation Army and other bodies for rescue and reformatory work.

A deserting husband or the putative father of an expected illegitimate child may be prevented from leaving the country.

The Criminal Amendment Act ensures adequate punishment for sexual offences—from five years' to life imprisonment, with floggings, is given according to the seriousness of the offence and the age of the victim. (The indeterminate sentence makes possible life imprisonment for moral imbeciles, degenerates of both sexes, and habitual criminals.)

The Prison Reform Act substitutes reformatory for punitive methods in dealing with offenders.

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The First Probation Offenders Act has been the means of saving many offenders from a criminal career.

The Indecent Publication Act is used to suppress indecent pictures and immoral literature and plays.

The Shop Assistants Act protects the health and wages, and regulates the hours of shop assistants.

The National Provident Fund Act provides for a contributory form of insurance.

The Juvenile Smoking Act prevents indulgence in cigarettes by boys under 16.

The Children's Court Act has been in operation for some years, and has been the means of much kindly and preventive work amongst juvenile offenders.

The Divorce Act makes the conditions for divorce equal for both sexes. In it there is a provision by which in the case of a husband suing for divorce, if it is proved that his unfaithfulness had driven the wife to a similar act, the divorce can be refused. In the case of the wife suing for divorce the same rule applies.

Women can get compensation for slander, under the Women's Slander Act, without having to prove that the slander has damaged their reputation.

The Municipal Elections Act provides that both husband and wife have a vote in the qualification of the one or other.

The Legitimation Act is similar to the Act in Scotland by which a child may be legitimised on the marriage of the parents and receive equal shares in property, equal rights and the status of a legitimate child. Provision is made for distribution of the estates of illegitimate children to the mother and her relatives to the exclusion of the father and his relatives. Illegitimate children can be registered in the name of the father. There are many other Acts which safeguard the lives and well-being of children.

The influence of the women's vote is seen and felt in all our legislation, although no attempt has even been made to arouse sex antagonism. The sense of justice which prevails, and which insists upon the punishment of the guilty party instead of his victim, in cases of seduction, has attained a high level in New Zealand.

There are many cases in which the voice of honest indignation has been raised against the man whose neglect and selfishness have driven a shamed and hunted girl to desperation, which clearly prove that the tone of morality has been raised and the sense of justice aroused in men as well as women.

The Factory Laws, which provide equal pay for equal work for men and women, and ensure healthy conditions of work and a minimum wage of £1 5s. per week for women, which have made sweating impossible, show the benefits working women have received as the direct or indirect result of the power of the vote. I have the testimony of Mr. Tregear, who was head of the Government Labour Department for twenty years, to the effect that the present generation of women think that things were always as satisfactory, and have forgotten that their mothers had to work for so little wages and so long hours as their employers willed.

The Compulsory Military Training Bill, which has had the hearty support of the women of the Dominion, was welcomed as a protection to their homes. The provision in the Bill for the exclusion of alcohol from the military camps was insisted upon as a safeguard from temptation to their sons.

The Temperance regulations which have reduced crime and drunkenness in the districts in which they are enforced are an example of the voting woman's foresight and care for the future of her children and her home.

Amendments to the Pensions Act to add 50 per cent. to old age pensions, when the pensioners have children under 16 years of age, and to pay 7s. 6d. to 10s. per week to widows, irrespective of age, who have young children, have been passed, with the concurrence of the Opposition, who knew that they were acceptable to women voters, who had to be reckoned with at the General Election.

The real power of the woman's vote in New Zealand is not in opposition, but in its harmony and co-operation with the men's vote. A house divided against itself cannot stand, but the united and loyal comradeship of

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men and women have secured for New Zealand reforms in legislation which are making the Dominion a paradise for men as well as women and children.

Anti-Suffrage Arguments Refuted.

The following statements have been made by "Anti-Suffragists" without evidence or proof of their accuracy. I shall try to prove that they are false by quoting reliable statistics and admissions made by men who are opposed to the suffrage for reasons which it is unnecessary to summarise.

1.—*Women do not want the vote.*

The same statement was made in New Zealand and disproved at the first election in which women took part as electors. There were five petitions presented to Parliament at various times, containing in all 31,872 signatures, but 109,461, or 78.48 per cent., of adult women registered and 85.18 per cent. of these voted. There were three constituencies in which there was no contest.

2.—*Women do not use the vote.*

Several writers have stated that, "contrary to expectation," women *do* use the vote in the ratio of 78 to 80 of the men's vote. A writer in the *Standard* quoted the reduced percentage of 78.26 at the last election without stating that the men's vote had also decreased 2 per cent. The most convincing proof that women are more willing to vote than formerly is that 99.76 of the adult women registered in 1908 compared with 78.48 in 1893. The percentage of men who registered was only 99.54. Many women were unable to record their votes, but if it was understood that women have often to drive or ride for long distances over rough country roads, and have to take their children to the poll with them, the British voter would be more than astonished at their zeal. All women, married and single, have a vote, yet we find that the Englishman, who does not have to take his family to the

poll or undergo any discomforts in recording his vote, shows less willingness to vote than the women of New Zealand.

3.—*The Government is purely parochial, and has no real similarity to an Imperial Government.*

We find the British House of Commons dealing with very domestic matters such as drainage, water supply, meals for children, education of infants, boot factories, shops, flannelette nightdresses for babies, overlaying of infants, maternity allowances, and a hundred and one small parochial matters. In New Zealand we have made greater strides than Britain in Imperialism. We have adopted Compulsory Military Training. Proposals for Imperial Federation, representation of the Dominions at Imperial Councils, and an Imperial Appeal Court were submitted to the Imperial Conference by delegates representing women voters. Our representatives were consulted in Defence and International Politics. In the name of their constituents (men and women), they demanded the right to be consulted on all Imperial questions. Their proposals were rejected by the "Imperial Government," which fails to realise, as Australia and New Zealand women do, the need of a United Empire. The Dominions have been before instead of behind Britain in the realisation of Empire. It seems as if women had by their influence developed an Imperial conscience as well as a moral and altruistic standard in domestic legislation.

4.—*Home life has been ruined by the vote.*

Home life and all the conditions for happiness have been improved by giving men and women an additional mutual interest and equal power in determining the future of their children.

5.—*Women would neglect their homes.*

This cry was very loud before we got the vote, but now we have the testimony of "antis" that no such calamity has befallen the homes. There are instances of women who spend their days playing golf and

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bridge (they do not take the trouble to vote), but there is no case on record in which the vote has been blamed for neglect of home.

6.—*The vote would cause dissension in homes.*

An "anti" visitor from New Zealand, in a letter to the *Morning Post* of August 4th, 1910, wrote: "It has brought about no family quarrels to speak of," and so he did not speak of one, much as he would have enjoyed the opportunity! No one has ever mentioned one such case during the eighteen years since the Franchise became law. There have been family quarrels caused by bad cooking, hats and frocks, education of children, religion, late hours at clubs, over-indulgence in champagne, and other matters of less significance, but no case in which either husband or wife has blamed the vote for unhappiness in their married life.

7.—*Drunkenness has increased as a result of the temperance regulations secured by the women's vote.*

The statement is one of the half-truths so dear to the "womanly anti-mind." The number of cases has increased, but the percentage has decreased. With an increase of 22,284 in population the number of cases is bound to increase. New arrivals, numbering 12,000 from the country that refuses to enfranchise its women, may account for the increase.

8.—*There is more alcohol drunk in the no-licence districts than formerly, and secret drinking has become the rule.*

Compared with other parts of the Dominion there was only a twelfth part of beer and a hundredth part of wine and spirits consumed in the no-licence area. There has been a reduction of 90 per cent. in drunkenness in no-licence districts and crime has almost disappeared. The testimony of judges, magistrates, doctors, clergy, mayors, and other leading citizens verifies this statement and court records prove it.

9.—*New Zealand women are "Anti-Gambling."*

(What a blessing they are "anti" something!! It ought to make an Imperial bond with the Anti-Suffra-

gists.) They are not all "anti-gambling." Even if they were, does it denote a low standard of womanhood or constitute a danger to the State?

10.—*Women are for Peace.*

Perfectly true, and we are proud to follow the example of King Edward, the Peacemaker of Europe. "Women are for Peace" because they suffer more than men in time of war. Although they believe that all International disputes should be settled by arbitration, they answered the Empire's call by sending their sons to South Africa. They support compulsory military training because they believe that the best way to secure peace is to be ready for war. The fact that the only parts of the Empire which have recognised this are Australia and New Zealand, where women have the vote and where their vote would have counted as a factor in opposition, is a conclusive answer to the "anti" cry that giving votes to women would imperil the safety of the Empire. The votes of British women in the Dominions helped to save the Empire in time of peril, and we have no reason to believe that the women of the Motherland are less loyal or less patriotic than their sisters under the Southern Cross.

11.—*Crime has increased.*

The ratio of crime has decreased, and the largest number of law-breakers in New Zealand are new arrivals from Britain. Of 3,159 convicted prisoners received in gaols in 1909, 1,502 were from the United Kingdom and 47 came from other British Possessions. In 1910 there were 1,538 from the United Kingdom and only 1,263 New Zealand born prisoners. The New Zealand born form 68 per cent. of the whole population, but only 35 per cent. of the total number in gaols. Our crime is traced to the country where women are voteless.

12.—*Immorality and the illegitimate birth-rate have increased.*

The moral tone of the community is on a much higher level than before the suffrage. The illegitimate birth-rate (which was always low), has decreased, and the

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rate per thousand unmarried women has also decreased, although there is more freedom and independence amongst women, and marriage is contracted at a later age. It is only the "anti-obsession of sex" that could find any connection between illegitimacy and the vote. The "antis" are unable to look at any subject from a wide and rational point of view, and always bring sex and its vices or weaknesses into the discussion of matters which depend upon physical, mental, moral, and climatic conditions.

13.—*The birth-rate has decreased.*

The birth-rate decreased before the suffrage, and began to increase in 1899. In 1909 it was 27.29, compared with 24.4 in England and Wales in 1911. The increase in the number of children attending school was so great that thirty-five new public schools and one private school were opened in 1909. Our natural increase in population is 18.07 per 1000, compared with 12.13 in England and Wales.

14.—*The rate of infant mortality is a disgrace to New Zealand.*

The rate of infant mortality is the lowest in the world, and has decreased 30 per 1,000 since the suffrage. In 1909 the proportion of deaths of infants under one year was 61.6, as compared with 120 in voteless England and Wales. The deaths of children under 5 years of age, per cent. of mortality at all ages, was 23.55 in 1909. In Dunedin the low rate of 4.86 per cent. proves that in a short time we shall be able to save all babies except those suffering from "the sins of the fathers."

15.—*Women will be treated with discourtesy at the polls.*

During eighteen years New Zealand women have been treated with consideration, respect, and courtesy, not only at the polls, but at the declaration of the poll. No "anti" has ever ventured to state that the vote has unsexed women, or lowered the status of womanhood.

16.—*Undesirable women will vote.*

No doubt they will, but they will not be able to out-vote the more "undesirable men" who have reduced

them to the "undesirable" state. In New Zealand "undesirable women" are "not in evidence" since women got the vote.

17.—*Labour legislation has ruined the country.*

The Dominion is more prosperous and trade is brisker than it has ever been before. The total trade increased from £33,788,778 in 1908 to £35,336,715 in 1909. The increase was still greater last year.

18.—*Capital has been driven out of the country.*

Capital is always going somewhere, according to the Opposition Party in every country. If capital remained in a stocking, it would denote stagnation of business. Unlucky people complain, but others have prospered.

19.—*Education has made servants scarce.*

The same complaint is heard in England. The remedy—and New Zealand women are urging its application—in more practical training and less education in useless subjects.

20.—*Farmers have been ruined by grandmotherly legislation.*

Farmers were never more prosperous. The New Zealand Farmers' Co-operative Association's turnover for 1910 was £2,961,688, an increase of £510,784 for the year. There has been an increase in occupied land, and a decrease of twelve only in the number of holdings of over 20,000 to 30,000 acres. There are eighty-four holdings of 50,000 acres and over. There has been a great increase in the number of small holdings, from 1 to 10,000 acres. There has also been an increase in the number of freeholders owning land, from small holdings up to 20,000 acres, but a decrease of holdings above that acreage. There is now only one estate of 150,000 acres. The decrease in large holdings is not altogether due to land taxes or lack of labour, but to subdivision on the death of the original owners. The Labour Laws have compelled farmers to provide decent accommodation, good food, and a living wage for their men. There are wealthy men, but no millionaires, in New Zealand, and no grinding poverty or sweated labour.

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21.—*Women are women, and men are men.*

In New Zealand, after eighteen years of equal suffrage, women are still women, and very womanly and domesticated women, and men *are* men, and very manly men.

Conclusion.

The *New Zealand Graphic* quotes the Leader of the Opposition Party as having said of New Zealand: "This country is a good country; everything is right in it save the Government"!! This bears out my contention that all the criticism hurled at New Zealand is only a matter of "ins" and "outs."

Another M.P. said that before women got the vote finance was the only matter of interest in the New Zealand Parliament, but that now the safeguarding of child-life, the interests of the home and the race, and every measure for the betterment of the State and the stability of the Empire was considered and adopted with enthusiasm.

An account of the election (of 1911) which has just taken place in New Zealand proves that the women are more interested in their electoral rights than at any previous time. The following quotations from a leading daily (*The Evening Post*, Wellington) will be of interest as showing the view of one on the spot who has every facility for obtaining reliable information:—

"It is fairly generally recognised that the women's vote has been a powerful factor in promoting temperance and social reform." . . . "Even if woman had not the time or the inclination [this is only a supposition, mind] to study politics, candidatorial man has to work on the basis that woman is carefully weighing his words." . . . "Never for one moment does he forget the woman's vote." . . . "There is perhaps more evidence of activity among the women for this election than for any previous one." . . . "This power of woman at the ballot is to grow still more formidable."

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HOW WOMEN USE THE VOTE.

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*Author of "Votes and Wages,"
"Physical Force and Democracy,"
"Hints on the Organisation of
Sufrage Work."*

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THE object of this little pamphlet is to supply the cogent reply of facts, to those who doubt whether Women's Suffrage will "do any good," or who fear it may do positive harm. Against the dark and horrid prophecies of disaster put forward by our opponents, I have set the less exciting but more re-assuring evidence of sober fact, and shown "How women use the vote."

I have drawn largely from Lady Stone's "Woman Suffrage in New Zealand," and Miss Vida Goldstein's "Woman Suffrage in Australia," both published by the Woman's Press (price 1d.). To them I commend readers in search of fuller information.

I also owe much to the admirable series of leaflets on "Equal Suffrage in America," and to the pamphlet, "Where Women Vote," published by the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

MAY, 1912.

HOW WOMEN USE THE VOTE.

WHAT have women done with the vote, when it has been granted them? Just what we should expect. There has been no antagonism with men: no "sex-war": no division of men and women into hostile camps, each seeking to over-ride the other. They have *co-operated* in the State, as they have always co-operated in the Home.

Of what use then has the vote been to women? Were they not just as well off without it?

We are constantly asked for facts; constantly urged to show cause why we expect that women's votes will be of real use to them, and of service to the State. Such facts are not far to seek; and they are destructive of the vague but awful prophecies of disaster put forward by our opponents to terrify rather than to convince. Here, in the countries where women vote, may be seen what use they have made of political power. They have pushed forward with special zeal, and with *expert knowledge*, laws protecting *the children and the home*.

Is not this "just what we should expect" from women? Are they not the Mothers and Home-makers of the race? Look at this list, and it will be seen that voting has not changed their natures.

WYOMING, U.S.A. (women enfranchised 1869)—
Age of consent for girls raised to 18 (Revised Statutes of Wyoming).*
The employment of children under 14 in public exhibitions forbidden. (Do.)
Child neglect made illegal. (Do.)

* Raised again, later on, to 21.

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- 1895 Free kindergartens established.
 1897 Pure Food Bill (including penalties for the adulteration of sweets).
 1901 An Act making it illegal to license gambling.
 1903 An Act providing for the care of neglected or orphaned children.
 1911 Creation of Offices of State-Chemist and Assistant State-Chemist, to administer revised Pure-Food Laws.
 1911 State Industrial Home for Juvenile Offenders established.

COLORADO, U.S.A. (Women enfranchised 1893)—

- 1893 Insurance of Children under ten forbidden.
 1895 State Home for dependent children established. (Two of the Board of five to be women.)
 1895 Mothers made joint guardians of their children, with the father.
 1895 Age of protection for girls raised to 18.
 1895 Three of the six County Visitors to be women.
 1895 Kindergartens established.
 1897 State Industrial Home for Girls established. (Three of the Board of five to be women.)
 1899 One woman-doctor to be on the Board of every Insane Asylum.
 1901 Detention and protection of the Feeble-minded.
 1901 State Bureau of Child and Animal Protection.
 1903 Joint signature of husband and wife necessary for mortgage on homestead or household goods used by the family.
 1903 Eight hours' day for children under 16.
 1903 To contribute to the delinquency of a child, or neglect to support aged, infirm parents when possible, made a criminal offence.
 1903 Fathers and mothers made joint heirs of deceased children.
 1903 Receiving tribute from prostitutes made a criminal offence.

[The Inter-Parliamentary Union has put it on record that the laws relating to child-life in Colorado are

"the sanest, the most humane, and the most scientific to be found on any statute books in the world."]

IDAHO (women enfranchised 1896), UTAH (women enfranchised 1896), and WASHINGTON (women enfranchised 1910), have passed many similar laws, and the women of California (enfranchised October, 1911) have a similar programme of work for the future.* We notice especially that Idaho has established a "Department of Domestic Science" in the State University, and in the Academy of Idaho (1903), and passed a series of Pure Food and Public Health Acts (1911); while Utah has required teaching in physiology and hygiene to be given in all State schools (1897); protected neglected boys (up to the age of 14) and girls (up to 16) (1903), and compelled wife-deserters to pay a weekly sum in support of their families (1911).

Is there anything revolutionary in all this, or anything suggestive of sex-antagonism? The men of the suffrage States do not seem to think so, for they have recorded again and again their belief that the enfranchisement of women has done good, and not harm. "For fourteen years active Anti-Suffrage Associations in New York and Massachusetts have been diligently gathering every scrap of evidence against it that they could find. So far as appears by their published literature, *they have not yet found, in all our enfranchised States put together, a dozen respectable men, in or out of office, who assert over their own names and addresses that it has had any bad results.*"† While, on the other hand, men like Governor Shafroth, Judge Lindsey, Governor Bryant Brooks, Hon. J. W. Kingman (of the Supreme Court), Attorney-General W. E. Mullen, Governor Brady, Governor Cutta, Governor Hoch, ex-

* Californian women are working for the following legislative reforms (among others):—The regulation and restriction of child labour; recognition of the mother's rights of guardianship over her children, equally with the father; placing women on all Police Boards and Commissions; raising the age of consent for girls to 21; laws against the White Slave Traffic.

† "The Test of Experiment." Published by the National American Women Suffrage Association.

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Chief Justice Horton, Supreme Court Justices Valentine and Johnston, many United States Senators and Representatives, and ex-Governors of States have recorded their conviction of the good results of Women's Suffrage.

"Submit the question to those who have tried it," says Governor Shafroth, "and scarce a corporal's guard will be found to vote against it."* "To me it all lies in this," writes Judge Lindsey; "It is important for the nation, the child and the home, that women have the right to vote."† And a United States Senator adds, "Our women are intelligently active in public affairs, but withal womanly and devoted to home and family."‡

Many bear witness to the purifying effect of Women's Suffrage in politics.

The verdict—"It tends greatly to purify corruption, and to promote better government,"|| and "politically, the effect has been immeasurably uplifting and beneficial"¶ is given again and again, too often for quotation.

But most weighty of all is the testimony of those who were converted, not by argument, but by experience—who did not believe in Women's Suffrage until they saw it. "I did not myself approve it until I saw it," writes U.S. Senator Teller; "Wyoming's experience largely influenced Colorado in adopting it."‡ And the Attorney-General (W. C. Mullen), "I must confess that I was greatly prejudiced against equal suffrage. . . . I have observed the practical results here, and I have changed my mind."§

* "The Test of Experiment," p. 1.
 † Ditto p. 5.
 ‡ Ditto p. 9. (U.S. Senator, Francis E. Warren, of Wyoming).
 || Ditto p. 10 (Chief Justice Fisher).
 ¶ Ditto p. 13. (Governor James H. Brady).
 †† Ditto p. 4.
 § Ditto p. 10.

It is useless to multiply quotation,* and it is unnecessary. For nothing can equal in value the testimony afforded by looking at a "Suffrage Map" of America. There it will be seen that all the Suffrage States are close together. The honesty of any man's opinion may be questioned; but how explain the fact that when men see how Women's Suffrage works in one State, they are willing to give it in the next? The only possible explanation is that they see with their own eyes its benefits, and are convinced.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

In our own colonies the women have done equally well. Here is their record:—

NEW ZEALAND (women enfranchised 1893)—

- 1894 A Legitimation Act protecting the rights of illegitimate children, and legitimizing them on the marriage of their parents.
- 1898 The Testator's Family Maintenance Act empowers the Supreme Court to cancel a will leaving the testator's wife, husband, or family unprovided for.
- 1898—The Succession Act ensures a fair division between widow, widower and family.
- 1898 The Divorce Laws made equal between the sexes.
- 1905 Adoption of Children legally regulated.
- 1905 Protection of Children Act prevents baby-farming.
- 1905 Maternity Homes Act.
- 1908 Maintenance Act for wives and families.
- 1910 Destitute Persons Act provides for the maintenance of relatives.
- 1910 Inalienable Annuities Act ensures special maintenance for defective and invalid children.

* "The Test of Experiment" gives many others, note especially:—"I confess that I was not in favour of Women's Suffrage at the time it was adopted by the State in 1896. From practical experience with it, however, I am become a convert."—Representative French, of Idaho; and "When it was first put into operation, I very much doubted the wisdom of the idea, but my mind has changed on that point."—U.S. Senator G. Sutherland.

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The Education Act of 1875 has been amended many times, and Technical Schools now give equal opportunities to girls and boys.

AUSTRALIA (women received the Federal franchise 1902, and the States granted it as follows:—S. Australia 1894, W. Australia 1899, New South Wales 1902, Tasmania 1903, Queensland 1905, Victoria 1908).

The different States have, of course, different laws, passed at varying times, but the following are now general:—

Affiliation Acts, protecting and providing for illegitimate children, and compelling the father to bear part of the expense of the mother's confinement.

Acts suppressing indecent literature and advertisements.

Maternity Homes and Allowances Act.

Destitute Persons Act, making the maintenance of aged or infirm relatives compulsory where possible.

Legitimation Act.

The evidence of public men is as striking here as in America. Mr. Pember Reeves (late Premier of New Zealand), Sir Robert Stout (also late Premier of New Zealand, and now Chief Justice), Sir Edmund Barton (late Premier of Australia), the present Prime Minister (Mr. Andrew Fisher), and many others* have recorded their belief in the good effects of Women's Suffrage. A resolution expressing the same was *unanimously* passed by both Houses of the Federal Parliament of Australia in 1909.

But again no "opinions" are so irrefutable as facts; and the fact is that, beginning with S. Australia, every

* See especially the Bishop of N. Queensland in a letter to the *Times*, April 10th, 1912:—"I believe that the women's vote is a very valuable asset to the State. It is almost without exception thrown into the scale for the maintenance of law and Order. It is a very effective deterrent of notoriously bad-living candidates being put up for election."

Australian State has enfranchised its women. *Why*—if it was seen to be a failure? It may be difficult to take away the vote, once granted; but why grant it in a second State, if in the first it has worked badly?

What argument or what "opinion" can possibly persuade us that it did work badly, when men were so willing to extend it further?

NORWAY.

The Norwegian women were granted the vote in 1907. They have therefore not had much time for legislation. But they have already given to illegitimate children the right to bear their father's name, and to inherit a share of his property. They have also provided for the care of the mother during her illness.

They are now working for the establishment of schools of domestic training, and for certain constitutional reforms.

FINLAND.

The women of Finland were enfranchised in 1906. They have:—

- (1) Appointed an authorized midwife for every parish;
- (2) Established schools of domestic training;
- (3) raised the legal age of marriage for girls from 15 to 17.

[The women of Finland introduced 26 Bills into the first Diet, in which were embodied most of the reforms carried by women elsewhere; but the tragic history of their country makes such reforms almost impossible.* Of the Bills introduced, or specially agitated for by women, fifty per cent. were concerned with the interests of children.]

* See also Miss Zimmern's "Demand and Achievement," published by the N.U.W.S.S., 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster; and "Where Women Vote," by Frances Maule Björkman, published by the National American W.S. Association, 505, Fifth Avenue, New York City, U.S.A.

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Are not all these laws exactly "what you would expect" from the women? They surely prove that women do not become unwomanly or "un-sexed" by the exercise of the vote, but have used it in the sacred interests of home and childhood.

But the child's history begins before it is born into the world. It begins with the mother. And so the women have tried to protect womanhood as well as childhood.

The age at which a young girl may legally consent to her own ruin has been raised to 18 in all countries where women vote; except in Wyoming, where it is 21.

In Colorado, it has been made a criminal offence to exact tribute from prostitutes (1903); in Utah, laws have been passed to prevent the traffic in women (1911); in New Zealand women can obtain redress for slander without having to prove special "damage" (1902); "Criminal Amendment Acts" (1906 and 1910) have secured adequate punishment for sexual offences, and made it possible to detain moral imbeciles and degenerates of both sexes; and a "Servants' Registry Office Act," by compelling the registration of all Registry Offices, has been effective against the White Slave Traffic. In Australia, also, heavy penalties have been attached to trading in prostitution.

But it has been rightly felt that the harsh conditions under which women work for their living, and the low wages paid to them, are responsible for much immorality, and consequently, wherever women have votes, they have improved economic conditions. In Wyoming, there is equal pay for teachers, men and women. In Colorado there is equal pay for teachers,* clerks, and stenographers, and in all State employment; an Eight

* As this has been specifically denied by Anti-Suffragists, it is worth while quoting the reply of Anne Martin, M.A., who lived for many years in Colorado:—"Women receive equal pay for equal work, but the positions are graded, and men still hold most of the highly paid posts, so that the average wages of women work out lower than the average wages of men."—Letter to the *Standard*, December 1st, 1911.

Hours' Day is the maximum for women in any employment which requires them to be continually on their feet (1903). The Factory Inspection Acts have been widely amended (1911). In Utah, there is equal pay for teachers, men and women (1896), and a nine hours' day for all women industrially employed (1911). In Washington, there is an eight hours' day for women, except those employed in the fruit and fish canneries (1911). In New Zealand, there is a Minimum Wage, which is equal for men and women, and equal wages are paid for equal work throughout the State service. The Factory Acts have been amended again and again, the most important changes being in 1894, when "Conciliation Boards" were set up, with power to fix a minimum wage when applied to; and in 1900, when the awards made were given legal and binding force. These Acts have practically abolished sweating, which had previously existed in New Zealand as well as in the older countries.* They are superior in several important particulars to those passed in Victoria, before women there had the vote.†‡

In 1895, women were admitted to practice as barristers; in 1904, the Shop Assistants' Act provided for the health and protection of women employed in shops.

In Australia, the wages of men and women throughout the Federal Public Service are equal, and in the Junior Grade of the State Education Department. There is an equal minimum wage for men and women. Women Inspectors have been appointed in all Government Institutions.

* "Thirty years ago, instances of underpayment, exactly on all fours with those exhibited in the Queen's Hall in 1906, were to be found in New Zealand." (Sweated Industry, page 230, by Clementina Black).

† The "Anti-Suffrage Handbook" indirectly suggests that the emancipation of women in 1893 had nothing to do with the passage of this Arbitration Act in 1894. Mr. Pember Reeves, Minister of Labour and author of the Bill, states that the General Election of 1893 (in which women voted for the first time) returned to power the party which was responsible for this Bill (and passed it in Dec., 1894), after a keen and hotly-contested struggle lasting roughly from 1890 to 1894. (State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, Chapters II. and III., by W. Pember Reeves).

‡ See "Sweated Industry," by Clementina Black (Chap IV.) for particulars.

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In Norway, as soon as women had the vote, without waiting for them to use it, the Government *at once* equalised the pay of men and women employed in the Post Office.

Does all this mean that women are *only* interested in themselves, their homes, and their children, and forget the wider life of the nation as a whole, or (in the case of English women) of the Empire?

Certainly not. Their influence in politics has been for good here, too, if we may judge by results. "New Zealand was the first British Colony to send her sons to stand side by side with the sons of Great Britain in the battle-fields of South Africa; she was also the first British Colony to cable the offer of a battleship to the mother country in the spring of 1909. She, with Australia, was the first part of the British Empire to devise and carry out a truly national system of defence, seeking the advice of the first military expert of the mother country, Lord Kitchener, to help them to do it on efficient lines. The women are demanding that they should do their share in the great national work of defence by undergoing universal ambulance training."*

It will be observed that the women are, as they might be expected to be, keenly interested in the question of defence. They are not, probably, enthusiastic about wars of aggression. It is to be hoped they never will be. We all look forward, or profess to do so, to the time "when wars shall be no more." But undoubtedly the most justifiable wars are those which are fought in defence of the race, and here it is evident that Women's Suffrage has exercised no ill effect.

But women do feel—and surely they are right—that their greatest contribution to their country and the Empire is their gift to it of children, healthy and fit

* "Women's Suffrage." M. G. Fawcett, p. 39. (The People's Books). Mrs. Fawcett refers also to the Report of Sir Charles Lucas, who visited New Zealand on behalf of the Colonial Office in 1907: and to "Colonial Statesmen and Women's Suffrage," published by the Women's Freedom League.

to become good citizens. It has therefore been their care to secure such conditions as will make for the birth and up-bringing of healthy children. The infant death-rate in New Zealand has been reduced to 62 per 1,000. (In England and Wales it is 109 per 1,000). In Australia, the rate differs in the different States, but works out at about 70 per 1,000 for the whole continent. In W. Australia, the fall has actually been from 184 per 1,000 (in 1896) to 78 per 1,000 (in 1909).*

These remarkable figures cannot be put down to the perfection of the climate; since Women's Suffrage has not changed the climate! In Chili, with an almost perfect climate, the death-rate among children is 320 per 1,000.† In Canada, which like Australia and New Zealand, is a comparatively new country (but, unlike them, has not enfranchised its women), the rate has hardly changed. It was 125 per 1,000 in 1899 (first record made), and 125 per 1,000 in 1908 (last record).

Nor is this all; for the children who die are not the whole of the tragedy, nor even, perhaps, the worst part of it. It is those who just manage to live, who are more tragic still, and more disastrous to the race—the dwarfed, the stunted, the unfit, who grow up somehow, to burden the gaols, work-houses, and insane asylums later on. *The death-rate and the damage-rate go together*, it has been truly said.

The general death-rate is low in Australia and New Zealand, as well as the infant death-rate, for the children not only live, but grow up healthy. There could be no more splendid tribute to the work of the women than this, and none of greater import to the race. "It is more sensible to pay serious attention to the health of the nation than to sing 'Rule, Britannia.'"‡

* For all these figures, see the Report on Infant Mortality, of the Registrar-General, 1909.

† "The Conservative and Unionist Franchise Review" calls attention to these terrible figures. See also the Infant Mortality Report, 1909.

‡ The Bishop of Stepney at the Mansion House, April 26th, 1912.

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On the other hand, the birth-rate in Australia and New Zealand is rising; while in England it is already lower than in New Zealand, and is falling.

In England and Wales (1911) the birth-rate was 24.20; in New Zealand (1911) the birth-rate was 27.42.

From all this testimony—some directly, some indirectly, witnessing in favour of Women's Suffrage; none witnessing against it—it becomes evident that the answer to the question "How do women use the vote?" must be that on the whole they use it well. *Two heads are better than one*, in the State as in the Home; and the fact that in this country we have problems to solve such as these, and some more difficult still, makes it the more urgent that we take counsel of both.

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Demand and Achievement

THE INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT.

BY

ALICE ZIMMERN,

Author of "Women's Suffrage in Many Lands."

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THE DEMAND.

THE Women's Suffrage Movement is of world-wide extent. Far away in the Antipodes women have the vote; in the New South African Union Boer and Britain alike are claiming it; in Norway the battle is won; in Sweden it approaches victory. In French and German, in Portuguese and Dutch, in Italian and Icelandic, petitions are drawn up and signed, asking that the women who speak these tongues may share the responsibility of choosing the men who are to guide the destinies of their country. In every civilised land the demand is being heard, and it will grow louder and louder till it is conceded everywhere.

Where the movement actually began is not easy to determine. France of the Revolution and America struggling for her independence alike claim the honour. As a continuous and conscious movement it doubtless originated in the United States, for in a sense it began in 1787 with the beginnings of the constitution. The first definite stimulus to action was afforded by the Anti-Slavery campaign, into which all the best of America's women were drawn. From out their ranks came the pioneers who in 1848 summoned the first Women's Convention, and drew up that famous Declaration of Rights which furnished the programme for sixty years of work. In 1869 the enfranchisement of the negroes and the refusal to add the words "nor sex" to the amendment to the Federal Constitution, which declared that colour should henceforth be no bar to citizenship, led to the foundation of the National American Women's Suffrage Association.

Happily that very year afforded an opportunity for putting Women's Suffrage to a practical test. Wyoming, which was being organised as a territory, agreed to try the experiment, and when in 1890 it was admitted as a state, became the first suffrage state. Colorado followed in 1890, and Idaho and Utah in 1896. For fourteen years they were the only suffrage states. But the movement in America was growing and spreading, and the seeds of future success being sown. To change the constitution of an American

state is no light matter; it is harder even than to soften the heart of an English Prime Minister. First the amendment must pass the Legislature by a majority of two-thirds, then it is submitted by referendum to the whole male population, a process in which it invariably attracts the opposition of the liquor interest, which is often strong enough to wreck it. Again and again have suffrage amendments passed the Legislature and been thrown out by the referendum; yet in spite of difficulty and discouragement American women continue their arduous labours. And at last their efforts are winning their reward. In the United States as in Great Britain the Suffrage idea is spreading into all circles and all districts. It has been taken up by College women, by the Trades Unions, by the Women's Clubs, by women in society as by the sweated worker. Men's Leagues are giving their valuable help, the press which long avoided the subject has discovered that it is now "good copy," and we in England know what that means to a cause. Already the first fruits of this success have been gathered in. In 1910 the important state of Washington enfranchised its women, and scarcely were the rejoicings ended than a far greater victory was announced, for in October, 1911, the Great Pacific State of California decided for Women's Suffrage.

This victory is regarded by those best informed as the turning point of the American movement, and it is confidently expected that all the states west of the Mississippi will before long follow California's lead. This year Oregon, Kansas and Wisconsin will submit a Women's Suffrage amendment to their voters, and the Nevada Legislature will decide whether to follow a similar course in 1914. Nor are the hopes of suffragists confined to the West, for Ohio and New Hampshire will shortly decide whether a Suffrage amendment shall be submitted to the voters in the course of this year. Even in the South women are stirring; and far-sighted persons, men and women alike, are coming to realise the value of the women's literate vote in counteracting the effects of the illiterate negro vote. Wherever the suffrage has been granted, the result is bringing fresh friends to the cause; and the streams of help and sympathy, springing up in all parts of the States will presently combine and produce a flood of good-will that must bear it on to final victory.

SWEDEN.

From America the inspiration of the Suffrage movement came to England and to other lands as well. Frederika Bremer, the high-souled authoress, bore the torch to Sweden, and kindled a mighty flame which to-day burns more brightly than ever. It was through her inspiration that the education of Swedish girls was improved and the position of Swedish women raised, so that, as her brilliant successor, Selma Lagerlöf, reminds us in her wonderful fantasy, "Mademoiselle Frederike," she put an end to the whole race of down-trodden and useless old maids, and found a place of usefulness for even the childless and homeless woman. Her name will be for ever linked with the Swedish Women's Movement, for the association founded in 1884 to promote it bears the name Frederika Bremer Union.

In Sweden as in England Women's suffrage has been before the country for half a century. As early as 1862 women received a partial instalment of municipal suffrage, and this was gradually extended till in 1909 they were made eligible to all municipal boards and town and county councils excepting the *Landsting*.

The question of the parliamentary suffrage was raised as early as 1884, but made no real advance till 1901, when Mr. C. Lindhagen moved in the Lower House that Parliament should call upon the Government to undertake an investigation of the question of Women's Suffrage. This was rejected; but in 1906 Parliament accepted a proposal made by the Constitution Committee to undertake the enquiry, the results of which have recently been published.

The Suffragists, however, had made good use of the interval. Suffrage associations had sprung up all over the country, and had been united into a National Union of Suffrage Societies, which continues to increase with amazing rapidity and has carried its activities even into the Arctic circle. In 1909 a Women's Suffrage bill passed the Lower House by a unanimous vote, though a similar bill was rejected in the Upper House by 104 votes to 25.

The International Women's Suffrage Congress, held at Stockholm, in June, 1911, marks an epoch in the history of the Swedish movement. The interest aroused throughout the country by the presence of women from so many different

lands, all intent on political freedom, the co-operation of so many distinguished men, the vote of a sum of money by the Stockholm town council towards the entertainment of the foreign guests, the presence on the platform of Sweden's best loved writer, Selma Lagerlöf, all this helped to arouse interest and win sympathy. Immediately afterwards Swedish women were forced to reconsider the policy of their Union. The elections for the Lower House were imminent, and the Liberals and Socialists had pledged themselves to make Women's Suffrage an item in their programme, while the Conservatives had made a definite pronouncement against it. As a result the Swedish N.U.W.S.S. decided at the annual council meeting to throw in its lot with the two friendly parties. Swedish suffragists worked hard at the polls and had the satisfaction of seeing their friends victorious. 101 Liberals and 64 Socialists were returned in a house numbering in all 230. The Conservative Cabinet resigned, and Mr. Staaf, an ardent Suffragist and a member of the Men's League, became the new Prime Minister. Women's Suffrage has now been included in the Government programme, and the King's speech on January 16th announced a bill conferring suffrage and eligibility on women on the same terms as men. The enfranchisement of Swedish women can therefore not be delayed much longer.

DENMARK.

Though Denmark has not yet achieved victory like Norway, nor come so near attainment as Sweden, Danish women may boast that they have a larger proportion of suffragists to population than any other country. Two large societies are at work, with a membership of over 23,000, and that in a country whose whole population numbers 2½ millions, not much more than a third that of London.

Already one great victory has been achieved by these societies, for it is through their endeavours that in 1908 municipal franchise and eligibility were won. This was conferred on all tax-payers whose income amounts to 800 kroners (about £50) in Copenhagen and rather less in the country districts, who have lived in the municipality for over a year, are 25 years of age and of untainted reputation.

When the husband pays taxes from the joint income both husband and wife are entitled to vote. Even servants are included, as their board and lodging are considered in calculating their income.

The granting of municipal suffrage has helped greatly to arouse interest in public affairs among the women of Denmark and is an excellent preparation for the parliamentary vote which is the natural corollary. But this can only be given by an amendment to the fundamental election law, carried in two successive parliaments. Each of the many political parties in Denmark now appears willing to give the vote to women in some form or other; and here as in England the question seems to be whether women shall receive the franchise as part of a general electoral change or whether it shall be conferred on them by a separate Act. The present Government is friendly, and prospects are bright. There seems every likelihood that a women's suffrage bill will pass its final stages in the session 1913-1914.

ICELAND.

In little Iceland the battle is all but won. The municipal franchise was granted to women in 1907 and immediately afterwards four women were elected on the Reykavik Town Council. In 1911 a bill to confer the suffrage on all men and women over 25 passed the Althing. Here, as in Denmark, a constitutional change must be passed by two successive parliaments and therefore the new law still awaits the second confirmation as well as the assent of the King of Denmark. An extraordinary session will be held this year and if the bill is then passed without amendment the women will at once be enfranchised. Otherwise they will have to wait till the next ordinary session in 1913. Of the final result apparently there is no doubt.

THE NETHERLANDS.

In Holland, too, Women's Suffrage has become a burning question, after a quarter of a century spent in educational work. In 1883 Dr. Aletta Jacobs, now President of the Women's Suffrage Association, applied as a tax-payer to be

placed on the list of communal voters, and sent up a petition to the States-General in favour of the parliamentary franchise for women. A negative answer was received and the direct result of her action was the insertion of the word "male" in the new state constitution of 1887. The indirect result was the initiation of the Women's Suffrage movement in the Netherlands.

In 1905 the women's opportunity came in the shape of a proposed revision of the constitution. Suffragists took an active part in the elections and demanded the inclusion of women in the commission appointed to report on the proposed changes. When this request was refused they prepared a report of their own, which was printed and widely circulated and favourably received by the press.

The report of the Commission, which appeared in 1907, evaded the difficulty of the franchise by recommending that article 80, which deals with the parliamentary suffrage be left to the decision of the Cabinet. Before any action was taken, a ministerial crisis led to the resignation of the Liberal Cabinet and the postponement of the constitutional revision.

But here, as in all countries where there is a Suffrage movement, each seeming set-back only calls forth fresh enthusiasm and brings in new friends. The National Suffrage Association now numbers 11,000 members, backed by an enthusiastic and influential Men's League; while the Bond for Women's Suffrage is helping to educate and enlighten new sections of the public. Dutch women will be ready for action when the turn of the political scale revives the prospects of franchise reform.

GERMANY.

Though the cause of freedom does not advance as fast in Teutonic as in Scandinavian lands, progress is being made even here. For many years the women's movement in Germany was chiefly concerned with the improvement of educational and economic conditions. The first Suffrage Association was founded in 1902 and re-organised after the Berlin Congress of 1904. Hamburg, a free city, unhampered

by the Association Laws, was its headquarters; and a very successful congress organised at Frankfort in 1907 first aroused the interest of the press and the country at large. A vigorous campaign against these Association Laws, which in many of the states, notably Prussia and Bavaria, forbade women to organise political associations or attend public meetings, was at last crowned with success, and in 1908 a new law uniform for the whole Empire and putting men and women on an equality, came into operation. It now became possible to organise a really national Suffrage Association. Since then rapid progress has been made.

The work before German suffragists is no slight one. As yet there are but few towns where women have a municipal vote. In a few places they vote for Church councils. Everywhere they have a vote and are eligible for the boards of public insurance against illness and invalidity. In some towns they may be guardians of the poor, and they are occasionally placed on school boards. Indeed the work of women is winning more and more appreciation in Germany, and of late years the idea that every girl should be educated for some definite trade or profession is gaining ground. All these changes must sooner or later lead to the Suffrage.

Of course the movement in Germany is complicated by the division into states with varying conditions for the franchise. In Prussia in particular an antiquated indirect system prevails which confers special privileges on wealth. An agitation against this and in favour of direct and secret uniform voting is now being carried on; and Prussian Suffragists are claiming that women too should find a place in a reformed system. At the same time they are working for an extension of the municipal suffrage, while always keeping before their eyes, as the ultimate goal, the vote for the Reichstag. During the recent elections some of the suffrage societies took an active part, supporting those candidates who expressed themselves in favour of the women's vote.

AUSTRIA.

Austria presents a special problem of its own, for many of its numerous diets are engaged in "reforming" themselves, a process attended by depriving women of such

privileges as they had formerly possessed. The Imperial Parliament completed this process five years ago, when a so-called universal franchise was substituted for the vote of the four classes. The first class, which consisted of the great proprietors, included some women, who lost their right of vote in 1906. Protest on the part of women was of little use, for here too the Association Laws, even now unrepealed, made any serious agitation impossible.

The reform of the Imperial Parliament was followed by that of the separate diets, a process that is still going on. In Lower Austria women who had had the right of voting for over thirty years were disfranchised. In Bohemia they not only had the right to vote but even to be elected. In order to protest against the loss of these rights several women have during the last few years come forward as candidates and obtained a very fair proportion of votes. The new election law is still pending here, and suffragists are rightly anxious to procure the election of at least one woman to the Diet before the final decision. Bohemian Suffragists have friends in all parties except the Conservative, which is very weak. We may hope therefore that at any rate they may not lose their old established rights. In Galicia too "reform" is pending, and the women suffragists are earnestly pleading for real universal suffrage. A Galician Committee has recently been affiliated to the International Women's Suffrage Alliance.

An interesting contrast is afforded by the action of the little province of Vorarlberg, which has granted the right of vote to unmarried women tax-payers, and of Bosnia and Herzegovina where women have obtained the right to vote by proxy.

HUNGARY.

If the suffrage movement in Hungary is a new one, it makes up for its youth by its extraordinary vigour, for Hungarian women have thrown themselves into the cause with an ardour and enthusiasm which must almost carry the fortress by the force of its onset. Yet here too the difficulties are increased by the impending democratisation of the male franchise. Indeed one bill introduced by a Radical government explicitly proposed the disfranchisement of women. Fortunately it

did not pass, and Hungarian women are using every effort to procure inclusion in any future bill. Their endeavours to educate the country are meeting with success. The press is growing more favourable, a Men's League has been started, the country is beginning to realise the meaning of the demand, and the International Congress which is to meet at Buda-Pest in 1913 should give a great impetus to the cause, since Hungarians, unlike our own countrymen, attach special importance to the views of other nations. If the electoral law is postponed till after the Congress the success of Hungarian women should not be far off.

ITALY.

In Italy there is a strong and growing demand for women's suffrage. The question has been discussed in Parliament, and attention was called to it a few years ago by the claim made by several hundred women to a place on the register. Their claim was upheld by the local courts, but reversed by a superior commission. Suffrage societies are now being formed in all the chief towns, and throughout Italy there is a growing opinion in favour of giving women the municipal franchise. At the same time the suffrage societies are protesting against a proposal to introduce manhood suffrage into Italy with the exclusion of women.

OTHER COUNTRIES.

SWITZERLAND has a Women's Suffrage Association which is increasing in numbers and influence. But its work is hindered in a sense by the very completeness of the liberties enjoyed by men. They see no reason to disturb the franchise, and on this ground the women may have to wait the longer.

BELGIUM too has a National Suffrage Association, which reports that the question of Women's votes is at last meeting with serious consideration. But the movement here is complicated by the opposing forces of Clericalism and Socialism.

In SPAIN the question has been seriously discussed; in PORTUGAL the political changes have called into being the "Republican League of Portuguese Women," the first

political association of women in the country. When the new electoral law declared all citizens over twenty-one electors, one woman, Dr. Beatriz Angelo, took them at their word and claimed to be placed on the register. The Tribunal which tried the case conceded her right, and she actually registered her vote in May, 1911. Though this was not allowed to serve as a precedent, it gave a stimulus to the Suffrage movement, and Portuguese women have good hopes of a victory at a not too distant date.

In BULGARIA and SERBIA too there is an active movement. In Bulgaria a league of men and women has been formed to promote women's suffrage; in Serbia the question is as old as the constitution, indeed a proposal in favour actually passed the State Senate in 1902, though subsequent political events prevented its being carried into effect.

In RUSSIA and POLAND men and women may be said to have equality of wrongs, yet in both there is an active women's movement, and in 1907 Russian women received a small instalment of suffrage, since married women, with the necessary property qualification, were allowed to exercise a proxy vote through their husbands and sons.

THE BRITISH COLONIES.

Of the self-governing colonies, Australia and New Zealand already give votes to women; in Canada and South Africa they are still demanding them.

CANADA, where for some years much indifference prevailed, has of late been completely roused and during the last two years the advance has been very encouraging. The press has grown friendly, interest throughout the country is increasing, and new suffrage societies are being organised in every province. In SOUTH AFRICA the question of women's suffrage will have to be considered when the Union Parliament fixes the franchise qualifications for the whole Union. It rests with this Parliament to give it if it pleases. It rests with South African women to show that they desire it. When the mass of women, British and Boer alike, show that they demand it in earnest, the cause will be won. And the recent growth of interest in the question encourages the belief that this date may not be very far distant.

THE ACHIEVEMENT.

NORWAY.

How the Vote was won in Norway is a record honourable to both men and women. In 1905, the year of the separation from Sweden, a census of the whole male population was taken on the question. As the women, though no less patriotic, were excluded from the enquiry, they resolved to take their own referendum. The Suffrage Association collected the signatures of 300,000 women, practically all of full age in the country, expressing adhesion to the resolution of separation. These were presented to the Storting with an address. When the President reported the matter officially all members rose in their places as a mark of respect for the women. They accepted them as citizens and carried the matter to its logical conclusion. In 1907 a bill was passed conferring the franchise on all women, married or single, who paid taxes on an income of 400 kroner (about £22) in towns, or 300 kr. (about £16) in the country, thus finding a way out of the difficulties which attend adult suffrage in countries where the women are more numerous than the men. It is important to notice that the right is conferred on the married women personally and not as the wives of their husbands.

Even before Norwegian women had an opportunity of voting they received an instalment of justice, for the pay of men and women in the postal service was equalised. The change in the position of women due to their citizenship was thus shown at once. In 1911 the limited municipal franchise of women was changed to full womanhood franchise. A bill has just been passed throwing open to women all state offices except those in the Government itself, the Diplomatic and Consular Service, the Army and Navy, and the State Church.

FINLAND.

Finland was the first European country to enfranchise its women, and for a brief while it seemed as though we might point to it as the pioneer land of freedom. Unfortunately this state of things was not to last. The equality remained, but it was an equality of unfreedom, for the gradual Russification of Finland is making her diet the mere sport of Russia, and till this sad state of things is changed Finnish women will have little opportunity of showing what they can do for their country.

Yet even with the constant dissolutions of the diet and the frequent elections, something has been achieved by women as voters and Members of Parliament. Measures for the protection of women and children, the reform of the marriage laws and the protection of the wife's property have been introduced and some of them passed. Enough has been done to show how much more may be done when the happy day of freedom dawns once more for Finland.

THE AMERICAN SUFFRAGE STATES.

If Europe has as yet little of achievement to show, the land in the West is bright and growing ever brighter. There are now six Suffrage states and their number will soon be increased.

What is the effect of the women's vote in these enfranchised states? From the first four eloquent testimony has already reached us. In Wyoming the assembly that gave women the franchise, without even awaiting their vote, passed an act giving married women absolute right over their own property and one giving men and women teachers equal pay for equal work. In 1892 the House of Representatives passed a resolution unanimously declaring that the exercise of the suffrage by women had done nothing but good and as the result of experience urging "every civilised community on earth to enfranchise its women without delay." Of Colorado, Judge Lindsey, the great reformer and founder of the Juvenile Courts, says: "Woman Suffrage in Colorado for over ten years has more than demonstrated its justice. No one

would dare to propose its repeal; and if left to the men of the state, any proposition to revoke the right bestowed upon women would be overwhelmingly defeated. Many good laws have been obtained in Colorado, which would not have been secured but for the power and influence of women." The testimony of Utah and Idaho is no less eloquent and it is worth noting that in both the pay of men and women in the Civil Service and the teaching profession is made equal.

Interesting as is the testimony to Women's suffrage in these four states, even greater importance attaches to the two latest additions. Washington and California enfranchised their women at a time when the full blaze of publicity was turned on the suffrage movement throughout the world. Any little mistake or disadvantage would be eagerly seized upon by the enemy. Yet with scarcely an exception the testimony is all in favour. Here, as elsewhere, the prediction that women would not take the trouble to vote was abundantly falsified. In both states women registered at the earliest opportunity and in large numbers. In the United States the axiom holds good that the greater contains the less, and the grant of State suffrage carries with it the right to vote at municipal, school board and all other elections. Hence it was not long before the women of the two states were called upon to discharge many of their duties. In Seattle, the chief city of Washington, 23,000 out of 25,000 women on the register went to the poll on the famous occasion when they initiated and carried through the "recall" of a corrupt and vicious mayor, an event almost without parallel in the history of the United States. It was the counterpart to the re-election of Judge Lindsey by the women of Denver, Colorado, when the forces of reaction would have driven him from office. In California the same eagerness to register and vote was apparent and so far the women's vote has been cast everywhere in the cause of pure government, clean cities and the abolition of vice.

In U.S.A. as in England the voter is liable to jury service, and this objection sometimes raised against the enfranchisement of women has proved to be another argument in favour. In both Washington and California the men were very ready to set the women to work, and the result has already brought some fresh converts to the cause. In California an "all

woman" jury was empanelled, but in Washington they serve with men, thus providing the advantage of the different point of view. Probably the citizens of both states will presently wonder how it was possible for so long to continue the one-sided system.

Suffrage also includes the right to vote for President, and at the next election at least half a million women will be able to exercise this right. Henceforth these will vote for the assemblies that make the laws as well as for those which execute them and also for the Head of the whole Republic. Unless all signs mislead, these votes will be cast on behalf of electoral purity, good government, cleanliness in the city and the home, justice to women and children and so to the whole community.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

Of the struggle for the vote in Australia and New Zealand little need be said. It is forgotten in the completeness of the victory and the success of the achievement. New Zealand women won the vote in 1893; in 1894 the cause was led to victory in South Australia by Sir John Cockburn, that faithful friend who, as President of the International Men's League for Women's Suffrage, is still fighting the battles of the Suffrage cause and leading its banners to victory. Western Australia followed in 1899; and the lead thus given was followed by the Federal Parliament, constituted in 1900. New South Wales followed in 1902, Tasmania in 1904, Queensland in 1905; though Victorian women, who for various reasons had special difficulties to overcome, were not enfranchised till 1908.

For all Australian Parliaments women vote on equal terms with men. In the Federal Parliament, South Australia and Queensland they are eligible for both Houses, in West Australia and Tasmania for the Lower only, and in New South Wales for neither. The position in Victoria appears still uncertain. The fact however remains that though women vote on equal terms with men, no woman has yet been elected to any parliament, and very few have stood for election.

With this complete equality Australia and New Zealand offer the most favourable ground for studying the effects of Women's Suffrage. As to the much discussed question of which party would be the gainer, it is interesting to note that there is but little change. "To add a million women to the parliamentary register is the same as to add a million men," says Miss Goldstein. "Each party gets its share. The proportion remains the same, but the quality of the vote changes. Women bring into the organised parties the same qualities that they manifest in the home, and the party programmes henceforth include political questions that are of special interest to women." . . . "The political reforms for which Women Suffragists ask, such as equal marriage and divorce laws, equal custody and guardianship of children, equal pay for equal work, raising the age of consent, are not party questions. The majority of men in all parties believe in these reforms, and the non-party women endeavour to obtain their practical support in putting them on the statute book." As for the women themselves they find that M.P.s will make time to attend to the claims of women voters, though the voteless woman in the past often invoked their sympathy in vain. For now "their guns are loaded."

All the social reform legislation in which Australia has taken the lead in recent years has been vigorously supported by the women voters. The most important reforms are:— On the Federal domain, equal pay for equal work in Government departments, equalising the naturalisation laws for men and women, a Federal marriage and divorce bill.

In the separate states:—wages boards, children's courts, old age pensions, protection for wage-earning children, married women's property acts, help for the illegitimate mother, and reforms in the drink trade.

The most striking result of Women's Suffrage in Australia is the conversion, through its effects of its bitterest opponents. Former friends and foes alike regard it with favour; and the final blessing was pronounced by the Commonwealth Senate in November, 1910, when the beneficial results due to the extension of the Suffrage to women were enumerated. In the words of the resolution unanimously adopted: "It has led to the most orderly conduct of elections, and at the last

Federal elections the women's vote in a majority of the states showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of defence and Imperial concerns they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

Surely the day should not be too far distant when the parliaments of the world endorse this resolution.

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