

The Common Cause

THE ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF

Oct. 3rd,
1912.

Vol. IV.
No. 182.



Women's Suffrage

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All Business Communications to be addressed to The Manager The Common Cause, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

Advertisements (Societies, Miscellaneous, etc.) must reach the Office (2 Robert Street) not later than first post on Tuesday.

Advertisements (Trade), S. R. Le Mare, Advertisement Agent, 21, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

Literary Contributions should be addressed to the Editor, The Common Cause, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C. The Editor, however, accepts no responsibility for unsolicited matter, and no manuscripts will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Correspondents are Requested to Note that this paper goes to press on Tuesday. The latest news, notices and reports should, therefore, reach the Editor by first post on Monday. The Editor reminds correspondents, however, that the work is made much easier if news is sent in as long beforehand as possible. Monday is only mentioned as the last day possible, not as the one upon which all news should arrive.

NOTICE.—This paper is obtainable at newsagents and bookstalls by mid-day on Thursday. If people have any difficulty in getting it locally they should write to the Manager, The Common Cause, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C., giving the name and address of the newsagent or bookstall from which they wish to be supplied.

Notes and Comments.

Resignation of the Editor.

Mrs. Swanwick resigned the Editorship of this paper on July 18th, and this is the last issue which will appear under her direction. Miss Clementina Black will, for the present, be acting editor.

Women's Suffrage and Home Rule.

In the *Daily News and Leader* of Monday is an article by Mr. H. W. Massingham suggesting that there should be one more "formal appeal to the electorate" before Home Rule is sent to the Lords. It may not be without interest in this connection to draw attention to an article in *The Freeman's Journal* of August 10th, in which it was pointed out with pride that in the course of this session some 500 meetings had been held in Great Britain in support of Home Rule. We have no means of discovering how many meetings there have been in support of Women's Suffrage during that time, but the National Union alone held over 1,000 important meetings. It seems likely that 3,000 would be well within the mark. In the autumn of 1910 it will be remembered that 4,200 meetings were held in three months in support of the Conciliation Bill. If it comes to "support in the country," there seems no question as to which of the two measures claims precedence.

The Llanystumdwy Incident.

A correspondent objects that in last week's short paragraph of twelve lines alluding to the Llanystumdwy incident, we did not express our horror and condemnation of the brutality shown to the women. She says that others will feel as she does. Probably. But a paragraph is not a manifesto or a treatise, and this paragraph made one point, which we think an important and interesting one, and perhaps not quite so often made by Suffragists, and therefore worth making. One can't say everything every time, and last week, and many times before, we have explicitly stated our condemnation of brutality, and we have never at any time printed a line to suggest that we condoned or advocated brutality. But when one observes the indifference shown by the mass of decent men to these brutalities, it is not unprofitable to try and find the explanation of this indifference, and we think the explanation is to be found very largely in the average man's exasperated scorn for "nagging." Many hard-working Suffragists and convinced anti-brutalists, who were present at the National Union's Albert Hall meeting last year, found the silly interruptions of Mr. Lloyd George a

very severe strain upon their resolution not to retaliate; it made some of them realise how such irritations might affect half-baked, half-savage men and women who are not Suffragists, and who have no convictions about brutality. Of course, we recognise the shameful cowardice of the men who mauled the women in Wales; of course, we recognise the remarkable courage of the women who know they are loosing hell by their little pipe; of course, we do not for one moment accept the plea that Mr. Lloyd George did all he could to check the brutalities, any more than we believe Mrs. Pankhurst could not stop militancy if she chose. These are merely the usual political fictions of the partisan.

Shaw, the Idealist.

Most people will find Mr. Bernard Shaw's contention that "political crimes are the worst of crimes" a very hard saying; but he was perfectly consistent with himself. You can't be a Socialist and hold that so much of the world's happiness should be vested in the State, and not also hold that offences against the State are the greatest of all, since they attack liberty and happiness in their stronghold. That is to say, you cannot unless you are a sentimentalist, and at one and the same time freely condone, or even admire, offences against government while calling for more and yet more government. We may admit that the ideal state ought not to be resisted, but the ideal state would consist of ideal persons, and most of us feel that until persons approach rather more closely to our ideal we do not want to place all our happiness in their hands. We doubt whether popular opinion will ever endorse Mr. Shaw's opinion, and he is probably the last to imagine that it ever will.

Men Whom Ladies Receive.

On August 8th we published a communication from Mr. John Cowen, of Colombo, on the white slave traffic as carried on in Crown Colonies, and especially in Colombo. We have now received some numbers of a little weekly news sheet, entitled *The Christian Watchman*, printed, published, and edited by Mr. John Cowen, who has courageously decided to cleanse Colombo by the only possible way—the way of light and air. In the first number (June 29th) there is a description of the impressions derived by a watcher of the "tolerated" houses of Colombo, so strangely placed in a street called "Reclamation Road," and of how the mere presence of a quiet observer with a note-book shamed some of the English men who frequent these houses, and whose demand it is that creates the supply of children of 11, 12, and 14 for purposes of prostitution. The writer declares that most of the patrons of these houses are not soldiers nor sailors and passengers, but *resident Englishmen*; "they are all men apparently of comfortable circumstances. Some of the young men show signs of good education, careful upbringing, and the influence of a good home. They are men who might, as far as appearance goes, be received by any lady in her drawing-room"—and we would add, "and marry that lady's daughter, and transmit to the innocent girl the wages of sin—death, disease, sterility, suffering and shame." How long will women let such things be when they know them? Not long, we think, and therefore we acknowledge with gratitude the courage of Mr. Cowen in publishing them. The paper can be ordered from Mr. John Cowen, c/o. Y.M.C.A., Racquet Court, Colombo (single copies, 25 cents; one month, Rs. 1.)

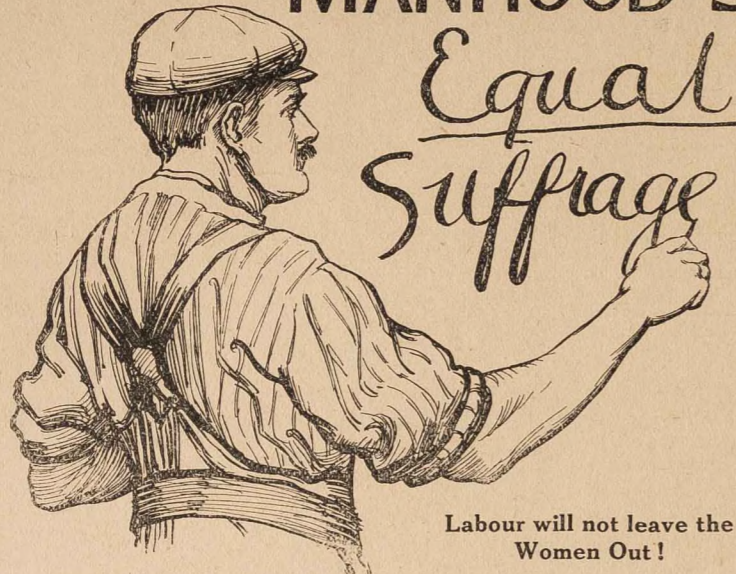
What Is and What Might Be.

We are not surprised to hear that the London Teachers' Association has declared against Women's Suffrage, although the women members preponderate largely over the men. We have headed this paragraph with the title of Mr. Holmes' great book, because if you have read that book you can understand and allow for the elementary-school teacher who has not yet begun to understand the use of liberty and personal dignity. It is the worst feature of a system such as that Mr. Holmes describes that it kills individuality and personal pride. "Egeria" would be sourly looked upon by our bureaucrats; Dr. Maria Montessori could scarcely have flowered beneath the influence of our Board of Education. Head-mistresses and teachers in secondary schools and University and medical women have all declared with overwhelming force their belief in enfranchisement, but one fears that, till they have liberated the elementary-school teachers, these last may scarcely know how even to desire liberty.

Read the "Daily Citizen."

Remember, the first number of the *Daily Citizen* appears on Tuesday, October 8th. It will be a halfpenny, and will not only support the Women's Suffrage movement, but will advocate the election policy of the National Union.

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LETTING THE CONSERVATIVE IN.

Last week we showed that our policy in the recent by-elections has already done much to achieve one of the objects for which it was adopted—viz., to persuade the Liberals and the Nationalists, who were responsible for the defeat of the Conciliation Bill, that it will be inexpedient for them to oppose the Women's Suffrage amendments to the Reform Bill. The success of our policy in this respect has consisted in shaking the Liberal position in Holmfirth (and indirectly in Ilkerton), and securing the loss of two Liberal seats in Crewe and Midlothian.

Is the success of the policy to be measured by the return or defeat of the Labour candidate?

So far, so good. But in none of these elections have we been able to secure the return of the Labour candidate. Have we not failed, therefore, in achieving the other two objects of our policy viz: (1) To increase the number of Members in the House of Commons who can be relied upon to vote for Women's Suffrage measures, and (2) to strengthen the party which is determined to insist on the inclusion of women in the Reform Bill.

There are two ways of increasing the number of Members who can be relied upon to vote for Women's Suffrage. One way is to secure the return of a new Member who is reliable. The other way is to take such action as will induce present unreliable Members to be reliable next time. If the return of one unreliable Conservative Member decides ten unreliable Liberal Members to support an amendment to the Reform Bill instead of opposing it (or abstaining) we may congratulate ourselves on the result. It would be a gain even if the Conservative were a thorough-going Anti-Suffragist. But there is little fear of any candidate being a "whole-hog" Anti-Suffragist nowadays. Experience has shown that there is nothing like a vigorous Suffrage campaign at election-time for educating both electors and candidates (it is wonderful how the candidate's education keeps pace with that of his electors!); and the invariable result of such a campaign—the establishment of a strong Women's Suffrage Society in the constituency—provides the best means of continuing the Member's education when he is in Parliament. How does the return of a Conservative strengthen the Labour Party?

But what about our other object—the strengthening of the Labour Party? How can that possibly be furthered by the return of a Conservative?

At first sight it looks as if the return of a Conservative must be pure loss to the Labour Party, and the Liberal Press, of course, makes the most of this view of the case. But is it a true view? By no means; and the Labour leaders know this well enough, though the rank and file of the Labour Party are sometimes imposed upon by the Liberal writers and orators, who implore them with such brotherly concern, "not to cut off their nose to spite their face." The real fact is that every seat lost by the Government owing to Labour opposition gives the Labour Party a greater power of influencing the Government's action in the immediate future, for two reasons: (1) Because the Government will be anxious to avoid increasing that opposition again, and (2) because the smaller the number of Liberal Members in the House of Commons the more dependent the Government becomes on the support of the other sections of the Coalition. This means that, as a result of Crewe and Hanley, the Labour Party will have a greater voice in determining the character of the measures which the Government puts forward. One of the chief causes of the present dissatisfaction of the Labour Party with the Government is the exclusion of women from the Reform Bill, which professes to make the House of Commons "for the first time truly representative of the people." When the Labour Party talks of "the people" it means the whole people, women as well as men; and it has declared that it will use all the power it possesses to prevent the passage of the Reform Bill without an amendment to include women. It is for this reason that Suffragists have been endeavouring—and will continue to endeavour—to increase its power; and no one who understands the inner working of party politics will deny that the recent by-elections have had that result, even though no Labour candidate has been returned.

The defeat of a Liberal (provided he is not a "tried friend" of Women's Suffrage) is worth while even if an Anti-Suffragist Conservative gets in.

With the Labour Party's influence strengthened in the House of Commons, the Liberal Party managers and the Nationalists

alarmed, and unreliable Liberals provided with an object-lesson which may make them keep their promises next time, we need have no misgivings about "letting the Conservative in." Even if he were a downright Anti-Suffragist—which was not the case either in Crewe or Midlothian—the single loss would be outweighed by the three-fold gain.

Vale.

"I daresay many of the readers of this paper would not agree with me. But I have never regarded newspapers as places for people to agree in; if ever they completely become so (as they sometimes show signs of doing) I shall take to boardings or pamphlets or paving-stones or some other surfaces on which to inscribe my views."—G. K. Chesterton (*Daily News and Leader*, Saturday, 28th September, 1912).

In taking my leave of the paper which I have edited since its foundation, three and a-half years ago, I beg my readers to allow me to speak for once in my own person.

"The Common Cause" was started under many and considerable difficulties. It had to be ready with only a few weeks' preparation and with no staff. I was Editor-Manager, and for some months had no assistance but that of one clerk-bookkeeper. The office had to be in Manchester. With regard to women's suffrage the paper was to represent the policy and publish the news of the National Union, but it was legally debarred at that time from being the organ of the Union. It became the property, therefore, of an independent limited liability company. It was brought into being by the generosity of Miss Margaret Ashton, and many voluntary helpers made the work possible. Never was the way of a venturesome ignoramus more kindly smoothed than mine. Now that we have all the business equipment of an ordinary weekly paper I look back with some amazement to the progress we made in our first year. No one knows so well as I what the paper owed to the help given by the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian," by our first accountants, Messrs. Gillies and Smith, and by our first printer, Mr. John Percy of the Hotspur Press and his employees.

The particular objects which I set before myself were twofold: to make "The Common Cause" primarily a paper for educated women, and therefore one which would have to be reckoned with by politicians as representing the views and interests of educated women—I do not, of course, restrict the term "educated" to those women who have received university education; there are many kinds of education and, to my way of thinking, many of the best sort of working women are far more educated in the ways of life and of humanity than ladies who do no work. It was not part of my desire or intention to do over again what is already being done by others. I saw no paper doing what I wanted the "Common Cause" to do, and it seemed to me far better to give the paper a character of its own than to adopt processes by which other papers with other ideals succeeded. A newspaper cannot have it all ways, and if it eschews sensationalism it will have to wait for success. Such success has seemed to me worth waiting for.

But, of course, the chief object of the paper, the reason for its foundation at that time, was to help forward the political enfranchisement of women by constitutional methods of organisation, education and peaceful political action. In a paper which is to be the organ of such work there is practically nothing human that is irrelevant. Everything there is in modern society is an "argument" for women's suffrage, and the more widely we can throw our net of interest, the more we shall find men and women who are led to belief in our cause through the particular interest they have in some department of life. If you touch upon questions of education you attract the teachers and graduates; if you write of health or morality you take the doctors and nurses and clergy with you; the housewives and domestic workers are keen on matters affecting domestic service; housing and poor law and prisons and licensing and taxation, and industry—we will not continue the list—everything there is has its social and therefore its political side. I took the world for my province, and it seemed to me better than a narrower interpretation of the common cause.

For in choosing the title of "The Common Cause" my meaning was the recognition of humanity as bi-sexual; the recognition that there were no "women's questions" and no "men's questions," but that all were human questions. The bother with the mass of the Press of the country is that it does not recognise that human questions like war, or the birth-rate, or tariffs, or a miners' eight-hour day have quite as much to do with women as with men, and ultra-mannish papers like the "Westminster Gazette" scarcely print anything rational about women, palming

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off on them, as women's interests, the fashion drawings and chatter which are the recognised ways of promoting commercial enterprises run in the interests of men.

I am a bad partisan. The pure partisan bores me to extinction, because she is intellectually dead. Her mind is closed to impressions; you know what she is going to say before she says it; she has nailed her colours to the mast, and when she opens her lips it is to utter a war-cry, not a thought. The deadly monotony of a partisan paper is almost criminal; its fundamental untruthfulness is quite criminal. I have never considered it my business to defend women as women, right or wrong, or to refrain from commenting on or criticising the actions of women as frankly as the actions of men. To me the notion that woman is to be immune from criticism is a stuffy and depressing notion; the very people who are most imbued with the idea that men are always unfair to women are those who are most insistent that women must never criticise, still less laugh at their fellow-women! This seems to me a hopelessly obscurantist doctrine; there is no lesson women need more than that of taking criticism robustly; these people would suppress the women's view of women (unless it were one of undiluted adulation) and regard the men's view as necessarily tainted.

Holding these opinions about the wholesomeness of criticism, I have never been able to see that it does the cause of women's suffrage any good at all to refrain from criticising militant suffragists who, in my opinion, are doing considerable immediate harm and far more considerable ultimate harm. I constantly hear them say, "Why can't you work in your way and let us work in our way?" To me this is exactly like saying to a bricklayer, "Why should you object to my pulling down the wall you have with much labour built up? You work in your way and I work in mine!" It is because I believe intensely in our way of working that I resent the destruction of our work by the W.S.P.U. When the National Union organises a great meeting and the W.S.P.U. attends it in order to interrupt and insult our guest and speaker, I regard this as a clear act of hostility, and though I am immensely proud of the self-control shown by the National Union in not being tempted into any retaliation, I see no beauty in sentimentalising away our differences. They are great and vital and I will be no party to making light of them.

Really astute politicians would have known how to use the Franchise Bill for their own purposes; the W.S.P.U. have not known how to use it and they are doing their utmost to prevent our using it. I regard them as the greatest danger we have. If politicians were bigger men, the danger would be less. It remains to be seen of what stuff the men are made.

H. M. SWANWICK.

The Purchasing Power of Women.

In your review of Mrs. Billington-Greig's book "The Consumer in Revolt," you acknowledge the importance of her discovery of the consumer. Conclusions very similar to hers were borne in upon me some time ago as a result of a close acquaintance with the co-operative movement. Within that movement two main conceptions of co-operation exist, one of which has been admirably stated by Mr. T. Tweddell, in a paper read before the British Association on "The Co-operation of Consumers." Beginning with this conception one may go on to some quite startling facts. Our whole industrial system begins and ends with the consumer. Uneducated and unorganised, the consumer is a universal prey, whose "good-will," frantically competed for, is daily bought and sold, Organised and educated, the consumer might control the economic world. And, for the most part, "the consumer" ultimately is simply an economic name for the essential woman, the housewife.

Hence, in the co-operative magazine the "Wheat-sheaf," some months ago, I wrote:—

"In all these (industrial) questions it is usual to think only of capital and labour, but to secure genuine advantages to the people it is necessary to consider capital, labour, and the

To-day's Daily News announces that in one ward in Manchester the municipal election is to be fought on the Land Tax Campaign question.

A SUFFRAGIST DOCTOR OF 1798. It may interest your readers to know that in the year 1798 there was a Radical politician who was not afraid to advocate the enfranchisement of women.

20, Pitoullen Terrace, Perth. September 26th, 1912.

Forthcoming Meetings.

ARRANGED BY THE NATIONAL UNION (The meetings are given only a fortnight in advance.)

- Sunderland—Y.M.C.A. Hall—"Autumn Market" 6.0
Bristol—The Coliseum—suffrage stall—The Misses Chate 12.10
Brighton—Rottingdean—open-air meeting—Mrs. Toyne, Mrs. Timpany, B.A. (chair) 3.30

- Leigh—Co-operative Hall—Mr. G. G. Armstrong, Miss Margaret Robertson, Mr. J. H. Stephen (chair) 7.30
Bristol—The Coliseum—suffrage stall—Mrs. W. C. H. Cross, Miss David 12-10
Croydon—34a, Arcade, High Street—Mrs. Dempster "At Home" for business employees 3.30

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- OCTOBER 6. Westminster Men's Adult School Hop Gardens—St. Martin's Lane—Speaker, Miss I. B. O'Malley 9.0
Dulwich—I.L.P.—Hansler Hall—Lordship Lane—Speakers, Miss Agnes Dawson, on Women's Suffrage. 7.30

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- OCTOBER 3. Kirkealdy—Sauchendene—Dr. Elsie Inglis 5.0
October 4. Dundee—12 Meadowside—"At Home" 8.0
October 5. Dundee—12 Meadowside—Scottish Federation Executive meeting 2.30

MEETINGS ADDRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE UNION. Birmingham—Somerset Road, Handsworth—Men's Brotherhood—Mrs. King 3.0

MISS ABADAM'S ENGAGEMENTS. October 4 (Free Church League W.S.), Whitwell Lodge, Newcastle-on-Tyne ... 3

PREPAID ADVERTISEMENTS. Not exceeding 10 words: 1 insertion, 9d. 2 insertions, 1s. 3d. 3 insertions, 1s. 6d. 4 insertions, 2s. 0d. 5 insertions, 2s. 6d.

SUFFRAGE NOTICES.

LEIGH—Co-operative Hall. Mr. G. G. Armstrong, Miss Margaret Robertson, Mr. J. H. Stephen (Chair) October 8th at 7.30.

TWO SUFFRAGE DIALOGUES, 3d. each. Comedy. 6d.—"S." Fordel, Glenfarg.

GOD'S WORD TO WOMEN has never been a word of disapproval and suppression. The Bible encourages the development of woman, and stands for her perfect equality with man.

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FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

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SCHOOL of PHARMACY for WOMEN. Moderate fees. Recent passes 100 per cent. Mrs. Wood-Smith, M.P.S., 21, Blenheim Road, Bedford Park, W.

POSITIONS VACANT AND WANTED.

ORGANISER, experienced in suffrage work, required for Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society. Applications to be sent not later than October 21st to the Hon. Secretary, 35, Windsor Place, Cardiff, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

WANTED, a Lady gardener; Liberal non-militant Suffragist preferred.—Apply by letter, or personally to Mrs. Walter Duncan, Duneraig, Charnmouth, Dorset.

NURSE desires post, excellent nursing and sanatoria experience; amanuensis; bright and refined; London; daily preferred.—Nurse, 10, Kimberley Road, Clapham, S.W.

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