

# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

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THE prospects for the present Session of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill will be decided ere another number of this *Journal* reaches the hands of its readers. Wednesday, April 26th, is the day fixed for the second reading of the Bill. We entreat all who are interested in the fate of the measure to make the best of the time that remains to them, and to use whatever influence they can bring to bear that can have a favourable effect on the division. Among these influences none is more valuable or effectual than the exercise of the constitutional right of petition. To women especially this course is commended, seeing that the right of petition is the one shred of constitutional privilege which connects them with the House of Commons. Men have other means of influencing the Legislature. They can express their sentiments through the ballot box; and though this circumstance gives to the petitions of men a weight which cannot belong to the petitions of the disfranchised, it is none the less incumbent on women who desire an extension of their constitutional rights to be diligent in the use of those which they possess.

The absence of petitions against the measure is a very significant circumstance. It may be taken as very strong presumptive if not conclusive evidence of the absence of any strong feeling of opposition to the proposal in the country. Great stress has been laid on this argument in the case of the Royal Titles Bill. Perhaps no proposal that was ever introduced by responsible ministers was received with a stronger expression of dislike and distrust by the Opposition and by the independent newspaper press. The dislike, we might call it aversion, to the measure was based on purely sentimental grounds, but it was so strong that had the Opposition been supported by a demonstration of feeling throughout the country in the form of numerous petitions against the Bill, ministers might have found it difficult to carry their proposals into law against such an expression of popular sentiment. One honourable member has given notice for a return of the number of petitions presented against this Bill, with particulars respecting the numbers who signed them. This has been done presum-

ably to show the insignificant character of the demonstration which has been made against it. The argument is a sound one, for although it may be that there exists in reality a much stronger sentiment of opposition than that which has found expression through petitions, yet hidden feelings do not count; and if people will not take the trouble to ask for what they want, or to express their objections to that which they dislike by the constitutional methods open to them, they have no right to complain if their views are overlooked, and if Parliament and the country should decide on the evidence which is tendered to them as to the real sentiments of the people.

Judged by this standard, the advocates of women's suffrage are in a proud and strong position. The number of petitioners for this measure hugely exceeds the number of those who express their sentiments on any other subject, and there are none against it. We claim to have the benefit of this exposition of sentiment. Not this year only, but for the last ten years, has there been a continuous and increasing stream of petitions for justice from the women citizens of the realm; and as none petition that this justice shall be longer withheld, we may urge with effect that the time has come to grant the prayer.

Notice of opposition to the Bill has been given by Viscount FOLKESTONE, one of the members for South Wilts. It appears as if the former leaders of the opposition were becoming discontented with their position. Last year the opponents were so eager for the fray that, at a much earlier period of the session, two members of some distinction on either side of the House—Mr. LEATHAM and Mr. CHAPLIN—had simultaneously given notice of opposition. Now these doughty champions, both men of mark in their own way, have seen fit to retire from the fore-front, and are apparently contented to fight the battle of resistance to the constitutional claims of their countrywomen under the leadership of a young nobleman, who, so far as we know, has not succeeded in distinguishing himself in any other way in the brief period during which he has occupied a seat in the House of Commons. In the last Parliament, the opposition was led by Mr. BOUVERIE, one of the mem-

bers of most consideration in the House. As this right honourable gentleman lost his seat at the general election, his mantle descended to Mr. CHAPLIN and Mr. LEATHAM. We are unaware of the conditions which have induced these gentlemen to relinquish their honours, but we may venture to assert that these, such as they are, have again made a descent. It would not be surprising if the ungracious task of opposition to so moderate and reasonable a demand as that preferred in Mr. FORSYTH'S Bill should become distasteful to high-minded and honourable men, and we would fain accept this as an explanation of the change in the tactics of our opponents.

Since the last division twenty-one members have been removed, from various causes, from the House of Commons. Of these, seven were supporters of the Bill, thirteen opponents, and one neutral. One vacancy, Norwich, has not been filled. The new members include the original Parliamentary champion of the Bill, Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, who returns to the House of Commons with renewed and increased political strength, in time to render his powerful aid in the approaching debate and division; Mr. PETER RYLANDS, who seconded the adoption of the clause conferring the municipal franchise on women, and who has always steadily supported the Bill, and three other members who have pledged themselves in its favour. The thirteen opponents who have been removed have been succeeded by others whose sentiments remain to be tested, but among them there is not one who has previously opposed the measure, and there is reason to believe that the Parliamentary changes during the year are on the whole favourable to the prospects of the Bill. Much depends on the efforts made by its friends both in and out of the House of Commons to secure a favourable division, and from all the indications that reach us we are justified in expressing the confident hope that the next step we have to record will be one of great and substantial progress.

DURING the month that has just closed, there has passed from among us one whose great though unostentatious services to the cause of the enfranchisement of women demand more than ordinary notice. We have in another column recorded the death of Mr. THOMAS THOMASSON, with some of the circumstances which render the event one of deep and mournful interest to those connected with the movement. It is impossible for any but those who had the privilege of working with him to apprehend the magnitude of the loss that has been sustained; and possibly the most just estimate of this loss might be formed by men who

have had experience of the value of his services in the political struggles of the last generation. The Anti-Corn-Law workers of thirty years ago, and the promoters of every measure of reform that has been brought forward since that period, knew the worth of Mr. THOMASSON'S support, and these are best able to appreciate that which we lose in losing him. We would appeal to his old political friends and associates to let the remembrance of the help he gave them in their efforts to remove the fetters which bound the industry and life of the nation, when they were commencing their political career, plead for their aid in pressing forward that cause of political and social reform which engaged his active help up to the time of his disablement and his sympathies up to his last hours.

One of his latest political speeches was made on the occasion of presiding at the annual meeting of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage in December, 1873. He then said: "In former ages, the long spear and the sword were the weapons of defence. In our times the defensive weapon was the Parliamentary vote, and without this it was idle, it was childish, for any individual or class to expect full justice at the hands of the Imperial Parliament. It was stated that women were ignorant, and unfit to exercise the duties of electors. Why were women ignorant? They were excluded from the universities, and from most of the endowed schools which had been instituted by the piety and benevolence of good men in former generations, and then they were told that women were so ignorant that they were unfit to vote for members of Parliament. He had one simple answer to make to that objection. Women knew where they were hurt, and that was a sufficient qualification for them to vote. There was looming in the distance some proposal of equalising the borough and county franchise. Women had a very important interest in that Bill, and must watch it closely, and see what reasons were given in the preamble of that Bill for the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer which did not also apply to the enfranchisement of women. He had had experience in his time of many foolish panics into which JOHN BULL had fallen from time to time; the Russian war was about to annihilate us, or that France was going to invade us, or that the Pope was coming to settle amongst us; but the most foolish panic from which JOHN BULL had ever suffered was lest some indescribable disaster was going to fall upon him by his own daughter being enfranchised."

We believe that the panic alluded to was supposed to

exist principally in the minds of a certain section of the Liberal party, and we trust that their experience of the baselessness of former panics as to subjects brought forward by themselves, will be allowed to prevail over the unworthy sentiments deprecated in this speech by one of the truest and most enlightened Liberals that ever served his party and his country.

WE extract from the *Englishwoman's Review* a table of the number and proportion of women landowners to men in the several counties of England, derived from the new "Domesday Book." From this it appears that there are in England and Wales 269,547 landowners who possess one acre of land and upwards, and 703,289 who possess less than one acre. The names and addresses of those who possess one acre and upwards are given, and it appears that 37,806, or one-seventh of the whole, are women. Although there are no means of positively ascertaining the proportion of women among the freeholders who own less than one acre, there is no reason to suppose that it is smaller than among the larger proprietors; and in that case the number of women landowners would be upwards of 137,000.

It is no light matter that these 137,000 landowners, the larger part of whom are raised above poverty, while some enjoy great wealth, should be deprived of all share in the election of the Parliamentary representation of their respective counties. The statute 8 Henry VI., which is in force to the present day, enacts that elections of knights of the shire shall be made "in each county by people dwelling and resident therein, of whom each has freehold to the value of forty shillings by the year." There never has been any Act of Parliament passed restricting the county franchise to men freeholders, and there never was any judicial decision excluding women freeholders from the right seemingly secured to them under the Act of Henry VI. until the year 1868, when, for the first time in law, women were specifically disfranchised, and the anomalous distinction created between the conditions of the local and parliamentary suffrage which had, up to that period, been governed by laws couched in the same general terms for all votes.

The exclusion of so large a proportion of the property and intelligence of the country from all direct representation is of more significance, because of the proposal to bestow a much larger share of direct representation on a class which possesses neither property nor general political intelligence. Without prejudice to the claims of agri-

cultural labourers to the franchise, we fearlessly assert that these as a class are inferior to women landowners in those qualities which, in this country, have been usually considered as giving a claim to representation, and we cannot perceive the justice or expediency of denying a vote to the Lady of the Manor while giving it to the cottager on her estate. Canon GIRDLESTONE, in a recent lecture, in speaking of the advantages of having a class with leisure to devote their thoughts to politics, made the following quotation from Ecclesiasticus (ch. xxxviii., v. 25), which might be used in reference to the political intelligence of the next claimants for the franchise among men:—"How can he get [political] wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks?" But ignorant of politics as these may be, they, like women, know when they are hurt, which is a kind of knowledge not possessed by others than themselves. The need of bringing this consciousness of suffering on the part of any class of the community affected by the laws to bear directly on those who are empowered to make the laws, outweighs the temporary inconvenience arising from the extension of the machinery of representation to those whom the neglect and indifference of the ruling classes have allowed to remain until now in the depths of ignorance and degradation. It is time to endeavour to put an end to this condition of things, and let not those who would make political freedom and personal intelligence universal among the people, neglect the claims or reject the help of women in the consummation of their glorious aim.

THE *Indian Daily News* contains an affecting narrative which illustrates the hopeless miseries entailed by the customs which "the experience of ages" sanctions as appropriate to widowhood among the uncounted millions of Her MAJESTY'S subjects in the East. Mr. EGERTON ALLEN, deputy coroner, held an inquiry lately into the death of a young native widow, named SREEMUTTEE DOSSEE, who was reported to have destroyed her life by means of opium, because she could not endure a life of perpetual widowhood. The facts of the case, chiefly gleaned from the letter written by the unfortunate deceased, give an idea of the miserable life a Hindoo widow leads, and call loudly for a reformation in this direction. She could read and write Bengalee remarkably well, the two letters found by the police being in her handwriting. She became a widow at the age of fourteen, and was in a state of widowhood for

four years, during which period she lived with her mother. She was a *purdah nusheen* (lady within the veil), and had no quarrel with any one. The letters found were translated and read. After disposing of her property she says "What is the use of my life? The Hindoo religion is very bad in giving early marriage. There is no grief greater to any one than that of a Hindoo widow. I was only fourteen years and five months old when I was married, and am now only eighteen. I see no reason for suffering distress of mind any longer. Why has GOD made me a woman, and why should I suffer so much? I have not known happiness for a single day since my marriage, and I am therefore giving up my life." After the evidence of one or two other witnesses the jury returned a verdict of suicide by means of opium.

A higher law than that technically administered in courts might have evolved a different verdict. "Suicide by means of opium," says law. "Murder by means of unjust laws and cruel customs" would be the verdict of equity. In all countries, and in all ages, women's lives have been crushed out of them by the iron hand of repression, in some countries more than in others, and in some social grades of the same country more than in others. In all countries, and in all ages, the cry for redress and emancipation has been met with scornful denial of the existence of the wrong, with reproaches to those who complained, with allegations that the laws of nature and the experience of ages were against any change in the condition of women, and that the sentiments of men were opposed to it. Poor SREEMUTTEE DOSSEE in her ignorance exclaimed "Why has GOD made me a woman?" but her sufferings arose not from God-given ordinances, but from man-made laws. The remedy for these and kindred wrongs daily occurring in our midst lies in the recognition of the woman's share in shaping the laws and constitution of society, and in lifting her up from under the feet of man to her rightful position at his side as his co-partner in all the concerns of life.

THE inconvenience of the disabilities, with regard to property and contract, which the common law of England attaches to marriage in women, lately received an illustration in the Police Court at Westminster. An order had been made against one ELIZABETH HEMMINGS, on the complaint of Mr. PHILLIPS, for the payment of £1. 4s. and costs, she having been a machinist in his employ, and having left her work without notice. In default of payment a distress warrant was issued, but this was returned *nulla bona*, and consequently the plaintiff took out a

summons calling on defendant to show cause why she should not be dealt with according to law. Defendant pleaded that she was a married woman. Mr. ARNOLD said it had been decided, in the case of TOMPKINSON appellant and WEST respondent (39 Justice of the Peace, 293), in the Court of Queen's Bench, that a married woman could not be convicted under the Master and Servants Act (30 and 31 Vic. cap. 141) for leaving her employment without notice, on the ground that she, as a married woman, was incapable of contracting, and that consequently there was nothing to bind her as between her and her employer. And in HODKINSON appellant and GREEN respondent (39 J. P., 372), the Court held that an order on a married woman under the same Act to pay money by way of compensation, under similar circumstances, could not be made. The summons was then dismissed.

A case of this kind usually calls forth from a certain portion of the press comments to the effect that the disabilities in question are to be regarded as some special privilege accorded to women, which is to compensate them for the denial of political and personal rights, and yet women who avail themselves of these disabilities in order to avoid their just debts, whether of money or service, are taunted with not acting honourably. Women are reproached because the laws that men have made for them deprive them of the status of persons legally responsible for their actions, and men are slow to understand that a removal of this condition of non-responsibility is as much an object of those who seek to amend the property laws for women as the establishment of their right to hold property on the same terms as men. Fortunately for employers who depend largely on the work of married operatives, women have consciences as well as laws to guide them; at the same time the relation between such work-people and their employers is one of unstable equilibrium, and in the interests of the labour market it would seem desirable that some inquiry should be made with a view to the amendment of the present unsatisfactory law.

THE first Bill which obtained a second reading this session was one directed against unhappy and desperate women. The day after Parliament met Mr. CHARLEY carried the second reading of his Offences Against the Person Bill. Unlike the Bill under the same name which the honourable and learned member for Salford succeeded in carrying into law last session, and which was a humane measure of protection, defective only through not going far enough, the

present Bill appears monstrous in the harshness of its provisions. It renders a woman, whose child dies in the birth, liable to seven years' penal servitude. Mr. WHEELHOUSE, in opposing the second reading, described the Bill as one to imprison a woman for being out of her mind, but his humane remonstrances were drowned, and the Bill passed without division.

On going into committee, on March 1st, Mr. P. A. TAYLOR made another effort to awaken the attention of the House of Commons to the cruel character of the Bill. He said they were an assembly of men, chosen by men, and there was something most painful in the idea of their legislating with this terrible severity towards the other sex. It was only fair to women who were not represented that the House should stamp out this Bill. Mr. STAVELEY HILL and Sir EDWARD WATKIN followed on the same side, the latter observing that public opinion he believed was against it, none of the women's organisations were in favour of it, and its monstrosity was generally known. The House divided, when there appeared for going into committee 108, against 82—majority for going into committee 26. Progress was immediately reported, and since then the Bill has remained on the order book, awaiting its time for further progress. It is hoped that friends of justice and humanity will be watchful, and, as far as they can, arrest further mischief.

AN Oxford teacher (not Mr. GOLDWIN SMITH) was lately asked by a friend to give an opinion of the women's suffrage movement. He readily did so, and to the following effect: "It originates on the somewhat natural discontent of certain ill-favoured spinsters, and of some theorising persons of the other sex who have time and money, and who want to find some occupation by which they may place themselves before the public." "I am sure that it would be an unmixed evil, and for none more so than for women themselves." "If women had votes all over Europe, the world would very soon be governed by the Ultramontane party." "It may be true that there are some priests who are not narrow-minded, and some women who are not under the control of priests, but they are exceptional cases." "Laws are never made for exceptional cases." The friend, not being altogether satisfied with this response, put the same questions to another Oxford teacher, an Italian gentleman, whose reply rings with the spirit of true liberality. "You ask (1) whether it is desirable to extend the suffrage to women? (2) Whether, as an Italian, I think that the influences supposed to be exercised over

their minds by Conservative, clerical, and Ultramontane agencies would be likely to prove detrimental to the Liberal party, who are now endeavouring to secure for them the true position and rights of citizens? With regard to the first, I think it is not in the least a question of desirableness or not, to be decided by the selfish interested judgment of men who, abusing their power, may deny, but cannot annul those rights, but a mere principle of justice, the acknowledgment of the *rights* of those upon whom *duties* are imposed. To impose laws on rational beings and withhold from them the right of discussing them first, or choosing those who shall discuss them, is mere tyrannical despotism. To sustain the right of men to legislate alone for men and women, is to assert the principle of that brute force which, carried a little further in some classes of society, takes the form of blows and kicks. But, if the right of brute force is upheld, where is the distinction between civilised and barbarous nations?

"With regard to the second question, I think it very likely that in some cases those influences may be felt, but not to the extent of jeopardising the aims of the Liberal party, and are not those influences now successfully exercised on men? Recent history offers us some very striking instances of the weakness of masculine minds under such influences, while feminine minds have proved much stronger and offered greater resisting power.

"All men are not clever, liberal-minded, and endowed with sure independent judgment, neither are all women bigoted or stupid. There are endless varieties and degrees of character and intellect in both sexes, and it is impossible for either to judge with impartiality of the merits and capacities of the other."

WE would impress on our supporters the importance of sending as many petitions as possible before the Easter recess. Those which are not presented before Easter should be forwarded on or before Tuesday, April 25th. Petitions posted on that day will reach the House of Commons in time to be presented before the order for the second reading comes on.

THE second reading of the Women's Disabilities Bill is fixed so late in the month that it may not be possible to obtain the full and revised report of the debate in time to allow of the appearance of the *Journal* with its wonted punctuality. Should our subscribers fail to receive their copies at the usual date, we beg that they will note this anticipatory explanation, and that they will accept our assurance that every effort will be made to issue the *Journal* as early as practicable after the debate and division.

## Obituary.

THOMAS THOMASSON, ESQ.

We have to lament a deplorable loss to the friends of women's suffrage, and of progress generally, in the death of the above-named gentleman, which took place at his residence, High Bank, Bolton-le-Moors, on March 8th, at the comparatively early age, for one who had been so long actively engaged in public life, of sixty-seven years. Mr. Thomasson was born on December 6th, 1808. His grandfather was a yeoman, and a member of the Society of Friends; he was the owner of the estate or farm at Edgeworth, near Bolton, called Thomasson's Fold. He died in 1787, but prior to the invention of the steam engine, he had erected a factory on his property, which was worked by a water-wheel. His son John carried forward the projects launched by his father, and at a later date, Mr. Thomas Thomasson, on the death of his father in 1837, took the management of the concern with such ability, practical insight, and methodical precision as has been rarely equalled, even among the originators and founders of the Lancashire cotton trade. But great as were Mr. Thomasson's abilities as a business man, his name will be more honourably associated with the great free trade agitation, which brought to the half-famished hard-wrought people of this crowded county abundant employment and cheap bread. To Mr. Thomasson's promptitude, self-possession, and prescience, the country is to a large extent indebted for the commencement and vigorous career of the Anti-Corn Law League. He gave munificently to objects which he deemed worthy of his support, but the extent of his benefactions never can be known, as he did good by stealth, and conferred benefits in secret. The preacher of a funeral sermon in Bolton stated that he became accidentally acquainted with one case of his giving away thousands, but not a line of it found its way to the public prints. The same preacher commended him as a worthy example to the young men of the present day, for his untiring devotion to public questions which affected the interests of the people; his hatred of all extravagance and waste, both in public and private, his simple habits, his untiring industry, his princely benevolence, and his freedom from all self-seeking and public praise. Another says of him: He did not wait for a cause to become fashionable before giving in his adhesion to it. "Is it just?" was all he cared to ask. If it commended itself to his conscience as just, then he unflinchingly believed in it and helped. He believed there was a sense of justice in men which enabled them to appreciate just causes when their claims were fairly presented to them, hence the one method of achieving results, social and political, was for him the method of discussion. "Only get the thing discussed," he was fond of saying. A love of justice characterised him in his private life and in all his public pursuits. He had a righteous abhorrence of war, because he held it to be in its progress and in its issues the vilest injustice with which man could desolate the earth.

Mr. Thomasson was many times solicited to allow himself to be nominated as a member of Parliament, but he always steadily declined the honour of a seat in the Legislature, though it certainly would have been his had he cared to accept it. He preferred a less public though not less useful career, and sought rather to stimulate and support the efforts of others than to undertake public work himself. He was, however, for many years an active member of the Bolton Town Council, but was defeated in the municipal election of 1868, since which he never sought re-election. This was one year before women obtained the municipal franchise, and the reflection is satisfactory in so far as it is certain no woman shares the reproach of defeating one

so able as an administrator, and so noble as a man. On the other hand we may assume that if women had had votes at any election in which he was a candidate, their quick sensibility and insight into character would have enabled them to discern his worth, and led them to secure his return so far as their voices could prevail. At his funeral the streets of Bolton were thronged with working women of his and other mills in the town; these crowds knew him familiarly, and blessed him for the good that he had done. He was interred on March 13th in the family vault at St. Ann's Church, Turton, and by his own directions the funeral was strictly plain and private. The body was followed to the grave by those only who were impelled by a sense of heartfelt sorrow, and was laid in the tomb by loving hands with no other service than the silent thoughts and tears of the throng of mourners whom he had loved and benefited in life. His family were gathered around; others who knew his worth were permitted to join them; and at the head stood his old and tried friend Mr. John Bright, who, with deep emotion, assisted in laying him to his rest.

Mr. Thomasson took a warm interest in the movement for the enfranchisement of women, and was from the first one of the most generous contributors to its funds. He was an active member of the Committee of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, and presided at the annual meeting of the society, held in the Town Hall, Manchester, in December, 1873. He was constant in his attendance at the meetings of the committee, and ever ready to guide them by his counsels, and aid them with his purse. His letters contain many expressions of his interest in the cause. He wrote: "It is more important to make converts than to answer opponents: who will not be answered. There is an enormous and inert mass of the people totally ignorant on the subject, and to whom it will fall to decide it hereafter." "You ask me to give you a recipe for conciliating lukewarm or adverse Liberals! The Liberal band in all my experience has always been hampered and obstructed by this genus, who claim to be more judicious than anybody else, and are always afraid of being too much in the right. Usually they treat a disputed question by adding up and dividing by two, and so they are neither wholly right nor wholly wrong, but a little of both." "I quite concur that the suffrage alone is the grand remedy for the ill-treatment of women." "In the present evenly balanced state of the two parties of 'progress' and of 'obstruction,' one tenth of any constituency, with a very little activity and earnestness, could, I think, procure the removal of any obvious grievance or injustice, and this I hope I may live to see." He did not live to see his hope fulfilled, but he laboured and thought for it up to the last. In a letter written a few days after his fatal malady confined him to his room, he took the opportunity of stating his composed and contented state of mind, as his work seemed to be done. He wrote words of encouragement and hope to persevere with our mission, "to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint," and he added the assurance that though absent he would still be present at our meetings. As he sustained the efforts of others in former struggles for freedom, so he fed the secret springs which sustained the workers for the enfranchisement of women. The record of former movements for reform would be incomplete without the recognition of his deeds; and beside the names of John Stuart Mill and Jacob Bright, whose public and Parliamentary labours first made women's suffrage a practical political question, there stands as that of one without whose support the movement could not have attained its present magnitude, and as worthy to be honoured and remembered along with theirs, the name of Thomas Thomasson.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

BRISTOL.

A public meeting, convened by the Bristol and West of England Women's Suffrage Society, was held at the Victoria Rooms, on March 9th. Mr. Mark Whitwill presided, and among those present were Miss Ashworth, Miss L. S. Ashworth, Mrs. Clark (Street), Miss Priestman, Rev. U. R. Thomas, Mr. Alan Greenwell, Dr. E. W. Dunbar, Mrs. Beddoe, Professor Newman, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Bartlett, Rev. E. Harris, Mr. Grenfell, Mrs. R. Carpenter, Mrs. Ashford, Dr. Davy, Miss Tribe, Mr. Tribe, Dr. Atchley, Mr. J. H. Tucker, Miss M. Price, Mr. Pearce, Mrs. Clara Thomas, Miss Jenner (Cardiff branch), Miss M. Priestman, Mr. Tanner, Rev. J. B. Spring, Rev. Mr. Johnson, Rev. E. Trevelyian, Mrs. Miles Baker, Mr. Herbert Thomas, Mrs. Colman, Mrs. Grenfell, &c.

Several letters were read from persons unable to attend. Miss Frances Power Cobbe wrote one from which we take the following extract:—"A reflection which cheers me as regards our suffrage work is this—that it is not, as it once almost seemed to be, a narrow line of march from a single base; but a wide onward, sweeping movement, extending over the civilised and half-civilised world, in favour of women's liberties, rights, education, and whatever else may tend to elevate and help them. In one country, and among one class one demand is most urgent; in another society a little different. Some ask for higher education and a larger share of public educational endowments; others for the admission of women to the medical profession; others, again, for juster laws respecting property and the rights of mothers over their children; while you and I think that the suffrage is not only good for reasons of its own, but because it is tolerably certain that it will secure all those benefits for us when it has been a very little time obtained. Now the progress in public estimation which every one of these objects has made in the last few years is almost equally great; and at the same time we are told of the success of not dissimilar efforts and hopes of women in America, all over Europe, and even in India and Japan! It may be the advocates of such changes are very unwise, and the things they demand unattainable or undesirable; but I think the world's history has never seen so remarkable a sign as the simultaneous waking up to higher hopes and nobler aims in life of an entire sex, nor does it seem possible that such a movement should subside without having effected a very great and permanent revolution. I am not impatient at the slowness of so vast a tide, nor at the little retreating waves we may every day notice. Year by year—certainly every three or four years—we may measure that it has sensibly and undeniably risen, and that is enough to sustain our faith and hope."

The CHAIRMAN, after some preliminary remarks, said, I have much pleasure in presiding, because I fully sympathise with the object of your association. We are met to-night to endeavour to help on the admission of women to the parliamentary franchise. There was a time, and that not so very many years ago—within, indeed, the memory of many present—when elections were in the hands of comparatively few persons. With the growing intelligence of the nation, came the conviction that more persons should be admitted to the privilege; so public meetings were held, petitions were poured into Parliament, till, by-and-by, the Bill of 1832 was passed. Again the same thing occurred, more public meetings, more petitions, until the last Reform Bill became the law of the land. Now we are again holding public meetings, again petitioning Parliament, because that Reform Bill, which professed to establish the principle of household suffrage, only recognised the male house-

holder as a voter, giving the vote to him, and denying it to all female householders, whatever may be their character, wealth, or education. We are agitating and intend to agitate until the last Reform Bill is reformed, and the householders, irrespective of sex, is admitted to the suffrage. Why is there opposition to the proposed reform? It springs from various causes. I will name a few of them. Some men assuming, as "lords of the creation," a superiority to women, object to give them equal rights and privileges; others have not confidence in the ability of women to understand the great questions of the day; others think that women would be guided rather by their feelings than by their judgment in giving their votes; others, again, fear that the votes of women would further the interests of one political party; others have settled opinions with regard to what is woman's sphere, and, being of opinion that the power to exercise political influence by voting would take her out of that sphere, persistently oppose the privilege being granted; others argue that women are already virtually represented by the votes of their male relations; others contend that the duty of military service is bound up with the right of voting; others object from their simple dislike of any change, they are in constant dread that any innovation may be mischievous in its consequences, and, somehow or other, imperil our glorious constitution. To these various objections, and to others, the ladies by whom I have the honour of being surrounded this evening, will doubtless give sufficient answers. I care not to argue the question as one of expediency or of policy, but on far higher grounds, as one of absolute right and justice; and taking our stand there our position is unassailable. The tax-gatherer draws no distinction between men and women householders; he very impartially collects the rates and taxes from all alike, regardless of sex; and surely as a matter of justice, the women taxpayers should have a direct voice in the election of the men who are to levy the taxes and to spend them. In the matter of local rates the principle is admitted, women ratepayers can vote for the men who make the rates, why should they not be able to vote for those who settle the taxes? And here I may remark that I have never known the greatest opponents of women's suffrage carry their principles so far, as in the case of municipal or school board elections, to refuse to canvass women for their votes. The cause of women is making its way, the mighty barrier, erected by the members of one of the learned professions, to keep women out of a sphere which should be as open to them as to men, is being assailed and is giving way, has indeed in some places already given way; and I trust that Mr. Cowper Temple's Bill may pass during this session, so that women who have obtained diplomas at certain foreign universities may be entitled to be placed on the medical register, and thus be fully recognised as members of the profession. In conclusion, I would merely say, that the more social questions come as they should to the front, the more important is it that women should have a voice in sending to Parliament those who are to be the representatives of the people.

Professor F. W. NEWMAN moved the first resolution affirming the principle.

Mrs. HELEN BRIGHT-CLARK (daughter of the Right Hon. John Bright, M.P.) seconded the resolution. She said, the Bill to enfranchise women householders, introduced by Mr. Forsyth, is a very simple and moderate measure, so moderate, indeed, that some people who don't understand it wonder why it should call forth any enthusiasm; and it is not only a moderate Bill, it is an honest Bill, it means exactly what it says and no more. But when we urge this simplicity and modesty of our aim, we are sometimes met by the statement that we are trying to get something further. Well, in one

sense we are. We are not seeking the franchise for women merely that they may have the amusement of handing in a ballot paper once in three or four years; we are seeking it for precisely the same reasons that working men and middle-class men desired and sought it, and with, I venture to think, as much reason. Some of us were not unmoved spectators of the last great struggle for Parliamentary Reform. We saw there the whole force of powerful sections of the community opposed for years to the enfranchisement of the working class; we saw the advocates of Reform denounced as mischievous agitators, and subjected to every kind of misrepresentation and abuse, but we did not see those men give up the work to which they had put their hands. They were confident of the justice of their cause, and they persevered. Some of them were men who were not themselves excluded, to whom fortune had not been hard; but they had a great sympathy with their less fortunate fellow-countrymen, and they were ready to give years to the cause of their enfranchisement. Well, that cause is gained, so far as the boroughs go, and what is the position of working men now? Do we not see a vastly increased attention to the needs and the feelings and the opinions of working men? Was not almost the first result of that measure a Bill for the general education of their children, and does not every borough election show that even the very men who year after year opposed their admission to the franchise with all the influence they possessed, are now most eager to exhibit themselves, if possible, in the guise of true friends of the working class? Well, such lessons are not lost on us. The arguments that were convincing ten years ago are not less so now, and as for the various hobgoblins that are trotted out to frighten timid people, they are not new to us; most of them are very much the same as made their appearance during the last Reform agitation, and forty or fifty years ago, when the middle classes of this country were striving for something like fair representation, they played a still more conspicuous part. If you will look back to the speeches and debates of that day, you will find that the first Reform Bill, which I suppose most people now look upon as almost the foundation of our present electoral system, that that measure was regarded with the utmost alarm by the upper classes of this country. They predicted that it would produce the most disastrous consequences. It was to destroy the throne, the church, the constitution, and liberty itself, all together. Well we know that these things did not happen, and that on the contrary, that measure brought peace and prosperity to this country. There are some people who are always afraid. I don't suppose that any measure of conspicuous justice was ever passed without frightening somebody. I remember reading in that charming and instructive book, *The Life of Sir Samuel Romilly*, that when he was endeavouring to remove from our statute book some of those barbarous laws which disgraced it fifty or sixty years ago, particularly when he had charge of a Bill to repeal the law that condemned to death any one who stole from a shop to the value of five shillings, he met with the determined opposition of the Cabinet of that day, and of the bench of bishops. They said it was a daring innovation, and that innovations in our criminal law were to be deprecated; and Lord Ellenborough, who was considered a great authority, said he should like to know what would happen next? Well we all know that a good deal had to happen next, and surely the name of Romilly is beloved and revered—it should be especially so in this city of Bristol—when the names of those cruel bishops and Cabinet ministers are almost forgotten. Now, our cause is in some respects even stronger than that of the working men, for though they were no doubt as a body excluded from representation, yet there were exceptions, and there was always the chance that a working man, by thrift or good fortune, or both, might

attain to a position of greater affluence, and thus secure a vote. But it is not so with women. The line is fixed and they are absolutely excluded, and no wealth or special interest, or knowledge of politics, can avail to put any woman on a footing of equality in this matter with the meanest male elector, and observe that this exclusion tells more forcibly now than it used to do. It is natural that women should begin to resent their exclusion more now that almost every other great class is enfranchised than they did when it was the exception to vote, and when exclusion was therefore much less marked. Women are often told that they are already sufficiently represented by their male relations. I can only say that that is not an arrangement that would be considered satisfactory by men amongst themselves, and I know no reason why it should be more so for women; and, certainly, men who, while desiring and valuing the franchise for themselves, can yet see no reason why women should desire it, are clearly unfit and unable to represent us in this way, since it is evident that they apply a totally different set of rules to themselves and to us. During the last Reform agitation we heard a good deal of the educating effect of the franchise. It was admitted that a good many working men neither knew nor cared much about politics; but it was said that the best way to increase their self-respect and thoughtfulness was to give them a sense of responsibility, and to admit them to some share in the representation. Now I want to know why women are to be deprived of this great educational influence? If you teach girls and boys grammar and arithmetic, you teach them out of the same books and by the same methods. I never heard that there was one way for girls and another for boys if the end to be attained was the same, and why don't you teach them to be public-spirited in the same way? Is it not because some of you don't desire that women should be educated at all in this direction? But I ask, is it fair, is it just, that your wishes and your prejudices should be the measure of other people's rights? Some of you I dare say are liberal enough to allow art, and literature, and even science to women—but is it not "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." Now I think this policy of exclusion with regard to women is a narrow and selfish one, for delightful and valuable as art and literature and science are in education, is there not something that comes even before these? We know that these things may thrive for a time at least under a corrupt government, but public virtue, an enlightened public opinion, these are the surest and indeed the only safeguards of good government. And I ask you now, even supposing you do not care that your daughters should receive this sort of training, how can you expect your sons to grow up high-minded and self-sacrificing in public matters, if you allow those who have so often the greatest influence in forming their early principles to be shut out from all sense of duty and responsibility in political matters? And now I should like to say a few words to those women—I daresay there are some here to-night, who have what may be called in this matter unbelieving husbands. Don't try to drive them; but try by all means to persuade them, only let it be by the most reasonable and judicious persuasion. Sometimes in a family even silence may be persuasive. I can quite sympathise with a man who is always under the apprehension that whatever subject is started, conversation will always come round in the end to women's suffrage. It does not appear so interesting and important to him as it does to you and me; and you must bear this in mind. I am sure that women need to use great tact and patience in this matter, and that for want of this tact and this consideration harm has sometimes been done to our cause. Now you know that one great fear that men have in connection with our movement is, lest an interest in politics and the admission of women householders to express that interest through

their votes should draw women away from their domestic duties. It is a curious fear. They seem to forget that men have also domestic duties, and that amongst them is the grave and often very arduous one of providing for their families, and that the conscientious performance of these duties does not prevent a man from being an intelligent citizen and giving an intelligent vote—that is, if he has any intelligence in him to begin with. However, since this fear does undoubtedly beset many people's minds, let me urge on women to be especially careful that their lives should give no sort of colour to this idea. Do you try to make your homes more attractive, not less so because you have begun to think in a somewhat wider circle. And don't let the men with whom you are connected have any reason to think that politics will make women hard. Rather let them see, if possible, that your gentler sympathies, if, as I hope, you have these gentle sympathies they sometimes speak of, may tend to soften politics, and may perhaps do something to make a contest one of principles rather than personalities. If you take an interest in and study those subjects in which your fathers and brothers happen to be specially interested, depend upon it they will find it agreeable, and they will perhaps end in finding that your subjects are interesting to them. But we have not, and we do not wish to have, only a special class of interests. Wherever we look, whether in the country districts, we see the agricultural labourer living on very small wages—as much as one-sixth or one-seventh of those meagre wages too often paid him in cider; his children almost uneducated, himself landless, and sometimes almost homeless, in a country of wealthy men and large landed estates, and where the laws favour that accumulation of land; or whether we live among the crowded population of towns, with their many temptations, and their besetting sin of drunkenness; or whether we look to our enormous and still increasing military expenditure, with all its train of demoralisation and vice—and I am but just touching on two or three of the great dangers that threaten us—surely, wherever we turn our eyes, we cannot fail to see that the fields are white unto harvest, and that the labourers are too few. And it seems to me, if I may venture to say so, that the Lord of the harvest is in these days speaking in the ears of women and demanding from them a wider sympathy and a more earnest life. That they should no longer be content to shut themselves within narrow walls, but that they should venture to look forth on the evils that surround them, and ask themselves the causes of those evils, and whether it is not possible by joint effort to do something towards their removal. And do not give heed to those who would tell you that these dark blots on our civilisation are necessary evils—and do not be led away by the notion, which some may be ready to present to your mind, that your personal purity may be dimmed, or your real influence lessened, because in the strength of your increased love for your fellow-creatures you venture to look deeper than you have hitherto done into the causes of human suffering. There are many kind and tender hearts among women, I know, that are pained by the suffering they see. They have long recognised it to be their duty to help and comfort the sufferer, but they have perhaps not been accustomed to look to human laws for some, I don't of course say all, of the causes of crime and poverty. We are sometimes told that we cannot make people sober and moral by Act of Parliament, and in a sense this is true. But it is not difficult to degrade and demoralise by law. It is easy to give the sanction of law to what could never have that of justice, and if people do what is in accordance with the spirit of the law they are generally satisfied. They are apt to make the law their standard of action, and hence it is of the greatest importance that the law should set forth a just and true standard. So long, for instance, as the law of

England says that, when a man dies without a will, his landed property shall all go to the eldest son, even if it leaves the other children almost penniless, so long will average Englishmen think themselves justified in such an unnatural distribution; and so long as the law of divorce is unequal between men and women, will the sanction of law be given to the idea that there is one standard of morality for men and another for women. Now, if the importance of laws is at all understood, I cannot see how anyone can suppose women to be less affected by them than men. As a matter of fact, they are more deeply concerned since they are subject not only to the laws made for people in general, but also to a number of special laws, made for them alone, made by men alone, and a good many of which it is obvious could never have been passed, if women had had any share in the representation. I think that on the whole we have had a great deal of kind help and fair dealing from men in this suffrage work. The various committees are deeply indebted to the thorough-hearted help they have received from the gentlemen belonging to them. I know it is specially the case on this committee, and I believe it is so elsewhere. We are not afraid of those timid members of the House of Commons who have banded themselves together to defend nature, and revelation, and the British constitution, against the women householders of this country. We mean to go straight on, and if some who have borne the burden and heat of many an earlier conflict are now resting from their labours, if some of them do not see their way to join us, well we must not expect too much. It is not, perhaps, given to any one to see all truth. We may each see a portion of the truth, and at any rate we may each, in our humble way, strive to extend those principles of justice which have had in the past, and I trust will ever continue to have, pure-minded and unflinching advocates.

Mrs. ASHFORD supported the resolution, which was agreed to. The adoption of petitions was moved by Mr. Herbert Thomas, seconded by the Rev. E. Harris, supported by Miss Lilius Ashworth. On being put to the meeting the chairman declared it carried. Votes of thanks concluded the proceedings.

## BATH.

A meeting was held in the large room of the Assembly Rooms, on March 16th. Mr. T. W. Gibbs presided, and there was a very large attendance, the body of the room being quite filled. Amongst those we noticed present were the Revs. W. E. Littlewood, R. Hayes Robinson, S. C. Voules, — Lord, Archdeacon Goold, W. Anderson, the Rev. Dr. Steele, and the Rev. H. Quick, Sir John Bunbury, Col. Ford, Col. Baines, Dr. Hathaway, Dr. Cardew, Messrs. J. Thirlwall, H. A. Simons, J. Clark, A. Mason, W. S. Daniell, F. Shum, J. Drummond, J. M. Shum, J. J. Wilkinson, C. Milsom, H. Hancock, G. Powell, T. Cox, B. Bartrum, G. S. Lean, E. White, J. Theobald, J. L. Stothert, M. Medrington, and H. Holland Burne, Mesdames Thornton, Theobald, and the Misses Ashworth, Lilius Ashworth, Spender, Becker (Manchester), Mary Beedy, Le Geyt, Jeuner, Tyler, and Gore, and many others.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, said he desired first to call their attention to the precise object of their meeting, which was shortly this, that wherever a man would be qualified to vote according to law and to exercise the Parliamentary franchise there, a woman similarly qualified should not be disqualified because she is a woman. (Hear, hear.) He desired to put it in that way, because he confessed he was not one of those who held extreme opinions on subjects allied to that which they brought forward that evening, and for another reason, because he thought that the object derived strength—great strength from its moderation. (Applause.) He had heard it contended,

and had heard it admitted that it was only just that ladies should have this right, but it was objected by those who make that admission, that they ought not to have it for fear of the use to which they would apply it. (Oh, oh.) He confessed he could admit no such reasoning, either from argument or from experience. In the greater fields of moral action in widely differing communities, where it has been found by experience that "it is not good for man to be alone," and in which the efforts and services of women have been made available in the cause of peace, of progress, of humanity—it has been found that the efforts of women, whether in causes religious, educational, philanthropic, or charitable, have been characterised by no less indulgent activity, by no less a discriminating zeal, by no less a faculty of organization, and pre-eminently by tact and by sympathy, and above all by a noble and generous spirit of self-sacrifice, as have been the efforts of men. (Loud applause.) This will hardly be denied, and if they admitted it, they could hardly see or give any reason why if they had one function of women exercised well already, they should make worse use of another than they have made of those which they at present possess. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He looked forward rather to their seeking only just and peaceable and reasonable objects by just and peaceable and reasonable means. (Hear, hear.) This he said by way of testimony, only because he believed that all that could be urged would be urged by the lips of ladies whom they would hear that evening. (Applause.) He then called upon

The Rev. W. E. LITTLEWOOD, who moved the first resolution said there were one or two remarks upon this particular subject which he would desire to make from the point of view of a minister of religion. He was with the movement because he thought it was pre-eminently a Christian movement. It seemed to him that while the older and the modern Paganism have degraded women, and while Mohammedism and Mormonism had degraded and defiled her, it was peculiarly characteristic, and always had been characteristic of the religion of Jesus Christ, that it had endeavoured to elevate women, and it appeared to him that they might apply to this matter of the suffrage that doctrine which was laid down in one part of the New Testament, with regard to any matter that they had any business to consider, whether there be male or female in the case. (Hear, hear.) They ought to think that if a woman contributed to the support of the State she ought to have a right in the representative government—a right to say what she would have done with her contribution to such State. (Hear, hear.) There was another point of view from which he regarded the matter. He felt quite certain that whatever evils men might have to fear from the introduction of the female vote into politics, the ministers of religion would have nothing to fear—(hear, hear)—for he was sure that the female vote when it was given—and he was convinced in his own mind it would be cast in England before long—(applause)—it would be cast upon the side of temperance, religion, and virtue. (Renewed applause.) He could not help thinking that when women come to vote, they will have a certain amount of regard for the personal character, for instance, of those who are candidates for their suffrages, and he thought also that they would pay great attention to social measures. (Hear, hear.) Some might laugh at a clergyman for enunciating the doctrine that these things were desirable in considering who were proper representatives for a constituency, but whether they did so or not he considered them exceedingly essential, and felt quite sure that whenever the female vote was cast it would be in favour of social and moral and virtuous men, and moral and virtuous measures; and therefore he felt himself to be right in supporting the movement. (Hear, hear, and applause.)

Dr. HATHAWAY seconded the resolution, and, in doing so, said that if they allowed women to vote in municipal and parochial elections, it seemed to him that they were on the horns of a dilemma, and could show no reason why they should not admit them to the other. Some years ago it was his lot to be in India, as the private secretary to the Governor-General, and, before his departure from India, a lady, whose name was a household word, Florence Nightingale—(applause)—sent for him and said to him that, although it might not be generally known, she could tell him that there was not a barrack built in the whole of that enormous country of India, there was not a measure proposed or passed for the relief of the British soldier in India that was not sent to her first for her opinion. (Hear, hear.) He mentioned this as an instance of one single lady—an invalid—being able to decide questions which no member of Parliament has yet been able to do by himself, and yet she was deprived of the electoral franchise.

MISS BEEDY, MISS SPENDER, and MISS BECKER supported the resolution, which was then put and carried with a few dissentients.

The Rev. R. HAYES ROBINSON moved the next resolution, which was to the effect that petitions to Parliament should be signed by the Chairman on behalf of the meeting, and that the members for the city and county be requested to support the Bill. He said the cause of women's suffrage was based upon justice, it was opposed only by ridicule, and was bound up with the moral and religious welfare of England, and was as sure to pass as the sun was to rise to-morrow. (Loud applause.) They had heard a good deal about importing emotion through women into politics, they had had Reform Bills before now in this country, and they had mobs assemble, houses burnt down, and all kind of uproar. But in the reform now going forward ladies did not go in for any abuse whatever, but went forward quietly and calmly and with good reasoning, and the same quiet influence would follow if it became law, and women would be found capable of as much calmness, as much good sense—perhaps in one or two cases a little more—than the lords of the creation. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. F. SHUM briefly seconded the motion, which was supported by Miss LILIAS ASHWORTH, and carried by a large and increased majority.

Votes of thanks concluded the proceedings.

#### BARNSTAPLE.

On March 18th a crowded meeting was held in the Music Hall, Barnstaple. The Mayor, W. Avery, Esq., presided, and on the platform were the Revs. H. J. Bull, A. Macdonald, J. Rutty, and R. Eland, Captain Swift, Messrs. Townshend, M. Hall, E. Greek, and many ladies. The National Society for Women's Suffrage was represented by Miss Beedy and Miss Becker. The usual resolutions adopting petitions to the borough and county members were passed, and the meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the mayor for presiding.

#### DRAWING-ROOM MEETINGS, LONDON.

A drawing-room meeting was held at Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood's, Queen Ann-street, on February 24th, Miss Cobbe presiding. The meeting was addressed by Miss Anna Swanwick, Mrs. Webster, and Miss A. Shore. Drawing-room meetings have also been held in connection with the Central Committee, at Mrs. Eiloart's, Clapton; Mr. Biggs', Notting Hill; Mrs. Rennick's, North Kensington, when a lecture was given by Mrs. Perrier; and at Miss Hill's, Dorset Square, Mr. Frederick Hill presiding.

#### MR. W. F. MAITLAND, M.P., ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

In reply to a memorial from a meeting at Brecon, Mr. Maitland wrote a letter dated February 3, 1876, of which the following is an extract: "I confess I have been hitherto averse to giving the suffrage to women, though I am willing to admit that the weight of argument seems to be against me. All I can say now is, that I will give the matter my fullest consideration, in the hope that my opinion may eventually be in accordance with that of my constituents."

#### PROPORTION OF WOMEN LANDOWNERS TO MEN.

The following table, extracted from the new "Domesday Book," shows the proportion of women to men among the landowners possessing one acre and upwards in the several counties of England and Wales:—

COUNTY.	Total Number of Owners of Land of one acre and upwards.	Number of Women Owners of Land of one acre and upwards.	Proportion of Women Owners, containing fractions.
Bedford	2,382	309	One in 7
Berks	3,068	432	" 7
Buckingham	3,288	448	" 7
Cambridge	6,496	1,085	" 5
Chester	6,029	784	" 7
Cornwall	5,149	639	" 8
Cumberland	5,896	1,138	" 5
Derby	6,092	995	" 7
Devon	10,162	1,558	" 6
Dorset	3,409	506	" 6
Durham	3,112	363	" 8
Essex	7,472	957	" 7
Gloucester	8,425	1,326	" 6
Hereford	4,646	829	" 5
Hertford	2,831	377	" 7
Huntingdon	2,087	235	" 8
Kent (exclusive of the Metropolis)	7,758	1,031	" 7
Lancaster	12,558	1,399	" 8
Leicester	4,927	692	" 7
Lincoln	16,729	1,690	" 9
Middlesex (exclu. of the Metropolis)	2,875	283	" 10
Monmouth	2,841	464	" 6
Norfolk	10,096	1,338	" 7
Northampton	4,455	514	" 8
Northumberland	2,221	294	" 9
Nottingham	4,628	637	" 7
Oxford	3,344	483	" 6
Rutland	564	63	" 8
Salop	4,838	776	" 6
Somerset	12,395	2,209	" 5
Southampton	6,235	891	" 6
Stafford	9,699	1,248	" 7
Suffolk	6,765	907	" 6
Surrey (exclusive of the Metropolis)	4,581	621	" 7
Sussex	5,059	681	" 7
Warwick	4,622	629	" 7
Westmoreland	2,662	473	" 5
Wills	4,378	652	" 6
Worcester	5,796	941	" 6
York, East Riding	4,564	664	" 6
North Riding	6,198	992	" 6
West Riding	17,417	2,078	" 8
Anglesey	1,126	181	" 6
Brecknock	1,219	207	" 5
Cardigan	2,038	358	" 5
Carmarthen	2,898	520	" 5
Carnarvon	1,630	245	" 6
Denbigh	2,272	301	" 7
Flint	1,462	232	" 6
Glamorgan	1,856	271	" 6
Merioneth	651	107	" 6
Montgomery	1,927	324	" 5
Pembroke	1,629	293	" 5
Radnor	1,190	136	" 8
Total numbers of owners of land of one acre and upwards in England and Wales (exclusive of the Metropolis)	269,547	37,806	Proportion of Women Owners
Number of Women Owners	37,806		1 in 7

#### KENDAL.

On March 27th, a crowded and enthusiastic meeting was held in the Town Hall, Kendal, under the presidency of the Mayor (Mr. Alderman Braithwaite), for the purpose of hearing an address by Miss Becker. Hundreds went away unable to obtain admission owing to the crowd. The speech was received with great favour, and frequent bursts of applause. After the lecture Mr. John Monkhouse rose from among the audience and moved a resolution adopting a petition. This was seconded by Mr. Councillor J. W. Robinson. The Mayor stated that it had not been expected that a petition would be proposed, but as a resolution had been moved and seconded he deemed it his duty to put it to the meeting. A perfect forest of hands was held up in its favour, and none to the contrary. The Mayor declared the resolution carried unanimously. Mr. Robinson moved, and Mr. J. Whitwell Wilson seconded a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was carried; and after a vote of thanks to the Mayor the meeting separated.

#### BATLEY.

On February 29th, a large meeting was held in the Batley Town Hall, under the presidency of his worship (Alderman J. T. Marriott). The hall was crowded, and at intervals considerable enthusiasm was displayed. The Mayor was supported by Miss Becker, of Manchester; Mrs. Oliver Scateherd, of Leeds; Mrs. Wood, of Dewsbury; Mrs. Ellis, Mrs. Abernethy, and other females; Mr. Joseph Parker, junr., Alderman J. J. Carter, Councillor A. Parker, Councillor W. Vero, Mr. J. S. Bailey, of Leeds, Mr. C. Burnley, of Batley, and others. Resolutions were moved and supported by the above-named ladies and gentlemen, and carried unanimously and with enthusiasm. Petitions to Parliament, and memorials to the borough and county members were adopted by the meeting, and the proceedings terminated with the usual complimentary votes.

#### HUDDERSFIELD.

##### WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SUPPORTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL.

At the monthly meeting of the Huddersfield Town Council, held on March 15, the Mayor said they had received a letter from Miss Becker, which was read to the council. It asked that the council would follow the example of the Manchester Corporation, and petition in favour of the Women's Suffrage Bill. Alderman Denham moved: "That in consideration of the communication from Miss Lydia Becker, secretary to the Manchester Society for Women's Suffrage, the council do present a petition to Parliament in favour of a measure which concerns so many of their constituents." He (Alderman Denham) said he presumed the council would be aware of the action which the ladies had taken in this matter. They had held meetings in Huddersfield for the purpose of defending themselves; they had pleaded their cause before the town; and he thought their arguments were unanswerable. As was well known, the ladies voted municipally; and it was only asked that the same powers which were given to them municipally might be given them in Parliamentary matters. The council were thoroughly familiar with the subject, and he had no need to add a single word. He hoped the council would give the motion their hearty support. Alderman Woodhead seconded the motion. Seeing that so many of the council were indebted to the ladies for the seats they occupied at that board, he conceived they would not be unwilling to extend to their female constituents the privilege of voting for members of Parliament, especially as they had displayed such excellent taste in voting them into the council. (Laughter.) The motion was then put to the vote, when twenty-one members voted for it and twelve against it. The motion was declared to be carried.

The Councils of Lincoln, Denbigh, Batley, Northampton, and others, have also adopted petitions for the Bill.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS RECEIVED DURING  
MARCH, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Winkworth	15	0	0
Mrs. Pochin	10	0	0
Mrs. S. W. Browne	4	0	0
Mrs. Ogden	2	2	0
Mrs. Scholefield	2	2	0
Miss R. Hervey	2	0	0
The Dowager Countess Buchan	2	0	0
Mrs. Gaddum	2	0	0
Mr. T. B. Potter, M.P.	1	1	0
Mrs. Lucas	1	1	0
Mrs. Eccles	1	1	0
Miss Knott	1	1	0
Mrs. Robert Winder	1	1	0
Mrs. James Lister	1	1	0
Mrs. G. H. Smith	1	0	0
Mr. Samuel Courtauld	1	0	0
Mrs. Carslake	1	0	0
Miss Annie Browne	1	0	0
Mr. Arthur Steains	1	0	0
Mrs. Tewson	1	0	0
Miss Goldsmid	1	0	0
Mrs. C. M. Holland	1	0	0
Mr. J. D. Milne	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Wilson	1	0	0
Mrs. Brankston	0	10	6
Miss Emily Hall	0	10	0
Mrs. Coppock	0	10	0
Dr. Gammage	0	10	0
Rev. J. Freeston	0	5	6
Mrs. Freeston	0	5	0
Miss Ellen Drewry	0	5	0
Mrs. W. H. Drewry	0	5	0
Miss Lucy Boulton	0	5	0
Mr. Bramley	0	5	0
Mr. J. A. Lyon	0	5	0
Mrs. Oldham	0	5	0
Mr. James Rhoades	0	5	0
Miss Nicholson	0	5	0
Mrs. Roby	0	5	0
Mr. J. Constantine	0	2	6
Mr. Temperley	0	2	6
Mrs. Hargreaves (Burnley)	0	2	6
Miss S. Hill	0	2	0
Mrs. Turnbull	0	1	6
A Poor Friend, per J. R.	0	1	6
DUDLEY.			
Mr. Owen Wright	1	1	0
Mr. C. L. Lester	1	1	0
Mr. T. Lester	0	10	6
Mr. D. Howat	0	10	6
Mr. D. Tanfield	0	5	0
Mr. J. Ridgway	0	5	0
Mr. A. J. Baird	0	2	6
Mr. James Whyte	0	2	6
Mr. J. H. Morgan	0	2	6
Mr. Thos. Turner	0	2	6
Mrs. Thompson	0	2	6
G. B.	0	2	6
KIDDERMINSTER.			
Mr. Miller Corbet	0	10	6
Mr. George Holloway	0	10	6
Mr. William Talbot	0	10	0
Mr. Lloyd	0	10	0
Rev. Thos. Fisk	0	5	0
Dr. Cowen	0	5	0
Mr. A. W. Beale	0	2	6
Mr. J. P. Harvey	0	2	6
Mr. G. Turton	0	2	6
Mr. R. Jones	0	2	6
Mr. John Christie	0	2	6
Mr. Will Brooke	0	2	6
Mr. E. Guest	0	2	6
WOLVERHAMPTON.			
Mr. W. Edwards	1	1	0
Mr. S. S. Mander	1	1	0
Mr. M. Bayliss	0	10	0
Mr. R. Markland	0	2	6
Mr. J. Newbold	0	2	6
Mr. John Jones	0	2	6
Rev. E. Franks	0	2	6

Carried forward... £71 17 0

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS (continued).

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward	£71	17	0
BATLEY.			
Mr. Alderman Marriott (Mayor)	1	0	0
Mr. J. J. Carter	1	0	0
Mr. W. J. R. Fox	0	10	0
Mr. Samuel Jubb	0	10	0
Messrs. Joseph Parker and Sons	0	10	0
Mr. Wm. Senior	0	10	0
Mr. John Oldroyd	0	10	0
Mr. John Middlebrook	0	5	0
Mr. A. Barran	0	5	0
Mr. John Spencer	0	5	0
Mr. J. P. Middlebrook	0	5	0
Mr. John Ingram	0	5	0
Mr. John Bates	0	5	0
Mr. William Vero	0	2	6
Mrs. Preston Sheard	0	2	6
Mr. W. Blamires	0	2	6
Mrs. David Vero	0	2	6
Smaller Sums	0	2	0
WALSALL.			
Mr. T. Checkley	1	1	0
Mr. E. T. Holden	1	1	0
Mr. Cotterell	0	10	0
Dr. Maclachlan	0	5	0
Rev. T. G. Littlecott	0	5	0
Mr. Job Wilkes	0	5	0
Mr. Joseph Dixon	0	5	0
Mr. Scanlan	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Kirby	0	2	6
Mr. A. D. Aulton	0	2	6
Mr. Thomas Blinkhorn	0	2	6
Mr. J. Ellis	0	2	0
Mr. Bates	0	1	0
STAFFORD.			
Mr. M. F. Blakiston	0	10	6
Mr. B. P. Wright	0	10	0
Mr. F. Greatrex	0	10	0
Mr. H. Bruce	0	10	0
Mr. Woolley	0	5	0
Mrs. Gibson	0	5	0
Mr. W. Silvester	0	5	0
Mr. Sproster	0	5	0
Mrs. Kelsall	0	2	6
Mr. J. T. Cox	0	2	6
Captain Hunt, R.A.	0	2	6
Mr. T. Bamford	0	2	6
Mrs. Blakemore	0	2	6
Mr. Josiah Hadley	0	2	6
M. D.	0	2	6

£86 14 6

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, Treasurer.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

Contributions to the funds of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, 64, Berners Street, London, W., from February 20th to March 20th, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Pochin	25	0	0
Mrs. Nichol	10	0	0
Mrs. Gough Nichols	10	0	0
Lady Goldsmid	5	0	0
Mrs. Lucas	2	2	0
Mrs. F. Malleon	2	2	0
Mr. Biggs	1	1	0
Miss Biggs	1	1	0
Miss C. A. Biggs	1	1	0
Mr. Stanley Lane Poole	1	1	0
Miss Sparling	1	0	0
Miss Beecher	1	0	0
Miss Holland	1	0	0
Mrs. Neymann	0	10	0
Miss Edith H. Taylor	0	10	0
G. S., per Mr. Bennett	0	5	0
Miss Pideaux	0	5	0
Mrs. Stobart	0	5	0
Mrs. Troupe	0	2	6
Mrs. Greig	0	2	6
Mrs. Perrier	0	2	6

£63 14 0

ALFRED W. BENNETT, Treasurer.