

their sex, and who only ask to be permitted to earn a livelihood by making themselves useful to their fellow creatures. The claim to be admitted to Parliament, indeed, if it should be advanced (which it has not yet been), would stand on somewhat different ground. Exclusion in this case would not mean exclusion from the means of earning a livelihood, and therefore the reasons in favour of the claim are undoubtedly less strong than those which may be urged in favour of opening professional and industrial careers; but why should women not be allowed the fullest and freest use of their faculties in any walk of life, whether lucrative or otherwise, in which any competent portion of the community may think it expedient to employ them? At all events the onus of proof lies with those who would resist such a claim; and if opponents have nothing better to urge than the fatuous jokes which have hitherto been the staple of their argument, but from which Mr. Smith has had the good taste to abstain, the case against women is certainly not a strong one. Whether many women, if the opportunity offered, would be ambitious of a parliamentary career; or whether, in this case, they would find many constituencies disposed to elect them, are questions, the consideration of which may perhaps be left, without disadvantage, to a future day.

THE END.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE,

THE COUNTERFEIT & THE TRUE.

REASONS FOR OPPOSING BOTH.

BY

REAR-ADMIRAL MAXSE.

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WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

PART I.

The Counterfeit.

There is much misunderstanding in regard to the real character of what is known as the Woman Suffrage movement in this country. It is not surprising. The ostensible demand is made for Woman Suffrage. The organization that represents this demand is described as the "Woman Suffrage Society," the meetings are called on behalf of Woman Suffrage, and Women enfranchisement is the alleged object of agitation. Speakers and writers who come forward to advocate the cause, make their most touching appeal by declaring that they plead for "half the human race." They tell us in reply to one form of objection, that the perils of maternity are not

The greater portion of the following pages was given as a Lecture in various parts of London and at Croydon. It is now published with additional remarks and notes in reply to the criticism it has received.

less hazardous than those of war¹; all that they say leads us to infer that Woman Suffrage in its proper sense is the object of their demand. Yet, when we turn from professions and declarations to examine the actual substance of the measure which is proposed, we find that if it be adopted only propertied single women will be raised to citizenship! Widows, spinsters, and other single women possessing households, all the women, in fact, who are in an abnormal state—those who form the mere fragment of their sex—are to exercise political power, while wives and mothers, unless mothers be widowed, are to remain without the vote. Can this, then, be termed a genuine Woman Suffrage movement? How can it be said to represent “half the human race”?

As the substance of this pamphlet has been given already in the form of a lecture, not once but several times, and as discussion has followed upon each occasion, as likewise the Woman Suffrage Society appointed an eloquent lady² to deliver a lecture in answer to mine, I have had

¹ “As a matter of fact, we understand that the per centage of women who lose their lives in the dangers incident to them in the profession of marriage, exceeds the per centage of soldiers killed in battle.” A reply to Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, &c. By Miss Lydia Becker.

² Miss Fenwick Miller.

every opportunity of ascertaining the manner in which my objections are met.

Two replies are almost invariably made in justification of the present form of the Woman Suffrage demand. They are as follows:—

1. We take the law as we find it; we find that certain property qualifies the owner to vote, we demand that where it qualifies a man it shall qualify a woman—that there shall be no *sex* disqualification.

2. The measure we propose, although it may only obtain Single Women Suffrage now, represents the “thin end of the wedge:” it must be regarded only as an instalment of the larger measure which will comprehend Wife Suffrage.

There is, perhaps, some further reply in the common remark that no other mode of female enfranchisement would receive consideration. The dilemma exists of having to propose Woman Suffrage based upon the property qualification, however fanciful the result may be, or of not proposing it at all.

The first of these replies sounds plausible. I do not say that those who make it are conscious of this: but it is plausible, or in other words, superficially satisfactory, as a reply to the objection I have raised. I maintain, and have reiterated on each occasion of delivering my lecture, that the

advocates of Women Suffrage are bound to consider that the present electoral law was framed, both in spirit and letter, solely with a view to male voting. It was devised with the object of enfranchising certain men representative of their sex and race. Whom did it select as representative? Not the staid bachelors, nor the wild ones, nor the unmarried especially. It sought representation among the fathers and husbands—in the heads of households. They were necessarily associated with property: but property was not the object of representation, as it has become recently; it was the men. The Woman Suffrage Society propose now to pervert this law to the enfranchisement (as it is erroneously termed) of women: thus perverted it can of course only act in a fanciful and inappropriate manner. Used as a means of female enfranchisement, whom do we find that the altered electoral law selects as representative of the woman sex? Not the mature women, the wives and the mothers, but spinsters, widows and other single ladies. Miss LYDIA BECKER, the active Secretary of the Woman Suffrage Society, speaks occasionally of the “brand of electoral incapacity” which now rests upon women. Whether it is a brand or not, I will consider later. But it is certain that if the Single Woman Suffrage Bill is passed and political power is

declared the privilege of single women alone, then a veritable stigma will be attached to wives, and marriage will represent, as far as they are concerned, the very livery of political subjection. This will be so on Miss BECKER'S own shewing; I find the following passage in the pamphlet I have already quoted from in a foot note: “Every extension of the franchise to classes hitherto excluded lowers and weakens the status of the classes which remain out of the pale.” If there be any truth in this declaration it applies with double force to Miss BECKER'S own scheme of woman enfranchisement. There is no stigma on wives while no women exercise political power, but a stigma is created for the first time if the enfranchisement of women is announced in a measure which deliberately excludes them. Moreover, if one class of men have ever been enfranchised to the detriment of a non-enfranchised class, it has at least been done upon the alleged social or intellectual superiority of the newly enfranchised, but even Miss Becker will hardly venture to assert the superiority of spinsters and widows over married women. The supporters of the measure say that it will “give the franchise to women upon the same terms on which it now is, or hereafter may be granted to men.” This seems to me to be merely playing

with words. Nominally it may be so; substantially it is otherwise, for while husbands will have the vote, wives will be deprived of it. An electoral law will be in force that qualifies propertied women so long as they avoid or survive marriage, and thus marriage will be invariably identified with political disability.

The advocates of the Bill say they take the law as they find it: and they frequently claim credit for not altering it: they are only going to give it a new signification. "Man" is to mean "Woman." This sounds delightfully simple: but it represents a considerable alteration. It would have been more straightforward to endeavour to alter it so as to embrace the genuine principle of Woman Suffrage,¹ instead of attempting to pervert the law and mislead the public for the benefit of a counterfeit principle.

There is, I am sure, no intentional deception. The promoters of this movement do not realize that they support a counterfeit principle, but they commit the common error of mistaking the shadow

¹ This might have been done by proposing that, simultaneously with the adoption of the minor alteration, wives shall be held to share their husband's qualification. I do not advocate this, because I am entirely opposed to Woman Suffrage. I merely indicate the proper course for those who desire something more than nominal Woman Suffrage.

for the substance. And there is everything to encourage them in this error. They find themselves embarked on a politic course. To the astute Conservative mind that leads,¹ the scheme is altogether deserving, it may be truly termed a "constitutional" one, it is favourable to people who have "a stake in the country" as it is called; the Conservative does not much care who is connected with property so long as it is represented, and then he reflects that most women are likely to be Conservatives. The Radical is also conciliated. Extension of the franchise, never mind how allotted or how collected, is his one panacea for all ills. Then there is the concession of an abstract right. All his own pet arguments and declarations about the rights of every man, &c.,—why not "every woman"?—are turned upon him. He thinks the measure is in favour of every woman; he is told that this is the ultimate object, although the Conservative is carefully told that it is not so.

There are some ladies in this movement who know that it does not comprise genuine Woman Suffrage, but they regard it as a stepping stone. Theirs is the reply to the Radical; they say that the anomaly created by the measure—the maid

¹ See Appendix i. Letter of approval from Mr. Disraeli.

voting, and the wife disfranchised—will be so outrageous that public opinion will not sanction its continuance.

These ladies deceive themselves. I warn you not to share their generous confidence. Anomalies which are favorable to property are always tolerated in this country. And "Public Opinion!" Who can have faith in what is termed Public Opinion? The conditions under which a seat is obtained in the House of Commons are such as almost to close the Parliamentary channel for the expression of independent opinion,¹ while the condition of national publicity to opinion is that it shall be common place enough to suit

¹ It will be found in nearly all constituencies that the party managers on the Liberal side represent the Nonconformist and non-political Middle Class point of view. It may be asked, if "non-political," why do they organize opposition to the Conservatives? The reply is that party feeling, inherited apparently as an instinct, seems to prompt the opposition. There is very frequently a hot contest in which the actual difference of idea upon politics between the candidates is imperceptible, but one is called a Conservative and the other is called a Liberal. This being the case, a man of independent political thought is by no means acceptable as a candidate. It is the pliant man, it is he who has not thought upon political subjects at all, and who turns to his agent for the cue to each public reply, who is known to be the model candidate for an electoral campaign. On the Conservative side orthodoxy is indispensable.

the average mind, and obtain the "largest" or a "world-wide" circulation. No prominent publicity can be obtained for opinion which is likely to be unpopular with the propertied class. The proposal to give all wives votes, which would include the wives of all working men, (just conceive the effect of a proposal to double the terrible Democracy!) would not even obtain discussion in our prudent London Daily Press—that Cerberus, which has taken charge of our liberties, and guards us carefully from the access of disturbing unorthodox ideas, or only admits them duly caricatured and discredited.

But the influential and official representatives of the Woman Suffrage Society disclaim the idea of seeking Wife Suffrage. Theirs is the reply to the Conservative. At a public meeting held at St. George's Hall in May, 1875, by this society, when resolutions of support were submitted to the meeting, but no discussion was permitted on them until after they had been passed, Mrs. FAWCETT said:—

"If the bill is carried, I do not think any one need be afraid that an agitation for Married Woman's Suffrage would take the place of the present agitation. The heart would be taken out of the whole movement."

And this is perfectly true. But note that there are two faces to the movement, the one irreconcilable with the other. Mrs. FAWCETT's reply is the true one. A proposal to enfranchise wives would be scouted.

Mrs. FAWCETT, in the same speech that I have quoted from, claims credit to England on account of the position which the Woman Suffrage question occupies, as compared to the position it occupies in all other countries. I say that this position is a *discredit* to the country; in no other could a vessel have sailed so far without having its true character exposed. Its progress here is mainly due to the surreptitious knowledge of conservative supporters that it makes for a goal far different to the one which is inscribed on its banner. It is chartered by money, plied by Conservatives, it has the generous breath of radicals in its flag, and makes with ammunition (an armoury of votes) to an enemy's port. Once in that port, the banner will be hauled down, and the ammunition will be expended in opposing the rights of women and the rights of men.

If you think I am severe in my description of the Woman Suffrage Society measure, I will quote an opinion to you which you may consider less prejudiced than my own. It is the opinion of a talented lady who is a well known advocate

of Woman Suffrage. I refer to Mrs. BESANT. She uses the following words in a letter addressed to an American newspaper:—

“The real truth is that the Woman Suffrage movement, as conducted by the National Society, is in no sense a popular movement in England; it is a movement of the upper classes, of the propertied women to whom alone a vote would be given if Mr. Forsyth's Bill became law. It is timid, apologetic, irresolute, favoured much by the clergy, and smiled on by Conservatives.”

Here is another witness. The following passage is from a letter addressed to the *Standard*, and quoted with approval by the *Woman Suffrage Journal* in which I found it:—

“I should be glad to know,” writes a lady correspondent, “what action, if any, the Conservative Association is prepared to take on the important question of the *so called* ‘Woman Suffrage;’ to my mind, more properly to be named ‘property suffrage.’”

I oppose this agitation, then, upon the following grounds:—

1. Because it is falsely termed a Woman Suffrage Movement.
2. Because the measure advocated will create an invidious distinction between wives and other women, at the expense of the former.

3. Because its success will constitute a triumph of the representation of property as against the representation of persons.
4. Because the effect of the Bill proposed will be to strengthen the reactionary party, and thus to impede National Progress.

Of course it is sufficient to oppose a measure which has proclaimed itself as "advanced" or "progressive" to invite the usual taunts of illiberalism and shafts of ridicule. The fanatic of every idea invariably pronounces opposition as contemptible or prejudiced; each petty whipster of a notion declares that those who are against it enact the part of the opponents of Galileo, Newton, &c., or institute a comparison with Mrs. Partington's combat with the ocean; yet for one idea—heralded forth with this customary brag-gadocio—that proves its fitness to survive and benefit mankind probably ninety-nine perish. Another effective device is to recall the foolish predictions which have been made at various times upon proposals of beneficial reform, and thus to confound two entirely dissimilar cases.¹

¹ "Well, sir, very likely you and others in this room can remember the time when our Catholic fellow-countrymen struggled for their emancipation: did you not hear the same sort of thing from the Admiral Maxses of the time?"—Miss Fenwick Miller's reply to my lecture delivered at the Eleusis Club.

According to this mode of reasoning, the infallibility of all projects is necessarily assumed. Yet a sufficient number of people can always be collected who will applaud such an exhilarating fallacy.

I do not, therefore, exaggerate the probable effect of my opposition. All I am anxious for is that you should realize the position that will be attained by this measure, and consider carefully whether it is likely to be of much value. Single women who are householders will have the vote—wives will be excluded from the poll. The Woman Suffrage Society will expire, its "heart" will go out. Then how shall we be? What will be the practical outcome? What sort of a political force shall we have released under the pretext of emancipating the sex? We have to consider the character and disposition of average women who are now all at home encompassed by a household horizon, and who trouble themselves little about this or any other public movement. They would rather not have the vote. It is common for the Lady Suffragists to allege that women approve of their measure because they do not come forward to oppose: it must be remembered, however, that it is not consistent with the views of ladies who object to the vote to make platform appearance. They are deficient in public spirit and in a knowledge

of the ways of public life. Another fallacious statement is that if they do not want the vote they can "leave it alone." *But will they be left alone?* It must be remembered that they are unprotected, there is no male tyrant at hand to intimidate canvassers. What part, then, will these women play—the widows, the spinsters, and the single ladies—who are suddenly called in to give the casting vote upon many a momentous question? You will form a singularly erroneous notion if you regard the ladies who have come forward to demand the vote as representative of their sex. When they go to the poll, they will, I venture to predict, meet with an overwhelming antagonistic vote on the part of their ungrateful sisters.

It is claimed that women have voted well in School Board elections; I do not know upon what ground this claim is made; I am disposed to think that the Woman School Board vote has been a clerical one.¹ Their voting in municipal

¹ It does not follow that this vote need be a Church vote: there is a Nonconformist clerical vote as well as a Church clerical vote. The last London School Board contest (1876) was mainly a struggle between Liberals and Nonconformists on one side and Conservatives and Churchmen on the other: it is likely that the woman vote followed congregations and was equally divided.

elections has not so far been characterized by much public spirit. I received not long since a somewhat discouraging letter from a friend who lives in one of our largest Southern towns; he wrote, in reply to a question I put to him concerning the number of women voters and proportion to class, as follows:—

We are blessed with about 500 lady voters on the burgess roll; of these the preponderance is very large on the side of the Upper and Middle Classes. This arises from the fact either that many of the widows of the Working Classes, when the head of the household is gone, content themselves with becoming lodgers, or are excused their rates, or procure the aid of the Parish Authorities. Nearly all the women vote Tory. The women of the Upper Classes are naturally Tory by association and connection. The Church parson and his district visiting ladies are converted at the election times into an active Tory Committee, whose influence the women of the Middle Class do not attempt to withstand. The parson recommends them in the way of business, and the association is of too flattering a character to be separated on polling day. My belief is, that at the last municipal election in All Saints, 90 out of 100 women of the Middle Class voted Tory. I canvassed one lady whose husband was a Liberal in his life time, but she voted Tory, and said afterwards, "How could I refuse Miss—who is always so kind to me, and what could I say to the clergyman when he asked me to accept a ride in his brougham to the poll."

Then the widows of the very poor vote Tory also. The parson at Christmas pleads for the poor widow, and he and his visiting ladies distribute amongst them the parochial charities. When election time comes, the parson is found among these people, pleading that one good turn deserves another, and when

they in their turn ask a favour, and one so slight, how can it be refused?

Dissenting ministers abound amongst us, but the parochial system of the Church is one in which they have no lot or part, and they find it much easier to propound a principle eloquently in the pulpit than to give effect to their views by bringing to the polling booth those over whom they have influence. When, at our last municipal election, there were at least six Church parsons at work bringing up voters, it was impossible to induce the Dissenting Ministers to budge one inch further than to record their own votes.

Of course it is retorted that there are men voters just as bad. But because there are many men who do not know how to vote, does it follow that women will know how to do so? I fail to see how one evil will be corrected by the introduction of another. Political responsibility has not educated the men, why should it educate the women? And we must remember this—much as self-dependent women may repudiate the idea of dependence—single women are more likely to be “dependent” than men voters. At least the men, if they choose, can protect themselves: it is more the nature of women to yield to solicitation; and whatever may be pretended to the contrary, it is certain that average women are more subject to clerical influence than men.¹ When I speak of clerical

¹ “Any one acquainted with the enormous power of popular preachers over the susceptible sex must know how little it

influence, pray understand that I refer to the doctrine more than to the man. I speak of the influence derived from human opinion claiming supernatural sanction and expressed through an ecclesiastical agent. Gibbon says, that “To a philosophic eye the *vices* of the clergy are less dangerous than their virtues”—their virtues are doubtless many. What with their doctrine, their virtues and various accessories, they exercise great power over women. The priest from his pulpit—or as the kind excellent friend which he so frequently is—can more readily excite women against public measures than he can excite men. I have known a clergyman send women out of his church, during a School Board election, in a state of righteous indignation against a “secular” candidate, and fully resolved to sustain the Church in its combat with Satan. If you wish to learn the influence of the clergy over women, look into the churches and observe the proportion of women.¹ Some will account this a merit, for it will be tantamount to saying that women care more for religion than men. But the word

depends on the matter of the appeal, or the object to be gained or the arguments used.”—*Times*, April 28, 1876.

¹ See appendix II. for an interesting table showing the relative number of men and women who made requests for special intervention through Moody and Sankey.

religion requires more than any other to have some definite meaning attached to it. Too often it may be described as the deification of human error. Feelings and thoughts, however mean, however selfish, and however ignorant—and excelling only in the quality of vehemence—ticket themselves as “religious,” and forthwith claim a sacred immunity. “This is a religious feeling,” it is said, “and you must respect it.”

Now women resort to this plan of dignifying mere impulse with the name of “religious feeling,” far more than men, and they claim a virtue for it. I fear that this religious feeling will, at the time of an election, be made use of (especially in the case of lonely women) to oppose all movements of progress.

The common reply made to the objection that women are likely to vote under the influence of the Clergy, is that we have surrendered them to the Priests by failing to give them sufficient interest or concern in the affairs of the country; and Mill told us often that the explanation of the Priest having so much influence over woman is that he is the only person who speaks seriously to her. One of his objects in demanding the vote for woman was to counteract the influence of the Priest by means of the influence of the Politician. I fear I cannot share this sanguine expectation.

Women are highly emotional, they fear death more than men, and they are weak. The Priest appeals to their emotions. He offers them access to celestial joys, he abolishes death, and holds in reserve a method of alarm which few women are strong enough to despise. The dead can never return to refute his words. What sort of a rival is the Politician with his meagre fare of doubtful benefit to others!

I am aware that taunts of illiberality are made against me, because I point out that the woman vote is likely to be Clerical. It is said, “They are of course free to vote as they like.” This reply may perfectly serve for those who concede the right to vote. But I do not concede any abstract right to vote at all. The right to vote I regard as a question of expediency and fitness. It is easy to sneer at expediency, to toss the head, and enquire who is to judge of rightful expediency. The indignation with the word arises from its oppressive misuse. I will venture to say that there is not one person in this hall (however riotous his sense of justice may be) who is not prepared to defend some position he holds upon the ground of expediency. I have not heard the vote claimed for minors. I defy anyone to defend the non-enfranchisement of a young man of twenty, of a foreigner, or of a pauper, upon any

other ground than that of expediency. The respective arguments of adolescence, of nativity, and of poverty, are expediency pleas, and none other.¹

As it is a favourite declaration on the part of members of the Woman Suffrage Society that women are placed in the same political category as paupers, criminals, and idiots, I must emphatically repudiate any such interpretation being placed on the illustration I have just given, the object of which is merely to show that Society determines the Suffrage upon the ground of expediency, that is to say, of fitness.² Women are

¹ A writer in the *Englishwoman's Review* for January last combats the above remarks in the following manner: "To our mind it is a question of right that every person shall have during his or her life a chance of self government. A minor can become of age, a foreigner can be naturalised, a pauper may become a man of substance, a criminal may reform" (it should, perhaps, be added here, "A wife may become a widow" in anticipation of proposed law), "an agricultural labourer can emigrate to a town; it is in the possible future of all of these to become voters—only women have the franchise put out of their reach for life." The "chance of self-government" here spoken of is clearly a fiction, and a fiction invented for the occasion. If the "right" exists, the pauper may object that the chance of his becoming a "man of substance" is too remote to satisfy it. It is evident that the writer refuses the vote to the pauper upon the same ground of expediency as I do.

² See Appendix III. for American opinion on the Expediency of Woman Suffrage.

excluded for a number of reasons, which I shall consider later; but they are excluded, as they are excluded from the army—without contempt.

Leaving this I may say that even if I did concede the right to vote which is claimed, I should still be entitled to protest against the enfranchisement of a particular section of women whose position renders them peculiarly subject to reactionary tendencies, and might demand as a set-off the simultaneous enfranchisement of the wives of town bootmakers.

Certainly the ladies theory is a highly convenient one. They consider themselves entitled to dwell as fully as they please upon the beneficent changes which will result from the enlightened vote of single women. *They* may proclaim the advantage. I am to be debarred from showing the disadvantage—they may affirm that women will vote right; if I suggest that they may vote wrong, they indignantly exclaim "Is it possible that a Liberal can desire to constrain the liberty of the voter!"

The Woman Suffrage advocates generally commence their charge by stating a number of evils and oppressive laws from which women suffer, and which I desire to see abolished as heartily as they do—*then*, with an amazing inconsequence, they produce the single-woman vote as a remedy!

It is assumed that with this vote the evils will commence to disappear, that it will correct bad laws, and abolish the existing legal disabilities. "Ten years after women become voters," says one sanguine lady, "there will be some erasures in the Statute Book." This is just exactly what I deny—namely, that there will be some erasures favourable to women. The single-woman vote will, in my opinion, confirm the bad laws, and maintain the very restrictions that we desire to be rid of.

The evils referred to are due to other causes than that of the non-enfranchisement of single or other women. They are largely due to the intolerance and wilful ignorance of women themselves; they are partly owing to what women have made of men.¹ As far as the evils can be traced to political representation they are due to an Electoral system which (among other defects) is antagonistic to the representation of ideas upon

¹ "It is an undeniable truth that women ought to be infinitely better educated than they are, taught juster methods of reasoning, and a greater regard for facts. But when women rage passionately against the injustice of their own ignorance, they never seem to remember that it is they themselves who have so willed it. It is not the fathers who choose the schools for their daughters. Whatever girls' schools may have been, women alone have made and ordered them. It is women who mould and

National subjects. There are plenty of ideas in the country favourable to progress for both men and women, but the means of representing them in Parliament is limited. It is the tendency of this system to elect members upon personal considerations, and local interests. Electors do not vote in virtue of themselves, but in virtue of a restricted locality, a method which breaks up association in the interest of the nation at large. They find, therefore, in too many instances, that the great privilege of the franchise gives them the opportunity, once in seven years—sometimes once in three years—of supporting one of two parish opinions, viz.: whether the vote shall be given to that well-known Conservative Tweedledum, who has always lived among them, or whether it shall be bestowed upon Tweedledee, who is Liberal to everything and in favour of nothing.

There is one favourite argument I must refer

regulate the lives of women; and if the answer is, Mothers make their girls what men desire them to be, is there not a counter reply, Are not all men the sons of women? The miserable thing called a polite education has been, and is emphatically the work of woman; that more miserable thing, a fine lady, is still more emphatically her work and creation."—"Woman's Place in Nature and Society;" an article by Mrs. Lynn Linton, in *Belgravia*, May, 1876.

to before passing to the consideration of True Woman Suffrage. It is founded on the notion that representation is the correlative of taxation. This one of those popular formulas which has no foundation in fact.

It is a mere phrase; women make themselves supremely ridiculous when they mimic Hampden, by refusing to pay taxes and allowing their spoons to be sold. *All* people are taxed and few people are represented. Lodgers of all kinds and classes, married men, married women, adults, minors and the entire peasantry, are taxed without representation.¹ There are in England and Wales some 12,000,000 adults who pay taxes, and of these 12,000,000 people, only two million (I speak in round numbers), have votes, that is to say, are nominally represented—and then, as an amazing climax of our Constitution, a minority of these

¹ "Because we are taxed we are not therefore entitled to vote. If we were, a minor who pays taxes is unjustly deprived of the franchise. Our taxes pay for the protection of our persons and property, and the benefit of Society."—Letter in *Index*.

"It is seen that the property of a woman is taxed, and that she is not allowed to vote: it is forgotten that the property of the Corporation, the minor, the non-resident, is taxed under the same circumstances. Taxes are assessed upon property with no reference to the owner. If it be urged that the women whose

electors return the majority in the House of Commons! so that less than one million people have veritable representation. If you want an anomaly to wax indignant over—here is one! Here is an answer to those who assert that public opinion will not brook the anomaly of Woman Suffrage—minus wives!

If this movement makes way, it is because the Nation slumbers. We live at a period which all patriotic men must contemplate with some sorrow. In the powerful press—I do not refer to the honourable course of the subterranean unheeded Democratic press—there is a conspiracy of silence in regard to all great Domestic Questions. I measure a question by the number of people it affects. When meetings are held upon really important questions, such as the Agricultural Labourer question, the Land question, the Electoral Reform

property is assessed for 100 or 1000 dollars ought for that reason to be allowed to vote, it may with equal propriety be maintained that a Corporation that pays one half the tax of the town, as in many instances they do, ought to be allowed more than one vote. . . . *The proposed change is opposed to the fundamental principle of Republican Government—namely, persons, not property, constitute the basis of representation; and property, not persons, is the basis of taxation.*"—"Woman and Politics;" an Essay read by Rev. E. S. Elder, before the Chestnut Street Club, Boston, U. S.

or State Church questions, they are disregarded, or are treated as minor questions, while questions that are really minor—such as administrative blunders or subjects that are sensational—are converted into great ones. I observed not long since that a leading journal which knows what kind of literary ware best suits the “largest circulation,” gave nine columns to the details of a murder, and not one inch to the report of a great political meeting at Sheffield, where a man of Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN’S mark attended and made one of his ablest speeches. Ambitious ministers study silence also. No Statesman dare, under our parochial system of election, express an honest conviction upon a People of England’s question; and the safest seat in Parliament is held by the man who has not yet committed himself to “yea” or to “nay” upon a serious political issue. That honest Conservative, Mr. THOMAS COLLINS, said, in his evidence before the Commission appointed to enquire into corrupt practices, that when he went to Boston as a candidate, he was told that if he wanted to secure the seat he must be careful to avoid politics! What a comment on the power of the non-political class! What an illustration of public apathy and insensibility to national affairs! It is not surprising that at such a time as this a

Counterfeit Image of Progress should appear on the lifeless political scene¹ and receive a certain amount of applause.²

¹ The Eastern Question has arisen since this passage was first prepared, and it may be said that the political scene is no longer “lifeless.” But the passage has reference only to domestic questions. It would be strange, indeed, if the horrors which have been committed in the East, and the danger with which we are threatened of having to embark upon an unjust war did not cause some national perturbation.

² A lady asked, upon the first occasion of my giving this lecture, how I reconciled my opinion of the smallness of the measure before the public with the magnitude I appear to attach to it. This is easily explained. It is small when compared with the principle it professes to represent, but looked at in its proper light as a property representation measure, it is large by reason of its delusive and class character, and by the effect it may produce in close political contests.

PART II.
TRUE WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

And now I will offer some remarks upon the question of True Woman Suffrage, no proposal for which has ever been placed before the country. I must decline to consider any demand for Woman Suffrage as other than counterfeit which does not include wives in the proposed enfranchisement; and I would warn you here—as a part of both questions—against the possible effect of a favourite metaphor which is used by the advocates of the measure I have discussed. They call it—that is to say a few of them do, those who address the ingenuous Radical—the “thin end of the wedge:”¹ now I wish to impress on you that if by the “wedge” is meant genuine Woman Suffrage, this implement does not enter at all: indeed if we must have metaphor (though I think metaphor often misleads) the wedge is

¹ “The thin end of the wedge of justice will be inserted in our Constitution, at any rate, by Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. Once recognize the truth that women should not be disfranchised by sex, and the rest will follow.”—*Examiner*, January 4th, 1873.

not put to its proper function: it is converted into a hammer to weld and strengthen the resisting medium.

The Question of True Woman Suffrage I approach with a different feeling to that with which I regard the other proposal. Generous sentiment inclines to it. I always bear in mind that Mr. MILL advocated Woman Suffrage in that noble book of his the "Subjection of Women." What man with mind is there who will not sympathize with Mr. MILL in his desire to elevate women and to give them strong minds?—for strong minds not less than feminine grace are precious in women. The more women there are who interest themselves in politics, the better it will be for all of us. Who is there that does not feel that until women share the best and most difficult aspirations of men the burden on the latter is double, and that

"A dreary Sea now flows between."

But the question over which there may be difference of opinion is as to the *means* of elevating women. Mr. MILL's eloquent book seems to me more powerful as a plea for the alteration of the Marriage Law, for the removal of legal disabilities, and for throwing open all vocations and occupations, than it is powerful as a plea for political

power. And remember this—*his whole argument is founded on the position of Wives*. I think he exaggerates the slavery of their position: as when he speaks of each wife living "under the very eye of her master in a chronic state of bribery and intimidation combined," or when he describes her as "the actual bond-servant of her husband; no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called." There are not a few husbands who—notwithstanding legal obligations—could tell a different tale. Marriage is as often slavery to the man as it is to the woman. Speaking broadly, it may be said, that while a woman gains her independence by marriage a man loses it, and as far as I can observe, no amount of Voting Power enables him to recover it. I find it very difficult to reconcile Mr. MILL's confidence in the vote as an instrument of redress, with statements he makes of the dependence of women on men, and the improbability he thereby suggests of their making an independent use of it. At page 46, he says, that "the greater part of what women write about women is mere sycophancy to men;" also that the majority of the women of any class are not likely to differ in political opinion from the majority of the men of the same class. Is it then likely—as he asserts—that they will strike out an

independent line upon a question in which the interests of women, as such, are involved? Can you fancy many women "tampering," as it would be called, with the Marriage Law, or—considering their alleged sycophancy to men—supporting a programme of Women's Rights, however just such a programme might be?

My point of view in this question is that of regarding women in their normal relation to men; that is to say, the position towards men which the majority of them occupy. I hold the theory to be erroneous which treats them as a class apart from, or existing independently of, men. Now I trust I shall not be misunderstood. I do not say that women should not have their independent individual existence as far as they can create it. There are a number of women entitled to our highest esteem, whose lives are entirely separate from the lives of men. But we cannot, and ought not, to judge the whole case of the sex from a consideration of their exceptional position; neither should we impose duties and privileges on them which are not common to all women.

Again, as we should not argue the case upon a consideration of the exceptional position of certain women, neither should we argue it upon the exceptional qualities of superior women. Yet this is a very common practice. Certain dis-

tinguished women are compared with ordinary or inferior men, and the average equality of the sexes is supposed to be established. It may be as well to note, on our way, that although women of genius are constantly quoted to attest the mental calibre of their sex, these eminent ladies manifest a remarkable indifference to the question of Woman Suffrage.

Then Mr. MILL quotes certain people who are distinguished by position—Queens and Princesses—who are supposed to have exhibited considerable talent for government; but the fact is that we *know nothing* of royal personages. If they commit error it is concealed from our vulgar knowledge. The King "can do no wrong" is a constitutional maxim. There is so much glamour thrown upon their proceedings that they are almost fictitious personages. Men require under a Monarchy ornamental persons at the head of the State, and a woman will serve this purpose better than a man, for her weakness and sex appeal to the sentiment of chivalry, and by this means obtain support and forbearance. If, however we are to go off upon this false issue and form judgment from the conduct of women brought up, for the political purpose of men, under the artificial conditions of royalty, I should like you to compare the opinion of Mr. GOLDWIN

SMITH on this subject¹ with that of Mr. MILL. But the question is really beside the main issue: this is not—"Who is to impersonate or to image the Governing Power?" but "*From whom is it to be derived?*"

To vote means to govern, that is to say theoretically: of course under our Constitution and Electoral System the real power of voting is slight. But the theory is that the voters elect the Government: and it is with this object that the vote is claimed; it is a means to governing the nation.

This raises the question whether there is or there is not a *natural* province for women as there is a natural province for men. I am quite aware that in using this term "natural" it may give rise to a little feeling of triumph on the part of some of my adversaries. They will say "Here is the old plea of every oppressor," and MILL's inquiry will be remembered as to whether there was ever any dominion which did not appear "natural" to those who possessed it?—whether the dominion of the white man over the black was not alleged to be "natural?" &c. &c. But because a word has been misused it does not follow that it has no significance. No one will

¹ *Macmillan's Magazine*, June 1875. See Appendix iv.

gainsay me if I assert that it is "natural" (according to our present definition of natural) a man should protect a woman in the presence of danger, that it is "natural" he should serve as a soldier in war; *nor* on the other hand, if I said that it is "natural" a wife should bear a child, and that it is "natural" women should depend on the men who love them. It is not my fault—though it may be my misfortune—that I am compelled to use arguments and words which have been perverted to justify oppression and wrong doing. Reasons may be applicable in one case which are not so in another. Good government and bad government may be defended in precisely the same words. I dwell upon this because the following retort appears to be regarded by so many people as conclusive. "If you deny the claim in one case I do not see how you can concede it in another," it is said, when the two cases are entirely different; each must be judged upon its own merits. I am never deterred from acquiescing in a right because an unreasonable claim may be founded upon it. If it be asked—who is to decide as to the difference of case? I can only answer—Clearness of mind and an improved Public Opinion.

I beg, therefore, you will dismiss from your mind any prejudice which may have been created

by the misuse of words. When I say "natural," I do not mean "usual;" I mean natural in the sense of conforming to a known invariable relation between persons or things.

Defined thus, I do not shrink from asserting that women have a natural province, and that the exercise of political power or government of the nation is inconsistent with it. MILL says at page 38, "What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing." It depends upon who is speaking, MILL's view in this matter appears to be ROUSSEAU'S, it is represented in the doctrine of the Fall of Man. Whatever is bad results from art and civilization; whatever is good belongs to nature—so back to nature: and what do we find there? the men fighting and the women treated as chattel. "Nature" appears to place women entirely at the mercy of men. Their independence is an artificial product: it is the outcome of civilization, and the growth of sentiment, but we shall err in supposing that there are no natural limits to such independence.

We cannot make women the equal of men in male strength; and there are certain male duties which result from this strength. Mr. GOLDWIN SMITH truly says, that "the law, after all, though the fact may be rough and unwelcome, rests at bottom on the force of the

community, and the force of the community is male. No woman can imagine that her sex can execute, or in case of rebellion re-assert the law; for that they must look entirely to men," and he remarks:—

"In France, it is morally certain, that at the present moment if the votes were given to the women, the first result would be the restoration to power of the Bourbons, with their reactionary priesthood, and the destruction of all that has been gained by the national agonies of the last century. But would the men submit?"

This passage from Mr. GOLDWIN SMITH forcibly illustrates the necessity of the voting power corresponding with the real strength of the nation. Rebellions occur sometimes under male legislation. Peoples will submit to much vexatious legislation, rather than resort to rebellion; but when great questions are at issue, and there is national excitement, they will not submit to an oppressive edict if they consider they are strong enough to resist it: the knowledge, or even the suspicion, that such law is enacted by the vote of women supplementing that of a minority of men would be sufficient to provoke rebellion.¹ I trust that this grave point will be considered by my adversaries.

¹ As in the discussion which took place on this point there was some misunderstanding, and it was assumed that I proposed the

As I am very anxious that there should be an exact understanding upon the relative positions occupied by myself and opponents upon this question of Physical Force, I will quote one or two passages from the replies given by the latter, and will give them the benefit of their strongest points.

The writer in the *Englishwoman's Review* says, in reviewing my lecture, "Is moral force of no value unless backed up by physical force? Are we to go back to the policy of savage times, when might was the only right to frame our code?" Miss FENWICK MILLER exclaims, "Since the

absurdity that all women would be found voting on one side and all men upon the other, I will give an illustration of my meaning. Let us imagine that in France under a law of universal male and female suffrage there are some 22,000,000 votes equally divided between the two sexes. A Plebiscité is taken as to whether a Democratic Republic or a Roman Catholic Monarchy shall be established. Nineteen million votes are polled. They are disposed in round numbers in the following not improbable manner :—

FOR THE REPUBLIC.	FOR THE MONARCHY.
7,000,000 Male.	4,000,000 Male.
3,000,000 Female.	7,000,000 Female.
<u>10,000,000</u> Total.	<u>11,000,000</u> Total.

The majority in favour of the Monarchy would thus be 1,000,000. But would a Monarchy thus established rest on a solid basis?

days of Rob Roy . . . such an opinion as this argument implies of the rights of Brute Strength has never been enunciated."

I must ask you here to disregard mere declamation about the "savage times" and "Brute Strength" which is indulged in for the purpose of giving an odious character to an agency which, as Society is composed, is indispensable. It is very easy to sneer at what Mr. MILL calls the "law of the strong," and the sneer is perhaps excusable when we consider how often it has been unjustly imposed and glorified by Carlylean hero worshippers irrespective of the cause it upheld, but the law of the strong settles some things wisely. The independence of nations has been achieved and is preserved by means of it. Good laws result from strength as much as bad laws.

Does this involve the absurdity of advocating "Brute Strength" as divorced from mind? Certainly not. Brute strength built the houses we live in, and it arrests the criminal, but there is mind to determine its exercise. What does this show? Clearly that beneficial power is derived from the combination of reason with strength.

Miss LYDIA BECKER in her pamphlet on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, produces an illustration as follows :—

"If it were thought expedient to invest women with equal property rights with men, and with the electoral franchise, the law would be as competent to secure their rights to women—notwithstanding any inferiority in physical power—as it is to secure the property rights of infants who are infinitely weaker than women, but who are in this respect treated by the law as the equals of the strongest men."

My comment on this is that the infants are not protected by *infant made law*. The law to be efficient and to command respect—especially at a national crisis—must be male made.

I am anxious that women should have equal property rights and equal independence with men, but they can never obtain it themselves. I not only concede this equality, but demand it—not from them, however, but for them—by male legislation. I hope at least that there are some among my opponents who will moderate their indignation, and endeavour to comprehend my views. I want all that the most enlightened women ask for. I am as strong a champion for their personal rights as the most devoted daughter of MARY WOLSTONCRAFT can be, but I do not confuse personal right with political or military right. I hold that the personal right to be equal in the eye of the law, and to obtain redress for the wrong committed by men, does not involve the political right, and that the exercise of the latter will be damaging to the former. It

requires a woman of masculine thought to demand in its full meaning personal and equal rights for women; now I believe that from the majority of women you will only get what is commonly known as feminine thought. I form my judgment upon observation of the common characteristics of women. I decline to decide this question upon an inference drawn from their exceptional characteristics.¹ It will be admitted that one common characteristic of the sex is timidity—timidity mental, not less than physical. During one of the discussions that followed the lecture, one gentleman turned with some impatience, if not anger, upon a previous speaker, who

¹ Mill's error on this point has been adopted by all his disciples. There can be no doubt but that he formed his idea of women generally from a consideration of his wife's peculiar character: in fact, in an unconscious manner he admits as much, for he says that one may infer to an almost laughable extent the character of a man's own wife by the opinion he expresses of women in general. Now although this assertion is absurdly untrue as far as men are concerned who have mixed much in the world, and who have women relatives and friends presenting every variety of character, it is probably quite true as far as Mill's own life and experience went, and he is at least entitled to receive the benefit of his own statement. Mrs. Mill was, from all we can gather, precisely one of those women—endowed with masculine thought—whose character was exceptional to that of her sex.

had suggested that women were not constitutionally fitted for political life, and asked him to state—"What there is in the constitution of a woman to hinder her from exercising a sensible choice between two parliamentary candidates?" If the gentleman interrogated had bethought him of an appropriate reply, he would have said—"Constitutional Timidity."

Rival candidates represent rival ideas: one set of ideas may include a project of political enterprise, that is of reform, which may be very needful either for the nation or for women themselves, but the constitutional mental timidity of women will cause them to dread and oppose it. Of course I do not refer to the ladies who advocate Woman Suffrage. They are endowed with considerable mental energy, an energy that I value highly, though I wish it had taken another direction. My reference is to women as they are commonly characterised.

The *Englishwoman's Review* then varies the illustration and asks if Physical Force is so

"What does our law mean by disfranchising the exponents of physical force, policemen, and soldiers?"

It may be replied that soldiers and policemen are the voluntary exponents of force, and that they acquiesce in the condition of disfranchise-

ment; it is certain that if they did not acquiesce they would rebel. There is no analogy whatsoever between their case and the case I put of the male majority declining to acquiesce in the decree of a feminine majority.

It may be said that it would be very wrong to rebel against a law which has been decreed by Parliament. Nevertheless, insurrections do occur, and men have been called patriotic for resisting an odious law. MILL said that the only justification for insurrection was the probability of success. I maintain that under woman-made law the prospect of this will tend to encourage insurrection.

Women, misled by a purely artificial condition, may declare that they are entitled to play exactly the same part as men—that they will make laws, share government, and enforce obedience to the official declaration of their will. The idle claim may be made, sentimentalists may applaud it, and party politicians may, during a sickly period, carry it into law. But, inevitably, whenever the real strain comes, under the flowing tide of energy and thought, and men are suddenly called upon to submit to an artificial yoke, not all the invocations of justice in the world, or the wildest rhapsodies over abstract right will lend strength to the brittle toy. The relative position of men and women will be re-asserted in the midst of confusion, and

society will learn that it can only advance under certain fixed unalterable conditions.

The Physical weakness of women and their dependence on men is a reason why female government should not prevail over male government as it might well do if all women had votes: it is also a reason—though not generally regarded as a degrading reason—why women are excluded from the Army, Navy, and Police. If we argued, after the fashion of the lady suffragists, from the exceptional women, this reason would not hold. Sir ROBERT ANSTRUTHER, M.P., while presiding over a Woman Suffrage meeting in Hanover Square two years ago, was considered to have made a successful retort to the physical strength argument by saying that he could produce a Scotch fish woman who would walk the wind out of me in five minutes.

I will make him a present of the following case, which I cut out, not long since, from a Northern paper.

“ In the Dundee Police Court, on Saturday, two women, Gordon Stewart and Elizabeth Melville, mill-workers, were fined twenty shillings or twenty days, for fighting with each other in a field, on Thursday week. After both had got into boxing trim, the fight was conducted according to the etiquette of pugilistic science, and was witnessed by a crowd of females. There were three tough rounds, in which Melville was severely punished and latterly rendered insensible.”

We are told of the *brand* of Electoral incapacity; but since women can fight so well it might be argued—why should they be humiliated with the brand of military incapacity? Yet we may say—without being accused of dogma or of invoking “the law of the strong”—that military service is inconsistent with the natural province of women.

I must endeavour here to clear up a misconception. It is assumed by Woman Suffrage Advocates that we declare women should not vote because they do not serve in the army. This is not so. The object of my reference to the army, navy, &c., is to show that there are certain offices from which women are excluded on account of sex, and without indignity. We must be governed, as it is necessary to repeat *ad nauseam*, by the general characteristics of women: timidity and physical weakness¹ disqualify them as soldiers.

¹ But it is said there are men also who are timid and weak. “ Yet no one proposes to recognize a difference in the personal rights of able-bodied and infirm men.” (Lydia E. Becker—Reply to Fitz James Stephen). The comment on this sally is that men do not lose the privilege of their sex by becoming infirm any more than do the women, who take to pugilism, lose their privilege of sex to be exempt from military service.

Women are under no brand on account of their weakness,—their timidity, and the grace of their natural dependence—or they are under the brand of nature—if to be a woman is a brand. And I can quite understand that in some cases sex may be felt in a woman with honorable shame and regret: that is, when a woman possesses a masculine and vigorous mind with all sorts of capacities, and with an intellect far surpassing that of ordinary men. It is in her favour and our interest that I occupy the paradoxical position as some regard it, of objecting less to the woman vote than to the admission of women to Parliament. I know one or two women now whom I would gladly accept as my representatives in the House of Commons. It is women of this sort who very naturally repudiate dependence on men; but we must not, as I have urged before, commit the blunder of arguing the case of women on consideration of the exceptional qualities possessed by a few, nor suppose that these qualities can, by means of political enfranchisement, be made characteristic of women in general. Let us now consider how far the natural character of women fits them to enter public life and give weighty decisions. I think it will be admitted that very few of them perceive that there is any connection at all between

private and public life. Their domesticity has its drawback. They care only for that which is near them, for the actual which is within touch. The waves which come in from outer life and affect domestic circumstances, which indeed create and destroy them, they mostly ignore. Of course, I speak of average women. The position I am placed in of having, apparently, to draw up an indictment against the sex, is an extremely disagreeable one. I would rather dilate upon their private worth, but as it is proposed to confide the national destiny into their hands, it is necessary to discuss seriously their character and disposition for public life. If, then, we take women in the mass, we shall find that they exaggerate the worst characteristic of the English people, namely, a failure to appreciate the effect of indirect cause. I will illustrate my meaning. If we see a shot fired at us, it is easy to attribute the discharge to a gun; but it would be folly to blame the gun, we should consider who fired it, and the motives that prompted the hostility. Women, as a rule, can only perceive the gun, that is to say, the nearest visible cause of evil. They would not knowingly harm a fly, especially *one that is in the room*; yet, by means of their sympathy and influence, they contribute powerfully to the indirect causes of human suffering and

massacre. They, more than others, are responsible for those

"Specious names learn't in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour,"

which sanctify the sword, and send men to kill each other. They hate war and adore the army. They will wring their hands over the battle field—their's to bestow the glory and to applaud the barbaric pomp and glittering pageantry which excite men to conflict. Their's the mission to teach children that other peoples are inferior and should be held in subjection, and when they have it, their's will be the vote for naval and military expenditure.

They, more than others, "pity the plumage and forget the dying bird." They grieve over poverty, yet rebuke the innovator who attempts to deal with its ancient causes. He may disturb the "plumage." They desire to be good, and are good, often are far better than men, but they do not desire to think, failing to realize that

"Evil is wrought by want of Thought
As well as by want of heart."

Those who think unorthodox, that is, unusual thought, they believe to be wicked. Wise thought must have some pomp and outward circumstance.

Then they turn instinctively from all initiative movement. Even superior women rarely have sympathy with the struggling principles which determine the life of a nation. They are only interested in public affairs within the limits of the Parish, or in the cause blazoned round the land. They were not to be counted among the active supporters of the National Education League, but under the advice of the Clergy are warm supporters of Denominationalism in their respective parishes: they did not send us a single half-crown in support of Mr. MILL'S Land Tenure Reform scheme, neither have they given much countenance (except the women who were concerned with the men) to the Labourers' cause, or to workmen's independent movements.¹

They are weak likewise in this way, they care more for persons than for ideas. I say weak, meaning weak for public life: for this very weakness occasions the regard that men prize, it may be the strength of their womanhood, the indis-

¹ Miss Fenwick Miller, in reply to this passage, asks me if I have never heard of Madame Roland and Charlotte Corday. But these women were the eccentricities of their sex; the first a noble one, and the latter, let us hope, a very rare one; a more treacherous deed than the one which lifted Charlotte Corday to fame it is almost impossible to conceive.

pensable condition of their domesticity and home help. But the quality is weak as far as the public good is concerned; and one bad result is that they love to have power personified, and are in consequence ardent supporters of Kings and Princes, Popes and Bishops.

I know the theory that accounts for all this. It is said these defects arise from a system of repression. Enlarge women's minds by giving them public responsibility and public interests: they will soon develop public spirit and public courage. This is what I doubt. Much of the timidity of women is due to their physical organization, and the narrowness of their outlook, the confinement of their life, to an original instinct. What they are is partly the result of primitive type, partly the result of what Mr. HERBERT SPENCER calls those "vague and deep combinations organized in barbarous times."

The extent to which the vote is likely to develop a sense of responsibility is much exaggerated. The direct power of the single vote is felt by the individual to be so infinitesimal, the corrupt or social influences which counteract it are so enormous, the issues it determines are so apparently trivial, that even persons of high public spirit are apt to become callous. Women

with that passion for visible effect to which I have referred will fail to be impressed with its real importance. The theory of the educational value of the vote seems to me to be the illusion of those who have small practical acquaintance with the real men and women who compose Society. Surely the experiment of enfranchising all women is somewhat vast, somewhat rash, upon this slender speculation. Its only chance of success lies in the long process of time and in the lapse of a sufficient number of generations to transform the nature of women and create the artificial stock, and in the mean time!

"It hath not much
Consoled the race of mastodons to know
Before they went to fossil, that anon
Their place should quicken with the elephant;
They were not elephants, but mastodons."

And so are we living men of *these* generations; let us at least plead for our children and for those who follow them, if we may not plead for ourselves. It is right we should live for posterity; but we are not entitled to gamble away our heritage upon the mere chance of a remote benefit. And if the experiment does not succeed! If the total effect of the Woman Vote turns out so oppressive that it becomes insupportable to the majority of men, remember that nothing less

than an insurrection will suffice to withdraw the vote. Professor CAIRNES, in his reply to Mr. GOLDWIN SMITH, suggests that at a crisis, if free institutions were likely to be jeopardised by the Woman Vote, the appeals of husbands, fathers, and brothers would induce a sufficient number of women to abstain from voting; that is to say, we are to surrender the power of suppressing free institutions into the hands of women (who do not want it!) in order to entreat them not to exercise it when political responsibility is put to its highest test.¹

There is another argument I may use. It is that political government by women conflicts with the ideal relation of man and woman. This ideal relation may be rarely fulfilled; men and women are trained to miss it; formalities, custom, and a bad marriage law, with social penalties that encourage hypocrisy, all conspire to make

¹ As I have been accused of mis-representing Professor Cairnes, in the above passage, I will give his exact words as they appear in Macmillan's Magazine for September, 1874. Mr. Goldwin Smith had said that "Female Suffrage would give a vast increase of power to the Clergy." Professor Cairnes, after remarking that he is "quite unable to discover what the grounds are for such a supposition" proceeds thus: "Even if we were to make the extravagant supposition, that the Clergy are to a man in favour of personal government and absolutism," (it may

true union rare; but nevertheless I think that all reform likely to alter the relation of the sexes should be considered with this ideal steadily in view; women going to the poll to govern men, to act as an opposing class (the whole theory of the value of the vote rests upon the supposition that they will oppose male legislation), this picture conflicts with the ideal relation.

Not one wife out of fifty wants to go to the poll whether she attains the ideal relation or not: the majority of wives are either indifferent or hostile to the vote. I do not refer merely to the thoughtless, I refer to the opinion of the most thoughtful of wives. I fancy I can hear some one say, "Slaves never wish to be free," but if they are slaves, does the vote give them freedom? The analogy is a forced one. Freedom in the case of Slaves means release from ownership. In the case of women, according to Mr. MILL,

be remarked in parenthesis that the extravagant supposition about the clergy "to a man" was Professor Cairnes' and not Mr. Goldwin Smith's) "*there would still be husbands, fathers, and brothers, whose appeals on behalf of free government would not surely pass altogether unheeded. Is it being over sanguine to assume that at the worst a sufficient number of women would be kept back from the polls to leave the victory with the cause that is 'characteristically male.'*"

marriage constitutes the so-called slavery, and this is to remain. Since they continue slaves, how can they be expected to vote for freedom? According to the premiss they will insist upon shackles for themselves while possessed of the power of forging shackles for men.

There remains something to be said—as against the alleged Subjection—of the Domination of Women. Previous to giving them a strength entirely foreign to their nature, it may be as well to consider whether their natural influence is not already excessive, and whether their feminine power requires to be supplemented by artificial or masculine power. I am aware that in the public treatment of this question, it is the fashion to ignore entirely the sex relation and influence; still I do not think we shall come to a wise decision unless we bear vividly in mind the potent force, derived from sex attraction, which is perpetually at work, whether we approve of it or not, establishing the Domination of women. How much of the World's working power is not due to Woman motive? It may be concealed, but there it is supplying the fuel to men's energy. Women may disclaim the desire for homage, they may caricature it as constituting them the "puppets of a dream," but they may just as well attempt to alter the law of gravitation as endeavour to alter their own mode of

attraction and the corresponding deference of men.¹

The woman who takes an interest in politics, such is her sex influence, exercises far more political power than any man occupying a private position. It is asserted that this is an injurious indirect influence, but the vote will not abolish it; on the contrary, if women are to become more interested in politics by means of the vote, it will make them all the more anxious to exert their influence whether it be described as direct or indirect.

I am quite sure that, whatever may have been my reasoning, I shall have done little to dislodge the intense feeling which some ladies have worked themselves up to on this question of Woman Suffrage. The roots of strong feeling run too deep to be affected by argument. I must, however, protest against the common supposition that strength of feeling affords any indication of the righteousness, wisdom, or ultimate success of a cause. If earnest feeling be the test of truth,

¹ "Surely their influence is strong enough as things are without their direct invasion of the political platform. As wives and mothers, as sisters, friends, and the first woman whom the young man loves, they have immense power over men." "Woman's Place in Nature and Society."

then Roman Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, and Freethinker are equally right. The fire of conviction belongs to each. Yet it is probable that one or the other is entirely mistaken. Of course, intensity of conviction is generally accompanied by so much earnestness of character and rectitude, resulting from fidelity to principle, that one hardly likes to discourage it, and yet we all know—when wedded to error and strong it has been the scourge of mankind. I would entreat ladies to look into history, and note how many movements, great and small, have been lifted into temporary notice, and have produced cases of martyrdom—entirely thrown away—far more heroic than is displayed by the martyrdom of submitting to the sale of silver spoons. MILL truly says, that “It is one of the characteristic prejudices of the reaction of the nineteenth century against the eighteenth, to accord to the unreasoning elements in human nature, the infallibility which the eighteenth century is supposed to have ascribed to the reasoning elements.”

We have some American experience upon Woman enfranchisement, which hardly justifies the sanguine expectations of its supporters here. The experiment is only local in the United States, therefore the evil effect is limited, but the account

I have here taken from an American newspaper¹, favourable to Woman Suffrage, is very suggestive:—

At Wyoming, it seems the Woman advocates not only obtained the vote, but, declaring (with vehement conviction) that only a jury composed of both sexes is capable of rendering a just verdict, they secured to women the privilege of sitting as jurors. Then I read that “After a few trials the system of placing women on the jury was quietly abandoned, and has never since been revived.” The necessary exemptions amounted to nine-tenths of the whole sex. “When a jury consisting of men and women (five of the latter) were long detained and locked up for several hours, the resulting inconvenience was so great that both sexes were heartily sick of the experiment.” Concerning the Suffrage it says:—

“Some complain that the cost of running for office has greatly increased, and as the candidates have to bring out their lady supporters in carriages; but the ladies, in their convention a few weeks since, unanimously resolved against it, declaring themselves ‘as able to walk to the polls as to Church or Market.’ A few fights have resulted from challenging the votes of ladies. The first lady whose vote was challenged at Laramie dropped her ballot, and indulged in a good cry, whereupon her escort sailed in and made it hot for her challenger. After a few fights on

¹ *Index*. Boston, September 9th, 1875; quoted from *The Rocky Mountain News*. See Appendix V.

this subject, challenging ladies was, by common consent, discontinued; and in that particular at least they have the advantage over men. As far as can be known the ladies divide their vote between parties as much as men do; rather more, perhaps, voting for personal friends. To sum up; the opinion of the best informed is that Woman Suffrage in Wyoming, has resulted in making everything just as it was before, *only a little more so.*"

I should tell you that the Woman Suffrage advocated in America is the True Woman Suffrage.

In Massachusetts there are now
 367,236 Male Voters.
 Woman Suffrage will give
 386,848 Female Voters.
 giving the Women a majority of 20,000!

Fortunately, if we may accept the evidence of a Boston gentleman—the Rev. E. S. ELDER—Massachusetts, as well as other parts of New England, remain supremely indifferent to the proposed revolution. He tells us:—

It is not a little remarkable that after the woman suffragists have laboured ably and persistently to convince the women of Massachusetts that they ought to vote, that they are suffering from their political disabilities, that the welfare of the State depends upon their participation in politics,—it is not a little remarkable after so much has been said and done that they still remain unconscious both of their duties and their sufferings. It would seem that if they are wronged, enslaved, they ought to know it for themselves; but if they are still insensible of their

sufferings and wrongs after the persistent iterations and appeals of the advocates of woman's suffrage, it is difficult to foresee what will bring them to their senses.¹

Now this is not the evidence of an opponent of Reform, but of a gentleman who is well known for his liberal views: and his paper was read before a society of advanced thinkers. There are many symptoms that the Woman Suffrage movement in America is commencing to languish. Mr. ABBOT, one of the ablest of its advocates, tells us, in an article published last February,² that an "increasing number of free and thoughtful "minds" contemplate it with apathy, and even fears himself that "if women obtain the ballot by "the exertions of the enlightened few, they will "forthwith use it to destroy the very political ideas "to which they have owed their enfranchisement." This is a pretty strong admission coming from a supporter of the movement.

I will not detain you longer; but before concluding I must refer to the accusation which has been made against me of resisting the Woman Suffrage measure upon what are called "party" grounds. Only superficial, non-political people can be misled by a charge of this sort. Party

¹ "Woman and Politics," quoted previously.

² *Index*, February 1st, 1877.

does not signify to me a collection of men struggling for office: there is little chance of my becoming a Lord of the Admiralty under either Whig or Tory administration. Party signifies to me principle: it means veritable progress: association for the promotion of certain ideas. One of these ideas is assertion of the interests of the poor in the Political and Social Compromise that governs us, in a far broader sense than they are at present recognized as deserving. It is not a popular idea: neither are certain other principles I am stubborn enough to believe in, one of which is, let me say, the utmost practicable emancipation of women. My principles being unpopular, it follows that the association supporting them is by no means powerful. I care little for Party, but I care a great deal for the cause identified with Party. The case stands thus: I want what I believe is likely to benefit mankind, meaning by mankind both sexes. The Single Woman Suffrage party offers me—wrapped in specious phrases—that which I believe to be bad for mankind, and because I say “The advance of the good I believe in will be retarded by the success of this deceptive movement,” I am accused of rejecting it upon “party” grounds, and Mr. AUBERON HERBERT writes to the *Times* to say that I find no difficulty in telling women that I would have

given them the right of voting if they had agreed with my political views, but as they are not sufficiently fortunate to do so I decline to concede it. Now what is the ground of this misrepresentation? Simply that when women make it *part of their claim to vote, that they will contribute enlightened and valuable thought to Parliament*, I express my belief that *the contribution will be, as far as the majority is concerned, of a reverse character*. The accusation of being actuated by “party” considerations is as childish as it is unjust, and it can have no force against one who occupies a position almost *outside* the two great governing parties.

In conclusion, I have a word or two to say upon the subject of progress. I was asked by the Chairman of one of my lectures to consider whether, even supposing the Woman Suffrage Measure to produce the reactionary effect I anticipate, other counteracting forces will not be likely to come into play which will preserve our momentum forward? I am not certain, to begin with, that there is a momentum forward; but if there is, I cannot perceive that this affords any argument for creating a hindrance. I am not a fatalist about progress. Indeed, I regard the belief in insensible inevitable progress—a progress to be obtained without human striving—to be as

pernicious as any old theological belief that sent men striving on the wrong track. It absolves the majority of men from responsibility. There is surely no law to make us wise. I cannot believe it possible that progress will come to a people that does not make constant effort to be worthy of it. Progress of course means improvement. Individual improvement is, to a great extent, the result of individual effort, but it is affected by external circumstances and institutions. National progress means the improvement of these circumstances and institutions for the general benefit, (as for instance by an Education Act or Reform of the Land Tenure system), and must be the result of National effort. I look around and do not observe much sign of this. The men who endeavour to initiate national or political effort—politics being only a means to national effort—are too often ridiculed as theorists or decried as disturbers.

Of course, progress and national greatness must have some common meaning attached to them. There are those who regard France as having been greatest under Louis Quatorze and Napoleon, England as greatest under Pitt, Germany as greatest now. But mere military strength does not represent progress or greatness in my eyes. We may cast a "Woolwich infant"

(an appropriate offspring of the 19th century), launch huge sea monsters, furbish up the deeds of our ancestors and celebrate Balaklava charges. We may, in the exuberance of our wealth, despatch Arctic expeditions to the North, purchase the Egyptian canal, and display gorgeous processions of State pageantry in the East; we may prostrate ourselves, with kneeling elephants, at the feet of Royalty as the symbol of magnificence. Still, this is not progress. History—if there *be* progress, and history expands its stature to a corresponding degree—will push all this splendour and tinsel on one side, and will say, "At this time, what were the numbers and what was the condition of the English poor?" Here is the true test of national well being. Progress must mean moral growth; it must mean the general bettering of human life: less drunkenness, less brutality, less killing—greater susceptibility to ideas, and an uneasy conscience when wrong doing prevails, or when Civilization, as it is called, produces a "Black Country," a joyless landless peasantry, or city squalor.

All that we can say is, that we are surrounded by latent possibilities. If progress is to be evolved it will only be obtained by the exercise of human wisdom—certainly not by such an act of human folly as would be achieved by conceding direct Political Power to women.

APPENDIX.

I.

Mr. Disraeli on Propertied Single Woman Suffrage.

The following letter appeared in 1873:—

“DEAR GORE LANGTON,—I was much honoured by receiving from your hands the Memorial signed by 11,000 women of England, among them some illustrious names, thanking me for my services in attempting to abolish the anomaly that the Parliamentary franchise attached to a household or property qualification, when possessed by a woman, should not be exercised, though in all matters of local government, when similarly qualified, she exercises this right. As I believe this anomaly to be injurious to the best interests of the country, *I trust to see it removed by the wisdom of Parliament.*

“Yours sincerely,

“B. DISRAELI.”

II.

Table showing the relative number of men and women who made requests for special intervention through Moody and Sankey.

Several weeks ago, being struck with the great disparity in the number of requests for prayer made by men as compared with the number of those made by women at the Moody and Sankey Meetings, we began to clip from the daily issues of the *Boston Journal* the successive lists of these requests. Such

lists were not published every day, and latterly seem to be almost discontinued; nevertheless, collating all that came under our notice in the morning *Journal* day after day, we now subjoin a statistical table of no little interest, following the classification of the revivalists themselves, and presenting in convenient form the condensed results of our comparison. We give the number only of those *by* whom, not of those *for* whom, the requests were made, and pass over all cases in which the sex is not indicated:--

TABLE.

Showing the relative number of men and women who made requests for prayer at the Moody and Sankey meetings in Boston, from February 3rd to March 24th, 1877.

DATE.	MEN.					WOMEN.					TOTALS.	
	Fathers.	Sons.	Husbands.	Brothers.	Miscell.	Mothers.	Daughters.	Wives.	Sisters.	Miscell.	Men.	Women.
Feb. 3	2	1		1	2	3		7	5	1	6	16
" 9	1	1			2	13	1	7	9		4	30
" 13	5		3	5	2	35		13	21	2	15	71
" 15	5			5	1	13	1	12	9	1	12	36
" 16	5		1	2	2	25		14	23	2	11	64
" 17	4		1	5	1	16		12	20		11	48
" 20	6			5	3	49		17	24		15	90
" 21	9	2		3	1	46	1	19	26		18	92
" 22	4		3			19	3	7			7	29
" 24	6				3	26	4	14	17	2	9	65
" 26	6	1			1	59	6	30	25	1	6	121
" 28	1					13		10	11		1	34
Mar. 1	4				1	32		15	1		5	45
" 2	5		1			8		8	8		3	24
" 3	1			2		18		22	24		3	64
" 7	9		5	5		37		45	45		19	128
" 8	5		3	5		31		19	21		13	71
" 9	4			2		23		12	16		6	51
" 10	2				1	17	1	9	13		3	40
" 14				4	1	1	1	54	35		5	90
" 17	1			4	3		11	6	17		8	34
" 24	2					21	7	12			2	40
	87	7	24	45	24	515	25	364	371	9	187	1284

"Index," Boston, U.S.

III.

Is Woman Suffrage Expedient?

"A few years ago no one believed more firmly in Woman Suffrage than the writer. But thought and observation have led me to doubt, like many others, whether more evil than good would not be the result. We all know that abstract principles of right cannot be applied in all conditions of society, especially in human governments. What is best in one stage of social evolution is not best in another. Circumstances seem to determine the right or wrong of forms of government and social institutions. Some of our political principles are generalizations, fitted for an ideal state of society, but not adapted either to the apprehension or practice of men and women in a semi-savage condition.

"We say, for instance, that the majority should rule. This is our American principle. But suppose that majority in any part of the country should be Indians; then we make an exception to the principle without any hesitation. But why? Simply because it is expedient. Look at the dilemma in which the administration and the country are placed with this Southern question. It is not a question between Packard and Nichols, Chamberlain and Hampton, but simply of *race* supremacy. The majority in some of those Southern States are unquestionably of the inferior race, just out of a semi-barbarous condition, utterly unfitted to rule; and yet under the

principle referred to, they have an undoubted *right* to rule. Just what might have been expected, therefore, has come to pass; constituted as human nature is, it could not have been otherwise. No white race in the world, saints or sinners, Northerners or Southerners, would willingly submit to it.

“We have no infallible rule, or infallible application of principles, in politics any more than in religion or daily life. Dogmatism, here as elsewhere, is out of the question. Woman Suffrage, therefore, it seems to us, is a subject which must be considered entirely from the stand-point of expediency. To assert that it is right, irrespective of consequences, is simply begging the question, as it would be to assert that it was right for minors or criminals or Indians to vote.

“The expediency of Woman Suffrage we have been led seriously to doubt within the last few years, and mainly for the reasons indicated by some of your correspondents. With the ardour of her feelings and the depth and earnestness of her religious nature, woman is the slave of the Church. We say the slave—not the free, self-reliant, and independent helper, sitting in calm judgment both on creed and priest and sacrament,—simply devoted to the Church because ‘she has been more fully recognized in it than in any other great department of society.’ We wish we could take this view of the matter. But we cannot. We know that the majority of *men* in our churches are poor, pliant tools enough in the hands of

an ambitious and power-loving priesthood. But every one knows that women are a great deal more so.”

The above passages are taken from a letter addressed to the *Index* (April 12th, 1877), by Mr. R. Hassall, of Keokuk, Iowa.

Another correspondent writes as follows:—

“I do profoundly respect human rights, but without more or less surrender of our personal rights, civil government is impossible. It seems hard that an intelligent, educated young man twenty years old is forbidden to vote. But it is the best we can do. He may be better qualified to vote than many men double his age. And of lawful Voters, the wisest man is on a level at the polls with the most ignorant. And after the voting is done, it turns out that nearly one half are practically disfranchised, for the majority have the power, and the minority become as—women.

“Now who can contemplate these and cognate facts, and not see that ideal justice and equality are unattainable in political adjustments? They should be approached as near as possible, all things considered,—in other words, as near as is expedient. I am not afraid of the word. The best form of civil government is an expedient, and the wisest men study expediency all their lives.”

IV.

Mr. Goldwin Smith on Women Rulers.

“Mr. Mill had persuaded himself that great capacity for government had been displayed by

women, and that there was urgent necessity for bringing them into the management of the State. But he can hardly be serious when he cites as an instance of female rule a constitutional queen whose excellence consists in never doing any act of government except under the guidance of her ministers. The queens regnant or consort, before our monarchy became constitutional, who may be said to have wielded power, are the Empress-Queen Matilda, Eleanor the wife of Henry II., Isabella the wife of Edward II., Margaret of Anjou, Mary, Elizabeth, and Henrietta Maria. Not much can be made of this list, when it is considered that both Margaret of Anjou and Henrietta Maria were, by their temper, principal causes of civil war, and that the statesmanship of Elizabeth has totally collapsed between Mr. Froude's first volume and his last, while her feminine relations with Leicester and other favourites have contracted a much more ominous complexion in a political as well as in a moral point of view. On the other hand, it is probable that Eleanor the wife of Edward I., and certain that Caroline the wife of George II., rendered, in a womanly way, high services to the State. Mr. Mill says, from his experience at the India Office, that the queens in India are better than the kings. But the reason is obvious. British protection has suspended the operation of the rude checks on the vices of Indian despots, and a woman brought up in the zenana, though she cannot possibly be a good ruler, may well be better than a hog or a tiger.

Neither the cases of queens, however, nor those of female regents of the Netherlands, to which Mr. Mill gives so strange a turn (as though Charles V. and Philip II. had preferred females on account of their ability to male members of the house), are in point. They all belong to the hereditary system, under which these ladies were called to power by birth or appointment, and surrounded by counsellors from whose policy it is scarcely possible to distinguish that of the sovereign.

Female Sovereigns, as a rule, have not been eminently pacific. It would be difficult to find four contemporary male rulers who made more wars than Catherine the Second of Russia, Maria Theresa, Madame de Pompadour (who ruled France in the name of her lover), and the Termagant, as Carlyle calls her, of Spain. It is widely believed that the late Empress of the French, inspired by her Jesuits, was a principal mover in the attack on Germany. Those who know the Southern States say that the women there are far more ready to renew the civil war than the men. The most effective check on war is, to use the American phrase, that every one should do his own fighting. But this check cannot be applied to women, who will be comparatively irresponsible in voting for war. A woman, in fact, can never be a full citizen in countries where, as in Germany, it is part of a citizen's duty to bear arms."

Macmillan's Magazine, June 1874.

V.

Miss Fenwick Miller was very indignant over this extract—declared it to be an anonymous letter to the *Denver (Co.) News*—and called upon me “publicly to remove the passage altogether” or “to state the place and circumstances in which it appeared.” The passage must stand in its original words; but the authority was always forthcoming. The letter from which the extract is taken appeared in the *Index* of Boston: the date is given in note, p. 59. It is there quoted as taken from the “*Rocky Mountain News*,” not from the “*Golden Age*” was as entered in my first uncorrected proof, a copy of which I lent to Miss Miller. Of course I always intended to look up and verify the quotation previous to final publication. I do not know that the authority of one of these papers is greater than the other: the authority of the passage in my eyes was that Mr. Abbot, Editor of the *Index*, a gentleman whom I know and trust, and who is favourable to Woman Suffrage, had copied the letter into his journal.



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With the author's compliments

A PLEA FOR THE LADIES.

BY

N. J. GOSSAN.

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I LAY no claim to originality in the opinions I have expressed in this Essay: they are, indeed, based on my own sincere convictions, formed after much reflection. I shall be satisfied if this Pamphlet be found to contain a readable summary of the leading arguments advanced in favour of enlarging the sphere of female influence, by removing some of those arbitrary conventional barriers which at present impede the free exercise of the talents and industry of women.

I have to acknowledge my obligations for valuable suggestions to Miss ROBERTSON'S excellent *brochure* on Female Suffrage, and also my indebtedness to many distinguished writers and speakers, of both sexes, on the subjects treated of in the following pages.

A PLEA FOR THE LADIES.

I THINK it well, to prevent any possible misconception of my opinions, by stating at the outset, that I utterly repudiate all sympathy with those extravagant pretensions put forward on behalf of the female sex by some Women's Rights' Advocates in America and elsewhere. While I acknowledge the many hardships often endured by women in the married state, from which men are exempt, I see no feasible means by which such can be remedied, unless by women's exercising greater caution in the choice of their husbands. If men and women were to be free to dissolve at will the marriage partnership I fear that, in the present state of the matrimonial market, women would be the greater sufferers. It would be much easier for a man at fifty to obtain a wife than for a woman at forty to get a husband. Instead of tampering with the bonds of marriage let more care be used before entering into them; and that women should have the liberty, now enjoyed by men, of marrying or not, as they please, it will be necessary that serious modifications be made in regard to their present social and political condition. But I support no claim for the extension of the limits at present assigned to female usefulness which is incompatible with due respect for the sacred laws of morality and religion, and with the dictates of feminine propriety, as commonly understood by Christian nations. Moreover, I freely admit the general relative inferiority, mental and physical, of women as compared with men; but, having conceded so much to those who hold views on this subject different from mine, I contend, nevertheless, that

women are artificially and unjustly debarred from that share in the government of the State, and from the practice of those honourable and lucrative professions, for the proper exercise of which they are in no way disqualified by Nature. I allude to their unfair exclusion from the Parliamentary suffrage, and from callings the engaging in which would be in no respect derogatory to their conventional modesty. Among such may be mentioned those of medical attendants to their own sex and to children, pharmaceutical chemists, conveyancers, mercantile and Civil Service clerks, engineering, office assistants, &c. I would not be in favour of women holding the position of Members of Parliament, nor of their engaging in medical practice among men, nor pleading in courts of law, nor being employed in any other occupation that would be likely to bring them into direct conflict with men, and thereby tend to blunt that delicacy of feeling and manners which is so graceful a characteristic of their sex. If we would treat this important question justly we must discard a vast amount of inherited and acquired prejudice; we must remember that we are now almost in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century; and, especially, we should not forget that we are considering one of the gravest social problems that at present demands solution—the position that women ought to hold in the commonwealth. The gradual elevation of women in the social scale has corresponded with the gradual advance of the world in civilisation.

It is the instinct of the savage to crush woman because she is physically a weaker vessel; it is the instinct of the Christian gentleman to respect woman as a being gifted, as he is, with an immortal soul, endowed with an intellect less robust, possibly, than his own, but compensating for lack of strength by greater delicacy and quickness of apprehension. To the savage the late Mrs. Somerville would have been a mere squaw—a household drudge to minister to his pleasures and his comforts, to be beaten when she failed to satisfy his humours. To the educated man Mrs. Somerville was the brilliant interpreter of the great truths of physical science, the earnest, modest labourer in varied fields of knowledge, the accomplished lady, the gentle-hearted woman. And it is because too

strong a tincture of the instincts of the savage still flavours the views of the civilised man that we hear so frequently from male lips contemptuous expressions of scorn for women who seek to better their condition independently of male aid. In a savage or semi-civilised country a Mrs. Somerville would have been an impossibility. And are not the opinions and usages fostered by civilised male society inimical also to the due cultivation of the female mind? If women were less thought of as the handmaids of men, as beautiful creatures born to the sublime destiny of pleasingly wiling away men's leisure, and obediently ministering to men's wants, and considered more as distinct beings, having a separate and inalienable right to the legitimate enjoyment of such happiness as this world may afford, we should have fewer sarcasms and less denunciation directed against those who claim for women only that to which they are legitimately entitled. And yet the rational advocates of Women's Rights—of whom I claim to be one—ask nothing for women which society has not already conceded to them in some other form. Society shrieks with horror at the proposal to allow women to vote for Members of Parliament, while it loyally acquiesces in the able and benign rule of Queen Victoria; and it readily acknowledges that no male sovereign could be less swayed in the performance of public duties by private bias, could more worthily discharge the obligations appertaining to her exalted station as a constitutional monarch, than does Her Most Gracious Majesty. No doubt Queen Victoria's duties are comparatively light, as she rules through her Ministers, but there was an English Queen who governed as well as reigned. Let the private demerits of Queen Elizabeth have been what they may no sovereign ever held the sceptre of England with a firmer grasp, or more resolutely maintained the honour and interests of the great nation committed to her charge than did the last of the Tudors. There is no Salic Law in Russia. By the failure of heirs male the throne of the mightiest empire on the globe might be occupied by a woman. The monarchy of Russia is not a limited one, fettered by Parliamentary majorities and responsible Ministers. To a woman reigning over the dominions of Russia would be entrusted the absolute government of more than seventy

millions of human beings; to her would be given the nomination of generals to command immense armies, the appointment of judges to administer the laws in all the courts of the empire, the transaction with foreign sovereigns, on terms of complete equality, of the highest international affairs of State. I am drawing no fancy sketch. What sovereign, next to Peter the Great, exercised the most important influence on Russian history? Catherine the Second. And in France, Italy, and other lands women have indirectly wielded great political influence, not always, perhaps, for good, but frequently with the display of distinguished aptitude for the business of State. The Medicis and Antoinette arise to memory among those who exercised indirect, and Isabella of Castille and Maria Theresa of Austria as women who, in a direct manner, powerfully influenced, as sovereign rulers, human affairs. Turning to the East, we are confronted by Semiramis and many other able female sovereigns. The late Mr. Mill, who enjoyed special facilities for being accurately acquainted with the details of Indian history, states, in his remarkable essay on the "Subjection of Women" that the best governed native states of India have been those with female rulers. Compared with their respective opportunities for manifesting them, I am really inclined to think women endowed with better administrative talents than men; and though the members of the fair sex are conventionally excluded from interference in politics it would seem, judging from their success as independent sovereigns, that they are especially qualified to take part in them. Nor must it be forgotten that women who have successfully ruled states were not selected from amongst the *élite* of their sex by competitive examination. They occupied their thrones by the accident of birth, through the absence of male heirs. Who can say how many distinguished sovereigns we have probably lost by the Salic Law, and the exclusion of females where male heirs exist? Now, if women be fitted, as they have in every age and in many countries shown themselves fitted, to exercise wisely the highest political powers that can be confided to a human being, how can it be logically maintained that they are radically and hopelessly unsuited for the right discharge of the very humblest political function—

that of giving a vote at an election of Members of the Legislature?

And, be it remembered, that this power of voting for Members of the Legislature, which is absolutely denied to women, is in all free countries largely extended to men. In some highly-civilised countries it is granted to every full-grown man, no matter how ignorant, no matter how vicious, if he be not actually a convicted criminal—no matter how destitute of property of any kind, how bereft of any stake in the welfare of the country, if not a public mendicant, he may vote. Though incompetent to form an intelligent opinion on any of the great social or political problems submitted to his decision, without any claim arising from the possession of wealth, intellect, education, or social position—on the sole strength of his sex, a man, in many highly-civilised countries, *e. g.*, in France and the United States, has a vote; and in England the payment of a certain moderate rental, or the possession of a house, gives a man a like privilege. The most besotted rowdy who "loafs" about a New York gin-palace, the most blood-thirsty *ouvrier* of Montmartre, the most stupid man-machine, who, in Manchester or Sheffield, helps to build the fabric of England's manufacturing greatness may, *yea, must*, have a voice in the making of his country's laws; while women of high moral excellence, of wealth, of education, of intellect—our Burdett Coutts and Nightingales, our Martineaus and "George Elliots," women whose goodness of heart has blessed their kind, whose vigour of mind has enlightened it—are classed, forsooth, with children, criminals, paupers, and lunatics. "What," it may be said, "do women want with votes; will not men look after their interests? The possession of a vote is a privilege, and in many cases it is a right, to disqualify from the enjoyment of which is always to impose a stigma of inferiority, and often to inflict a serious wrong; besides, no class can be adequately represented by another. Where interests conflict the represented class will look entirely to itself. In England it has been conclusively shown that material benefits have come to each section of the population in proportion as it has been represented in Parliament. The Reform Act of 1832 conferred special advantages on the middle,

and that of 1867 on the lower, or working class. If women suffer under any disability peculiar to their sex, and apply to Parliament for redress, their claims are shelved *sine die*; they have no votes, and are consequently of no weight in the body politic. Formerly, indeed, there was a direct inducement held out to landlords to dispossess their female tenants, who could never pay them the "compliment" of a vote; and a similar injury to women has frequently been done by the French and American Governments, in dismissing their female *employes*, because they could not aid the party in power with their votes, and supplying their places with males, thus entailing direct pecuniary loss on women; and the cruellest suffering has been inflicted upon mothers in regard to the custody of their children. Male legislators have declared the father to be the sole guardian of his child; so the mother, who has endured the pangs of child-bearing, who has supported her child with her milk through the precarious period of its infancy, is, when that period is passed, debarred by law from all right to property in her offspring, a right bestowed upon her by Nature, and is treated as if she were a hireling nurse. The misery caused to mothers by the iniquitous state of the law in respect to maternal rights in children might, without difficulty, be copiously illustrated. How many artifices have not mothers resorted to, what hardships have they not patiently borne, rather than surrender their children to strangers! Yet, till women are legislatively represented we can hope for no mitigation of such evils. The indifference with which men regard female wrongs is also shown by the length of time that was allowed to elapse before the slightest legal protection was afforded to the earnings of industrious married women, deserted by their husbands. Drunken ruffians were in the habit of swooping down upon the little property accumulated by their wives' industry and self-denial, and then rushing off to gorge their brutal appetites with the proceeds. By dint of great efforts those wrongs have been somewhat lessened, but the laws in reference to the proprietary rights of women are yet far from being satisfactory—women under their operation, are still often subjected to grievous injustice.

Police magistrates and judges have come to regard wife-

beating, and even wife-killing, as almost excusable pastimes. A learned Chief Judge of one of the Irish superior courts all but apologised, a couple of years ago, to a scoundrel who had kicked his wife to death, while she was in an advanced state of pregnancy, because he was obliged to pass upon him a sentence of six months' imprisonment (!!!) And a "gentleman," at a recent assizes in Waterford, who appeared in the dock, adorned with a profusion of jewellery, and was charged with atrociously ill-using his wife—a poor woman of weak mind—by keeping her locked up in a room, bereft of sufficient clothing, and in a condition of indescribable filth, received the heavy penalty of three (!) months' seclusion in the county jail. And while killing a wife was punished with six months' imprisonment, stealing a shoemaker's kit was condemned at the same sessions, and by the same judge, to a penalty of twelve months. In England I know that matters are much worse, and shooting a partridge without a game licence is deemed a more heinous offence than "purring" a wife within an inch of her coffin.

It has been asserted that if women had votes they would throw them into the scale of what is variously described as the Conservative, Reactionary, or Clerical party. Clergymen have votes themselves, and belong, moreover, to various political parties, so that their exercising retrogressive influence over female electors need not be dreaded. The conservative or ballasting influence is not at present over-powerful in the political world; a little increased strength to counterbalance the forces of revolution and disorder would not work badly for the interests of mankind. The religious principle is also much more influential relatively with women than with men. In these days of scepticism a large believing element added to the constituencies would be of incalculable advantage. But, as a rule, in political matters women would act as men do, vote according to the particular views in which they had been brought up, or as personal predilections directed. "But women cannot serve in the army or navy; why, then, should they be allowed to have a voice in the declaration of war, or in voting the taxes to maintain the services of war?"—an argument which, if pressed to its logical conclusion, would exclude

from the franchise members of the Society of Friends, old and sickly men, and others who, from various causes, could not fight; besides, those who argue thus show forgetfulness of one of the soundest principles of political economy, that which affirms the utility of a division of labour. It is more convenient for the merchant and lawyer and agriculturist—and much better for the country—to pay soldiers and sailors to fight for them than to fight themselves. “Giving women the franchise would tend to cause disunion in families; husbands might be Whigs, and wives Tories—as they often are at present—and so an additional element of discord would be introduced into married life.” I attach little importance to this argument. Politics are a subject interesting to most men, and it would give a new zest to married life if men found their wives capable of affording them intelligent sympathy in a pursuit which engrosses so much of male attention. However, I admit that it would be hardly fair to give married men a double vote, as would often happen in practice if married women had votes. I would, therefore, disfranchise wives, or, at least, leave it optional for husbands or wives to vote. The right of female voting would thus be reserved for widows and spinsters of independent means otherwise duly qualified. As the headship of the Christian family is vested in the man, women knowing the conditions of marriage could not reasonably complain that in marrying they had to sacrifice, as men who marry have, some of the personal freedom of single life.

“But the very act of voting and of being canvassed involve a loss of feminine dignity.” Under the old system of open voting this argument might be worth something, but with our present quiet arrangements no possible annoyance could be suffered by the most refined lady; besides, if it were found necessary, voting papers might be permitted to female voters, and thus every difficulty would be obviated. Canvassing, like bribery, treating, and election riots, is happily going out of fashion, and ladies need not be at home for canvassers no more than for other troublesome visitors. Women have in England voted for some years at municipal elections—which are often hotly contested—for poor-law guardians, and latterly for members of school boards, to which they are also eli-

gible to be elected, and I have yet to learn with any evil result. “Politics are outside the sphere of women’s ideas. Women are too personal in their sympathies to be able to comprehend measures, as apart from those who support or oppose them. They are too intolerant in their views to be capable of calmly considering public questions, so that if women got votes we should be prepared for impulsive politics and hasty legislation. Moreover, women are too susceptible to external pressure, and consequently their votes, instead of being the independent emanation of their own convictions, would rather be the coerced or unduly influenced expression of the opinions of others.” Women can hardly be expected to take an interest in that which, from their earliest childhood, has been declared outside the range of their concern. Working men formerly took little interest in politics because, having no votes, they felt themselves as foreigners in their own land; now working men are active, and frequently intelligent, politicians. When women have been elevated into positions, such as sovereigns, which required an active participation in public affairs, they have displayed not only a keen interest but considerable judgment in political matters. Give women votes, and they will soon make it evident that they can understand politics. Besides, politics embrace everything subject to legislation—and how few things are beyond the scope of legislation! Matters of social importance which come home to every household, that average women can comprehend as well as average men, and with which they are equally conversant, are liable to be influenced by legislation—the sanitary condition of towns, the imposition of taxes which impede or promote trade, education, &c., are instances in point. Women manage large landed and chattel properties with, very frequently, more skill and economy than men. They are often prosperous proprietors of large factories and commercial establishments, and are as shrewd in their business dealings as men in similar positions. Women are not unfrequently hotel proprietors. A woman following that calling could give an opinion well worth legislative attention respecting the operations of the Licensing Act. Ought not such a woman to have a vote? A female theatrical manager could intelligently appreciate the

merits of legislative enactments respecting the stage ; and a female landed proprietor could correctly estimate the consequences of a measure of tenant-right ; and if it be said that such women would only think, when voting, of what immediately concerned themselves, and not look beyond the limits of their own private affairs, cannot the same be truly asserted of numbers of male voters ? How has it happened that since Mr. Bruce's Licensing Act so many Liberal publicans have discovered that they ought to be Conservatives ? Again, a widow with children would be able to form a rational opinion with reference to the effects likely to be produced by an Act of Parliament dealing with public education.

I do not assert for women the possession of any greater independence of thought, any acuter faculties of discrimination, than are usually vouchsafed to men. From the objections raised to female voters on the score of intelligence and independence one would be led to imagine that male voters always discharged their electoral duties with unimpeachable discretion, and under the influence of the loftiest motives ; whereas, on the contrary, the bulk of electors vote without much previous reflection, frequently from personal considerations, and, not seldom, in accordance with the views of those they hold in respect. The ignorant will be moved by the educated, the tenant by his landlord, the member of a religious denomination by his clergyman ; but no fair-minded person would maintain that such influence, if free in its action, and not undue in its weight, vitiates, or ought to vitiate, the votes given under its direction. As to women being intolerant and impulsive : the free atmosphere of political discussion would rub away a great deal of their unpractical enthusiasm and narrow-mindedness. But in mature life women are very practical. Young men are often as visionary as young women, yet the male dreamer of twenty is prosaic enough at forty ; and so it would be with women. Besides, responsibility would create caution ; and, in fine, men are often very intolerant and passionate in their views on public affairs, but, finding their excitement useless, they gradually subside into reasoning beings ; and the like would happen with women. Conversing with men on political subjects would, moreover, enlarge women's

range of mental vision, and calm the fervour of their feelings. It is an axiom of free government, that taxation without representation is tyranny. Spinsters and widows, with whom alone I am now concerned, are frequently large contributors to the public funds, yet, except in English municipalities, they have no voice in their distribution ; they are amenable to the laws, yet have no power in the making of them.

"But women exercise much indirect political influence, through their male relatives"—an assertion which is only partially true ; and the influence in question being irresponsible is objectionable. Educated women are expected to be proficient in the knowledge of history—and very often they are, and manifest intense interest in its study—yet, what is history but the politics of yesterday ? Next to their being debarred from all direct participation in the Government of the country, the inability to discuss public affairs, so often found in (otherwise) intelligent and educated women, arises not unfrequently from a factitious ignorance. Men's views of women are still so tinged with sensuousness that graces of person, proficiency in dancing and other physical accomplishments, are deemed of more account in the training of the fair sex than mental culture. And the requirements of the marriage market have, unfortunately, to take precedence of all others in female education. So long as ignorance of politics is deemed by men fashionable for ladies ignorance of politics will be studiously cultivated in the discipline of women. Whether women are capable of attaining the heights of literature, science, and political knowledge that have been reached by men, it is perfectly unnecessary to discuss. The class of women who would be admitted to the franchise would, as a rule, belong to a grade in society whose average female culture would be on a par with the average male culture of the same rank, and a great deal superior to the male culture of a lower grade.

We hear much of the profound learning of men, and of the novel-reading of women ; but the great majority of even educated men read nothing but newspapers. While the trash of novels is vigorously denounced, the trash of newspapers is quietly ignored. As a means of mental improvement the perusal of "Old Mortality," "Middle-

march," or of one of Mr. Trollope's excellent fictions, would be incomparably superior to the perusal of the city article and the police reports. A novel must, indeed, be a very worthless production that fails to convey some useful information or suggest some valuable thoughts. A newspaper is, no doubt, a necessary adjunct to civilisation, but its perusal is, in a great measure, destitute of intellectual benefit. However, a combination of novel and newspaper reading, if moderately practised, would be essentially serviceable to both men and women. The narrow-mindedness of which men complain in their intercourse with women is, as often as not, the product of women's unnatural exclusion from subjects of study interesting to men, and their enforced devotion to pursuits that fit them only to be drawing-room dolls or kitchen drudges. Let the franchise be extended to some women, and all educated women will then acquire a new interest in politics. The arguments used against the extension of the suffrage to women, on account of their intellectual unfitness, are precisely similar to those that were used against the extension of the suffrage to the great mass of the male population. To men the suffrage has proved an educator, on women it will have a like effect. Their keener wit will enliven the ordinary dullness of politics, their warmer feelings and higher moral tone will humanise and purify the struggles of political life.

"Politics would degrade women." They did not degrade female sovereigns; they do not degrade men. Are statesmen less gentlemanly in their manners than doctors and lawyers? The intercourse of educated women with men has ever been found to elevate men. Rough sportsmen have become courteous through the presence of ladies on the hunting field. The recent laudable custom of having ladies at public banquets has checked intemperance and improved the speaking.

"But women have no time for politics." Except Cabinet Ministers, and hardly even them, no persons in the United Kingdom are expected to devote their whole time to politics; indeed, the instincts of our people are opposed to the existence of a class of professional politicians. Merchants and professional men, however eager in their political sympathies, usually manage, while striv-

ing for the public good, not to neglect their private interests. An election is an event of infrequent occurrence, and the very women who would possess votes are precisely those on whom time hangs most heavily. Energies now frittered away in shopping, visiting, and in idle gossip, would be diverted to the public service. Politics are a useful and a liberal branch of knowledge. Taking an interest in their study would lessen in women that excessive domesticity of thought and conversation which bores men, and frequently drives husbands to clubs.

"But women, in large numbers, do not ask for the franchise." The slaves of the Southern States were said to be indifferent to freedom. Many men are careless about the franchise; in fact, one of the liberal professions holds aloof almost entirely from political life. I have heard doctors assert that there is an absolute divorce between politics and medicine. I am unable to assign a rational cause for the fact that doctors rarely vote, and abstain, with few exceptions, entirely from political controversies. We should not, however, dream of disfranchising a man on the ground of his being a doctor. There are many women anxious for votes, and is it just that they should be made suffer for the apathy of their sisters?

"But if once you let women have the franchise what is to prevent their becoming Members of Parliament, Ministers of State, and so forth?" Nothing, except the will of the country. If numerous constituencies desired to be represented by women, if it were clearly shown that some tangible benefit would be procured by the presence of women in the House of Commons, I could see nothing more improper in their being Members of Parliament than in their having seats on school-boards. But no necessity at present exists for women's entering Parliament; no constituencies seek to have women as their representatives, nor have women in this country expressed any desire for the possession of Senatorial honours. Women in England enjoy the municipal franchise, yet they have not asked to be elected members of municipal councils. Clergymen in orders, although eligible for the electoral roll, are not permitted to enter Parliament. The talents requisite for giving a wise vote and becoming a useful legislator are not identical. Nothing can be more

unfair—though few things are more common—than to refuse to comply with a just request, lest compliance may be followed by further demands not so reasonable. The thin-end-of-the-wedge argument has ever been a favourite one with the bigoted opponents of progressive legislation. Every foe of just concession, every adherent of antiquated abuses, has resisted change, on the ground that reform meant revolution—that you could not alter without destroying. When women ask to be admitted to Parliament it will be quite time enough to discuss the justice and expediency of granting their claims.

There is one argument often advanced against giving women a political existence, or a position of any kind, outside the home circle, of which—although it has often been answered before—I may take some notice. It is said that the exclusion of women from political life, and from every form of intellectual activity, implies on the part of men a deep reverence for the female sex. Women are too good and too pure to be mixed up with the struggles of this wicked world. This view of the matter is most hypocritical. While women may not be doctors they may be nurses; while they may not engage in legal practice they may scrub legal offices. It would be grossly unbecoming in them to drive to a polling-booth and quietly record their votes; but it is quite right and proper, if their means be scanty, to trudge through slush, and under rain or snow, as visiting governesses. It is not through respect, but through contempt, that women are debarred from every pursuit bestowing wealth and honour—for, if men could, they would prevent women from obtaining artistic or literary employment—and are confined exclusively to those callings which are so laborious and so ill-paid that men scorn to engage in them. It is in distributing honours and emoluments that we make a difference between the sexes. When certain men—judges, for example—are excluded from political life—but judges may vote at Parliamentary elections—they are recompensed for the privation by having positions of high dignity, with handsome stipends attached. No such compensation is given to women. No slur is cast upon the intellectual attainments of men by depriving individual males of the franchise, whereas a gross affront is offered

to the mental qualifications of all women by withholding the suffrage from the whole female sex. So far from detracting from women's dignity, you add to it by giving them a place in the world of politics and an interest in the social and political welfare of their fellow-beings. You afford women a new claim to male homage by enlarging the sphere of their sympathies; by teaching them that love of country is but an expansion of love of home; that patriotism, with all its high hopes, its ennobling efforts, its solemn duties, is no mere male privilege, but the common heritage of the human race. Has the Asiatic, who most rigidly secludes women within the privacy of domestic life, a higher respect for the female sex than the European, who extends to her a much larger amount of freedom, a wider career of usefulness? It is gratifying to know that female suffrage has secured distinguished supporters from both sides of the House of Commons. The brilliant leader of the Conservative party and several of his most prominent followers have voted for female suffrage, while it has also obtained the warm advocacy of eminent Liberal members; and although Mr. Gladstone has felt himself compelled by official considerations to refrain from openly supporting female suffrage his private opinions are evidently strongly in favour of it. Thus Tyrian and Trojan have joined on this question; the speculations of the sage have found support in the action of the statesman. Men of thought and men of action; philosophers like Mill, and statesmen like Disraeli, are equally agreed on the desirability of adding another large, important, and intelligent ingredient to the electoral force of the country.

One of the first and most praiseworthy subjects that would, doubtless, engage the attention of women after their admission to the Parliamentary franchise would be the extension of facilities for the HIGHER EDUCATION of their sex. The time is, happily, long past when it was still deemed unfeminine to be well educated. There is still an immense and deplorable waste of female brain-power. Women are not educated up to the level of their capacities. Men do not find in women, as often as they ought, intellectual help-meets. The mental influence of women over men is utterly disproportionate to their emotional ascendancy, and hence women are too fre-

quently the objects of mawkish male affection rather than of intelligent male respect. As mothers, sisters, and wives, women exercise a very important influence on the formation of male character. The closer association of men and women, which modern social usages have produced, makes it the more necessary that there should be an intellectual "levelling up" on the part of women. It is positively painful for educated men, conversing with (frequently) intelligent women, to be obliged to avoid allusion to a number of interesting subjects in philosophy, science, and politics, because of the entire female ignorance of all such things. Namby-pamby conversation, that might have charmed lovers, will pall upon husbands, and the reverence of sons for mothers will be increased when maternal counsels are dictated as much by the wisdom arising from cultivated intelligence as by the fervour of loving hearts.

It would be unjust to women to bear hardly on them for their educational deficiencies: they are not afforded the means of being well educated. It was stated by an influential speaker at a late meeting of the Social Science Association that there was no training college in the United Kingdom where ladies could be properly prepared for the profession of governess. Teaching is an occupation of which no one seeks to deprive women, yet there exists no academy in which they may be fitted for it. When the head of a respectable family dies without leaving a provision for his children it usually happens that his daughters turn to teaching as the only resource to keep them out of the workhouse. Possessing but a smattering of the ordinary feminine accomplishments, they endeavour to impart to their pupils a knowledge of subjects of which they themselves know next to nothing. The number of well-born, semi-instructed women anxious to ply the trade of governess is something appalling to contemplate. The profession of teaching, as a means of employment for women, is totally over-run, yet fathers of families complain, *with cause*, that they cannot get competent governesses to instruct their daughters. Endowments left in past times for the education of both boys and girls have been appropriated to the exclusive benefit of boys. The noble foundation of

Christ's Hospital, which was intended originally to provide a sound education for an equal number of boys and girls, now gives a first-class education to hundreds of boys, while it trains just twenty girls for *domestic service*. There is no just reason why the vast endowments and unequalled educational appliances of our Universities should not be shared in by women. The experiments made in Girton College, and by the institution of the Cambridge examinations for girls, have triumphantly proved that, given the facilities for acquiring sound knowledge, women will avail of, and profit by, them. At Girton College the examination papers used have been exactly the same as were set to candidates for degrees in Cambridge University, and the answering of the young ladies has been of a superior character. The system of establishing female colleges in connection with our great universities, where ladies would receive separate instruction, but undergo examinations of equal difficulty with those of the male students, is an admirable one. No educational tests applied to female acquirements will command respect if not of equal severity with the tests of male learning.

Women should, however, be allowed a certain latitude in the choice of subjects of study and of examination. Greek and the higher mathematics might fairly be omitted by women having no special aptitude for them, and be substituted by music and additional modern language, or by some other acquirement specially suited to the female sex; but this latitude should be kept within due bounds, or mere accomplishments might be cultivated to the neglect of sound learning. No certificate or degree in Arts should be given to women who had not attained a respectable proficiency in the English language and literature, geography, arithmetic, elementary mathematics, Latin, French, or any other Continental language, and in something more than the rudiments of logic, mental philosophy, and physical science. A college course of four years, preceded by a sound school training, should afford ample time and opportunities for acquiring a satisfactory acquaintance with the foregoing subjects. Facilities for learning embroidery and plain sewing, drawing, dancing, &c., ought to be provided, in order to render the

curriculum of female university colleges *practically* beneficial to their students.

But, however desirable it may be to establish colleges where women may receive a thoroughly liberal, as well as practically useful, education, and to enable them, after passing the requisite examinations, to obtain university degrees or certificates, it is certain that such colleges will be largely availed of only as a means towards gaining a respectable livelihood. As the world thinks, knowledge acquired for its own sake is good, but knowledge which pays is better. There can be no denying it, an immense dearth of female employment exists in the middle classes of society. Ladies of the higher classes have private means, women of the lower classes have numerous outlets for their industry, but ladies of the middle classes, when bereft of male support, have almost no resource by which they may ward off poverty. Miserably overcrowded as the profession of teaching is, Roman Catholic ladies are virtually excluded from it by the large number of conventual schools. The occupations of seamstress, dressmaker, milliner, shop-assistants, &c., are hardly such as ladies could fill without losing *caste*; but the competition for such employments is so great that only a limited number of the applicants for them can be accommodated. Success in Art and Literature requires special talents. Clerkships open to women are few in number, while the candidates are thick as leaves in Vallambrosa. In a report of the late Postmaster-General it was stated, that for twelve female clerkships in the London Post-office no less than twelve hundred (!) candidates presented themselves. Moreover, men have considerably encroached upon distinctively feminine occupations. We have male milliners, male staymakers, male ladies' hairdressers, male attendants in the female departments of drapery establishments; so that a vital necessity exists for new openings that will enable educated women to earn their bread. There are many people who see without observing, and, consequently, there are many to say that women should look after their homes, should discharge properly the duties of wives and mothers, should distribute the bread, leaving to men the task of earning it—an ideal estimate, truly, of the functions proper for all women. Persons

who talk thus resolutely shut their eyes to the facts which every day stare them in the face. Within their own circle of female acquaintances, as in the world around them, are young women in abundance, well-looking, amiable, fairly educated and accomplished, who yet are maidens, and with every prospect of continuing so. Who is in fault? Not, certainly, the maidens or their mothers. Every stratagem, every resource within the ken of female ingenuity, every social allurements that can attract men into proposing, is unsparingly employed, and to no purpose. Nor are the men entirely to be blamed. Some men, for various reasons, do not like to marry; a great many have no means with which to support a wife and progressive family; besides, eminent statisticians have calculated the relative proportion of adult females to adult males, in old countries, to be as 11 to 10. The risks to female celibate life being less than to male increase the disproportion. Then we must throw widows under forty into the number of marriageable women; so that, altogether, the prospects of portionless girls in the marrying line are not very cheering. High-minded young women are deserving of the greatest compassion in the humiliating efforts they are obliged to make to obtain men to take and keep them as wives; in many instances it is a question of life or death with women to get married. From their earliest childhood it is impressed upon the minds of girls by parents and others that they exist for the sole purpose of getting married; if they fail in winning husbands they have lost their career in life, the money spent on their education has been just thrown away; moreover, they are told that unless they make a good match they might as well not marry at all. A good match means a tolerably well-conducted, rich man; personal appearance, mental acquirements, high moral qualities, unaccompanied by money, counting, in the eyes of most young ladies' relatives, in search of eligible husbands, as so much rubbish. As a result, we have, in numbers, unloving and unhappy wives; we have young ladies who are on thorns at every social gathering; to attend an instant to the conversation of some clever married man, or of a brilliantly-cultivated, but penniless, bachelor, is deemed a culpable waste of time, when a humdrum male "eligible" claims attention. Every

woman of spirit revolts at the humiliation entailed by husband-hunting; yet, what is she to do? The life of a poverty-stricken old maid does not present an enchanting prospect. Persons who think and write, as I do, who wish to extend the means by which women may obtain a livelihood, are accused of being enemies to the family principle—foes of the married state. No assumption can be more contrary to the fact. We desire marriage to be something more—something purer, nobler, and higher than a legal contract between a man and woman to live quietly together. We want a union of hearts as well as of hands; ties of affection, not merely bonds of duty marriages; of which mutual love is the basis. Such marriages can only be attained where men and women are free; where one of the contracting parties is not, as now too often happens, a bond-slave of necessity. In the items of absence of affection and of pecuniary considerations, many marriages are, for women, just one degree better than legalised prostitution. I would elevate the dignity of woman as a rational being by making marriages free, by giving her the husband of her choice, or allowing her to remain in a condition of comfortable celibacy. Such ends can be attained only by enlarging the area of female industry. Marriages of affection are now usually contracted in defiance of parental injunctions. Women are not free in the disposal of themselves for life.

Another impediment to marriages of love is the comparative poverty of men. A high-minded man will not consent to become the father of paupers. In the present state of polite society the whole burden of supporting a family falls upon the husband. The wife is a mere dead-weight on his exertions. If he be wealthy, she may usefully and gracefully occupy her time solely with domestic pursuits; but when he is poor, such wifely labour is of little value. If ladies had distinctive callings of their own, by whose exercise they could contribute to the common expenses of house-keeping, we should have more marriages—certainly, more happy ones. In the lower grades of the population celibacy is rare, because in those classes wives contribute largely to their own maintenance. If educated ladies were, in greater numbers, self-supporting, the evils which fortune-hunting entails upon

men and women would be vastly diminished, as the inducements to pursue heiresses would be considerably lessened.

One addition to the very limited number of callings open to women that may very fairly be made, is that of the practice of MEDICINE. I would name pharmacy, midwifery, and the general medical attendance of women and children as suitable departments of the medical profession to which educated ladies might profitably and decorously devote themselves. I can conceive of no objection worth an answer that could be urged against ladies engaging in practice as pharmaceutical chemists; while there is something peculiarly appropriate in their being the medical attendants of members of their own sex, especially in the cases of patients suffering from feminine ailments. It is a well-known fact that many women, especially when young, will submit to the most distressing maladies rather than have them cured by consulting male practitioners. For such persons lady doctors would prove an invaluable boon. Again, every human instinct of delicacy and propriety revolts against male practice in midwifery. To a high-minded man it must be excessively disagreeable, to a high-minded woman painfully humiliating. Nothing but absolute necessity can excuse it. It is only of comparatively recent origin, it being, I believe, but two centuries ago since men first engaged in midwifery practice. A large number of medical men, including many of the most cultivated and respected members of the profession, discard obstetric practice altogether; and it is very frequently thrown into the hands of apothecaries, druggists, and semi-qualified practitioners; while quack doctors, distributors of obscene advertisements, and other vile hangers-on to the skirts of the medical profession, largely engross it. From the comparative ease with which the ordinary practice of the obstetric art is learned, medical students who fail to attain a competent knowledge of the higher walks of the profession often become, as a last resource, men-midwives. That there are among *accoucheurs*, both specialists and general practitioners, many gentlemen of high professional attainments and stainless personal honour I readily grant, but that there are also a number of half-educated and immoral men cannot be denied. The

wealthy can easily be served by the former ; but the poor, or rather those just above the class entitled to gratuitous relief in maternity hospitals, are forced to apply in their hour of need to the latter, or to be attended by ignorant women. Women of the humbler classes have an insurmountable dislike to the presence of male practitioners in midwifery cases. I have been told by physicians engaged in country practice that, unless in cases of great difficulty, the presence of the dispensary doctor is always avoided by poor women in labour. As a consequence, ignorant women, many of them without even a diploma as a midwife, are the sole attendants in such cases,—with disastrous results to human life. Even the *Lancet* felt bound to call upon the heads of the Faculty to devise some better means for the due instruction of a larger number of women qualified to attend in ordinary cases of labour. Midwifery cases of great surgical difficulty seldom occur, and ladies might be taught how to meet even these ; but, in the vast majority of instances, male practitioners would be relieved from a class of practice positively indecent for men ; and women, in their hour of trial, would be spared the attendance of any but members of their own sex. Children's diseases might likewise be properly treated by female practitioners. As regards female surgical, as distinguished from medical, treatment, time alone would determine the competency of lady doctors for this class of practice. But, as far it could possibly be done, I would rigorously exclude female practitioners from engaging in either the medical or surgical treatment of adult males.

Female candidates for medical diplomas and degrees should be compelled to undergo examinations of precisely the same character as those appointed for men ; but, I believe, female aspirants to the medical professions have hitherto raised no objection to being placed on exactly a similar level with male candidates—indeed, female medical students have already passed some brilliant professional examinations for medical licences. However, I would have their teaching conducted in separate classes. Mixed-classes have been said to work well in some American colleges ; and I am far from crediting the existence of all the evils reported to have been produced by a similar

system in the University of Zurich. Later intelligence indicates political hostility as the source from whence sprung the charges against the Russian ladies studying in that university. However, it is likely that, in some individual cases, abuses would arise from combining in the same classes students of both sexes. In order to prevent the possibility of danger, and to ensure greater freedom of instruction to the professors, I would have male and female students, of every kind, taught apart, especially in medical schools. As to the assumed indelicacy of ladies engaging in medical studies and practice, I may observe that women, yea, and high-born ladies, are employed as hospital nurses ; in which situation their delicacy and nerves are often sorely tried. And, all uninstructed, as they are, in the mysteries of the medical art, hospital and private nurses frequently display an almost intuitive knowledge of the proper course of treatment to be pursued towards the sick. In fevers, and in many other diseases, good nursing is the chief essential for recovery ; and physicians would not feel flattered if they knew how often a judicious deviation from their prescriptions by a skilful and an experienced nurse has resulted in saving their patients' lives. Doctors are quite willing that women shall have all the disagreeable drudgery of caring the sick ; they only object to their sharing with themselves any of the professional honour and emoluments. One of the chief characteristics of an accomplished physician is a power of sympathising with his patient. Each sex can best understand the idiosyncrasies of its own, and thus female doctors could best appreciate the needs of female patients.

The opposition of the medical profession to the admission of ladies to medical degrees is not to be wondered at. Old Tory politicians do not monopolise all the ignorant, unreasoning, bigoted conservatism of the world ; besides, professional *esprit de corps* makes most men jealous and exclusive, and inspires a very strong antipathy towards intruders from the ranks of the profane vulgar. This spirit found expression in Edinburgh in a series of unmanly, blackguardly outrages on the feelings of some lady medical students. I am happy to believe that the ruffianly conduct towards ladies of certain male medical students in the

northern Athens would find no imitators among the great bulk of the medical students of the United Kingdom. There have been some ladies studying in one of the largest and most important of the medical schools and hospitals of Dublin, and I am reliably informed that they have experienced no unpleasantness from either the professors or students. A few doctors have broken sufficiently through the trammels of professional trades-unionism to acknowledge the justice of the claims of women to receive a medical education. In a profession so liberal, so scientific, so humane, as the medical, it cannot be doubted but that, from among its leaders, converts will soon be made to the admission of women to a calling peculiarly suited to their capabilities. But I am quite sure that all the uncultured blockheads of the profession will long continue opposed to female doctors, as uncultured blockheads of every occupation have always fiercely resisted the most salutary reforms that have ever been devised for the benefit of mankind.

The members of the medical profession need not fear any serious curtailment of their practice by the admission of ladies within their ranks. Male artists and *litterateurs* do not complain of the competition of women, although some of their most brilliant rivals are of the female sex. And, alas! the field for the exercise of the energy and skill of professors of the Healing Art will ever be a wide one. The *Lancet*, which for half a century has been the able organ of the medical profession of the United Kingdom, not only protested indignantly against the disgraceful behaviour of the Edinburgh medical students towards their lady class-mates, but has also manifested an intelligent, inquiring interest in all the discussions on this subject. To those people who confidently assert that ladies must fail as doctors I would say, give them the chance. If they prove inadequate to the due performance of their responsible duties they will soon find their level, just as do male practitioners of any profession for which they have no aptitude. But it is only begging the question to say that women, numbers of whose sex have won eminent distinction in Art, in Science, in Literature, and in Government, would prove utterly incompetent to acquire a satisfactory knowledge of the practice of a profession which

contains many men of mediocre, not to say feeble, abilities. The opposition of the medical profession to lady doctors would, however, indicate anything but a belief in the certain failure of female practitioners; and the success already attained by many female doctors is another proof of female capacity for acquiring a knowledge of medicine. The Medical Faculty of the University College of Paris—one of the most learned and liberal licensing bodies in the world—has admitted ladies to its degrees. Surely, Edinburgh of ancient renown, Dublin of European fame, and London, which is yearly becoming more distinguished, will not long hesitate in following the tolerant and enlightened example of their brilliant French Sister!

Turning to the kindred profession of the Law, I would be in favour of admitting ladies to practice as conveyancers, and in other branches of the profession requiring only office work. I admit that the practice of law, especially of criminal law, or in courts of justice, would be unseemly for women; but readers of David Copperfield will remember what an excellent clerk Mrs. Traddles was to her learned husband. I am glad to know that law-writing forms one of the subjects taught in that most useful academy, the Dublin Queen's Institute. Many of the warmest advocates of women's claims to increased means of support are to be found in the ranks of the Bar. I would hope, therefore, that the employment of qualified ladies in law-writing will be one of the practical expressions of sympathy with the efforts to procure female emancipation from factitious poverty that learned legal gentlemen will shortly display. So far, however, as female employment in the legal profession will depend on the action of the Benchers of the various Inns of Court I would not advise ladies or their friends to be sanguine. Conservative of old traditions as are the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, they are extreme Radicals when compared with the honourable Societies which preside over the destinies of the legal profession. However, public opinion, expressed through Parliamentary action, sometimes effects marvellous conversions.

Women have been already employed successfully in the postal and telegraph services, and I trust their admission to these departments is but a prelude to their introduction

into the higher departments of the Civil Service, as well as into banking and general mercantile offices. But during office hours I would have male and female clerks kept in separate rooms; an opposite course was pursued in some of the Government offices of Washington, and with bad results to the efficiency of the public service. I would likewise recommend the employment of female inspectors for female National Schools. The present system of male inspection has occasionally—if rumour is to be credited—proved detrimental to morality; besides, it is absurd to have men examining in purely feminine acquirements. I have heard—with what truth I cannot say—that learned gentlemen, on probation as inspectors, may be found in the head Irish Training and Model Schools diligently engaged in learning from female teachers the arts of sewing, tatting, &c. If, at some period of their probationary career, male candidate inspectors are not so engaged, they are unfit for the duty of inquiring into the efficiency of female National Schools; so let us have educated ladies as inspectors for female schools.

Engineering and Architectural office work would also be suitable for ladies gifted with special tastes in those lines. Female reporters are successfully employed in connection with some American newspapers, and shorthand is taught in the Dublin Queen's Institute. Women have frequently displayed great skill in journalism. The employment of women in photography, heraldic drawing, engraving, and in other artistic occupations, is so generally approved of that I need not enlarge on its propriety. The engaging of females as waitresses, attendants in theatres and concert-halls, assistants in confectionary and drapery establishments, and in other positions in which civility and good taste form the bulk of the requisite qualifications, is so much more economical to employers, and agreeable to the public, than the service of men in similar capacities, that I am astonished at seeing the rougher sex so often obviously out of their proper sphere. There was a time when, doubtless, the appearance of women on the stage was deemed highly indecorous. Now what would our great plays be without actresses? Women have imparted new charms to the interpretation of the masterpieces of dramatic literature; they have elevated and purified the

Stage, and let Siddons, Rachel, Ristori, and many more, testify to the illustrious abilities women have displayed in the histrionic profession.

Literary work was once deemed unfeminine, so was artistic; yet the late Charles Dickens had but one formidable British competitor as a popular novelist—she is known as “George Elliott.” Sir Edwin Landseer had just one great rival as an animal painter—her name is *Rosa Bonheur*. In music—strange to say—women have not as yet excelled, but I am convinced their doing so is but a question of time. With more scientific female instruction in the theory of the musical art we may expect female composers of eminence. But in the executive departments of music—vocal and instrumental—women have held their own with men. Those who sneeringly taunt us with not putting women in the pulpit should remember that we have express Scriptural enactments, and the invariable tradition of the Christian Church, against the employment of women in the sacred ministry; it is not, therefore, for us to question the wisdom, justice, or expediency of such prohibition. But in lay callings of various kinds, in Art, and Literature, and in the science of government, women have manifested distinguished ability. Perhaps they have never reached equality with the highest order of male intellect, but they have shown intelligence enough to cause deep regret that for so many ages they have been unjustly debarred from the exercise of their many mental gifts, and from the gratification of their legitimate ambition. Surely, no rational cause can be assigned for depriving women of the means of using aright all their faculties? Is it to be maintained that women can have no existence independent of man? It is said that imparting higher education to women, and affording them increased means of earning their bread, will deprive them of male courtesy and respect. I deny it. Women of high literary or artistic culture command the enthusiastic regard of cultivated men. Women can be accomplished scholars without ceasing to be refined and fascinating ladies. When female learning is more general, blue-stockings will be less a source of terror to timid men.

Let us, as honest old Dr. Johnson would say, clear our

minds from cant when dealing with this question of female political, social, and intellectual enfranchisement. Women are not so innately wicked as to require the constant guardianship of men. Trust them; they are keen and practical—they know their wants, and will not outstep the limits of propriety. When they seek a more extended arena than the impoverished family hearth, or the lonely garret, don't talk rubbish about its being the proud privilege of man to shelter woman from the storms of the world. Where are the men who shelter the half-starved governess or the weary genteel toiler at the sewing machine? The advocates of Women's Rights, as they are rationally understood, seek for women some higher position in the organisation of Society than that of beautiful animals, trotted out in ball-rooms and at flower shows for the inspection of male purchasers, in a fashion just a little less odious than the manner in which Circassian girls are exposed for sale in the slave-market of Constantinople.

We should recognise the intellectual as well as the physical nature of woman. We should open to her delighted gaze the charms of Art, the beauties of Literature, the marvels of Science, the wide domains of Politics and Philosophy. The age of mere brute force is past—even in war—Intellect holds supreme sway. We have emancipated the Negroes, who are, for the most part, ignorant and stupid, because it is not just that any men should be slaves; and yet we hold in intellectual, in political, and almost in bodily, slavery those fair beings who minister so exquisitely to our social enjoyments, who realise for us so powerfully the tenderest aspirations of our nature. We debar them from the exercise of the faculties with which Nature has so richly endowed them, and thus deprive them of the means, when celibate, of supporting themselves; when married, of supplementing by their earnings their husbands' often scanty incomes.

If it be asked, what will become of the men when women will compete with them in callings now monopolised by males? I answer that, as in Literature and in Art, so in Medicine and other occupations that I would open up to women, there will be room enough for all. The inferior of both sexes will sink, the superior will rise. And men,

whose *physique* is more vigorous than that of women, will have as a field for their industry the boundless regions of the New, and of portions of the Old, World, that overflow in neglected sources of wealth; thither let them carry their strong arms and their brave hearts; if female labour crushes them out of employment at home. But I repudiate the assumed right of any creed or class or sex to hold the good things of the earth for its own exclusive benefit. In evil times men, on account of their religious profession, were debarred in various countries from pursuing certain honourable and lucrative callings; those of the favoured belief profited by their exclusion. Such restrictions are now removed, and who suffers? So it will be when men and women are allowed freely to employ legitimately their several physical and mental endowments.

Almost every great cause passes through three stages preliminary to the triumphal one; silent contempt—ridicule—vituperative misrepresentation. That embracing the concession to women of their just demands has proved no exception to this rule; but the cause which embodies those claims steadily advances to Victory. Every year new converts are being made to it in Parliament, among the members of the Learned Professions, and in the Universities, where reside studious and speculative youth, destined to supply to the world future leaders of its thought and action. Every year conventional prejudices are growing less powerful in retarding the advancement of women in the intellectual scale. What is new is strange, and what is strange is frequently disliked. Strangeness evokes variously laughter or abhorrence. Thus railways were sneered at, and vaccination fiercely denounced. The time will come when people will wonder at the resistance now offered to the higher education of women, and to their earning their bread by honest industry. Mental power and physical strength are not necessarily correlative, and often exist separately in different persons. So, though women's bodies are weaker than men's, it does not follow that their mental vigour is relatively less. The spirit of the times is in harmony with the views I have tried to uphold. The thinking portion of the community are with me. In the Universities, and among the educated classes generally, those favourable to the intellectual advance-

ment of women are, with scarcely an exception, persons who have thought and reasoned a little, persons a trifle superior to the common average of intelligence; while opposed to it are the crowd—those who have never devoted five minutes to the consideration of this question; those who believe that whatever is, is best; those too indolent to think at all; those who fear change of any kind, as children fear darkness; optimists; people extravagantly wedded to their own views, who are intolerant of argument; men who secretly despise women. And amongst female opponents of the intellectual rights of their sex will be found timid women, spiteful women, stupid women. In justice, I must admit that many excellent and clever men and women differ with my opinions on this subject; but, in the majority of those cases, their opposition arises from ignorance in regard to it, and want of reflection, rather than as the result of matured thought. When they have calmly examined the matter, I expect from their intelligence and sense of justice an acknowledgment of their present errors. I am myself a convert to Women's Rights.

Success cannot be far distant when we have won to our side men of the intellectual standing of Fawcett and Mill and Bright and Disraeli, and, proudly, as an Irishman, I add the name of one now, alas! numbered with the dead—of one whose zealous attachment to high morality and pure religion has never been questioned; one whose chivalrous disposition, no less than intellectual strength, enabled him to rise superior to conventional prejudices, and, by his eloquence in Parliament and his skill as a writer, give valuable aid to the supporters of women's claims to the franchise, to higher education, and to admission to the Learned Professions: I refer to the late deeply-lamented member for Cork city, John Francis Maguire.

O ye ladies of birth and culture, of wealth and station! little do ye know the hard, hard, bitter struggles with that most grinding of all foes to domestic happiness—genteel poverty—which so many of your sex, nought your inferiors in aught of what is amiable, and refined, and educated, have to endure. For ladies unblessed by fortune, with every means for adequately cultivating their mental gifts withheld, every mart for their profitable employment

closed, and the few avenues of self-support remaining, overcrowded, the cause which I plead is one of life or death. Ladies of fashion, ladies of wealth, you can effectually aid your less favoured sisters by your countenance of their efforts for intellectual and social advancement. And you have a ground for common action with them, for the law declares you the intellectual and political inferiors of your powdered menials. They may vote for a member of the Legislature; you may not. In Dublin, I note with pleasure, the kindly interest displayed by high-born ladies in the progress of the Queen's Institute; an interest utterly removed from patronage, and prompted only by that amiable and intelligent desire to encourage struggling merit, especially in members of their own sex, which is so eminently characteristic of the benevolent nature of my fair countrywomen.

With sorrow, not untinged with pleasure, I bring my self-imposed task to a conclusion—sorrow, in the consciousness that, despite my efforts, it should be so imperfect, so unworthy of the great cause it has endeavoured to maintain; pleasure, in the reflection that—notwithstanding its defects—it may, perchance, induce others more gifted, more learned, more eloquent, but, assuredly, not more earnest, to carry on the struggle, to fight more powerfully than I have done the battle of the weak against the strong, of women's rights against man's injustice. If this *brochure*, by inducing thought, by provoking discussion, or in any other way, shall bring one step nearer to a satisfactory settlement the legitimate claims of women to the enjoyment of a higher, a more expanded intellectual, social, and civil life than has hitherto been their lot, my labour shall not have been in vain, my reward shall, indeed, be great.

*Please see other
side*

FEMALE MEDICAL EDUCATION.—I find the following interesting piece of information in the *Women's Suffrage Journal* of February, 1875:—"A LADY DOCTOR OF LAST CENTURY.—The following, from a newspaper dated March 18, 1736, has a modern reference:—'Friday, Mar. 12.—Bologna, Mar. 3. The day before yesterday, Mademoiselle Loure Bussy, a graduate of this University, aged 22, disputed with the professor in the Latin tongue; the question was, *Whether the bones of the human body had their accretion by the means of certain juices?* The anatomist maintained the affirmative, and the lady the contrary. She spoke with great eloquence for an hour and a half, and, consequently, was extremely applauded by the assembly. The young female doctor is here in great consideration. When she took her degree, about three or four years ago, the ceremony was performed with a good deal of solemnity; the Cardinal Legate and Archbishop and the Cardinal de Polignac were present, and the latter made her a present of a gold snuff box.'—*The Daily Journal*." What a powerful rebuke the enlightened encouragement afforded to this young lady anatomist—one hundred and forty years ago—by those two eminent and liberal-minded Italian churchmen, conveys to the prudish conservatism of the opponents, in our time, of female medical education.

FEMALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGES.—When referring to the HIGHER EDUCATION of women I alluded to the advantages held out by Girton College, in which ladies' classes are conducted, and examinations held, under the supervision of the University of Cambridge. I omitted, accidentally, to mention that the Dublin Alexandra College, for the higher education of ladies, has also classes whose teaching and examinations are directed by professors of Trinity College. Without public funds, and having had to contend with public apathy, and, perhaps, against something stronger, the success attained by this admirable institution reflects no less credit on its excellent management than on the zeal and industry of its pupils; and affords conclusive proof of the need which exists in Ireland for facilities for the higher education of women, and of the readiness with which those facilities will be largely availed of when duly provided.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CENTRAL COMMITTEE.
OF THE
National Society for Women's Suffrage.

Presented to the General Meeting, May 29th, 1875.

In presenting their Annual Report your Committee have much pleasure in stating that the interest felt in the Women's Suffrage movement has greatly increased throughout the country during the past year, whilst the late division shows a marked advance in the House of Commons.

On the first day of the session Mr. Forsyth gave notice to re-introduce the Bill to remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women. It was read a first time on February 8th, and the second reading was fixed for April 7th.

The text of the Bill is as follows :—

“Be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—

“1. That in all Acts relating to the qualification and registration of voters or persons entitled or claiming to be registered and to vote in the Election of Members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the masculine gender, the same shall be held to include females, for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters, and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.”