

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

VOL. VIII.—No. 92. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.
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OCTOBER 1, 1877.

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WORKSOP.—A PUBLIC MEETING in support of the Bill for conferring the Parliamentary Suffrage upon Women Householders will be held in the Assembly Room, Corn Exchange, Worksop, on Monday evening, Oct. 22nd, 1877. The chair will be taken at half-past seven by the Rev. J. E. Moore. Miss Becker, of Manchester, and Mrs. Oliver Scatterd, of Leeds, will attend as a deputation from the National Society for Women's Suffrage. Admission free; reserved seats, 1s.

GRIMSBY.—A PUBLIC MEETING in support of the Bill for conferring the Parliamentary Suffrage upon Women Householders will be held in the Town Hall, Grimsby, on Tuesday evening, October 23rd, 1877. Miss Becker, of Manchester, and Mrs. Oliver Scatterd, of Leeds, will attend as a deputation from the National Society for Women's Suffrage. To commence at eight o'clock. Admission free; reserved seats, 1s. each.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on Wednesday, November 7th, in the New Town Hall, Albert Square. Chair to be taken at Three o'clock, by his Worship the Mayor of Manchester. Further particulars in future announcements.

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Communications for the Editor and orders for the Journal to be addressed to the Secretary, Women's Protective and Provident League, 31, Little Queen-street, Holborn, London.

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WOMEN HOUSEHOLDERS' DECLARATION.

A desire has been felt to form a record of a permanent kind of the demand of women, otherwise legally qualified, to exercise the Parliamentary franchise. When the names of such women are appended to petitions to the House of Commons, they are usually mixed up with those of the men and women who are not householders, and when once the petition has been laid on the table of the House of Commons the signatures become the property of Parliament, and are no longer accessible for reference. It is therefore proposed that women who possess the qualification for the Parliamentary vote should, in addition to signing petitions to Parliament, send in their names to be appended to the declaration to be preserved in the offices of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, as a standing protest against the deprivation of the Parliamentary franchise attached to the household or property qualification they possess, and a memorial of the desire and demand of women for the suffrage.

The following is the form of declaration, which it is hoped will become a record of permanent historical and political value:—"We, the undersigned, possessing qualifications which would entitle us, if we were men, to vote in elections for members of Parliament, declare that we consider our exclusion from the privilege on the ground of sex an infraction of the principle that taxation and representation should go together, and we hereby express our desire for an alteration in the laws, which shall enable all women possessing the qualifications now enabling men to vote to exercise the Parliamentary franchise, if they desire so to do."

All friends are requested to send for forms to collect signatures.

Women householders are invited to write (stating name, address, and qualification, and) authorising their names to be attached to the declaration to MISS BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Manchester; or to MISS THORNBURY, Secretary of Central Committee, 64, Berners Street, London, W.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.—AN EMPHATIC PROTEST.

A "Woman Householder" writes as follows to the editor of a London paper:—

"Sir,—Will you permit me a little space in which to state the reasons which induce me each year to refuse payment of the State taxes, and to allow my goods to be seized and sold?

I have once more made this protest against the injustice which refuses women householders the right to vote for members of Parliament, thereby excluding them from any power of regulating the expenditure of the money taken from them, or of watching over their own interests, either of purse or person. Men householders can do both, and yet the two sexes are taxed alike.

I need not surely defend the principle of the right of the citizen, who helps, in his own degree, to support the State, to a voice in the disposal of the money contributed; that has long been a settled point as regards men. Why should women be denied this right? Their money is used for State purposes; and for some, I can assure my women readers, that are most repulsive and most unjust to our sex. If anyone pays such a proportion to the State as entitles that person to a vote according to the present law, sex should make no difference. Colour does not now, even in America. We demand the vote and the right to defend our purses.

Next, men can defend their personal liberty. No man can

be condemned to imprisonment without a public trial; but in many parts of England there are Acts in force by which a woman, suspected by a policeman of what is thought to be no fault in a man, can be treated as a criminal, without a trial, and be made to undergo treatment which is worse than any man criminal, even the vilest murderer, is ever forced to endure. The slaves of old could not suffer greater injustice than to be taxed in purse and person for the vices of their lords.

Why are women to have no voice about their personal rights? We demand the vote and the right to personal liberty.

Even our friends can do us no good while they persist in treating women as if they were children. Witness the Factory Acts, and others, forwarded by many men who are most benevolently and faithfully disposed towards us; yet, what can women say but that all such legislation for the intelligent adults of half a nation is an insult.

There is no true friend to women who will not, first of all, strike off the chains of political slavery in which they are bound, and hear from themselves, with a vote to back it, what they need and what will be of real use in advancing their health, their happiness, and their honour, consequently, that of the nation, of which they form half.

I refuse the taxes as the most earnest and most peaceable protest I can make against the exclusion of women from the right to vote for members of Parliament."

September 5th, 1877.

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THE session of Parliament this year has disappointed the expectations of many who looked for some useful measures of improvement in the laws as the result of the legislative season, or for some elucidation of sound principles which might serve as a basis for future action from the utterances of the collective wisdom of Parliament.

Questions and measures affecting women have formed no exception to the generally unsatisfactory course of procedure on other matters. The solitary measure designed to effect some improvement in the laws for women, the Act protecting the earnings of married women in Scotland, has passed in such a form as may tend to perpetuate the monstrous wrong which the author of the Bill sought to remedy. There is danger that the partial relief afforded by this measure may be more than counterbalanced by the mischief arising from the renewed sanction it gives to the principle which forms the basis of the property laws for women, namely, confiscation by the act of marriage. The exception provided by the Act from the operation of this principle establishes a distinction heretofore unrecognised between the legal right to earnings as distinguished from property acquired by inheritance or gift. Men have a legal right under all circumstances to the control of all property honestly acquired by them. Women, if they marry, have a legal right to the control of such property only as they have earned by their own labour. Thus a fresh distinction has been created between the laws for women and men. The result of the efforts made to amend the laws for women, by appealing to a Legislature which denies them representation, should show to those engaged in such effort that the surest and speediest path to their goal lies through the acquisition of the Parliamentary franchise. While the inequality is maintained between women and men as regards political rights it is vain to look for the recognition of equality as regards civil and personal rights.

The Canal Boats Act injuriously affects the personal rights of a large number of women directly, and of all women indirectly, inasmuch as it is a fresh legislative application of the assumed right to forbid women to do things which are supposed to not be good or proper for

them to do, while no such right is assumed to interfere in the same way with the personal liberty of men.

The treatment the women suffrage question received from the House of Commons this year will be fresh in the remembrance of our readers. While arguments in its favour were being presented, towards the close of the debate, the majority yelled for half an hour, and thus effectually stifled discussion. This procedure was in complete harmony with a principle which appears to be coming into favour with certain politicians, who use it as an argument against women suffrage—the principle, namely, that brute force, and not reason, is the basis of representative government.

With the close of the long vacation the shadow of the work for the coming season approaches, and calls on us to brace our energies and faculties for the task that lies before us. We enter on it with renewed heart and hope, and with unshaken confidence that the great principles which underlie our movement are those which must prevail in the counsels of any nation which desires to advance in the path of political progress, and make real improvement in the social condition of the people.

THE recent scenes in Parliament have at least succeeded in demonstrating how much even the mildest form of resort to physical force is out of place in a deliberative assembly such as the House of Commons, notwithstanding that close connection between physical force and legislation so often insisted on at the polling booth. No law without sanction, no sanction without physical force; therefore women never should have any connection, direct or indirect, with law-making. Such is the doctrine so often urged upon us in regard to the less laborious and occasional function of deciding who shall be chosen to legislate, notwithstanding that in the act of legislating this physical force is found altogether misplaced.

No doubt men do control the wills of their fellow-men by mere physical force, but only where there is no law; the club and the Bowie-knife come into play only where law has never existed or has been cast behind; the very existence of law implies the presence of a governing

power, which in its turn implies organisation more or less extensive—the influence of some one will pervading many wills. It matters not whether that pervading will emanate from one sovereign person or from a sovereign power composed of numerous persons, law controls according to that one will, and shall the ghost of the old traditions, which existed when as yet law was not, override us still? The soldiers, the police, who lay hands on the man that casts law aside, use physical force it is true, but they use it at command. How can we, after centuries of law, say that they, the compellers, are themselves compelled by physical force? No power has ever continued sovereign, no power has ever maintained obedience to itself, which has not constrained that obedience by a character in the present, or associations in the past, calling forth sentiments of honour and respect. It is the reverence and dignity associated with law, it is the accumulation of experience expressed by law that make command possible. How can this be affected by the fact of women having votes? It is a conceivable concatenation of circumstances that two or three representatives might owe the turn of the poll in their favour to women's votes, and further, that the votes of these same members might, on some question in which women generally felt themselves specially interested, turn the majority in the direction desired by a considerable number of the women of the country. That question might then be said to owe its acceptance or rejection to the votes of women. But what is there in this to militate against law and order? The sole new circumstance would be that the wishes of certain persons largely interested in the subject under discussion had influenced the result of the debate in Parliament, or, in other words, that a certain increase of experience had been brought to bear on the consideration of the measure.

H. B.

AT the Trades Congress at Leicester, on September 20th, a resolution proposed by Mr. HALLIDAY in favour of the Factory and Workshops Acts Consolidation Bill was adopted by an overwhelming majority of delegates. Only three voted against it, these three being delegates from the only class of adult workers who are subject to the provisions of the Acts. All the men delegates voted for extending the restrictions on the industrial freedom of women. All the women delegates voted against such restrictions. As the men only are allowed representation in the Legislature, the protest of the women will in all probability be disregarded, and the policy of protection and restriction of trade receive a further extension in the next session of Parliament.

It appears to be generally anticipated that the contest between the Senate and the Convocation of London University will terminate in the admission of women, not only to medical, but to all other degrees conferred by that University. The vehement opposition of the great majority of the medical graduates to their admission to their own profession will thus have been the means of obtaining for them the much larger privilege. In any case we seem to be considerably nearer to the goal of equality in eligibility for educational *rank* (though scarcely for educational opportunities) than we found ourselves at the beginning of the year.

It has been a long struggle since the days when the demand was first seriously made, some sixteen or eighteen years ago, and when many of us fondly hoped that the boon we asked for would be granted readily and cheerfully by the courteous gentlemen with whom it lay to do so at their pleasure. The present writer can remember, after speaking on the subject at a meeting of the Social Science Association in Guildhall, finding not only the venerable chairman of the meeting, Dean MILMAN, but, as it seemed, almost every man who discussed the question, convinced of the fairness of our demand. A whole generation of young girls has, however, been educated since those days without the benefit of the stimulus and reward which we hoped to obtain for them, and which men find indispensable to lure the youth of their own sex to serious study; and it is far from impossible that years may yet be lost by the procrastination of the half-reluctant University.

The history of this struggle for degrees seems to be typical of every claim connected with the woman question. We seem always to be flattered at first with the prospect of a speedy and kindly concession of our object. Then there rise up obstacles—then very formidable opposition. After this there is a long and severe contest; and then at the end—when every argument against us has been worn threadbare, and sentiments far from either chivalrous or generous have been betrayed on many sides—the boon is given, divested, alas! of all its grace. If it be true, as the proverb has it, that *bis dat qui cito dat*, presents made to women are certainly single!

F. P. C.

A PECULIARLY painful example of the foundation of social institutions on woman sacrifice is related by Mr. VIGORS respecting the Milanos, a tribe of Borneo, who are said to be a fine, intelligent race, and to have cordially united with Rajah BROOKE in the suppression of piracy. The passage is quoted by Mr. GLADSTONE in a recent number

of the *Contemporary Review* as follows:—"The Milanos build long galleries to dwell in, supported upon piles driven into the ground." "I was informed," says Mr. VIGORS, "that on the erection of one of these houses a deep hole was sunk for the corner pillar, and in this, as we place a bottle containing a coin and an engraved inscription, they (*horresco referens*) lowered an unfortunate girl decked out in all her finery, and then dropped the enormous post on her head, crushing her to atoms."

If women suffrage were ever demanded among the Milanos, it would probably be resisted by the local JOHN BRIGHT, on the ground that the interest of the women was involved in that of the men. The more overwhelming and crushing is the tyranny exercised over women, the more completely does it seem to those who exercise it, and even to those who suffer it, to be a part of the order of nature with which it is a kind of impiety to interfere.

Many will think with a shudder on the house building ceremonies of the Milanos who never reflect on the horrors no less tragical, if less dramatic, which too often lurk beneath the foundations of the boasted English home. Who can tell how many stately households in our own land have been reared over the remains of one, or of more than one, "unfortunate girl," who, if she does not lie crushed bodily underneath the pile, wanders in outer darkness, and satisfies by a life of misery and shame the social law which assumes that the safety and purity of the inmates of the house must be purchased by the destruction, body and soul, of innumerable young girls, who are doomed to be victims to the cruel and degrading "customs" sanctioned by the social world. Let those whose consciences are free on this matter condemn the Milanos of Borneo.

WE lately had to record the action of the Italian Legislature in removing the disability which precluded women from serving as witnesses to deeds and to wills, except in cases of infectious disease. Probably many of our readers are unaware how very recent is the date at which a similar disability was removed in Scotland. The "Titles to Land (Scotland) Consolidation Act," 31 and 32 Vic., c. 101, which was passed in 1868, has a section (139) which runs as follows:—"It shall be competent for any female person of the age of fourteen years or upwards, and not subject to any legal incapacity, to act as an instrumentary witness in the same manner as any male person of that age, who is subject to no legal incapacity, can act according to the present laws and practice, and it shall not be competent to challenge any deed or conveyance or writing or docu-

ment of whatever nature, whether executed before or after the passing of this Act, on the ground that any instrumentary witness thereto was a female person."

Notwithstanding the passing of this Act, the disability may still remain in other forms of deed than those specified in the above section. A correspondent informs us that it is not more than five years since her mother was requested by her lawyer to get male witnesses to a lease which she had to give of some property in Scotland. If this precaution were necessary under the existing law, it is time that this legislative stigma on the capacity and trustworthiness of Scotch women were removed, and we commend the subject to the attention of their representatives in Parliament.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us an extract from the Norman law relating to the position of women, from which it is probable that some of the present laws may be derived, and remain as a survival from the days of a lawless condition of society. The reasons for the restrictions on the right of women as to the guardianship of children may have been sound at the time; but those reasons having ceased to exist, the laws and customs based upon them should also pass away. The extract is as follows:—"Who shall protect the orphan heir, who ought to be under some guardianship? The mother shall not protect him. Why? Because if she took another husband and had children by him, the children, for greed of the inheritance, would kill their elder brother, and be heirs; or the husband himself would kill his stepson to give his own sons the inheritance."

WE have received from a correspondent a series of newspaper cuttings, being letters on the women's suffrage question contributed by Mr. THOMAS JAMES SEARLE to the columns of the *Working Intelligencer*. We notice these letters with great pleasure, not only because they are ably written and contributed by an esteemed and respected co-worker, but because they offer an example of a method of spreading knowledge and awakening interest in the question which we desire to see extensively followed. Editors of newspapers are, as a rule, very willing to admit letters dealing with subjects of general interest, even if they do not agree in all the opinions expressed by correspondents, and men or women who have thought out carefully the several aspects of the women's suffrage question, and express their ideas in temperate language and reasonable form, will rarely find that their letters will be denied insertion in the newspaper press of the town or district to which they belong. More especially

do we exhort women to use this method of showing the demand for the suffrage. It is hardly possible to take up a single copy of any newspaper—metropolitan or provincial—and make careful scrutiny of its columns, without discovering some record of some grievous wrong suffered by a woman, some illustration of the need for the protection of suffrage. Very frequently these things do rouse a cry of remonstrance, and letters are sent to us calling attention to some particularly striking illustration of Mr. GLADSTONE'S assertion that "the law of England is too much against women, and too much in favour of men." But we desire to impress on all such correspondents that their letters would do infinitely more good if they were addressed to their local newspaper press than to this *Journal*. Let women, then, carefully study their newspapers, not indeed for the sole purpose of finding out grievances, but in order to observe the events that are passing around them, the operation of the laws, the working of social customs, and the bearings of these things, not only on the general welfare of society, but especially on the condition of their own sex, and of those women who may be less favoured by fortune or circumstances than themselves. It is hardly possible for intelligent women to turn their thoughts on these subjects without finding that they have something to say on them, and even if they are unaccustomed to literary composition their letters will not be of less interest on that account, if they are written shortly and simply, and to the point, and express just what their writers think and feel. It would be as good an answer as could be given to the taunt that women do not desire the suffrage, if those who do desire it would open their lips or put pen to paper to say so, and make the demand that exists apparent.

THE *Daily News* has an article on Lawn Tennis, the great conqueror of the whilom victor, croquet. "At lawn tennis, man," it says, "as usual, has unfair advantages. He has been used to games all his life, but feminine quickness soon makes up lee way, though the feminine wrist is not always found equal to hitting back-handed strokes." "As usual, man has unfair advantages." Woman comes to the fight here, as elsewhere, unduly weighted. She comes unprepared and untrained against an adversary grown skilful from long practice and long undue favour. But "feminine quickness," it seems, "soon makes up lee way." Where she has fair play, woman is a match for man. The point where she fails is that her "wrist is not always found equal to hitting back-handed

strokes." Happy omen, drawn from lawn tennis strife Straight and honest strokes she can give and win, "back-handed" ones she leaves to the "unfair sex." C. H. C.

HINDU women holding a regular meeting in the proper form, speaking appropriately and passing business-like resolutions, is an event not wholly insignificant. The *Calcutta Englishman*, July 16th, records the proceedings of such an assembly, which was held to do honour to the memory of Miss CARPENTER. There were a few gentlemen present, but all the business of the meeting was conducted by the ladies exclusively. Mrs. M. GHOSE was voted to the chair, and resolutions were proposed and seconded by Mrs. P. C. MAZUMDAR, Mrs. BOSE, Miss SARALA DAS, Mrs. BANERJEA, and Miss KADAMBINI BOSE; a committee being appointed in conclusion to carry out the intentions of the meeting. One of the speakers, Mrs. A. M. BOSE, who appears to be a really eloquent woman, compared the life of an English philanthropist like MARY CARPENTER to "a fertilising river carrying benefits to many lands," and that of a Hindu lady to "a pond which does good only to those who are close beside it." Let us devoutly hope that the "pond" type of female existence (a simile appropriate for more reasons than one, and by no means inapplicable to a good many lives we are acquainted with nearer than India) may as soon as possible ripple away, if it be only into rivulets! F. P. C.

THE meeting of the Social Science Congress at Aberdeen has been distinguished by an unusual amount of space and attention devoted to papers by ladies, on subjects of special importance to women. Miss BURTON read papers on the question "Should the labour of women in factories be regulated by legislation?" and on "Beauty not incompatible with labour;" Miss BECKER on "Some social aspects of women's suffrage;" Miss LOUISA STEVENSON on the "Higher education of women in Scotland;" and Mrs. STRUTHERS on "University local examinations for girls and women." There was a large attendance at the reading of these papers, and a general acknowledgment of the ability and earnestness of the authors. The success which has rewarded the efforts of the Social Science Association to bring contributions from women towards the elucidation of social problems should encourage them to persevere in the same direction. All the subjects of discussion at these gatherings are of as much importance to women as to men, and women bring observations, as it were, from

the other hemisphere, which are needed to complement the observations from the standpoint of men. Astronomers could not determine with accuracy the sun's horizontal parallax from observations taken exclusively from one spot, and politicians need observations from every side of social life in order to arrive at a correct solution of the far more complex problems with which they have to deal.

SOCIAL SCIENCE CONGRESS AT ABERDEEN.

The proceedings of the Congress included several papers of special interest to women. The first of these was an able paper by Sheriff McLAREN on the Married Women's Property Law, maintaining the necessity of amending the common law so as to bring it into harmony with the sense of the people as expressed in the provisions usually made in cases where women have property before marriage. In the discussion, Professor Hunter, Miss Becker, Professor Sheldon Amos, Mr. H. N. Mozley, Miss Burton, Lord Gifford, President of the department, and Mr. Daniel, Q.C., supported the views advocated in the paper. Mr. Young spoke in the opposite sense, but the feeling of the section was strongly with those who desired an amendment of the law.

In the Art Department, Miss Burton read a paper on "Beauty not incompatible with labour." Miss Becker and Mrs. Parker took part in the discussion.

On Saturday morning, Miss Burton read a paper on the question, "Should the labour of women in factories be regulated by legislation?" The section room was crowded to overflowing, and regret was expressed that a larger one could not be had, as numbers were unable to find room. The paper was an admirable plea for industrial freedom for women, enforced with sound argument, wit, and wisdom. The views of the writer were supported by Miss Becker, Miss Lucy Wilson, and others. The discussion, which was full of interest, was brought to a somewhat premature close by the necessity for adjourning the section at midday on account of the excursions.

On Saturday afternoon, excursions were made to several places of interest. A special train was provided to Aboyne and Ballater. About sixty members of the Congress, including Miss Becker, visited Balmoral, Her Majesty the Queen having graciously given permission to view the grounds.

On Monday, Mr. Boyd Kinnear read a paper on the law of marriage.

On Tuesday, September 25th, the first paper in the Department of Economy and Trade was read by Miss Becker. The crowd was so great that the audience adjourned to the large hall. The following report is slightly abridged:—

SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

All political questions have important social bearings, but of all political questions, none touch so closely on purely social relations as the political enfranchisement of women. The political inequality between women and men is correlated to a social inequality which exists more or less in all human societies, subject to the general rule that those communities where the subjection of women is most complete are either barbarous or stationary, and those communities where women have attained the nearest approach to social equality with men have reached the highest and most progressive stage of civilisation. In our own country woman is held to be equal to man as touching responsibility, inferior to man as touching rights. The law does not protect the property of married women, and

the forms prescribed for evading the operations of the law are cumbersome, invidious, and expensive. Thus a very heavy tax is exacted from women who desire to retain their property in the security which men enjoy by the simple operation of the law without trouble or expense. The protection afforded by the law to women from evils which men cannot suffer in their own persons is very inadequate, and in regard to their mutual relations both law and custom deal much more severely with offences by women against men than with offences by men against women. Under the old law, a man who murdered his wife was held to have committed an ordinary murder, and might be hanged; but a woman who murdered her husband was held to have committed petty treason, and might be burned alive. In the present day wifebeaters escape with light sentences and comparatively little social reproach, but in the rare cases of cruelty to husbands, the wife is regarded as a monster of iniquity, and punished with exemplary severity, although husbands may be supposed to be better able to protect themselves against the violence of their partners than wives. Notwithstanding this, we need not doubt that if the returns of killed and wounded husbands began to show a faint approach to the numbers of wives who are annually beaten, kicked, and starved to death, we should have a "scare" incomparably greater than that caused by the ravages of the Colorado beetle. We should have a "Destructive Wives Restriction Bill" hastily framed by the Government of the day, and rushed through all its stages without discussion or obstruction, by an obedient and panic-stricken Legislature.

The common law of England professedly regards husband and wife as one person, and that person the husband; therefore the wife has no legal claim on the husband for the value of the services she may render him, and no legal remedy against him should he fail to supply her with necessaries. If he actually starves her to death the law provides a punishment, but while she is living in his house she cannot compel him to give her money to support her or feed her children, but should they die in consequence, she may be made criminally responsible for the neglect, and he may escape altogether. A husband may desert his wife at the most critical and utterly helpless period of her existence, and the law will hold her answerable for the life of the infant, which it regards as his, and not as hers. At the last Manchester assizes a married woman was condemned to die for the murder of her infant, aged six weeks. She had been deserted by her husband, had been confined in the workhouse, and at the end of a month she left with her infant in a destitute condition. A fortnight afterwards the body of the child was found in the canal. When taxed with the crime, she said: "It is all through starvation. I had no home to go to." The barrister who defended her on her trial said it was of the utmost possible importance that the lives of young children should be watched over, and that women when they were found guilty of neglect or cruelty of any kind towards them should be regarded as monsters, and be subjected to condign punishment. This is a man's view. Women might say that it is of the utmost possible importance that the lives of women and children should be watched over, and that the men who were guilty of cruelty or neglect of any kind towards those whom the law committed to their charge should be regarded as monsters, and be subjected to condign punishment. The jury found the deserted mother guilty of wilful murder, and recommended her to mercy. The judge, in passing sentence of death, said he had no doubt that the poverty-stricken condition of the mother was the foundation of the recommendation, but he gave no hope of mercy. Shortly after the trial her husband was brought before the Stockport magistrates on a charge of deserting his wife and child, and leaving them chargeable to the union. The relieving

officer stated that the wife was utterly destitute, and that the husband would find her neither a home nor food. The husband pleaded guilty, and was committed to gaol for one month with hard labour. The punishment was not for cruelty and wrong to his wife, but for the expenditure he had caused to the ratepayers. At the expiration of the term the husband would emerge a free man, without incumbrance. His deserted baby is dead, and his wretched wife expiates on the gallows or in penal servitude for life the desperate act to which starvation has impelled her. If equal rights were given to women, wives would have a direct and personal claim, without the intervention of the relieving officer, to the maintenance which is one of the conditions of the marriage contract; and if equal justice were done to men, fathers who desert the mothers of their children at the time of their sorest helplessness and peril would be made criminally responsible if life should be lost through their neglect.

A case of flagrant injustice through the law which decrees power to the husband and responsibility to the wife lately occurred in Salford. Agnes Dilworth was charged with obtaining payment of the school fees for her children from the Salford Guardians on false pretences. She had stated that her husband was a joiner's labourer, and that his wages were 14s. a week. The order for payment was made. It subsequently transpired that the husband was a joiner, who was earning 27s. per week. The wife, in defence, said she did not receive that amount from her husband. The magistrates said they very much regretted that they could not bring the charge against the husband. They were unfortunately compelled to carry out the law against the woman, who would be sentenced to seven days' imprisonment. The husband asked them to put on a fine. The magistrates said it was very much against their feelings to send the wife to prison, but the husband had received the benefit of an order obtained under false representations, and they could not bring it against him. Thus the wife is sent to prison, and her children are deprived for the time of their mother's care, through the withholding by the husband of the money necessary to keep his children and satisfy the requirements of the law as to compulsory attendance at school.

The law does not afford to women the same liberty to enter the learned professions that men enjoy, nor allow to women who desire to consult medical or legal advisers of their own sex the same freedom that it permits to men. True it is that after long years of gallant struggles against ungenerous, unjust, and, if I may say so, unmanly opposition, the legal bar to the medical profession has been removed, and Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake and her fellow students are in the exercise of their well won honours and rights. Who can doubt that if women had been in possession of the Parliamentary vote, the opposition to their entrance on the medical profession would either never have been raised, or would have been overcome at the outset. It may be safely affirmed that had Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill been passed last session we should hear no more of any opposition either from the Convocation of London University, or from any other educational body, to the fullest facilities being given to the cultivation and recognition of intellectual progress in women; Public schools, universities, and learned societies shut their doors on women, or, if they admit them occasionally to their meetings, it is as mere witnesses of their proceedings, and not as persons capable of being educated into fitness to take part in them.

The legal profession is still closed to women, although for some of its branches they are as peculiarly fitted, and the need for their services is as great, as in the medical profession. The laws are not only framed entirely by men, but they are interpreted and administered from a man's point of view.

Women do not find their own side represented anywhere, and if they go to a lawyer they must needs seek one whose personal and professional instincts lead him to look at things from the opposite point to their own.

But there are obstacles in the way of women who desire to obtain legal education. At the present moment there is a young lady, the daughter of a solicitor at Manchester, who has begun her training in her father's office, but whose articles have been refused registration. It is understood that an appeal may be made to a higher authority to test the legality of the refusal, and it is earnestly to be desired that means may be found to prosecute the appeal.

The labour of women is regarded as given under different conditions from the labour of men. Men work and receive wages, and are said to maintain themselves. Women work and do not receive wages, and are said to be maintained by men. In reckoning the number of women who are self-dependent, or self-supporting, those only are taken into account who work out of their own homes, or who are paid wages from some outside source. Those women are not regarded as self-supporting who do domestic work for which they are not paid, although that work is absolutely necessary to the maintenance of the household, and would have to be paid for if done by another person.

The evil effects of the arbitrary division of human interests caused by marking out distinct spheres for men and women are shown not only in the exclusion of women from all share of political duties, but by the withdrawal of men from their fair share of domestic duties. In the majority of the homes of England the whole of the housework falls on the wife at all times, whether she is fit or unfit for the task. Men are encouraged in the notion that it is beneath the dignity of their sex to help their wives to mind the house. Politicians and philanthropists promote clubs on the ground that men cannot be expected when they come in from work to face the discomforts of clamouring children and household work, and that it is desirable to provide them with places where they may spend their evenings pleasantly away from home. It is to be feared that these efforts will ultimately cause greater mischief than that they are intended to counteract, by teaching men that they may lawfully seek their own pleasure and leave their wives and children neglected, unless the clubs shall be so organised that men may share with their families the benefits they are meant to convey. It would be a powerful antidote to the evils of idleness and intemperance among men to give them such a training in domestic duties as would enable them to help their wives when these were overworked, and to take care of their children in case of widowhood. At present a working man who is left a widower with a young family is seldom capable of attending to the housework and the children, in the intervals of his outdoor labour, as widows with young families commonly do; and the suffering of the children in such circumstances is cruel. Lately, at Manchester, a man left his three children under six years old utterly neglected, and when he was brought up to answer for the death of one of them through starvation, he said he "had no one to look after them." The poor child who died said to a compassionate neighbour: "We have had no proper dinner since mother died." It is natural to feel indignant with the conduct of the father, but it would be wiser to encourage a change in the training and sentiments of men which would tend to diminish the probability of such occurrences.

In one of his amusing papers, Sir John Lubbock describes the habits of certain slaveholding ants which have become so demoralised that they were too lazy to feed themselves. He put some of these aristocratic ants into a box, and he found

them so helpless that he believes they would have died if he had not put two or three slaves into the box, who immediately began to attend to the wants of their masters. Some of the men of this country might fare no better than these ants if they had not domestic slaves in the shape of wives or girl-children to minister to them.

At the time of the agitation for the Nine Hours Factory Bill, men asked for a reduction in the hours for women, not that they might have more time for rest and recreation, but that they might have more time to attend to their domestic duties. The requirements of men in this respect may be seen from the testimony of Her Majesty's inspector of factories. Mr. Redgrave reports as follows:—"The husband leaves home at six a.m., returns at eight a.m., and has his breakfast served for him. He goes to work and returns at noon, or at one o'clock, and has his dinner served for him. He goes again to work, and returns home at six p.m., with nothing whatever to do except to smarten himself up a bit, and enjoy himself as he lists. Now let us see the contrast that the married woman presents. She leaves home at six a.m., returns home at eight a.m., serves the breakfast for her husband and family. Again the same thing at dinner time; and when she returns home last of all, at six p.m., her hands are full till bedtime. It may be fairly said that she is working in some way or other from rising in the morning until going to rest at night." Thus a man assumes that when his outdoor work is done he has a right to rest and enjoy himself, but when his wife's outdoor work is done it is her duty to serve and wait upon him. This notion appears to be a remarkable instance of what is called "survival" of an arrangement which lasts after the circumstances which gave rise to it are altered. It was not an unjust division of the labour necessary to maintain a household which assigned the outdoor work to the man and the indoor work to the woman. But the division is no longer equitable when the wife has to do as much outdoor work as the husband and the whole of the indoor work besides. If this arrangement is not a survival, it would have to be attributed to the strong tendency that exists in human nature to place burdens not on those who are best able to bear them, but on those who are least able to resist them. Many here present will remember a picture in the Royal Academy two years ago, entitled "Bearers of the Burden." It represented a woman heavily laden, carrying an infant, and surrounded with other children, while the husband walked on before, with his sporting dog by his side, his pipe in his mouth, and his hands in his pockets, in lordly disregard of those who were struggling wearily behind. I fear this is an overtrue picture of the social condition of large masses of the labouring population.

It is startling to reflect on the amount of taxation levied practically on the wives and children of working men. The duties on the spirits and tobacco he consumes represent money withdrawn from the family income, and they amount to something like 800 or 1,000 per cent on the value of the articles consumed. If taxation were not levied in this form men would not require to spend nearly so large a proportion of their wages on the indulgences which they seemingly will not forego, and more would be left for their families. Opinions may differ as to the wisdom of retaining or lowering the duties on spirits and tobacco, but the consideration of how they affect the women and children of the industrial classes should not be disregarded.

In cases of disputes between workmen and their employers the claim of women to a voice in the matter seems entirely overlooked. Men assume a moral right, as they have a legal right, to strike work at the bidding of a trades council, without the consent of their wives, who will be the first to suffer the privations of the struggle. In calculating strike pay so much per week is allowed for the man, and so much for every child

under ten years of age, but nothing is allowed for the support of the wife beyond what the unmarried men receive.

Not only the wives of those on strike suffer, but the women who have independent employment in the mills lose their employment when the men's trades councils order a strike, and these do not receive strike pay. Just now a strike is going on at Bolton. The trades unions pay to sustain the men on strike in Bolton about £3,000 weekly, in lieu of £7,000 which they would have earned had they remained at work. Thus £4,000 weekly has been withdrawn from the maintenance of the women and children of the Bolton district through loss of the men's and children's wages alone. But this is little more than half the loss. The men and children who receive strike pay number 6,700, and these receive £3,000 instead of £7,000. The cardroom hands number 5,000 young women between the ages of 15 and 20, whose average earnings per week amount to about 12s. These women are not in the men's union, and receive no support from the union through whose act they have lost their employment. They lose £3,000 in aggregate wages, they are deprived of their means of livelihood, they are turned out without any resource whatever, and that by the decree of a trades council in which they are not allowed a voice. Thus in social as well as in international strife men decree war and women suffer.

Men are much less acutely sensible of the evils women suffer than to those which affect themselves. It is no reproach to say this, because it follows from a necessary condition of human nature and of sentient being. We all know what we feel ourselves better than we can possibly know what other people feel, and we can all understand the condition of persons like ourselves better than we can understand the condition of persons unlike ourselves. Men cannot be trusted safely with absolute power to legislate for women since all their knowledge of the subjects of their legislation must be obtained, as Sir Henry James said, second hand.

It has been said that women are not a class—that they do not need political power because their interests are involved in those of men. This position was maintained by Mr. James Mill during the discussion which preceded the first Reform Bill in the following words: "One thing is pretty clear, that all those individuals whose interests are involved in those of other individuals may be struck off without inconvenience. . . . In this light women may be regarded, the interest of almost all of whom is involved either in that of their fathers or that of their husbands." The fallacy of this argument was shown by Lord Macaulay, who, in an essay reprinted in his miscellaneous writings, says: "We say that every argument which tells in favour of the universal suffrage of men tells equally in favour of female suffrage. Mr. Mill, however, wishes to see all men vote, but says it is unnecessary that women should vote; and for making this distinction he gives as a reason an assertion which in the first place is not true, and which would, in the next place, if true, upset his whole theory of human nature, namely, that the interest of the women is identical with that of the men." In another essay, commenting on the same passage, Lord Macaulay writes: "If we were to content ourselves with saying, in answer to all the arguments in Mr. Mill's essay (Essay on Government), that the interest of a king is involved in that of a community, we should be accused, and justly, of talking nonsense. Yet such an assertion would not, as far as we can perceive, be more unreasonable than that which Mr. Mill has here ventured to make. Without adducing one fact, without taking the trouble to perplex the question by one sophism, he placidly dogmatizes away the interest of one half the human race. If there be a word of truth in history, women have always been and still are, over the greater part of the globe,

humble companions, playthings, captives, menials, beasts of burden. Except in a few happy and highly civilised communities, they are strictly in a state of personal slavery. Even in those countries where they are best treated, the laws are generally unfavourable to them with respect to almost all the points in which they are most deeply interested." The general accuracy of Lord Macaulay's picture of the condition of women under the irresponsible government of men will hardly be disputed, and it presents one of the strongest grounds on which women ask for the Parliamentary franchise. The claim of women to the political franchise is based on the same principles of political justice and social necessity on which it is claimed by men. The enfranchisement of women will add a new force to social progress. It will be the removal of a drag which has clogged the wheels of progress with the everlasting friction caused by the different rates of advance of the two halves of humanity. As well expect a waggon to move straight while the wheels on one side have a smaller diameter than those on the other, as expect the human race to go on in a right line while the minds of women are restricted to a smaller sphere and constrained to take a different direction from those of men. Women are the co-ordinate, not the subordinate, half of humanity. The political franchise is at once the symbol of this co-ordinate dignity and the means whereby substantial equality before the law may be secured. Men and women do not exist in separate spheres, but have a common sphere—the world in which they live—and the co-operation of each in every department of human life is needed for the full development of human faculties and the perfection of the race.

Mr. C. BUSHELL (Liverpool) said he wished to say one or two words of protest against the view expressed by Miss Becker. He appealed to the married ladies in that meeting for their verdict with regard to the paper. He knew not what might have led to the views which Miss Becker held with regard to our social and domestic life, but he was persuaded that the evils she had justly portrayed would not be remedied, or in the slightest condition improved, by that which she proposed to adopt. (Applause.) He did not believe that woman's suffrage would meet these evils, but that it would greatly increase them. He believed that with regard to crimes of violence upon women and children the law was powerful enough to reach them. Miss Becker had complained that certain duties were limited to one sex or the other, but she forgot that Divine Providence had assigned to each class peculiar functions. (Hear.) He ventured to think that women had no right to engage in outdoor employment at all—(hisses)—and that her sphere was her own home. The great remedy for the evils which we suffered would be found in a better, more general, and more religious education of the masses of the people.

Miss BURTON (Edinburgh) mentioned that in Aberdeen no less than 600 women householders had signed a petition for the franchise. In one respect this society had not been consistent, for whilst it had held a meeting specially for working men, it had addressed nothing to the working women. (Laughter.) She regarded the law of infanticide as a particularly bad example of the injustice done to women. (Hear, hear.)

Miss FLORA STEVENSON (Edinburgh) said she thought they were all much indebted to Miss Becker. She agreed with the first speaker that the improved religious education of the masses would make a very great difference in our social life. No one was more strongly in favour of religious education in our public schools than she was, and there was one text that she would especially have enforced upon the boys, "He who provideth not for his own denies the faith, and is worse than

an infidel." (Hear, hear.) She generally supported the views of the paper.

Mr. Serjeant Cox said he thought that nothing could be more inexpedient than the giving of the suffrage to married women. We had always maintained the principle that husband and wife were one, and carried it out in legislation. He hoped we should not forget that principle, which was not interfered with in the Bill which the Women's Suffrage Society had promoted in Parliament. The real question was not whether married women should be admitted to vote, but whether single women, who were in every other respect qualified to be voters, should be simply by reason of their sex prohibited from exercising the franchise. (Hear, hear.) He had never yet heard any substantial reason urged against making this concession, and on the ground of ability at least there could be no possible objection to it.

Mr. BUSHELL explained that he entirely agreed with the learned serjeant. As single women had the municipal vote and the school board vote, he would give them the vote for members of Parliament.

Mr. ALEXANDER TAYLOR (a working man of Aberdeen) said there was a fallacy running through the whole of the paper, and that was, that woman's suffrage would sweep away all the evils that flesh was heir to in this country. It was an entire mistake. (Hear, hear.) All the ladies who had spoken had failed to connect the one with the other. He protested against such an assumption. (Hear, hear.) He held that in nine cases out of ten women were not capable of exercising the franchise with due discrimination—(hisses)—and for the benefit of the country. (Hear, hear, and dissent.)

Mr. M'PHAIL supported the views expressed in the paper.

Mr. STORR (London) pointed out that the obligations which were said to be imposed on women by the State were local and municipal and not national, and that therefore they formed no ground for claiming the Parliamentary vote. He adverted also to the inconvenience which would be likely to arise from the fact of single women having the vote, marrying and losing their qualification, and in women on becoming widows again taking up their qualifications. He thought that the privilege which was claimed was hardly worth fighting for.

Mr. LESLIE pointed to the fact that women had a very large share in the government of the Churches in Scotland, and argued that as they used their power well, they were quite fitted to exercise the right they claimed.

Miss BECKER, in reply, said she was not so foolish as to think that woman's suffrage or any other measure would remedy all the evils of society, and she had yet to learn that the granting of the suffrage to women was incompatible with the spread of religious education. With regard to the alleged insignificance of the question, she said that in the city of Manchester alone the concession of the Parliamentary vote to single women would add 10,000 voters to the Parliamentary list, a body which could hardly be despised by any candidate for the constituency. She thought the statement of Mr. Leslie as to the power of women in the government of the Churches of Scotland was extremely significant. In fact, the Church of Scotland might be said to be practically governed by women, for the proportion among the elders was two women to one man. She thought that if Scotland was not afraid to trust women with the government of the Church, she need not fear to trust them with some share in the government of the State.

The CHAIRMAN briefly summed up the discussion, and the proceedings concluded.

DRAWING ROOM MEETING.

ISLE OF ARRAN.

A very pleasant drawing-room meeting in favour of women's suffrage was held at Brodick, Isle of Arran, on August 27th. It was arranged under the auspices of Miss Ramsay Smith (a member of the Edinburgh Committee), and held in a room kindly lent for the purpose by the proprietor of the Brodick Hotel. The meeting was presided over by the Rev. David Purves, of Maxwelltown, Dumfries, and addressed by Mrs. Masson, of Edinburgh, and by Miss Orme, one of the two lady conveyancers who are at present practising in London. Mr. M'Laren, of Glasgow, and Mr. Costello, of Baliol College, Oxford—two gentlemen among the audience—also spoke in favour of the movement, and the resolutions were carried unanimously. This is the first meeting which has been held on the subject in Arran. It was attended numerously by both residents and visitors, who expressed themselves much interested in the arguments placed before them. It is to be hoped that the custom of holding drawing-room meetings in country districts during the holiday season will become more general, as it is a pleasant method of disseminating knowledge and interest in the question.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

BARNESLEY.

Miss Craigen held an open-air meeting at Barnesley on July 9th, which was attended by about a thousand colliers. Mr. Chas. Downs was in the chair, and a petition in favour of women suffrage was unanimously adopted.

THE POTTERIES.

HANLEY.

On August 28th, Miss Craigen held an open-air meeting on the Crown Bank, Hanley; Mr. John Johnson in the chair. About 500 working men, mostly potters and colliers, were present. The petition was unanimously adopted.

BURSLEM.

On August 29th, another open-air meeting was held in St. John's Square, Burslem, about the same in numbers and character of the audience. Mr. Lewis Groom occupied the chair.

SMALLTHORN.

After the meeting at Burslem, some working women spoke to Miss Craigen, and said they all felt the bad laws for women. They invited her to go to Smallthorn, saying every woman would come out to hear her. Miss Craigen accepted their invitation, and on arriving at Smallthorn she found the women had provided an excellent tea, and a long table for a platform in a field. Smallthorn is a little village of pits and ironworks, and the women had been all round the village, from house to house, and told what was coming off. The pitmen's wives came in great numbers, but though it was a large meeting, there were not a dozen men present; it was a mass of women. They listened very attentively, and when the petition was moved, it was seconded by Mrs. Rothwell, and signed on behalf of the meeting by Mrs. Mary Anne Barnet, who occupied the chair.

LONGTON.

Miss Craigen held two open-air meetings at Longton, on September 4th, 1877, on the Show Ground, Mr. W. Freakley chairman; and on September 7th, 1877, in the Market Place, Longton, Mr. Joseph Throoley in the chair. Petitions were adopted at these meetings.

Miss Craigen has also held meetings since April last:—On May 9th, 1877, in the Liberal Club Room, SHEPHEY, Mr. John

Tiplady, chairman; on May 17th, 1877, in the Methodist Chapel, GARGRAVE, Yorkshire, Mr. Abraham Bateson, chairman; on June 14th, 1877, at PADHAM, in the Assembly Rooms, Mr. James Briggs in the chair; on June 20th, at OVER DARWEN, in the Market Place, Mr. William Lomax, chairman; and at MEXBOROUGH, on July 24th, Mr. Abraham Lee in the chair. Petitions were adopted at all these meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WOMEN HOUSEHOLDERS' DECLARATION.

To the Editor of the Women's Suffrage Journal.

Madam,—Permit me through your columns to call very urgently the attention of all our friends, and especially of the various Suffrage Committees, to the declaration of the Women Householders now in process of signature. A diligent, organised propagandism among the women who would be enfranchised by our Bill, is, in my humble opinion, the chief work before us for a long time to come. When it is accomplished, our cause will virtually be gained. So far as my experience extends, I believe it will be found very much easier to obtain the signatures of these women, both of the higher and lower ranks, than of those who have not needed to "fend for themselves," but have merely opened their mouths like the little birds in the nests, and been fed by their parents and husbands. A young friend of mine who has cheerfully accepted the request of our Central Committee to seek signatures in her own neighbourhood (in one of the southern counties), writes to tell me of her success with the majority of those to whom she has applied, and adds these pertinent remarks:—"Some of the women are very sensible (the hard-working, independent-looking ones in particular), are most anxious for the suffrage, and speak very strongly against many of the laws with regard to women (*e.g.*, a married woman's earnings belonging to her husband). They seem all to have their stories of husbands carrying off and squandering their wives' money, and I suppose seeing these things done before their eyes, and suffering themselves from the injustices of men, makes them wiser than their richer neighbours." Hoping that your readers generally will take to heart the work in question, and encourage their friends and servants (a most useful class of assistants) to obtain the signatures.—I am, dear Madam, yours truly,

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Tanllan, Llanelltyd, Dolgelly.

MR. WALTER MORRISON ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

At the luncheon at the opening of the Liberal Club at Bradford by Earl Granville, after the great speeches of the day,

Mr. SWIRE SMITH proposed the health of "The Ladies." In the course of his remarks he said there were many ladies in the town and neighbourhood who took a great and stirring interest in all those questions to which they themselves gave so much of their time. If he might express a personal wish, it would be that the ladies, whose sympathising and refining influences they all must acknowledge in their domestic life, might be allowed to extend their influence in political life.

Mr. WALTER MORRISON, who was very heartily received, responded to the toast. He remarked that they were nothing if they were not political—(hear, hear)—they were assembled there that afternoon as members of a party, in order to promote a certain political object. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, while they had been congratulating themselves upon the extension to such a wide limitation of the borough franchise, they hoped that be-

fore long either one or the other of the great political parties in the State would take action in another direction, and that a similar measure might be passed for the counties. He most cordially joined in the wish expressed by Mr. Swire Smith that English women might be allowed to extend their influence in a political direction. The average English woman, when she was performing any public function, showed at least as much intelligence, at least as much good sense and tact, and certainly as much conscience and principle in exercising her rights, as an average Englishman. (Applause.) The extension to women of political power was not a mere sentimental question, but a practical question, and he ventured to say that if women had political rights they would not find the difference that now often existed between the sentences passed on persons who picked pockets and stole property, and those who committed brutal assaults; and they would not find, at least he hoped not, the medical corporations opposing the admission of women to the practice of medicine—a profession for which they were eminently suited. (Applause.) If women were politically equal to men, he believed more money would be given to girls' schools, and that there would be a great many more girls' schools like those at Keighley and Bradford. (Hear, hear.) He thanked them in the name of the ladies, especially of Yorkshire, and particularly in the name of those ladies who had graced that meeting that night—(hear, hear)—but if they were to get into the way of looking at women as on a level with men, then on such an occasion as that the toast of "The Ladies" would be responded to by a lady—(hear, hear)—and from what he had heard of the speaking of women, he had been led to believe that if they got a dozen intelligent women to speak on a subject which they had at heart, they would find it difficult to get men to speak so tersely, so logically, and with so much common sense as women did. (Cheers.)

MR. LLOYD GARRISON ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

This great moral reformer of the United States, forty of whose years have been spent in bringing about the emancipation of slaves, has lately visited Scotland, where his presence has been much valued by all who have had the pleasure of seeing him and hearing him speak. Mr. Garrison is now upwards of seventy years of age, and has come over on this occasion to Europe to have the pleasure of seeing once again his friends and fellow-workers in the cause of progress, and to get a much-needed rest from his labours. It was a disappointment to many that they could not well ask the veteran reformer to take part in a public meeting in this country during his holiday; but in private conference his valuable opinion on more than one subject of interest has been obtained. In Mr. Garrison is to be clearly discerned a great and good characteristic not seldom wanting in those who have carried one great reform—sympathy with all reforms—for in his old age he is as eager for the social improvements of the day as he can ever have been for that great one which his life has seen consummated. Speaking of woman's suffrage at a private meeting in the house of Mrs. Nichol, Huntly Lodge, Edinburgh, he expressed his earnest desire that it should be brought about, and said that he looked to the forthcoming equality of the sexes as a means of removing many State evils. When asked if women in the United States were more privileged than those in Britain, he said "in some respects only." "But here in your country," he continued, "you have a precedent for woman's legal power to help in governing the land which we have not. We, although we consider ourselves highly civilised in many respects, have never yet had a female President, whereas you

have had Queens, and are at this very present time ruled over by a monarch, Queen Victoria, one of the best and most virtuous sovereigns Britain has ever seen." "I wonder," said Mr. Garrison, his eyes lighting up with an expression of quaint humour, "that Britons could ever seriously raise any objection to so small a matter as the question of women householders having a vote for members of Parliament. So long as there is a woman on the British throne, so long as the people do not cry out 'away with her! she is a woman, she has no right to govern,' there is every justification for her female subjects obtaining the rights of citizenship. For is not the greater universally acknowledged to contain the less?"

These very justifiable remarks by Mr. Garrison may serve to show how it may appear a singular anachronism to foreigners that in the free and enlightened country of Britain there should still exist such a relic of barbarism as the treatment of British women as social ciphers while a British Queen is on the throne.

REVIEW.

La Femme Libre, by Léon Richer. Paris, 1877.

This is a careful and thorough essay on the whole question of the position of women. Taking its departure from social conditions in France, it is more especially applicable to that country, but in its general effect is true for all countries, showing the peril which must await civilisation if the subordinate position of women should continue in the future what it has been in the past. "We must choose sternly between these two consequences, the elevation of women or decadence," is the conclusion which the book leads up to. The preface tells us that this work is to be by no means regarded as attempting an exhaustive treatment, but rather aspires to lay a foundation on which future and more detailed works may be built—one such work, La Code des Femmes, being already in preparation by the same author, on the position of women before the civil law. La Femme Libre accordingly presents that general outline which is an essential preliminary to any philosophic treatment of the parts.

The first chapter lays down the principle that woman is the equivalent of man, and the succeeding chapters show how the absence of this principle works for evil in the legal, moral, educational, and political aspects of society. Then follows a chapter on the women's suffrage movement in England and America, and a brief review of the advancement of women throughout the history of civilisation.

In France the struggle is concentrated on the civil law, some of whose chief anomalies are here pointed out, while the political question is still in abeyance, and the reader feels continually that—in the words of a recent writer on France—"the place of women in provincial French society would be stronger if they saw more of the men, and it would be better for society generally if the sexes were not so widely separated." "We employ fifteen years of the lives of women," says Mr. Richer "in inculcating sentiments which are not ours, ideas and beliefs contradictory to those we possess; in carefully hiding from them, as if it were forbidden fruit, all that interests and incites ourselves, and at the end of that time we are naively surprised that women do not understand us" (p. 156). These two passages mutually explain each other. We will close this brief notice of a noble protest against the tardiness of those who proclaim liberty, equality, fraternity, in acting up to their own principle, with another extract referring to the civil code. "Before the civil law woman is our inferior, but before the penal law she recovers her rank. Her right to the galleys and scaffold are recognised . . . Not that I

would reproach our law for proceeding with equal rigour against the guilty woman as against the guilty man. I only reproach it for having two measures" (p. 73). We hope that La Femme Libre may find many readers in our own country as well as in France.

MARRIAGE OF MISS ASHWORTH.

On Saturday, September 1st, the marriage of Joseph Cross, Esq., M.A., of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, youngest son of the late John Cross, Esq., of Gartside House, Bolton, and Miss Anne Frances Ashworth, the elder of the two daughters of the late Thomas Ashworth, Esq. (son of the late John Ashworth, Esq., of Bertenshaw), of Claverton Lodge, Bath, and Poynton, Cheshire, was celebrated at the Church of S. Mary, the Boltons, Kensington, London. The wedding was a remarkably quiet one, there being neither bridesmaids nor groomsmen. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. W. Duboulay, vicar of the parish, and the bride, who wore an embroidered dress of dark blue satin, was given away by her uncle by marriage, Duncan Maclaren, Esq., M.P. for Edinburgh. The wedding breakfast was served at the town residence of Mr. and Mrs. Maclaren, the Boltons, Kensington. The party, numbering about fourteen, included the Right Hon. John Bright, M.P., and Mrs. Bright, uncle and aunt of the bride; John K. Cross, Esq., M.P., brother of the bridegroom, and Mrs. J. K. Cross; Mrs. Lucas, aunt to the bride; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hanbury; Mr. and Mrs. Hallett; the Misses Agnes and Rhoda Garrett; Mr. W. Maclaren, &c. The health of the bride was proposed by Mr. Bright. Mr. and Mrs. Cross left for the Continent in the afternoon, and on their return will take up their residence in Bolton, residing temporarily at Heaton Lodge. Mrs. Cross and her sister, who was married on the 28th June to George Palmer Hallett, Esq., M.A. (Lond.), of Bristol, at the Friends' Meeting House, Bath, have taken an active interest in the women's suffrage movement, but Mrs. Cross has not, like Mrs. Hallett, been in the habit of speaking on public platforms in its advocacy. Mrs. Cross—a member of the Society of Friends—was one of the unsectarian representatives on the first Bath School Board, formed on the passing of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, but declined to offer herself for re-election when the term expired.

VICTOR HUGO ON THE WOMAN QUESTION.

M. Victor Hugo has written the following letter to M. Léon Richer respecting his book just published, entitled "La Femme Libre:"

Mon cher confrère,—J'ai enfin, malgré les préoccupations et les travaux de nos heures troublées, pu lire votre livre excellent. Vous avez fait œuvre de talent et de courage. Il faut du courage, en effet, cela est triste à dire, pour être juste, et surtout juste, hélas! envers le faible. L'être faible, c'est la femme. Notre société, mal équilibrée, semble vouloir lui retirer tout ce que la nature lui a donné. Dans nos codes, il y a une chose à refaire: c'est ce que j'appelle "la loi de la Femme." L'Homme a sa loi; il se l'est faite à lui-même; la Femme n'a pas d'autre loi que la loi de l'Homme. La Femme est civilement mineure, et moralement esclave. Son éducation est frappée de ce double caractère d'infériorité. De là tant de souffrances, dont l'Homme a sa part; ce qui est juste. Une réforme est nécessaire. Elle se fera au profit de la civilisation, de la société, et de la lumière. Les livres sérieux et forts comme le vôtre y

aideront puissamment. Je vous remercie de vos nobles travaux, en ma qualité de philosophe; et je vous serre la main, mon cher confrère. VICTOR HUGO.

5 août, 1877.

[TRANSLATION.]

"I have at length, despite the anxieties and labour of these troubled hours, been able to read your excellent book. It is a work of talent and courage. Courage, alas! he must have who will be just towards the weaker. The weaker is woman. Our ill-balanced society seems as if it would take from her all that nature has endowed her with. In our codes there is something to re-cast. It is what I call the "woman law." Man has his law; he has made it for himself. Woman has only the law of man. Woman is civilly a minor and morally a slave. Her education is imbued with this twofold character of inferiority. Hence many sufferings to her which man must also justly share. There must be reform, and it will be to the benefit of civilisation, truth, and light. Serious and powerful books such as yours will do it. I thank you as a philosopher for your noble labour."

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS, SEPTEMBER, 1877.

Table with columns for names and amounts in £ s. d. format. Includes entries like 'Mitrailleuse' (100 0 0), 'Mr. Dalton' (1 1 0), 'Mrs. Plimsaul (two years)' (0 5 0), and 'Miss E. Jones' (0 2 0). Total: £111 2 0.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

Contributions to the funds of the Central Committee of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, 64, Berners street, London, W., from July 20th, to September 20th, 1877.

Table with columns for names and amounts in £ s. d. format. Includes entries like 'Miss Thornbury' (4 3 4), 'Rev. A. G. L'Estrange' (1 1 0), 'Mrs. Wedgwood' (1 1 0), 'Miss App's' (0 5 0), and 'Mr. H. Harris' (0 2 6). Total: £17 7 4.

(PETITIONS CONTINUED.)

Table with columns: NO., DATE, PLACE, NO. OF SIGNATURES. Includes sections for THIRTEENTH REPORT, FOURTEENTH REPORT, FIFTEENTH REPORT, SIXTEENTH REPORT, SEVENTEENTH REPORT, and EIGHTEENTH REPORT.

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