

Suffragette

Edited by Christabel Pankhurst.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT DRUGGING.

Nearly all prisoners who have been forcibly fed of recent times complain that they have now to battle with an overpowering feeling of drowsiness and a sense of great muscular weakness. Those doctors who have seen and spoken to these prisoners on their release are unanimous in thinking that sedative or hypnotic drugs are responsible for this extreme listlessness and mental inhibition, and it will be remembered that it has been proved by competent pathologists that these drugs have been excreted by the prisoners in quantities diminishing day by day from the date of their discharge.

Most doctors are agreed that the administration of sedative and hypnotic drugs is a course which should be most carefully safeguarded, and only sanctioned after due consideration of the many evil effects and results that frequently follow their use. Treatment by bromides and such like drugs, which used to be and still is carried out by some doctors for certain mental diseases, e.g., epilepsy, is a practice which has been strongly and energetically denounced by many authorities on this subject. The gradual mental impairment which follows in many cases of epilepsy has been emphatically stated by the same authorities to be the direct result of the administration of sedative drugs and not the result of the disease. In any case we know that the results of prolonged treatment by these drugs produces dullness and lethargy of the mind, in other words mental torpor; the memory is deficient and the intellectual processes are slowed, and this state of affairs ultimately leads to irritability, deficiency of moral tone, and finally the organic deterioration of the mind.

This treatment might make the operation of forcible feeding more easily accomplished, but the accompanying gastric and cardiac distress, together with the loss of sensation in the throat and elsewhere, and the extreme weakness in addition to the mental effects already detailed, will inevitably and more surely lead to the failure of forcible feeding as in the past; moreover the condition of the patient on release will be even more grave, and the chances of complete recovery more remote.

According to a press announcement the Prison Authorities deny that sedative or hypnotic drugs of any kind have been given to prisoners who have been forcibly fed, and they further announce "that it would be shown that drugs were being conveyed to prisoners in order that they might be made violently sick after being forcibly fed."

Drugs to produce this alleged effect can in no way be confounded with drugs such as the bromides, the action of which is, as we have already detailed, and never give rise to sickness—in fact they counteract vomiting. The former drugs (for causing sickness) are commonly called emetics, and are used for the same purpose that mustard and hot water or salt and water are given. Their effect is temporary, and in no way could they lead to the same disastrous results to mind and body as the bromides or other sedative or hypnotic drugs,

(Signed) FRANK MOXON, M.B., B.S.
C. MANSELL MOULLIN, M.D., F.R.C.S.

It is alleged that Miss Grace Roe, a Suffragist prisoner who is under forcible feeding torture in Holloway Gaol, has attempted to take a drug which would make her sick after forcible feeding, and thus compel her speedy release.

The Government's answer to the charge of drugging prisoners is, in short, that they drug themselves. This is a deliberate and shameful piece of dishonesty on the Government's part.

It is not denied on behalf of Miss Grace Roe that she has drugged, or attempted to drug herself, but that does not destroy the other fact that the Government have been drugging her and other prisoners.

There are, indeed, two forms of drugging in question—that practised by the Government upon Miss Roe and other prisoners and that practised, or attempted to be practised, by Miss Roe upon herself.

The prisoner's object in seeking to take the drug said to have been found in her possession, is to secure escape from the far more terrible form of drugging inflicted upon her by the Government. In other words, the prisoner tried to drug herself to get OUT of prison dead or alive—the Government are drugging her to keep her IN prison.

The drug which Miss Roe attempted to take is dangerous, in the sense that while it might effect its purpose of compelling her release, it might, on the other hand, prove suddenly fatal. But she was prepared to run the risk of death because of the much more appalling danger by which she is faced as a consequence of the forcible drugging which the Government apply to her.

The consequence of the Government's drugging—as we show, on medical authority, in this issue—will be to cause dementia if it is continued. It is not merely the life of the prisoners that is at stake. What is far worse, their sanity is at stake.

It will be remembered that some time ago the prison doctor distinctly and deliberately said to Miss Mary Richardson, a forcibly-fed prisoner, that if she did not surrender, the Government would reduce her to the condition of a mental wreck, so that she would have to be placed in an institution where such wrecks are detained. It is by drugging that the Government seek to carry this threat into effect.

To those who know the mental force, the indomitable will-power, and splendid morale of Miss Grace Roe, it will be obvious that, to her, death is infinitely preferable to the mental and moral destruction to which the victims of the Government's drugging are doomed unless they can save themselves or be saved by others. The point of view of Miss Nellie Hall and the five others who are at present being forcibly fed, is precisely the same as hers.

It is in order to save herself from the appalling fate which the Government, by drugging her, are preparing for her that a Suffragist prisoner has resorted to the desperate expedient of taking another and a different drug, which would quickly free her, either by killing her, or by forcing the Government to unlock the prison door and let her go.

MORE ABOUT HIS MAJESTY'S POLICE. The Treatment of Women on King's Thursday.

As days pass more details reach us of the barbarous treatment meted out to members of the deputation to the King on 21st May. The accounts published below prove that the Police had been given to understand that they could do anything they liked to the women, in order, if possible, to break down their resolution to go forward with their leader to Buckingham Palace.

The Scene on Constitution Hill.

"I shall never forget the women's self-sacrifice, for it seemed at times as if they must be killed."

I was a member of the Deputation to the King, on 21st May, and walking close to Mrs Pankhurst. No attempt was made to arrest her going up Grosvenor Place, and I hoped everything might be well after all, and that perhaps the King had changed his mind and would receive our leader and a few others. But when we got to the arch on Constitution Hill the gates were hurriedly shut, and mounted police on horses began dashing about, trying to ride down the women who had reached the gates. The whole affair was like a battlefield. Women trying to get through the gates and others holding on to the bridles of the horses to prevent damage being done. I was at one time in a rather unfortunate position, being squashed against the railings by the hind quarters of a horse; luckily it was too much upon the top of me to kick.

The women behaved with the most conspicuous courage. I shall never forget the self-sacrifice shown, for it seemed at times as if they must be killed. The police, both mounted and on foot, were the roughest men I have yet come across. They were not content with knocking us about and hitting us, but actually threw us down with all their force when some way from the gates.

I was Sent Flying.

I was sent flying several times. Luckily on most occasions I was able to catch hold of some one so as to break the fall, but in one instance so terrific was the force used that I brought down another girl with me. On another occasion I was pushed headlong by a policeman into a crowd of men, and within a few minutes I was surrounded by the biggest collection of cowards it has ever been my lot to come in contact with. They pushed me down the hill and I was kicked on the legs. Had it not been for the valiant conduct of three men (one of them a clergyman) who came to my rescue I should without doubt have been trampled under foot. It was all that my protectors could do to keep me and myself on their feet.

Eventually I and another girl who came to the rescue were pushed by the police into a taxi cab, but after driving a short way we got

out and returned to the scene. One man remarked "I see you are back," I said "Yes, I am not afraid of cowards like you."

Worse than Black Friday.

Most of the mobbing seemed to be instigated by plain clothes men. It seemed as if they were out to terrify us and break our nerve down. I was out on Black Friday, and have been on several deputations, but I have never seen women so disgracefully treated before, or our women so inspiringly courageous—the elderly ones in particular.

After protesting at the gate for over two hours at not being allowed to pass through, I had to leave through sheer exhaustion, but when I recovered later I was able to make a further protest. It appeared orders had been given not to arrest but to knock the women about as much as possible. Needless to say, this brutality only made me more determined than ever never to cease fighting till women are treated as human beings, and until they have the protection of the vote, for no voters would have been knocked about as we were that Thursday for peacefully going to see their Sovereign!

E. K. M.

A Sight Not Easily Forgotten.

The Rev. Cyril Isherwood, who was a witness of what took place on King's Thursday outside Buckingham Palace, writes as follows:—

To see those hundreds of police many of whom were mounted, and also a number of soldiers with bayonets, waiting to drive back and arrest a number of women who were coming to claim their right, was a sight not easily forgotten, and only showed to what lengths brute force and coercion will go, especially when the Law backs it up.

TWO OR THREE HUNDRED MEN AGAINST ONE WOMAN.

I was passing Hyde Park corner on 21st May about 4.45, and within a space of five minutes, I saw on two occasions a mob of two or three hundred men assault and rush one woman. When police appeared it was not to protect or even to arrest the woman, but to hustle and assault her further, and judging from their smiles and ejaculations to various members of the attacking mob, they were apparently in league. On each of these two occasions I saw a clergyman endeavouring to protect the woman, warding off blows and receiving some himself.

As an onlooker I was struck by the hundreds of plain-clothes men present, many of whom were endeavouring to misrepresent the woman's aims to the genuine onlookers.

I noticed some men talking volubly to a crowd, when a woman standing by corrected them. The crowd then urged the men to cease talking, and let the woman put her point of view, in which they seemed much interested. Although this knot of people were perfectly quiet and obstructing no one, they were, with the exception of the men who had been speaking, suddenly ridden down by mounted policemen.

F. M. R.

Let the Men Surrender!

A Frenchman's Comment.

Writing in "Le Journal," the Paris newspaper, which lately took a poll of its readers on the question of Votes for Women, M. Gustave Téry says:—

Have you noticed the pictures that reach us from London? Policemen who hurl themselves upon Suffragettes—these solid fellows who drag young girls in the mud; this pink and white giant who lifts Mrs Pankhurst from the ground, gripping her with all his force, in a way that is enough to crush her!

Are there people who find these scenes comic? I confess that to me they appear painful. The little that one knows of the British heart, and the legendary urbanity that policemen show to "ladies," makes such a spectacle appear all the more paradoxical and grievous.

Will anyone say that all this is as it should be, and that the Suffragettes are not particularly interesting?

I dare to confess that to me the Suffragettes are very interesting indeed. It is not that one necessarily approves of their violent manifestations, but, however reprehensible these may be, they cannot prevent us from recognising the justice of the claims which these women are making.

It is evident that the Suffragettes are in the wrong when they attack pictures, but that does not prove that men are in the right when they refuse to give them the Vote. The men show, in fact, that they have no serious argument against Votes for Women, except their fists.

So long as the force of men suppresses the rights of women, it is certainly deplorable, but it is not astonishing, that the women militants shall seek to overcome violence by violence. And one asks in vain by what mistaken view of their own interest or self-respect, men still hesitate to confess themselves beaten in this unequal war, where women, the weaker sex, become necessarily the stronger, because, even in their worst extravagances, they have right on their side.

If the men surrender now, will they not have everything to gain by their surrender?

Of Vital Importance to Men and Women.

A W.S.P.U. member writes:—

I lent a copy of Miss Pankhurst's book to a charming girl friend who at last was interested in the woman's movement. I asked her to read it first, and then if she thought it wise to pass it on to her fiancé. On Sunday last he came up to me and said, "I must apologise to you for not returning your book, but I must get you a new one." I wondered for a moment if he was going to tell me he had put it in the fire, but no, he said, "I read it three times over and then passed it on to the men in our works." He then told me it was just splendid, and badly wanted, as numbers and numbers of men are absolutely ignorant on a subject which is of such vital importance to both men and women.

"SHE LOVED NOT HER LIFE UNTO THE DEATH." (Revelations, xiii., 11).

Passages from a Sermon by the Rev. Canon Todd at St George's, Bloomsbury Square, on 6th June, 1914, at a Memorial Service in commemoration of the death of Emily Wilding Davison.

We are assembled here to commemorate our sister, who, twelve months ago, passed from us into the presence of our God. And short as human memory is, there is, of course, no need that I should say a single word to anyone to recall to your minds who she was, what she did, and how the end came, for that is all as fresh in our memories as it was twelve months ago when we met, many of us, in this church, and her coffin, containing all that was mortal of her, halted here for a short time on its way to its long home. But I wish to speak rather of our meeting to-day and what it must bring home to ourselves, and its own lessons; and first of all with regard to our dear sister departed herself. Where is she now? We answer with a full faith and a strong belief—"the souls of the faithful are in the hands of God." And so to-day we reach out our hearts in longing desire to penetrate on to the other side, and to commemorate one who, we believe, still lives in God; still bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord God.

And then, for those of us who are alive, and remain, we are glad, yes, we are glad to take this opportunity of replying, by our prayers, and our attendance here, to those who censured and sneered a year ago. We were told that we were carried off our feet by a transient wave of sentimentalism; that we had lost our foolish heads in the excitement of the moment, and that when we recovered from our drunken enthusiasm, we would do penance in sackcloth and ashes. Beloved, I trust we do repent of our sins every day, but there is one thing that none of us have any need to repent of in the sight of God, and the elect angels, and that is our admiration for the woman whom we are now commemorating.

And so with regard to ourselves, we are here to try and kindle once more, our own souls to enthusiasm by the example of her spirit. We are trying to get shot through to the grey fabric of our souls, something of that silken fibre which formed the tissue of which her spirit was woven. We are here to commemorate for our own soul's benefit, that glorious spirit which she displayed. I say that glorious spirit: of the act itself, we do not presume to offer our trifling criticisms. The world has talked much of that deed, and criticised it, going over and over again all the points, and we can only answer as we have answered all through the year that is passed: "They say. What say they? Let them say."

Of all the foolish decisions pronounced by untrained intellects, none are more fatuous or futile, than these offered in the sphere of

ethics and casuistry, where those who have had no training, and who indeed, have no principles on which to go, invent their canons of criticisms as they go along, and therefore reach, by apparent reasoning, exactly the result which they had already reached by passion. And so when they tell us that she died by her own act; she imperilled other lives, and this and that, we say "Go on, dear advocate of the devil. Go on and say all that you have got to say; but we will answer you only by the words of One who is greater than any of us, 'Her sins which were many are forgiven, because she loved much.'"

As a Christian priest it is my duty to remind you that Christianity is a spirit and not a law; a principle within the heart, and not a series of codified duties; an enthusiasm, an exaltation of the soul, not a mere catalogue of prohibited actions. Laws of conduct are indeed most useful. They are useful for you and me in our humdrum lives, to keep us straight in the path of duty; but just as laws of grammar are useful to the student, but literature is something more than grammar, so the laws of ethical conduct are good, but the enthusiasm of the Christian soul, and the nobility of the Christian life, are something far more precious in the sight of the elect angels than any catalogue of duties and sins.

It is not our sister's act but her inspiration that we venerate. She acted because in her soul she believed that she saw her opportunity had come. It was no foolish discussion as they would have us believe about some political question that stirred her anguish, and her wrath, and her indignation. She saw womanhood defrauded of its just rights. She saw virginity an easy commercial prey. She saw humanity itself going astray because one half was so cruelly misunderstood in its position, its responsibilities, and duties; and then, in one glad moment, seeing, as she certainly thought she saw, her great opportunity, she sprang and embraced it—"She loved not her life unto the death."

But is such devotion so common in this world, is this exaltation of the spirit such a drug on our markets that we can afford to despise it? Shall we not venerate, shall we not love, shall we not commemorate her who blossomed out as a beautiful flower on the rugged shrub of humanity, and shall we not thank God, yes, in our sorrow thank God, that such things are possible to men. Do not stop at the words of my text, but take the next two after them: "They loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice."

CONTRIBUTIONS, March 26 to April 29, not acknowledged earlier as Books, etc., were taken by THE POLICE.

April 9.

Table of contributions to the Self-Denial Fund, listing names and amounts.

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