

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.

EDITED BY LYDIA E. BECKER.

VOL. III.—No. 31. PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

MANCHESTER, SEPTEMBER 2, 1872.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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THE Session which has just closed has not been altogether barren of progress as regards women's suffrage. An important geographical extension of the principle has been accomplished in the passing of the Scotch Education Act. Up to the present time women have been disfranchised in the local government of Scotland. Although women in England have from time immemorial exercised the vote in parochial and local government, and have recently been admitted to the municipal franchise, the same electoral rights have not been recognised beyond the Tweed. When the School Board system was constituted in England, the conditions of election naturally followed those which regulated every other species of local government, and women were enfranchised as a matter of course. But when a similar system came to be devised for the sister kingdom, the question had to be decided whether the electoral conditions should follow the precedent of the English Act, and admit women; or that of other kinds of representative government in Scotland, and exclude them. The former alternative was adopted by the Government, and accepted without demur by Parliament, and we regard the decision on this point as a distinct and substantial gain. It would not have seemed unreasonable if the Government had taken up the position that the School Board franchise was given to women in England in accordance with the practice already recognised in other local matters, and therefore it was no innovation nor alteration of established usage; but that to give women in Scotland the School Board franchise, would be contrary to the custom of that country in regard to municipal government, and that so great a change in the electoral law should not be introduced by a side wind into an Act for promoting education. We have heard much less plausible arguments adduced against the proposal to enfranchise women; and we look upon the absence of any such protest from the Scotch members as a sign that they were not unwilling to see the practice of women's suffrage introduced within their borders. By the terms of the Act

the election of a School Board is made compulsory in every district. We may, therefore, witness during the coming months the exercise of the suffrage by women in every part of Scotland—a novel circumstance, which cannot fail to arouse attention to the other and greater question which lies behind the grant of the local vote to women. We have always understood the Scotch to be a very logical people; and we think that it is much easier for them to rest in the position of affirming that women ought not to vote at all, than in that of affirming that they ought to vote sometimes, or on some questions which concern them along with the rest of the community; but not in all elections, nor in all such questions.

The experience of the working of the Ballot, in the recent election at Pontefract, has been such as to justify the most sanguine expectations of those who predicted that it would put an end to the scenes of riot and confusion too often associated with the contest at a polling booth, and render these places fit for the presence of women. Men can now no longer appeal to the existence of riot and disorder for arguments against women's suffrage, nor allege their own neglect of the duty of preventing such disturbances as an excuse for refusing to women the right to take part in elections. More than one opponent of women's suffrage has declared that his objections would be removed by the adoption of vote by ballot, and we hope to see the result of this change in the next division on the Suffrage Bill.

The anomaly of rejecting the votes of women on account of supposed incompetency of understanding, is brought into strong relief by the elaborate preparation made for the accommodation of the illiterate voter, and the numbers who came within the category. Out of 1,236 men, who voted at Pontefract, 199 were so ignorant that they were not simply unable to read, but avowed themselves incapable of distinguishing between the names of the candidates, so as to fill up the ballot paper unassisted. It suggests singular considerations to the minds of those women who are classed with minors, lunatics, and idiots, as persons incompetent to exercise the franchise, to find such careful provision made for its exercise by persons who

lack the modicum of knowledge and intelligence necessary for the performance of the simple action of making a cross opposite the name of the candidate they desire to support. We regard the illiterate voter as a much more fitting companion than woman for the class of persons disfranchised on the ground of mental incapacity to form a judgment on political matters; and we think that the intelligence of the electorate would not suffer if he were made to change places with her. We should not object to see something like the ancient rule of "benefit of clergy" applied to women who possess the qualification for a vote, so that upon proof to the satisfaction of the presiding officer that she is able to read, a woman might be admitted to the privilege of the vote which is now enjoyed by the man who proves to the satisfaction of the same official that he is unable to do so.

It may be said that men, even those who cannot read the newspapers or the names of the candidates on the voting papers, have interests which are affected by legislation, and that the suffrage is needed as a protection for these. If this is true of illiterate men, the consideration has much more force when applied to the case of women. Illiterate men are not legislated for on principles different from those which affect educated men. They labour under no property nor personal disabilities. The law gives them security of tenure for their possessions, be these small or great, or acquired by industry, gift, or inheritance. The law does not discriminate between the sources of the property accruing to any man, and say that wages and earnings shall be his own, but property coming to him in other ways shall, under certain circumstances, pass away from him, and absolutely into the possession of another. The law does not deprive the illiterate man of the custody and control of his children, and declare him to be a "stranger" to his own offspring, except as regards the liability to maintain them. If illiterate men were disfranchised, and the law did these things to them, then the case for their admission to a share in controlling legislation would be made out. The law does all these things, and more, to women, and we submit that the case for their admission is equally made out.

BABY FARMING.

AN accusation of "baby farming" bids fair to become as formidable to poor women of the present day, as an accusation of witchcraft was to those of former times. It should be generally known that any woman who either from desire to eke out a livelihood, or from charity, undertakes the charge of a deserted infant, does so on pain of liability to an indictment for murder or manslaughter, should the baby die on her hands. At the Hammersmith

Police-court, on August 9th, a nurse named ANNIE WHEELER surrendered to answer the charge of causing the death of a child, aged five weeks, which had been entrusted to her care. From the evidence it appeared that the child was extremely small and thin when it was placed in the care of the prisoner, who had supplied it with proper nourishment, and called in a surgeon when it was ill. Also that another child, still under her care, was in an extremely healthy condition.

Miss DAMPIER, of Fulham, who was connected with a nursery which was established to receive the first children of unmarried women, stated that the prisoner was employed in this nursery before she took care of children at her own home, that she always behaved kindly, and was very attentive. One child recovered under her nursing. Under these circumstances the magistrate was asked not to commit the prisoner. This application was unsuccessful. The prisoner was remanded, and finally committed for trial for manslaughter. The grand jury threw out the bill. The case was first brought into notice by the remark of a doctor to the relieving officer, that in his opinion the child was being starved; but the name of the doctor is not given, nor does he appear to have been called in support of the charge. It seems, therefore, that on the casual observation of a doctor a woman has been subjected to an unjust and injurious accusation, for which no evidence was brought forward, but which may cause the loss of her occupation. The more miserable the condition of an infant, the more likely it is to die on the hands of a nurse, and the more dangerous it becomes for women to take charge of such children. The risk of an accusation of murder, and the pains and penalties of the so-called Infant Life Protection Bill, which might be more properly designated Infants' Nurses Deprivation Bill, are enough to deter all women from the occupation of nursing. It may be expected that increased difficulties thereby thrown in the way of poor and deserted mothers in finding nurses for their infants, will cause an increase of infanticide. This cannot be checked by increasing the severity of the penalties on the unhappy women who are driven to these desperate deeds. The waste of infant life which the Legislature has endeavoured to avert by the recent Act, can only be stayed by the adoption of legal and social changes, which shall enforce more stringent responsibility on the fathers of deserted infants, and hold out a hope of redemption and restoration to the mothers.

WE beg to call attention to the advertisement in another column of the Annual Meeting of the committee for amending the law with respect to the property of married women, to be held at Plymouth on September 13th, in connection with the Social Science Congress. The ATTORNEY-GENERAL has consented to preside, and an interesting and important gathering may be expected.

THE STROMNESS FEMALE POOR INSPECTOR.

We extract the following from the *Northern Ensign* :—
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISION AND THE STROMNESS PAROCHIAL BOARD.

As usual, the weakest has had to go to the wall in the quarrel between the Board of Supervision and the Stromness Parochial Board, in the matter of the appointment of Miss Corston as inspector. The following letter has been received by the Stromness chairman :—

Board of Supervision,
Edinburgh, 19th July, 1872.

Sir,—In reference to the excerpt minute of meeting of the Parochial Board of Stromness, held on the 28th ult., reappointing Miss Margaret Corston to the office of Inspector of Poor in that parish, I am directed to communicate to you, for the information of the Parochial Board, the following minute passed by the Board of Supervision at its meeting yesterday :—
"The board resolve to present a summary petition to the Court of Session, and instruct the Secretary to take the necessary steps accordingly.

"Direct the Secretary to intimate this resolution to the Parochial Board of Stromness."—I am, sir, your obedient servant,
(Signed) ORD. GRAHAM CAMPBELL,
for Secretary.

William Ross, Esq., Chairman of Parochial Board
of Stromness.

The probability is that the Stromness Board, rather than undertake the pecuniary responsibility of fighting with the superior Board, will now meet and appoint a man as inspector. Should they, however, resolve, as we think they should, to defend their right to appoint the most suitable individual, we believe they will meet with generous support from other Boards, whose interests are quite as much bound up in the result of this important question as are those of the Stromness Board.

The following is the memorial submitted on behalf of Miss Margaret Corston, and the opinion given thereon by Sheriff Fraser. The correspondence referred to was published in the *Women's Suffrage Journal* for July.

July 31, 1872.

Mr. John Corston, Inspector of the Poor for the parish of Stromness, having died in February 1872, the Parochial Board thought it desirable to appoint one of his daughters to succeed him, she having done great part of his work during the last years of his life.

Before making the appointment they, however, wrote to the Board of Supervision, to inquire whether by any existing rule or statute such appointment would be incompetent in point of law. (See letter 1 of correspondence annexed.)

In reply the Board of Supervision gave the opinion that such appointment would be inexpedient, but did not declare it incompetent. (See letter 2.)

On this the Parochial Board resolved to make the appointment in question, being especially induced to do so by the fact that a large majority of the paupers with whom the inspector would be concerned were women, and that, moreover, no other competent person had been proposed for the office.

On this the Edinburgh Board of Supervision exercised their power of veto to dismiss Miss Corston, on the ground that she was, in their opinion, "unfit to discharge the duties of the office" (see letter No. 4), in spite of the testimony of the Local Board that she had been "a most efficient assistant to her father," and was "well acquainted with the various duties" of the office.

It is, in point of fact, the case that Miss Corston did substantially and to the satisfaction of the whole local community discharge the duties of the office for some years; and that if there be any "unfitness," as stated in the Minute of the Board of Supervision, this consists solely in her sex.

This decision excited much public indignation, and attracted notice in Parliament, and, in consequence of this, the Parochial Board persisted in re-appointing Miss Corston.

On July 19th, the Board of Supervision in Edinburgh sent notice to the Stromness Board that, rather than allow this appointment, they would present a summary petition in the Court of Session.

In these circumstances the opinion of counsel is desired by the memorialists on the following queries :—

1. Whether there is anything illegal or incompetent in the appointment of a woman as Inspector of the Poor?
2. Whether the Board of Supervision is legally entitled to veto such appointment on the single ground of sex?
3. Counsel is requested to advise generally respecting the course to be taken under the circumstances.

1. I am of opinion a woman may be legally appointed Inspector of the Poor.

2. I am of opinion that the Board of Supervision have no power to dismiss the memorialist "as being unfit to discharge the duties of the office," if this unfitness be merely because she is a woman. It appears from the statement in the memorial that the memorialist lies under no physical or mental disability to discharge any or all of the duties of the office, and in point of fact has discharged them for some time to the satisfaction of the parish. This being so, sex must have been the whole ground of objection to the memorialist, and this alone is stated in the letter of the Secretary of the Board of Supervision of date 22nd February, 1872, and of 23rd March, 1872. But in the letter of 12th April the language is changed, and the Secretary there says that the Board is "still of opinion that Miss Corston is unfit to discharge all the duties of the office of Inspector of Poor." This seems to imply that there is some particular duty for which the memorialist is unfit; but whether it is because she is a woman, or whether it be because of some speciality connected with herself, does not appear. I understand from the statement in the memorial that the Board of Supervision made no inquiry as to the qualifications and capacity of the memorialist.

As to the legal powers of the Board of Supervision the matter stands thus :—The consent or sanction of that Board is not necessary to the appointment of any one as inspector by a Parochial Board. All that the Court of Supervision can do is (sec. 56 of the Poor Law Act) to suspend or dismiss an inspector, if "in the opinion of the Board of Supervision," the inspector "be unfit or incompetent to discharge the duties of his office." The unfitness or incompetency must be ascertained as a matter of fact, and the unfitness or incompetency must be such as to incapacitate the person appointed from efficiently discharging the duty. I observe from the published rules and regulations of the Board that they have intimated their opinion to the effect that (1) in Highland parishes no inspector can be appointed who is not able to speak Gaelic; (2) that a ground officer, or anyone who holds any similar situation under a proprietor or factor, is ineligible; also (3) a Procurator Fiscal of the district, also (4) a Sheriff and Justice of Peace Clerk of the district; also (5) a sheriff officer. These recommendations of the Board have been, I believe, very generally followed. But whether, if any one of them (except the first) would be sustained by a court of law as amounting to "unfitness or incompetency" in the sense of the statute, I very much doubt.

But I am of opinion that the objection of "sex" cannot be added to the list, unless there be some speciality in the case, such as that the parish is so populous as to be beyond the strength of a woman to manage, or so extensive in area (as in many Highland parishes) that the inspector can only visit his paupers on horseback. These cases would be such as to warrant the Board of Supervision in saying that a woman was "unfit." But I can find no legal ground to justify the decision of the Board that a woman cannot, in such a case as this of Stromness, be an inspector.

3. If the Board of Supervision follow up its intimation that they will present a summary petition to the Court of Session (I presume under the 87th sec. of the statute), then the Parochial Board of Stromness should answer to petition, and obtain a judgment of the Court on the point. The Court will compel the Board of Supervision to state the ground of "unfitness" alleged. No statutory body of commissioners like the Board of Supervision are entitled to shelter themselves behind general words, and a court of law will inquire not whether the evidence was sufficient to justify a dismissal (for that is a matter left entirely to the Board), but whether the "unfitness" found proved was of a kind contemplated by the statute.

The opinion of (Signed) PATRICK FRASER.
No. 8, Moray Place, Edinburgh, 1st August, 1872.

The following article is taken from the *Northern Ensign*.
STROMNESS PAROCHIAL BOARD CASE.—ANOTHER FEMALE ELECTION.

Many will regret to learn that at the Stromness Board meeting on the 6th instant, it was resolved to appoint a male inspector, notwithstanding the very favourable opinion which had been received from Sheriff Fraser, the senior member of the Board of Supervision, on the points at issue.

Twelve voted for an adjournment of the meeting, with a view to make preparations for contesting the case with the Edinburgh Board. Thirteen voted for a male election, and thus carried the day by only one of a majority. Not from any hostile feeling to the lady inspector did they so act, but merely because they were wearied of attending so many meetings on this matter. A man was then elected to the office. It is a pity that the case was not proceeded with, as in all probability a favourable decision would have been given in the Court of Session. Miss Corston has a fair case against the Board of Supervision for unjust and illegal dismissal from office, which she has filled to the full satisfaction of the ratepayers and the paupers. The Board of Supervision has acted very cruelly, at least the few of them which decided on Miss Corston's dismissal.

A meeting of the Stromness ratepayers was held on the 7th inst., for the purpose of electing four men to represent the smaller ratepayers. There were two or three respectable male inhabitants nominated for the office, but not one got a seconder. A woman was then nominated, and not only seconded but elected as a representative, and instead of four males being elected, it ended in one female. This shows what a great feeling must be on women's rights among the ratepayers of Stromness, and the comparative value of male and female—one female going in the place, and to do the work of, four men!

THE STROMNESS CASE.

(From the *Scotsman*.)

It is a pity that either the timidity or poverty of the Parochial Board of Stromness has prevented them from fairly trying in the Court of Session whether or not a woman can, merely on account of her sex, be summarily dismissed from the office of Inspector of the Poor, after she has thereto been duly appointed. This point was raised in a remarkably clear way,

free from many of the complications that might arise elsewhere, in the recent case of Miss Margaret Corston, who was a few months ago unanimously appointed by the Parochial Board of Stromness as Inspector of the Poor for that parish, under the circumstances and with the results we stated a short time ago. As the Parochial Board knew Miss Corston well, and as the Edinburgh Board clearly knew nothing about her personally, it is plain that the whole and sole ground of objection was that of sex, and so the question is raised point-blank—Is sex a disqualification for such office in the eye of the law? The Board of Supervision has not ventured to assert this to be the case, although its members choose to act as if it were; and Sheriff Fraser, in the lucid opinion published on Saturday, distinctly asserts that it is not so. This, then, is the point that would have come up for trial in the Court of Session, had not the Stromness Board shrunk from the perils or expense of litigation.

The question raised by this case is not a little curious, if we consider that the kind of work which Miss Corston is forbidden to perform officially is in the main just such as women are constantly doing in a private way in connection with one charity or another. Whatever may or may not be the woman's sphere, few people dispute that she is in her right place when she spends time, money, and energy on behalf of the poor. In fact, when ladies demand opportunities for entering professions, they are very apt to be referred to works of charity in the shape of district visiting, &c., as the proper occupation of their time, and the pauper or semi-pauper population of our cities would be in a bad way if they were henceforth to depend on the care and oversight of the sterner sex alone. To inquire into the general condition of the poor of any given district, to separate out the worthless from the unfortunate, to devise means of providing the destitute with the necessaries of life, and to effect the greatest amount of good with the smallest expenditure of money—these are the functions which women are every day discharging in a silent and unostentatious manner, and these are just the duties which Miss Corston is forbidden to fulfil as a salaried official in Stromness. It is true that in large and populous districts certain duties of a less beneficent and more sternly official kind might be added to those described, but in Stromness the inspector has probably seldom occasion to take legal proceedings against any one, and even if a solitary case of the kind did arise, it is to be presumed that a person who is competent to be a collector of poor-rates is not altogether unacquainted with other minor forms of law, nor unable to discharge the very simple functions therewith connected. It is, in fact, an absurd fiction, which day by day becomes less tenable, that women, when properly trained and accustomed to the work, as in the present case, are one whit less able than men to fulfil ordinary official duties. The fact is, that custom has involved us in a perfect network of inconsistencies respecting these matters. Women have always been eligible as Churchwardens in England, but orthodoxy would shriek at the idea of their being elders in Scotland. Lady Burdett Coutts was recently implored to become a Guardian of the Poor in London, but Miss Corston is sternly forbidden to be an Inspector of the Poor in Orkney. Parliament has decided most emphatically, and with the full assent of the nation, that women were eligible and desirable as members of school boards, but every baby girl has to show her sewing to a male school inspector, because no ladies are to be appointed to the office that he holds. Very recently a widow lady has been made a Surveyor of Roads in Westmoreland, and is said to discharge the duties most efficiently, though one would have thought that, of the two, this appointment was less feminine than that involving the care and oversight of the poor

CORRESPONDENCE.

TAXATION AND NON-REPRESENTATION.

To the Editor of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*.

Dear Madam,—Last year you copied from the *English-woman's Review* a letter of mine, in which I stated that I had refused to pay the State taxes, on the ground that it is unjust to tax women householders, and then to deny them the right of representation, by refusing them the vote for members of Parliament.

Many of your readers may feel interested in this practical protest against the present unjust system; and I, therefore, ask a little space to describe what my experience has been this year, when I have for the second time declined to pay the State taxes. I permitted furniture to be seized, a man to be left in possession, the goods to be taken away and sold at a great loss to me, on the first occasion.

This year, when the tax collector and broker came to distraint, I placed some silver in the entrance passage, and twelve forks were seized. As a few weeks since another lady, in a different parish, had refused payment for the same reasons as myself, and as the silver had been removed at once from her house, I thought it just possible that the same thing might be done in my case. However, my tax collector took a different course of action; he declined "the responsibility" of taking the twelve forks away, and left a man in possession in my house from Wednesday, August 14th, till Monday, August 19th. On Monday the broker and an appraiser came, and, after sending for a policeman, in whose presence some formal oaths were made, ten forks were removed, this number being considered sufficient to cover the amount and costs, and the man in possession was taken away at the same time. The amount for which the distraint was made was £3. 8s. 7d., but, with costs, it now stands at £5. 8s. When the forks are sold there will be a sale commission to be added, I suppose.—Yours faithfully,
August 23rd, 1872. A HOUSEHOLDER.

To the Editor of the *Daily News*.

Sir,—The sale of my goods recently distrained upon for Queen's taxes took place yesterday. I caused them to be bought in, and the account rendered stands thus:—Taxes, £6. 18s. 3d.; levy, 5s. 6d.; appraisal, 6s.; printing, 10s.; commission, 10s. Total, £8. 9s. 9d. The cost of my protest against "taxation without representation" is therefore £1. 11s. 6d., which I freely and gladly offer as a small contribution to the cause of women's suffrage. If other women taxpayers would adopt the same course, I am convinced that this practical demonstration of the injustice done to them would not be without influence on public opinion and on the legislature, and would hasten the concession of their just claim.—I am, sir, yours respectfully,
Hendon, August 2. R. A. H.

WOMEN'S WRONGS.

To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Sir,—Strikes are prevalent, but I opine prevention is better than cure. Take up, I ask you, the case of those helpless suffering women who cannot, as men, agitate for less drudgery. While all is apparently bright and *couleur de rose*, behold the other side of the view, as shown in the following letter, which I think needs no comment from me but this—that it is no exceptional case. I have ascertained that the state of matters there described is prevalent even amongst the best and highest-toned houses of business. For six weeks at least twice in the

and destitute. In hospitals, too, ladies' services are in the utmost request as "visitors," and their daily ministrations among the sick could ill be dispensed with; but yet Sir Robert Christison will probably be startled when he finds lady colleagues seated with him at the Board of Management. Instances of anomalies might be multiplied almost *ad infinitum*, but the remedy for all lies in a nutshell. It is useless as well as foolish to try to keep up the traditions of fifty years ago, and to endeavour to fit them forcibly to present emergencies. Ample work lies on every side, demanding competent hands for its performance; we have never yet had too many good officials of any kind, and there is little prospect that we shall be surfeited with them now. Let efficiency become the sole test for admission to any or every calling, and the double advantage will accrue that a large choice of fit candidates will be afforded, and that no person of either sex will be arbitrarily prevented from earning daily bread because those dressed in brief authority choose, without inquiry or examination, to pronounce "unfit" for an office one who is declared to be eminently fit by local authority, and of whom the censors know, and can know, nothing but the bare fact of her sex.

WOMEN AS CIVIL SERVANTS.

The *Civilian* says that the Post-office authorities have resolved to introduce a large number of female clerks into the department. Forty young ladies are to be shortly placed on the establishment of the Savings Bank-office, notwithstanding the vigorous protest of the controller, who, in common with the entire staff, feels the grievous dangers, moral and official, which are likely to follow the adoption of so extraordinary a course. The gentlemen in the office contemplate holding an "indignation meeting" to protest against the proposed action of the authorities.

St. Martin's-le-Grand is in a state of the wildest excitement. That useful department of the state is seldom tranquil, but the Postmaster General threatens it now with an indignity and a wrong before which all previous grievances seemingly pale. The *Civilian* is quite shocked to be obliged to announce that Mr. Monsell has resolved to introduce a large number of female clerks into the department. Forty young ladies are, it is said, to be shortly placed on the establishment of the Savings Bank Office. This is really too dreadful. What right can women have to earn a decent livelihood outside certain limits, which if arbitrary have at least the sanction of a venerable prescription? The Controller, "in common with the entire staff," has earnestly protested against this weak concession to the cry about the rights of women. These disinterested and high-toned gentlemen see "the grievous dangers, moral and official, which are likely to follow the adoption of so extraordinary a course," and the *Civilian*, as the faithful organ of the party of decency and "official" rights, "learns with pleasure" that they contemplate holding an indignation meeting to protest against the proposed action of the authorities. This is not a joke; it is downright deplorable fact. Mr. Monsell, it may be hoped, will know how to deal with these gentlemen and their protest. The employment of young women in the Post-office is no innovation. It has been tried in Mr. Scudamore's department, and it would be interesting to know what that able officer has to say about the "grievous dangers" attending the experiment. Has he found that the "morals" of his staff are lower than those of the persons employed in any other government office? It is easy to understand what is meant by "official" dangers, but the introduction of the word "moral" makes too strong a demand upon the public patience.—*Manchester Guardian*.

year—August, when we are taking our holiday, and February—these poor girls begin work at half-past eight, and keep on to eleven and twelve at night.

If this be not slavery, what is? If this be not a disgrace to civilisation, what is? If this be not deserving of consideration, what, sir, is?—Your obedient servant,

EDWARD CURTIS,
Curate of Newington, S.E.

St. Mary's Clergy House, Kennington
Park Road, S.E., July 5.

Sir,—I am induced to tell you some of the hardships that many of the young girls are subjected to in the Edgware Road, feeling sure that you are kindly taking an interest in us. We are engaged from eight a.m. till ten p.m. (14 hours) in shops, and till eleven or half-past on Saturdays. I am a bookkeeper; but really after these late hours we are too tired for our own needlework, writing to our friends, or any recreation; so we crawl up to bed. On Sundays we are obliged to find a home somewhere, as we are given to understand that no meals are provided for the young people, and we are not wanted at "home," as they expect company, and do not care for us to hear their conversation; therefore we are obliged to seek a home, whether we have friends residing in London or not. Then, sir, is it to be wondered that you see so many of what are termed "fast girls" making a pleasant day of the most sacred of the week? Many come from the country; and unless they have friends to interest themselves in them what can be the result? Their Sabbath is a day for frivolity and pleasure with loose characters. Why should not the Workshops' Act be brought in shops? I am just 20 years of age, and have been out five years, during that time I have seen many a poor girl obliged to gain her living by working fourteen hours; and when they enter the shops they look fresh and healthy but after two or three months—sometimes less—believe me, they are thin, hollow-cheeked, and appear completely worn out, with the complaint of always being "so tired," and wishing they were dead, having nothing to live for, &c.; and how often have they been carried out fainting from that shop? The employers then say, "I cannot think what she is made of." But, sir, what can they do, as they depend upon their own exertions for a livelihood, and must keep up; and that is the reason many of them are consumptive—long hours, bad and limited food, and standing so long in the gas air. The salary received for this is about £15 per annum, and they have to find their Sunday food. If only some kind ladies would exert their influence on our behalf, how much they would be thanked. But many leave their shopping till the evening, when every person should be thinking of bed. Now, sir, I must draw this long list of hardships to a conclusion, trusting that you will kindly make this public, for what can we do unless we have help.—Yours gratefully,

G. L. (for self and eight other persons
similarly placed.)
July 5.

A valued correspondent sends us the following letter, with the explanation that it is from a Russian to the Bolton Co-operative Congress, in her own English. He adds, "When will English sempstresses write Russian letters to Russia?" We do not think that the study of the Russian language will ever become generally useful to English operatives, but we do not see why English sempstresses could not have placed within their reach the means of mental culture equal to those attainable by their Russian sisters, who seem to have the opportunity of acquiring at least one language other than their own.

A PLEA FOR WOMEN.

Letter from Catherine Diakoff, Kharkof, Russia.

Sir,—I am a seamstress, and am very interested in the state of workwomen. A great part of women who work in our towns are seamstresses, and they receive wages impossible to live upon. I think the same is in England. I read the proceedings of the Co-operative Congresses, and was astonished not to find in them long and serious speeches about the work of women. I would be glad if the next Congress would determine something to make the position of workwomen in the towns better. It seems to me that, if the Congress would recommend it, the seamstresses may form "Artels" [productive societies] in order to work, and, if possible, to live together, and have a common Co-operative shop, where they could take needles, and thread, and calico at wholesale prices, and give over the work one to another, when one "Artel" has too much, and another has too little. If, too, they were to found common magazines of fashion goods, it would have a good result.

Excuse me, dear sir; I disturb you with my simple suggestions; but I write you because I think Co-operators should try to protect the work of their wives, sisters, and daughters, in order that Co-operative action may be greater. The education of women is, of course, necessary; but if women will not co-operate, they will be always in a bad position, and even their education is impossible. They will not be raised to independence, if they are not able to gain more than mere bread. And whereas women are generally seamstresses, if we raise the seamstresses' work, we raise the mass of women from slavery.—I am, sir, with respect,

CATHERINE DIAKOFF,
Kharkof, First Users' Society,
3rd February, 1872.

To William Pare, Esq.

From the *Co-operative News* of April 3rd, 1872. Addressed to the Bolton Co-operative Congress.

A RUSSIAN LADY IN AMERICA.—The *Philadelphia Ledger* states that the Oneida community has recently been visited by a young Russian lady named Catherine Dikhova, who has come to this country to study the woman question. Miss Dikhova is the daughter of a princess, and her father is General of Artillery at St. Petersburg. This young Russian lady, though not yet 21, is very talented and highly educated. It is but four months since she began speaking English, and she now converses quite fluently, comprehending readily everything said to her. She is mistress of seven languages—Russian, Polish, French, German, Greek, Latin, and English. She graduated with high honours at Kasan when 16; she received at that time the badge of Her Majesty, which gives her power to appeal to the Emperor for any favour, and also the privilege of attending court balls. She is one among only four women who have been honoured by Her Majesty's badge during the last 40 years, as it is only awarded to those who display extraordinary talent and proficiency. Not satisfied with the amount of education she had received, and there being no schools in Russia where she could pursue the higher branches, she employed private tutors, devoting the following four years to the study of mathematics and physics, and was examined by the Faculty at Moscow. She came to this country for the purpose of studying the woman movement here, examining the medical colleges for women, &c., with a view of assisting her own countrywomen. She was the first to appeal to the Emperor to open colleges to women. She intends starting a woman's journal when she returns to St. Petersburg.

BASTARDY LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

The magistrates sitting at the Manchester County Police Court, on August 22, found themselves in the extraordinary position of being unable, though willing, to order a defendant to contribute towards the support of an illegitimate child, of which he was clearly proved to be the father. The mother of the infant had obtained an order to compel the defendant to pay a weekly sum to her, and was quitting the court, when Mr. Walker, the justices' clerk, called the attention of the Bench to the recently-passed Bastardy Law Amendment Act, the wording of which renders it impossible to compel any man to pay for the support of an illegitimate child born before the day on which the bill became law—the 10th August.—Mr. Edward Walmesley, the chairman, called the plaintiff back, and informed her that owing to the new Act of Parliament, of the precise wording of which he and his colleagues were not aware when they made the order just granted, they would now have to withdraw their judgment. The new act came into force on August 10th, and there had evidently been an omission in it, to which the attention of Parliament would no doubt be drawn. When the act was amended, the plaintiff could come forward again, but, in the meantime, she would have to do the best she could.—The plaintiff then left the court without an order. It seems that important parts of the old bastardy law having been repealed when the new bill passed, the defect in the latter is that it only enforces payments in the cases of "children born after the passing of this act."

On this a valued correspondent remarks:—

The Bastardy Laws Amendment Act is indeed defective in this respect, that it actually prevents any provision being secured to children born before the 10th August this year. The bill, as it passed the second reading in the Commons, fully provided for all such cases, but the words making the needful provision were struck out of the measure in committee. They do not appear in the bill as it went to the Lords. This is by no means the only mutilation the measure suffered in the House of Commons.

As the bill originally stood, it provided that the amount of the order should be at the discretion of the justices, the obvious intention being that the father should be made to provide, according to his means, for the maintenance of his own child. The Commons, however, by the careful insertion of the words "not exceeding 5s. weekly," have again reaffirmed the false principle that the richest father's only duty to his illegitimate child is to provide for it the of bare means existence, on the same scale of living as the lowest pauper. The Commons raised the maximum allowance to 5s. a week in consideration, no doubt, of the enormous advance in the cost of living since the 2s. 6d. rate of allowance was originally imposed; but they refused to do more. Our legislation continues practically to affirm that no father of an illegitimate child need do more for it than just keep it in life. Nor did the Lords think it worth while to correct the injustice perpetuated by the Commons. I would here remind your readers of the strange fact that in England, almost alone of civilised nations, there is absolutely no law by which a parent is bound to support his children. It is true that when a child becomes chargeable to the parish the overseers are allowed to turn round upon the father or mother, and sue for the relief afforded it; but that is all. It is surely time that this should be changed, and that the just and true principle long recognised in the practice of good and just men should be embodied in legislation.

To return, however, to the Bastardy Act. The act has made several considerable amendments upon the old law. It provides that the absconding of the father of an illegitimate

child shall be no bar to the procuring of an order for maintenance upon him after his return. It has repealed the proviso which forbids the recovery of more than thirteen weeks' arrears. It provides in certain cases for the extension of the liability of the father to the child's 16th year, and it enables boards of guardians to recover from the putative father the cost of the maintenance of his child during the time that such child, while under 16, is in receipt of parish relief. These are important mitigations of the cruelty of the old law, which, in seeking to punish the mothers of illegitimate children, lost sight altogether of the claims and necessities of the children themselves.

I shall be happy to co-operate with anyone who will endeavour still further to amend the law, so as to secure some provision for those poor children who have been denied it by the operation of this act. Still more gladly will I co-operate with anyone who will seek to obtain the full recognition and enforcement by law of the duty of all parents to support their children, whether legitimate or illegitimate.

Meantime, I would urge upon the mothers of those unfortunate children whose claim upon their father has been set aside by the defect of the new Act that, pending an appeal to Parliament, there is one remedy open to them. Let any such mother, if in necessity, apply for parish relief for her child, as the guardians are empowered by Section 8 of the Act, to obtain a justice's order upon the father for payment towards the relief of the child, and orders under this section are not barred by the same limit of time, as orders under Section 3 of the Act, which deals with orders made to the mother.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

ELIZABETH C. WOLSTENHOLME.

Congleton, August 23.

MAINTENANCE OF WIVES.

The following report is taken from the *Times* of August 6. The italics are our own.

At Worship-street, on Saturday, a married woman who appeared very ill, and who carried a baby in her arms, applied to Mr. Bushby for advice and assistance. She stated that a short time ago she gave birth to the child she carried, and that during her confinement her husband ran away from their home and left her destitute. Being helpless she was compelled to go to the Whitechapel Workhouse, and being received in there remained some days. During that time, however, she was put into a ward with a lot of women whose language and behaviour were very bad. The milk given to the baby was sour and resulted in diarrhoea. The bread she received was mouldy and green, the meat black, hard, and uneatable. She was so weak as to be unable to give baby sufficient nourishment, but yet felt herself compelled to leave the house. She had discovered that her husband was living near Windsor with another woman, but he did not do anything for her. He was a good workman, and could earn over £2 a week. When she was in the workhouse she stated these facts, but was told that the *Guardians would not proceed against her husband to compel him to support her*. She left the workhouse because she was starved there through the badness of the food given her, and now had no one to assist her. Mr. Bushby directed Stancombe, a warrant officer of the court, to make inquiries into the matter, and report to him. Meanwhile he allowed the applicant 5s. from the poor-box, and directed her to attend before him again yesterday. Stancombe then stated that, having made inquiries at the Whitechapel Workhouse, he had seen the matron and the relieving officer Harris. The matron stated that the complaint of the food had nothing to do with her. The relieving officer said that *the*

Guardians would pass the woman on to her own parish, somewhere down by Bristol, and that there the inquiries as to her husband could be made. He could not say how long it might be before she was removed; it might be months. Stancombe knew that there were women with families who had been in the house for years, though their husbands were well able to support them. He now held a dozen or 15 warrants from that parish, which he was unable to execute, because he could obtain no assistance from the officer who was appointed solely to inquire into such matters, but was only told, when he sought information about the persons wanted, to find them himself. Bendall, head gaoler, said that the applicant's own parish was Whitechapel. She wished to know if the guardians could refuse to institute a prosecution against her husband to compel him to support her. Mr. Bushby said that the effect of such a course would be to deprive the applicant of the remedy of the law meant to afford her and others in her condition. With regard to the matter of the diet, it was beyond his control. He hoped that Mr. Harris, the relieving officer, spoke without the authority of the guardians as to their intentions. If not, it rendered nugatory, with regard to that parish, the 33rd section of the Poor Law Amendment Act, which allowed a woman to come before a magistrate and obtain an order of maintenance upon the husband without going to the Divorce Court. He could not suppose, upon the statement of the relieving officer, that the guardians of the Whitechapel Workhouse wished to keep the woman in unmerited pauperism. If so, it was a dereliction of duty upon their part which had best be made known. Apart from the injustice to the ratepayers, which would be great, was the unmerited suffering of enforced pauperism upon wives. The guardians were the only persons who could put the law in force, and he hoped that the remarks he had made would reach the ears of authority, though he doubted if ever such facts had been brought before them. Stancombe repeated that there was an officer who was appointed solely to conduct such prosecutions, but who rendered him no assistance as to the warrants he held. Mr. Bushby advised the applicant to return to the workhouse and put up with its inconvenience for a few days. He doubted if she would have long to wait.

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS, August 8, 1872.

The August sessions for criminal business were held to-day at Clerkenwell, before Mr. Serjeant Cox and Mr. Barrow, Deputy-Assistant Judges, Sir James Tyler and Mr. Charles White, Justices.

Margaret Watson, 29, a married woman, was charged with obtaining, by false pretences, from the guardians of the Stepney Union 1lb. of meat and 1lb. of bread, and from Mr. G. A. Page, assistant relieving officer of the same union, an order for admission to the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum. Mr. Poland (instructed by Mr. Swepstone on behalf of the guardians) prosecuted; Mr. Lewis Glyn defended. The prisoner's husband works for Mr. Shelburne, contractor, Fore-street, Limehouse, and is in receipt of 30s. a week from his employer; but it was alleged for the defence that he neglected her, and did not provide for her during an illness she was suffering from in July. For this illness she was attended by the parish doctor, and Mr. Page, the assistant relieving officer, visited her, when she told him that her husband was a sailor, had been away for six months, and had not left her his half-pay ticket. She also said she had maintained herself as a machinist and tailoress till her illness rendered her unable to work. Believing these statements, Mr. Page gave her an order for the Sick Asylum, and she was admitted as an inmate. Some days after it was discovered that her story was untrue, and Mr. Jones, the relieving officer, taxed her with

her falsehood. She admitted her guilt, and discharged herself from the asylum. For the defence it was argued that the prisoner really was so destitute that she was a proper subject for relief, and consequently no fraud had been committed. The jury found the prisoner guilty, but recommended her to mercy. Sentence was postponed till Monday next to procure the attendance of the prisoner's husband. Margaret Watson was subsequently sentenced to two months imprisonment with hard labour.

[The above case painfully illustrates the need of a legislative provision for the maintenance of wives. Had Margaret Watson asked for relief, she being the wife of a man earning 30s. per week, it probably would, and certainly might, have been refused. The "fraud" for which she was punished consisted in a false statement as to the mode in which her destitution was caused—there appears to have been no deception as to the fact of the destitution itself. A woman whose husband neglects and does not provide for her is practically as destitute as one whose husband has deserted her. If the guardians refuse to proceed against the husband to compel him to support her she has no remedy, for she cannot institute a suit for her own maintenance. The remedy would be to give power to the magistrates, on the application of a wife whose husband neglects to provide for her, to make an order on a husband to pay such sum for the maintenance of his wife as seems to them fit, having regard to the circumstances of the husband and the merits of the case.—Ed. W. S. J.]

At the last Norfolk assizes a blacksmith brought an action against the Reverend Mr. Dawson, rector of Necton, near Swaffham, for slander and libel. The slander alleged was that the defendant had set a story about his parish that the plaintiff starved and ill-used his wife. The rector, in a letter to the plaintiff's attorney, said that he had not set about the story, that it had been told him by the plaintiff's wife herself, and that he believed it to be true. In support, however, of his plea of justification, *i.e.*, that the plaintiff did starve and ill-treat his wife; the defendant could only establish that the wife was a weak, sickly, and paralytic woman, that her husband to some extent neglected her, and that he provided her with food of an unsuitable character for a woman in her bodily condition. The jury held that this treatment did not constitute ill-usage of the invalid, so they found a verdict for the plaintiff with £45 damages.

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS AND WORKING MEN'S WIVES.

Mr. Roebuck, speaking at the inauguration dinner at a working man's club at Sheffield, said:—"Before I sit down there is one subject that I want to touch upon. It is very near my heart; but I hardly know whether I shall be met with a laugh or something like a sneer—(no, no)—but I wish the time may come when a club of this sort may have the wives of its members here. (Hear, hear.) Now, I am told that the artisan of France may be seen, with his wife, and even with his children, taking their homely but well-cooked meal—always well cooked in France—(laughter)—in a restaurant. He takes it in the company of his wife and in the society of his children; and I do hope to see the day when a well dressed woman and an artisan shall come to a house like this, and that he shall be enabled to say to her, 'Here is a dinner which you and I may enjoy, dear, and shall not incur the reprobation of anybody.' I hope that the time may come. I do not see it very near, but still I leave it as one of the recollections that may some day or another be connected with my name, that that was my great desire through the whole of my life."

THE LADIES AT THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

Upwards of one thousand ladies were present at the recent meeting of the British Association at Brighton. In many of the sections they formed the majority of the audience, and not the least intelligent or appreciative portion of it. It is not often that they take part in the proceedings, which is to be regretted, for we are satisfied that all subjects, save perhaps those of a purely technical character, lose something from being perpetually regarded from an exclusively masculine point of view; and that the contribution which could be made to the discussions by the highly cultivated and intelligent ladies who year after year frequent the meetings, would be an element which would add greatly to their interest and value. Some feeling of this kind appears to be spreading among the members of the Association, if we may judge from the following extract from the opening Address to the Anthropological Section, by the President, Colonel Lane Fox, F.G.S., &c.:—"When towards the conclusion of the last meeting at Edinburgh one of the ladies present drew attention to the generally unscientific character of the papers which had been read, she, 'I believe, said no more than was strictly applicable, not only to that particular meeting, but to upwards of two-thirds of the papers which are included under the head of 'anthropology elsewhere; and here I may observe that if no other benefit were recognised from the participation of the other sex in our discussions, we should find in it a source from which home truths of this nature can emanate without their setting our backs up.' On the recent occasion, however, the ladies limited their part in the discussion to the section of Economic Science and Statistics, which met under the presidency of Professor Fawcett, M.P. The most popular paper read in this section—nearly the most popular read at the whole meeting of the British Association—was by Miss Emily Shirreff, on the higher education of women, with special reference to the work undertaken by the National Union for the Education of Women, of which Princess Louise is president.

The paper started by saying that "its purpose was to urge forward the work undertaken by the National Union for Promoting the Education of Women. A wide system of co-operation was the very basis of this work. Many are labouring in the cause of education, and have long laboured earnestly in various places unknown to each other and the public. It is by drawing them to work together, by introducing system and co-operation, that the work can be made effectual as a national movement towards a better state of things. We teach boys because the teaching will have its money reward, while girls are not so taught because the reward is not so apparent. But when the day shall come when other aims suggest other methods, and we think it of equal importance to educate boys as to teach them; then it will be acknowledged that the education of girls stands on exactly the same grounds, that the duty of giving full development to the human creatures' faculties, physical, moral, and intellectual, is entirely irrespective of sex as of class. It is difficult to draw up a profit and loss balance-sheet respecting the exercise or neglect of mental gifts, but it may be boldly affirmed that the waste culpably incurred by the denial to women of the means of education, could it be made the matter of a statistical report, would be appalling to those who think lightly of it now. I say denial, because women can only ask for the means of education they cannot procure for themselves. The power and the wealth of the country are in the hands of men. Some have thought to refute the claim of women by saying that men created the wealth; but unless it could be shown that women have had the same opportunities and have neglected them, such

an argument is worthless. By natural position, or by law, or by private rule, women have been debarred from lucrative occupations. What they nominally possess is not theirs' to use. A mother, for instance, could not command the use of her own fortune to educate her daughters. It is, then, fair to bring the claim against those who do possess the means and withhold them from such uses, and to lay at their door the waste of national resources caused by women's ignorance. In the face of all the work this generation has to do, we may well ask if intellect be so abundant that we can afford deliberately to prevent one-half of those classes whose mental power directs society from aiding in the common work. Is care for the public good so common that we lose nothing by leaving a large and influential portion of society ignorant of what national welfare demands? Is our modern life so simple that it matters not though half of those who hold position, and distribute wealth and employ labour, understand nothing of the relations amid which they live? Is the path of public duty so straight and easy that it signifies nothing whether in each home voices are raised for or against it? or we may further ask, if it be of no consequence to the nation whether round each cradle, cultivated or uncultivated minds minister to the great wants of the dawning intelligence, direct the earliest bent of association. She then advocated the institution of a public company to take up the subject, and concluded by saying that the National Union would work steadily and patiently on, hoping to see the dawn, at least of that day when England will cease to think the education of her daughters a matter of no national importance."

After the reading of the paper a discussion followed, which was opened by Mr. Barclay Phillips, who argued that with regard to the lower classes, an education was given to girls by the Government fully equal to their wants, and that classes able to pay for the higher branches of education could obtain it for their daughters as well as for their sons, while for girls of the middle class it was undesirable that their education should be the same as that required for boys. It was not necessary that a woman should be highly cultivated, and he instanced the Queen and the Princess of Wales as ladies who, without being learned, were accomplished and well informed, and shining examples of their sex. To him replied Mrs. Fawcett, who was received with cheers—bringing forward the reports of the School Commissioners to show that, as a rule, the parent's standard of a good education for girls was a low one, not rising above "accomplishments which charm, and tastes which fascinate." The opponents who made so much of educating girls to take their places as good wives and mothers, were reminded that the best means to such ends would be found in strengthening their intellectual powers, and fitting them to cope with any difficulties connected with the duties of either a wife or a mother, so that in the one case wives might have intellectual intercourse with their husbands, and so find their sympathies intensified and enlarged, and in the other mothers might be better fitted to superintend the training and education of their children. Mr. Adams, although a member of The National Union for Improving the Education of Women, did not agree with Miss Shirreff in thinking that the suggested limited company could be successful. Lady Bowring thought Miss Shirreff had overlooked that, as a boy is educated with a definite view to his future duties in life, so a girl's education should be conducted with as definite a purpose. Mr. J. G. Fitch compared small with large schools, and held the former to be mistakes, and this view was also supported by Dr. Carpenter. The Rev. Mr. Sturges made an attack on private schools, and Mr. Bohn followed in the track of Lady Bowring. Miss Davies defended the conductors of private schools, on the

ground that they were compelled to educate in accordance, not with their own views, but with those of the parents by whom they were supported; and she looked to the College for Women, as giving facilities for higher studies to young women, equal to those which had so long been enjoyed by young men. Mr. Hurst advocated Miss Shirreff's views. Miss Lydia Becker thought it might be well at present to discuss the education of women as a specialty; but she hoped the time would come when the education of women would be considered as part of the general education of the country. She disputed the view of Miss Shirreff that "man had created the wealth of the country," for she held that women had assisted to create the wealth. Remarking upon one speaker's thankfulness that all were not philosophers, she said that some people were thankful for small mercies, but for herself, she was not thankful not to be a philosopher, felt it to be a grievance that she had not had the opportunity of becoming one, and she hoped the women of the future would not be deprived of this right, if they possessed the ability. Miss Shirreff, in reply, pointed out that no comparison could be made with the fees charged in such schools as those in Edinburgh, which were endowed, and schools which would be paid for wholly by a company such as she proposed. As to the limitations to be placed on women's education, these should only be in respect of time and money, no limitation should be placed on the subjects. With regard to the intellectual powers of women, she would not enter upon the comparison of these with men, for it was not to be expected, she said, after the neglect of thousands of years, that women would be equal to men. She considered that if only regarding women as the educators of each generation, they had a claim upon the attention of the country for the training of women. The meeting was then in the usual way brought to a close.

In the same section, on the previous day, a paper was read by Miss Becker on the attendance and education of girls in the elementary schools of Manchester, which attracted a crowded audience, and gave rise to a lively discussion. Miss Becker supported her allegations as to the inferiority of attendance and instruction of girls in elementary schools by reference to the regulations prescribed by the Education Department, and to the experience gained on the Manchester School Board. In the discussion that ensued, Mr. Fitch, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Nicholson, Sir John Bowring, Mr. Bohn, Mr. Wilcock, Mr. Seeley, the Rev. Dr. Binney, and Sir Francis Lycett took part. The president said that he believed that the development of the human faculties was the greatest privilege which could be enjoyed by living in a civilised country, and although he might have (which he had not) the feelings of one speaker, who preferred an imperfectly educated woman to an educated woman, that would not settle the question. It was not what men might prefer, but what women preferred themselves. A vote of thanks was warmly accorded to Miss Becker for her paper.—In commenting on the discussion the *Spectator* says: "Taken as a body the women beat the men as debaters altogether out of the field, they spoke more eloquently, more reasonably, more lucidly;" and we think no one who was present on the occasion referred to will dissent from the judgment as to this particular debate. One little sign of progress as to the status of ladies in the association may be noted. Last year the association refused to recognise the presence at the meeting of the Empress of Brazil, though they included her husband in the list of foreigners present. This year the Empress Eugenie and another lady appear in the list of foreigners who are presented with tickets as the guests of the association.

A WOMAN AS BANK MANAGER.—Mrs. Michael Edwd. Murphy is manageress of the Branch Bank of Ireland at Limerick.

REVIEWS.

The Social Review—Woman: A Weekly Journal embodying female interests from an educational, social, and domestic point of view. Edited by Amelia Lewis. Price Twopenny. London. Published by Bernard Colnaghi, 81, Fleet Street.

The Ladies: A Journal of the Court, Fashion, and Society. Price Sixpence, weekly. With illustrated Supplement and a beautiful coloured Fashion Plate. London. Published by C. T. Tyler, 3, Amen Corner, Paternoster Row.

We are glad to welcome both the above additions to our periodical literature, and heartily commend them to the attention of our readers. Mrs. Lewis' paper contains some thoughtful articles on various aspects of social questions. *The Ladies*, in addition to topics of this character, offers useful and entertaining articles suitable for general circulation. Both journals admit correspondence on questions relating to women, and those who desire to see all sides of these important matters fairly presented may look with satisfaction and interest to the articles and letters in these periodicals.

In the *Contemporary Review*, for August, there is an able argument by Miss Wedgwood on "Female Suffrage in its influence on Married Life," from which we take the following:

As men have hitherto monopolised the cultivation of the world, as they have, I should add, a stronger imagination, no woman's picture of a woman has had a chance of competing with theirs. Hence it has come to pass that certain aspects of female life have been put on record with a distinctness and brilliancy which have virtually annulled all the rest, and the average man is rendered even less able to sympathise with a woman than she is with him. Thus it happens that as married people advance in life their standard is apt to be lowered. They have been constantly enlarging the region which, by the very fact of their holding it in common, is shut off from all moral influence. They have in so doing cut themselves off from the most elevating joy which we experience in our passage through this world—that sudden generation of power, that sudden enlargement of view which takes place when two human spirits come into moral contact, and the voice of conscience is echoed by sympathy. This is what marriage might be in every class of life, among the ignorant and hard-working just as much as among the cultivated and leisurely. Our falling short of this ideal has, in addition to all the weakness and imperfection of human nature, this obvious and removable cause, that we have built up an artificial barrier between men and women, so as to make moral sympathy between them impossible. It is, therefore, in the interests of all we are said to endanger, that we seek to obtain for our sex that educating influence which belongs to political recognition. To make women feel that they belong to a larger whole, that they are connected with the past and the future, and cannot act as mere isolated individuals, must be best even for that particular aspect of their lives, under which alone men are inclined to regard them. It is quite true that the suffrage given to women as holders of property—given, that is, on the only terms which are possible without a return to the false principle of legislating for women as a class apart—would give whatever power it did give to those women who are not men's actual or probable wives. But if it tended in any degree to set before men and women a common ideal—if it awoke in both sides the sense that there was a larger life in which they were sharers, a life not exalted by their mutual relations—if it made them feel themselves in any degree more capable of judgment of each other, and therefore of a truer sympathy—it would be a step towards a kind of union between average men and women such as is now seen only between the most exceptionally gifted specimens of the race.

PUBLIC MEETINGS.

COATBRIDGE.

A meeting was held on June 24 in the United Presbyterian Church, Coatbridge, near Glasgow, the Rev. John Inglis in the chair. After an address by Miss Craigen, a petition in favour of women's suffrage was adopted by a unanimous vote, and forwarded to Sir T. Colebrooke, for presentation to the House of Commons. Miss Craigen also addressed meetings at West Calder and Ecclefechan.

BIRKENHEAD.

On July 10 an open-air meeting was held in the Market Place, Birkenhead, attended by about 1,200 working men; Mr. Phillips, missionary, in the chair. Miss Craigen delivered an address. Discussion was invited. A few questions were asked, not in argument, but for information, on various points. The signature of the petition was carried by a large majority. After the adoption of the petition, Mr. Phillips said he was glad that women were coming forward in this matter. He thought it a healthy and patriotic thing for women to feel as citizens, and in this view he should propose three cheers with honours for the women who were thus proving that they possessed the feelings of English women. The cheers were given with acclamation. The petition was presented on July 30, by Mr. John Laird, M.P.

CONGLETON.

Miss Craigen addressed a meeting at Congleton on July 17 in the Primitive Methodist School-room. The meeting was fully attended, but the room was small, and the persons present mostly Good Templars, who came in full order and regalia. A petition was adopted, and sent to Mr. Legh, M.P., for presentation.

SILLOTH.

A meeting was held in the Assembly Room, Silloth, Cumberland, on July 29, 1872—Mr. Joseph Osborne in the chair—which was addressed by Miss Craigen. A petition in favour of the removal of the electoral disabilities of women was adopted, and signed by the chairman on behalf of the meeting. The petition was presented on August 10, by the Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P.

FEMALE DOCTORS.—In the town of Quedlinburg (Thuringia) there lived in the last century a much-esteemed physician whose name was Dorothea Christiana Erxleben. Mrs. Erxleben was the wife of the Dean of St. Nicolas. Her diploma was obtained in 1754. In a pamphlet which created a good deal of sensation at the period she examines the causes which prevent her sex from pursuing serious studies, and tries to demonstrate that it ought to be different. It appears as if her wishes are now being realised, if we take into consideration what has been going on for some years at the University of Zurich. This distinguished focus of intelligence at this moment has 63 female students, of whom 51 (44 Russian, one English, three Swiss, three German ladies) study medicine and 12 philosophy (10 Russian, one Austrian, one German). Six of the students have gained the doctrinal diploma, two of them are practising at St. Petersburg; another, Miss M., is chief doctor (or doctress) to the female hospital under the management of Mrs. Doctor Garrett-Anderson; the fourth will have the charge of a new female hospital at Birmingham, and the fifth is destined for a similar situation in her native country; whilst the sixth laureate has been appointed clinical sub-assistant at the University at Zurich.—*Swiss Times*.—From *Scotsman*, Friday, August 9th, 1872.

PETITIONS.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—IN FAVOUR.

Brought forward, Petitions 843—Signatures 355,801

June 24	§ Alexander Walker and others, chairman	Colonel Wilson Patten	1
July 2	§ Coatbridge, Inhabitants of; J. Inglis, chairman	Sir Thomas Colebrooke	1
" 27	§ Congleton, Inhabitants of, in public meeting assembled; Joseph Wyatt, chairman	Mr. Legh	1
" 30	§ Birkenhead, Inhabitants of, in meeting assembled; Alexander Phillips, chairman	Mr. Laird	1
Aug. 10	§ Silloth, Inhabitants of, in public meeting assembled; Joseph Osborn, chairman	Mr. Wyndham	1

Total number of Petitions 848—Signatures 355,806
The petitions marked § are signed officially.

The following summary of petitions for Women's Suffrage, presented to the House of Commons during the session of 1872, is taken from the supplement to the thirty-second Parliamentary report:—

	No. of Petitions signed Officially or under Seal.	No. of Petitions.	Signatures.
Women's Disabilities Removal Bill—			
Against	3	3	3
In favour	176	848	355,806

Obituary.

SIR T. G. FERMOR-HESKETH, BART., M.P.—We regret to record the loss by death of another parliamentary supporter of the Women's Disabilities Bill. Sir Thomas G. Fermor-Hesketh, M.P. for Preston, died at his residence, Rufford Hall, on August 21, aged 47 years. He was returned for Preston in the Conservative interest, in 1862. He voted for Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill, in 1871, and paired for it on the last division.

Mons. Leon Richer has established a free library for women and girls belonging to the association, *Pour des Droits des Femmes*, at 4, Rue des deux Gares, Paris; and all who take an interest in the intellectual advancement of woman are requested to send books to it.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—Just published, a new set of LEAFLETS, suitable for distribution at Meetings, consisting of short extracts from the speeches of the following members of Parliament:—JACOB BRIGHT, Esq., M.P., SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, Bart., M.P., E. B. EASTWICK, Esq., M.P., PROFESSOR FAWCETT, M.P., THE RIGHT HON. GEORGE WARD HUNT, M.P., SIR GEORGE JENKINSON, Bart., M.P., SIR WILFRID LAWSON, Bart., M.P., THE RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN MANNERS, M.P., WALTER MORRISON, Esq., M.P., P. H. MUNTZ, Esq., M.P., DR. LYON PLAYFAIR, M.P., T. B. POTTER, Esq., M.P., COLONEL SYKES, M.P., PETER RYLANDS, Esq., M.P., in favour of Women's Suffrage. Price Three Shillings per Thousand, to be had at the offices of the Society, 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL.—Edited by LYDIA E. BECKER.—This Journal is published monthly, and contains full information of the progress of the movement for removing the Electoral Disabilities of Women; accounts of public meetings, and lectures; correspondence, and original articles on the subject. It also records and discusses other questions affecting the welfare of women—such as education, employment, industrial or professional, and legislation affecting their property and personal rights. The volumes already published contain full reports of the debates in the House of Commons on the Women's Disabilities Bill, and in the House of Lords on the Married Women's Property Bill, besides other interesting and important intelligence. The Journal furnishes a medium of communication among the members, and a record of the work done by the different branches of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and by other persons and societies interested in improving the condition of women.

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THE PROPERTY OF MARRIED WOMEN.—The ANNUAL MEETING of Members and Friends of the Committee for Amending the Laws with respect to the Property of Married Women will be held in connection with the Social Science Congress, in the Mechanics' Institute, Plymouth, on Friday, the 13th inst.

The chair will be taken at four o'clock p.m., by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Sir J. D. Coleridge, Q.C., M.P.

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE JOURNAL. Edited by LYDIA E. BECKER.—Volume II., 1871.—In coloured cover, price post free, 1s. 10d. London: Trübner and Co., Paternoster Row. Manchester: A. Ireland and Co.

Communications for the Editor and orders for the Journal may be addressed to 28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester. Price post free for one year, One Shilling and Sixpence.

Printed by A. IRELAND & Co., Pall Mall, Manchester, for the MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, and Published by Messrs. Trübner and Co. Paternoster Row, London.—September 2, 1872.