

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

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PETITION! PETITION! PETITION!—Friends of Women's Suffrage are earnestly exhorted at once to prepare and forward Petitions for an amendment to the Irish Borough Franchise Bill extending the Parliamentary Franchise to all householders in Irish boroughs, women as well as men. Directions for procedure will be found on our next page.

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DIRECTIONS FOR PREPARING PETITIONS.

We earnestly exhort our friends to help the cause by promoting petitions in their several localities in favour of amending the Irish Borough Franchise Bill. If desired, petitions ready for signature will be forwarded on application to the Secretary; but it is better that friends should prepare their own petitions according to the following directions.

Write out the form given below on any kind of paper that may be at hand. A sheet of note paper or foolscap opened out will do.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The humble Petition of the undersigned

SH EWETH,

That the exclusion of a large part of the property, intelligence, and industry of the country from participation in its Government, by the exclusion of women possessing the statutory qualifications from voting in the election of members of Parliament, is injurious to them and the country at large.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray your Honourable House to amend the Irish Borough Franchise Bill, by extending the Parliamentary Franchise to all the householders in Irish Boroughs, women as well as men. And you petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Write out the above form without mistakes, as no word may be scratched out or interlined, and sign it on the same piece of paper. Try to obtain one or more signatures to follow your own. When the original heading has been filled up with names, more paper may be added, if necessary. The petition may be signed by men and women of full age, whether householders or otherwise. Make up the petition as a book-post packet, open at the ends, write on the cover the words "Parliamentary Petition," and post it, addressed to the member who is to present it at the House of Commons, London, S.W. No stamp is required, as petitions so forwarded go post free. Write, and send along with the petition, a note (post paid) asking the member to present it, and to support its prayer.

Written petitions, ready for signature, will be supplied on application to Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester; or to Miss THORNBURY, 64, Berners-street, London, W.

THE CALENDAR.

MOON.		SUN.	
		Rises.	Sets.
7th New Moon,	9h 55m aft.	3 46	8 11
15th First Quar.,	9h 52m aft.	3 44	8 16
22nd Full Moon,	1h 46m aft.	3 45	8 19
29th Last Quar.,	9h 57m morn.	3 48	8 18

Day	Notes
1 T	
2 W	
3 Th	S. Clotilde died 545. Bettisia Gozzadina created Doctor of [Law, Bologna, 1286.
4 F	
5 S	
6 S	2 after Trinity.
7 M	
8 T	
9 W	[S. Margaret, Queen of Scotland.
10 Th	Clara Novello b. 1818. Women's Printing Society founded 1876.
11 F	First exam. in Literature and Arts for women, at St. Andrews, [1878.
12 S	
13 S	3 after Trinity. Frances Burney (Madame d'Arbly) b. 1752.
14 M	Camb. exams. for women begin.
15 T	Lady Stirling Maxwell (Hon. Mrs. Norton) died 1877.
16 W	
17 Th	
18 F	
19 S	
20 S	4 after Trinity. Accession of Queen Victoria, 1837.
21 M	Miss Porter (novelist) died 1832.
22 T	Soc. for Employment of Women established, 1859.
23 W	Lady Hester Stanhope d. 1839.
24 Th	Coronation of Maria Theresa at Presburg, 1741.
25 F	
26 S	
27 S	5 after Trinity. [Saragossa, 1808.
28 M	Coronation of Queen Victoria, 1838. Defence by the Mail of
29 T	Mme. Ida Pfeiffer st'd on her first journey round the world, 1846.
30 W	Lond. Univ. Summer Examinations for Matriculation begin.

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THE great Demonstration in St. James's Hall fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of the promoters, and was in every respect a worthy successor to the great gathering at Manchester from which it sprang. It may now be held to be a proved and accomplished fact that there does exist among women, as a whole, a deep and wide-spread sympathy with the suffrage movement and its leaders, and that it needs but for these to come forth in force and invite a manifestation of this feeling to evoke an enthusiastic response from thousands of their sisters who throng around them to hear their views and to assure them of their confidence and support.

In London, as in Manchester, the great hall proved inadequate to contain the multitudes who sought admission. An overflow meeting was quickly arranged, but even this did not suffice for all, and many went away for want of room. Not only by their numbers did women manifest their adhesion to the cause. They did this by the earnest and sympathetic attention they gave to the speakers, by the cordial bursts of applause with which they received the telling points—applause quite as lively and spirited and scarcely inferior in force to that which we are accustomed to hear in political assemblies of men—and last, but not least, by the overpowering demonstration which followed the impressive peroration of JESSIE CRAIGEN—a daughter of the people, who may justly claim to rank among England's greatest orators. All these things show that a new departure is indeed at hand—that the night of silence and endurance is passing away, and the day of deliverance and hope is beginning to dawn.

THE morning after the Demonstration a Conference of Delegates and friends was held in St. James's Hall Restaurant, when a paper of practical suggestions, which had been prepared by Miss BECKER, was read, and a discussion took place on the best means of promoting the work. We have been reluctantly compelled by the great pressure on our space to curtail the report of the discus-

sion, as well as some of the speeches at the great meeting.

THE introduction of a measure by the Government dealing with the borough franchise in Ireland offers the first opportunity for testing the feeling of Parliament on the great issue with regard to the inclusion of women householders in the next extension of the principle of household suffrage. The object of the Bill is to assimilate the borough franchise in Ireland, which now stands at a £4 rental, to that in English boroughs, which is household suffrage pure and simple, without reference to the amount of the rating or rental. The second reading of the Bill, which is in the hands of Mr. FORSTER, was fixed for last night; but as we go to press we have not learned whether our parliamentary leaders have taken any action with regard to moving an amendment in committee to include women householders, although we understand that there is a strong feeling in favour of such a course.

We have therefore to content ourselves with urging our friends to watch carefully the proceedings in the House of Commons with respect to this measure, and to support any action that may take place in our direction by petitions and by letters written to their parliamentary representatives. We give in another column a form of petition suitable to the occasion, and we ask those who desire further assistance or information to apply to the office of this Journal, or to any of the Secretaries of the National Society for Women's Suffrage.

A LADY who owns considerable property in an Irish borough, in writing to urge the desirability of taking some action in respect to the franchise Bill, says: "When I think of the men who are to be enfranchised by this Bill—men who live in the same room as their pigs and their poultry—it does seem ridiculous to stand calmly by."

No wonder that educated women of large property and intelligence should view with distaste or indignation the proposal to make men of this class their political rulers, while they themselves are denied the smallest modicum

of political rights. They may reasonably ask, if the man who occupies the meanest cabin in an Irish borough is to have a vote, why should not the woman who owns the land on which the cabin stands have a vote also?

Two Bills for the amendment of the law with respect to the property of married women are set down for second reading on June 9th. Mr. HIBBERT'S official position precludes him from further charge of the measure which he has had in hand for three or four years, but his place has been supplied by Mr. J. HINDE PALMER, Q.C., who had charge of the Bill in a former Parliament, and who has now regained his seat for Lincoln. Mr. ANDERSON has a Bill with a similar object for Scotland. It is expected that both Bills will come on for discussion on the 9th of June. Petitions in support of these should be sent before that date.

ONE of the "privileges" of married women received a fine illustration on Tuesday last in the Central Criminal Court, when Mrs. WELDON, who was found guilty of libel last session was brought up for judgment. The Recorder, in passing sentence, said her offence was a most serious one; he could not fine her, because she had no money; he could not make her enter into recognisances, because she was a married woman; he had therefore to sentence her to be imprisoned for four calendar months.

Now, however serious Mrs. WELDON'S offence may have been, it appears that if she had been a single woman the Judge would have held it sufficient to make her enter into recognisances; but this not being possible in her case, it would seem that, practically, Mrs. WELDON has been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for the crime of being a married woman. This is a "penalty on marriage" with a vengeance!

WE had an impression that the law extended personal protection from assault to children up to the age of thirteen years, even if such assault was perpetrated with the "consent" of a child under that age. But a recent decision of the Court of Appeal seems to deny this protection. In a case of assault on a child of seven years of age, at the Leicestershire Quarter Sessions of April last, the counsel for the prisoner proposed to address the jury on the question of the child's consent, but the Chairman ruled that such a question could not be put, on the ground that a child so young was incapable of giving consent in such a case. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sen-

tenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour.

But on appeal to the Court for the Consideration of Crown cases reserved, before the Lord CHIEF BARON, Mr. Justice LUSH, Mr. Justice DENMAN, Mr. Justice LOPES, and Mr. Justice BOWEN, the Court held that the ruling of the Chairman was wrong, and the conviction must be quashed. Therefore, this horrible criminal will be set free to repeat the offence, with the assurance, not very dearly bought, that future outrages may, with a little address, be committed with perfect impunity.

Mothers of helpless little ones, are you content with this outcome of man-made law?

DEPUTATION TO CANDIDATES.

LEEDS.

A deputation of ladies waited on Mr. Herbert Gladstone at the residence of James Kitson, jun., on May 1st, to ascertain his views on the question of extending the franchise to women. The deputation having been formally introduced to Mr. Herbert Gladstone by Mr. Joseph Lupton,

Mrs. SCATCHERD explained the views of its members on the question of women's suffrage.

Mrs. Whiting, Mrs. Edward Walker, and Mrs. Stephen Marshall also spoke briefly on the subject.

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said that up to the present time he had not gone into this question as fully as he hoped to consider it very shortly. He could only say, therefore, that he would consider it with all the seriousness, gravity, and attention which they would desire. He felt most deeply the truth of what Mrs. Scatcherd had said about the justice of extending the franchise to women. It was perfectly true that they ought to have a voice on a great many public matters—perhaps on all public matters. The chief difficulty in his mind was one of detail rather than one of principle or argument. He could not say decidedly that he should be prepared to vote for the extension of the suffrage to women, because he felt that he had not at present been able to do justice to the question. He had not considered fully what the probable effects of extending the franchise to women would be, and he was sure they would not wish him to give any positive or decided opinion under the circumstances. With regard to the extension of the franchise in the counties, he felt that there were strong historical grounds in its favour; but perhaps history did not give the same arguments in favour of extending it to women. But still he felt very strongly that even although history did not show that women had had votes, yet that was not a reason why a vote should be withheld from them. He was sure that everybody would admit that the position of women in any State was always a mark of the civilisation of that State, and that their position had improved with the improvement of civilisation, so that the point was, Would the granting of the suffrage to women be an advantage to civilisation? That was a question which he hoped soon to consider and decide upon. The chief objection in his mind was that if the suffrage were granted to a certain class of women, he did not see how Parliament could withhold it from all women of sufficient age and experience. In conclusion, he stated that he should consider very carefully the arguments that had been set before him.—The deputation thanked Mr. Gladstone and retired.

GREAT DEMONSTRATION IN ST. JAMES'S HALL.

On May 6th a great national demonstration of women took place at the Great St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, which was crowded in every part, to support the claim of women rate-payers to the parliamentary franchise. The great hall was crowded to such an extent that it was necessary to hold an overflow meeting in the small hall, at which Mrs. Surr presided. The chair was occupied by Viscountess HARBERTON, who was supported by the Dowager Countess of Buchan, Lady Emerson Tennent, the Countess of Portsmouth, the Dowager Countess of Devon, Clara Lady Rayleigh, Lady Helena Newenham, Lady Wilde, Mrs. and Miss De Morgan, Miss J. E. Cobden, Mrs. Shore Smith, Mrs. A. Cohen, Mrs. Frank Hill, Mrs. Benj. Whitworth, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., Mrs. Pennington, Mrs. Charles Holland, Mrs. Grimshaw, Mrs. Eiloart, Mrs. Cowie, Miss Courtenay, Mrs. Hertz, Miss Bryce, Mrs. A. Greenwell, Mrs. A. Holland, the Misses Stevenson, Mrs. Mallett, Mrs. Henry Richmond, Mrs. Westlake, M.L.S.B.; Miss Richardson, M.L.S.B.; Mrs. Hoggan, M.D.; Miss Williams, the Misses Garrett, Mrs. Atkins, M.D.; Mrs. Buckton, Mrs. Eaton, Miss Buss, Mrs. Croom Robertson, Miss Walker Dunbar, M.D.; Miss A. Shore, Mrs. Marshall, M.D.; Miss K. Hill, Mrs. Moncure Conway, the Hon. Mrs. Maurice Drummond, Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. and Miss Orme, Miss Muller, M.L.S.B.; Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. Pfeiffer, Miss Hesba Stretton, Mrs. Ashton Dilke, Mrs. Humphrey Sandwith, Mrs. Webster, M.L.S.B.; Mrs. Charles M'Laren, Mrs. Paterson, Miss J. Craigen, Miss Helen Taylor, M.L.S.B.; Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Mrs. Wm. Clark, Miss Downing, Miss Boucherett, Mrs. Donkin, Mrs. Venturi, and Mrs. Charles Hancock; and amongst those present were delegates from various parts of the United Kingdom, amongst whom were Miss Barker, M.D., Mrs. C. E. Matthews, Birmingham; Mrs. Beddoe, Mrs. Cobb, Mrs. Garrett, Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Jeffery, Miss M. Price, Miss M. Priestman, the Misses Southall, Miss Emily Sturge, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Walker, Bristol and the West of England; Miss Colby, Mrs. Pearson, Heywood; Mrs. Atherton, Keighley; Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, Leeds; Miss Royce, Leicester; Mrs. Bigg, Miss Bigg, Luton; Miss Becker, Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Barton Wright, Manchester; Mrs. Scholefield, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Miss Cooper, Norwich; Mrs. Leach, Yarmouth; Mrs. Smithson, York; Mrs. M'Culloch, Mrs. M'Kinnel, Dumfries; Mrs. Duncan M'Laren, Mrs. Masson, Miss Ramsay Smith, Miss L. Stevenson, Edinburgh; Miss Young, Glasgow; Mrs. Daniells, St. Andrews; Miss Tod, Belfast; and Mrs. Maurice Brooks, Dublin. A banner had been made and was carried in procession by members of the Westminster Tailoresses' Union, and was displayed on the platform. It bore the inscription:—

We're far too low to vote the tax,
But not too low to pay.

Whilst the audience were assembling, selections were played on the great organ. The entire hall was occupied by ladies, with the exception of the small upper gallery, to which a limited number of gentlemen were admitted. The proceedings throughout were characterised by great enthusiasm, and each of the resolutions was adopted amidst loud and prolonged cheering.

Lady HARBERTON, in opening the meeting, said: I think it might be well to preface the remarks we are to hear to-night by a distinct statement of what it is we are assembled here to protest against; and I really think, from what I sometimes hear said, that a good many people have hardly taken the trouble to understand what the term women's suffrage means. To hear them talk one would suppose they thought we were demanding either that all women should vote, whether householders or

not, or else that they should vote instead of men. I need hardly say such an idea has never occurred to us. According to law, every payer of rates and every householder is entitled to vote for the person he considers the best and fittest representative of the place in which he lives, and as the taxation includes all householders irrespective of sex, so we maintain the right of voting ought also to belong to all householders irrespective of sex; and I feel that on this subject, as on all others, a few phrases with a good deal of sound about them have been coined rather to prevent women seeing clearly which way their interests lie, and to a certain extent to cast dust in their eyes, for busy people have not time to sift all these things, and see how little sense or truth there is in them. One very common remark is that women don't and ought not to understand anything about politics—that it is out of their sphere, and so on. Now, politics is just one of those words that have a vast sound, and it usually conjures up visions of Judicature Bills, of Drainage Acts, of Army Estimates, of Agricultural Holdings, and all sorts of foreign finance questions; but remember it also means the married women's property law, which includes the right, at present denied to us, of the care and custody of our own children except on the sufferance of the husband. It also includes the laws relating to the liquor traffic; and as not long ago I saw one of our magistrates had given a person who was brought before him for drunkenness rather a severer sentence than usual on the express grounds that she was a woman (so he said), I think those laws affect us very much indeed. Not that I could see the justice of his way of reasoning; for if, on the one hand, the law holds that we are irresponsible creatures of impulse, and not stable enough to have a vote, how, on the other hand, can it be fair to visit any infringement of the laws with a heavier penalty on us than on men? It makes one doubt extremely whether the present system of one law for men and another for women is not even more abominably unjust than we are even aware of. It means whether the labour of women is to be free, so that they may be able to make the most advantageous terms with employers, or whether they are to be harassed by absurd regulations made about them by men, which have the effect of preventing them doing work which is exactly suited to them. It means the power of saying yes or no to such questions as the marriage with a deceased wife's sister, which in all conscience affects us as much and more than men, and a good many other questions which I have not time to mention. I think the other phrase, which perhaps conveys the greatest shock, is, "Well, yes; I dare say, in strict justice, women ought to have votes, but, if they do, they must be prepared to take the rough with the smooth, as men do." Now, examined into, it means this. We do not now take the rough with the smooth, for we take the rough without the smooth. For I take paying the taxes to be the rough, and voting the smooth; and as we do not fear the one, we certainly need not mind about the other. It is true we do not serve on juries, but that is the men's own choice. I suppose they think they do it better themselves. As for the nervous people who live in fear that, if women were not carefully excluded from the franchise, they might end in getting into the House of Commons, I can only beg them to keep up their spirits by remembering that, first, no one can be a member unless he is elected; and, secondly, that we have already among us a set of people—the clergy—who, though ineligible to become members, are not therefore deprived of the franchise. I can only say, in conclusion, that it is vain for women to hope for justice to their interests until they are allowed to give weight to their opinions in the simple, natural, and quiet manner of other citizens by voting for their representatives in the House of Commons. (Loud cheers.)

Mrs. O. SCATCHERD, who, on rising, was received with applause, said:—Ladies and gentlemen,—The resolution which I have to move reads as follows: "That in the opinion of this meeting the franchise attached by law to the occupation or ownership of property liable to imperial and local taxation should be exercised by women in the election of members of Parliament." It is with feelings of the deepest and most heartfelt satisfaction that I rise to move that resolution. (Hear, hear.) We are met here to-night to consider for a while a very grave question, a question of great importance—viz., the further extension of the parliamentary franchise. Now, I take it almost for granted that nearly everyone in this room has heard at some time or other of this question of women's suffrage; but if there are any here to-night who think that this is an entirely new work in which we are engaged—that it is one of recent origin or growth—I think that a little reflection on their part will soon show them that such is not the case. This movement in which we are working is but the natural outcome of much which has gone before; it is but a continuation of the struggle which has been going on in our country for half a century past—a struggle which has engaged the attention of many of our leading public men, and a struggle which I believe, and, indeed, which I hope, will continue until every responsible ratepaying class of subjects in this realm have won that franchise which is so largely and so justly their right. (Applause.) Now, there is one point to which I wish more especially to call your attention, and it is this—there never has been yet in our history any extension of the franchise proposed when there has not been shown great dread as to what would be the consequences if that extension took place. Those who were within the political pale have always shown very great fears of those who stood without, and those who had power have shown almost a frantic terror of those who had none. This was the case in 1832, before the great Reform Bill was passed. The landowners said that if the middle class of England were enfranchised the country would be greatly distressed, and much mischief would be the result. At that time we must remember it was our lawyers, our doctors, and the great business men of our northern towns who had not votes, and these men found that many of their best interests were not considered by Parliament, that their trade was subject to many and most grievous restrictions, and that due provision was not made for their education. They saw that no one would voluntarily relieve them from those burdens, and that if they were to be relieved from them they must do the work themselves; and that if they wished to raise their class as a whole they must become possessed of the franchise—and most nobly did they fight for and win that franchise. Why, it stirs our blood even now to read the history of that great time, and many a time have I listened with interest to my elders glorying in the share they took in the work. (Cheers.) It is enough now to make one smile when we remember that it was the magnificent middle class of England who it was feared would do harm to their own country, and it is enough to make us smile to remember that it was our own fathers who were supposed to be the enemies of our nation. And now, what do we see? That the middle class of this country are happy and contented. And why? Because they are free. And why are they free? Because they won the franchise which removed those restrictions and those evil laws which pressed so heavily and so grievously upon them. And when we come a little nearer to our own day we can all remember the last Reform Bill which was passed in 1867. I myself can remember the dreadful predictions which were indulged in, the shocking things said in newspapers, in clubs, and in railway carriages as to what would be the result of the franchise if it were given to our working

men. I do not think any of those very dreadful things have come to pass; but we have seen as the result of the franchise that some very good things have taken place. I will give you one instance, notably the great National Education Act of 1870. (Applause.) And now there are other classes asking for the franchise—two classes; there are the agricultural men in the counties and the women householders in the boroughs. (Applause.) Our duty, then, is very clear. We are met with the vague and undefined dread as to what will happen if women have the franchise conferred upon them. But our duty is clear. It is to go on and try to remove that dread by bringing together such large gatherings as this, until in a little time the public pulse will be strengthened, and we hope that our cause will be won. (Applause.) A few days ago I formed one of a deputation—an influential deputation—of women at Leeds, who waited upon Mr. Herbert Gladstone, who is the candidate for that town—(cheers)—to ask him seriously to consider this question. We went to him, and laid our views before him, and in the course of a most thoughtful and courteous reply he said that "it was perfectly true that women ought to have a voice on a great many public matters—perhaps in all public matters. He felt most deeply the truth of what Mrs. Scatcherd had said about the justice of extending the franchise to women. He was sure that everybody would admit that the position of women in any State was always a mark of the civilisation of that State; and the point with him was, would the granting of the suffrage to women be an advantage to civilisation?" Most assuredly we think it would be advantageous to civilisation. (Applause.) Because how can it be for the good of any nation that it shall have unequal laws—one set of laws for men and another for women? If women had the franchise we should have the power of removing many grievous restrictions from which we now suffer, and also to wipe from off the statute book some very degrading laws which are an insult to every woman in the land so long as they remain there. (Applause.) Mr. Gladstone also said in a speech to the electors of Leeds, delivered the night before, "You will experience dangers when you keep up unjust restrictions. Remove those restrictions, and you will remove the dangers. Repress the people, and then you will have to experience dangers from them." We most heartily agree in all that Mr. Gladstone said. I spoke of the double laws which there are for men and for women. How can it be to the advantage of a civilised nation to have double laws dealing out perfect justice to men, and only partially dealing out justice—nay, very often great injustice—to women? You have double laws of education—you have one law for men, and another law for women; you have double laws of divorce; you have one law for men, and a much harder law for women. (Hear, hear.) You have heard from Lady Harberton that you have unequal laws as regards labour. You have laws which allow men to go into the best market they can find, and in order to sell their labour for the very best price they can get. You have free trade in labour for men, but for women you have vexatious restrictions; and no woman is at liberty to carry her labour into the best market she can find, and get the best price she can. (Hear, hear.) Then you have unequal marriage laws. Marriage for a man is an honourable estate; but marriage is treated in a woman as a crime, and the law regards her for the rest of her life as a perpetual infant, perfectly incapable of looking after her own property, and irresponsible for her actions. There is, however, one law which is equal as between man and woman, and it is this, that if a man and a woman each rent a house, they have to pay the rent, and the tax-gatherer comes regularly, and he expects them both to pay the taxes. (Laughter and applause.) Now it is for the sake of these women that we

are asking that the franchise may be conferred. I heartily support this resolution, because I have been led in all the work I have undertaken as a social reformer to see the need of some political advancement for women before we can take any step to raise the women of this nation into a better position than they at present occupy. (Much applause.)

Mrs. ARTHUR ARNOLD, who was received with applause, in seconding the resolution, said: This great city, where the majesty of nature is unknown, cannot afford any grander spectacle than this vast assembly, and when we see thousands of women here all animated with the same desire—and I hope with the same determination to obtain that desire—viz., enfranchisement, the scene is indeed joyful and imposing. (Cheers.) Some people ask, Why are women not contented, as heretofore? Why did not they always want the suffrage? In the first place, women were not contented formerly. Silence and submission are more frequently the result of coercion than free and real acquiescence, and formerly they were too little educated to know precisely what they wanted. But of late years the education of women has considerably improved. They have learned to think. When women take to thinking, and find they have penalties without privileges, they live under a continual sense of injustice, and that is not a healthy state for the country to be in. Society has made one great mistake with regard to women. It has educated many of them for freedom, and then expected them to be content with serfdom. You will find that in every country where slavery prevails, and where for any reason it is thought desirable to keep the people in subjection, education is denied to them. But look at the anomaly which exists here. Nearly half the literature of the country is from the pens of women, and we have this curious spectacle, that whereas women writers are to be found in almost every magazine, and perhaps may be able to earn thousands in the course of the year, still they have less liberty and civil rights than sometimes come to the lowest of male humanity. (Cheers.) It is impossible for anyone to read the daily papers without seeing that, where the interests of men and women clash, those of women are unscrupulously sacrificed, because men possess the power of sending men to Parliament to look after their interests, and women have no such power. They are, in fact, ignored in a way which would make any generous man or woman to burn with indignation. In Dublin a woman was awarded damages for the injuries she had received in a railway accident; but while she got the verdict, her husband, from whom she was separated, received the money. Now, if such a wrong as this could be done to the lowest and vilest man in this country, and one man could receive injury while another obtained compensation for that injury, England would stand up against it. But no such wrong could happen to men, because they have their protection in the suffrage. (Cheers.) The idea that some people have that it is a religious duty for women to be always kept, and to keep themselves, in a state of subjection is, I think, an extremely painful one. Women at one time probably thought so, and there are some perhaps who think it now; but since they have been better educated they do not attribute their condition to Heaven, but they attribute it altogether to another quarter, which it is their duty to resist. (Cheers.) It is, indeed, a sad truth that Scripture and Christian doctrines have been misused in many ways, and there are those who have tried to make the Scriptures suit their own particular ideas. People have endeavoured to justify polygamy and slavery on Christian principles; and when the slave trade prevailed in America it was quite a common thing for religious people to sell the little negro child in order to put the money into the missionary box. (Laughter.) The Apostles, who are so often quoted, it must be

remembered, though holy men, were but men, and that they had the passions and prejudices of men is proved by their abundant errors and the rebukes which they received from their great Master. (Hear, hear.) It is quite certain they did not attempt to upset any existing institution. They left slavery and the despotism of the Caesars wholly untouched, probably because the fulness of time had not come, or that they were a little flock amidst powerful enemies. (Cheers.) But let her hearers turn from the Apostles to their Lord, and carry back their thoughts 1800 years. Let them carry their thoughts back to the period when by a hillside a sermon was delivered which surpassed all others. They were taught on that occasion to love their neighbours as themselves, to love their enemies, to be just instead of being unjust, and they were taught the importance of universal love. He who preached that wondrous sermon taught the great doctrine of liberty and equality, and to do unto others as they would be done by. This was a code of morals which were of an unexampled character, and had they been universally followed from that day to this, the position of the society of the world would be far different from what they unfortunately found it. The words of the great Preacher to whom I have referred spoke not to a particular class, but to all the world, and women then, as now, formed half of the population. In conclusion, the speaker sincerely trusted that the audience would heed the few ideas to which she had endeavoured to give expression, and that no one would be found to think that it was a religious duty to keep others in subjection. (Cheers.)

Miss RHODA GARRETT said: It is some time since I had the pleasure of addressing an audience on the women's suffrage question, so the audience can well understand that I feel some diffidence in addressing the large meeting assembled on this occasion. Now I think it is always an advantage in every political agitation to hear the opinions of those who view the contest from the calm standpoint of spectators. Both those who advocate this change and those who oppose it must understand, or must at any rate try to understand, what such a change would involve in the whole condition of women; and what political, what social, and what sentimental objections could fairly be urged against it. In the first place, the enfranchisement of women would give them political rights and political duties that they never had before. But I do not think that, except for party reasons, anyone ever seriously combats nowadays the justice of this claim. (Cheers.) During the election contests just over I read, as I suppose every one of you read, too, the speeches of a great orator and statesman, Mr. John Bright, at Birmingham. (Cheers.) And I was particularly interested in those parts of his addresses which related to the enfranchisement of agricultural labourers. If those whose business it is to advocate the claims of women to electoral representation would take the speeches of John Bright addressed to the men of Birmingham, and would substitute the words "women householders" for the words "agricultural labourers," they would have the most eloquent, the most powerful, and most convincing arguments in favour of giving votes to women. (Cheers.) In time to come, fellow-countrywomen, when we, too, have gained for ourselves a political existence, we must not forget to render our gratitude to this great champion of the people's liberties for the arguments which he has thus unwittingly placed in our mouths in favour of conferring upon us those rights which he demands for every other class of his fellow-subjects. Men, and a great many women, too, dread to see women brought into rough contact, as they think, with the world; and if this change that we are asking for would really have the effect of making women worse wives and mothers, less pure and less unselfish in all

those relations which we cannot change and which we do not wish to change, then I think that we who are asking for these rights would pause to consider whether we were doing what was wise or right for our sex. But it is difficult to believe that such an effect as this would be produced. It is difficult not to believe that the possession of political rights and political duties would give to women's characters just that strength and just that stability which they need; and if we really want to convince people that this change would result in good and not in evil—if we want to overcome the sentiments that oppose our claim—we must endeavour each one of us to show, by the reasonable use we have made of the liberties we already possess, by our patience, by our courage, and by our moderation in urging this further demand, that we may be safely entrusted with the rights of citizenship, and that we should use them for the good, and not for the hurt, of our homes and our country. (Cheers.)

Miss TON, of Belfast, said: This struggle for the franchise has a great educating power. We have learnt much during the ten years we have been trying to set our views before our fellow-countrymen and countrywomen all over these three kingdoms. (Cheers.) But now specially it behoves us to keep before us two very important objects—one, that we shall endeavour to learn whatever there has been of good in the political life of the country as managed by men in times past; and, secondly, that we shall endeavour to retain whatever is good in the methods of thought and action of women in times past. (Cheers.) We have a great duty to do in bringing both to bear on the future of our own and other countries, for we know very well that the condition of women throughout the whole world is very largely influenced by the position of women in these three islands. (Hear, hear.) There are certain political instincts which have grown up in the public life of this country. There is an endurance, a capacity, and an insight—a sort of sympathy even with those from whom we widely differ—a capacity of seeing the other side of things. That spirit and that temper we must cultivate. It has been indeed a very great pleasure to some of us to watch the very rapid growth of such a faculty among the leaders of the women's movement; but we desire it not for the few, but for every woman who will have the vote herself, or will be able to bring her influence to bear on her sisters who will have it. It is no small thing that we should thus keep the past in public life in view. The representative system of government as we see it is the best form of government. What we desire is, not to injure, not to destroy it, but to share that system of representation, only bringing to it fresh and valuable elements which we believe it stands in need of. The great authority on constitutional law, Sir Erskine May, writes: "In a civilised community political power is exercised by the legitimate agents of freedom, by the press, by public discussion, by association, and by electoral contests." Three of these we possess already. But we need and desire the fourth. We consider it is our birthright, and the natural corollary of the other three. (Cheers.)

Miss HELEN TAYLOR, who was received with loud cheers, said: It is, believe me, ladies, with an unwonted feeling of pleasure that I rise to address a meeting where I am able to begin with the word "ladies only." (Laughter.) When I see such a meeting as this, when I look around this hall, I think that in almost every mind here must arise the question which has so often presented itself to my own mind: How comes it that in this our England of the latter part of the nineteenth century almost every Englishwoman eminent for talent or virtue, known to the public for great thought or great deeds, joins with us in this movement for women's suffrage? (Cheers.) How comes it, ladies, that the venerable Mrs. Somerville gave the last words

of her long life to cheer us on this question? How comes it that that noble woman—that gentle and illustrious woman whose name is revered alike by men and women, irrespective of their position in society, wherever the English language is spoken—is on the side of the movement we are met together to-night to advocate? You will know to whom I refer—it is the gentle Florence Nightingale, whose name will live for ever on the page of history. How comes it that she from her sick bed sends out to us the words of cheering and encouragement? (Cheers.) How comes it, ladies, that the oldest and the youngest and the brightest among our noble-minded and talented women of the age in which we live come forward to help us? There can be no doubt but what most of the illustrious women are on our side, and the fact must make us all rejoice, and inspire us with confidence in the ultimate triumph of our cause. (Cheers.) It would be an insult for anyone to say that the noble-hearted single women of the country and the quiet matronly women of the country are unfit to exercise the suffrage. It is a mistake to suppose that those were the representatives of the true women of the country who only lived to minister to the vanity or the selfishness or the pleasure of the opposite sex. The true representatives of women are those who can raise up in the minds of others a lofty ideal. This was the class that could fairly lay claim to be the true representatives of the women of the nation. (Cheers.) I have no hesitation in saying that every day brings us nearer the day of triumph. Only by the triumph of our principles can we hope to raise women from the degradation in which thousands of them live. Young girls leave their happy country home to come to our great city trusting in the civilisation of their country; and in that city they do not find the protection they have a right to claim from civilised men and women, and they fall into the depths of ruin because our laws do not protect them. (Cheers.) I say that in the homes of our country mothers sit weeping over their little dead children because we neglect the means by which the homes of the poor in this country might be made safe, healthy, and happy. (Cheers.) And I say that it is for us, the women who themselves have no personal grievances to complain of—it is for us—and I see many in the hall, the happy mistresses of independent homes—I say it is for them to stand up and claim the simple right of the franchise, by which men have delivered their poorer brethren from the wrongs under which women still suffer. Ladies, do you ask me what wrongs? I say, go to any sheet of the *Times* newspaper, and read there the wrongs that women have to bear. (Cheers.) Is it nothing that thousands of honest women have to bear day by day and night by night the blows of drunkards? Ladies, not long ago it chanced that I was going home, about eight o'clock in the evening, from my official duties, in a railway carriage, and a drunken man got into the carriage. He forced his way in, and not one of the gentlemen in the carriage—and I do not blame them—would sully himself by thrusting the man out. And that man, so drunken and degraded that a man would not touch him unless he was paid to do it, went home to be the master of an innocent and sober woman. I say, ladies, and gentlemen too, if there are any here—(laughter)—I say to the gentlemen pre-eminently, since there are some here, I am glad to see, so long as you leave one man in the country a convicted felon, who leaves his prison to be the master of the life, the person, and the destiny of an innocent woman, we have grievances against you. (Cheers.) It is not for ourselves, it is not for those among us who are cherished and protected, not for those among us who never in the whole course of their lives ever heard anything but kindness and, more than justice, even generosity, it is not for us that we ask for the suffrage—we have

a thousand times more power than the suffrage could give us. (Applause.) We ask it because we stand here as the representatives of the helpless girls—(applause)—because we come here to speak in the name of the tortured and degraded wife of the degraded man. We come here because we speak not only in the name of those women who suffer from the individual vices of the men of their own family, but also of those who suffer from that neglect of domestic legislation which comes from the fact that men only have the making of the laws. (Loud applause.) We acknowledge, and we are proud as Englishwomen to acknowledge, that the men of our country have done a great and noble work in building up the civilisation in which we live—(applause)—because they have done their work well; because the men of old times and of our own times, too, aided by brave and generous women, have built up here a stage of civilisation wherein we say the time has come for the women to come forward and help them in their work. (Applause.) All know, every man knows, and all women who know anything of politics know, that every day we complain that the things which appertain to the homes of the people are grievously neglected year by year—the health of the people, the healthy homes of the working classes. While those have been neglected, myriads of little children have sickened and died of typhoid fever and cholera because we have neglected the people's homes, and their mothers have wept over them, like Rachel in the Scripture, and would not be comforted. I appeal to you, then, to ask for this right of the suffrage. If there are any here who by their pen can rouse all Europe to read their words, let them, if they like, stand aside and say "I do not want the suffrage; I can make my voice heard by other means," but each one of us who is not gifted by nature with great talents may at least claim that by having this humble and modest power to record our vote we may each of us do our little act towards every woman of our country who suffers under neglect or unjust laws. (Applause.) The franchise is the right of all, but I hope the time will never come when to a woman a right shall be dearer than a duty. (Cheers.) It is as a duty that we must look upon it. It is as a duty we should claim the suffrage, so that we may go forth and make ourselves a blessing to the helpless poor, to the suffering, and to the oppressed among our sisters—not in any rivalry or in imitation of men, but as women doing a perfect right; not as meddling with man's side of legislation, but as women, taking up those branches of legislation which women understand, which women are capable of doing, and by which many of us can give help to the suffering among our fellow-women. (Cheers.)

Miss BECKER, who was received with cheers, proposed the next resolution, which was as follows:—"That the following memorial to the Prime Minister be adopted, and signed by the president on behalf of this meeting, and that she be requested to forward the memorial to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.:

'To the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., First Lord of her Majesty's Treasury.

'The Memorial of Women in Public Meeting assembled on May the 6th, 1880, in St. James's Hall, London.

'Sheweth,—That in the opinion of this meeting the franchise attached by law to the occupation or ownership of property liable to imperial and local taxation should be exercised by women in the election of members of Parliament.

'Wherefore your memorialists pray that in any measure which may be introduced by her Majesty's Ministers for the extension of the household suffrage in the counties provision may be made for the exercise of the parliamentary franchise by all duly qualified women in boroughs and counties.

'And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.'

Miss BECKER said: I believe that this meeting is a meeting in character unprecedented in this metropolis. A few months ago we had a similar meeting in Manchester, only our hall was about twice the size of this, and if it had been as large again it would have been filled with women who came to participate in our proceedings. We ask that when the franchise shall be extended to every man who is in the occupation of a house or farm, the same right shall be exercised by the woman who has the same qualification. It is estimated that the total number of persons qualified to vote under the present electoral law is about 3,000,000. We estimate that if the franchise were now enjoyed by women on the same conditions as men enjoy it, there would be added to this 3,000,000 somewhere about 500,000 women voters—not a sufficiently large proportion to stultify or overbear the votes of men, but a sufficiently large proportion to ensure due attention to the interests of women. (Cheers.) All classes of women join us in this claim. We have ladies who come from the ranks of the aristocracy, ladies of wealth and culture; we have women who have walked from their factories to take part with us—and I may say I am prouder of the adhesion of those working women than of the great ladies. (Renewed cheers.) Working women have need to join us. They know that there are laws which interfere with their labour. We are told that these laws are for the protection of women, and the Government officers are so concerned to protect women from working an hour longer than is good for them that they forbid them to do so in workshops. I took up a Manchester paper this morning, and I saw an account of a prosecution of a firm near Manchester, who were charged with allowing women to work during meal hours on Good Friday. The offence was that a number of women were at work at twenty minutes to six on Good Friday evening, and the Bench said it was a very black case, and the employers were fined for each woman thus found working a £3 penalty. (Cries of "Shame.") Now I will contrast that with another case, in which a firm of employers was sued by a poor working woman of Manchester for balance of wages due to her, and that firm was not ashamed to plead that they had entered into an agreement with that woman to accept 3s. 6d. a dozen for some kind of work—boot tops, I think—and out of that money she had to buy her thread and silk, the firm being dealers in those particular articles of commerce. Her wages at the end of the week were 11s. 6d., and the bill due from the woman to them was 9s. 10d. If the factory laws were meant to benefit the working women of this country, they do not appear to have succeeded in their intention, and we want to have a voice in the making of better laws. (Cheers.) A woman wrote to me a day or two since, and asked whether the furniture which she brought to her husband, who had since died, was her own or not, and the reply I was obliged to give was that half of it must go to the next of kin; and her answer to-day is, "I do think that's a shame." (Laughter and cheers.) A lady, whose name is known as a novelist and a delightful writer all over the world, told me she had been in conversation with Mr. Forster the morning after the last debate in the House of Commons on our Bill, and she was complaining to him of the law which prevented a widow from appointing guardians to her children, in case she wished to provide for their custody after her own death, and Mr. Forster answered her with a flat denial that such was the state of the law. Now, Mr. Forster is an educated intelligent man. He had just been making a speech in the House of Commons about the laws affecting women, when it might have been presumed that he would have taken care to acquaint himself with the subject, and if he could be in such a state of dense ignorance as to the legal position of

women, what must be the benighted condition of the average M.P.? (Laughter and cheers.) It rests with you and all who join with us to remedy the present condition of things. We believe the time has come for us to strike on behalf of the great movement. There can be no doubt that we have a right to be included in the next Reform Bill. The women of the country should be in earnest in their demands for parliamentary representation. The meeting that is now being held is not the acme and the crown of our efforts, which, having reached this point, are to relax and be forgotten; it is but the fringe of the rising tide of opinions and efforts which will not be stayed until the victory shall have been won. This is the beginning of a series of meetings we intend holding in various parts of the country. (Cheers.) We must show that we claim to have the same electoral rights as the men of the counties. (Hear, hear.) I cannot believe that the men who are now asking for the household representation to be extended to the counties would turn round and close the doors to those who are asking for the suffrage on behalf of the households of women.

Mrs. WEBSTER, in seconding the motion, said; I feel somewhat at a disadvantage in coming after so many able speakers. But, after all, I feel that the best address that could be delivered is the sight of the large audience now assembled. (Hear, hear.) The very fact of these crowds gathered together here this evening shows the importance that this movement has taken, and it shows that, whereas we are told that women do not care about it, and do not care to know about it, the fact is that they do care about it. (Cheers.) Those few who do not come here because they are heart and soul in the movement—come here to hear about it because they think it is time for women to hear about this large question affecting not only women's interests, but the interests of the whole country. Many have spoken to-night about the special reasons why women as women require the suffrage. Every class, the happiest as well as the unhappiest, has some grievance of its own; and though I would never speak of women as a class in opposition to their husbands, fathers, and brothers, there must be special interests belonging to them, and they must have, and they do have, special grievances. But I am not anxious now to speak of these. I rather want to speak of the general right of citizenship which belongs to a country like this, whether they have grievances or not. If there were no grievances at all to be removed from women other than their loss of citizenship, that is too great a grievance to be endured. It is making of Englishwomen, who certainly have not deserved so ill of their country, a separate class, which they have no right to be. (Cheers.) It is telling them that they alone can never be thought to care for the great interests of their country—that they must stand aside and hold themselves for ever incompetent to take their own interest or share in the common duties of citizenship. (Cheers.) I want to call attention to the moderate nature of the actual claim we are making. We are not asking, as some fancy, for any new qualification. When the working classes came to their just right recently, they got it by an alteration of the qualification. We are not asking for that. We are asking, not that Parliament should make some arrangement by which unqualified persons should get the vote, but that self-supporting, independent women, who are fulfilling every duty which gains the vote for men, should have it. (Cheers.) We are quite aware that in asking this we are excluding a majority of women; but we cannot help that. We should be glad if the qualification would take in more; but it will not. We are asking simply for equal justice. It is not by hundreds, or by thousands, but by millions, that the number of women is to be counted who are supporting themselves, who are managing households, who, if they are widows, are taking the responsi-

bility of conducting families, and who, in the position of landlords or tenants, are fulfilling the same duties which give to men the vote. (Cheers.) And those women are being excluded. And why? What have they done? It is nonsense to talk about this being for their mental incompetence, because, if so, they could not carry on their business as they are doing. It is not the question whether a woman wrote the greatest poem, painted the greatest picture, or made the greatest discovery. It is a question of ordinary competence; and do we not know that in all the practical businesses of life men do trust the women that belong to them. I said that belong to them. (Laughter.) I said it accidentally, meaning neither reproach nor joke; but perhaps that phrase does to some represent the idea of women's position. However, what I was calling attention to was that men do trust women with practical business, and especially in the working classes, where a man who has to go out to his work does rely on the woman, who does the work of the day at home. It has always been the maxim that representation and taxation should go together, and so long as that principle is recognised you can show no reasonable cause why women who pay their taxes should be excluded, and so long as they are excluded in this way you, gentlemen, are telling all the women of this country that they are a separate and incapable class. Had we no other wrong, all I protest against is that wrong. I personally feel no pressure of wrong, and I hope the majority of women here do not feel it; but we must feel it for our sisters. But the happiest of us all, if we have any sense of care for our country, and that right feeling of duty and responsibility which is widening throughout the land—if we have any feeling of that kind, we must feel that every woman of us is under a stigma so long as we are told that the mere part of womanhood is a thing so degraded that it should render a woman incapable of the ordinary duties of citizenship. Let women then claim this duty, which is also their right and their protection—though I would rather we thought most of it in the character of a duty. (Applause.) When I began to speak I was afraid I should find nothing to say to you, but I am now conscious that I should like to say a very great deal, but I should exceed the length of time allowed to me, and therefore I will now do no more than second, as I most heartily do, the resolution which has been moved by Miss Becker. (Loud applause.)

Miss DOWNING, who was warmly received, said: I was reading a few days ago in a very old-fashioned book, and a book which a vast majority of the people of this country still look up to for their guidance, and I came across two very remarkable passages. They struck me as almost prophetic at the present time. They follow one another in a very remarkable way. The first passage, I may take it, is addressed to the Liberal party, and the next part is addressed to the women of the country. "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." And immediately following that passage comes an address to the women: "Rise up, ye women that are at your ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters, and give ear unto my speech." I am not here to make a long speech, and I think in these two passages there is quite sufficient instruction for the guidance of the new Parliament. It will be within the recollection of most ladies on this platform, whether Liberal or Conservative, how in the recent elections those of us who took any interest in the matter at all felt the issues to be so grave and important that we refrained from harassing candidates at public meetings on our question, vital as we felt that question to be, and bound up as it was with the very political existence of the women of this country. Some papers blamed us for this, but I think we showed to the country at large that women had a deep sense of public duty,

and could exercise in pursuance of that duty a wise self-restraint which others might take example by, instead of saying that women have no notion of public duty. I confess I was one of those who worked in faith. I had faith that the Liberals would devise liberal things, and that among the measures they would pass would be this measure of justice, of giving the right to vote for a particular member of Parliament to a household, whether the house is presided over by a man or by a woman. (Cheers.) I believe that that faith of mine will be justified. When I made the quotation, "Rise up, ye women that are at your ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters, and give ear unto my speech," I did not mean that as a reproach, but because you know it has been said time after time that the women of this country do not care for a vote at all. This great meeting, as well as the important meeting held in Lancashire last February, I think gives a denial to that. But as we get nearer to victory so will our opponents, both inside and outside of Parliament, become more determined in their opposition, and we must prepare for increased exertions. What we are asking for affects many thousands of women, and we speak in the interest of numbers of toilers in the East-end of London, who, while we sit here, are working by the light of a single candle till eleven o'clock to-night to earn daily food for themselves and the children who belong to them. (Cheers.) These are the women we have to think for, and these are the women for whom we ask the right to vote. For although some of them may not be entitled to vote, we feel that they are our own sisters—we feel that they are our own flesh and blood. We sitting on this platform feel that these women are our sisters, our mothers, for whom we have to legislate. I could tell you something of the East-end of London that would startle you if one dared to do so on a public platform; but I cannot do so. If you want to know more about it, go down to those districts where they have to follow so hard a life, and see whether they should not have a vote which would enable them to have fair laws for the protection of their labour, their persons, and their property—(cheers)—whether these things are not necessities for these women, and whether the vote which gave the advantages to the working men in this country is not equally necessary for the working women of this country. An American poet has said that "The crowning fact, the kingliest act of freedom is a free man's vote;" and why not a free woman's vote? (Hear, hear.) All that we ask is that we shall be entitled, fulfilling the same duties, to exercise the same privileges as men, and that we should be no longer barred from the possession of citizenship in a great and a free country. (Cheers.)

Miss CRAIGEN, in supporting the resolution, said: The *Manchester Examiner*, in commenting on the great meeting you have heard of, called it "a new departure." Now, it is only the external form of the movement that is new, for the principle of it is as old as human nature. It is simply the assertion that women are human beings. (Cheers.) And in humanity you have two principles—one of growth, to grow always more loving and to acquire more knowledge of the best way in which to show our love to others. That is the end of human existence, and we women have also this principle of growth within us. I think it is Carlyle who says, "The universe would not satisfy the soul of a chimney sweep," but there are a great many gentlemen who seem to expect that a cranny of the universe—a corner of it—will do to satisfy the soul of a woman. There is also a principle of individuality given under an oak tree. You can pick up two of the leaves, and they have in them the pattern of the oak leaf. They have individual veining which marks their individuality. We women are in some things all alike.

Broad characteristics of affection bind us together, but each one of us has individual character, individual gifts, intellectual and others, which require development and growth, and we want room to grow. Gentlemen are always telling us about the sphere of women. They are always drawing a large round chalk line, and they say the ladies are to stop inside it. That is the sphere of women. We are to do this, that, and the other, exactly as they tell us, but we are human beings, and the growth of the soul is not the building of a house, stone laid upon stone, by a foreign architect. It is the growth of a tree, which grows and assimilates its own and gains vital power, and this tree of womanhood has not yet put forth its last blossoms or borne its last fruit. The last word of progress for man has not been spoken. Philosophers tell you that; and while that is so with regard to men, the last word of progress for women has not been spoken.

Mrs. PATERSON said: I am quite sure that among all classes of women the cause is gaining in strength every day. I know that among working women—in the raising of whose position I am deeply interested—there is the greatest desire for it. Working women feel so keenly the practical difficulties they have to meet in the struggle for life that there is no half-hearted support among them. Out of many hundreds of working women I have known, I have only found three against this movement. The Westminster women, some of whom work in the Army Clothing Factory, where 1,500 women are employed, have come here in great numbers, and with some difficulty have carried the banner you see from Westminster to this hall. (Cheers.) It is often said that if men were convinced that women wish for the suffrage, they would grant it. If such a meeting as this does not convince them, I do not know what will. We must say that they do not want to be convinced that women desire the franchise. In conclusion, I will just point out one other strong proof that women are in earnest in this matter. We have heard of members of Parliament and other men who have come over to our side leaving us in some few instances, though not, I am glad to say, in many; but have we ever heard of one woman who having once become convinced of the right and justice of this claim has gone back from it? Though women are charged with being fickle, uncertain, and capricious, I am convinced that those who have made up their minds that this claim is just remain faithful to it. Thirteen years have elapsed since the claim was first made, and if thirteen more years should elapse before it is conceded we shall still remain steadfast in its advocacy. But we hope and believe that long before so many years have passed we shall have granted to us this simple act of justice. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mrs. WILLIAM CLARK said: A very pleasant duty has devolved upon me—namely, to propose a vote of thanks to our excellent president—(applause)—and in doing so I think I may congratulate her on the proud position she has held this evening, because I think it is a very pleasant thing to take the chair at a meeting of so remarkable and representative a character. I hope we shall all go home feeling strengthened by what we have heard, and that we shall not abate anything of our resolution to win this great cause. I have great pleasure in moving a vote thanks to Lady Harberton for presiding. (Cheers.)

Mrs. SCHOLEFIELD said: I have great pleasure in seconding this vote of thanks to our president. I think it is indisputably evident that the agitation of the women's suffrage movement has exercised the most salutary and beneficial influence upon all classes of women in this country, and has

been the means of awakening in them a sense of their individual responsibility in advancing their claims to the franchise, and has thus extended their hopes and aims of usefulness, and the fact that Lady Harberton has presided at this large and important meeting is in itself significant. It is an appropriate and dignified vindication of the extended sphere for women. I have great pleasure in seconding this resolution, in which I am sure you will all unanimously join. (Applause.)

The resolution was carried with acclamation.

Lady HARBERTON said: I have to thank you all sincerely for the kind manner in which you have received the last resolution. I can only say it has given me very great pleasure in assisting in such a movement, in which I take so great an interest. I think we are all agreed as to the object of our meeting, and I wish you to remember that everybody who has attended here has helped this movement, and I venture to say that it is only by such consolidated co-operation as this that we can in the future ever hope to gain our end. (Applause.)

Miss BECKER announced that a conference on the same subject would be held on the following day (Friday) at the St. James's Hall Restaurant.

The proceedings then terminated.

THE OVERFLOW MEETING.

At the overflow meeting Mrs. Surr took the chair.

Miss CAROLINE BIGGS, in moving the first resolution, said that it was sometimes objected that the movement for women's suffrage was not a practical one. She thought that a meeting such as was held that night showed that English women—London women, at all events—were determined that the time had come when this should be a practical question. A new Parliament had been elected, and the greater part of the vast Liberal majority had been returned, having pledged themselves that a new Reform Bill for extending household suffrage to the counties should be passed. The Household Suffrage Act of 1867, which proposed to give the suffrage to every householder and ratepayer in boroughs, really only gave it to six-sevenths of the householders. Women formed one-seventh of the whole number of householders in boroughs, and their property and their interests were still left unrepresented. Even since the Household Suffrage Act had been passed women fulfilling those qualifications had been asking to be included in the Act. They had been told the time was inopportune for asking for what was practically a new Reform Bill. Now, the new Parliament stood pledged to bring in a Reform Bill, and women were justified in pressing their claim. They believed that the Liberals, who believed that household suffrage was a good basis of representation for the whole nation, could not refuse it to women who were householders; and that Conservatives would, at a time when representation was to be extended to nearly a million more men, many presumably illiterate, wish to see women of property and of education also represented. No one could tell how women were feeling upon this till the test of the ballot was given them. The ready test by which men made their opinions known was the result which the ballot-box showed. Till six weeks ago no one knew with any certainty how the opinion of Englishmen was tending, but the elections showed this unerringly. Let women have the ballot, and it would be found by the manner in which they used it that they valued the privilege. Meanwhile, meetings of women such as this was the best means of showing that women wanted representation. Since the great meeting of women

in the Free Trade Hall at Manchester no newspaper in the North had reverted to the old argument of the indifference of women, and she believed that this meeting in St. James's Hall would show the London newspapers the same fact, and that representation should accompany taxation with women and men.

Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD seconded the resolution.

Mrs. FAWCETT said she appeared before them somewhat as a penitent, as when she was asked to take part in the meeting some weeks ago she refused, declaring that it was certain to be a failure, that there was not enthusiasm enough amongst the women of London to fill St. James's Hall. This overflowing meeting, and the still more magnificent one from which she had just come, proved her to have been wrong, and she gladly confessed her error. After enumerating many of the changes which were being made in the condition of women, the opening of the medical profession, the higher education which was now being given to them in Cambridge and other places, she pointed to the various things in which change is still needed, and illustrated it by some incidents which had recently occurred to herself. A short time since Mr. Fawcett and herself wished to make their wills, and, amongst other things, to arrange for the guardianship of their child. She and her husband were aware that she had no legal claim whatever to the guardianship of their child, in case of the death of the father, unless he by will expressly appointed her the guardian. This, therefore, was done; but the case suggested itself, Was it not desirable for Mrs. Fawcett to appoint a guardian in case of her death after that of her husband, while the child was still a minor? Mrs. Fawcett asked the lawyer if she could appoint a guardian in case she too died before the child came of age, but was told that she had no power to do this—that no one could appoint a guardian but the father; the mother could not do so even after the father was dead. Mrs. Fawcett further said that having written a book some years ago, from which she had derived annually a small income, she asked the lawyer whether that book was her own property, and whether she could will it to anyone after her death. The lawyer's answer was, "I am ashamed to say that even that book is not your own property to deal with it as you wish. It belongs to your husband." Therefore, in order to correct the injustice of the law, her husband's will bequeathed to her her own property, the copyright of the book she had written. Mrs. Fawcett ended by expressing her great pleasure in having taken part in the meeting, a pleasure which was all the greater because she had not had the anticipation beforehand of being called upon to do it.

The meeting was also addressed by Miss Richardson, Miss Becker, Miss Craigen, Mrs. William Clark, and several other speakers from the great hall. Similar resolutions to those at the great meeting were unanimously adopted.

CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES AND FRIENDS.

A Conference of Delegates from Local Committees and friends interested in the Women's Suffrage Movement was held on Friday, May 7th (the morning after the National Demonstration in St. James's Hall), at 11 a.m., in the New Room, at St. James's Hall Restaurant, Regent-street, W., for the purpose of organising the work to be done previous to the introduction of the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill in the House of Commons. The Conference was attended by the following ladies and gentlemen:—Mrs. and Miss Bigg, Luton; Miss Babb; Miss Apps, Miss Dunbar, Dover; Mrs. Lucas; Mrs. Jeffery, Bath; Miss Norris, Hampstead Court; Miss Goff, Brighton; Mrs. J. H.

Simpson; Miss Louisa Stevenson, Edinburgh; Miss Stewart, Kirkcaldy; Miss Fowler, Norwood; Miss Hannah L. Fox; Miss Emily Sturge, Allen Greenwood, Esq., Bristol; Mrs. Hunt, Clifton; Mrs. H. W. Thomas; Mrs. Hokey; Mrs. Lynch, Beckenham; Mrs. Smithson, York; Miss Hilles; Miss Rees, Miss Reid, Hampstead Court; Mrs. Southey, Sec. Women's Peace Association; Mr. Fredk. Baines; Miss A. Dixon, Southboro'; Miss Craigen; Miss Young, Glasgow; Misses Southall, Leominster; Mrs. Chaplin Ayrton, M.D.; Mrs. Clark, Street; Mrs. Scholefield, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Miss A. Bewicke; Mrs. Kinchlea; Miss Augusta Brown; Miss Ward Andrews, Hampstead Court; Mrs. Walker, Clifton; Mrs. C. E. Mathews, Birmingham; Miss Tod, Mrs. Biggar, Belfast; Mrs. Louisa Lowe; Mrs. Higgins; Miss Clarke; Mrs. Leach, Great Yarmouth; Miss Holyoak; Miss Heather Bigg; Mrs. Pennington; Miss Pennington; Viscountess Harberton; Miss Ramsay Smith, Edinburgh; Mrs. Daniell, St. Andrews; Mr. and Mrs. Mark Judge; Mr. W. F. Hamilton; Mrs. Stevenson, Secretary Working Women's Teetotal League; Mrs. M'Laren; Mrs. Chas. M'Laren; Mrs. Tanner, Bristol; Miss Foxley; Mrs. Leon; Miss Helen Brown; Mrs. Paterson, Hon. Sec. Women's Provident League; The Misses Colby, Cheltenham; Miss Downing; Miss Cooper, Norwich; Mrs. Condon; Mrs. Turner, Clapham; Miss Sharpe, Bayswater; Mrs. Caird; Mr. E. W. Cox, Bristol; Mrs. R. R. Glover; Miss Hamilton; Miss Lucy Wilson; Mrs. Livens, Leicester; Miss Williams; Mrs. Atherton, Keighley; Miss K. Hill; Rev. Stewart Headlam; Mrs. M'Culloch, Mrs. M'Kinnel, Dumfries; Mrs. Whittle; Miss Whittle, Liverpool; Mrs. Hallock; Mr. Bysson; The Misses Price, Bristol; Miss Boddy; Miss Sharman Crawford; Mrs. Charles Hancock; etc. Miss HELEN TAYLOR was voted to the chair, and the following paper was read by Miss BECKER.

The objects of the Conference which is now assembled may be summarised as follows:—

1. To afford to the friends who have assembled in support of the Demonstration held last night, many of whom have come from long distances, an opportunity for mutual introduction and intercourse, and for conferring on the best methods of promoting the work; also to give to those who have not hitherto been active supporters of the movement, but whose interests may have been aroused or stimulated by the great meeting, the means of becoming better acquainted with those already engaged in it, and of learning how they may best aid it.

2. To consider the present position of the question and the prospects of the parliamentary campaign.

3. To suggest to the delegates and representatives of the various districts effective methods of work in their several localities, and to endeavour to organise such work.

The first of these objects explains itself and needs no comment.

In regard to the parliamentary prospects, we have to note a great change in the political situation which considerably alters the aspect of our affairs. Our measure no longer stands alone as an isolated measure of parliamentary reform. We have to look forward in the new Parliament, not as heretofore to an annual motion brought forward year after year, through which we might hope to gain a steadily-increasing support, but to one grand struggle which may be expected to bring our question to a crisis, and to afford a reasonable hope of a satisfactory solution.

We must therefore now concentrate our energies on the object of obtaining the vote for women ratepayers when the household suffrage shall be extended to the counties. Whether our Bill be brought forward as a separate measure before the

Government introduce their Bill, or whether our leaders deem it desirable to await the actual introduction of the Government measure before taking action themselves; in either case henceforward, our proposal will be considered as practically a part of a general reform Bill, and all parliamentary action, speeches, and votes will have reference to it in relation to such a measure. It is evident, therefore, that we are taking a new departure, and it behoves all of us to use well-directed, persistent, and energetic effort to profit by the opportunity now offered by the re-opening of the question of parliamentary reform.

The inclusion of women among the classes next to be enfranchised will necessitate persistent and incessant action and watchfulness through all stages of the measure within the House of Commons, and subsequently in the Upper House, to carry it through successfully. It is, therefore, respectfully suggested to our friends in both Houses, that a Committee of Peers and members of Parliament might be organised for the purpose of securing the extension of the franchise to women fulfilling the same electoral conditions as men, as an integral part of the next Reform Bill.

The result of the general election as at present ascertained is as follows:—Of 229 members who had declared themselves in our favour in the last Parliament 82 have not been returned to the present House. On the other hand, of 362 opponents 132 have been displaced.

We have thus in the present Parliament of former members 217 known opponents and 147 friends; but this number of friends is already largely increased by the return of fresh supporters, so that there are 209 members who have already expressed themselves favourable to women's suffrage. There remains the large body of new members who have not yet pledged themselves to either side of the question, and whose support will probably depend, in a great measure, on the amount of interest displayed in their constituencies.

New members should also be sought out through friends, invited to drawing-room and other meetings, and otherwise informed and influenced by all convenient methods.

We ask our friends to help us in various ways.

PETITIONS.—It is highly desirable that the question should be kept before Parliament by a continuous stream of petitions throughout the session. Friends, especially those who have never worked in the cause before, will find that the collection of signatures to a petition is an effective method of introducing the subject, and of enlisting new helpers in the work.

As soon as a definite motion is before the House of Commons a general and systematic effort should be made to send multitudes of petitions in support of it.

DRAWING-ROOM MEETINGS.—These are a most valuable method of spreading information and arousing interest in the work. They are especially useful in London during the season, and in the country at all times. Any lady, whose room will contain from a dozen friends upwards, will do excellent service by inviting her friends for an afternoon or evening discussion. One or more speakers to explain the subject will attend on behalf of the society, if application is made to the secretary of the nearest society engaged in the work.

COTTAGE MEETINGS to bring the question plainly before working women also give effective help to the cause, and have for some years past been held with great effect in the north.

Petitions and drawing-room and cottage meetings can be undertaken by individuals, but the work next to be considered will generally require funds or organisation.

SUMMER or AUTUMN LECTURES during the tourist or holiday season are very valuable.

Such lectures may be given at the spa-rooms of watering

places, where visitors are accustomed to gather for entertainments of various kinds. The expenses may often be covered by means of a charge for admission if an able lecturer and an influential lady or gentleman to take the chair be secured. Lectures have been given with this result in Blackpool, Buxton, Harrogate, etc., and doubtless there are many other places where this could be done, or, at all events, the expenses greatly diminished.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.—With the month of October come the notes of preparation for the November elections of town councillors, in which women form about one-sixth of the electorate.

The best way to utilise this electoral power in furtherance of the cause of women's suffrage is to gather together the women electors in every ward where a contest takes place, to instruct them on the questions before them, and to urge them to use their vote with a due regard to their responsibilities as citizens. This was done with great effect in Leeds, Manchester, and Salford, last October. The candidates came to the meetings of women, and addressed them in support of their candidature. They were questioned by the women as to whether they would, if elected, support a petition from the town council in favour of the parliamentary franchise for women, and in every case promised to do so. A show of hands for each side was taken. The result of this action was to bring into prominence the power of the women voters, and to secure attention from candidates to questions affecting their interests.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.—As soon as the municipal elections are over the season for public meetings begins, but while these meetings are always valuable in all places, they are of especial consequence in constituencies which have returned new members to Parliament, or where meetings have not been held for many years.

The following is a list of places in which for these and other various reasons meetings are particularly desirable. The towns have been grouped in districts in reference to their geographical or political connection, or to their nearness to one great centre of population. We ask our local friends in these districts to co-operate with us in arranging meetings in these towns, or in any other places which may appear to those acquainted with the locality more suitable or practicable for the purpose.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

NEWCASTLE DISTRICT.—*Boroughs:* Berwick-upon-Tweed, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Gateshead, Darlington, Durham. *Counties:* Alnwick (North N.), Hexham (South N.), Barnard Castle (South Durham).

CUMBERLAND DISTRICT.—*Boroughs:* Carlisle, Cockermouth, Whitehaven, Kendal. *Counties:* Maryport, Workington, Allonby (West), Penrith, (East), Appleby (Westmorland).

LANCASHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Blackburn, Bury, Clitheroe, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stalybridge, Preston, Liverpool. *Counties:* Barrow-in-Furness, Lancaster, Blackpool, Chorley (North); Southport, Ormskirk, St. Helens, Leigh (South West).

CHEESHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Chester, Macclesfield, Birkenhead. *Counties:* Frodsham, Nantwich (West); Altrincham, Knutsford, Sandbach (Mid); Hyde, Wilmslow, Bollington (East).

STAFFORDSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Stoke-on-Trent, Hanley, Longton, Burslem, Tunstall, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Wednesbury, Wolverhampton. *Counties:* Leek, Cheadle (North); Burton-on-Trent (East).

NOTTINGHAM.—*Boroughs:* Nottingham, Retford, Worksop, Newark. *Counties:* Mansfield (North), Southwell (South).

DERBYSHIRE.—*Borough:* Derby. *Counties:* Bakewell, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Buxton, Matlock Bath (North); Chesterfield (East).

SHROPSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Wenlock. *Counties:* Wellington, Oswestry (North); Shifnal, Bishops Castle (South).

YORKSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Richmond, Thirsk, Bradford, Wakefield, Sheffield, Ripon, Knaresborough, Pontefract. *Counties:* Guisborough, Stokesley (N. Riding); Beverley, Driffield, Bridlington Quay (E. Riding); Skipton, Sowerby Bridge (W. Riding, N.); Barnsley, Rotherham, Doncaster (W. Riding, S.); Harrogate (W. Riding, E.).

WORCESTERSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Kidderminster, Worcester, Evesham. *Counties:* Bromsgrove (East); Stourbridge, Malvern (West).

WARWICKSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Birmingham, Warwick, Coventry, Tam-

worth. *Counties:* Coleshill, Nuneaton, (North); Leamington, Alcester (South).

LINCOLNSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Grimsby, Boston, Grantham, Stamford. *Counties:* Market Rasen, Louth (North); Horncastle (Mid); Spalding, Sleaford (South).

RUTLAND.—*Counties:* Oakham, Uppingham.

LEICESTERSHIRE.—*Counties:* Loughborough, Melton Mowbray (North); Hinckley, Market Harborough (South).

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.—*Borough:* Peterborough. *Counties:* Wellingborough (North); Daventry, Towcester (South).

NORFOLK.—*Counties:* Yarmouth, Theford, Diss (South).

SUFFOLK.—*Borough:* Eye. *Counties:* Premisingham, Southwold (East).

ESSEX.—*Boroughs:* Colchester, Harwich. *Counties:* Braintree, Halstead, Sudbury (East); Chelmsford, Dunmow, Saffron Walden (West); Southend, Stratford (South).

MIDDLESEX.—*Counties:* Barnet, Harrow, Brentford.

OXFORDSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Oxford, Banbury. *Counties:* Chipping Norton, Thame.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Buckingham, Aylesbury, Great Marlow. *Counties:* Stony Stratford, Newport Pagnell, Eton.

KENT.—*Boroughs:* Maidstone, Gravesend, Rochester. *Counties:* Ramsgate, Margate, Ashford (East); Tenterden, Tunbridge Wells (Mid); Bromley, Sevenoaks (West).

SUSSEX.—*Boroughs:* Rye, Hastings, Horsham, Shoreham, Chichester. *Counties:* Eastbourne, Battle (East).

BERKSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Abingdon, Reading. *Counties:* Maidenhead, Newbury, Hungerford, Wokingham.

SURREY.—*Borough:* Guildford. *Counties:* Croydon (East); Reigate (Mid); Godalming, Dorking (West).

HAMPSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Southampton, Andover, Petersfield, Winchester, Christchurch and Bournemouth. *Counties:* Ryde (Isle of Wight); Basingstoke, Farnborough (North); Romsey (South).

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.—*Borough:* Cambridge. *Counties:* Ely, March.

BEDFORDSHIRE.—*Counties:* Dunstable, Luton, Leighton Buzzard.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.—*County:* St. Ives.

HERTFORDSHIRE.—*Counties:* St. Albans, Watford, Berkhamstead, Hitchin.

WILTSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Swindon and Wootton Bassett (for Cricklade), Westbury, Salisbury, Wilton. *Counties:* Trowbridge (North), Warminster (South).

DORSET.—*Boroughs:* Shaftesbury, Dorchester, Wareham, Poole, Weymouth. *Counties:* Wimborne, Blandford.

DEVON.—*Boroughs:* Barnstaple, Exeter. *Counties:* Bideford (North); Honiton, Axminster, Teignmouth, Torquay (East); Totness, Dartmouth (South).

SOMERSET.—*Borough:* Bath. *Counties:* Weston-super-Mare (East); Wells, Glastonbury, Yeovil (Mid); Bridgwater, Wellington (West).

CORNWALL.—*Boroughs:* Helstone, Penryn. *Counties:* Penzance (West); Saltash, Bideford (East).

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Bristol, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.—*Borough:* Newport. *Counties:* Chepstow, Aber-gavenny.

HEREFORDSHIRE.—*Boroughs:* Hereford, Leominster. *County:* Ross.

NORTH WALES.—Flint Boroughs, Denbigh, Ruthin, Wrexham, Menai Bridge, Holyhead, Ffestiniog, Pwllheli, Bala, Welshpool, Dolgelly, and Montgomery.

SOUTH WALES.—Radnor Boroughs, Cardigan, Aberystwith, Pembroke, Haverfordwest, Llanelly (Carmarthen Co.), Brecon, Merthyr Tydvil, Neath, Cowbridge, Cardiff, Tenby.

SCOTLAND.

Boroughs: Aberdeen, Ayr Boroughs, Dumfries, Dundee, Glasgow, Greenock, Kilmarnock, Montrose, Perth, St. Andrews, Stirling. *Counties:* Aberdeen (West), Ayrshire (North), Berwickshire, Bute, Dumfriesshire, Midlothian, Elgin and Nairn, Fifeshire, Haddingtonshire, Kincardineshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Lanark (South), Peebles and Selkirk, Perthshire, Roxburghshire, Stirlingshire, Wigtonshire.

IRELAND.

Boroughs: Athlone, Bandon, Carlow, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Cork, Dublin City, Dundalk, Enniskillen, Galway, Kilkenny, Mallow, New Ross, Newry, Portlinton, Waterford. *Counties:* Antrim, Armagh, Carlow, Clare, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Kildare, Kilkenny, King's, Leitrim, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Queen's, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Tyrone, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford, and Wicklow.

After some remarks by Mrs. Simpson, Miss Andrews, of Hampstead, a poor-law guardian of St. Pancras district, urged that the question of women voting and sitting as guardians should be more prominently brought forward. Discussion on this point was continued by Miss Tod (Belfast) and Mr. Greenwell (Bristol).

Mrs. OLIVER SCATCHERD (Leeds) thought that the question of inducing women to use the votes they already had was one of

the most important to be considered in relation to this question. Ladies who had leisure might assist this desirable end. To give an instance, in the town of Leeds she made it her business some years ago to hold meetings of women householders in the house of a poor woman, who was in a position to invite eight or ten neighbours, where she regularly explained to them, as the municipal elections drew near, what was meant by municipal elections, and the good that was done by such an institution as the school board. She also went to mothers' meetings, and wherever she had the opportunity of meeting women, and explained to them how a large town was governed. Any lady who could give a fair lesson in a Sunday school was capable of doing such work as this. Many women did not vote at the election of guardians because they did not know what was involved. The work of teaching them this did not require any great preparation, but such preparation as there was should be careful in regard to facts. Any lady anxious to aid the movement in her own town might do so by calling together small bands of women and explaining to them how the town was governed. (Hear, hear.) When the elections drew near, the political associations would solicit the votes of the women thus instructed, and the Liberal Association of Leeds now regularly asked her assistance in giving this instruction to women voters. No doubt the Conservative associations would also be glad to have it, but she had not been able as yet to invite both Conservative and Liberal candidates to address the women. (Laughter.) But the fact that the Liberal associations now recognised the vast importance of speaking to women householders was, she thought, a most encouraging sign. When she left the north to attend to business connected with this movement, it often happened that there was a meeting of several hundreds of these women, and they wished her good-bye in such language as this: "Now, Mrs. Scatcherd, when you come back you must come and have tea with us, and tell us all that has happened since you have been away. We wish you God speed, and God help you through the work." (Applause.) In conclusion, Mrs. Scatcherd said she could not too earnestly impress upon the ladies that they might in their own towns explain to the women ratepayers what was meant by municipal government, and what were the functions of the board of guardians and the school board.

The discussion was continued by Mrs. Stevenson.

Mrs. JEFFRY said she wished to obtain information for working a district. She had recently become a member of the committee at Bath, where very little work had been done, though it was generally understood to have even a larger proportion than any other town in the United Kingdom of women householders. More interest in the question needed to be excited in Bath. There were many ladies, she thought, who, like herself, wished to work, and hardly knew how to set about it. (Hear, hear.) She was in favour of a public meeting being held in Bath, knowing that by this means a number of persons, men as well as women, were influenced in favour of the question. The women of Bath did exercise such local votes as they possessed. She herself had never failed to do so either for the town council or guardians.

Miss BECKER suggested that so soon as the proper season arrived, for people liked to spend the light evenings out of doors, that every woman whose name appeared upon the register should be invited by post card to a public meeting; the chair to be taken by a local lady of influence, and some ladies from a distance being invited to attend to give variety to the proceedings. If there were any contest in any of the wards of Bath, meetings should be held, and speeches made in reference to the election, people being at such times much more ready to attend meetings. The month of October was suited for that

kind of work. The summer time, when these meetings could not be held, was better adapted for drawing-room meetings. She had no doubt that the services of Mrs. Hallett and of Miss Emily Spender, both of whom were resident in Bath, would be readily given in organising such meetings. (Applause.)

Miss BABB advised women to refuse to pay taxes until they were allowed to vote.

Miss CRAIGEN said: In regard to the distribution of the Journal, which she regarded as a point of great importance, she might state that she had had them bound in paper covers and left them like tracts from door to door, calling for them again in a few days, until in this way she had gone through a whole district.

Mrs. M'KINNEL stated that Mrs. M'Culloch, of Dumfries, had in the course of one year circulated in that town alone nearly 1,300 copies of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*, with a view to disseminating a knowledge of this cause.

Rev. S. A. SREINTHAL said: If ladies would take a more prominent stand upon the question and express the opinions which they felt, they would find that they were helping on the movement in a most effective manner. It was very often thought that men were strongly opposed to this question, and one of the great arguments they brought forward was the want of interest in the question which women evinced. The quiet conversation of the drawing room or of the dinner table was very often as effective as any public speech could be. (Applause.) He thought he might claim to be one of the very earliest workers in this movement present here. He was attracted to it by the influence of a man by whom he had been supported in many a practical movement—he meant Mr. William Lloyd Garrison—when he was over in 1846. One of the great and practical ways in which they could help forward the movement was by consistently acting upon the principle of doing unto others as they would be done by. Ladies should remember that they ought at all times to be engaged in this work, and show by the work they did that they were fitted for the position which they desired to hold. Men would be found far more willing to recognise the power of women to work, when they saw the women without any false pretence taking up positions as near to those to which they aspired as they could attain. There had never been heard any objections to Mary Carpenter's work, or to women who had taken up such a position before the public as had Mrs. Scatcherd and Miss Becker and others, and he was sure that if this matter were taken up in a right spirit, success would soon crown their efforts. (Much applause.)

The discussion was continued by Miss Downing and Mr. Judge.

Miss TOD said that as some means of disseminating literature had been mentioned, she wished to mention a plan which she had adopted for a number of years. She had looked out for the newspapers which contained the best report of a meeting, and had sent out, say, three hundred copies. Having sent such papers over and over again to the same people, she believed she had made more converts thus than by any other means.

Mr. GREENWELL spoke of Miss Becker's paper as a most interesting and valuable one, pointing out as it did many ways in which good work for the cause might be effected. He wished to point out another method, which embraced the whole scope of this movement. At the present time this movement might be said to be at its greatest crisis. At no period of the movement had there been such a political feeling as the present, and every effort should be made to further the work. He would suggest that a committee be appointed to form a deputation of the principal supporters of the movement, men and women, in England, Scotland, and

Ireland, to wait upon the Prime Minister, in order to ask him, before the new franchise is drawn up, to take into consideration the claims of women—all those who were qualified to vote at municipal elections. (Hear, hear.) If they waited until the Bill was drawn up he thought they would experience much greater difficulty in getting their case inserted than if the matter were brought before those in power at the present time. This party would then occupy the position it ought to occupy before Parliament, and would be seen to have the interest and efforts of an important part of the community at the back of it.

The Rev. STUART HEADLAM (Charterhouse) observed that what Mr. Judge had said had precluded what he had himself intended to say upon the same subject. There were three sets of people whom it would be well to organise: firstly, the elementary schoolmistresses, whose names might all be obtained from the regular list, and who, if thoroughly canvassed, would probably become strong supporters of the movement; secondly, the women connected with trades' unions, a large detachment of whom were present in St. James's Hall; and thirdly, the specially religious people.

Mr. COURTNEY, M.P., subsequently delivered the following address: Miss Taylor and ladies, with regard to the special question before us, we are at present, as is recognised by every one, in a rather new position. We are going to take a new departure. A new Parliament has been elected with a very large Liberal majority, and part of the work of that Parliament will be to assist the new Liberal Government in conferring the franchise upon the agricultural labourer. We have to consider our question in relation to those two facts. Not only is there a large Liberal majority, but there are also a large number of men, Liberals as well as Conservatives, perhaps more Liberals than Conservatives, who are not committed to any opinion at all upon this question. Some of them have possibly no opinion to which to commit themselves—(laughter)—and we must be very careful not to do anything which shall prematurely lead them to a decision which may be adverse to ourselves. (Hear, hear.) Of course there is always a risk in delay that we may lose the support of persons we can secure now, but I think that if we have confidence in our cause, we must believe that in that respect time will rather fight for us than against us. More supporters will be drawn to us by the silent operation of reason, and by the evidence which is brought before them from all parts of the country of a feeling in favour of conferring the franchise upon women. In addition to meetings, public and private, which have been dwelt upon, there is the suggestion made by Mr. Greenwell, that a deputation should be formed to wait upon the Prime Minister before the introduction of the Franchise Bill, to urge upon him, and through him the Government of which he is the head, the necessity and the propriety of introducing the enfranchisement of women into the scheme for the enfranchisement of men. I dare say we shall have plenty of time to think about that, because I am not aware that any date has been fixed for the introduction of the Franchise Bill. It certainly will not be this session. But this is a matter to be kept in mind as a means of representing our arguments in the most forcible manner to the feelings of the Government, and of getting reports in the newspapers. It does not at once press, but it is a matter which should be remembered. Although I share a good deal of the scepticism which others feel with respect to the influence of deputations, I know that they are of value in spreading ideas abroad amongst those who read of deputations. But I am quite confident we have ultimately to rely upon the reasonableness of our cause, and the way in which we can bring our reasonableness home to the minds of individual members of Parliament.

I believe there is no more potent way of doing that than by showing practically in local, municipal, parochial, and school board matters the worth and the value of the women's vote. You have been recommended, and very properly recommended, to have meetings up and down the country, big meetings as well as small meetings. Whenever a vacancy occurs in a parliamentary constituency it is obviously desirable that you should, in the most calm and reasonable way possible, bring your case before the parliamentary candidate. I would never myself aim at making our case a test question. At the same time, whenever the election of parliamentary representatives does occur, you, each in your own sphere, should endeavour to bring your claims before the candidates, and the reasons you have for bringing them forward. I was glad to see that a lady, whom we have here, who has done us such admirable work in the north, I mean Mrs. Scatcherd, called upon Mr. Herbert Gladstone the other day and pressed upon him the claims of women to the franchise. I hope that they will have some effect upon that young candidate, who will soon be the member. (Hear, hear.) I am not at all disposed to be desponding about the position immediately before us. When the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer comes on for consideration, which cannot be very far off, we shall certainly have a great opportunity. Whether the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer is supported on the ground of expediency or abstract right, I cannot understand how it can be supported more powerfully than the claims of the woman householder. The claims of women householders are at least equal to his, and in many respects might be considered superior. At any rate, I am quite content to hope that an effort will be made to induce Parliament, when enfranchising the agricultural labourer, to enfranchise women also, and we must show the excellence and justice of our claims by using all the opportunities which we have at present. (Hear, hear.)

Miss BECKER observed that one or two observations had been made respecting practical work. One lady had suggested that women should use the votes which they had. In reply to that she might state that women did use the votes they possessed to a great extent, and the object of the conference that day was of course to make them do so to a greater extent. It was difficult to get them to vote for guardians, because of the irregularity with which the votes were collected. Mrs. McCulloch had done a great deal for the Journal. She went round Dumfries at the beginning of every year, and she collected the subscriptions, and she sent upwards of a hundred eightpences from ladies who wished to receive the Journal during the forthcoming year. If there were in every town a lady as energetic as Mrs. McCulloch, the circulation of the Journal would be increased a hundred fold, and the information about the society proportionately increased. She suggested that in the event of meetings being held by men in support of the Government proposal, it would be expedient that either men or women who cared for the justice of the cause should attend those meetings, and propose that the proposal should include the enfranchisement of women. Her experience was that such a resolution would always be carried in a meeting convened for the purpose of forwarding the county franchise. That was done at Manchester when there was a conference of delegates of the National Reform Association, and the resolution of the lady who proposed it was such that, coupled with the irresistible justice of the cause, the resolution was almost unanimously adopted. (Applause.)

Mrs. McLAREN moved a vote of thanks to Miss Taylor for presiding, which was seconded by the Viscountess HARBERTON, and carried unanimously; and, after a response from Miss TAYLOR, the Conference separated.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

BRIDPORT.

A public meeting in support of the movement for securing the extension of the parliamentary electoral franchise to women was held on April 23rd at the Templar Hall, Bridport, under the presidency of the Mayor (J. T. Stephens, Esq.), who was supported by the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, Rev. F. J. Austin, Rev. J. T. Eames, Mrs. W. Clark (of Street), Miss Sturge (of Bristol), Miss Wansey, Mrs. Reynolds. A resolution in support of the principle was moved by Miss Emily Sturge, supported by Mrs. W. Clark, and carried unanimously. A petition to the House of Commons was moved by the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, seconded by the Rev. F. J. Austin, and also carried. A vote of thanks to the ladies was proposed by Mr. T. H. Edmunds, and seconded by Mr. J. F. Suttill, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the Mayor, carried on the motion of Mr. Alderman Reynolds, seconded by Mr. Howell.

On April 21st, Miss E. Sturge, a member of the Bristol School Board, was present at a drawing-room meeting held at Mrs. Reynolds', East-street, together with a number of ladies, to discuss women's suffrage. Mrs. R. L. Carpenter and others took part in the proceedings.

BEDFORD.

An address, in support of the extension of the franchise to women, was delivered in the Assembly Rooms, Bedford, on April 30th, by Miss Helen Taylor, to a large audience. Dr. Coombs, J.P., presided, and there were also on the platform Mr. G. Hurst, J.P., Mr. J. Carlet, the Rev. John Brown (of Bunyan Meeting), Mr. Gillions, Miss Biggs (of Luton), and Mrs. Rogers (of Bedford). Dr. Coombs read a letter from Captain Polhill-Turner, late member for Bedford, in which he expressed his regret at being prevented from attending the meeting in support of women's suffrage, a movement which had always had his sympathy and support by votes in Parliament. After some remarks by Mr. Hurst, Miss Taylor delivered an able address, which was received with applause. Mr. G. Hurst then proposed the following resolution: "That it is desirable that women householders who are now legally qualified to vote in all local elections should also possess the parliamentary franchise." This was seconded by Mr. Carter and carried unanimously. In acknowledgment of a vote of thanks, Miss Taylor said she would have been glad if those who differed from her had given their views on the important issue put before the meeting, because she believed that it was by discussion and thoroughly ventilating those matters that they arrived at truth.

PENICUIK.

On May 1st, a meeting to consider the claims of women householders and ratepayers to the parliamentary franchise was held in the Penicuik Town Hall. On the motion of Miss Wigham, one of a deputation of ladies present from the Edinburgh Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, Mr. James Birrell, Uttershill, was called to the chair. In illustration of the female influence which, in bygone times, had been exerted on national polity, the Chairman dwelt upon the career of the Lady of Penneucik, who, in the assistance she rendered Wallace and his compatriots, so harassed Edward I. in the execution of his plans, that that monarch addressed letters to his deputy, the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, calling upon him to burn and destroy the domain of this intrepid lady. And as that lady had used her powerful influence for patriotic ends, so he (the chairman) believed that were the Penicuik ladies of the present day vested with the same political rights as the sterner sex, in judiciously

exercising the franchise they would be found to be very much in accord with them. After addresses by Miss Kirkland, Miss Simpson, Miss Wigham, and Mr. Crasley, the Chairman put the following resolution to the meeting, by which it was unanimously adopted:—"This meeting is of opinion that female householders and ratepayers have a just claim to the parliamentary franchise." A vote of thanks was awarded to the chairman.

CHELTENHAM.

A public meeting was held in the Assembly Rooms, Cheltenham, on May 3rd, to hear addresses by Miss Sturge, of Birmingham, Miss M. M. Price, and others, in advocacy of the electoral franchise for members of Parliament being extended to women, being owners of property or householders. Mrs. Hume-Rothery presided. The attendance was large, admittance being free except to certain seats. Among the ladies and gentlemen present were Mrs. General Colby and the Misses Colby, Rev. W. M. Lennox and Mrs. Lennox, Rev. J. C. Hirst, Miss Sturge, Miss T. Sturge, Misses Price, Miss Poulston, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. M'Ilquham, Mr. and Mrs. J. Downing, &c. A letter was received from the Rev. J. D. Breen (St. Gregory's) expressing regret that absence from home prevented him from attending the meeting, with the objects of which he felt sympathy. After addresses by Mrs. Hume-Rothery and Miss Eliza Sturge, Mr. Hume-Rothery proposed the first resolution:—"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the exclusion of women, who are equally with men responsible to the community, and are equally bound by the laws and amenable to the burden of taxes, from voting in the election of Parliament is injurious to those who are excluded and to the best interests of society, contrary to the principles of just representation, and to the laws now in force relating to the election of municipal, parochial, and other local elective governments." The Rev. J. C. Hirst seconded the resolution, which was supported by Miss M. M. Price, and carried with three dissentients. Rev. W. M. Lennox moved the second resolution, that a petition embodying the above resolution should be signed by the President for presentation to Parliament by the Baron de Ferrieres, M.P. Mr. Ewens seconded the resolution, which was carried almost unanimously. Mr. J. D. Steel, jun., proposed that, as a deputation from the meeting, Miss Colby should be requested to attend the women's conference upon the subject, to take place shortly in London. He remarked that it would be a most anomalous thing if, after agricultural labourers had gained the right to vote in elections of members of Parliament, owners of property by whom they were employed should not be allowed to vote because they were women. What then would become of the rights of property? He was quite sure that women's suffrage would benefit the community, and aid in securing peace, retrenchment, and reform, and everything else that was good. (Hear, hear.) Mr. J. H. M'Ilquham seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously. A vote of thanks to Miss Sturge and Miss M. M. Price, and to Mrs. Hume-Rothery for presiding, was proposed by Mr. Steel, sen., seconded by Mr. Smith, and carried unanimously; and in reply, Mrs. Hume-Rothery briefly stated her and her friends' acknowledgments, adding that any person who wished to assist in the cause may communicate with Miss Colby, of Napier House, who has taken a very active part in the movement, and in getting up the meeting. The proceedings then terminated.

BIRMINGHAM.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the Birmingham Branch of the Women's Suffrage Association was held on May 26th, in the Committee Room of the Town Hall. The Rev. H. W.

CROSSKEY presided. Amongst those present were Mr. H. Hawkes, Councillor R. F. Martineau, Messrs. W. Rogers and T. Hewins, Miss Barker, M.D., Miss Clark, M.D., Miss Sturge, Mrs. C. E. Mathews, Mrs. Archer, Miss Gardiner, Mrs. Gore, Mrs. E. L. Tyndall, Mrs. Rogers, &c.

Miss STURGE read the eleventh annual report.

Mrs. C. E. MATHEWS moved the adoption of the report. Councillor R. F. MARTINEAU seconded the motion.

Mr. H. HAWKES, in supporting the resolution, suggested that an early opportunity should be taken of testing the new House of Commons, by the moving of a proposal to include women householders in the proposed extended franchise to the Irish boroughs. They had one member of the Cabinet, one of its most energetic members, and one who would carry out whatever he undertook if it was within the bounds of possibility, whom they might remind of what he said some time back on this subject. Speaking of the points to which a new Government should turn its attention, he enumerated the assimilation of the borough and county franchise, the equalisation of representation by a redistribution of seats, the abolition of the minority clause of the last reform Bill, and the recognition of the rights of women, being householders, to the franchise. When the question was raised they would be able to see whether it was against a solid stupid majority that they had to work or whether it was a majority won over to their side. In the general election it was often said there was some mental difference between men and women which was made the ground of objection to women being electors. He saw something at that general election both in the counties and town, and he said that he never remembered a similar contest in which there were such a lot of clap-trap appeals—he did not say on which side, or whether on both—made to get votes. Pictures of a revolting character were put on the walls containing pictorial lies, every vulgar mode of expression by rhyme and prose was used, not to get the votes of women, but the votes of the enlightened men who thought they were so superior that women ought not to join them. Nothing could have more induced him to work for the enfranchisement of saving, sober, religious, reading, and suffering women.

On the motion of Dr. BARKER, seconded by Mrs. TYNDALL, a committee was appointed for the ensuing year. On the motion of Dr. CLARK, seconded by Mr. T. HEWINS, a vote of thanks was passed to the Mayor for the use of the room. A vote of thanks to the Chairman, moved by Mr. ROGERS, and seconded by Miss STURGE, concluded the proceedings.

MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS.

HACKNEY.

On April 20th, Miss Wade gave a lecture on the suffrage, at the Gospel Mission Hall, Maria-street, Homerton. Before separating, the meeting passed a resolution in support of the demonstration, moved by Miss Downing, seconded by Mr. Copping.

On April 28th, Miss Downing opened a discussion at the Literary Institute, St. Thomas's Square, Hackney; the Rev. Mr. Forsyth in the chair. The attendance was numerous, and after the address resolutions in favour of the demonstration and adopting a petition were unanimously carried.

SOUTHWARK.

On April 28th, a crowded meeting was held in the Webster Hall, Southwark. Mrs. Lucas presided. The first resolution was moved by Mrs. Simpson, a member of the Radical Club; seconded by Miss Becker, supported by Mr. F. W. Soutter, and carried unanimously. The second resolution, adopting a

petition, was moved by Miss Helen Taylor, seconded by Miss C. A. Biggs, supported by Mrs. Scholefield, of Newcastle, and carried with the same hearty unanimity as before. A vote of thanks to Mrs. Lucas closed the proceedings.

ARTIZANS' INSTITUTE.

On April 29th, the Rev. Stewart Headlam took the chair at a meeting at the Artizans' Institute, Castle-street, Upper St. Martin's Lane, which was addressed by Miss Craigen, Miss C. A. Biggs, and Miss Blackburn, and a resolution was passed in support of the demonstration.

BLACKFRIARS.

On April 30th, Mr. Thorold Rogers, M.P., Miss Becker, and Miss Biggs addressed a meeting at the Collingwood Hall, Collingwood-street, Blackfriars. Mrs. Washington Lyon presided. The meeting was crowded and unanimous in carrying the resolutions, which were the same as those at the Webster Hall. Mr. Bowbrick and Mr. J. Wilson also took part in the proceedings.

BRIXTON.

A public meeting was held at the Angel Town Institute, Brixton, on April 30th, Mr. E. Ravenstein in the chair. Speakers: Miss Craigen, Miss Orme, and the Rev. Mr. Gladstone. A gentleman amongst the audience also spoke. Resolution carried unanimously.

BERMONDSEY.

On May 1st, a mass meeting was held in the Drill Hall, Bermondsey, in support of the demonstration. The chair was taken by Mrs. M'Laren, who was supported on the platform by Miss Becker, Miss Jessie Craigen, Miss Downing, Mrs. Lucas, Mrs. J. H. Simpson, Miss Helen Taylor, J. J. Jones, Esq., Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Chicken, Mrs. Chenery, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Fielding, Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Goodwin, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Leitchi, Miss E. Lewis, Mrs. Medland, Mrs. Revill, Mrs. Soutter, Mrs. Sparkhall, Miss Stafford, Miss A. Stevens, Mrs. Taylor, Miss M. Stevens, Mrs. Warner, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Whittall. The first resolution, which was the same as that at Webster Hall, was moved by Miss Becker, and supported by Mr. J. J. Jones, member of the School Board for Hackney, who said he had recently been much struck by the soundness of the remarks of the ladies whom he had heard address a meeting at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon-street. Their claims were those of right and justice, and he had been drawn over to their side on the question of women's suffrage. There were intelligent women in the present day, women on the School Boards, and he knew they did more for the benefit of the children than the men. Surely such women as they were fit to have the franchise, and the sooner they had it, in his opinion, the better. Miss Craigen supported the resolution, which was carried unanimously. Mrs. Lucas then moved the second resolution adopting a petition to Parliament; this was seconded by Miss Downing, supported by Miss Helen Taylor, and carried unanimously. A vote of thanks to Mrs. M'Laren, moved by Mr. Arnold Goodwin, seconded by Mr. Stafford, closed the meeting.

CLAPHAM.

On May 3rd, a public meeting was held in the Clapham Hall, Mr. Rutland in the chair. The meeting was addressed by Miss C. A. Biggs, Miss Becker, and Miss Downing, who attended as a deputation from the society, also by Mr. A. Smith and Mr. H. F. Hamilton. Resolutions were carried by large majorities.

KINGSLAND.

On May 3rd, Miss Craigen addressed a crowded audience of the members and friends of the Kingsland Total Abstinence Society, at the Young Men's Christian Association, Kingsland Green, on the extension of the franchise to women. The chair was taken by Mr. H. G. Whiting.

TOWER HAMLETS.

On Tuesday night, May 4th, a public meeting, which was largely attended, was held in the Beaumont Hall, Mile End Road, for the purpose of considering the claim of women householders to the parliamentary franchise. The chair was occupied by the Rev. Septimus Buss, rector of Wapping. Amongst other ladies and gentlemen on the platform were Mrs. Buss, Miss Becker, Mrs. Webster, Miss H. Taylor, Miss Downing, Mrs. Hickman, Mrs. Joseph, Mrs. Hunter, Miss J. Craigen, Mrs. Salter, Miss Blackburn; Messrs. M. J. Hickman, W. B. Ferguson (Oxford), H. Burrows, Talmadge, M. Joseph, Read, Sherman, J. H. Levy, Joyce, W. Upton, F. J. Dellow, Brooks, Green, B. Lucraft, the Rev. J. H. Clews, R. H. Hadden, B.A., and D. F. Quaile. The chairman in opening the proceedings read a letter of apology from Sir Edmund Hay Currie, who said he was in favour of the parliamentary franchise being granted to widows and spinsters who were householders. The rev. gentleman then passed on to say that the question was not an ecclesiastical one, so that they might all work together impartially; neither was it a party question, but simply an act of justice. The first resolution was moved by Miss Becker, seconded by Miss Jessie Craigen, supported by the Rev. R. H. Hadden, and carried unanimously. The Rev. J. H. Clews moved a resolution in support of the demonstration at St. James's Hall. This was seconded by Mr. Lucraft, supported by Miss Helen Taylor and Mrs. Webster, and carried unanimously. Miss Downing moved the adoption of a petition, which was seconded by Mr. Le Lubez, and carried; and with a vote of thanks the proceedings terminated.

HOMERTON.

On May 4th, Mr. J. J. Jones (of the London School Board for Hackney) presided at a well-attended public meeting at the Homerton Evangelical Hall, High-street, Homerton. The meeting was addressed by Miss Helen Taylor, Mrs. Webster, and Mrs. Surr (of the London School Board). A very lively discussion took place, after which Miss Becker and Miss Craigen, who had arrived from Beaumont Hall, addressed the meeting. Resolutions similar to those at Beaumont Hall were carried unanimously.

NEW CROSS.

A meeting was held on May 4th in the New Cross Hall. The hall was crowded. The chair was taken by Corke Baines, Esq. Speakers: Mr. Joseph Wates, Mrs. Scatcherd, Miss C. A. Biggs, Mr. George Whate, Miss Brocklehurst, Miss Brown, and Mrs. Southey.

ISLINGTON.

On May 5th, a public meeting, numerously attended, principally by ladies, was held at Myddleton Hall, Islington. Mrs. Lucas occupied the chair. On the platform were, amongst others, Mr. Burrows, Mr. Forsyth, Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Glover, Mr. Bassett Hopkins, Mr. Lucraft, Mrs. McCulloch, and Mrs. M'Kinnel (of Dumfries), Mr. and Mrs. Surr, and Miss Surr, Mr. Hurst Smith. Miss Downing read letters of sympathy with the movement from Sir A. Lusk, M.P., the Rev. Gordon Calthrop, M.A., vicar of St. Augustine's, Highbury; Dr. Parker, of the City Temple; Mr. E. S. Allen, vice-chairman of the Finsbury Liberal Association. Speakers: Mr. Forsyth, Mrs.

Oliver Scatcherd, Mr. Benjamin Lucraft, Mrs. Surr, Miss Downing, Mr. Bassett Hopkins, Miss Craigen, and Mr. R. Glover.

WALMER CASTLE COFFEE PALACE.

By the favour of Miss Cons, a public meeting was held on May 5th at the Walmer Castle Coffee Palace, Seymour-street. The chair was taken at three o'clock by Miss Jane Cobden. The Hon. Rev. W. F. Freemantle, Mrs. Oliver Scatcherd, and Mrs. Lucas addressed the meeting. Resolutions in favour of the suffrage and adopting a petition were carried heartily.

DRAWING ROOM MEETINGS.

HAMPSTEAD.

On May 1st a crowded and influentially-attended drawing-room meeting was held at the residence of the Misses Davenport-Hill, 25, Belsize Avenue, to consider the advisability of extending the parliamentary franchise to women householders. Mr. W. H. Wills, M.P. for Coventry, presided, and amongst those present were the Hon. Mrs. Drummond, Mrs. W. H. Wills and the Misses Stancomb, Miss Becker, Miss Ellen Elcum Rees, Miss Lovell, Miss Orme, Mrs. Isa Craig Knox, Miss Blackburne, Mrs. Lankester, Mrs. Bompas, Mrs. and Miss Shore Smith, the Misses Ridley, the Misses Hill, Mrs. Stebbing, Madame Parkes Belloc, Mrs. Pearson Hill, Mrs. Walter Baily, Miss Lister, Mr. Courtney, M.P. for Liskeard; Rev. Thomas Bates, Mr. Arnold White, Mr. E. J. Payne, Mr. J. G. Fitch, &c.—The proceedings were opened by Miss Davenport-Hill introducing the chairman to the meeting, and announcing the receipt of certain letters, in connection with which she observed that one lady asked the pertinent question, "If women householders are not to vote, why are they to pay taxes?"—a question, said Miss Hill, rather difficult to answer.—Mr. Wills said he felt some difficulty in accounting for his presence there, but he had come by the wish of his old and valued friends the Misses Hill. He believed the place women held in society was a test of the rank of a country in the scale of nations. Miss Hill had brought him there to hear what should be said.—Miss Becker then explained the general position of the question and objects of the Bill.—Mr. Baines spoke in support of the movement, followed by Mr. Courtney, who said that in canvassing at elections it was customary for the candidate to go round and call on every constituent, when he heard what their wishes were, and also what the wrongs they felt. Time being an object in such work, the agent will tell the candidate that such and such houses have no votes, being occupied by women, so it is of no use to call; consequently, if the woman has wrongs to relate or views of her own to express, the candidate does not hear them—at least, not directly. Sometimes he does indirectly, for sometimes the wife of a voter knows more than her husband; but usually the women are in the background. Then it is astonishing what attention is paid to deputations; for here danger of loss of votes is implied. Perhaps the railway servants have a grievance; they are not a numerous body, but still they compel attention. Or the schoolmasters come, and their complaint is listened to. Schoolmistresses do not come, yet they must have their complaints too. The proposed measure for the registration of teachers has some provisions which bear hardly on women. But while the agent is careful to bring up everyone who has votes, he is careful to keep away everyone who has not got votes; says the candidate is too busy, it is a shame to trouble him, they must write. Mr. Courtney then referred to the influence exercised by women at the recent elections, and especially at Leeds, where the contest hitherto had been very equal, one if not two of the members being always Conservative. But the change had been extraordinary, and this was chiefly due to one lady, Mrs. Oliver

Scatherd, who had addressed the women in ward meetings during the municipal elections; the effect of her active interest had extended to the men; and by her influence money had been subscribed by the women at the elections to aid the Liberal candidates, and also in York, where they had had a Liberal victory not easily paralleled in Yorkshire.—Mr. Arnold White afterwards spoke in opposition to the movement; his arguments were replied to by Miss Orme.—After a few words from Mrs. Fitch and also from Madame Belloc, a resolution in support of the movement was carried, and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

KENSINGTON.

Miss Williams gave a meeting on May 4th, at her house, 4, Vicarage Gate, Kensington. After a few introductory remarks from Miss Williams, the meeting was addressed by Miss Orme, Miss Emily Sturge, Mr. Albert Dicey, Mr. Arthur Williams, Miss Browne, and Miss Cobden.

LONDON.

Under the presidency of Sir William Power, and at the invitation of Miss Tod, of Belfast, a drawing-room meeting was held on the 4th of May at 15, Langham-street, W. A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present.

The CHAIRMAN expressed great surprise that at the present advanced state of society, with a Liberal Government and a large Liberal majority, it should be found necessary to hold such a meeting as that, and discuss such a question as the one occupying attention. Still, advanced as they were, there existed a large amount of stupidity and ignorance which it was necessary to overcome. For this purpose it was necessary constantly to refer to the tritest possible arguments, and even at the risk of being tedious they must be again and again repeated. Referring to the different qualifications which the ladies held with reference to the suffrage the speaker enumerated three, viz., numbers, property, and capacity. With regard to numbers, the ladies of the United Kingdom were in a majority of about a million, and it certainly appeared to him anomalous that while minorities were considered entitled to be represented, so great a majority as a million should be unrepresented. With regard to the property qualification, householders, if men, were admitted to the exercise of the suffrage even down to a very low condition of society, while there were in that room many bright intelligences and persons of solid wealth who were disfranchised simply because of their sex. Referring next to capacity as a qualification, he thought it could not be contended that on that ground women should be deprived of the right to vote. An illiterate man who chanced to be a householder might vote in the existing state of things over the heads of ladies of the highest rank and with most cultured intellects.

Miss Becker then addressed the meeting, and was followed by Miss Downing.

The Right Hon. JAMES STANSFELD, M.P., after some introductory remarks relative to the absence of opponents, said: But now, coming to Sir William Power's introductory remarks, there was something so naïve about them, coming from an experienced public man, that nothing but native Irish humour could have been their source. He began by expressing an almost infantile astonishment that in these days of a Liberal Government—and an advanced Liberal Government—it was conceivable that a subject like ours should need to be considered as a debatable question at all. I must say a word or two on that subject and the immediate prospects of the movement, because I may, perhaps, be expected to say something on that subject. (Hear, hear.) But I must begin by saying that I do not share that extreme astonishment, and I can only attribute it in a man so experienced as our friend

in the chair to the sense of humour to which he has referred. Sir William went into a series of arguments which in some sense it might be supposed would weigh with a Liberal Government and an advanced Liberal party. And the first was that women were in a majority in this country by about one million. But surely Sir William must know that that is one of the strongest objections—(laughter)—the forefront objection—in the minds of many men. (Laughter.) "What," they say, "give women the suffrage, with the female element a million in the majority? Why, you'll have civil war; the voting power and the brain and muscle power of the country will be at variance, and the brain and muscle power will in the end be sure to win." But if you want to get to the bottom of the whole question, and to know what is the ultimate root of the antagonism in the minds of men, which sooner or later will show itself, and which will need a strong fight and a long fight to overcome, it is simply this—that you are women! (Sensation.) That is the reason men will not give you the vote. They think it is an assertion of the privilege and heritage of their sex. You have been going through a period when it was not to many men a very serious question that you should vote. They gave you the power to vote for the School Board, and they gave you a municipal vote, and they were rather pleased with their own liberality. But suddenly they were called upon to be logical. They were shown that women who could be trusted with a vote for members of the School Board and for municipalities could also exercise that voting power aright in parliamentary matters. But when you come to the question of giving women the suffrage, men, with a true perception—because when our own interests are in danger we have a true perception—suddenly perceived that this was nothing short of a revolution, and that the franchise would produce changes—not disastrous changes, but great changes—in the political and social conditions of this country. Therefore, when the question of women's suffrage was raised, there began to creep upon the minds of men this new antagonism. I should like to address myself for a moment or two to that manly—no, I will not call it manly, but man-ny—instinct. I should like to ask the many who have this feeling—and I am afraid there are very many who have it—I should like to ask this question—What do they think ought to be the basis of the suffrage? We have got so far as this—that there are only two bases; the one is the family basis, and the other is the individual basis. The principle at present accepted in the boroughs, and shortly to be extended to the counties, is the principle of familyism—that a family is entitled to be represented by a vote, and that its vote should be given by the head of the family. Well, if you accept that principle, then the head of the family, man or woman, ought logically to exercise that voting power. And if you accept that principle, what will follow will be this—that in any possible further extension of the franchise, political extension will be governed by social conditions. As long as a man is the head of the family, then the law will give the man a vote as the representative of the family. That appears to be a principle which I call conservative in character, but it recommends itself to my mind. I look upon the family as the true basis of society; and I am content to take my stand on the principle that it is the family which might be represented. But if that is not done, then individualism must form the basis of the vote. What does this lead to? First, it leads to manhoodism. Now, I will never consent to manhood suffrage. I look upon it as the most brutal of political expedients. I look forward to the extension of the suffrage to every householder in the country; but if, in addition to that, we go further, and say that every

wretched boy who has attained the age of twenty-one years, however uneducated or silly, or however bad, should have a political status in the country, but that no woman, however wealthy or however accomplished, shall be placed on a political equality with that boy—I say that that is so monstrous that I hope even the men who now uphold it will ere long condemn it. What I would say now is that you have these two lines before you. Take the principle of household suffrage, from which you cannot recede, to protect it you must extend it to the head of the household, whether that head be man or woman. If you do not, you will go to manhood suffrage, and that would not be here long without extending it to every grown-up person, whether man or woman, and that I should be sorry to see. And now I come back *apropos* of Sir William Power's remarks—I come back to the political situation. The question of household suffrage and its extension to the counties is coming to the front. The question you will be entitled to put to all independent members of the Liberal party, and also to many Conservatives, will be this: Are you prepared or disposed to extend household suffrage to every uneducated labourer in the country at the very moment that you deny it to the most educated and wealthy woman? But this is a question about which the friends of women's suffrage should not lose time. They *must* bring their question to the fore, because if you do not do all you can to make your claims known, and if you allow the Liberal party and the great majority of the new Parliament to extend household suffrage, and refuse to extend it to women householders, you will lose a very great opportunity, and you will put the parliamentary and the public mind on the wrong tack. I therefore urge you strongly to regard the present situation as one which you must utilise for your own purposes. And certainly I think that the best use you can make of it is this, to redouble your exertions and to determine that household suffrage shall not be extended to men householders all over the country without at the same time being extended to women in the boroughs and counties as well. (Applause.) I am obliged to you for the kindness with which you have listened to me while I ventured to make this contribution to the discussion of the question.

MISS CAROLINE A. BIGGS moved: "That a petition to the House of Commons praying for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women be adopted and signed by the chairman on behalf of the meeting." Miss Biggs for the nonce placed herself in the position of an opponent of the movement, and quoted seriatim the main objections which are generally urged, interspersing them with an occasional pertinent remark which effectually exposed their shallowness.

Miss Tod, of Belfast, seconded the motion, and explained that one good reason why she had not obtained the presence of an opponent on that occasion was that she could not find one among her circle of friends in London, and she was more certain not to find one in her list of acquaintances in Ireland. She then proceeded to deliver a brief and pithy address, which was listened to with manifest attention and appreciation.

On the motion of Miss BEWICKE, seconded by Miss Tod, a vote of thanks was accorded the chairman, who acknowledged the compliment tersely, after which the company partook of refreshments and separated.

BRISTOL.

A drawing-room meeting was held in May, at the house of Dr. Kennedy, Bristol. Mr. G. W. Cox occupied the chair, and a resolution was moved by Mrs. Tanner. Miss Frances Power Cobbe, in seconding the resolution, said that some good old people had thought that the fewer persons who had to do with the government of a country the better, considering the few were wise and the many foolish. They took it for granted

that the wise and not the foolish would be appointed. Well, this system had been tried in various places, and Turkey and Russia were present specimens of how the system answered. In England as many as possible shared in the government. Minors, criminals, and idiots only were supposed to be excluded, and it was with these persons women were at present classed. She had lived much in Italy, and before the Italians were enfranchised it was miserable to hear the silly, frivolous conversation of the men. The opera and dress were all they talked of from morning till night, and, as Mazzini had once said to her, "In a country where no one may talk either of politics or religion what can be expected from them but frivolity." Now things are quite altered there, and men may be seen standing in little knots conversing on these matters with the greater zest from that the opportunity to do so was so long kept from them. Women should be made to feel by every possible means that they have a part to fulfil in making this world more what all prayed for—"the kingdom of God." In her young days she (Miss Cobbe) had not felt the desire for this privilege. She felt that she had enough to do in other ways, with household cares and literary occupations, but when she was living for a time with Miss Mary Carpenter, and heard from her of reforms needed in "Industrial School Acts," "Reformatory Laws," &c., and when, from experience, she learned how much improvement was wanted in the Poor Laws, she began to wonder how it was she could not have something to say about all these matters, and then she went on to think that she ought to ask for this vote, and now she had been asking and asking for it for twenty-five years. Her means qualified her to possess it, she had education sufficient, and ordinary intelligence, and why she should not use all these qualifications was a mystery to her.—After remarks by Mrs. Kennedy, Mr. Grenfell, and Dr. Kennedy, the resolution and petition were carried, and the meeting separated after the usual vote of thanks.

WORKMEN'S MEETING IN HYDE PARK.

A meeting of working people in celebration of the Liberal victory in the recent election took place on Whit-Monday, at the Reformers' Tree, Hyde Park. There were four or five thousand present. Mr. MERRIMAN occupied the chair. The first resolution was of a congratulatory character.

The second resolution, moved by Mr. POTTLE and seconded by Mr. GARLIC, ran thus: "That inasmuch as no logical reason exists for denying the suffrage to the rural population, this meeting calls upon the Government to lose no time in bringing forward a comprehensive measure for an extension of the franchise and a redistribution of seats in such a manner as will remove the gross anomalies of the present electoral system."

MISS CRAIGEN, in a speech of some length, moved an amendment to the resolution in favour of extending the parliamentary franchise to women. Tracing the gradual extension of the political rights from class to class of the community, she submitted that women who paid rates and performed so large a part of the industry of the nation should be entitled to vote in parliamentary as well as in municipal and school board elections.

MISS DOWNING, seconding the amendment, claimed for women the right to vote in parliamentary elections, reminding her audience that women, equally with men, were bound to obey the laws, and were obliged to pay the rates and taxes.

The speeches of the ladies were highly applauded by the meeting, and were supported by remarks from Mr. Richardson. The amendment, on being put, was carried by a large majority, and the resolution as amended was agreed to.

LAW REPORTS.

COURT FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF CROWN CASES. RESERVED.

(Before the Lord Chief Baron, Mr. Justice Lush, Mr. Justice Denman, Mr. Justice Lopes, and Mr. Justice Bowen.)

MAY 1st, 1880.

REG v. BROADLEY.—In this case the prisoner was indicted at the Leicestershire Quarter Sessions, held on April 6th last, for an indecent assault on a child seven years of age. He was defended by counsel, who proposed to address the jury on the question of the child's consent; but the Chairman refused to allow this question to be put to the jury, on the ground that a child so young was incapable of giving consent in such a case. The jury found the prisoner "Guilty," and he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour.

Mr. Prosser now appeared on behalf of the prosecution; Mr. Hensman was for the prisoner.

The Court held that the ruling of the Chairman had been wrong, and quashed the conviction.—Times, May 3rd, 1880.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

A Bill has for several sessions passed the House of Commons, the object of which is to render legal all marriages between a man and the sister of his deceased wife, which have taken place, and which may hereafter take place. The provisions of this Bill do not apply to marriage between a woman and the brother of her deceased husband, nor to such marriages between a man and more distant relatives of his deceased wife as are now prohibited by law.

The Bill, therefore, has no definite principle; it introduces a vital change into family relations, and it does so in a one-sided manner; it makes a new and glaring inequality in the marriage relation by placing the husband in a different position as regards his wife's sister from that of the wife as regards her husband's brother.

At present the marriage law is based on the intelligible principle that relationship by marriage equally with relationship by blood is a bar to marriage within certain degrees. This principle is either sound—in which case it ought to be maintained as regards all relationships by marriage—or unsound—in which case the restriction ought to be removed in all such cases. A Bill which arbitrarily selects one relation, and that one of the nearest of the prohibited degrees in which marriage is to be legal, and does not touch the rest, unsettles the basis of the existing law without offering any substitute for the rule that has been destroyed, and such a Bill should be opposed by all who desire that legislation on the subject of marriage should rest on just and definite principles.

It is believed that there exists among women a strong sentiment of objection to the proposed change, which sentiment, for the want of means of expression, owing to the deprivation of the political franchise, has not received adequate attention from the legislature. It is, therefore, thought desirable to bring to bear on the House of Commons in the shape of petitions and other demonstrations of opinion the feelings of women in this matter, which so closely concerns domestic and family relations. This is all the more desirable as the promoters of the Bill take especial pains to procure the signatures of women to petitions in its favour, and the parliamentary advocates of the measure constantly affirm that women are in favour of the Bill.

Mr. Beresford Hope has placed the following notice of motion on the paper of the House of Commons:—"On

Second Reading of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, to move, 'That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the law of marriage in relation to degrees of consanguinity and affinity in the various countries of Europe and the States of America.'"

Women who object to the proposed Bill, and who desire to sign petitions in favour of Mr. Beresford Hope's amendment, are requested to communicate with Miss Jessie Boucherett, 9, Upper Phillimore Gardens, London, W.; or to Miss Lilius Craig, 6, Carlton-street, Edinburgh.—[ADVT.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.

GRIMSBY.

The election for the nine members of the Grimsby School Board took place on May 14th, when Mrs. Wintringham headed the poll with 5,414 votes; Canon Johnson, who was second, polled 3,718; and the lowest elected member, 1,697. Mrs. Wintringham is a lady whose social position and personal qualification render her likely to be a most useful member of the Board.

ILLOGAN, CORNWALL.

On May 13th the election took place of the School Board of Illogan, Cornwall. There were seven members to be elected and ten candidates, two of whom were ladies, Miss Evans and Mrs. Basset. Both ladies were elected, Miss Evans being returned fourth, and Mrs. Basset sixth, on the poll.

PETITIONS.

THIRD REPORT, 18—24 February, 1880.

Table with 2 columns: Date and Description of Petitions. Includes entries for Feb. 19, 20, 23, 24 and March 24.

Total No. of Petitions 23—Signatures..... 27

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THIRD REPORT, 25 February—24 March, 1880.

Table with 2 columns: Date and Description of Petitions. Includes entries for Feb. 25, 28 and March 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 15, 19.

Total No. of Petitions 36—Signatures..... 78

The Petitions marked thus (©) are from public meetings, and are signed officially.

SUMMARY OF PETITIONS PRESENTED UP TO MARCH 19th, 1880, the end of the last Parliament.

Summary table with 4 columns: No. of Petitions signed Officially or under Seal, Total No. of Petitions, Total No. of Signatures. Includes entry for Women's Disabilities Removal.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, MAY, 1880.

Table of subscriptions for Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, May 1880. Lists names and amounts in £ s. d.

DEMONSTRATION FUND.

(Free Trade Hall,—Fifth List.)

Table of demonstration fund contributions for Manchester, Free Trade Hall, Fifth List.

£14 19 0

S. ALFRED STEINTHAL, TREASURER, 28, Jackson's Row, Manchester.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be made payable to the Treasurer, and may be sent to him or to the Secretary, Miss BECKER, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester. Post Office Orders payable at the head office, Manchester.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS

RECEIVED FROM

APRIL 20 TO MAY 20, 1880.

Table of subscriptions and donations received from April 20 to May 20, 1880. Lists names and amounts in £ s. d.

Table of subscriptions and donations for Manchester National Society, continuing from previous page.

NORWICH.

Table of subscriptions and donations for Norwich.

£52 7 0

DEMONSTRATION FUND.

(St. James's Hall.)

Table of demonstration fund contributions for St. James's Hall.

£ s. d.

Table of subscriptions and donations for Manchester National Society, continuing from previous page.

£80 8 0

JANE E. COBDEN, TREASURER, 64, Berners-street, London, W.

BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

Table of subscriptions and donations for Bristol and West of England Branch.

£29 8 0

SPECIAL FUND.

(Payable in two years.)

Table of special fund contributions, payable in two years.

£990 0 0

A. GREENWELL, TREASURER, 3, Buckingham Vale, Clifton.



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