

Women's Franchise.

No. 16.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1907.

PRICE
ONE PENNY.

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Notice to Contributors and Subscribers.

Articles containing information on the subject of Women's Suffrage should be addressed to the Editor, who will return those not considered suitable as soon as possible if a stamped addressed envelope is sent with the MS. As the paper is on a voluntary basis, and all profits go to help the cause, no payments are made for contributions. Subscriptions for the weekly numbers to the end of March (3s. 3d.), or less if so desired, should be forwarded to the Publisher. Back numbers can still be obtained.

'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE,'

EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING OFFICE,
13, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

The Suffrage in Other Lands.

A FEW days ago I was discussing the Suffrage with a Swedish lady, and expressing pleasure and some surprise at the victory already won in Norway, and now impending in Sweden. "Yes," she said, "our victory is a remarkable one, but remember that we should never have achieved it but for the work of English suffragists." It was a pleasant reminder of the solidarity that exists among all those who are working for the same cause. The real strength of the movement lies in its international character. The demand for the vote is not the "fad" of a few thousand women in one isolated country, but a great world-wide movement, of which all the parts must continue to act and react on one another.

The object of this column is to emphasize this international aspect of the Suffrage question, by supplying a record of work done in other countries, and thus helping to bring workers of different nationalities into touch with one another. This work is, of course, being done on a large scale by the International Suffrage Alliance, whose organ, *Jus Suffragii* (editor Martina G. Kramers, 92 Kruiksgade, Rotterdam, Holland, price 3s. 6d. per annum), appears on the 15th of every month, and gives "a collection of facts concerning the woman Suffrage movement in different countries." I gladly take this opportunity of acknowledging my debt to *Jus Suffragii* for information used in this column. But the individual Suffrage organs can also help on this work; and I now appeal to my readers, in England and abroad, to

send me any interesting news they can about the Franchise. Either written notes, or printed matter, such as newspaper extracts, reports of meetings, or pamphlets and leaflets would be welcome. These last are specially interesting, as they throw light on the methods of propaganda which each country finds most effectual. Information will be welcomed in English, German, French, or Italian.

FRANCE.—An important contribution to this international propaganda has been recently made by Madame Avril de Sainte-Croix. Her little book, entitled 'Le Feminisme' (V. Giard and E. Brière), deals not only with the history of the woman's movement in France, but also with the collateral movements in other countries. She traces its history and vicissitudes in the different countries, the ebb and flow of public opinion, following closely the political conditions of each epoch, the loss of ancient rights in England and elsewhere, and the long and tedious efforts to win them back. A good deal of space is devoted to another international movement which led to the foundation and federation of the National Councils. And it is interesting to note that one after another they have found it necessary to include the demand for the Suffrage among their activities, acknowledging it as the keystone and basis of all true liberty. To us in England the most valuable part of her book is, no doubt, the story of the movement in France, with its various ramifications, and its sharp divisions, according to creed and politics. How these various groups originated, and how they are gradually being drawn into one common movement, I hope to tell in some future number.

A. ZIMMERN.

A Constitutional Question.

A SUBVERSION.—When a certain resolution of deep interest to women was recently before our House of Assembly, the hon. member who spoke against it with such telling effect scored a distinct point when he warned his colleague to beware of "subverting the constitution." Had he been asked what principles of our unwritten constitution would be violated by the granting of the franchise to a large number of citizens who are disqualified through no unfitness, nor by lack of responsibility, but by a mere accident, the high-sounding phrase might have lost some of its power of conviction.

We women protest that the refusal to grant Parliamentary representation, when demanded, to the now disfranchised, fully responsible, tax-paying citizen is a subversion of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution.

THE PRINCIPLES.—The two fundamental principles—one may perhaps say the only essentials—of the British Constitution (on which the constitution of her colonies is closely modelled) are (1) No taxation without representation; (2) No government without the consent of the governed. These two essentials are both violated when the right to vote is withheld from fully qualified women.

As a matter of fact, though these principles were accepted centuries ago, they are very slow in broadening down to their fullest application. The first is expressly laid down in Magna Charta. The second is implied in the grant of the charter. When Simon de Montfort, only a few years after the signing of the charter, died to enforce the principle of representation (which means government with the consent of the governed), he could little foresee whither the principle would lead. Had he bridged suddenly over the chasm of the centuries and seen every one of his serfs and villeins claiming and holding for himself the right which he demanded for substantial freemen, he would have refused to die for so fantastic a notion. If, instead, he could

have seen the slow stream of freedom as it broadened out through the centuries, he would have followed it joyfully, and to-day he would be leading the van of the last disfranchised class, the women.

With us to-day, who are used to an all-powerful Commons, and are not surprised at signs of decay in the Lords, it is difficult to realize how slowly the principle of popular representation was applied. We do not often picture to ourselves the sturdy, honest burghers seated meekly on back benches behind the Lords, with the privilege only of saying "Aye" or "Nay." Then, later, what with pocket boroughs and other subterfuges, the people were long in coming to their own. But in the fact that the principle was acknowledged, even if unapplied, lay the way to safety, for at any moment it could be applied. It was this careful maintenance of the outward and visible sign of popular government by the Tudors during their reigns of welcome despotism which gave England her "Pou sto" when she wanted to break from the hated despotism of the Stuarts. And it is in the reverse fact, that the principle, in our case, is denied, that our danger lies. We may be treated with the utmost care and consideration, and our interests may be watched sedulously, but, as long as we are disfranchised (that is, have to submit to government without our own consent) we are surrounded by all the machinery of oppression, which may be set in motion at any moment. Ruskin said that the best form of government was a despotism, given only a good despot. The modern tendency, however, is to regard a despotism as the worst possible form, for, paternal and wise as it may be, it yet has all the machinery of high-handed oppression ready to be set in motion at once. The best form of government is not that which does not happen to oppress, but that which cannot oppress. And this is certainly not a despotism. At the present moment we women of Cape Colony are suffering under a despotism which claims to be benevolent. Whether it is so or not is nothing to the point. The point is that, for us, it is a despotism.

THE DISFRANCHISED CLASS.—It is useless to tell us that we do not constitute a class, and are therefore not unrepresented. Exactly the same argument was used for continuing the disfranchisement of the Jews and the Roman Catholics, from both of whom—most useful citizens—the citizen's rights and privileges were until recently withheld. They were told that they did not constitute a class, that there were among them employers and employed, buyers and sellers, artists and artisans, rich and poor, landowners and traders, and that they therefore had their interests guarded in those who represented these various classes. By such specious arguments were they, for many years, kept out of their rights. By such specious arguments are we kept out of our rights to-day.

As a matter of fact, though of all social ranks, of all professions or trades, or of none, we constitute more of a distinct class than did either of those hitherto named. As long as there are laws regulating the relations between man and woman, women, from the point of view of the legislator, do constitute a class. And that class, though tax-paying, and performing the most important work of the State, is totally unrepresented.

REPRESENTATION BY PROXY.—Then there are those who tell us that we are represented by our husbands. Granting we have husbands, why should these useful citizens, by the fact of marriage, lose half their voting power? Why should a young and selfish bachelor, with no stake in the country and with no interest in his country's future, have one whole and undivided vote all to himself, while the steady married man, the father of a family, to whom the stability and future of his country are of the utmost personal moment, be obliged to make his single vote do for two adult, fully qualified, tax-paying citizens? Rather than thus penalizing the married man, it would surely be wiser to follow the example of the Emperor Augustus, who granted special privileges to married men. This astute gentleman went even further, and expressed his appreciation of the services rendered by mothers to the State by granting to any woman who had three children certain privileges, which varied according to her social rank.

THE ROMAN MATRON.—Though perhaps a digression, one may touch here on the Roman matron, whose virtues have served as such a plank against our just demands. Athens and

Rome, we are told, were both republics, and examples of whole-hearted democracies; yet look in what close bondage the women were held in each, and see what sons those women mothered!

It is true that Athens and Greece claimed to be democracies (which may be roughly defined as States in which the governed are the governors), but they were not the kind of democracies we are familiar with. If one may be permitted an Irishism, one may describe them as elegant, aristocratic little democracies, where the great majority were the personal property of the self-governing, and slave-governing, select minority. In such a democracy the tutelage of women is not anomalous; and its fact in no way forms a precedent for the subjection of woman in a State which is truly self-governing.

Though by Roman law the wife was a mere chattel, by custom her position was quite different. When Roman civilization was overwhelmed by barbarism, the refinements of custom perished not to be recovered, but the law lived, to be raked up again later, and it was this raking up of the ancient law, unsoftened by later customs, which gave such a backward sweep to the woman movement centuries ago.

To return to the Roman matron. She was a factor to be reckoned with, publicly as well as privately. Nor was she always so docile as certain people would have us believe. She took a very lively interest in public affairs. One instance, at least, is on record, when this interest was so keen that, having no legitimate means of bringing pressure to bear (as she would have had had she been enfranchised) she was driven by her sense of the gravity of the situation to form a vast conspiracy for the murder of all the recalcitrant men (husbands, of course), and this patriotic scheme was only frustrated by the fact that one woman proved a better wife than citizen. Surely it would be wiser to grant us a legitimate control in public affairs than to ask us to exercise our so loudly boasted influence in this indirect manner of the Roman matron.

A CONTRAST.—But to be serious. To take the position of the disfranchised South African matron (as has been done with such striking effect) and compare it with that of the Roman matron is hardly fair; but the two positions may be contrasted with advantage. The Roman matron ruled in a household where her menials, male and female, were her own personal property (though nominally her husband's) and were of not so much account in the State as horses and donkeys are with us. (We have a S.P.C.A. which can set the law in motion to prevent us from prodding our unwilling donkeys with hat-pins, but not even public opinion protested against Roman ladies jabbing their slaves with hair-pins, and Roman gentlemen using theirs for varied vivisectional experiments.) On the other hand, the South African matron rules a household where her lowest menial, be he only male and earning a "living wage," is as potent in the State as any man of large property; and she is a political nonentity. The man who cleans the South African lady's boots is a citizen, while she is an utlander. The man who carried the Roman lady's parasol did not exist politically.

THE SOLDIER AND POLICEMAN ARGUMENT.—The argument which is again and again brought up against our just demands is that, not being capable of bearing arms, we have no right to ask for representation. This would be a more telling argument if it were brought forward in a country where universal military service obtained. As it is, it is a mere subterfuge, for were the power to bear arms a test really imposed on those whose names were admitted to the voters' roll, quite a respectable proportion of men would be at once disqualified, while a few women would be admitted. Under our present circumstances the argument reduces itself to an absurdity. Even in the Transvaal, with its manhood suffrage, those who "are in the full pay of the regular forces" are exempted from the privilege of the vote, as they are in the United Kingdom, and, I believe, in all of the British colonies. So we come to this specimen of masculine logic. "Soldiers may not vote because they bear arms, and women may not vote because they do not."

While on the "arm-bearing" question one may perhaps be allowed to quote Flora Annie Steel. All familiar with her charming books will know that she is by no means prejudiced in favour of Western or democratic institutions, and that she

is fully alive to all the advantages and beauties of the ancient customs of the East. Yet she has lately joined the Suffragist movement in England, and on this very question she says: "Women's natural task of child-bearing places them in the first fighting line. The essence of military service is the risking of life and the endurance of hardship for the good of the general community. Surely if the long irksome months ending in pain and danger which go to the making of every citizen were summed up, the grand total of devotion would be with the woman, and not with the man—even in war-time."

"PROTECTION."—Then we are told by certain chivalrous gentlemen that we are disfranchised because it is their duty (as well as their privilege) to protect us. Tying one's hands may strike some of us as a queer notion of protection. But let that pass. The situation reminds me exactly of the Kaffir. When I first came to this country I was horrified to meet a worthy black couple, the woman well-loaded, and with baby on back; the man stalking along unencumbered, swinging a stick. When remonstrated with, the man frankly said, "It is the custom of our country." Had he been a little more sophisticated he would have declared that he was "protecting the woman." For it was from the need to protect her in reality that the custom arose, and, as customs do, it has outlived the necessity that gave it rise. When at any moment there might be a swoop from an enemy, and when wild beasts lurked near the gardens, it was quite reasonable that the man, unencumbered, should stalk round with shield and assegai, while the woman hoed and bore the burden. Now the harmless stick has superseded the assegai and knobkerrie, but the custom of the woman working while the man remains idle has lived on.

So in the far past, when physical strength and the power to fight were essential in the ruler and in those who shared his rule (now represented by the voters) it was quite reasonable that woman should submit to male tutelage, with its advantages and disadvantages. That this was the origin of the "protection" custom we find from examining the history of other countries which never passed through a stress of warlike times. Take Burma, for instance, a country nurtured in peace, where none of the disabilities of women to which we are accustomed exist, and no social or legal distinction is made between the man and the woman. And the custom, once established, lives on, having lost its advantages when it lost its usefulness, while its disadvantages have grown and multiplied.

Whether the boasted "protection" was ever adequate it is hardly pertinent to discuss. But one feels impelled to question it. A careful reading of history leads the writer to the conclusion that man's idea of protection meant a firm hold on his own and a grab at other people's. Just recall the fantastic ideals of chivalry, when men said they worshipped women, and would give their lives to free them from the merest slight. The student who looks behind the courtly forms and high-sounding phrases inquires into the treatment which kings and other feudal lords meted out to the wards under their "protection," and remembers the *droit du seigneur* and other abominable customs indulged in by the "protector." To take only one typical case out of hundreds, that of a young and beautiful Marchesana, who lived in the early dawn of the Italian Renaissance. This lady, who was the Marchesana Parisina, wife of Niccolò III., of the famous family of Este, of Ferrara, had been a model mother to a heterogeneous illegitimate family of her husband's, yet she was done to death on the first false step on her own part, and this not in any fit of jealousy or rage, but calmly and judicially, with the full approval of the world, who would have seen justice in no other course. Instances could be multiplied, but one is sufficient to show that "protection" often means tyranny. If one doubts whether the spirit which made such things possible (though weakened by time and fuller thought) exists to-day one need only point to what constitutes the most difficult problem before us—the existence of the coloured or half-caste population. They are a living monument of what man's "protection" means to woman, and of the terrible effects of an unjust system of sex-domination.

Cape Town,

E. M. WOODS.

Correspondence.

[The Proprietors of "WOMEN'S FRANCHISE" do not necessarily identify themselves in any way with the opinions expressed by their Correspondents.]

An Amendment to the Address.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.'

DEAR SIR,—In looking forward to the Suffrage work which will be undertaken this winter, may we call attention to the present attitude and action of Co-operative and Trade Unionist women?

(1) Mr. Dickinson's new Bill provides a broader basis for enfranchisement than any Women's Suffrage Bill yet introduced, meeting the requirements of married women and of a democratic Parliament. It has therefore received the support of the Central Committee of the Women's Co-operative Guild.

(2) A new method of attacking the Government has been suggested by the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Trade Unionists, who propose that a Women's Suffrage Amendment should be moved to the Address.

The Labour Party Executive have been asked if they will move such an Amendment, by the Textile Women's Labour Representation Committee, by the Women's Co-operative Guild, and the Manchester Women's Trade Council. A joint letter from these bodies has also been sent to I. L. P. branches, asking them to urge the Labour Party Executive to take action. If the Labour Party agrees to move this Amendment, all women's organizations will then be asked to press Members of Parliament to support it.

At a recent meeting of the constitutional party of the Women's Social and Political Union, at which the chair was taken by Mrs. Despard, the suggestion was made to form a loose federation of societies working for the Suffrage. The idea was not to ask support for any particular policy, but to create machinery for joint action in carrying out any special plans that might from time to time be agreed on.

Might it not be possible for all organizations to unite in any effort to gain support for the proposed Amendment to the Address?

I should like also to throw out the suggestion whether an amendment to the Address might not provide an improved election policy. A pledge could be required from a candidate that he would support a Women's Suffrage Amendment. This policy would be, in effect, an anti-Governmental policy, but it would allow Liberal as well as other candidates to be supported who put Suffrage before party. It would leave women independent of any political party, but their work would be of the positive character of supporting some candidate. The present S. & P. U. policy of working for no candidate, though it has been useful in putting forward the idea of an Independent Woman's Party, cannot but be ineffective in practical results.

What would be more effective, would be a policy which would usually result in active support for the Labour Party, whose natural allies we are, but to whom we cannot pledge ourselves until actual proof has been given of their good faith, by giving the Suffrage a prominent place in their parliamentary programme.

Yours faithfully,

MARGARET LLEWELYN DAVIES.

Literary Note.

MESSRS. METHUEN are about to issue a new novel by Miss Elizabeth Robins entitled 'The Convert.' Miss Robins, who is an ardent believer in the power of women, and who is the author of the recent successful play at the Court Theatre entitled 'Votes for Women,' has given her forthcoming story a strong feminine interest, and it will be found to be one of the frankest expositions of the limitations amidst which the sex, especially single women, have to exist that has yet been written.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

OBJECT.—To obtain the Parliamentary Suffrage for Women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to Men.

The Union is a Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Secretaries: MISS FRANCES HARDCASTLE, M.A. MISS FRANCES STERLING.

Telegrams: "VOICELESS, LONDON."

Treasurer: MISS BERTHA MASON.

Parliamentary and Organising Secretary: MISS EDITH PALLISER.

Telephone: 1960 VICTORIA.

OFFICES: 25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

The Union will send Organising Agents, Speakers, or Literature to any place requiring them, its desire being to form a Women's Suffrage Society in every County and Borough. All persons interested in the movement, or desiring information about it, are requested to communicate with the Secretaries. Increased Funds are needed for the growing work of the Union, and Subscriptions will be gladly received by the Treasurer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1907.

Chairman—MR. WALTER S. B. MCLAREN.

MISS MARGARET ASHTON
THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR
MISS FLORENCE BALGARNIE
MRS. ALLAN BRIGHT

MISS EDITH DIMOCK
MISS I. O. FORD
MISS ISABEL MARRIS
MRS. PECHY PHIPSON, M.D.

MRS. BROADLEY REID
MRS. FRED RICHARDSON
HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL
MRS. PHILIP SNOWDEN

LADY STRACHEY
And the Hon. Officers,
ex officio.

Current Topics.

THE secretary of the North of England Society for Women's Suffrage has asked us to inform all delegates and friends desiring to attend the Council Meeting and Demonstration on Friday, October 25th, that reduced railway return fares, at the price of a fare and a quarter, can be obtained if they will take a shilling ticket for the Conference of the National Union of Women Workers held in Manchester the same week. The secretary, Mrs. Darlington, will obtain the National Union of Women Workers' Conference ticket and forward it to any delegate or friend applying to her for it at the Manchester address, Office 9; 5, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Members are recommended to avail themselves of this arrangement.

Mrs. Richardson, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Union, is coming forward for election on the Hull City Council in November. We heartily wish her success. Mrs. Richardson has long been associated with the public and social life of Hull, and for three years acted as Mayoress, when her husband occupied the Mayoral chair. In addition, Mrs. Richardson has had five years' experience on the Education Committee, and has been prominently connected with the University Extension Lectures.

Competition for Posters and Picture Post Cards on Women's Suffrage.

RESULT OF COMPETITION.

MRS. HERRINGHAM, Miss Lancaster Lucas, and Miss E. C. Woodward were the judges on behalf of the Artists' League, Lady Strachey, Miss Hardcastle, Miss Palliser, and Miss Sterling being appointed on behalf of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

POSTERS.—A large number of drawings had been sent in, but, after prolonged consideration, the judges were unable to award the prizes, as no one design reached a sufficiently high standard both as to artistic merit, suitability for reproduction, and excellence of idea.

Four designs were accorded honourable mention that by "Jam," was judged to be full of ability, but the artists considered it hardly broad enough in treatment, and that some of the lines were not quite happy in arrangement, while from the point of view of propaganda, it was considered that the representation of a working man given to drink as a typical voter as contrasted with worthier types of women was not a perfectly fair comparison, and, moreover, one which might lead to misunderstanding. It may be mentioned that this subject was a favourite one with competitors.

The design by "Brizz Yont" was highly commended from the artistic point of view, but was lacking in idea, while that by "Sweep," admirable in idea, lacked study in line and effect, and required much simplification, for its purpose. "Nil desperandum" had also hit on an excellent subject, but had not carried it out with sufficient clearness to receive more than an honourable mention, the figures being grouped in a confused mass.

There were several excellent ideas which proved unsuitable

as being rather literary than capable of pictorial expression; for instance, "Pay the Piper, call the tune," represented a tax-gatherer calling on a woman working at her loom, while the real point lay only in the "legend" below, where she asks "Who represents her in the spending of the money?" Again, "Picanniny" represents only a gracious elderly lady and two pretty girls, but the legend tells how Miss Australia and Miss New Zealand are off to the poll while Mother England is still considered unfit to go there.

"Obligation," with "The obligation of our cause is upon us," narrowly missed an honourable mention by not expressing clearly enough an original and good idea.

The judges will recommend to the committee to throw open the competition again, drawings to be judged some two or three months hence, and they suggest that thumb-nail sketches of proposed ideas should be asked for, say in a month's time, so that artists may not have to devote time and labour to working out anything which does not pass this first scrutiny. A further announcement will be made on this subject shortly.

POST CARD DESIGNS.—The first prize of 2l. was awarded to "Slainte" (Norah Neilson Gray, 62, Sardinia Terrace, Glasgow, W.). The legend "Woman must not descend into the arena of politics but should remain with her equals" is delightfully pointed by the picture, a woman surrounded by a "criminal," an "imbecile," and a not very desirable "alien."

The second prize was divided between "Gosling" (Margaret McCormack, Northwick, Pining, Bristol) and G. Simmons (67, Nithsdale Road, Pollokshields, Glasgow), honourable mention being given to Mrs. Keidel, to one of "Originals" designs, and to "Glafe" for a good idea and "Perlycoombe" for a clever parody on "Excelsior."

Designs will be returned to competitors, if desired, on receipt of stamps for postage.

Branch Societies.

CENTRAL SOCIETY: REIGATE BRANCH.—The Reigate branch of the Central Society held an open-air meeting in Chapel Road, Redhill, on Saturday, October 5th. Mr. E. Richmond took the chair, and the meeting, which was a very successful one, was addressed by Miss Rendell and Miss Richmond.

This meeting was followed by another at the same place on the evening of the same day, at which Miss F. Sterling, of the Central Society, spoke. Miss Allen presided over a good audience of over 200, attentive and interested. Mr. Williams also spoke.

NORTH EASTERN SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—The chief interest at present centres in the Municipal Elections. Our Financial Secretary, Dr. Ethel Bentham, is a candidate for election, and our organizer is acting as her election agent. Many offers of support are being received. We have developed a new feature with regard to speaking to Debating Societies, four gentlemen having each offered to take three of such meetings. The first one is the Bishop Auckland Debating Society, on October 21st, when Mr. John Dack is by invitation to "bring in a Bill."

After many weeks of boycott, our local paper to-day mentions the Suffrage Demonstration in Edinburgh. Mr.

Curran, M.P. for Jarrow, has been doing work in his division, and on at least three occasions spoke of the Franchise for Women, but not one of the four papers made any reference to it in their reports. The candidature of Dr. Bentham is, however, being well reported, and she is referred to as a Suffragist.

We have sent forward to the Manchester Council meeting what we think is an important resolution, and we hope that the other societies in the Union will—more than ever since the Edinburgh meetings—feel that something very drastic must be done to impress the Government with the fact that we are in deadly earnest; and we hope, therefore, that they will support our resolution.

FLORENCE N. HARRISON BELL.

OXFORD WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—The first committee of the season came together on Friday, September 27th. Arrangements were made for the holding of the annual business meeting for the election of officers, &c., early in November. Other plans for work were also discussed.

A successful drawing-room meeting was held on the afternoon of Tuesday, October 1st, at Court Place, Iffley, by invitation of Mrs. Pearsall Smith. The Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russell presided, and opened the proceedings. Miss Rhys (Hon. Sec. Oxford Women's Suffrage Society) and Miss Costello, of Newnham College, followed. Mrs. Pearsall Smith, Miss Davenport Hill, and Mrs. Lewis Farnell also addressed the meeting.

At the present time Women's Suffragists and all interested in women's wellbeing are actively forwarding the candidature of Miss Merivale for a seat on the Oxford City Council. No other woman is now standing for election, but all four wards will be contested next year.

READING WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—The second annual meeting was held in the King Edward Hall, on Tuesday, October 1st, when the President and Committee were "At Home" to members and friends. In spite of a wet evening a good number were present, and some friendly intercourse was enjoyed. The chair was occupied by Miss Edith M. Sutton, in the regretted absence of the President, Mrs. Rose, due to the effects of an accident.

Miss Frances Sterling addressed the meeting in a speech which was very much appreciated by all who heard it. As this was a young society, the speaker dwelt on the principles and practice of the National Union, to which it is affiliated, but of whose work it perhaps, does not know so much by reason of its extreme youth.

The nominated list of officers and committee were read and confirmed by a formal vote. The names are as follows:—

President, Mrs. Rose; Acting Vice-President and Chairman of Committee, Miss Edith M. Sutton; Vice-Presidents, Dr. Armitage, Miss Edith Morley, Miss F. Turquand, and Miss Oakley Walker; Hon. Secretary, Miss F. Milner; Hon. Treasurer, Miss Agnes Powell; Committee, Miss Bolam, Miss Best, Dr. Carling, Dr. Cruikshank, Miss Dale, Miss Hart Davies, Miss Evans, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Stansfield, and Dr. Pethick.

One of the Secretaries, Miss Hart Davies, reported as a result of the year's work that the membership had increased from 40 to 85, and the Treasurer reported that nearly 60l. had been raised and expended during the time. A vote of thanks was passed to the retiring Hon. Secretaries, Miss Hart Davies and Miss Evans—who are prevented by a pressure of work from continuing to act as such—on the motion of Dr. Cruikshank, seconded by Miss Edith M. Sutton.

Mrs. Stansfield then explained the scheme of work till Christmas, during which time it is hoped to hold a goodly number of "Suffrage Talks" in the houses of those members and sympathizers who are willing to invite their friends for the purpose. It is hoped by this means to arouse and awaken interest in the question. It was also further announced that Reading is to have a visit from Mrs. Fawcett on November 26th.

Mr. Malcolm Mitchell then gave a very interesting account of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage. He told of its inception a few months ago, and said that when its membership was made public it would be found to be a very vigorous banding indeed. Reading was invited to send its quota to the forthcoming meeting in December, and it is to be hoped something may be done ultimately in the way of forming a branch in Reading. Of the work done during the year in Reading

mention may be made of the shop which was taken and kept open for a fortnight, during which time the Committee held open court, and obtained a fair number of signatures to Miss C. Black's Declaration, a few additional members to the society, and sold and distributed a goodly quantity of literature. Help in money and personal services was also rendered during the Wimbledon election. This is not a bad record for a very young society, considering that the Committee is composed of women busy in many ways.

Women's Suffrage.

MRS. FAWCETT'S SPEECH AT PORTSMOUTH.

MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D., was the principal speaker at a meeting promoted by the Central Society for Women's Suffrage (Portsmouth and Southsea branch) held in the Mayor's Banqueting Room at the Town Hall on Friday, October 5th.

So large was the attendance that the accommodation was tested to the utmost. Mrs. Laphorn took the chair, and amongst those present were Mr. T. A. Bramsdon, M.P., Mrs. Hawksley, Mrs. Kingswell, Miss N. O'Shea (Secretary), Mr. T. H. F. Laphorn (President of the Portsmouth Liberal Association), &c. The President (Mr. Godfrey Baring), the Rev. H. Bircham, the Rev. W. Hawksley, Councillors J. Timpson and H. W. Blackadar, and Capt. Woolmer White were unable to be present.

In opening the proceedings Mrs. Laphorn observed that Mrs. Fawcett was one of the most able advocates of Women's Suffrage in the country, and for forty years she had been labouring amid great discouragements for the cause they had at heart. To-day she must be cheered to see the seeds she had sown were beginning to bear fruit, and that the women of the country were really alive to this subject. Mrs. Laphorn added that she was convinced that the sense of justice which characterized Englishmen would prevail when it was realized that the women of the country were really in earnest over this matter.

Mrs. Fawcett, who on rising was received with cheers, took for her subject 'The Granting of the Parliamentary Franchise to Women,' and was careful to explain that what they asked for was not that every woman should be given a vote, but that no woman who fulfilled the qualifications demanded by law for the male elector should be disqualified on the ground of sex. Many men thought that those interested in the movement desired to see every woman with a vote, and when the matter was explained most men expressed themselves in favour of the object of the Society. What they asked for would add about a million and a half voters to the present roll of electors, and this would work out at about 1½ women voters to every 7½ men voters, surely a proportion which could not be viewed with real alarm. All that they were asking for was simple justice. Women wanted the suffrage for exactly the same reason as the men wanted it. They wanted it in order to be able to secure the attention and some portion of the time of Parliament to their reasonable needs and requirements. Nearly every Act of Parliament affected women, and yet they had no constitutional means of affecting Parliament. Matters of great importance were passed by Parliament without any reference to the feelings or opinions of women. One of the objections raised to the enfranchisement of women was that if they were given the vote they would have power without responsibility. Mrs. Humphrey Ward, taking this line, argued that the women might vote for a war, and yet would not bear their part in the struggle by reason of their sex. It was a fact, however, that the very people who now fought our battles were debarred from voting for M.P.'s. After all, it was not the voters who made a war, it was the statesmen. No bad results whatever had resulted from Women's Suffrage in our Colonies, and it should also be remembered that the movement was of a world-wide character. In conclusion Mrs. Fawcett proposed a resolution to the effect that in the opinion of the meeting the time was ripe for the extension of the Franchise for Women on the same terms as it was granted to men.

This resolution was seconded by Mr. T. A. Bramsdon, M.P., who said he was something of a pioneer of this movement in Portsmouth, and for the past twenty-five years had been helping forward the question of Women's Suffrage in the town.

The resolution having been carried unanimously, Mr. T. H. F. Laphorn proposed that the Chairman should, on behalf of the meeting, sign a petition for the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women on the terms described above. This was seconded by Miss Watson, of London, and carried.

An omnibus vote of thanks was afterwards passed on the initiative of Mrs. Hawksley, seconded by the Rev. C. Bayliss.

On Thursday, October 3rd, the evening before this meeting, Mrs. Fawcett spoke for nearly an hour to "The Society" on 'Women as Citizens.' "The Society" was founded several years ago at Southsea by Lady Culme Seymour to encourage the study of social and economic questions. There was a very large attendance on Thursday, it being the inaugural meeting of the season.

Lest We Forget.

THERE was recently published in this journal a striking article entitled 'The Timidity of Women.' Its perusal suggests consideration as to the causes of this phenomenon. These are doubtless many, but one at least there is which is often overlooked. Women—the comfortable classes among them—are not perhaps ignorant; but there is too often an academic flavour about their knowledge. "A refined cultivated gentlewoman," as the phrase runs, does not always regard her knowledge as a weapon in her fight, the fight of every true progressive against the powers of darkness—may it even be whispered against the powers that be? The average woman is not truly progressive because she is not truly conservative. "Let be, there is a lion in the path," she cries at any suggestion of change. As with the wearisome servant question, so with the Suffrage. The foundations of the home are not shaken because no registry office seems to have the ideal house parlourmaid upon its books. Many noble families were founded in England before Messrs. Whiteley or Messrs. Harrod supplied the bewitching caps and aprons in which the modern Jane should answer the door to or for the vicar's wife. But the average woman forgets this. So it is with the deeper, more vital problems affecting the life of the nation.

"What is," cries the man in the street—"What is," echoes the woman on the hearth, "must be." But let her turn an understanding ear to the voice of history. "What is, was not and shall not be," is the clarion note of history. Deep in the annals of the past we gain our inspiration for the future. Some might think the divine fire would hardly kindle in the heavy atmosphere of the early Victorian era. But that this was not so is proved by one book, among others, dealing with that period. This book is full of food for thought and, what we women need more, incentive to action. In Mr. Morley's brilliant 'Life of Richard Cobden' what do we find? The *status quo* of to-day is the realization of the chimerical dreaming of the political fanatic of yesterday. A few extracts from this work, reading in for ourselves "Votes for Women" in place of "Abolition of the Corn Laws," will best illustrate our contention that forgetfulness of the past alone breeds despair for the future.

P. 147. "In the February of 1839, as Cobden gaily reminded the great audience on the eve of victory six years later, three of them, in a small room at Brown's Hotel in Palace Yard, were visited by a nobleman who had taken an active part in advocating a modification of the Corn Laws, but who could not bring himself to the point of total repeal. He asked what had brought them to town, and what it was they wanted. They had come, they said, to seek the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws. With an emphatic shake of the head, he answered, 'You will overturn the monarchy as soon as you will accomplish that.' For the moment it appeared as if this were really true. Mr. Villiers moved in the House of Commons (February 18th), that a number of petitions against the Corn Laws should be referred to a Committee of the whole House. The motion was negatived without a division. The next day he moved that certain members of the Manchester Association should be heard at the bar, in support of the allegations of a petition which

they had presented three days before....The motion was thrown out by a majority of two to one....The bewilderment of the Government was shown by the fact that Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston went into the lobby with the Protectionists, while the President of the Board of Trade followed Mr. Villiers. Yet Lord John had declared a short time before that he admitted the duties on corn as then levied to be untenable. The whole incident is one of the most striking illustrations on record of one of the worst characteristics of parliamentary government, its sluggishness in facing questions on their merits.

"The repealers felt they must depend upon their own efforts, without reference either to Sir Robert or Lord John. They had started a little organ of their own in the Press in April; and the Anti-Corn Law circulars used language which was not at all too strong for the taste of most of them when it cried out that all political factions were equally dishonest and profligate; that the repealers, at any rate, would not suffer their great question to be made a mere official hobby horse; that they would pursue an undeviating course of strenuous protest to the nation at large, knowing well that repeal would never be granted by either the one or the other faction of political pettifoggers by which the kingdom was alternately cursed. If they could only get the honest, simple-hearted, and intelligent portion of the people to see the justice and the necessity of their cause, then they would not be long before they dragged both sections of the State quacks at their chariot wheels, each striving to outbid the other in tenders of service and offers of concession....The first year's campaign convinced the repealers that agitation is not always such smooth work as it had been in Ireland....In Scotland the new Gospel found a temperate hearing and much acceptance, but in England the lecturers were not many days in discovering at what peril they had undertaken to assault the prejudice and selfishness of a territorial aristocracy, and the brutality or cowardice of their hangers-on. Though there were many districts where nobody interfered with them, there were many others where neither law nor equity gave them protection." Let those who fear the lion in the path observe the triumphant finale. On June, 26th, 1846, Cobden writes to his wife, "My dearest Kate—Hurrah! hurrah! The Corn Bill is law, and now my work is done. I shall come down to-morrow....and shall hope to be at home in time for a late tea." A. HELEN WARD.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

October Meetings.

			P.M.
18th	Reigate Branch, "At Home"	Miss Sterling Mr. Mitchell	8-10.30
19th	Reigate Branch, Open-air Meeting at Redhill		7
22nd	Temperance Hotel, Henley-on-Thames	Hon. Mrs. B. Russell	7
24th	Central Society, "At Home" to Members and Friends, 25, Victoria Street		4-6.30
28th	Debate at the Reform Club, Birmingham	Proposers: Mrs. Osler Miss I. Marris	8
29th	Newbury	Hon. Mrs. B. Russell	8
	Queen's Square Club	Mrs. Philip Snowden	8
	Tickets to be applied for before 6 P.M. on night of lecture.		
	Wantage Town Hall	Hon. Mrs. B. Russell	8

Friday, October 25th ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING, 10.30 A.M.
Midland Hotel, Manchester
DEMONSTRATION in Free Trade Hall, Manchester. 7.30 P.M.
Miss Margaret Ashton in the Chair.

SPEAKERS:

Mrs. Fawcett, LL.D. Rev. Canon Hicks, M.A.
Mrs. Pethick Lawrence Prof. S. J. Chapman
Mrs. Philip Snowden Miss Elizabeth Robins
Mr. W. H. Dickinson, M.P. and others.

Tickets may be obtained from the Secretary of the North of England Women's Suffrage Society, Office 9; 5, John Dalton Street, Manchester. Hours, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.

* * * All communications intended for the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies' columns should be addressed to the Secretary, 25, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., and should reach the office not later than first post Saturday each week.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Women's Social and Political Union.

Conference.

THE long-talked of Conference of the Women's Social and Political Union took place on Saturday, October 12th, delegates and visitors meeting in large numbers at Caxton Hall at 10 A.M. There were two sessions, forenoon and afternoon. The delegates and Provincial Committee came together, as could be felt by their attitude, with a deep sense of their responsibilities and a firm determination to carry through their rather complicated work in a businesslike manner.

Mrs. Billington-Greig, whose wide experience and logical faculty are well known not only in the women's movement, but in the different advanced causes for which she has worked, was unanimously elected chairman. The complicated nature of the Agenda, and the fact that, on account of the recent extraordinary crisis, the work of preparing the final agenda had to be pressed into a very short space of time, made the task of the chairman peculiarly difficult. She was admirably helped and supported, however, by the members of the Conference, who spoke briefly and to the point on the various resolutions and amendments.

After the chairman's address, which laid down clearly the position of the Union, the urgency of the crisis, and the responsibility of those who had been elected as delegates, the reports of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Provincial Committee were read.

These were accepted as satisfactory. It appeared that the work had been voluntary, and that the expenditure, though great, had been met by collections, affiliation fees from branches, sales of literature, and donations from friends. A balance of 2l. 2s. remains in the hands of the Treasurer—a careful and very good report of the year's work, including the names of all those women who had suffered imprisonment for the cause, was given by Mrs. How Martyn, Hon. Secretary, to the original Committee of the Women's Social and Political Union.

The report of the Treasurer of the late Committee was called for, but was not forthcoming.

The Conference then set themselves to the difficult task of amending and defining the constitution. With regard to the National Executive Committee, its officials and its sub-committees that it might from time to time call together for special work, we were impressed not only by the thought that had been given beforehand by the members of London and Provincial Branches to this vital part of our Society's organization, but also by the quiet and self-restrained character of the various speeches.

On one or two occasions the majorities were narrow; but, with regard to the greater number of resolutions and amendments carried, there was a practical unanimity which promised well for the future.

Then came the elections of officers and committee, the issue of which appeared to give general satisfaction. Mrs. Despard was appointed Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Billington-Greig Hon. Organizing Secretary, Mrs. How Martyn Hon. Secretary, and the following as committee members: Mrs. Coates Hansen, Miss Hodgson, Miss Irene Miller, Miss FitzHerbert, Mrs. Drysdale, Miss Abadam, Mrs. Winton Evans, Mrs. Dice, Mrs. Sanderson, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Holmes, and Miss Mansell.

The position and powers of the branch arrangements for future conferences and conditions of membership followed. While endorsing the principle of self government within the Union, the Conference left its policy unchanged. The vote of independence of party was given strong emphasis, and the membership clause remains unchanged.

It was impossible to conclude the business of the day without some reference to the extraordinary position into which the late events have forced us. By a resolution which was unanimous, our right to the name and properties retained by the National Women's Social and Political Union was asserted, but it was

decided—in view of the fact that the women's cause, should we take legal measures to enforce our claims, might suffer loss—that we would simply demand a balance sheet of moneys spent up to September 10th, when the cleavage occurred. The Conference wound up by the unanimous and enthusiastic passing of a resolution, in which we pledged ourselves to work with unabated vigour for the rights of citizenship so long denied to us. This is a very brief transcript of the business which occupied the Conference from 10 A.M. to 5.30 P.M., with a brief interval for lunch. A verbatim report of the Conference will be printed and sent to the branches, and members will be able to obtain copies. Some present, who had had experience on many boards and committees, both in the public service and of private societies, said that they had never seen so much business compressed into so brief a space of time. But there was no hurry, no confusion of issues. Every one who had anything to bring forward that had a distinct bearing on the question of the moment, was given a fair and a patient hearing. While the task of the chairman was a difficult one, it was clearly recognized by all present; and the attitude of the Conference, the brevity and directness of the speeches, with the readiness of every member to accept the ruling of the chair, made her work far easier than it would otherwise have been.

In fine, the result of this Conference, to which we have looked forward with mingled feelings, has been to deepen and strengthen our belief, not only in the future that is before our Union, but also in the existence of a great, unsuspected, though but partially developed, strength and business faculty now running to waste, because of the old prejudice which would shut out woman from her true place in the counsels of the nation.

It was decided by a large majority to hold the Conferences earlier in the year, and the next was fixed for January, and London chosen as the place of meeting.

The following resolution—"This meeting urges the Government to abandon the cowardly tactics hitherto adopted in order to prevent an honest discussion of the most pressing political question of the day, that of Women's Enfranchisement, and calls upon it to retrieve its honour by giving this question a place in the King's Speech next session"—was carried unanimously, amidst great applause, and a copy was sent to every Member of the Cabinet.

Scottish Notes.

THE work of the week in Scotland has been followed up less strenuously than during the last month. Most of the workers, indeed, were in need of a rest after the efforts put forward for the demonstrations of last week.

The branches have been chiefly concerned with the problems of better internal management, and with the commencement of the winter work. The Glasgow Central Branch opened the lecture session by providing an audience for Councillor Pratt, who delivered an able address to a full meeting of members and friends on Wednesday last.

Most of the branches sent delegates, and some visitors also, to the Conference at Caxton Hall. It is an especial pleasure to me to be able to report that the Scottish delegates made a very good impression by their thoughtful contributions to the Conference.

The work of the winter is being well commenced by new development of municipal policy. The Emergency Committee of the Scottish Council passed and sent out to the branches the following resolution:—

"That in order to make use of the Municipal Elections to forward our claim to the Parliamentary Franchise—

1. All candidates for municipal honours be approached

by the local branches of the W.S.P.U., or, where no branch exists, by the Scottish Council.

2. That the request made of such candidates shall be: Will you, if elected, pledge yourself to move or support in the Council a resolution to be sent from the Council to the Government petitioning for the enfranchisement of women during the coming Session of Parliament?"

3. That the replies be published and the women electors be canvassed and advised to vote according to the replies?

By this action it is hoped that the unrest of the voteless women of the country will make itself apparent in local centres, and that the rights women already possess will serve as instruments by means of which other rights can be won.

There is hope also that this agitation will not prove unproductive, for three years ago the Royal Burghs of Scotland sent up such a petition to the then Government.

TERESA BILLINGTON-GREIG.

Meeting at Caxton Hall.

WE militant Suffragists have become so accustomed to regard Caxton Hall as our tactical base, that to find it the rendezvous of peaceful Suffragists of all shades of opinion struck us as being a little strange, though far from unpleasant.

On the evening of our Annual Conference, October 12th, after a splendid day's work, the newly elected Committee welcomed a large gathering of friends, men and women, whose names are household words in the Suffrage world, and who are all in agreement in demanding the removal of the sex disqualification. We observed there Lady Steel, our Edinburgh passive resister; the Viscountess Harberton, who, we remember, volunteered on March 21st last to carry to the Prime Minister a resolution demanding the enfranchisement of women; Miss Frances Hardcastle and Miss Strachey, representing the National Union of Suffrage Societies; Miss Margaret Bondfield, of the Adult Suffrage Society; Miss Llewellyn Davies and Mrs. Vaughan Nash, of the Women's Co-operative Guild; Mr. Herbert Jacobs, Chairman; and Mr. J. Malcolm Mitchell, Joint Hon. Sec. of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

Madame Larkcom-Jacobs had kindly arranged a musical programme of a very high order, and we listened with keen enjoyment to songs given by Miss Butterworth, Miss Alice Baxter, and Miss Campbell, pupils of Madame Larkcom-Jacobs. Pianoforte solos were brilliantly performed by Miss Dorothy Goodland. All these ladies kindly gave their services for the cause.

The discussion was opened by Mrs. Despard, who, in a welcoming speech to the visitors from other societies, urged us to press on to our goal with good courage, for it was a good omen for the future of the movement that true chivalry was alive in the hearts of men as well as of women, and that women, who had up to the present been working strenuously for one social reform or another, were realizing that their work could have no permanent or really effective result until women were enfranchised, and were therefore joining the Suffrage ranks.

Mrs. How Martyn, our Honorary Secretary, who followed, reminded us that, although all Suffrage Societies had for their object one fundamental principle, viz., the removal of the sex disqualification to the franchise, they had not taken advantage of this point of agreement to work in harmony with each other at times of crisis, but had sought rather to accentuate the differences in their methods. Reviewing the history of the movement, she expressed the opinion that not only had much valuable energy been dissipated, but that, in the eyes of the indifferent or hostile public, positive harm had been done. It should be possible for all to concentrate in concerted action on a single common issue. This idea for a federation of Suffrage Societies, had been in many minds for some time, but had not come to fruition because the season had not been favourable. Now she thought that time had arrived, she would ask all societies to consider the project carefully, and she cordially invited expressions of opinion from all representatives of societies.

The suggestion of the federation of Suffrage Societies was

received with the keenest approbation by the audience, and Miss Llewellyn Davies immediately accepted the invitation to address the meeting.

Miss Llewellyn Davies, General Secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild (total 25,000 women), having endorsed Mrs. How Martyn's opinions, said that, although the Co-operative women were primarily associated in support of an economic principle, a recent decision in a Middlesbrough law-court had shown them that effective action on their part was impossible until they obtained the franchise. So keenly had this necessity impressed itself upon them, that they were doing all in their power to induce the Labour Party to frame an amendment to the King's Speech, should it contain no reference to Women's Suffrage. She would suggest that if the federation were formed, such an amendment might offer the first occasion for the concerted action of that federation.

Miss Davies further explained the attitude of the Women's Co-operative Guild to Mr. Dickinson's new Bill. A great majority of the Co-operative women, she said, are wives of working men, and therefore they are more especially concerned with the marriage disqualification.

The next speaker, Miss Bondfield, of the Adult Suffrage Society, congratulated Mrs. How Martyn on having given this opportunity for free discussion, and also on her suggestion for concerted action.

Mr. J. Malcolm Mitchell, speaking on behalf of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, also emphasized the need for friendly co-operation. The internal affairs of any individual society, its constitution, its methods, or its policy, no other society had any need or right to criticize, but this separate existence of the societies should not prevent cordial co-operation in all forms of propagandist work, and in such public expression of opinion as the previous speakers had indicated. They were all united on the single principle of the abolition of sex distinction in the parliamentary franchise, apart altogether from any results which it might have upon the balance of political parties. He called upon the societies to help one another in their meetings, and especially in promoting the success of *Women's Franchise*, which he regarded as an important asset to their common cause.

The meeting was appropriately concluded by a brilliant summary of the position by Mrs. Billington-Greig, the new Hon. Organizing Secretary, who pointed out the great value of a federation of societies to ensure joint action, and suggested as two suitable opportunities in which all could agree—first to endeavour to get an amendment to the King's Speech moved by any member or group of members on whom pressure could be brought to bear, and second to make use of our municipal votes in the manner suggested in the Scottish Notes of this issue.

E. M.

Meeting on Sunday on Clapham Common.

THE second open-air meeting on Clapham Common was held on Sunday, 13th inst., Mrs. Manson acting as chairman, and Miss Murby being chief speaker. Directly these ladies stood on the gravel mound, which served as a rostrum, there came running from all sides men, women, and children, and in two minutes a thick and densely packed crowd, by far the largest on the Common, surrounded the speakers.

Miss Murby dwelt on the so-called "objections" to Women's Suffrage, the answers to which, she said, had been so wearisomely iterated during the past forty years or more, it was nauseous to deal with them at all. The stupidity argument, the woman's sphere argument, the soldier argument, the acting under influence argument, &c., &c., were all ably dealt with. A laugh went round when in connexion with influence, she said young men were generally under the influence of *The Daily Mail*. Also when she spoke of the crewel-work mats to which women devoted themselves for lack of responsible work being, after all the labour, only in the way in the house. At the close of the meeting a Suffrage resolution was put and carried, copies of which are being sent to the Prime Minister and the local M.P.

Theory and Practice.

FULL of eager anticipation, I opened the daily paper to read about the great procession and demonstration of women in Edinburgh on Saturday. After a little search I discovered two small paragraphs, two inches in length, which recorded little more than the bare facts that there had been a procession and a mass meeting. The reason for the brevity was not far to seek, for both paragraphs ended with the plaintive cry, "the proceedings were most orderly," indicating that suffragists must not expect much notice unless they behave in a disorderly manner. The demand for justice by women must be accompanied by conflicts with the police and subsequent proceedings in the police court to attract the notice and arrest the attention of the average British voter. It happened, however, that the Head of the House, which is as autocratic where women are concerned as the House of Lords is to men, was in Edinburgh on that same day having a demonstration, and I found that, in spite of the *proceedings being of the most orderly description*, an account of a possible future attempt to try to reduce the arrogance of the House of Lords occupied rather more than three and a half columns.

This is fairly representative of woman's treatment by politicians. One man has forty times the space of 2,000 women allotted to him. The importance of the man in the eyes of the politician is about 80,000 times that of the women. This view through the ages has made woman's position intolerable, and it is time that women forced the conclusion upon the politician that his 80,000 estimate savours somewhat of conceit and must soon be a thing of the past.

As I read the speech it struck me how admirable the spirit of it would have been had it been spoken from a suffragist platform against the unwarrantable retention by the men of this country of the power which should be shared by women and men alike. But spoken by a Prime Minister, who refuses to extend to the women of this country the elementary justice which is the first fruit of a true Democracy, it sounds hollow and hypocritical in the ears of voteless women. He says, "We in this country have long since discarded the autocratic system of civil government, and the result has been unspeakable advantages to the Crown and to the people." I ask, Can Sir H. C. Bannerman agree with the judges that women are not persons? Do the people of this country begin and end with the male voter? Again he says, "The House of Lords, it would seem, knew more about your affairs in Edinburgh and the affairs of Manchester and Glasgow, and how they should be managed, than the municipalities of those great centres which feel where the shoe pinches." Substitute Commons for Lords, and for municipalities, women, and we have an exact expression of the feeling women have towards the legislation men provide for them, however well intentioned that may be.

Then he becomes pathetic when he records the melancholy and discouraging fact "that, within so short a space of the General Election, we should see that great demonstration of opinion, that great Constitutional verdict of public judgment, reversed and set aside by these irresponsible gentlemen who call themselves a Revising Chamber." What, then, must be the feelings of women who have time after time had their Bills talked out amid ribald laughter and coarse jest, by irresponsible gentlemen sitting in another House. This last session the attempt to make the mother a "parent," for the purposes of obtaining a certificate against vaccination, met with no success, and the women cannot remove such irresponsible gentlemen from their posts.

He waxes indignant over the Bills the House of Lords have had the temerity to destroy, but he is discreetly silent over the fact that he refused a day for the adjourned discussion of Mr. Dickinson's Bill, that the claims of women for citizenship could only be allowed a five hours' debate out of a six months' session.

We must not forget to be grateful for the Women's Local Qualification Bill; but is it not curious that, as it stands, no married woman in England will be eligible to sit on a Town Council, though Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's chief objection to Mr. Dickinson's Bill was that it would not extend the franchise to the bulk of married women?

In Sir Henry's own words, one only of which I have altered, let me appeal, then, to the Women Suffragists of this country:—

"You will meet the forces of privilege by enthusiasm. You will break down the citadel of private interests by that public spirit—the spirit of devotion to public causes which makes us proud and thankful to be Women's Suffragists. . . . The course we have to follow seems as clear as possible. Let us go along that course without flinching, without turning either to the right hand or to the left, and you may be sure that we shall ultimately attain to the fruition of all our desires."

EDITH HOW MARTYN.

NOTE.—The extracts from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's speech are taken from *The Daily News*, October 7th.

Men and the Universe.

SUFFRAGE news from the Hague is encouraging. We hear that the Government has submitted to the States-General a bill modifying the Constitution, to render possible the establishment of Universal Suffrage, Votes for Women, and the eligibility of women to Parliament.

The wording of the above is suggestive. Universal Suffrage signifies in the mind of man Manhood Suffrage. "Man is the race," he says, "woman the channel through which the race arrives." The dictionaries express it: "Man—a human being. Woman—the female of man." "Universal" is a big word; but men do not hesitate to apply it to their affairs because they have a big conception of their own place in the Cosmos. If they were reminded that the universe is rather a large place they would probably reply that all that part of it which could not be proved to bear a direct relation to themselves is not worth their consideration, and is therefore for them practically non-existent. Women are not so ambitious. All they demand is that they shall be allotted a recognized and honoured position upon this little planet.

London Branches.

Battersea.—Miss FitzHerbert, 9, Cambridge Mansions, Battersea.
Beckenham.—Miss Hazlewood, 35, King's Hall Road, Beckenham.
Clapham.—Miss Turquand, 1, Deauville Road, Clapham.
Croydon.—Miss Arter, 38, Blenheim Park Road, Croydon.
Central.—Miss Neilans, 11, Prima Road, Stockwell.
Fulham.—Miss Gardiner, 44, Brookville Road, Fulham.
Hackney.—Miss Scriven, 131, Homeleigh Road, Stamford Hill.
Nine Elms.—Miss Mansell, 2, Currie Street, Nine Elms Lane.
Northern Heights.—Miss Thompson, 43, Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End.

Tottenham.—Mrs. Self, 27, Varty Road, Stamford Hill.
Women who would like to hear more of the work of the Women's Social and Political Union are asked to write to the secretary of the branch in her district, or to the Secretary of the Central Branch. Until further notice the Central Branch will meet every Friday evening at 8 P.M. at 25, Wimpole Street, and all unattached members are heartily invited to attend the meetings, and to bring with them friends who would like to join the Union.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From October 17th to October 23rd.				P.M.
Fri.	Central Branch, 25, Wimpole Street	Members only		8
	Hackney, 24, Lower Clapton Road			8
	Battersea Borough Public Library, Lavender Hill			8
Sun.	Clapham Common	Miss Murby and others		3.15
Mon.	Willenhall Market Place	Mrs. Sproson		7.30
Wed.	Brookley, 124A, Adelaide Road	Miss Abadam		8
Nov. 14th	Lewisham	Mrs. Billington-Greig		8
		Mrs. Snowden		
Nov. 15th	Hackney	Mrs. Billington-Greig		8
		Mrs. Snowden		
Nov. 16th	Battersea	Mrs. Billington-Greig		8

* * All communications intended for the Women's Social and Political Union columns should be addressed to Mrs. How Martyn, 1, Marden Road, South Tottenham.

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

OFFICE: 38, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

Notes and Comments.

THE arrangements for the Queen's Hall meeting on December 17th are nearing completion. The tickets will be on sale by the 19th of this month. It has been decided to have a few 5s. tickets in the best rows of the sofa stalls. The rest of the tickets will be 2s. 6d., 1s., and 6d. The whole of the ground floor and the grand circle will be numbered.

The Committee is very fortunate in having secured the services of Mr. Benjamin Dale, who will give an organ recital from 7.30 to 8.

The hon. secretaries are glad to report that a number of members have signified their intention of assisting in the sale of tickets. It is very important that this work should be put in hand at once, and volunteers are earnestly requested to put themselves into communication with the hon. secretaries without loss of time. This meeting offers the first real opportunity to our members for active work on behalf of the League. Many members have come forward most generously in response to the Committee's suggestion for a guarantee fund. Those who cannot afford money can give equally important help in selling tickets and distributing bills.

As regards leaflets, the Committee have in mind a number of schemes. They need volunteers to distribute leaflets at public meetings of various kinds, to people standing in the queues of theatres, or on the platforms of suburban stations. Each leaflet will probably have propagandist matter on the back, so that the work of distribution will serve a double purpose.

A very striking feature in connexion with the offers of assistance in this department is the large proportion which come from the provincial towns. It is not making an invidious distinction when we say that the support and encouragement which we have received from non-metropolitan members is beyond all expectation.

The West of Scotland Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

THE members of the West of Scotland Men's League are congratulating themselves upon having now done something to justify their existence. The great meeting organized by them on Friday, October 4th, proved that in such cities as Glasgow there is a fine province for their efforts in the direction of bringing the Women's Suffrage Societies together for great combined demonstrations. St. Andrew's Hall was filled in every part by an intensely interested audience, made up largely of women, but with a good proportion of men who had come to enjoy the sallies of the Chairman Mr. R. B. Cunninghame Graham, and who remained to realize that our sex does not monopolize all the political genius in the world. Space does not permit me to quote more than a few sentences of Mr. Cunninghame Graham's address.

"The movement," he said, "had now reached a crisis in its history. People had almost ceased jeering and had begun to persecute. All movements went through one or two phases. First they were laughed out of court, then came persecution. In this case the persecution had not been entirely on one side. (Laughter.) If the brain of the average woman was inferior to the brain he observed upon the benches of the House of Commons then the brain of the average woman could not be remarkable for much specific density. (Laughter.) If Parliament was composed entirely of women, it could not possibly be more foolish than the present Parliament composed entirely of men. (Laughter.)"

Mrs. Despard, in moving the resolution, paid a tribute to the Men's League.

"She was standing," she said, "on the platform of the Men's League because she had been preaching for some time that this was a question which did not confront women alone, that it was a question for men as well as women, that, in fact, the interests of men and the interests of women could not be separated one from another."

This was the trend of her whole speech, and she concluded with these words:—

"We want men to stand beside women, the best and strongest, and the purest and noblest, to push on our nation to a finer and to a brighter and higher time than that we have lived through." (Cheers.)

Then followed Mrs. Philip Snowden, Miss Christabel Pankhurst, Mrs. Billington-Greig, and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence—all brilliant speakers, each pleading the cause in her own distinctive style, and each dealing with a different branch of the subject. We would have preferred to have had more male speakers, but we would not willingly have been without any one of the ladies who spoke so eloquently from our platform.

On the following day the West of Scotland Men's League were again in evidence. Armed with our own banners, we took part in the Edinburgh demonstration—the first of our sex, I believe, to march in a Women's Suffrage procession. We had two banners: the first, attached to a carriage filled with our office bearers, bore the legend "Scots wha hae votes—men"; the other, fixed to a carriage occupied by ladies, had the words "Scots wha haena votes—women." Many of our members walked, some even helped to carry the flags. As we passed through the streets of the beautiful city, where on every side a sea of amused faces were turned to us, we had a unique opportunity of gauging the attitude of the "man in the street" towards our movement. Working men called us "blacklegs"—not once but many times. Occasionally we were "traitors"! Is there then in the male sex a kind of instinctive trades unionism which seeks to exclude women from all political and economic freedom? If there is a sex war it is our sex that is waging it; but fortunately there are men in every town who are coming forward, having risen above this primitive instinct. As Mrs. Despard told us, the interests of both sexes are identical, and I look for the time when, should they be called upon, not a mere handful of the Men's League, but thousands of men will be found ready to march in a Women's Suffrage procession.

W. G. MOFFAT.

Christianity and Woman's Sphere.

IT is occasionally argued that the enfranchisement of women is contrary to the teaching of Christianity. Some aspects of this argument have been ably discussed in this journal in a recent article, in which the misapprehensions underlying them were very clearly set forth.

If we investigate the views held by the early Fathers of the Church on the subject of women, we shall see that they were strongly against any attempt on the part of women to extend their influence beyond the domestic circle, save in connexion with eleemosynary and similar work. The fact that such attempts were made is clear, and it is equally clear that the patristic writers regarded them with extreme dissatisfaction.

Let us take two examples from the fourth century, which indicate the attitude of two men who were in the front rank of intellectual and political authority. The Emperor Constantine the Great, under whom the Roman Empire became a Christian State, did not allow one woman to sue another in the law courts, and even objected to the "presence of women at the deliberations of men." The most famous of all the Greek Fathers, St. Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, and champion of

morality in the Church and in society, definitely insisted on the delimitation of the spheres of men and women. "Woman," he said, "can neither carry arms, nor vote in the assemblies, nor manage the commune, but she can weave thread, give better advice than her husband about domestic matters, superintend the servants, and bring up the children. Each sex has its special vocation."*

Now it is a very striking fact that these two prohibitions belong to a period of social evolution in which the position of women was beginning, largely under the influence of Christianity, to improve both absolutely and in relation to that of men. With this improvement both Constantine and Chrysostom were, to some extent, identified. The Emperor did much to give to women a more equitable legal status in respect of the authority held by their relatives, and in respect of property and succession. The quotation from Chrysostom, hostile as it may seem to a large number of women at the present day, implies an attitude of mind distinctly in advance of that which we find displayed by the intellectuals of pagan Rome, very few of whom really regarded women as more than the chattels of male relatives. Again, St. Augustine condemns, as the most unjust of all laws, the old pagan Lex Voconia (Voconian Law), passed about 160 B.C., which forbade a man who possessed a certain amount of property instituting a woman as his heir. Justinian prided himself on removing the legal disabilities of women, and on the whole the Christian emperor did much to destroy the old pagan sex distinction (see 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' ninth edition, article 'Women').

Still it remains true that the idea of a *femme politique*, unless, like Irene and Pulcheria, she occupied the throne, was scouted by the leaders of early Christianity.

What is the answer to this? Does it follow that we Suffragists must choose between the Fathers of the Church and Women's Suffrage? Unquestionably the answer is in the negative. For what do we find?

As a matter of fact there is no subject of importance on which the patristic writers differed so much as they did in regard to the position of women, scarcely any subject on which their ideas changed so much. Thus we find that some of the Fathers regarded celibacy as the *sine qua non* of masculine virtue in view of the assumed depravity of all the female sex. This view was supported and condemned at different times by theologians of equal distinction. Again, many early Fathers regarded a second marriage as merely a less sinful form of adultery, whereas their successors gradually came to regard re-marriage with merely mild disapproval.

We see, therefore, first, that Christianity made certain advances on the pagan idea of women, and secondly, that the views of early Christian leaders on particular points changed very materially from time to time.

But it may be argued that none of them advocated the recognition of women as citizens equally with men. That is probably true. But what is the explanation? Between the problems relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and that relating to suffrage there was for the patristic writers a fundamental difference. The former problems were part of the social system of the age in which these theologians lived: every thinking man was bound to deal with them at every turn. The Suffrage question, on the other hand, was in abeyance, not for women—in their case it had never been seriously raised—but for men. Since the fall of the free Roman Republic in the last century B.C., there had been no true political life for men. Augustus and his successors had gradually emasculated the old Republican *corpus*, until it had become but a grinning skeleton, form without content.

Therefore when Christianity came into the Roman State it came primarily as a moral or social force, not to re-vitalize a dead political fabric, but to attack the vicious social conditions of the empire which had been fostered by the destructive agency of a rotten Imperial Government. Christianity, bringing with it a new ideal of morality and decency, at once set to work to raise, *inter alia*, the position of women, and, as we have seen, to a great extent it succeeded. Had Christianity arrived at a time when

* See C. Schmidt's 'Social Results of Christianity' (English translation by Mrs. Thorpe, new edition, 1907).

Rome was agitated by a great franchise problem, it would have been natural for us to expect some guidance as to the moral issues involved in the *ius suffragii*, the question of adult suffrage and women's enfranchisement, from the pages of its early history. It is reasonable to infer that the same spirit which operated for the amelioration of the condition of women and children, the poor and the slaves, would have pointed to justice in electoral matters also.

The fact, then, that the Fathers were opposed to public life for women is attributable to the conditions in which they lived, and the problems with which pagan Rome had presented them. In its palmy days pagan Rome had regarded women negatively, as outside the sphere of individual existence; in its decline it regarded them positively, as something worse. The Christian Fathers improved on the latter; the former problem had practically never arisen.

Under modern conditions the parallel is again before us. The modern theologian has not to fight on the broad issue of the recognition of women as moral units; but he is faced with the question of women's enfranchisement. What happens? Just as one early Father condemned marriage as pollution, and another praised it as the expression of the purest human affection, so we find that the modern theologians are divided as to Women's Suffrage.

The fact is that Christianity and its leaders have all along dealt with each question as it has come up for solution, and every new reform has all along produced among the leaders of Christendom its opponents and its protagonists. There are many problems of pressing importance nowadays in which Christianity, apart from its fundamental dogmatic and moral teaching which applies to all subjects, gives no specific guidance. On the importance of moderation in food and drink Christianity is emphatic; but it provides no teaching as regards specific problems, such as Local Option and compensation for licences unrenowned. It gives general rules for the relations which should subsist between the nations, but it naturally does not solve the problem of their financial administration. This is perfectly natural; such problems had not arisen. What is really significant is that on a more specifically moral question the opinions of modern Christians should differ diametrically. For example, there were even at the beginning of the nineteenth century many Christian men who opposed the emancipation of the slaves; or, again, there are nowadays many who regard all offensive warfare as un-Christian, while others take a more lenient view of national obligation.

If, then, we compare the social position of women in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era or in Christian Rome during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. with that which obtains to-day, we shall see that it is altogether unreasonable to expect specific guidance as to any particular political problem. Though Christian ethics are the same now as then, the whole position is entirely different. Thus the passage from Chrysostom which has been quoted would forbid not only women's enfranchisement, but the presence of women in professions and trades. Granted that the extra-domestic activities of women are, in spite of Chrysostom's authority, not any longer an infringement of Christian principles, why should his condemnation of women-voters be regarded as still operative? The step from domesticity to the workshop is a much more fundamental change than that from votelessness to enfranchisement. The change from chattelhood to moral responsibility—which Chrysostom and Constantine the Great alike favoured—was the greatest change of all.

Christianity then was primarily and essentially a moral, not a political revelation. Christianity came into a society profoundly different from the society of to-day. Christianity has, through its human representatives, continually modified its attitude towards social problems, applying the same grand principles of justice and equity to each new case as it has arisen. We should be careful, therefore, when we are dealing with a *particular, modern, political* issue, lest, in condemning any progressive solution, we fall into the same error as those Early Fathers who condemned marriage, those well-meaning Christians who condemned the Abolitionist, those in all periods who have followed the letter and not the spirit.

OXONIENSIS.

* * * All communications intended for the Men's League columns should be addressed to the Editor, 38, Museum Street, W.C.

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Printed and Published Weekly by JOHN EDWARD FRANCIS at 13, Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane, E.C.—Thursday, October 17, 1907.