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WOMEN'S NEED OF REPRESENTATION:

A Lecture

UPON THE NECESSITY OF GIVING WOMEN THE PARLIAM-
MENTARY FRANCHISE.

BY
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At a General Meeting of the Members of the Irish National Society for Women's Suffrage, and others, held at St. James's Place, Blackrock, Dublin, on 21st February, 1872, the RIGHT HON. LORD TALBOT DE MALAHIDE in the chair, MISS ANNE ISABELLA ROBERTSON, President of the Society, delivered the following Lecture. She said:

All who are acquainted with the history of any new and important political movement must be aware of how long it often takes before the public mind can grasp the subject, so as to comprehend it fully in all its bearings; but the rapid progress made by the agitation to procure the suffrage for women-ratepayers has surprised even its warmest and most sanguine promoters. The National Society for Women's Suffrage has now branches in every part of the kingdom. From the first it was set on foot and supported by some of the deepest thinkers and most intellectual men and women of the day, and now a brilliant array of names adorns the lists of the Women's Suffrage societies. Clergymen of different creeds warmly support the cause; practical men of business, heads of great commercial houses, are to be found standing in the ranks of adherents, beside professors and fellows of colleges of every university of note in the United Kingdom; while upwards of two hundred members of parliament of different political parties, including Mr. Disraeli and Sir John Coleridge, have voted in favour of Women's Suffrage. These facts are in themselves sufficient to make men and women give some reflection to the subject; yet still we find many persons, both men and women, who know very little about the matter, and who consequently feel indifferent as to whether women receive the benefit of representation or not. It is a fact that where the subject is best known, it is most approved of. There are numbers of people who see at once the injustice of excluding women who pay rates and taxes from the suffrage; but still they cannot perceive that the injustice extends a great deal beyond the mere insult and indignity of that exclusion. There are few who think of tracing any of the wrongs that they know women suffer from, to their being denied the power of representation; but eminent political writers have proved clearly, that without the polit-

ical franchise, no class of people will receive justice or consideration for their interests. Whatever good is to be gained by the British Constitution, would be derived by women from their admission to the franchise, and we cannot dispute this without disputing the advantage of Parliamentary government and the representation of property—in fact, the British system of government altogether. Viewing the subject in a clearly constitutional light, we must admit that if the representation in Parliament of those who are interested in property, is a national benefit conducive to the maintenance of all property interests, and to the increase of our national prosperity, then the disfranchisement of any class of holders of property must have an injurious effect. Women are considered intelligent enough to be allowed to hold property, great or small, and it is a fact that the numbers of independent women are increasing in Great Britain, which renders their admission to the franchise a matter of much practical importance. Women are also considered intelligent enough to understand that they must pay the tax-collector their rates and taxes when he comes knocking at their doors, or, in default of payment, that their furniture may be seized for the amount. There is not the slightest indulgence shown to women by the law in any particular. When they commit offences they are punished quite as heavily as men are, and although denied the privilege and protection of representation, are obliged to obey to the letter all the laws made in a parliament whose members they have no voice in electing. Public opinion is fast coming round to the belief that this state of things, which originated in a false idea of the mental and moral qualities of women, should no longer exist.

One reason, perhaps, why the movement for obtaining the suffrage for women may be in any degree retarded, can be traced to a very simple origin. Many English writers have expatiated upon the great respect which women receive in England, and contrast this so-called respect with the bad treatment of women in other lands. Thus, many persons are under the impression that women in this country have no wrongs to complain of, and therefore, of course, they do not see any necessity to support a movement which is set on foot to redress the wrongs which its advocates believe women labour under, owing to the want of political representation. Men who imagine that England is a free country, and who boast of its liberty, can hardly bring themselves to believe that the women of England are not included within the pale of that constitution which is supposed to be so great a blessing to the nation. If we declare that the representative system of English government is really a blessing to those who enjoy its privileges and protection, then we must acknowledge that women who are denied representation are denied this great blessing. If there are any who imagine that women are excluded from rights and privileges, and the power of political representation, in order to preserve their dignity, and to keep them from rough contact with a rough world, I would recommend them to read something of law, and something of the history of those ancient times when the laws oppressing women were chiefly originated. It is a matter worthy of note that among our warmest supporters in this movement, are

many eminent professors of law and of history—men whose large amount of information respecting the political condition of different nations in different ages, has taught them that in the early ages, when many of the laws respecting women were made, the general treatment of women was often cruel and barbarous, and devoid of reason. They were occasionally persecuted, tortured, and calumniated; they were declared to be so innately mean and wicked as to be wholly unfit for any amount of freedom; they were oppressed in hundreds of ways; and when they committed offences, they were often given far more severe punishments than men were awarded for the same crimes. In the writings of Michelet will be found many allusions to the cruel and unjust treatment of women in mediæval times, and the literature of the middle ages speaks itself of the want of reason that characterized the opinions of men respecting women. It is difficult, perhaps, at this time of day to determine whether our ancestors were really as absurd as they seem to us now when reviewing their bygone opinions; whether they really believed that women were mentally and morally inferior to men, or whether they merely said so from policy, to excuse themselves for their oppression of women, and to induce women to despise themselves and each other. But, however it may have been, no one with any large amount of reflection or information could for a moment imagine that the laws respecting women were framed in a spirit of tenderness or indulgence towards them. They bear too strong a resemblance to the laws relating to serfs, to slaves, and to the people of conquered nations, to admit of any such delusion in the minds of the well-informed. No doubt they bear traces of that spirit of oppression that characterized the ages when they were chiefly framed. We may excuse the early framers of those laws because they were narrow-minded and ignorant—believers in witchcraft and other superstitions; but still that does not make their laws any more tolerable to the women of the present day, nor less disgraceful to the age we live in, and which calls itself civilized.

A good deal has been said about the position that Providence has designed for women; but we must acknowledge that their positions are many and various. We see them as reigning queens and as charwomen; we see them as peeresses of the realm in their own right, and as servants of all work; we find them earning their bread in shops, in factories, in public and in private occupations; we find them staying quietly at home, scarcely stirring outside the walls of those homes; and we find them, especially in this country, as emigrants, leaving home and parents and friends, to seek a living in a strange land among strangers thousands of miles away. Millions of women are engaged in the hard struggle of life at present under every possible disadvantage; but many thoughtful people are at work trying to ameliorate their hardships, and to procure for them some redress. Those persons who are earnestly labouring to procure the franchise for women, are not doing so merely to enable a few rate-paying women to vote for Mr. Brown or Mr. Jones, but to procure for women the protection of representation. The franchise is the best means that has as yet been devised for the protection and represen-

tation of the people, and until a better method is discovered, women will be glad to have the benefit of it. It is not merely those women who are self-dependent and self-supporting that suffer from unjust laws, and whose difficulties require to be represented. In that very department of life called the sphere of woman—the family and the home—the deep sufferings of women have often struck those who are obliged to administer the law which bears so cruelly upon mothers with regard to the education, the guardianship, and the custody of their children. Women are frequently told to leave politics alone, and to think only of devoting their whole time and attention to their children. You would naturally suppose, then, that at least they enjoyed some rights and privileges here; but they have no more legal rights as to their own children, than the hired nurse who helps to take charge of them. A child may be taken from its mother and educated in direct opposition to her wishes; and even if her husband, at his death, leaves the guardianship of it to her—which he does not always do—she cannot appoint a guardian for it at her own death. The law has determined that she has no rights whatever as a mother; and yet she is taught to believe that all her hopes, all her affections, all her ambition, should be centred in the rearing of her children—thus rendering her misery the greater when those children may be removed from her care by the caprice or malice of a cruel husband. It has been well said that, as regards their children, women in this country are treated legally exactly like the slaves of the United States before the war of emancipation. Fortunately, it is not often that women's feelings are harrowed in this way by a separation from their children; but that is no reason that they should be left altogether to the mercy of chance. If women in any department of life seem to be treated in this age and in this country any better than they were treated in former times, or are now treated in other lands, it is because men are better educated and more reasoning than they were formerly, and more civilized here than they are in barbarous regions. But our laws have not been altered to suit the advance of the times, as far as women are concerned; and until women receive the franchise they will probably remain on unchanged and utterly inconsistent with public opinion, yet giving free scope occasionally for the most cruel wrongs to be inflicted on the sex which is the weaker.

The idea that women have nothing to do with politics, and ought to have nothing to do with them is, happily, fast giving way, and will soon have departed from the minds of all but those who do not really understand what politics mean. Considering that politics so frequently affect the minutest particulars of household life and economy—all that is acknowledged even now to be within the range of what is called "woman's sphere"—it cannot be denied that women should take an interest in such affairs. The multitude for which a nation legislates is composed of individuals, and each individual, small or great, may be concerned in, or affected by, such legislation. Each subject discussed in parliament, from the debate upon a war in a foreign land to the tax upon the cheapest article of food, may have its effect equally upon the men and women of the country for good or for evil. Politics, which simply mean the government of the

country, concern common-place men and women and the common affairs of life; and those persons who say that women have nothing to do with such matters, prove either their want of sincerity or their want of reflection.

I am occasionally informed by persons opposed to women's enfranchisement, that the ladies of their acquaintance, intelligent women too, do not care to have votes; and I am even told that some ladies are not merely indifferent, but are actually hostile to the movement for gaining the suffrage for their sex. Now it is precisely to meet cases of this kind that our Society has been organized. If every body of intelligence understood the question, or had comprehended it from the first, we would be spared the trouble and expense of having any society of the kind. Our object is to bring before the notice of people some knowledge of the benefit which would accrue to women from the franchise being conferred upon some members of their sex. The first step, then, to be taken in this movement when seeking for adherents, is to ascertain if the persons spoken to on the subject understand the meaning of the franchise. Do they comprehend the advantages which men gain by possessing it, do they know why men engaged in a life and death struggle rather than lose their constitutional privileges, and the liberty of electing their law makers? If they do not understand that, their opinions cannot have that weight which would attach to the opinions of persons who know exactly what they are talking about. Sometimes I have heard ladies expressing disapproval of women gaining the power of voting; but when I have asked them if they knew what the good of votes was to men, they frankly confessed they did not know. It is no wonder, therefore, that they did not prize the franchise, since they did not understand what it meant. There are several men also who really do not comprehend the matter any better, and who speak against the suffrage for women, not knowing, at the same time, the signification or value of the suffrage to any one, man or woman. These persons evidently do not appreciate the advantages of representative government.

An important point, then, is to impress on persons ignorant of the matter the benefit of the franchise. Men in this country possess the franchise, and they are thereby enabled to watch over their own interests, and to guard them as far as relates to the laws of this country. No woman in this kingdom has got the franchise, and I shall now point out some of the evil consequences which result to women, and some of the hardships with regard to the law, which they suffer from by their not being able to watch over their own interests in parliament, where the laws are made. I shall proceed, for instance, to illustrate the position, according to law, of a mother with regard to the religion of her children—taking real cases that have actually occurred at quite a late date. I choose these cases because they are so intimately connected with the sphere which is said to belong especially to woman—the sphere of home, where by a popular fallacy she is supposed to reign. We have all, no doubt, heard of the woman's kingdom, and many of us have believed that there really existed such a realm. An opponent of women's claims to the suf-

frage has observed "that the mission of women in life is different from that of men—women having reserved for them a higher position, in which the delicacy, the refinement, and grace, which form the charm of the female mind are more important than the pursuits of science. And this mission is the training of a family, which is, after all, the most important education that can be imparted to mankind." These are very fine words, and some mothers might be greatly pleased to think they were of so much consequence, and that their mission was so extremely exalted. But how vague and misleading are the words when we come to look at plain facts. Does the law recognize that mothers have this higher mission? Does the law treat the mother as if she had delicacy or refinement, or tenderness of feeling, or indeed any feeling at all? Quite the contrary. Perhaps many persons here may not be aware that the law existing in this country at present pays no respect whatever to a mother's feelings, even with respect to so sacred a subject as her child's religion. In some countries, Austria for instance, a mother can by law decide upon the nature of a daughter's religious education—the law there authorizing the father to determine the religion of the sons. But in this country the mother is paid no such respect or consideration. The law never enquires what she thinks about her daughters, or her sons either. Her wishes go for nothing. Now, no one can consider that women, whether Catholic or Protestant, think one religion much the same as another, and do not care what religion their children profess. On the contrary, it is generally believed that women have much stronger religious convictions than men, and certainly the appearances of our places of worship on Sundays, and that of religious meetings on week days—to which women resort in so much greater numbers than men—would lead us to consider this popular belief was not unfounded. Nevertheless, the law of this land treats mothers, whether Catholic or Protestant, as if their children's religious education was nothing whatever to them. I shall here quote the words of the Vice-Chancellor of the Lancaster Court of Chancery, in deciding a question lately as to the creed in which a little girl named Catherine Hawksworth, of Liverpool, was to be brought up. The father was a Catholic, and died when the child was only six months old. Her mother was a Protestant, and the child had lived with her, and been reared by her, and had been in the habit of attending the religious service of the Church of England. However, when the little girl was about eight or nine years old, some of the relations on the father's side desired that the child should be brought up a Catholic, as it had been the religion of the deceased father. The mother was, no doubt, astonished that relatives of her husband, long dead, could presume to have any authority over the child she had nursed, and cherished, and taught for so many years. She appealed to the law, but soon found that the law had no protection or sympathy for her. The Vice-Chancellor was obliged to decide according to the law which he was appointed to administer; but he declared, were he at liberty to follow his own opinion, he would have had no hesitation in yielding to the mother's appeal, and allowing her to retain the training and education of her own child. His words were these: "To

direct that the child should be brought up in the Catholic faith, will be to create a barrier between a widowed mother and her only child—to annul the mother's influence over her daughter on the most important of all subjects on which it can be exercised, with the almost inevitable result of weakening it in all others; to introduce a disturbing element into a union which ought to be as close, as warm, as absolute as any known to man; and lastly, to inflict the most severe pain on both mother and child. But it is clear that no argument which would recognize any right in the widowed mother to bring up her child in a religion different from its father's, can be allowed to weigh with me at all. According to the law of this court the mother has no such right. The duty of the widowed mother is, in general, to bring up the child according to the faith which its father professed, even though she utterly disapproved of it, and feels that to do so will diminish her influence over the child, and cloud the relation between them." For these reasons his Honor directed that the child should be educated in the Catholic faith. The mother, however, appealed once more to English law, anxious to try a last chance to keep her child, and the case was brought to the Court of Chancery before the Lords Justices of Appeal. The decision was again adverse to the mother. One of the Lords Justices, Lord Justice Mellish, had the grace to say that he could quite conceive a difference of opinion as to the propriety of the rule of law, but that court could not alter the rule of law, which was that unless there existed some strong reason in the interest of the child rendering it undesirable, a child ought to be brought up in the religion of its father. The other Lord Justice, Lord Justice James, gave his decision without any apparent qualms, concluding with these words: "The mother has had the charge of the child up to the time when her regular religious instruction ought to commence, and the court ought now to direct that she be brought up and educated as a member of the Catholic church." This decision was given on the 26th of April, 1871, the mother's appeal being *dismissed with costs*.

Here we perceive only too plainly that the interests and the feelings of a mother are taken into no account whatever by the law. The law recognizes no claim on the mother's part. It appears to forget her existence. This is the result of women not being represented in parliament. If women had votes to elect members of parliament, the laws made in parliament would of necessity be careful to recognize women's claims to justice; their right to fair play and consideration could not be forgotten or be laid aside, if women were permitted to attend to what concerns their sex in the framing of laws.

I shall now mention the case of a Catholic lady married to a Protestant gentleman of the County of Cork. This lady, Mrs. Purcell, was left a widow with two little children, a son and a daughter; and she was appointed the guardian of the children by the Court of Chancery, and was allowed five hundred pounds a-year for the children's maintenance. Six years after the father's death, a relative of the father caused Mrs. Purcell, the mother, to be communicated with touching the religious education of the children. The Catholic

mother could not openly resent such interference between her and her children on the part of a relation of her deceased Protestant husband. She knew too well that the law was all against her, and that instead of giving her sympathy, it would decide directly in opposition to her wish, to educate her children in her own religion. She did not therefore appeal to the law at all. And what steps do you think she took? In order that she might be enabled to bring up her son and daughter in the creed she thought best, she fled with them secretly, like a criminal, from her native land, well knowing that she was acting against the laws of her country. Does not this case remind us of the flight of the slave-mother depicted in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," when escaping from the United States to Canada, where her little boy was safe from the slave-dealer who wished to separate mother and child?

Mr. Beresford Hope, a Member of Parliament, who often gets up to oppose Women's Suffrage, says that women require sympathy and protection; and no doubt if he were convinced that the possession of the suffrage would afford some safeguard to women where their dearest interests are concerned, he would support the Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of women, instead of opposing it. The case of Mrs. Purcell is a practical commentary on the amount of sympathy and protection given to women by the law as at present existing, when they wish to fulfil their high mission of training their children in the mode they think best. The Court of Chancery directed that the yearly allowance for the children's maintenance should not be paid to Mrs. Purcell until she obeyed the order directing her to rear her children in the Protestant faith, and to bring them back to Ireland forthwith. Mrs. Purcell, actuated by irresistible religious convictions, persisted in living in a foreign land, and in educating her children as members of the Catholic Church. And so this poor anxious mother struggled on for years, a stranger in a strange land, not receiving one shilling from the Court of Chancery of the sum allotted for the children's maintenance. But at the end of eight years Mrs. Purcell's daughter died; and then the mother ventured to return to her own country, as her only remaining child, her son, was then nearly fifteen years of age, and was too deeply imbued with the principles of the Catholic religion to have another faith forced upon him.

You see here that it is no question of which is the wiser, the father or mother, or no question of which is the better religion, the Protestant or the Catholic. If it were one particular religion only in which the law of the land required a widowed mother to educate her children, a state religion for instance, we might imagine that a narrow-minded bigotry actuated the framing of such laws on the part of the ruling powers, and we might entertain some kind of respect for sincere though mistaken views; but we see by the two cases I have just mentioned, of the trials severally of a Protestant mother and of a Catholic mother, that it is not a question of religious intolerance, but of an utter forgetfulness of woman's claims to justice or fair dealing, even in her so called sacred sphere of wife and mother. The question is, which is the religion of the father? and

even where daughters are concerned, the religion of the mother is of no account. The law of Austria furnishes an example, as I have observed, of a rough and ready attempt at justice; for while it permits the mother to decide as to the religion of her daughters, it leaves the father to determine the creed of the sons.

But some people may say that in the cases I have mentioned there was a difference of religion between husband and wife; and that a woman could easily prevent such trials as I have spoken of, by marrying only a person of her own religious creed. It must be remembered, however, that the rule of law which forgets that a mother is interested in her child's religion, must always place the mother merely at the mercy of chance. She has no security by law. Should her husband change his religion, then he can have his daughters as well as his sons educated in the creed he has just newly adopted, and in case of a dispute with his wife on the subject, the law would uphold his wishes, and would not listen for one moment to the wife's appeal to be allowed to direct even the religious training of her daughters.

Permit me to state a case where the husband, a reputed Protestant, changed his religion on his death-bed, making a will about a week before his decease, directing that all his children, three girls and two boys who had all been baptized in the Protestant Church, should be handed over to certain guardians, in order that they might be brought up in a religion different from that professed by their mother. In the newspaper report of the case, it is stated that the dying man in question, Thomas Marson, of Belfast, said that his wife was a Protestant, and that he wished to make arrangements to have his children brought up in the Catholic faith; and he expressed the great unhappiness he felt that they had been baptized Protestants. The reverend gentleman who administered the last sacraments to him said the proper course would be to appoint legal guardians to carry out his wishes. Such indeed is the law! The dying man might take a pen and make a will, without warning to his wife, separating from her every one of her children, boys and girls alike, and the law would support him in this exercise of power.

I may observe that it only serves the more to show the want of thought and feeling which characterises the present law, for persons to tell women to leave politics alone, and that their truest happiness consists in cultivating their domestic affections. It would be better, considering the state of the law, that women had no affections at all, and then they could not have their feelings wounded so cruelly with express legal sanction. It may be said that such cases of hardship occur very seldom. The same can be said of murder; it fortunately occurs very seldom, but we would not feel very safe or comfortable in a country where a murderer was not legally punishable for his crimes, and where we had for our safety and protection, merely to depend upon people being too good-natured, or too well principled to kill us. When women really understand the law, they may feel somewhat uneasy that it does not surround them with more safeguards for the protection of their dearest interests. Not long ago a report appeared in the newspapers of a case where the mother, Mrs. Gar-

nett, was said to have tampered with her child's religion, because, having changed her creed from that of her deceased husband, she taught her child the religion she thought best. Thus, if you see a child saying its prayers at its mother's knee, you cannot know whether she is bringing it up piously and properly, or whether she is unlawfully "tampering" with its faith, until you know what creed the father professed, even if he be dead for several years. For, according to law, the mother's faith, as I have before said, is of no account; but the father, whether he be Protestant or Catholic, is always of the right religion. Those ladies and gentlemen who write romantically about the "woman's kingdom," and woman's powerful influence in the sphere of home, evidently do not know much of the law, which gives to a woman no more rights with reference to her children than with reference to politics. It must be acknowledged that however men have disregarded the feelings of women in making the laws, they have taken pretty good care of themselves, settling everything in a manner highly conducive to their own peace of mind, to the exercise of their own ambition, and to their special interests at home, abroad, and everywhere. A woman must not be allowed to think of entering a profession and earning a good income (especially if she be in the rank of those who determine our social customs and make the laws) because she has to look after her children, and give up her whole time to them; and then she must not expect to have any rights or legal power over these children, because she does not earn anything for their support.

I have drawn especial attention to the religious education of children; but in every other branch of education the mother is equally powerless by law. She may have a good deal of influence, and probably some real power in the family; but this is in accordance with the law of nature, and in spite of the law of the land, and the ladies and gentlemen here assembled are aware that it is the law of the land we wish to improve, as far as concerns the interests of women. Some women think themselves very generous and self-sacrificing in saying that they do not wish for any rights, and are quite willing to give up all privileges in favour of their husbands; but evidently our law-makers did not expect any such generosity on the part of women, for they determined not to leave it in the power of any married woman—gentle or simple—to retain rights or privileges. Without allowing any choice in the matter, the law deprives a woman, as soon as she marries, of almost her legal existence—except in the case of serious crimes, for she can be executed as a separate individual when she commits a murder. It would be too much to expect that the "husband and wife are one, and that one the husband," when the scaffold and the hangman are in question; but if a good property falls to the wife, then it is convenient and proper that the husband and wife should be one, and that one the husband.

People sometimes say that to give women the suffrage would take them from their domestic duties. This argument would lead us to infer that the women of this country were very hard-worked indeed: that they were more constantly occupied with domestic drudgery than the busiest lawyers, the busiest doctors, the busiest grocers, the

busiest blacksmiths, were occupied with their various callings: for all these last-named individuals are supposed to find time to vote. Other opponents of women's suffrage declare that women ought not to be allowed votes because they do not work at all, and are entirely provided for and protected by men who save them all trouble.

In answer to those romantic people who imagine that women are shielded from the necessity of working for their own support, I may mention that nearly three millions of unmarried women in England alone are gaining their livelihood by their own exertions, and managing their own affairs; while eight hundred thousand married women, with their husbands alive, are engaged in occupations by which they earn money. In the manufacturing parts of the country especially, from whence springs so much of our national wealth, women are employed in large numbers, always, however, receiving less wages than men even for doing the same amount of work as men. Again, it has been said that women are not sufficiently educated to vote; while, at the same time, we know that men who can neither read nor write may now possess the privilege of voting. A highly educated lady, possessing thousands a-year and paying a large amount in taxes, besides perhaps contributing to the support of many charitable public institutions of the country, is not considered intelligent or worthy enough to be permitted a vote, while the blacksmith who shoes her horses may be endowed with the privilege.

Many years ago there were three prizes offered for the three best essays on a particular political subject. The competition was open to the entire kingdom: and when the time came for declaring the names of the winners, it was found that the three prize political essays were all written by one and the same person, and that person a lady about twenty-four years old. To think that women could find any difficulty in comprehending political questions is simply ridiculous. The facilities for studying politics are far greater than those for studying any other branch of knowledge. What is so cheap as a daily newspaper? Books upon botany or painting, Berlin wool for executing square featured men and women and angularly-formed animals, as ornamental covers for ottomans, etc., cost a great deal of money; but our newspapers are a cheap luxury, and there are few households, whether consisting of men or women, where the daily paper is not received as almost a necessary of existence every morning.

It is often said that no one could object to the franchise being given to women of what are called "the better classes" of society; but any one who has a knowledge of the industry, the integrity, and good sense so generally displayed by those hard-working women who as heads of families, or as single women, are earning their bread honestly and independently, must acknowledge that the women of each separate class are quite as capable of voting conscientiously as the men of the same class. The franchise is spoken of as a privilege and protection for men, and why not the same for women? Some people profess to think that women would lose rather than gain in dignity by exercising the franchise: but let us take a glance at the male persons who rank politically with women. The law books state

that some persons are disqualified for ever from being voters—such as “women and idiots.”

To some ladies and gentlemen this may, perhaps, appear an extremely dignified and graceful position for women, but I confess I cannot agree with them.

I will briefly allude to another argument occasionally made use of by opponents of women's suffrage, who seem to have arrived at their wits' ends in trying to discover something to say in opposition—namely, the argument that as women are not called upon to defend the country as soldiers, they should not expect to be politically represented. One answer to this argument is, that British soldiers themselves cannot exercise the franchise, because they are not rate-payers or householders; while clergymen, who certainly are not expected to undertake military duty, and men utterly incapacitated by age or infirmity from entering warlike service, are, nevertheless, permitted to exercise the privilege of electors, when they pay the requisite amount of rates as householders. Women are strictly keeping within the bounds of the British constitution when they ask for the suffrage as householders and ratepayers.

To point out the many hardships suffered by women from not being represented in the councils of the nation, would take up far more time than can now be spared; but I shall mention one or two cases more. Mr. Mill, in his memorable speech made in favour of women's suffrage in the House of Commons in May, 1867, mentioned that Christ's Hospital in London, generally called the Bluecoat School, and which had been founded originally for boys and girls alike, was then supporting and educating eleven hundred boys, destined for gentlemanly professions and callings, and only twenty-six girls, who were being trained for domestic servants. That was the just way the girls were treated; nearly all the money of the endowment was monopolized for the advantage of the boys. With regard to education generally, the interests of women have been almost entirely neglected by the State. There was formerly a vague idea prevalent, no doubt, that if women were educated highly they might not be contented to be such constant drudges as it was wished they should be, or would not believe so implicitly all that was imposed upon them to keep them contented with holding an inferior position. The scientific institutions of the country have displayed great injustice to women. The Royal Astronomical Society refused to give its gold medal to Miss Caroline Herschel, for her discovery of five comets, because she was a woman—frankly declaring that if the discoverer had been a man, he should have been awarded it. Mrs. Somerville, whose scientific works are so well known, and who is now upwards of eighty years old, only received about a year ago a tardy recognition of some work she accomplished twenty or thirty years before, by being given a medal for it: and this was owing to the representation of some of those persons engaged in the present movement for obtaining justice and fair play for women.

While thus discouraging women in every pursuit of high knowledge, by excluding them from scientific societies, and by refusing them marks of distinction and honours, when, in spite of obstacles,

they happen to make important scientific discoveries; opponents say that women have no taste, and in fact, no brains for science, or for any pursuit that requires deep thought. They first deny them the means of cultivating their intellect, and then they declare they have no intellect to cultivate.

It has been said that Members of Parliament chosen altogether by male voters might remedy all the legal injustices under which women labour; but what guarantee would they possess that succeeding law-makers might not bring back the old state of oppression? Until women gain the suffrage themselves, they never can be thoroughly protected against the caprice of the ruling powers. In the history of the world it will be found that privileges have been sometimes granted to women, and have been sometimes taken from them again, and have oftener been withheld from them altogether for no palpable reason. In some countries women can reign, whether as despotic rulers or as constitutional sovereigns, and in others they are excluded from the throne. But no one has ever proved that the nations where only male monarchs were permitted were uniformly better governed or more prosperous than where women as well as men were allowed to reign. Hanover would not permit Queen Victoria to ascend the throne of that kingdom. Her Majesty might do well enough to be the sovereign of the British Empire, but she was not thought good enough for Hanover. Now, however, Hanover has lost its king, and the conqueror reigns in his stead. In France no woman could ascend the throne, yet royalty there is in no higher favour for all that; and according to the present law there, every man in that country, however uneducated, possesses the privilege of the franchise; while no woman in France, however gifted, has any political rights whatever. These arrangements, whereby women are excluded from legitimately exercising political power, have not been productive of such beneficial effects as to make France serve as a brilliant example to other lands, of a method in which a country may provide stability and security, combined with liberty, progress, and happiness. Apparent caprice and inconsistency towards women may also be pointed out as instanced by France, which would not have a female sovereign, granting now medical degrees to women; whereas in England, where a lady at present sits upon the throne, no woman, notwithstanding, can attain at present the dignity of doctor of medicine. To point out further inconsistency in the treatment of women, it may be observed that in the matter of public distinction, women may enjoy it in some particulars, consistently with receiving the highest possible respect; while, nevertheless, there is a vague idea that it is feminine and graceful to like retirement, and to shrink from public notice. For instance, some people think it would be unfeminine for a young lady to have her name published as having won a prize in any solid branch of learning; but they do not think it unfeminine for her to have her dress minutely described in the public papers when she attends either the Drawing-room or state balls in London, or the Viceregal court in Dublin. When they read in their morning papers that Miss Angelina Blank, of 260 Fitzwil-

william-square, wore a train of the richest *poult de soie*, trimmed with *bouffants of tulle*, and *jupe* of magnificent lace, and corsage ornamented tastefully, they think this publicity is quite right for Miss Angelina Blank; but they would not think it so nice to see her name in the papers as having won a prize in history or mathematics; though I think we must all agree that the young lady who is thus tacitly taught to feel ashamed of intellectual attainments, and proud of wearing the richest lace, will naturally think attending to her dress more important than cultivating her mind. A lady may also make a speech to a regiment of soldiers, before an assembled multitude, on the occasion of presenting new colours to the corps; or she may give the name to a ship, likewise in presence of thousands; or lay the foundation stone of some public building before all eyes. But nobody thinks her unfeminine for doing these things. On the contrary, it is a proof of the respect in which she is held that she is asked to do them. She feels it as a compliment, and so do her whole family, that she has been selected for such distinction.* Moreover, there are various public positions now filled by women in this country, and neither Government nor society in general object to them. For instance, a woman may sit all day at a street corner, winter and summer, selling fruit at a stall under the shelter of a dilapidated umbrella; she may be the stewardess of a vessel bound to weather all storms; she may let lodgings and be liable to the intrusion of any one who sees her bill on her window-pane; and no one will say that these employments are unfeminine. The Government has been careful to exclude women from all high, well-paid appointments; but it permits them to engage in almost any low occupation that poverty may drive them to, thus proving that it is quite a delusion to imagine women are debarred from political or other privileges, in order to preserve their refinement.

With reference to public notice, I may observe, that it is the most refined ladies in the country who have their movements chronicled in the newspapers for all the world to read in the "Fashionable Intelligence." It is precisely the ladies of greatest distinction that we know most about, whom we are expected to respect the most; and if women see, as they do, the photographs of princesses in shop windows, and can ascertain from the public press the hour at which the royal ladies attended divine service on Sunday, and where they drove on Monday, and whom they visited on Tuesday, and so on through all the days of the week, surely no one could expect women with any reasoning powers whatever to believe that public notice is in itself so objectionable, that women, sooner than run the risk of appearing before the public, had better give up all idea of voting at elections, and securing for their sex the advantage of being able to look after their own interests concerning the laws of the country.

* I may here point out that since the first edition of this Lecture was printed, Her Excellency the Countess Spencer took part in the procession at the opening of the Dublin Exhibition last June. No other lady had a place in the procession. The Countess Spencer, as the wife of the Lord Lieutenant, takes precedence of all ladies in Ireland, and the fact is therefore at once apparent that for a woman to take part in a public procession is consistent with the highest honour, and is a mark of distinction to a woman as well as to a man.

At the same time, no compliment can be greater than that paid to women by many opponents of women's suffrage, who are so satisfied with ladies as they are at present that they do not think there is any room for improvement: who fear that if women become in any way different, it must be alteration for the worse, as it would be impossible for them to imagine that women could be any better than they are now. In answer I may say that as political power does not make polished gentlemen unmannerly, nor make rough men rougher than they were before they attained such power, so I trust that refinement and courtesy may not disappear when other women in this country besides her Majesty, the Queen, are admitted to political privileges.

The efforts to procure the suffrage for women ratepayers have already done much for the advancement of their whole sex. Wrongs have been pointed out that remained unnoticed, except by the silent sufferers, for centuries; and men in high places are awakening to a sense of the deep injustices endured so long by the women of the nation. I myself heard Mr. Gladstone say in the House of Commons that the laws had done much less than justice to women; but he was induced to consider the subject by the fact that Mr. Jacob Bright's bill for removing the electoral disabilities of women was then being discussed in the House. At the present time the difference between those who can guard their interests and those who are thrown defencelessly upon the mercy of others, is the political franchise. I would earnestly impress upon all those who are interested in the elevation of women—whether as regards their higher education, or their admission to any profitable employments now shut out from them—to do what they can to further the movement in favour of women's suffrage. When women are granted the franchise they can no longer be refused any just or reasonable privileges; but as long as they remain without it, their wishes and requirements will be liable to meet with slights and neglect from government. Those who are working in this great cause, giving time, and thought, and money for its promotion, and who have brought it to its present state of prosperity, believe that the wrongs of women—both social and political—arise from their exclusion from the franchise, and that all schemes for advancing their position will utterly fail unless built upon the solid foundation of constitutional rights.

Let none, therefore, who have women's welfare really at heart, refuse a helping hand in this movement, that a successful termination to it may not be delayed.

The Chairman, LORD TALBOT DE MALAHIDE, expressed his sympathy with the movement for obtaining the franchise for women ratepayers, and declared his belief that men and women both would be benefited by the extension of the suffrage to women. He said it was not to be supposed when women obtained the franchise, that men and women would be divided into opposite camps, but that both would render mutual assistance, and thus the general welfare of the community would be increased. He also alluded to the high position which women enjoyed among the Saxons of old.

The REV. JOHN NEWENHAM HOARE, Rector of Killeskey, County Wicklow, and Chaplain to the Lord Lieutenant, moved a vote of thanks to MISS ROBERTSON for her exhaustive and able address. He considered it most unjust to exclude women from the franchise when paying rates and taxes.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ARTHUR PHAYRE, K.C.B., seconded the vote of thanks. He said he believed that the time was not far distant when the cause which was so clearly advocated by Miss Robertson would triumph, and that her name would then have a foremost place among its first and ablest supporters.

The CHAIRMAN moved that Miss Robertson's lecture be printed for circulation by the Society.

MRS. THOMPSON, Alderford, County Roscommon, seconded the motion.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman was proposed by EMANUEL HUTCHINS, Esq., J.P., Ardnagashel, County Cork.

MRS. GELSTONE, County Antrim, seconded the resolution.

The meeting was crowded and successful, and among those present were :—Lord Talbot de Malahide ; The Hon. G. Gough ; Major-Gen. Sir Arthur Phayre, K.C.B. ; Miss Catherine Robertson ; Miss A. I. Robertson ; The MacDermot Roe, High Sheriff of the County Roscommon ; Lady Wilde ; Mrs. Thompson, Alderford House, County Roscommon ; General Galwey and the Misses Galwey ; the Rev. J. Newenham Hoare, A.M., Rector of Killeskey, County Wicklow, and Chaplain to the Lord Lieutenant ; the Rev. Thaddeus O'Malley ; Emanuel Hutchins, Esq., J.P., Ardnagashel, Co. Cork, and Miss Alicia Hutchins ; Lorenzo Nixon Nunn, Esq., and Mrs. Nunn, Middletown House, Co. Wexford ; Mrs. Close, 82, Stephen's Green ; Alexander S. Orr, Esq., and Mrs. Orr, Brooklawn, Blackrock ; the Rev. Barrington Orr, and Miss Kate Orr ; James McCullagh, Esq., Brookfield ; Robert Tyrrell, Esq., Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin ; the Misses Cheevers, Toberna-terrace, Seapoint ; Miss M'Dermott, Monkstown-hill ; the Misses Frazer, Annagh, Co. Sligo ; the Misses Bolton, Idrone-terrace, Blackrock ; Chatterton White, Esq. ; the Rev. W. G. Carroll, A.M., Incumbent of St. Bride's, Dublin ; James Creed Meredith, Esq., LL.B., and Mrs. Meredith, 17, Lower Fitzwilliam-street ; Mrs. Gelstone, the Mansion House, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim ; E. J. Hardy, Esq., and Miss Hardy, Moylary Glebe, Co. Louth ; the Misses Hogan ; Mrs. and Miss Catterson Smith ; Mrs. Blacker ; C. Edward Tuthill, Esq., Sloperton, Monkstown ; Miss E. Haughton and Miss Macintosh ; Mrs. Urlin ; J. Corbet, Esq. ; the Misses Stock, Eagle Lodge, Blackrock ; Samuel Hutchins, Esq. ; Mrs. Carter ; James MacIvor, Esq., etc.

NOTE.—The above Lecture was also delivered by Miss Robertson at Blackrock, Dublin, September 2nd, 1871, Sir John Barrington, D.L., in the chair :

And at Portrush, Co. Antrim, October 2nd, 1871, the Rev. Alexander Alcock, A.M., in the chair.

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THE POLITICAL DISABILITIES OF WOMEN.

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THE POLITICAL DISABILITIES OF WOMEN.

THE question of the political disabilities of women, which, long dormant but never dead, has remained hidden in the hearts of thoughtful women, to be repressed with a sigh over the hopelessness of the attempt to gain a hearing, has suddenly sprung into life and activity, and assumed, in an incredibly short time, an acknowledged position among the most important social and political subjects which call for the attention of the nation. This result could not possibly have been attained unless the principles involved in the claim had been in harmony with those great ideas of progress and reform which have taken so deep a hold on the minds of the people of this country, and which have received so sudden a development in about the same period of time as that comprised in the history of our present movement.

Within the last half century there has been a revolution in the principles which govern the distribution of political power. Shall the people be governed by rulers claiming to be divinely appointed, or shall they be ruled by representatives of their own choosing? Shall the right of the common people culminate in the claim for good government, or shall it rise to that of self-government? Is it enough for the populace that their irresponsible rulers shall govern them according to what they, the rulers, believe to be just and beneficial principles, or have those who must submit to laws and governance a right to be consulted in the election of the governors and the enactment of the laws? Such is the problem which it has been the task of the last fifty years to solve, and which has resulted in the triumph of the principles of popular government by the passing of the Representation of the People Act of 1867. This principle is now accepted by both the great parties in the State. A measure based upon it has become law by common consent. It has therefore changed its position from that of one which had to be recommended and enforced by those who urged the adoption of any measure founded upon it, to that of one which is admitted to be established. Therefore any class

in the community which seeks for the removal of political disabilities does so on principles which are now sanctioned by the Legislature as those on which the government of the country shall henceforward be conducted.

We, who make this claim for the enfranchisement of women, do so from the feelings and for the reasons which have led other classes of the community to make the same claim, and we ask that our claim shall be decided by the same principles which have guided the judgment of the Legislature in the case of others. In making this demand we are, however, met at the outset with the allegation that the same principles of justice are not applicable to both sexes—that the claim which is just when made by a man, is unjust when made by a woman—that when men say that the Government has no moral right to hold them responsible to laws enacted without or against their consent, nor to tax the fruits of their labour without giving them a voice in the imposition and disbursement of such taxation, their complaint is just and reasonable, and deserves attention; but that when women say the same thing, their complaint is unjust and absurd, and must be suppressed. Now we say that we can see no reason for this alleged discrepancy, and we challenge those who maintain it to show cause why the same broad principles of justice are not applicable to all human beings. We maintain that women are equally liable with men to suffer from misgovernment—that they have the same interest as men in securing good government—that they have the same intelligence as men in regard to the method of obtaining it, and further, that the only security for good government, either of women or men, is that the governed shall be consulted in electing the rulers and making the laws. We say that the disadvantages and hardships entailed on women by their deprivation of representative government are analogous to those suffered by the lower classes at the hands of the more powerful interests in the country. Women complain of the want of the means of education, want of liberty to engage in honourable or lucrative professions, want of opportunity of earning the means of subsistence, want of security for the possession of their property, their tenure being forfeited by marriage; want of sufficient protection for their persons from the violence of men; these and many other grievances are enough to justify any class of persons in seeking for their removal. Whether the special grievances of women are or are not precisely like those suffered by the common people at the hands of the privileged classes, there can be no doubt that they spring from the same root, political slavery, and their redress must be sought by the same means, political emancipation.

The theory on which the right of voting under the new Reform Act is ostensibly based is that of giving a vote for every household

or home. Mr. Disraeli stated in the House of Commons that by the Act regulating the franchise, the House gave it, and intended to give it, to every householder rated for the relief of the poor. But when this declaration comes to be practically tested, it is found that about one-seventh of the ratepayers in every borough are adjudged to be out of the pale of representation. This happens though they are taxed to the same extent as the others, and, moreover, have been subjected to the special burdens imposed by the ratepaying clauses of the Representation of the People Act, for which the vote conferred by that Act was confessedly offered as an equivalent. A woman would not only be derided, but punished, who refused to obey a law on the ground that "man" did not include "woman," that "he" did not mean "she," and that therefore she was not personally liable for contravening any Act so worded. Accordingly, though the "occupiers" and "owners" who come under the operation of the ratepaying clauses of the Reform Act were referred to throughout by masculine pronouns only, women were made to pay the increased rates thereby imposed. These clauses bore with distressing severity on thousands of poor women, as we gather from police reports which appeared in London and other newspapers. At Hackney in one day more than six thousand persons, mostly women, were summoned for non-compliance with them; and at Lambeth, we are told that several poor women applied to Mr. Elliott for his advice how to save their "things" from being seized by the parish authorities for rates under these clauses. Mr. Elliott did not appear to have any power to help them, and the applicants left, lamenting that they were likely to have all their "things" taken for rates for the right to vote under the new Reform Act. But when women came into court to claim the vote conferred on the occupiers who were fined, they discovered that "words importing the masculine gender" were held to include women in the clauses imposing burdens, and to exclude them in the clauses conferring privileges, in one and the same Act of Parliament.

One of the excuses alleged for excluding women from the right of voting is a desire to save them from the unpleasantness of contact with a crowd during the conduct of an election. But no one proposes to force women to record their votes, and if they did not like the crowd, they would have full liberty to stay away and exempt themselves from the operation of the vote-giving clauses. But there was no escape from the operation of the ratepaying clauses; and under these, thousands of poor women were dragged from their homes, and haled before the magistrate, for no wrong that they had done, but solely by the operation of an Act from the benefits of which they were excluded under the pretext of exempting them from an unpleasant duty. Men must

have a very low idea of the intelligence of women when they endeavour to impose on them by pretences such as these.

The political position of women under the existing law has been compared to that of minors, criminals, lunatics, and idiots. But a little examination will prove that the status of persons of all these classes would be considerably lowered were it reduced to that of women. Minority, if a personal, is merely a temporary disqualification. A householder who is a minor will in time come into the enjoyment of his vote. But adult women are kept throughout their lives in the state of tutelage proper to infancy. They are never allowed to grow up to the rights of citizenship. As Justice Probyn said, "Infants cannot vote, and women are perpetual infants." Criminals are also only temporarily disqualified. During the debate on the Bill of 1867, Lord E. Cecil proposed a clause providing that persons who had been sentenced to penal servitude for any offence should be incapable of voting. Mr. Gladstone objected to the clause because "a citizen ought not to bear for life the brand of electoral incapacity." Another member objected to "extending a man's punishment to the whole of his life." The clause was finally negatived. But the brand of life-long electoral incapacity, which was thought too severe for burglars and thieves, is inflicted without scruple on rational and responsible human beings, who have never broken the law, for the sole crime of womanhood. Parliament deems an ex-garotter morally competent to exercise the franchise, whilst it rejects the petition of Florence Nightingale. So much for the moral standard required for the exercise of the suffrage. Let us now see what the law says to lunatics. In a legal text-book we find the following statement:—"With regard to a lunatic who, though for the most part he may have lost the sound exercise of his reason, yet sometimes has lucid intervals, it seems that the returning officer has only to decide whether at the moment of voting the elector is sufficiently *compos mentis* to discriminate between the candidates and to answer the questions, and take the oath, if required, in an intelligible manner,"* But the law never allows that a woman can have a lucid interval during which she is sufficiently *compos mentis* to discriminate between the candidates, and to comply with the formalities incident to recording a vote. Thus it places her mentally below lunatics, as it does morally below felons. The courts have a very kindly consideration for the electoral rights of idiots, as a case quoted by Mr. Rogers will show. He states that the voter had no idea of the names of the candidates, but he had of the side on which he wished to vote. He seems to have been unable to answer the ordinary questions, and the returning officer

* Rogers, "On Elections," 10th edition, p. 153.

rejected the vote of this idiot; but on appeal the decision was reversed, and the vote held to be good. Mr. Rogers states that it is difficult to determine, since the decision in the "Wigan Case," what degree of drunkenness need to be shown in order to disqualify an elector. It is a question of fact for the returning officer to decide; and with respect to persons deaf, dumb, and blind, he says, that "although it is difficult to believe that such persons should have understanding, still if such a person can show by signs or otherwise that he knows the purpose for which he has come to the poll, and can also comprehend the obligation of an oath, and the temporal dangers of perjury, it is conceived that a returning officer would not be justified in refusing his vote." It will be seen by these extracts that those who compare the political status of women to that of criminals, lunatics, and idiots, give too favourable a view of the facts." The true comparison is that which was used by Mr. Justice Byles in the Court of Queen's Bench, when he likened the political condition of women to that of dogs and horses. After indignantly scouting the claims of woman to humanity: "I will not," said the Judge, "allow that woman can be man, unless in a zoological treatise, or until she is reduced to the condition of fossil remains," he proceeded to level the political rights of woman to those of the domestic animals. He would not even allow her to be "something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse," but assumed the absolute identity of the political rights of all three. The case was that of 1,600 ratepayers, who had been placed on the register by the overseers of Salford, and who had been struck off by the revising barrister without inquiry, merely because they bore such names as Mary, Hannah, &c. No objection was raised by any one to these names, though they had been published in the usual way. The mayor, the overseer, and the public generally concurred in the propriety of retaining them, and the representatives of both Liberals and Conservatives in the Revision Court did their best to keep them on the register, but in vain. Though the revising barrister expressed doubts as to whether he had a right to expunge the names, he said he should do so. This decision was appealed against, and the counsel was arguing that the revising barrister had exceeded his jurisdiction in striking off the names of persons not objected to, and the description of whose qualification was good upon the face of it; when he was interrupted by the Judge asking whether he meant to say that if the barrister found the name of a dog or a horse on the register he would not be justified in striking it off. This sudden question rather staggered the learned counsel, who had evidently up to that time not looked upon his clients as exactly on a level with brutes; but he could only follow the Judge's lead, and reply that in case a man

happened to be called Ponto or Dobbin, he did not see why he should lose his vote.

In the election petition at Oldham, where a scrutiny was demanded, one set of objections turned on alleged legal incapacity of the voters. These comprised some aliens, some minors, and one woman, who, being upon the register, had recorded her vote. Mr. Justice Blackburn decided that the objections to the aliens and minors should have been taken before the revising barrister, and that it was then too late to challenge the votes on the ground of legal incapacity, but a woman was not a man at all, and he should strike off her vote at once. He added, however, that if the vote became of consequence, he should reserve the point for the Court of Common Pleas. We hereby perceive what a mere fetish sex becomes according to the principles of English law. The attributes that distinguish man from the beasts are speech, reason,* moral responsibility, and religious faith. Out of these attributes springs the capacity for political functions, for knowledge and experience, and for the formation of a stable, regular government. Yet in seeking the proper basis of a qualification on which to rest the possession of political power, men deliberately reject as insufficient all those attributes of reason and conscience which raise humanity above the brutes, and select one which they have in common with these.

We say that this principle is injurious, because it sets a stamp of inferiority on women. The opinion of a woman is not esteemed so highly as the opinion of a man, because the law does not deem it worthy of being taken into account in reckoning the votes of the people. This lowers women in their own eyes, and in the eyes of men. By making the capacity for feminine functions a disqualification for political functions, the female sex is depressed from its natural position as the one whose preservation is of the most importance in the human economy to that of one which is deemed of secondary consequence, and the welfare of the race suffers accordingly.

The exclusion of women from political power has been defended on diametrically opposite grounds. On one hand it is said that the interests and sentiments of women are identical with those of men, and that therefore women are sufficiently represented by taking the votes of men only in the various classes of society. But if the opinions and interests of women are identical with those of men of a similar social grade, there could be no possible harm in giving them the same means of expressing them as are given to men. On the other hand it is said that

* We must not be understood as denying that the lower animals reason to a certain extent; but this does not affect the argument, as the distinction between these and mankind is sufficiently marked.

women are morally and intellectually distinct from men; that they possess mental attributes not inferior but diverse, and consequently the ideas which they may form on questions of national polity will be of a different character, or based on different principles, from those entertained by men. On this view, however, whether we regard political questions with reference to the interests of the community at large, or of the feminine element in particular, the recognition of the right of women to vote seems absolutely necessary in order to secure that fair representation of all classes of the community, and that impartial consideration of subjects involving the interests of these various classes, which is the final cause of representative government.

In illustration of this necessity we may refer to a speech by the present Attorney-General in the House of Commons during one of the debates on the Bill to render legal marriage with a deceased wife's sister. He is reported to have said:—"If ever there was a woman's question it was this one, and he asked if it were reasonable or generous to legislate on a matter of marriage against the well understood feeling of one of the sexes who were parties to it." Now whether Sir John Coleridge was right or wrong in his estimate of the feelings of his countrywomen on this question, there was surely justice in his appeal to the House not to legislate upon it without taking the sentiments of women into consideration. But under the present law what possible means exist for gauging the opinions of women on this or on any subject? The process of carefully eliminating from the electoral body every person otherwise qualified who belongs to the sex whose views are especially desired, seems singularly ill-adapted for the purpose of arriving at a trustworthy estimate of those views. Probably the opinions of women are divided on this question of the marriage law as on other topics, but until women are allowed to vote no one can possibly determine on which side the majority lies. Every attempt to do so is mere random guesswork, and until women are allowed to express their sentiments as freely, as fearlessly, and in the same manner as men, no man has a right to speak in their name. Legislation in regard to the interests of women, by an assembly from which the representation of women is rigidly excluded, is truly a "leap in the dark."

Another question specially affecting women is that of the right of married women to own property. Strange to say—or is it strange?—there seems less disposition to acknowledge the justice of consulting women in regard to this proposed amendment of the marriage law than on the other. In the debates which took place in both Houses of Parliament on the Married Women's Property Bill of 1870, it was throughout assumed that the matter must be settled according to men's notions of what was just and expedient for

women. Women's ideas on the subject counted for nothing. The opponents of a change in the law relating to marriages of affinity appealed passionately on behalf of the presumed sentiments of women. They arrayed them in opposition to the measure, and claimed for them the right to be heard. But the opponents of a change in the law relating to the status of wives were silent respecting the opinions of women. Either they did not dare to appeal to them for fear of an adverse verdict, or they thought that although women might be generally in favour of the maintenance of the existing law, their opinions were not worth quoting in its defence.

The law relating to the property of women is an instance of flagrant wrong inflicted on the unrepresented half of the nation. What would be said of a law which deprived the majority of adult men of the right to own property? It would be at once concluded that such men had no votes, or they would not allow a session to pass without enforcing a measure to secure their rights. Yet this is exactly the position of the great majority of adult women under the common law of England. The Act of 1870 does not in any way interfere with this principle of the common law, but leaves it in full force. It merely extends to the personal earnings of women, to small amounts of property accruing to them by deed or will, and to certain descriptions of property, on special application, the facilities offered by the Chancery courts for evading this principle. It would not touch such a case as the following:—A woman selling oranges in the streets of Liverpool related her history to another woman as follows: Her first husband died leaving her in possession of a comfortable inn in Liverpool and one thousand pounds in the bank. She married again. The second husband, after living with her a short time, ran away to Australia, having previously paid a visit to the bank and drawn out the thousand pounds. The wife continued her business, by which she was able to earn a comfortable subsistence for herself and a daughter by the first marriage. After a few years the prodigal husband returned without the thousand pounds, penniless, ragged, and ill. He professed penitence for his past offences and begged of his wife to forgive and receive him. She consented, and took care of him until he recovered. For a time all went well, the husband was kind and attentive, and the wife began to think they might be happy. One day the husband observed that he thought a drive in the country would do his wife good after the care of nursing him through his illness; he would order a carriage for her and her daughter. The wife did not wish to go, but in order to gratify her husband she consented, and she and her daughter departed. On her return she did not see her husband, but found a stranger in the bar. When she asked his business he produced

a bill of sale by the husband to him of the house with all it contained and the business. The mother and daughter found themselves turned adrift homeless and penniless on the streets of Liverpool without appeal and without redress. The husband has not since been heard of.

This robbery was committed under the sanction of the marriage law, and the law which sanctions it is still in force.

Sometimes it is urged that since the husband is bound to maintain his wife, it is but just that he should pocket all her property and earnings. But this is a fallacious argument. The claim of a wife to maintenance by her husband is based on the performance by her of the duties of a wife. Her maintenance is an equivalent for services rendered—an equivalent to which she is justly entitled whether she owns property or not. In truth, in the majority of cases, a husband no more "maintains" his wife than a man does his footman or his cook. To each is given maintenance in requital of services rendered. A cook or footman receives wages in addition to maintenance—a wife usually does not. To claim from a wife in exchange for mere maintenance not only her personal services, which are a full equivalent, but the surrender of all the property she may possess or acquire independently of her husband, is to demand something for which no equivalent is offered.

Under a system of free trade in labour every able-bodied single man or woman is presumably capable of maintaining himself or herself by the exercise of bodily or mental powers. Each such person has two classes of labour to accomplish for this end: 1. Out-door labour—*i.e.*, the earning of the money necessary to procure food, clothing, and shelter. 2. In-door labour—*i.e.*, the application of this money for the personal sustenance and comfort of the individual. It is not enough to earn money to purchase food in order to sustain a man; that food must be prepared and made ready for his use. It is not enough to earn money to pay the rent and furniture of a house; a very considerable amount of daily labour is requisite in order to keep that house habitable and comfortable. Suppose the case of a labouring man working for wages, who had no domestic inmate—who had to light his fire, prepare his own breakfast, and ere he set forth for his day's toil had to make his bed and set his house in order. Then, when he returned for the midday meal, had to go to market to purchase the food, to cook it for himself, to wash up the dishes and arrange his room before he again went forth to his labour, to return at the close to repeat the same process before he could get his supper; and in addition to these daily toils, had the periodical scrubbing of the floor and washing of his clothes, and such mending as is rendered necessary by their wear and tear. It may be safely assumed that a man so circumstanced would not be able to earn

more than half the wages which he could earn were he relieved of all these laborious and time-consuming offices. Let us imagine a woman similarly situated, half of whose time was consumed in out-door or money-earning labour, and half in domestic or comfort-earning labour. Let us now suppose that these two marry. In order to perform the domestic duties for the man, and thus set him free to devote his whole time to money-earning labour, the woman must give up that portion of her time which she had hitherto devoted to money-earning labour. Because of this, she has an equitable claim to share the money which this sacrifice on her part enables a man to earn. The claim of a wife to maintenance arises from the simple fact that marriage enables a man to earn money by relieving him from the burden of domestic cares, while it disables a woman from earning money by imposing upon her these cares.

The claim of a wife for maintenance we hold to be absolute under these circumstances—*i.e.*, where neither husband nor wife owns property or income other than the earnings of their daily labour. It becomes considerably modified when either possesses a fortune sufficient for maintenance without such labour. Since marriage need not of necessity, and would not, had the bill introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. J. G. Shaw Lefevre, in 1869, become law, have actually dispossessed a woman of her income or in any way disabled her from its possession or enjoyment, and since the possession of independent means of subsistence relieves her from the necessity of maintaining herself by marriage, and renders such an engagement a purely voluntary one on her part—the claim which a woman who gives up her independent means of subsistence in order to marry, has on the man at whose invitation she gives it up, does not exist, and in the case of persons who marry possessed each of independent property, we should be disposed to admit that the claims of husband and wife upon each other for maintenance are mutual and equal.

But this difference in the condition is not recognised by our laws. Whatever obligation the law at present imposes on a man to maintain his wife is totally irrespective of the amount of her possessions: it is the same whether she be a beggar or an heiress. Moreover, this vaunted liability shrinks to the narrowest limits when examined. If a man refuse to supply his wife with food and clothing, she has no means of enforcing her claim upon him. No magistrate could listen to a woman who complained that her husband would not maintain her. All he could do would be to recommend her to apply to the parish, and then if the guardians chose to supply her with pauper's allowance, they could recover the amount from the husband. But if the parish authorities were to find that the husband was in the receipt of good wages, and

therefore to decide that they would not relieve the woman, she must starve, for the wife has no direct remedy against the husband for neglect to maintain her. Cases have occurred of women being actually starved to death under the circumstances.

If, instead of bringing his wages home to his wife, to be applied to the maintenance of the family, a man takes them to the public house and spends them all in drink, the wife has no remedy. Yet surely, when the husband induced the wife to marry him on the faith that he would provide her with a maintenance, he contracted an obligation as binding and as capable of legal definition and enforcement as any other contract for the performance and reimbursement of personal services.

Suppose the common case of a working man paying court to a servant-girl in a good place. She is earning board and lodging of a much better quality than the wives of working men usually enjoy, and from ten to twenty pounds annually in addition. He asks her to leave all this, to give up all prospect of earning money, to devote herself to his service, to be not only his wife, but his servant—to wait upon him, to cook for him, to wash for him, to clean his house; and to perform all these arduous and multifarious duties, not only while she is well and strong, but through the period when the cares of maternity render them physically oppressive and injurious. In requital, he undertakes to provide her with uncooked food, lodging without attendance, and clothing. Now this is not a very tempting bargain, and commercially it cannot be considered advantageous. But such as it is, the terms ought to be carried out, and the law ought to provide means for enforcing their fulfilment. If the wife does not, at the end of the week, receive a portion of her husband's wages sufficient to provide her with these things, she ought to have as ready a means of redress as the working man would have who, after performing his week's work, should find that his employer neglected to pay him his week's wages.

Were the rights of the wife to her share of the husband's wages recognised as fully as the right of the workman to his share of the profit of his labour, a husband would no more think of defrauding the wife of her due than the employer now thinks of defrauding the workmen of their wages. The knowledge that wages can be recovered, effectually secures punctual payment without the resort to actual process of law, while this power in no way disturbs amicable relations between master and man. The experience that employers are now as a rule in the habit of paying wages punctually, would by no means induce the workmen to forego their legal claims. They would not think it just to be bound to spend their time and strength in working for their masters, and then be compelled to trust to their caprice or favour, or sense of honour alone,

for the payment of their wages. Yet we are unable to discover in what way the position of a man earning his livelihood by working for a master who supports him in return for his labour, differs as regards the question of right to maintenance from that of a woman who earns her bread by the performance of household duties for the husband who has undertaken to maintain her in return for her labour. If, when pay-day came round, the master were to inform the men that he had no money for them, as he had spent it all in selfish indulgence, and they would get nothing for that week's labour, the men would consider themselves unjustly treated. What, then, must the wife feel whose husband comes home on the Saturday night with his head full of drink and his pocket empty of cash? But the case of the wife is the harder of the two. The money she has a right to find in her husband's pockets at the end of the week is not hers for her personal use. It is the fund out of which she has to furnish food for her husband, her children, and herself. When that is wasted, their sustenance is gone.

A short time ago a lady was asked by a poor woman for a loan to pay off a debt at a provision shop for food supplied for the use of her family, consisting of her husband, herself, and three children. The husband was earning good wages, which he spent mostly in drink, and he did not give his wife enough even to provide the cost of his own food. The wife was obliged to go out to work, in order to earn money to pay for her own and her children's food, and make up the deficiency in that of her husband. The lady was advised not to lend the money, but to say to the poor woman that her husband was legally liable for the debt incurred at the provision shop, and that the shopkeeper should sue him for it. The reply was, that the husband had threatened to strip the house and sell off every stick of furniture, and that if he were asked to pay the debt he would very probably carry his threat into effect. The furniture had not been provided by the husband; it had been bought with money advanced by the lady who was our informant, and repaid by the wife in weekly instalments out of her earnings. But as this transaction took place before the passing of the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, the husband would now be upheld by the majesty of the law in desolating his wife's home, the fruits of her honest industry.

The clergyman of a parish in Lancashire stated the case of one of his parishioners, the wife of a drunken, truculent collier, who is earning good wages, but who spends all on his own vicious indulgences, and gives his wife nothing for the maintenance of the household. Nevertheless he expects to be provided for at home, and kept "like a lord," as the clergyman said. The woman is industrious, clever, orderly, and a good manager. She contrives

to earn enough to maintain a comfortable home and provide good meals for her legal master, who makes no scruple of abusing her if things are not served to his mind.

Such cases are very common: but were they as exceptional as they are common, they would afford ground for altering the law which supports and sanctions them.

The franchise is needed as a protection for women in regard of equal law. In every case where the laws determine the relative duties of men and women, the interest and the feelings of the unrepresented half of the nation have been made wholly subservient to that of the class which has political power. In the marriage relation, the wife's separate existence is lost; the husband is the only person recognised by the law. One of the most sacred natural rights, that of a mother to the child she has borne in her bosom, flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone, is set aside; and to the married mother's legal master is given the power to dispose of her offspring, not only during his lifetime but after his death. The law does not recognise a mother, even after her husband's death, as the natural guardian of her children. Her husband can will them away from her, and even if he names no other guardian, the mother does not become such by law. A married woman's children are not her own. Until a very few years ago an unweaned child might be torn from its mother's bosom, and deprived by a father's will of its mother's milk. However unnatural or bad a man might be, the law, without making any inquiries into his character, invested him with irresponsible power to make such a decree, and sanctioned and enforced it effectively. One of the revising barristers who adjudicated on the claims of women to be put on the roll of electors, desiring to say something especially insulting and unpleasant to the claimant who came to plead in his court, stated that he declined to recognise suckling as a qualification for the suffrage. But if womanhood had not been a disqualification for the suffrage, it would have been impossible that for hundreds of years the law should have vested the right to the custody of an unweaned child in that parent who could not nourish it. This glaring anomaly has been partially remedied, but at the cost of an injustice which is almost more cruel than the original one. By Sir Thomas Talfourd's Custody of Infants Bill, passed soon after the accession of her present Majesty, the married mother is as a matter of grace kindly permitted to keep—not her children—oh no! the law does not recognise them as hers—but she is graciously allowed to keep her husband's children until they are seven years old. Why! that she may have all the care, trouble, and anxiety of their helpless infancy, and the—it may be—profligate father be relieved from the same, and the torture and the uprooting of her heart be all the more cruel at the end of the seven years, when

the fiat of separation goes forth. What that torture is, none but a mother can know. It is probably the greatest that a human being can suffer. And the law sanctions the infliction of this torture on Englishwomen at the irresponsible will and pleasure of a man who may be a cruel and heartless scoundrel.

The despotic powers of a father are by no means a dead letter. But a short time ago a scene took place which shows what can be done, and what is done, under the sanction of man-made laws. The account went the round of the newspapers in a paragraph entitled

“PAINFUL SCENE IN A COURT OF JUSTICE.—In the Irish Court of Queen’s Bench, Mr. Justice Fitzgerald had a *habeas corpus* application made by the Rev. Henry Newenham, to obtain custody of his two children, Adelaide and Edith, who were under the care of their mother, Lady Helena Newenham, and her father, Lord Mountcashel. His lordship ordered that the younger girl, a child of about seven years, should be delivered up to her father; but the other girl, who is nearly sixteen, the age at which she is legally a free agent, having already expressed her unwillingness to comply with her father’s wish, was permitted to exercise her choice. A painful scene occurred as an officer came into the court, bearing the younger child, a pretty little girl, with long fair hair, and intelligent beyond her years. She screamed and struggled violently, exclaiming repeatedly, ‘Oh, must I, must I? Oh, dear, I won’t go to my father.’ Mr. Justice Fitzgerald took her up and spoke kindly to her, telling her her father would be fond of her, and that her mother would often see her. To this the child only replied again and again, ‘Oh, please, do let me do as I like. Don’t send me away. Will mamma ever see me again? Grandpa, grandpa, where are you?’ Mr. Justice Fitzgerald: ‘I shall take care of that, my dear. Your mamma will see you as often as she likes.’ Child: ‘Will it be every day? Tell me—will it be every day?’ Mr. Justice Fitzgerald: ‘Oh, yes, every day.’ Lord Mountcashel (who was much moved): ‘Knowing what I know, that is impossible. He is a d—l.’ Mr. Justice Fitzgerald said: ‘I am sorry I cannot leave the two sisters together. If I could, I would persuade you to that, Mr. Newenham. However, I hope you will allow free communication between the girls; and I must order that the mother be allowed to see her child as often as she wishes.’ Mr. Purcell: ‘Yes, my lord, all reasonable opportunity will be given her.’ The child was then handed over to her father, who carried her out.”

What a mockery to call the above a court of justice! A mother is to be “allowed” to see her child as often as she wishes, and a lawyer promises that all “reasonable opportunity” shall be given her. But suppose that on one of these reasonable opportunities on which the mother is “allowed to see” her child, she sees that the child is unhappy, or harshly treated, she cannot take it away, and the permission to “see” it may only add to her agony.

We appeal to every mother in the land to say, Is that mother and is that child justly treated by this country’s law? Is it enough for those who are happy to say, “These laws, though unjust, are a dead letter in my case; therefore I take no care for these things?” As well might those who are warmed and fed allege their own sense of personal comfort as a reason why they should bestow no thought on the sufferings, or care for the relief of the cold, the hungry, and the naked. We ask all women who have happy homes to join us in trying to protect those women who have unhappy homes, or who have no homes. For it is only the happy who have strength to help. The unhappy are helpless entirely.

We thought it necessary before appealing to this condition of the law as an argument for the necessity of the franchise, to ascertain with more precision the state and animus of the law with regard to mothers. From a legal text-book which enters fully into this subject we gather that the fundamental principle of English law is, that the father alone is entitled to the custody and disposal of his children; that this right inheres totally irrespective of his moral character or fitness for the charge; and that it will be confirmed and enforced by the courts, though he be an open and notorious evil liver. That while the law is thus jealous of the natural rights and parental feelings of the father, those of the mother are utterly disregarded; and that in the rare instances in which the absolute power of the father in regard to the disposal of the children is restrained or modified by the action either of the judges or special application of the law relating to the custody of children under seven years of age, this is done not in consideration of the natural right or parental feelings of the *mother*, but solely out of care for the supposed interest of the *child*. The courts have specially and expressly disclaimed any other intention than that of interfering for the protection of the child, and the claims of the mother have been dismissed as altogether out of the consideration of the Court. Such modified rights to the custody of the babies as are permitted at the discretion of the judges to be conceded to a mother, are wholly forfeited if she has been guilty of adultery, while a father may be living in open adultery, yet may withhold the custody of her children from a virtuous mother. It seems so monstrous and incredible that so unjust a law should prevail, that we think the fact will scarcely be credited on assertion only. We will therefore offer to our readers some cases and decisions quoted by Mr. Macpherson, to set forth the state of the law:—

I.

“On the petition of a mother and her daughter, a child of about fourteen years of age, praying that the daughter might be placed

under the mother's care, or that the mother might be permitted to have access to her daughter at all convenient times, it being stated at the bar that the father was living in habitual adultery, on account of which the mother had obtained a divorce in the Ecclesiastical Courts, Sir Anthony Host, L.C., said that the court had nothing to do with the fact of the father's adultery; that some conduct on his part, with reference to the management and education of the child must be shown to warrant an interference with his legal right to the custody of his child. He did not know of any case which would authorise him to make the order sought. If any could be found, he would most gladly adopt it; for in a moral point of view he knew of no act more harsh or cruel than depriving the mother of proper intercourse with her child."

II.

"The mother of three girls, the eldest aged five and a half years, left the house rented by her husband in which she was living with the infants, and afterwards removed them, and instituted proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts for a divorce. On the application of the father a writ of *habeas corpus* was granted to bring the children before Mr. Justice Paterson. The judge ordered that the mother should deliver up the children to the husband. In this case it was stated that the father was living in adultery."

III.

"An Englishwoman married a Frenchman domiciled in England. She separated from her husband on account of ill-treatment, and he by force and stratagem got into the house where she was, and carried away her child, an infant at the breast. The mother obtained a *habeas corpus* upon affidavit, stating these facts. Lord Ellenborough said, 'The father is the person entitled by law to the custody of his child. If he abuse that right to the detriment of the child, the court will protect the child. But there is no pretence that the child has been injured for want of nurture, or in any other respect.' The child was remanded to the custody of the father."

IV.

"G. H. Talbot, a Roman Catholic, married a Protestant lady. They had two children, John and Augusta. By a deed of separation between the parents it was agreed that Augusta should remain with her mother till the age of ten. The father died, having by will appointed a Roman Catholic priest to be the guardian of his children. The infants were made wards of court. The mother married Mr. Berkeley, a Protestant.

"A petition was presented on behalf of the infants, stating that the guardian had removed the boy, aged ten years, from school, and placed him under the care of his uncle, the Earl of Shrewsbury—that Lord Shrewsbury refused to allow him to visit his mother. The petition prayed that Augusta might continue with her mother, and

that John might have unrestrained intercourse with his mother, and might reside with her for convenient periods.

"The guardian petitioned that Augusta might be delivered to him.

"The Lord Chancellor (Lord Cottenham) said that the *mother had no right to interfere with the testamentary guardian*. The Court would exercise a discretion whether an infant should be ordered to be delivered up to such guardian. The female infant was of the age of eight years and seven months, residing in her mother's house, under the care of a Roman Catholic governess, and there was strong evidence showing her to be of delicate constitution, and requiring the care of her mother. There was also a statement of the late father's wishes that she should be left in the care of her mother till the age of ten, and on that circumstance his lordship relied as evidence that she might safely be left with the mother till that period. He therefore left the female infant in the care of her mother. The petition of the guardian was ordered to stand over, no order being made upon it for the present. As to John Talbot, the Lord Chancellor said that it was right that he should live with Lord Shrewsbury. The petition of the infants was dismissed. The only access to her son which the guardian would afford to Mrs. Berkeley was at Lord Shrewsbury's house, and in the guardian's presence.

"Mrs. Berkeley petitioned that her son might be allowed to visit her for a month; the petition was accompanied with a medical certificate that she was in ill health owing to her anxiety to have access to her son.

"The Lord Chancellor felt it to be necessary to *look only to the interests of the infant, and to the wishes of the father*, expressed in his appointment of a guardian, and declined to make any order on the petition. June 13, 1840."

V.

"A father applied to obtain possession of a child of five years old which the mother kept from him. There was reason to doubt whether the child was his; he had been divorced from the mother soon after its birth. Lord Kenyon had no doubt but that the father was entitled to the custody, as the Court saw no reason to believe that he intended to abuse his right by sacrificing the *child*."

VI.

"Lord Eldon, on *habeas corpus*, ordered two children of the respective ages of five years and seven months, to be delivered to their father by their mother, who was living apart from him, and who claimed their custody in virtue of a deed which provided for their residing with her in the event of a separation, and of another deed by which a provision was made for her separate maintenance, and an allowance was agreed to be paid her for the maintenance of the infants."

VII.

"In a modern case, in the Court of Common Pleas, a husband ill-treated his wife; a separation took place. The wife kept her child,

which was six years old. The husband cohabited with another woman. The husband sued out a *habeas corpus*. The judge decided that neither the father nor the mother was entitled to the custody of the child, and it was given up to a third person."

The propositions which these cases illustrate are the following:—

The law vests parental rights in the father alone, to the entire exclusion of the mother. The father has power to remove children from their mother, not only during his life; but he may by will appoint a stranger to be guardian after his death, and such guardian may separate mother and child. The power of the father is not forfeited by his immoral conduct. It inheres in him by law, and he cannot be divested of it at the discretion of a judge. The Custody of Infants Act allowed some modified rights to mothers. But these rights are not conferred directly on any mother. They do not inhere in her by virtue of her motherhood; the Act is merely permissive. It declares that it shall be lawful for a judge, upon hearing a petition, *if he see fit*, to make an order that a mother shall be allowed access to her child, and if it is under seven years of age, to order that it be delivered to and remain in the custody of the mother until attaining that age, subject to such regulations as he shall deem convenient and just. Another section of the Act declares that the judge shall have no power to make the order if the mother has been guilty of adultery.

The franchise is needed as a protection for women from the uncontrolled dominion of the savage passions of men. In the less cultivated classes of society these passions rage with terrific violence, and their effects fall chiefly on the unhappy wives whom the law delivers up to the mercy of their legal masters. The existence of this savage element in our population will not be denied. Yet we will call two witnesses whose testimony is well calculated to arouse attention to this commonly acknowledged but commonly neglected fact. At the meeting of the British Association in Liverpool, after a lecture by Sir John Lubbock on "Savages," Professor Huxley, in the course of some observations, said:—

"Since I have walked in your great town of Liverpool I have seen fully as many savages, as degraded savages as those in Australia. Nay, worse; in the primitive savage there remains a certain manliness derived from lengthened contact with nature and struggle with it, which is absent in these outcast and degraded children of civilization. The people who form what are called the upper strata of society talk of political questions as if they were questions of Whig or Tory, of Conservative and Heaven knows what, but the man who can see, will, I think, believe that in these times there lies beneath all these questions the great question whether that prodigious misery which dogs the footsteps of modern civilization shall be allowed to exist—whether, in fact, in the heart of the most polished nations of the

present day—of those nations which pride themselves most on being Christians—there shall be this predominant and increasing savagery, of which such abundant instances are in your midst. I believe that this is the great political question of the future."

We agree with the eminent Professor in this belief, and we ask—Have not women the deepest interest in, and is it not their duty to care for, political questions such as this? For women, and notably the women of our own land, are the chief victims of this savagery. There is not, we believe, any class in the world so subjected to brutal personal violence as English wives.

Soon after these remarks of Professor Huxley at Liverpool, Mr. Justice Brett held the winter assizes at Manchester. The following are extracts from his charge to the grand jury:—

"The calendar is not long, but I am sorry to say it is serious, and this seems to me to arise principally from a habit of brutal violence, and giving way, without the smallest provocation, to evil passions. There are no fewer than four persons accused of murder, and there are many cases of violence by stabbing and cutting with knives. . . . The first case is No. 1 in the calendar, and it is the case of a man who is accused of the murder of his wife. According to the depositions, by his own confession, he went in without any particular ill-feeling to this woman. The principal evidence against him is his own child. He put a rope round his wife's neck, tied it with a knot under her ear, and dragged her about the room until she was dead. . . .

"The next case is No. 6 on the list. It is also that of a man charged with the murder of his wife. In this case no one was present when the blow was struck, but the man was seen going into his house, a scream was heard, and the woman was seen coming out holding her apron to her head, the blood streaming profusely from a severe wound in the head. There was a brush or part of a broom found on the floor, and the woman made a statement in the prisoner's presence that he struck her with the broom. When she was examined by the doctors it was found that her skull was crushed in, and she was seized with paralysis and died. . . .

"The next case is No. 27. This, again, is the case of a man who is charged with the murder of a woman with whom he lived as his wife. There is evidence that he struck the woman a blow. . . .

"Another case is that of a man who killed his wife; and here, again, the blow was not seen, but the man was seen going into the house, and shortly afterwards the woman was seen bleeding about the head, and several contused wounds were afterwards found on her person. She seems to have died from what the doctors call prostration and weakness from exhaustion; and in presence of the man she said he not only struck her with a poker, but stamped upon her after having knocked her down. . . . How terrible this is! Here are no fewer than four cases in which men are charged with wilful murder, with brutal violence to women with whom they lived as their wives. Some steps must be taken to put an end to such conduct."

Men say that women are not oppressed. But women themselves tell a different tale. From all parts of the country, from suffering and sorrowing women, come voices blessing the efforts that are made and bidding them God speed. Sometimes they come from the ranks of the peerage—sometimes from the well-to-do middle classes—sometimes from the poorest of the poor. From all sorts and conditions of women the cry of distress has gone forth. And the story is ever the same deep and cruel wrong, suffered at the hands of those who in theory are their natural protectors. All have the same hopeless consciousness that for them there is no help and no redress. They are made legally subordinate to men, and their sufferings are held as of no account.

We are persuaded that the sufferings and the wrongs of women will never be considered worthy of attention by the Legislature until they are in possession of the suffrage, and not until they are politically on the same level as men, will their education and their welfare receive equal care from the Government. All those who are interested in the general progress of society in intelligence and virtue should aid in the effort to remove the political disabilities of half the nation. When this shall be accomplished the additional power thereby gained will enable those who are working for measures of social and political reform to carry them on at a rate of progress hitherto undreamed of. At present half the people are excluded from participation in matters of national interest, and of the privileged half a great portion are held back by want of public spirit, of knowledge, and of interest in these matters. This apathy is the natural result of the influence of the huge mass of political ignorance, partly engendered by the exclusion of women from political existence. Remove the cause, and the effect will begin to diminish; enfranchise the whole people, and the whole people will begin to develop political life. In a celebrated Essay on the Education of the World, the writer has personified the human race under the figure of a colossal man, whose infancy, education, and growth represent the development of religious and political civilisation throughout the period of authentic history. If we can imagine this man determining that his right leg alone must have the advantage of exercise, and the left should be regarded as an ornamental appendage, it will not inaptly figure the attempt of humanity to make progress by cultivating only one sex. All who have turned their energies to public affairs feel how lame and imperfect is the advance of opinion on great questions, and in the suppression of intelligent and responsible opinion in women we find the cause of this lethargy.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1872.

✓ WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.* BY ARTHUR ARNOLD.

I AM inclined to envy the insensibility of those who can stand up before educated and accomplished women—their acknowledged superiors in mental attainments, in moral worth and judgment—and refuse the claim even of such to political enfranchisement. For my own part, I find an apology rising to my lips together with the advocacy of women's suffrage. It seemed abasement enough when working-men, the humblest, but the most numerous class of householders, most of them orderly, law-abiding citizens, had to sue the same tribunal to which our plea is addressed, with prayers for the initial right of citizenship. But it is surely shameful that in a country which, for longer than the average period of one generation, has been ruled by a woman—in a country in which, against every obstacle, women have won such high place in every path to which their endeavours could be directed—where they are the responsible owners of vast wealth, and where of course they are exposed to all the rigours of the law—where, though under serious disabilities in regard to earning money, they are yet liable equally with men to the demands of the imperial and local tax-gatherer—it is surely, I say, not without some sense of shame, that a man, who is not the mere slave of precedent, can find himself engaged in advocating the political enfranchisement of women.

Yet I am not disposed to think harshly of men who oppose their impotent resistance to this demand, because I doubt their consciousness of wrong-doing. Half the errors of the world would be cured in an instant if we could inoculate mankind with the idea of progress. The friends of progress must not deceive themselves. There is actually in the mind of a large section of mankind a notion that humanity has from the beginning always wandered far and farther from perfection, though how they reconcile this inverted belief with any trust in the providence of God I never could make out. But if the

* Read Monday, February 5th, 1872.

review of progress affords no indictment of the honesty of apathetic objectors to this demand, they can hardly escape the reproach of stupidity if they do not now observe how rotten has become the anchorage of their objections. If any one were to say of the ablest of the many distinguished ladies whom I have the honour of addressing to-night, "Madam, you and your sex are born in acknowledged inferiority to men; you are only fit to be classed with reference to political enfranchisement among lunatics, criminals, idiots, and minors"—if he escaped the conviction of more than brutal rudeness it could only be upon the ground of his folly. In those good old times, long even before the Queen of Sheba's day, when there was no law but that of the strongest, a man who feared no Jael in his tent could not illogically make use of such arguments. But how much more ridiculous than insulting would such an argument be in our day, when women exercise every suffrage but that of Parliament, and when a woman sits by right of a larger number of votes than ever were given for a man in the chief educational council of the kingdom. It is late, far too late, to bring forward the old rib theory; and though I will not believe that men who oppose the claims of women are directly animated by selfish and unworthy motives, yet sure I am that if they will fairly consider the matter, they will see nothing but the old and dying law of mere might, is the foundation of their resistance. Feebly and unworthily as I shall handle a few of the arguments on the side of concession, I have yet so much confidence in the clearness and cogency of these arguments as to leave no doubt of the result upon the mind of one who is open to conviction.

Roughly speaking, we may divide those who withstand the claim of women's suffrage into four classes—those who say that women are unfit for the suffrage; those who contend that the suffrage is unfit for women; those who maintain that women do not want the suffrage; and lastly, those who assert that women have nothing to gain, no wrongs to redress, by means of the suffrage.

I shall not insult your ears by dealing at great length with the objection that women are unfit to be intrusted with the suffrage. Of course, no man in his senses would deny the eligibility of some women. Among the members of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, is a lady who is nothing less than the most distinguished astronomical mathematician; there are two others whose acts of philanthropy in Europe, Asia, and America, have made household

words of their honoured names; there are few living writers who do not acknowledge inferiority in her own department of literature to George Eliot; I know of no man whose services are valued at so high a rate in hard money as those of Adelina Patti. Few would have liked to deny the claim of Miss Burdett Coutts to the franchise. But do not these blind individuals who are about to fall into the ditch of defeat, do they not see that in admitting the claim of Mary Somerville they concede the whole matter? It is not to be expected that when by the operation of the law of the strongest, women have through all time been excluded from so many opportunities for intellectual improvement, that they should *all* thus shine before men; but if owing to this rude law, which it is the mission of civilization to banish, they have been deprived, unjustly deprived, of many advantages which, rightly used, tend to make life higher and nobler, they have not had to contend to so great an extent with the vices which, together with learning and power, men have done their best to monopolize. Rather than assert that all men were fit for the franchise, I would contend that all women are as fit as all men for the privilege.

But that is not necessary. Here the right of voting is a question of property; and there are very few men who will venture to argue that if a woman is fit to be intrusted with the rights and duties of property, she is unfit to vote in respect of her possessions. If I buy a freehold for 100*l.*, it yields me a vote *plus* the enjoyment of the property, and any man should be ashamed to confess that such a possession of the suffrage is not a valuable consideration. Why then should the woman have less than I for her money? Is not this injustice? If not, I know not what is just? Is it because she is unfit to exercise a right which the most drunken and ignorant and sordid clown may hold as the appanage of his purchase? This objection that women are unfit for the franchise, I think, has fallen rotten to the ground.

Let us give our attention now, for a moment, to those gentler hindrances who regard the suffrage as unfit for women. I must confess to you that from my earliest youth I have always suspected an argument of this sort. When I have heard people say:—"This is unfit for children" I have often found they had no good reason why the limitation should be so restricted. The suffrage is not given to minors, because minors universally cannot hold property—cannot perform the duties of citizenship, and are not amenable to the full burdens of that condition. And only in the paternal theory of govern-

ment have we a right to say of any privilege: "This is unfit for them; let us keep it all to ourselves." Such, indeed, is the standpoint of these objectors. They, in fact, assume a paternal authority over all women. But I never heard that this could be pleaded to bar the operation of a distress warrant issued against the furniture of a woman-householder; I never heard that it would excuse her from the payment of her rates and taxes. Surely if the suffrage is unfit for women, they ought never to be troubled with the cost of sewers, the wages of policemen, the maintenance of lunatics, the provision of paving? "Ah! but that is not what I mean," protests the self-constituted protector of women. "I mean that women are unfit for scenes in which men are brought together in hot excitement." Well, I must say, that I think it is just then that their influence will be most beneficial. Whether it be so or not does not of course affect in the slightest degree the question of their right. They have in respect of their property a right to the suffrage, and a further right to consider for themselves, whether the circumstances under which they were called upon to exercise it are such as invite them to record their vote, or to repel them from the exercise of the suffrage. But I do maintain that the scandals of the polling booth will be ended most quickly by the adoption of woman suffrage. I find no evidence of this stronger than in the very instances which the holders of the argument that the suffrage is unfit for women bring forward to refute my claim. They point to the presence of a few disorderly women at the poll in Manchester and at Preston. Yet the misconduct of these women has produced more solemn and abiding resolution for reform, than the far grosser misconduct of men for past ages. What a pity, I say, that we had not years and years ago these few ill-behaved women at the poll, that men, shocked at vice, to which their eyes were closed in their own case, should so resolve to make the conduct of elections orderly and reverent, as the most solemn act of worldly duty! Who indeed can fail to see that just in proportion as we have fewer places of which it can be said that they are unfit for women, so men become more self-respecting, more refined, more virtuous, in short, more fit for the performance of their own share of the duties of life. When I hear it said that something is unfit for women, experience has led me to associate more or less of drunkenness with the forbidden thing. There is riot and revelry, rude licence and improper conduct in the things from which fathers, and husbands, and brothers, desire to keep women. But do

they lose sight of the fact that the admission of women to those functions, the performance of which is stained with such conduct, is the surest antidote, the most certain way of removing the gross accompaniments of these public assemblies? Why should they doubt this? Let them look to their own dinner tables, and then ransack their memories for the records of the three-bottle men of their grandsire's day. If men have gained this advance by "joining the ladies," with more sense left in their brains than their grandfathers thought necessary for the drawing-room, why should it be questioned that the same result would be produced at the poll? For my own part, I think a further improvement at dinner tables would be the abolition of the separate system; the gain would be on the side of the temperance and of *esprit*; for dreary as English dinners not unfrequently are, I confess I always look forward with positive dread to that most dreary period of the evening, when, in obedience to the nod of the presiding Juno, "one shall be taken and the other left." I think the argument that the possession of the suffrage would *unsex* women, is more profane and impious, even than it is silly and inconsequent. Men say that the possession of the franchise would be contrary to a woman's natural position. Am I to suppose, this indicates a belief that the Creator specially formed women with reference to their perpetual exclusion from voting—not at contested elections to boards of guardians, local boards, town councils, and school boards, but at parliamentary elections? Does the proposer of this objection presume to suppose that he or I can *unsex* women—that we can undo the work of creation? I do not consider it necessary to continue the argument upon this part of the subject.

I am now prepared to meet the third class of objectors, those who assert that women do not want the franchise. I admit that all women do not demand the franchise; if they did, there would be little need of such poor efforts as I can make for their enfranchisement. But sure I am that every day and every hour an increasing number of women will join in this demand. Is it a new thing that the suffrage should not be demanded *en masse*? After all, the work of pulling down the park railings, and drawing a tear from the eyes of good Mr. Walpole, were not the achievements of a population. There is far more of real effort represented in the petitions from women which have again and again loaded the tables of the House of Commons. Now, the advocacy of the Women's Disabilities Bill is becoming quite fashionable, but it has been a different matter

in years that are but lately passed, and even now for earnest, sincere women, who feel the injustice of their disabilities deeply in their hearts, it is often a far harder matter to brave the silly prejudices of tyrant custom in the mere signing of a petition than to bear a hand in the removal of any length of Hyde Park railings. When I hear it said that the majority of women do not demand the political suffrage, I am not surprised. Of any unenfranchised class the majority had always been found apathetic. And think what special reason women have for apathy, or seeming apathy! Nine-tenths of them, and probably I might say more, are directly dependent upon men for the means of existence. They are more obedient to custom, more fearful of combatting the opinion of the world; they are much ruled by fashion, and the leaders of fashion—I mean the leaders of fashion in dress and apparel of all sorts—will be slow in demanding for women a life of greater dignity and more equal partnership. But I say this: that whether the woman with whom he talks be frivolous or ignorant, the gay butterfly who regards mere household work as a chrysalis state, or the poor drudge whose life is almost breathless in the performance of the vulgar duties of the most sordid home—no man, be he the bitterest opponent of this movement to be found within the walls of Parliament, can fail to arouse in her mind an active demand for justice, if he will honestly and truthfully set before his comprehension even those few of the disgraceful anomalies of our law with which I shall conclude my remarks. For now, lastly, I am going to do battle with those that assert that women have nothing to gain, no wrongs to redress by the possession of the suffrage, which I take to imply a more active interest on the part of the sex in political affairs. I ought indeed to have put the question of women's wrongs before that of their rights. It may perhaps be alleged against me with some truth that, as a man, I naturally shrunk from exposing to the shame of my sex laws so hideous in their injustice, so monstrous in their cruelty, so unparalleled throughout the whole world for their rank injustice. Let us look at the life of a woman from her cradle as affected by these laws. We may say of this country that "all men and women are born free and equal;" but directly the educational process begins, then the injustice commences. The boy finds ample endowments, many of them bequeathed for the education of poor children, open exclusively to those of his sex, while in nineteen homes out of twenty every effort is made for his advancement as something upon which the whole well-being of the family depends, while

the sister is often left as it were to feed upon the scanty herbage which she may find growing by the wayside of the remote bye-paths of her life. He is encouraged to be "manly," which with many people means skilful at fisticuffs; and rudeness to those weaker than himself is not regarded as a high crime and misdemeanour. When the lad is looking through the pleasant paths of a university career into that vague world in which he shall some day be an actor, free to try his strength against the strongest, and to win the highest honours in the State, there is settling down upon the mind of the girl a haze of uncertainty. Her common refuge is romance. She is bound by every tie of affection and of interest to be conventional, and to assure herself and her friends that she is very happy? But is she so? Is human nature so very different that inactive life can be as it were suspended without emotion. Do not believe this. Even "girls of the period" set their little wits a thinking occasionally. And what do they see? Nothing so ennobling as a certain career of active duty inviting every man in a hundred forms. An aimless, idle life, ending in marriage or inferior comfort to that enjoyed in the paternal home—perhaps penury. They find consolation and hope in romance and frivolity, and men find the consequence in the extravagance and want of sympathy of their wives. We have seen to some extent what is their position if they inherit property and live unmarried. A million of women in these islands cannot marry, but as for those who do, they must at the outset of married life accept the imputation from the law, of idiocy, or a mild and as it were semi-lunatic form of felony. They will not be allowed to retain possession of their property. Either they must commit its custody—with the possibility of utter ruin—to persons called trustees, who oftentimes cannot be trusted, or the husband, who has just vowed to endow them with all his worldly goods, receives by the mere act of marriage a transfer of all their property.

"Ye who believe in affection that hopes and endures and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,"

do not make the fatal error of supposing that this lovely fruit grows out of injustice and cruel wrong! As you value these sweetest rewards of life, these clasps, more dear, as an eloquent friend of mine has said, than those of Alma and of Inkerman, as you are zealous for the dignity of true love and for the fidelity of married life, set yourselves to right the wrongs of women! The time is long past when it was in the

power of the strong to force the physically weak to live a life of ignorance and subjection. All knowledge is open before women; a really learned woman has long ceased to be a curiosity: You cannot look for the most conscientious regard for duty and truth and honour from women who live under the thralldom of cruelly unjust laws; and for yourselves you must make your choice, whether in this matter you will so act as to receive the respect, the aversion, or the contempt of intelligent women. If you think I speak too strongly, bear me company a few minutes while I pass but very superficially over some of the iniquities of the laws of this country as they affect women. Let us take the laws at their best. Two friends of mine were lately married; both the man and the woman were possessed of property, which each had managed most admirably and with great success. The man retains full command over his fortune, but the woman was obliged on entering the portal of marriage to pass her property either to her husband or to trustees; she chose the latter, and is now thwarted and harassed in regard to every disposition of her fortune. So much for the good husband. Now let us look at another everyday picture. May I repeat the published facts of the case of a woman who is now reduced to selling oranges in the streets of Liverpool? Her first husband died, leaving her a licensed house and 1000*l*. She married again. In the early days of their married life her second husband drew out the 1000*l*. from the bank, and took ship with his legalized plunder for Australia. Robbed with the approval of the laws of her country, she made no revolt, but laboured and succeeded in maintaining in comfort and respectability herself and the daughter she had borne to her first husband. In a few years the unpunishable rogue returned, miserable, ragged, and destitute. She fed, and fondled, and forgave him. Happy in relieving his distress and in ministering to his comfort, she felt a new pleasure in life. One day he proposed a drive in the country for the hard-working wife and daughter, and they took the unaccustomed luxury of a carriage. On returning they found a stranger in full possession of the bar and the business of the inn. He produced a bill of sale from the husband, of the house with its contents and goodwill. Imagine the feelings with which this woman found herself and her daughter homeless and penniless, turned out to live a pauper or to die a beggar in the streets of Liverpool! Ladies and gentlemen, I am overwhelmed with shame as I confess that such—in spite of that legislative abortion, the Married

Women's Property Act—such is to-day possible under the laws of my country. Mark, too, while on the subject of property, that the law gives a woman no claim whatever to any definite portion of her husband's wealth. He finds her a girl, earning good wages in service, or salary in a shop, or the inmate of a happy home, and makes proposal to her for a life partnership. She accepts. Her part of the work is to economize his time for money-making employment, to be careful of the house, to nurse and educate the infant children, to sustain and improve his status in society by making their home respectable and respected. But the wholesome doctrine that the labourer is worthy of his hire does not apply to her. The law, which is so much a respecter of persons, with regard to the man's right to possess himself of his wife's property, that it permits her to receive for her own no sum exceeding 200*l*. coming to her by bequest after marriage, is purely indifferent with regard to the maintenance of women. If a lady of the most delicate health and refined breeding—one whose very existence demanded that which would seem luxurious to women of rustic mould—if such a one were the victim of a secret marriage, of the validity of which she was assured but could not prove, thirty pence a week is all she could obtain for the maintenance of his child from the richest man in the State, and for herself she could not directly obtain even a share of such biscuit as he gave his sporting dogs. She, his wife, the deluded unhappy wretch who accepted his vows to love, honour, and cherish her, who was mocked with the endowment at the altar of all his worldly goods—she is the one human being who has no rights against him. But surely justice—? No! Though he may be spending her fortune with harlots, English justice will not listen to her prayer for a mandate compelling the husband to give her food. Somebody must feed her, if they please—for even her claims as a pauper are merely those of starving humanity, not of such rights as belong to the drunken prostitute—and then they may recover the cost of their bounty from the husband, whom, though she hunger into slow consumption, the law will hardly brand as a criminal, only regarding him as a trivial debtor. But in this condition there is one joy; the famished child she hugs to her poor breast is her own, because its possession is shameful; it is thought to be illegitimate. She may have heard the recent wrongs of Lady Helena Newenham, and while she loathes the coarse food the Poor Law gives her, she may bless the injustice which bastardises her child. This daughter of the present Lord Mountcashel had two little

girls. Separated from her husband,—their father, the Rev. Henry Newenham, made application to the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, for their delivery to him. The younger was aged seven, the elder sixteen; the latter an age at which the law regards the wish of a girl. Both were earnest in their desire to remain with Lady Helena. The Court respected the wish of the elder girl, but decreed that the younger must be delivered to the father. Let me quote a bit from what the reporters called the "scene in court." "An officer came in, bearing a pretty little pet with long fair hair, and intelligent beyond her years." Can we not fancy a St. Augustine looking on her, and saying of the sisters:—

"Non Angli, sed Angli—"

"If free!" But they were not free. The worst horrors of the slave market were about to be enacted under the sanction of the Queen's Bench! "She screamed and struggled violently, exclaiming repeatedly, 'Oh! must I, must I? Oh, dear! I won't go to my father! O please, do let me do as I like! Don't send me away! Will mamma ever see me again? Grandpa! Grandpa! where are you?'" Then following the wail in childish treble, was heard the sonorous voice of the humane Judge, evidently struggling against deep shame and emotion. "I shall take care of that my dear. Your mamma will see you as often as she likes." A ray of hope overspread the child's face. "Will it be every day? Tell me—will it be every day?" To which entreaty the Judge replied, "Oh, yes, every day." Mr. Justice Fitzgerald must have known this was false; but I dare hope with Sterne concerning another piece of falsehood, that the tear of the recording angel blotted out the sin. Then the "grandpa" himself, a Peer of Parliament, a member of that House which mutilated Mr. Russell Gurney's Bill, then Lord Mountcashel, who, the reporter says, "was much moved," put in his word, "Knowing what I know," he said of the Judge's promise, "that is impossible; he (the father) is a ——" Finally, the Judge expressed the "sorrow" with which he administered the law; the sobbing child, sent from mother and sister, was handed to the father, who carried her out. I have not time now to speak of the condition of wives and mothers in that high life which over all this kingdom apes royalty in regard to the custom of primogeniture, with this ungenerous exception, that our aristocracy, and even our squirearchy, ordain a strict Salic law. In England a Queen may reign;

and it is noteworthy that the reigns of women have been the grandest periods of English history. For all time men will refer with pride to the Elizabethan and Victorian ages of our history. But an English countess reigns by right of her husband; life for her, and in his sense of the word, has only half the chance of ordinary mortals; for when he dies she will surely lose house and home, and the very jewels she has loved to wear are taken from her hand.

You who oppose this claim for the political enfranchisement of women; you who are touched to the heart—for are you not gentlemen and men of honour?—even by my halting and imperfect recital of these wrongs—you ask me, what would I have? I tell you I would have laws not of the strongest, but of right. I would have no disabilities. If men are liable to be compelled to serve in defence of their country, women should be held liable also to work in their own way, after the example of Florence Nightingale and many others, in the same service. For every employment open to competitive examination women should be permitted to submit their claims. I think men are much better fitted for "up-country" service in India; while on the other hand the clerical work of many of the public offices, both at home and abroad, might be performed with far greater advantage to the State by the admission of women. As to property, the law I hold should give facilities for settlements, while it should also allow the retention by a married woman of her property just as though she were a *feme sole*. She might reasonably be entitled to a moderate share of her husband's earnings while fulfilling to the best of her ability the duties of a wife; and as for the children in legal infancy—at the death of the father the mother should be their guardian of right; in the case of divorce I think they should pass from the care of the sinful parent, who, however, should be compelled to make due contribution for their education and maintenance; when there was a separation, the children of one sex should go to one parent, and those of the opposite sex to the other. Such and other needful reforms in the law relating to women we should strongly claim. We cannot trust to lawyers for justice. I mourn not more at the rudeness than at the ignorance of men like Mr. Justice Byles, who, scouting the claim of 1600 women ratepayers to the political franchise, exclaimed, indignantly, "I will not allow that woman can be man, except in a zoological treatise, or until she is reduced to the condition of fossil remains;" and proceeded from the seat of justice to

liken the position of women to that of the brutes, who, by the way, are never "brutal." Yet he was sitting on what may tomorrow be the King's Bench; he had been a queen's counsel, when the accident of a minute might have made him a king's counsel; he spoke every day of mankind inclusive of the entire race, of the Church inclusive of all worshippers, and of a kingdom which he dares not say should not be ruled by a queen. We may hope, however, that when the English law is less slavish, its professors will share the elevation. And this we hope is based on no uncertain foundation. For he who runs may read the lessons of the ages. The Divine decree, stamped upon the face of every people, ordains the progress of each generation to a fuller exercise of individual faculties for the greater happiness and responsibility of the individual, and the more complete advantage of all. And with this it is given to men and women, the children of all time, to regard with lasting honour, as highest and nearest to the Divine nature, those who labour most successfully to bring human law into harmony with justice, not those who make themselves the law and dispense justice to the weak as to the strong, but the truer servants of right, who in their law-making follow that Divine refusal to recognise disability of sex which is the foundation alike of the Decalogue and of Christianity—who in all their law-making have but one rule of duty, to deal with others as they themselves hope to be dealt with. I humbly advocate these reforms in the English law, not more for the interest of women, than with true and dutiful regard for those of my own sex—for to me nothing is more clear than that the perpetuation of injustice implies the degradation of mankind.

DISCUSSION.

EDWARD B. EASTWICK, Esq., C.B., M.P., in the Chair.

Among those present were the following:—Professor Amos, Mrs. Amos, Mr. W. H. Ashurst, Mrs. Arthur Arnold, Miss C. E. Babb, Miss Baines, Mr. Sneade Brown, Mr. Edwin Bell, Mrs. Evan Bell, Misses A. and C. A. Biggs, Dr. Brentano, The Misses Blinns, Rev. C. H. Cholmeley, Mrs. Chesson, Miss Chesson, Dr. Drysdale, Mr. E. C. Dunn, Miss Agnes Garrett, Miss P. Garrett, Miss Katherine Hill, Mr. P. H. Holland, Mr. C. H. Hopwood, Mrs. Elizabeth Howe, Professor Hunter, Rev. C. Thomas Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, Mr. H. D. Jencken, Mrs. E. M. King, Dr. D. F. Lincoln, Mr. G. C. Mast, Mrs. F. Malleon, Mr. Lewis Morris, Mr. Mettra, Mr. H. N.

Mozley, Mr. James Mowatt, Mr. and Mrs. Prout Newcombe, Mr. Pears, Mr. Frederick Pennington, Mrs. Pennington, Mr. John Percival, Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Pochin, Hon. A. D. Ryder, Mr. S. A. Ali Sehan, Miss Shacker, Miss Emma A. Smith, Mr. William Shaen, Mrs. G. Sims, Miss Sims, Mr. William Storr, Mrs. Storr, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Taylor, Madam Venturi, Miss Vickary, Miss Emma Wallington, Mr. Robert White, Miss Williams.

MR. PEARS said that he could not agree with the reader that English law was responsible for the existing position of women. He believed that, on the contrary, law had done much to alleviate her hardships. He believed it would be a much fairer way of putting the question, to say that English law had found the position of women to be such as it always is in barbarous times, and had set itself to work to improve it. Judging indeed from the records of our law, it would appear that lawyers have always been ahead of the rest of the community in this matter. Not only had our ancient Common Law made provision for the wife, but one of the most important branches of Equity had been absolutely created by lawyers for the benefit of women without the aid of Parliament, and even against the generally prevalent public opinion outside the profession. The wife's equity to a settlement, by which the courts stretched their power to the utmost to benefit the wife whenever their aid was asked by the husband, the doctrines in regard to pin-money and paraphernalia, and above all, the establishment of separate use, all bear testimony to the jealous watchfulness of the courts on behalf of woman. Indeed, it is only two years ago that public opinion would sanction a measure doing for poor women what Equity had already provided for the rich; and although the Married Women's Property Act was far from being what this Association would have liked, no one could doubt that it represented a great advance. The Law Amendment Society would have preferred an Act like that introduced by Mr. Russell Gurney, and supported consistently and persistently by them, placing a married woman in the position of a *feme sole* in regard to her property; but here, as at other times in our history, the legal profession was ahead of public opinion. Turning next to the subject of giving women the franchise, Mr. Pears observed that he saw no ground of principle on which it could be denied to women who had the same qualification as men. The basis of our electoral representation had always been property; and if a single woman or a widow were a householder, he did not see why she was not entitled to have a vote as well as a man. He was glad that the question had passed through its religious phase, to use Conte's classification. It was now in its metaphysical stage. People were asking, what would be the use of the franchise to women? What right have they to it? Would they use it? All these objections, he believed, might be easily met, and before long the question would enter its positive stage, and woman's franchise would be one of the institutions of the land.

Mr. HENRY D. POCHIN was surprised to hear it said that the law was fair in regard to rich women. Although not a lawyer, from his own observation he could say that it was very unfair to both the rich and poor alike. Even when the wife had a settlement, she had no real power over her property. He (Mr. Pochin) knew an instance where a woman of considerable property married an unworthy, bad man, and although she had all the security a settlement could give, her husband contrived, by cunning or force, to secure to himself all the benefit of it, and the wife had no remedy. In regard to the intestate disposition of property, women were certainly not on an equal footing with men. Why were men preferred to women in this respect? As the usage of society had shut out women from the learned professions, the law should, he thought, rather side to their interests than to that of men in such matters as this. He would remind them also of the miserable support the law provided for a married woman; and before she could claim even this, she must become a pauper. The law was formed by men, for men—more in favour of their own interests than for those of women. He (Mr. Pochin) supported the present movement as well for the benefit of his own as for that of the opposite sex. Wherever women had been mixed with men in management, the result had been that the proceedings had been immensely influenced for good; and he thought that their presence on committees, boards of guardians, or even in the House of Commons, would be productive of great benefit to the community. If we had respect for goodness, purity, and grace, which are more especially the qualities of women, we should act wisely in granting what is now asked for them. They asked this concession as a matter of justice to themselves, but we should grant it in the certain hope of thereby benefiting mankind.

Mr. JENCKEN said that he differed with Mr. Arnold on several points. And, first, the law as cited was entirely wrong. In Equity, the property of the wife was protected, and the separate income of the wife could in no wise be taken by the husband, nay, even the goods purchased by the wife with her separate means were protected. At Common Law, the wife could always get her needs supplied, and the husband would be liable for the debts incurred. He, nevertheless, agreed that the law, as it now stands, bravely battling against a barbarous custom, ought to be amended, and separate rights granted to the wife. On the continent almost universally an immunity of goods existed, that is, the wife shared in all the property of her husband, and took half his estate upon his decease, or she could execute an ante-nuptial contract and reserve the right to separate property. A similar law would work, he thought, beneficially in England. But before the right of franchise was granted to women, the unfettering of the chains that bound property ought to be accomplished; give women the right to property and educate them first, and then it would be time to consider the franchise. Unless women were intel-

lectually raised, he much feared priests would use their advantage of the franchise in their hands, and rule the land, as they now do in France and Spain. In the former country the Jesuitical fathers had since the commencement of this century accumulated four hundred millions sterling, and this all but entirely through the instrumentality of women. He alluded to this as a warning against admitting women to sacerdotal orders, which some of the speakers before him had recommended. But to the point. Franchise arose by use of the right of vote in waging war; wars were continually waged, private contentions and public national internal struggles; but beyond this there existed war with an external enemy: this had to be answered; and in all these matters he doubted much whether women, with their ever failing strength, were fit to take a part. The mothers and nurses of men, nature had indeed imposed on them a heavy task, and to burden them with the heavy duties that outward contentions would impose, he much doubted the expediency.

Mr. P. H. HOLLAND said, it was sometimes contended, as was no doubt true, that wives are not generally treated with injustice, though by law they will be. It will be remembered that Mrs. Beecher Stowe, when told that few slave owners treated their slaves cruelly, replied that that was no defence for laws which made it legal for any to be treated cruelly. Of course, there were very few Legrees, for if there were many, society could not hold together; but the *legal* existence of a single Legree was a disgrace to the whole American nation; so likewise, though in a greatly reduced degree, the mere existence of an unjust law is a wrong, however rarely it may be put into operation. But the cases of husbands legally robbing their wives, though of course very small in proportion, are by no means small in number, and there are probably few of us who have not met with an instance amongst our own connections or acquaintance. It has been said that women are less well qualified than men to form correct political opinions, and as it was just now put, that may be true; but exactly the contrary is true of the class of women whom it is proposed to enfranchise, namely, those who are ratepayers. Nearly all female ratepayers are either the widows or daughters of men in the middle classes, who are nearly all educated, at the very least sufficiently to read and understand any public discussion; while, perhaps, a majority—certainly a very large minority—of male ratepayers cannot even read with ease, and are at the mercy of any fluent demagogue who wishes to mislead them. The female ratepayers would be very far superior to the majority of the present ratepayers in intelligence, and beyond all comparison better in moral sentiment and true public spirit. In one important respect, the addition of well-educated and high-principled women, such as the vast majority of middle-class English women are, would be a great improvement to the constituency. Very likely they would not often vote, but they would always be ready to vote against a

clever reprobate ; nothing would persuade them to support a notorious blackguard; they attach more value than men do to moral character, and it would be of the greatest possible public benefit if all public men felt that their moral character as well as their ability was an important element for their success. There is another objection that hardly needs an answer. It is often said there is no occasion to give women votes : they do not wish for them. If it were proposed to compel all women to vote, the objection might be considered; but as those who do not wish to vote need not unless they please, that is no reason why those who please should be prevented.

Professor SHELDON AMOS said, it was difficult to vary the arguments for the proposed measure. He thought there was no weight in the objections that had been urged that evening against it. He looked upon it as part of a large movement for the amelioration of the condition of women. Part of this was political, and part social. We must have education for them. Hitherto all that was menial had fallen to their share, in this and every other matter. This and other subjects would have to be brought forward, together with the granting of the suffrage. He did not believe that women possessed a monopoly of the graces; but thought that the result of association, in the work of legislation and administration, of men and women, would bring out a higher principle in our doings. We wanted this more than formerly; for we attempted much more now in the way of legislation towards scientific and moral ends than in past days. Real knowledge and reliance on true principles were our great needs, and these he thought the measures proposed would help us materially to gain. He would exhort everybody to join in this movement. It had a side intimately connected with the future of man. With regard to what had been said about the administration of bad laws, he thought the most effectual way to promote their abrogation was to press them to their uttermost.

Miss GARRETT said that the ultimate object of the proposed measure was to enable women to protect themselves—to give them the power to do all for themselves which was necessary to be done.

Dr. DRYSDALE could speak from experience of the education of women in regard to medicine. The various disabilities they suffered from in this respect could not be completely remedied until they had the franchise. The reason they were not allowed to compete with men in professional pursuits was, that they had no power. They should devote their whole energies to gain the franchise, for until this is gained nothing effective would be done for their benefit. Intolerable injustice was done in many particulars to the female sex. In marriage great wrong could be and was committed by bad men, and we had got so much accustomed to this as scarcely to notice the amount of suffering endured. He had ample evidence of this in his hospital experience. If women had the suffrage, and became members of committees or such like, their presence he believed in such bodies would have an

immense influence for good. Matters which now injuriously affected them, would receive a due share of attention, and in particular regard to their education, the vexatious hindrances which now lay in their path would soon be swept away.

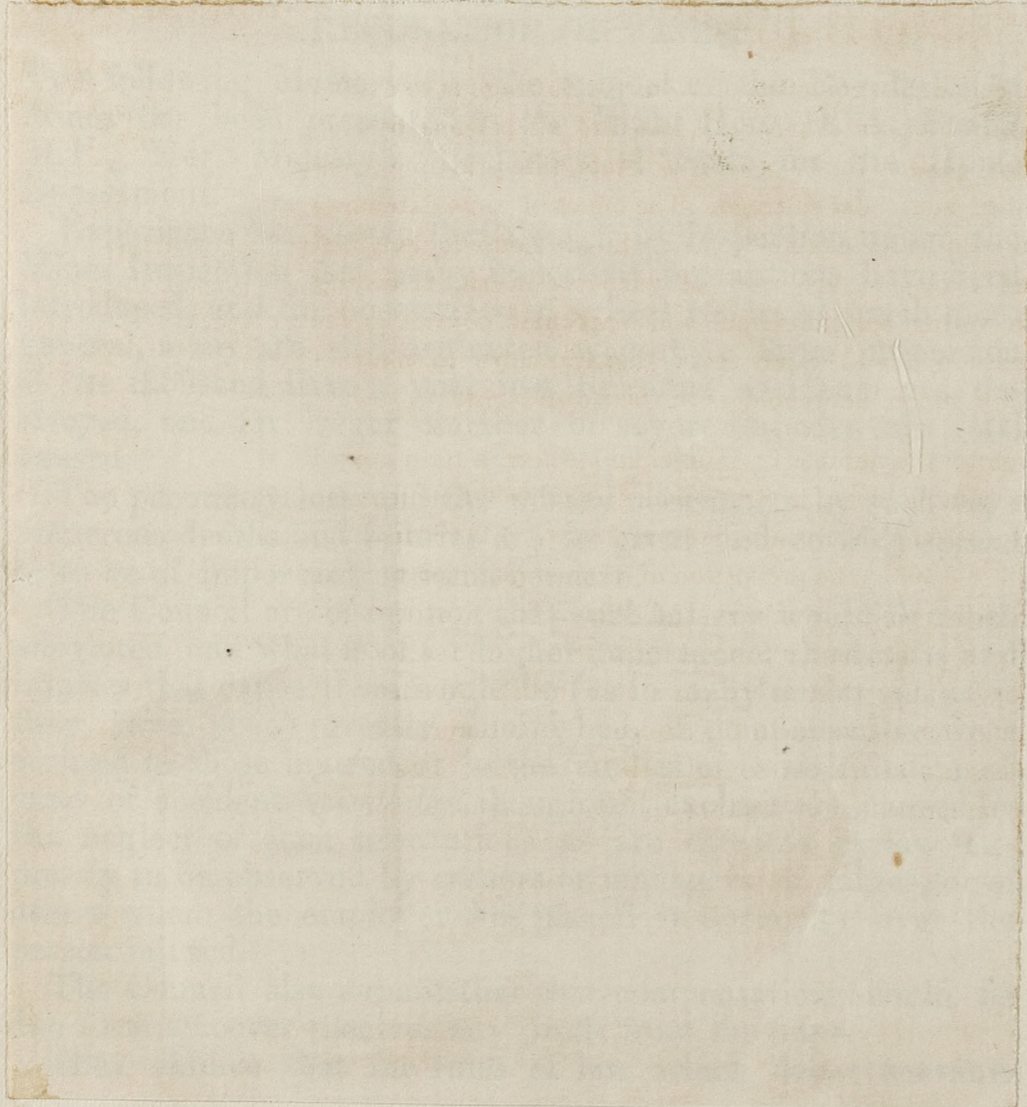
The CHAIRMAN said that he had not an easy task to sum up the discussion, for it had been nearly all one-sided. There was only one opponent to the measure advocated, and he (the Chairman) thought that he was not a real adversary. It was Mr. Jencken's duty to defend the laws, and he had done so. If, as he (Mr. Jencken) said, a wife could go out and buy a number of pounds of cheese, for no other purpose than to spite her husband, he thought there was a sad want of morality and common-sense in the law, and it gave him no better opinion of its regard for the interests of woman. In the numberless systems of law existing in Germany, there was not one in which, upon marriage, a woman was denuded of all her property. The legal view of the question had had much notice; he thought it better to take a wider range. He would have been glad to have had a little more opposition in the discussion—to have heard the best arguments which could be brought against the proposed measure. He believed that what women did would be done in an admirable manner. The interests of females were not inferior to those of males, but they had no direct participation in their consideration. Some women who had attended to statesmanship had become most accomplished and intelligent politicians, as, for instance, Queen Elizabeth. This would prove that there was no lack of capacity in women, when the opportunity was present. He attached no importance to Mr. Jencken's assertion that women had no right to a voice in the decision of whether there should be war or peace, since they could not fight. Rather, he would let their influence have weight on the question, for they would be always in favour of peace. Many women had already become eminent in spheres of labour formerly closed to them. He hoped that in this measure we should make a great stride in this Session of Parliament. It might be asked why, when on this particular question, America, to which country we generally looked for examples of progress, was quiescent, we should take the initiative in pressing for female suffrage? Without attempting to answer this question, having just returned from America, he might say that the social status of women there was higher than it was here. In the department of the Treasury at Washington there are seven hundred women employed, and they are in every way as efficient as men. The knowledge of their duties as citizens, which the possession of the franchise would confer on women, would, he thought, be a great benefit to men, who in the earlier stages of life received so much instruction from them. But after all, the greatest argument to his mind in favour of the measure was that no reasonable argument could be or had been brought against it. A great statesman, whose name he would not mention, had answered

a question he (the Chairman) had put to him, as to what reasons could be urged against the proposal, by saying that there was really no argument against it. He was sorry that some of those who habitually spoke against the measure, and some of those ladies who languidly opposed it, had not been heard on that occasion. In conclusion, he would express his thanks, and he was sure he might say that of the meeting, for the valuable paper of Mr. Arnold, and he hoped that their presence there might contribute in some measure to the success of the object aimed at.

Mr. ARNOLD expressed the pleasure with which he had heard the debate.

Mr. ASHURST proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his presence and remarks on that occasion; and Mr. ARNOLD seconded the vote, which was carried unanimously.

The department then adjourned.



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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

(Approved and adopted at a Meeting of the Committee of the Brighton Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, held at the Town Hall, Brighton, 6th April, 1872) of

OBJECTS.

The object of the promoters of Women's Suffrage is to extend the principle on which the franchise is based to all persons bearing an equal share of the burthens of the State, this principle being primarily that of household suffrage. The effect of thus extending the franchise will be to enable women who are householders, and pay rates and taxes, to vote for all purposes—a right already established in voting for municipal and parochial objects. The proposed extension would rarely give the franchise to married women, who are seldom householders in their own right.

In Brighton the number of municipal electors, a term almost equivalent to householders, is 8,831 males, to 2,008 females; in Bath, 5,148 to 1,308; in Birmingham, 47,185 to 5,111; in Manchester, 53,638 to 8,500; the proportion of women qualified to vote, as compared with men, in England and Wales, being rather more than one to eight. But, as the fundamental principle of all representative government is that every class bearing the burthens of the State should have a voice in the choice of representatives, and that no one class can be trusted to legislate for another class whose interests are unrepresented, it follows that women should have a

Examiner and Times, February 16th, 1872.

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voice in legislation directly affecting them or their children, such as the Married Women's Property Bill, the Guardianship of Children—at present the law leaning so strongly to the side of the father's right, that a mother may be deprived by him of her children after the age of seven,—the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, the protection of women and children from overwork and oppression, female education, &c. It is also felt that women would exercise a valuable moral influence on great national and social questions, such as war, the suppression of drunkenness, immorality, pauperism, &c., &c. The right of the suffrage in no way pre-supposes extensive political knowledge in men, or it would not be conferred on all householders; and it is probable that in many cases women's practical acquaintance with social questions, and with the wants of the poor, would render their participation in the choice of representatives an advantage to a constituency.

It is also hoped that as the Household Suffrage Bill of 1867 has given, as a matter of fact, a powerful stimulus to popular education, so the extension of the franchise to even a moderate number of women would give a decided stimulus to female education, both directly as throwing a responsibility on women which they must be educated up to, and indirectly in giving increased weight and importance to women generally.

In conclusion, it is earnestly hoped that no one, whether man or woman, will look at Women's Suffrage as a mere party question, to be rejected on the ground of unreasoning prejudice, or on the score of names associated or not associated with it. As such it cannot be considered when the leading men of opposite political schools are among its supporters. Its promoters would rather ask that the question be carefully considered on its own merits; and that all to whom it approves itself as just and right in principle should honestly and openly act up to their convictions, irrespective of party considerations, in the firm belief that the right will always in the end prove itself also the expedient.

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“A lady who is penetrated with the justness of the maxim that taxation and representation should go together, is seeking to turn it to her own advantage by a very bold device. She was this week waited upon by the tax-collector, and instead of meekly paying over the amount of the claim made upon her, she placed in the hands of that functionary a written protest, which ran as follows: “I refuse payment of the Queen's taxes as a protest against the injustice which I, in common with all women freeholders and householders, suffer in being excluded from the right of parliamentary representation, while called upon to bear a full share of State taxation.” What the collector would do with the paper when he got clear of the house, we can only vaguely conjecture. Perhaps, when a decent interval has elapsed, he will call upon the lady as though nothing unusual had happened. His position is certainly an embarrassing one, and were every feminine householder to act with equal determination, it might even become intolerable. When a lady is once resolved, we may be sure that no tax collector will be able to divert her from her purpose, and to make a distraint upon her goods and chattels in a case like this would simply be cruel. We quite agree that nothing would be so likely to convince Parliament that women are in earnest in demanding the suffrage as their refusal to pay State taxes, and if the example of this public spirited householder finds even a few imitators, the question may be regarded as practically settled.”—*Manchester Examiner and Times*, February 16th, 1872.

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ELECTORAL DISABILITIES
OF WOMEN :
A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY
RHODA GARRETT,

IN THE
CORN EXCHANGE, CHELTENHAM,
April 3rd, 1872.

CHELTENHAM :
PRINTED AT THE "TELEGRAPH" OFFICE.

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A. IRELAND AND CO., PRINTERS, MANCHESTER.

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THE ELECTORAL DISABILITIES OF WOMEN.

In speaking on the subject of the Electoral Disabilities of Women, it is no longer necessary to preface one's remarks by an elaborate explanation of what is meant by this demand that we are now making for admission to Electoral Representation. The subject has of late been too widely discussed to allow of any very great ignorance as to the matter to be dealt with in a lecture upon Woman's Suffrage; still I do not for a moment venture to hope that this discussion has caused even one-hundredth part of the excitement created by the Tichborne case, for example, though it involves a great political reform affecting not one family alone, but all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. In what manner it thus affects the interests of the entire nation, it will be my endeavour to point out in the course of my lecture to-night.

In order to bring my subject within as narrow a compass as possible, I will divide it into three parts—

- 1st. The education of women;
- 2nd. Their economic position;
- 3rd. The existing laws especially affecting the interests of women.

I dare say that at first sight you will be unable to see how the possession of the Suffrage by women would improve their position either educationally, economically, or legally; but by the time I have concluded my paper I am bold enough to hope that I may have convinced those who need convincing, that the Suffrage is, as Mr. John Stuart Mill says, the turning point in women's cause, and that with it, they cannot long be denied any just right, or excluded from any fair advantage.

If we put into the hands of those who suffer from this injustice some share of political power. Therefore, sir, while I admit I do not question the justice of Parliament, or the right intentions of honourable members, I submit that the constitutional means of remedying injustice is by influencing members of Parliament in a constitutional way.—*Speech in the House of Commons.*

May 1st, 1872.

Let us first of all consider the present state of education among women, from the time when they are first capable of receiving any education at all, until they arrive at that happy climax, when they are pronounced by their parents and guardians "finished." In the training of very young children there is, of course, comparatively little difference between the actual teaching given to boys and girls, but in their moral and physical training, the difference is even then apparent. Boys are taught from the earliest period of life to be self-dependent and self-reliant; while girls are taught, on the contrary, to be yielding, self-sacrificing, and reliant on any-one rather than upon themselves. A boy is encouraged to develop his physical powers by out-door sports of all kinds, and to interest himself in a variety of pursuits, which cultivate habits of observation, and often lay the foundation for a love of natural science which in after life proves most valuable. A girl generally receives a training of a very opposite character. If she shows a disposition to join in her brothers' games and amusements she is probably told that such conduct is "unladylike," that little girls should not be "tom-boys," and that, instead of running and jumping and climbing she should get to her sewing and knitting and "keep quiet." I believe it is a generally received axiom that men are more selfish than women, and it is easy to trace the growth of this selfishness in men to that spirit of excessive self-sacrifice in women which, even as boys, they have been taught to look upon as natural, and to regard as a right.

Passing from the home life, let us see how boys and girls are respectively prepared for the work of life by the education given to them at school. Everyone knows how immensely superior the educational advantages open to boys are, to those which are offered to girls. A boy is sent, or at any rate may be sent, to one of the great public schools and afterwards to one

of the Universities. In each case his education will be conducted by men of the highest ability and learning. Contrast with this the education his sister is likely to receive at the small private school which is open to her. The teachers here, when they are women, have seldom been trained to teach, and have in nearly every case undertaken the profession from necessity, and not from choice; consequently they are only able to impart to their pupils the smatterings of knowledge that it has been in their own power to acquire. The most important subjects for female education are generally considered to be accomplishments so-called—a little bad French and music, and worse drawing, with a great deal of fancy needlework. If anyone doubts the truth of my statements let him read the School Commissioner's report which lately enquired into the state of education in girls', as well as in boys' schools. Here the evidence is so united and voluminous that my difficulty, in selecting any one part as especially illustrating the poverty and worthlessness of the education now offered to girls, has been to choose, out of so great a choice, not to find suitable matter. Before I read the quotation I should like to draw the attention of those present, who take an interest in the education of girls, to a book which has been compiled by Miss Beale, of Cheltenham, from the reports issued by the Schools Inquiry Commission; it is most valuable as containing in one small volume all the evidence, and the reports, which were received by the Commission on Girls' Schools. After describing the teaching given in a girls' day school, one of the assistant commissioners says "The boarding school, (assuming it, as one may do, to belong to the same class), follows (in all probability), the same vicious system as the day school; and the only difference that it makes to the girl is to take away some of the primitive roughness or simplicity of her manner, and give it an air of affectation and restraint. Then at sixteen she goes home 'for good.' She displays the two or

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three pieces of ornamental needlework, each of which has occupied her three months, and some drawings, copies from the flat, of figures and landscapes, whose high finish betrays the drawing master's hand. A neighbour drops in, conversation turns upon Jane's return from school, and the mother bids her play one of the pieces she learnt there. For two or three weeks this exhibition of skill is repeated at intervals, and then it ceases, the piano is no more touched, the dates of inventions, the relationship of the heathen gods, the number of houses burnt in the fire of London, and other interesting facts contained in Mangnall are soon forgotten, and the girl is as though she had never been to school at all. There are few books on her father's shelves, perhaps two or three green or yellow novels, some back numbers of the Family Herald, Mr. Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy, Cowper's poems, with gilt edges, dusted more often than opened, Enquire within upon Everything, and one or two religious biographies. It is not this want of material, however, that quenches her taste for reading, for school gave her no such taste; her life henceforth, till marriage, is listless and purposeless, some of it spent in petty occupation, more of it in pettier gossip; and when at last she is called upon to manage a household she finds that her education has neither taught her anything that can be of practical service, nor made her any fitter than nature made her at first to educate and govern her children. In point of knowledge and refinement, she is just where her mother was, and her sons and daughters suffer for it."

I must here say a few words on the question of endowments as affecting educational establishments. It is a well known fact that all the enormous sums set apart for purposes of education are almost entirely devoted to the teaching of boys. The trustees of public educational charities have generally managed to employ the funds exclusively for boys, and Parliament, in voting money for

education, has very often forgotten the existence of girls. Where funds have been left for education without distinction of sex, girls have often been unfairly dealt with; as in the case of Christ's Hospital (the Blue-coat School) which was originally established for the purpose of maintaining a certain number of boys and girls. The funds of this school now amount to £42,000 a year; out of these funds one thousand two hundred boys are fed and clothed, and educated in such a manner as to fit them to proceed to the Universities, and nineteen girls are trained as domestic servants.

It must be remembered, moreover, that it is not alone to boys whose parents are rich that all those advantages are open. To every large public school there are attached scholarships open for competition to all the pupils, and therefore any boy of fair ability and perseverance may, by gaining one of them, obtain a sufficient yearly sum to enable him to pay, at any rate, a considerable part of his college expenses; and, when once the doors of the University are open to him, it is surely his own fault if he does not win for himself both honour and emolument.

Where now shall we look for similar advantages for the sisters of these fortunate boys? Referring to this subject, the report of the Schools' Enquiry Commission before mentioned says: "Examinations and endowments afford, at the present time, the best practical method of improving female education. We can only improve the education of the classes below by beginning at the top and improving the higher education, especially that of the teachers. Here scholarships would be most useful."

Of course it is impossible for me to point out, in the brief space of time at my disposal, all the evils that must arise from such a one-sided system of education as this—in the one case, we educate entirely for life in the world, in the other, for life at home. We well know that men neither can,

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nor do, live entirely in, and for, the world; nor can women live entirely in, and for, the home. Both are impossible as both are undesirable.

Let us now trace the connection between the education of women and their electoral disabilities. It will be readily admitted that the scope of education is to fit the child for his, or her, future place in the world; and here, as elsewhere, as we sow, so also shall we reap. If, therefore, we give to girls such an education as that I have just described, is it unlikely that when they grow up they will be both physically and mentally weak, ignorant, dependent and frivolous, unfit, as they are often declared to be, to be entrusted with civil and political rights?

But think you these evils will be best remedied by insisting upon their remaining in this state of dependence, or by admitting them to a broader and a freer life; by giving them responsibility as an educational power? Is not this what was done for working men in the passing of the last Reform Bill? Was it not argued that none but working men could tell what the needs of their own class were, and that, through their representatives, they had a right to express their opinions to Parliament? Is the same argument less forcible when applied to women? Would they consent to be excluded from a fair share in educational advantages if they could, in like manner, make their voices heard in the legislature of the country? Would not their claim to be educated as solidly, and in the same branches of knowledge as men, be argued with a far greater chance of success, if they possessed the power of urging its justice before that tribunal where men are able to lay their grievances, and enforce their redress?

Having now given a brief sketch of the early life and training of a woman, let us see how she is likely to fare when she is ready to take her part in the real work of life. In other words, let us examine the economic condition of women. Most people will tell us that a

woman has no need to take part at all in the world's work; that if she is all she ought to be, attractive, young, and with an adequate knowledge of cookery and shirt-buttons, some man will certainly wish to marry her, and then she will have no need to trouble her head about politics and the like, with which she has no concern. This is no doubt very plausible, and the majority of women will probably always choose to marry, if a suitable opportunity presents itself; but granting that the greater part of the female population is thus comfortably provided for, there still remains an enormous proportion of unmarried women, most of whom must support themselves by their own earnings. Now custom usually attaches a kind of stigma to what is called an "old-maid," that is to say, to a woman who, either from necessity or choice, is still unmarried when she has passed her early youth. But possibly custom might be a little more lenient to her misfortunes, if it were universally known that, in consequence of the great excess of the female over the male population in this country, there are two millions and a half of British women without husbands, many of whom are obliged to work for their own subsistence. As, therefore, a great many women are, willing or unwilling, compelled, by the law of this land that a man shall have only one wife at a time, to remain in single blessedness, it will be for the advantage, both of themselves, and of the community at large, that they should not only be self-supporting, but productive labourers.

I will not here enter particularly into the many difficulties and disadvantages of women of the so-called working classes, simply remarking, as I pass, that the universally low rate of wages amongst them, as compared with those of men of their own class, is accounted for principally by the fact that women rarely receive a proper training for the work they undertake to perform; consequently, their work is unskilled, and therefore inferior. Even where a woman is

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able to perform the same work equally well with a man, her labour is not remunerated in the same degree in consequence of the custom I have just alluded to. If a man engages in the trade of a mason or carpenter, or even a tailor or cook, he receives a proper training, and serves a regular apprenticeship; but it is not thought necessary to give these advantages to a woman; at any rate not on the same thorough and distinct understanding. I will give one or two illustrations of what I mean in regard to this subject, and then pass on.

Let us take as one example, out of the many that might be advanced, that of a cook in a wealthy family. If this same cook is a man, he has exactly similar work to perform as a woman would have in the same position—neither more nor less—but he has, in all probability, served a proper and recognised apprenticeship to his trade, and he can, therefore, always command a high price for his labour. A woman may have exactly the same amount of knowledge; may be quite as competent to prepare those marvels of cookery that aristocratic palates delight in, but she has no credentials from Soyer or Francatelli to assure her employers of her capability; she has, moreover the precedent of custom against her, and therefore, for the same work, performed in an equally satisfactory manner, she is paid half, or at any rate, one third, less than a man would be. Again. A large hairdresser in London has lately (to his credit be it spoken) adopted the sensible custom of employing young women in his establishment to cut and dress the hair of his lady customers. One of the girls employed in this business told me the other day that the women were always paid less than the men. Now this is obviously unfair. The girls do their work most satisfactorily; and their department is certainly more difficult and requires more skill than that of the men, for they have not only to cut a lady's hair, but also to construct upon her head one of those marvellous erections with which too many

English girls in these days disfigure themselves, and which I am sure it would puzzle their male competitors to fabricate.

These two instances alone will show you how unfairly even the skilled labour of women is remunerated. But I grieve to say there are thousands of women, who through deficient training, have not the same skilled labour to offer, and must suffer accordingly. We do not ask for these that competent, or incompetent, they should receive the same wages as men. What we *do* ask is that women should no longer be placed at a disadvantage; we ask that they should have as good an education, and as many opportunities as men for fitting themselves for their work; which, with the removal of trade monopolies, will at least give them a fair chance; and then, and then only, can it be justly said that it is their own fault if they do not make their way in the world as men now have it in their power to do.

But, bad as the economic condition of women of the working classes is, it cannot be regarded as so difficult to improve as that of the more educated middle-class women, who, in addition to a training which tends absolutely to unfit them for work, have to contend with a mass of prejudice against their working at all, which is all the more formidable inasmuch as it is unreasonable, and therefore *unconvinced*. The economic condition of such women, their exclusion from nearly all lucrative and honourable employments—their consequent dependence upon men for their support—are evils which increase with the growth of the population, and which the State is no longer justified in ignoring. For an educated woman there is no middle path. Either she must be Queen of England—the head of the State—or she must be shut out from nearly all the advantages of a citizen in a country over which a woman rules. To begin with the offices under Government. The numerous servants employed thereby (some of whom earn, or, to speak more

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precisely, receive several thousands a-year) are exclusively male subjects of her Majesty; except in the telegraph offices where, through the exertions of Mr. Scudamore, women have been admitted. But even here, they are admitted, as Mr. Scudamore himself told me, only in the lower grades, where, after years of faithful work, they might eventually earn £200 a-year. The office of superintendent, which women are quite as competent to fill as men, is denied to them, solely because they are women, *not* because they are in any way incapable of fulfilling its duties. There are many other civil offices quite as suitable to women as telegraphy, though requiring a higher education, for which hundreds of British gentlewomen would gladly fit themselves, the greatest proportion of whom, even the most delicate, would have physical strength enough to read the *Times* daily from ten to four.

The influence thus exercised by the Government in declaring women ineligible to hold office under it permeates through society and countenances their exclusion from the three learned professions—from the Church, where, as teachers of morality their influence and example would be as valuable as that of men; from medicine, though it is often said that it is a woman's special province to minister to the sick; and from the law, where—well, perhaps, some more of that tenderness of conscience, which men tell us is one of the peculiar characteristics of woman, might not be injurious to the higher interests of that learned profession.

Let us now note the difficulties a woman is likely to encounter, if she seeks to enter trade. Here there are no charters, it is true, as in the professions, to prevent her entrance at the very threshold. But there are lions in the way quite as formidable; blind prejudice, on the one hand; and a fear of injuring established interests on the other. You must not think I am drawing a fancy picture—that no woman would wish to engage in trade. I know women who have tried to do

so, and whose difficulties lay, not in their want of power to acquire the requisite knowledge, but in the almost over-whelming prejudice of those already in possession of the vantage ground which stops them at every turn. It is often urged against admitting women to a share in the real work of life that they are neither physically nor mentally strong enough to compete with men; but no amount of hard work, with the hope of success at the end, would break down a woman's health in comparison with the struggle with anxiety, disappointment and contempt, which she now has so often to endure, and which truly makes "the whole head sick, the whole heart faint." I do not believe that men mean deliberately to be unjust to women; but they think *they* are the best judges of what nature intended women to be, and to do, and it must be confessed that, to a certain degree, women have hitherto endorsed this opinion, by accepting with more apparent than real content, the rôle of dependence and frivolity prescribed for them. The only qualities expected, nay, insisted upon, in women by men, are but too often those declared by Sir Charles Sedley to be the sole characteristics of the female mind:

All that in woman is adored
In thy fair self I find,
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

But here let me point out that the prejudice middle class-parents, almost without exception, have against their daughters working, possesses a power which in very few other cases prejudice is able to wield. There is no trade which can be entered into without capital, whether a shop of the humblest dimensions be opened, or a brewery established. Years before a boy has left school the prudent father is casting about in his own mind what trade or profession shall be adorned by presence of his cherished young hero. Every taste that he has given the slightest indication of

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is considered; and even, in some cases, the merits of his personal appearance and manners receive due weight. But the trade fixed upon, the next question which the father propounds to himself is, "How can I provide the capital, first to article my boy to a respectable firm in the trade he has chosen, and afterwards to establish him in a business of his own?" But though parents thus recognise the necessity of providing capital for their sons, it never seems to enter their heads that the same thing should be, at any rate, offered to their daughters. Girls never have any capital; they hardly know what it means; yet without it the very first move is impossible; they may enter a shop, but they cannot own one. A boy is considered almost a miracle of goodness if, his premium paid, and his living expenses provided for, he lives morally and respectably, keeps out of debt, and applies himself with a moderate amount of intelligence to learn his business. To a girl, who, without any of these encouragements, plods on her way, eagerly learning the drudgery of some trade in which she can scarcely ever hope to be a master hand, such a meed of praise and encouragement is rarely offered. The excuse which parents generally give for making such a distinction between their boys and girls, is that if the girl married at the end of her apprenticeship, the money paid for her premium would be lost.

In answer to this several counter arguments may be used. In the first place it may be urged, that even if she did marry before she had regained in trade the sum expended upon her training, the business habits acquired during her apprenticeship, and the knowledge of how to expend her money to the best advantage would ensure her becoming the satisfactory steward of her husband's domestic expenditure, instead of (as is now too often the case) the thoughtless and extravagant agent, who is, during the first few months of her marriage "chaffed" for her ignorance in money matters; next, angrily expostulated with, and finally deprived of any power over the expenditure

whatever. In the next place the advantage may be pointed out, that the girl who has a trade at her fingers' ends, would not be likely to accept the first man who offered himself for her hand, whether she loved him or not. In other words, marriage would not be (as it too often is now) the only profession into which women can enter, and the one position in which society will recognise their right to lead free and individual lives. For, as the *Times* observes, "At present the language held by society to women is 'marry, teach, die, or do worse.'" I do not for one moment believe, and, if I did, I should never succeed in persuading you, that boys and girls will leave off falling in love and marrying. I am sure that few men are so modest as to believe that they are likely to find really formidable rivals in dusty ledgers, hard office stools, or even in full cash boxes. So far from this I would contend that the wives they would gain would become their wives voluntarily and joyfully, and the more joyfully because voluntarily. Whatever business they were engaged in would either be disposed of, or perhaps carried on for the advantage of the family. Women now but too often feel that in marrying they are submitting themselves as it were to a fate which they suppose is inevitable; for as Mr. Mill says, marriage must be regarded as Hobson's choice—that or none—so long as its only alternative is a dull, lonely life, embittered by the thought of the wasted energies or mis-used talents that, under other circumstances, might have been turned by the despised old-maid, to her own welfare, and to the advantage of the world.

Is there any difficulty now in seeing how the general position of women hinges on their exclusion from the suffrage? Has not Representation been the point for which all classes, who have had wrongs real or imaginary, have struggled? Is it necessary to explain what an advantage it would be to many women, now forced to work with competitors, who, at every turn, receive privileges and encouragement which are denied to them, to be

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placed in this respect, at least, on an equal footing with men? And lastly, is it necessary for me to point out how the responsibility of possessing a share in the government of the country (and a vote does give that share) would awaken from their lethargy those women who are now leading selfish—wickedly selfish—lives of indolence and gaiety; would force them to think out questions to which they now persistently shut their eyes, because they are painful or disagreeable, and would teach them that the souls and lives of their poorer sisters, whom a helping hand might save from despair, or guard from temptation, will be required of them. Thousands of women need only this awakening to be capable of doing noble deeds. "Women often take meaner things because meaner things only are within their reach."

Having now considered, as fully as time permits, the position of women educationally and economically, we come to the last point that remains for me to examine. What is the legal position of women in this country? I will speak, in the first place, of the laws relating to married women; and, in exposing their injustice and partiality, I hope all the husbands here present will not think I am having a sly hit at them individually and collectively; at the same time, if, in any case, the cap should fit, they have my free permission to put it on. Of course we all know that laws are not framed for those who do well; and it is a merciful thing that the majority of husbands have not the disposition to put in force all the power of tyranny and cruelty that our English laws place in their hands. As marriage is the only, or almost the only, career appointed by society for a woman; the one for which she is educated, and taught that it is her highest duty to prepare herself; it might naturally be supposed that everything would have been done to make this condition as eligible and attractive as possible, so that she might never be tempted to desire any other. But surely, if women carefully considered what the laws of marriage really are, they would

be more likely than when they are absolutely ignorant of these laws, to remain single, and to believe, with St. Paul, that "they are happier if they so abide!" Wives in England are, in all respects, as to property, person, and children, in the legal condition of slaves. When a man takes a wife he swears to endow her with all his worldly goods; then the law steps in and helps him to keep his vow by at once handing over the entire property of the wife to the husband, and declaring her incapable of holding property. Speaking on this point reminds me of the amusing description of the marriage service given by Sir John Bowring, "Look at the marriage ceremony," he said, "it is wicked from beginning to end. 'With this ring I thee wed'—that's sorcery; 'With my body I thee worship'—that's idolatry; 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow'—that's—that's a lie!" It is true that the richer classes in this country are able, by the costly means of settlements, to set aside the law, and to withdraw the whole, or a part of the wife's property from the control of her husband. But even then they are not able to give it into her own keeping—it must be held for her by trustees, and hedged round by numerous perplexing and irritating provisions.

In the Session of 1870 an Act was passed entitled, "The Married Women's Property Bill." This Act was supposed to do for poor women what settlements do for rich ones. It was intended to prevent the personal property of a woman, her wages, her savings, and her earnings, being at the absolute mercy of her husband or his creditors. I have not time to enter into all the provisions of the Act, which is certainly a step in the right direction, but unfortunately a very short step; for it does not in any way recognise the only just principle of all legislation, namely, the perfect equality of all before the law. One illustration will be enough to demonstrate to you the kind of justice meted out to women under the new Act, and you shall

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judge for yourselves whether it is unreasonable for women to ask for something a little better. The case was recently tried in the law courts, and the account of it which I am about to read to you was taken from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a paper which, as a rule, certainly never errs on the side of over-justice to women. "It is to be hoped," remarks the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "that women will not read the case of *Shillitoe v. Shillitoe*, which has just come before Vice-Chancellor Wickens, for it will give them a real grievance with which to make themselves and others uncomfortable, instead of those imaginary grievances that occupy so much of their time and attention. It seems that no settlement was executed on the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Shillitoe. At the time of her marriage, Mrs. Shillitoe had a sum of £500 at the Selby Bank in her maiden name. Soon after the marriage, at her husband's request, she drew the sum out of the bank on a cheque of her own and brought it home in order to pay rent and other specific sums with it. Two days after Mr. Shillitoe died. No rent was paid, and Mrs. Shillitoe for the first time ascertained that her husband was indebted to his father and his brother and to other persons, and was so when they married. The estate was being administered, and she was called upon to account for the £500 as part of her husband's property, without which sum the assets would be insufficient to pay the creditors. She declined to account for, or to pay over the money, and claimed it as her own by right of survivorship. It was insisted, on behalf of the creditors, that there had been a good reduction into possession of the £500 in the lifetime of Mr. Shillitoe, and that his widow could not retain it. On the other hand, Mrs. Shillitoe's counsel urged that the bank had paid the money to that lady as hers, and would not otherwise have paid the money at all; that it was in equity hers, for if she had known her husband's actual position at the time of the marriage, she would have insisted upon a settlement of the

money, and could have done so at any moment if he had refused. If this fund were taken from her she would have only £4 10s. a-year to live upon. The Vice-Chancellor decided that there had been a perfectly good reduction of the money into the possession of Mr. Shillitoe, and that the widow must hand it over to the executors. The case was no doubt a hard one for her, but the law—and a most important one it was—was too clear upon the subject."

Well! this is how the law protects an Englishwoman's property. Now let us see what protection it affords to her person. A wife is regarded by the law as part of the husband's goods and chattels; and, in olden times, women were absolutely sold by their fathers to the husband. Even in these days there are some (of course very ignorant persons) who believe that the law sanctions such a proceeding. Only the other day I saw a case in the newspapers of a man who sold his wife to another man for half-a-crown. Again, how many cases of the brutal personal violence of men towards their wives, may be read of every day in the columns of our newspapers, and the very inadequate punishment frequently accorded to them, by the magistrates, for the offence. Many a man, I really believe, conscientiously holds with the old proverb:

A wife, a dog, and a walnut tree,
The more you beat 'em the better they be.

Again, if a woman is cruelly treated by her husband, she cannot leave him, or, if she does so, she can be compelled to return to him by law or by physical force. It is only legal separation by a court of justice, which can entitle her to live apart from him; and this legal separation is most difficult to obtain, and is only granted in cases of desertion and extreme cruelty.

Now what is the power of a woman over her own children, who are, at least, as much hers as her husband's? They are by law *his* children. He only has legal power over them; she can only act towards

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them by delegation from him; after he is dead she is not their legal guardian, unless he by will has made her so; he could constitute any stranger their legal guardian, and deprive their own mother of any power whatever over them. After seven years of age, the custody of a woman's children belongs exclusively to her husband; after that age she has not the right even to see them, unless by special legal decree.

"My brethren, these things ought not so to be!" But there are laws affecting both married and unmarried women, worse even than these; more degrading, more cruel, more unjust, more barbarous; laws, which if Englishmen once thoroughly understood, and reflected upon, would not, I venture to say, disgrace much longer the statute books of our country. And if women had the power of showing by their votes at an election, that they approved or disapproved of laws which have so much to do with the happiness and well-being of their whole lives—if they had this power, would they not, I ask you, do their share in helping to abolish such legislation as this?

It is constantly said that women's interests are so carefully guarded by men that it is unnecessary to give them any voice in the matter. Did working men think that their well-being was so completely safe in the hands of the richer classes, that it was unnecessary to pass the Representation of the People's Bill? We women demand, as men have demanded before us, the right to protect ourselves; and we believe, as they believed, that this end will only be gained by our obtaining a voice in the framing of those laws which we are called upon to obey.

At the commencement of my lecture I expressed a hope that before I had finished speaking I might have convinced some of those who differed from me on this subject, that politics have, after all, a great deal to do with women; that as they cannot live in the world without bearing a part in its business, responsibilities, and sufferings, they there

fore do well to strive for a share of the power to work with men, for the general well-being and prosperity of their common country. In order to do this, I have pointed out, that they demand the removal of their electoral disabilities, believing that until this is done they can have no efficient weapon with which to fight their battles. We are constantly told, in tones of scorn, that the women who desire the suffrage are a mere handful of female fanatics. As compared with the entire female population we may be only a handful, but we are an ever-increasing handful of very obstinate people; and, if a wilful man must have his way, a wilful woman is likely to be quite as invincible:

If she will, she will, you may depend on't;
And if she won't, she won't, and there's an end on't.

Every year a larger number of petitions are presented to Parliament in favour of this measure, and last year these petitions were signed by 187,000 persons. One hundred and eighty-seven thousand persons is, at any rate, a considerable handful, especially if they are all, as they have been declared to be, violent fanatics.

Before I conclude I must make it clearly understood what the measure really is to which you will be asked to assent in the Resolution which will be put to this meeting. There is apt to arise a little obscurity on this point, I know. At a meeting in one of the large towns in the North, a short time ago, the Mayor, who was to preside, came up to me just before the meeting began, and said, in an excited manner, "Now promise me that you will not advocate the suffrage for married women." I have no doubt that my worthy chairman had visions of his wife rushing to the polling-booth to record her vote in favour of the wrong candidate; and, worse still, of being kept waiting for his dinner! However, I assured him, as I now assure you, that we are not seeking in any way to change the present basis of the suffrage. We only ask that women who fulfil the same conditions as men

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—who are householders, who pay taxes, and are rated to the relief of the poor, shall be admitted to the franchise. More than this we do not ask—at present.

I have not attempted, this evening, to answer many of the objections that are commonly urged against giving women the suffrage. So much has already been said and written on the subject that those who wish to read the arguments on either side can easily obtain pamphlets by application to the secretaries of the Association.

In conclusion I will quote from one, whose name in the cause of freedom is of world-wide fame, and whose words, taken in their widest meaning, will need no comment of mine. What he — a man — pleaded for men, I — a woman—would plead for women. Mr. John Bright, in upholding the claims of working men to the suffrage, said:—"England has long been famous for the enjoyment of personal freedom by her people. They are free to think, they are free to speak, they are free to write; and England has been famed of late years, and is famed now the world over, for the freedom of her industry, and the freedom of her commerce. I want to know, then, why it is that her people are not free to vote? Who is there that will meet me on this platform, or will stand upon any platform, and will dare to say, in the hearing of an open meeting of his countrymen, that these millions for whom I am now pleading, are too degraded, too vicious, and too destructive to be entrusted with the elective franchise? I, at least, will never thus slander my countrymen. I claim for them the right of admission, through their representatives, into the most ancient and the most venerable Parliament which exists among men; and when they are admitted, and not till then, it may be truly said that England, the august mother of free nations, herself is free!"

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FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

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THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

✓ (SIR JOHN DUKE COLERIDGE,)

ON

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

“I can scarcely believe that if the House of Commons was as much aware as every lawyer is aware of the state of the law of England as regards the property of women, even still after the very recent humane improvements in it, it would hesitate to say it was more worthy of a barbarian than of a civilized state. If that be so, I do not think the wisdom of Parliament will be darkened, nor the justice of Parliament slackened, because those who appeal to that wisdom are entitled to be heard by reason of the possession of something like political power, when they ask for justice. I believe, fully, that after a certain number of years the law, which I regard in many respects as wholly indefensible, will be altered. As it is, I believe the sense of justice on the part of men, if they are once aroused to it and convinced of the injustice, will in time bring about the reform needed; but I believe this reform will not be brought about so fast as it would be if we put into the hands of those who suffer from this injustice some share of political power. Therefore, sir, while I admit I do not question the justice of Parliament, or the right intentions of honourable members, I submit that the constitutional means of remedying injustice is by influencing members of Parliament in a constitutional way.—*Speech in the House of Commons.*”

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THE
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REPRINTED FROM "THE EXAMINER."

Anonymous

LONDON:

R. H. LAPHAM, 9 WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.

1872.

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members of Parliament in a constitutional way—speech in
House of Commons.

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WOMAN'S QUESTION

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THE
WOMAN QUESTION.

THE FEMALE FRANCHISE.

WHEN vaccination was first introduced into England, the grand objection raised against it was that it would undoubtedly alter human nature, and infuse into the minds of men a brutish and bovine spirit too horrible to contemplate. Tales which made the blood of listeners run cold were in circulation concerning persons who had undergone the unnatural process, and who had forthwith and evermore lowed like cows and butted like oxen. It was clear to the meanest understandings (particularly clear, indeed, to the understandings which were meanest), that Nature never intended any innovation of the kind, and that the most frightful perils always accompanied a change in the order of things as by custom established.

Some years hence the debates in Parliament on Woman Suffrage, such as that which took place last summer, and such as will only too probably take place on the second reading of Mr Jacob Bright's Bill on Wednesday next, will appear to the students who may take the trouble to refer to them exceedingly like the discussions on vaccination in the days of our fathers. The dreadful danger about introducing the political virus into the female constitution obviously is,

that, when they have taken it, women will cease to be women. Already fearful myths abound concerning the existence in England and America of strong-minded creatures who display ox-like obstinacy about their rights, raise their voices in unseemly fashion on platforms, and run their heads against a hundred things much too hard for them to deal with. This is the paramount objection to giving votes to women. Other reasons are sometimes feebly urged, but they are so manifestly futile that nobody minds them much; indeed, the advocates of the measure are wont to set them up like nine-pins for the pleasure of bowling them over. But the alarm about changing women into some yet unknown and dimly-conceived species of animal, developed by Unnatural Selection, and having none of the merits of either sex, and all the worst qualities of both, is the real bugbear which, tacitly or avowedly, determines the controversy.

It is, of course, a high compliment which men pay to women when they consider that any important alteration in them must needs be for the worse. Passing over the critics who in one breath say that women are vain, weak, and empty-headed, and in the next fiercely deny that they need any better education or nobler interests than they have at present, we find that there are plenty of men who honestly think that, as regards their wives and daughters, things are very much as they would have them; and that they have nothing better to do than to "rest and be thankful." In their opinion English women, such as they are under the present *régime*, with all their little loveable defects, and large compensation of high moral qualities, are the best companions they can desire; the

"sweetness and light" of dark and bitter existence. Any change of law which could possibly go deep enough essentially to modify female character they deprecate with the same vehemence wherewith they would meet a proposal from the sky to substitute a comet for the dear old mild-shining moon,—a rather feeble and variable satellite, it is true, but still quite as good a luminary as they can reasonably expect, and endeared by a thousand tender associations, honeyed and otherwise. It is to these opponents, we think, that the friends of Woman Suffrage ought to direct all their efforts of conversion, for they are probably open to conviction; and if one of the speakers in the approaching debate will fairly address himself to reassure them, we believe that such victory as is possible under the circumstances will be obtained. Time is merely wasted in proving, on the one hand, that women are worthy of the franchise, or, on the other, that they sadly need it. To the first argument their enemies reply as some reviewers did to Mrs Stowe's appeal on behalf of the negroes. "If slavery can create such Black Christs as Uncle Tom, then it would be a thousand pities to destroy so beneficent an institution." To the second they answer, that the more women need the franchise, the less, by the hypothesis, can they be fit to exercise it. Good or bad, strong or weak, it is hard to say which way their claims are most satisfactorily rejected.

Will the possession of votes for members of Parliament really turn women into unfeminine monsters? About as much, we think, as vaccination has made us all into Minotaurs. What may be the precise changes introduced into the typical character of women as a larger sphere is opened to them, and

loftier conceptions of justice and public good are superadded to the family interests and personal vanities to which they have been hitherto bound, it is, of course, impossible altogether to foretell. As Mr Jowett says in his introduction to Plato's Republic, "how much of the difference between men and women is due to education and the opinions of mankind, or physically inherited from the habits and opinions of former generations, it is impossible to say." Till experiments are tried on an extended scale and for several generations, no one can offer even a reasonable guess as to the sort of power which the minds of women may develop, or of what amount of muscular strength and endurance their now semi-valetudinarian frames may prove to be capable. But one thing is clear. It is not for those who profess belief in the advantages of liberty, nay, in the beneficence of the divine gift of moral free agency to responsible beings, to take it for granted that the change from subjection to independence, from a narrow circle of duties and interests to a wide one, from the condition of a Jesuit under vow of obedience to that of a free soul owing allegiance to God alone, can be for women at large a change of a hurtful or deteriorating kind. Even to betray the fear that it may be so, is to stultify all our professions of liberal political faith, and all our admissions of the cardinal postulates of enlightened theology. Men and women differ indeed in many ways; and, in our humble opinion, every free development of one or the other only sets in clearer relief whatever is best and most beautiful in the masculine or feminine character. The free man becomes more manly and the free woman more womanly than either could be if crushed into the dead level of servility.

But, however this may be, it is certainly too much to assume that the difference between them is of so topsy-turvy a nature that what is morally best for the man is morally worst for the woman; that the idleness which is the root of all evil for him is the fount of every virtue for her; and that, while his nature only blooms in the sunshine and the free air of heaven, hers, like a fungus, grows best in a cellar in the dark.

That a Government professing to be the most Liberal which England has ever seen should last year have set its foot deliberately on the claims of women to political independence was surely a portentous indication of the hollowness of its pretensions, or at least of the exiguous limitations of its liberality. That Mr Gladstone should this year have shown the singular discourtesy of refusing to receive a deputation of ladies, delegates from the London, Manchester, Edinburgh, and Dublin branches of the National Society for Woman Suffrage, is, in our judgment, the best argument which has yet been furnished to women for persisting in asserting their claims. No body of similar numerical or social importance which could command direct representation in Parliament would be liable to receive such a slight from the great *Liberal Premier*.—*April 29, 1871.*

WOMEN'S ELECTORAL DISABILITIES.

WEDNESDAY'S debate on the Women's Disabilities Bill was remarkable in many ways; but scarcely so instructive as the first leader in the *Times* which, of course, came next morning to strike home the last nail into the coffin of that lost measure. What though Mr Bouverie, Mr Scourfield, Mr Beresford Hope, and Mr James manned their walls, like Chinese Engineers, with the most formidable hobgoblins they could dress up, and Mr Newdegate threatened that the result of giving votes to Protestant Englishwomen would undoubtedly increase the power of the Jesuits? what though the "landmarks of society" were beheld "uprooted" again and again by all these gentlemen, till those venerable objects assumed the characters of trees of liberty, to be set up and set down at a moment's warning? what though all these weary old follies marked the opposition in Parliament to Mr Bright's Bill? It may be truly said that, for the production out of its treasury of things new and old in the way of fallacies, the writer in the *Times* outshone the M.P.'s altogether. The burdens of the State, he gravely tells us, "are not confined to paying taxes; they consist in those exertions by which the prosperity of the State is maintained." Now, admitting for a moment that the "nurture and admonition" of children is a wholly unimportant office in the

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commonwealth, and that all the risks and sufferings incurred by women in the divine task of giving life entitle them to no such recognition or gratitude as the dangers run by men in taking it in the battlefield, let us examine this new theory of constitutional rights expounded by the *Times*.

Hitherto we had imagined it was accepted as an axiom that with us taxation and representation were correlatives; and that it was that particular kind of "burden of the State" which consists in paying taxes in hard cash to which we attached the right to have a voice in their expenditure. When the last Reform Bill extended the franchise to thousands of men who could neither read nor write, and to thousands more who were sickly or crippled, and utterly unfit to serve as soldiers, nobody dreamed of observing that "the burdens of the State were not confined to paying taxes," and that those who exercised rights of citizenship should be capable of anything else than of paying them, and voting how they should be applied. But now that women taxpayers are in question, and that a fresh Income Tax adds yet heavier burdens, pressing with peculiar cruelty on the very class which demands the suffrage, the great organ of masculine selfishness suddenly discovers that it is not on taxation at all that representation is based, but on certain "exertions" for the "prosperity" of the State. "As Mr James justly argues," we are told, "the exclusion of women is founded upon the fact that those who are incapable of such exertions are also necessarily incapable of comprehending the questions connected with their public control." Let this delightful argument be applied to the lower class of masculine voters,

and what arrant and insolent Toryism it would seem! Apply it to a dozen women we could name in a breath, and how ludicrous it is! Think of the "necessary incapacity" of educated English ladies generally to "comprehend the questions" which their footmen and chimney-sweeps are, by the principles of the Constitution, supposed to be perfectly qualified to judge! To complete its logic, the *Times* adds a few statements to which its own columns, every week, supply the best possible refutation. Only last week it denounced the disgusting injustice of the law in taking from a widowed mother of blameless character the religious instruction of her little girl, in compliance with the merely supposed wishes of the dead father. This week it now tells us complacently that, in return for the lack of all political rights, "women have an overwhelming influence in those affairs in which they are chief actors; they are as influential in domestic life and in the *education of children* as men in public life." Again, never a week elapses without the police reports recording some pitiful story of a wife beaten to death by her husband; or left to starve in poverty and disease by the man to whom she has given her all. Hospitals, workhouses, governesses' benevolent institutions, and the Society for the Employment of Women, alike supply stories without end of daughters brought up to helplessness and left penniless; widows who discover at once their widowhood and their ruin; and sisters and mothers who have lent their little capital to their brothers and sons and are left at last, by fraud or extravagance, in utter destitution. And in a world where these tales come every day to fill our ears and sicken our souls, the *Times* sweetly tells

women to be content without any political rights, because, "as matters now stand, men undertake to provide for women a safe and sheltered sphere within which they may develop all the gentle powers of their nature!" *Do they undertake it?* Then let the laws compel them to fulfil their undertaking! Let us have one thing or the other. Let the State secure for every woman "a safe and sheltered sphere," and a freedom from all the burdens for which she has no corresponding privileges; or, let her have equal rights with a man, and have done for ever with the cant of the "safe and sheltered sphere," which to thousands is only a mockery.

We are glad to think that a truer comprehension of the question than is at present possible to the *Times* or Mr Newdegate is rapidly gaining ground in England; and of this Wednesday's debate affords convincing proof. The defeat of the Bill was not really a defeat; it gave the fullest promise of victory in the end, and an end not very remote. The Premier, who a year ago, with eyes as unprejudiced as Mr Newdegate's, saw in the proposal to give the franchise to tax-paying women "the unsettling, not to say uprooting, of the old landmarks of society," discovered on Wednesday that "the question of the recognition of woman's rights is after all a question of degree;" and, just as two years ago he found that Mr John Bright's scheme of justice to Ireland was an excellent thing, so now he is prepared to admit that Mr Jacob Bright may be "the real benefactor of his country." Mr Gladstone's speech showed that he is being educated; and Mr Disraeli's vote, following the speeches of two members of his last Cabinet, Mr Ward Hunt and Lord John Manners, showed that the Conserva-

tives are being educated yet more speedily. Another year or two, perhaps a single year, will suffice for the schooling of our party politicians; and then "the better half of creation," as in mocking gallantry it is called, will have a chance of securing for itself justice and fair-play.—*May 6th, 1871.*



WORDS OF WEIGHT.

THE rapid growth of literature on the "woman question" indicates a prevailing impression that hitherto society has failed to draw from women all the good they are capable of doing, that it leaves their powers insufficiently developed, and that we accordingly find a wide diffusion of misery dogging the steps of wasted energy. The mission of the present day may be said, on the one hand, to "utilise" women; and, on the other side, to give them justice. Those two objects have ever been united, and are, indeed, inseparable. Injustice does much harm to women, but it does more to men—it recoils upon them and depraves their character. For, after all, there is some truth in the paradox that Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates, that it is a greater evil to do injustice than to suffer it. The extravagance and frivolity of women—the favourite topics of small satirists, is simply the reverse side of the medal that they contemplate with ecstasy—their dependence, irresponsibility, and idleness. The position of women is excessively unfavourable to the growth of any virtues except those that flourish among slaves. To a being endowed with reason or forethought, what can be more desolating and demoralising than the reflection that her destiny is not in her own hands, that she is as clay in the

hands of the potter, that caprice or accident, not merit or worth, is the arbiter of her career? Yet such is the ideal position of woman, according to our grandmothers' notions. Standing on the banks of the broad river of human existence, she is not suffered to "paddle her own canoe," but has to wait till some craft, driven by the current, or wearied with its emptiness, invites her on board. To many thousands there is one sure fate: they must stand till their hair turns grey, and learn that the world has no place for them.

To the eye of reason, the so-called "sphere" of woman is the strangest of anomalies and the most absurd of paradoxes. It arose from historical accident, and is consecrated by nothing more imposing than the hoary hand of time. Its real strength lies in the cluster of emotions that always gather round the sexual relation. Opinions are tenacious in proportion to the strength of feeling connected with them, and the area they cover. In both respects, it would follow that the current theories about women's "sphere" would be difficult to remove. The only way to destroy them is by constantly digging at the foundations, and every one who removes a bag of earth may congratulate himself on helping on the good work. One of the sandbanks thrown up in defence of veteran prejudice is the alleged intellectual inferiority of woman. It is interesting to compare this with the Roman and Greek theories about the lawfulness of slavery. In a certain early condition of social life nobody felt the least uneasiness in compelling men or animals to work for him, nor was the savage conscience disturbed by the exercise of considerable violence on those who obeyed with reluc-

tance. But in Greece and Rome a time arrived at which there was enough of uneasiness to prompt a search for soothing beliefs. The Roman theory was characteristic. It was laid down that slaves were originally captives in war (which, in point of fact, was not true, or, at least, not proved), and that, as the conqueror had a right to kill them, if he spared their lives he might lawfully keep them as slaves. The Greeks sought another explanation, and they found it in the natural aptitude of slaves for the servile condition. Just so, the opponents of women's rights allege that subordination, or a certain mild form of servitude, is the natural condition of woman, for no more profound or recondite reason than the fact that such hitherto has been her state. This fallacy is very skilfully ridiculed in the following passage:

Visiting some time ago the vast subterranean cave of Adelsberg, I lingered for some moments beside the famous river which has no outlet into the upper world of lights, but runs its whole course—

"In caverns measureless to man
Down to a tideless sea."

In the river (as all the world knows) dwells the *Proteus Anguineus*, a creature who, by long habitation of darkness, has lost the power of vision, and displays only the rudiments of the organs of sight. The poor animals of this singular species are smooth to the touch and rather colourless, but extremely soft, and on the whole, inoffensive. . . . I could not refrain picturing to myself a few audacious ones among them striving to wriggle out of their styx (through their mill-race, perhaps, or other available medium), while a stern *Spectator* sat on the bank, and pushed them back as far as he was able underground, remarking solemnly, "Le droit dérive de la capacité! You have lived so long in darkness, you stupid fishes, that you cannot use your eyes at all; so do not attempt to push yourselves where you or your fry might possibly learn to use them thereafter. Till you 'show us that you can feel a general interest' in the course of the Danube and the Vistula, you must go back to your underground river."—F. P. COBBE.

The paragraph we have quoted is one out of one thousand one hundred and seventy-six similar quotations from the sayings and writings of many authors on the "woman question," gathered together with extraordinary patience by the author of the anonymous work before us.* The sentences are arranged according to a scheme of reasoning which exhibits, in turn, almost every phase of the question, forming a curious sort of mosaic argument, which to some minds (so strong are the separate bits) will be more effective and durable than a picture painted by a single hand. Putting all the admissions and assertions together, the case for women is completely made out, although many of the authorities are not consistent supporters; the writer who has affirmed that A B is equal to C D, has notoriously stated somewhere else his entire disbelief of the further proposition that C D is equal to E F. Mr Gladstone, for instance, says sweet things in 'Words of Weight' about the claims of women; but when they came to be seriously urged in the House of Commons to the franchise, and in the House of Lords to the ownership of their own property when married, he simply put his foot on them in the first case, and let the Lords have their will in the second. Nor has any measure tending to help them emanated from his Cabinet as a counter-balance to these rebuffs. Indeed, as the book before us quotes, very aptly, from Miss Helen Taylor: "It is very well worthy of note that no Bill for the advantage of women has been brought into Parliament, except by the men who vote for giving them the suffrage."

* *Words of Weight on the Woman Question.* Longmans.

Not the least valuable part of the 'Words of Weight' is the thorough manner in which it deals with all the evils flowing from the low position of women. About one hundred and forty extracts are gathered to illustrate and support the following propositions:

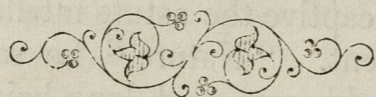
Men are determined to keep women idle, and they monopolise all profitable employments, and leave to women those that are ill-paid, which women have no choice but to accept, and they are therefore slaves, in whose good treatment their taskmasters have no self-interest.

Women are now forced to take employments far less fitted for them than those from which they are excluded. Especially hard is the case of needlewomen, who are ground to the dust and literally-worked to death by cruel and callous employers; and on the proceeds of such work as poor girls can get, it is not possible for them to live; while the world looks on, but does not feel compassion. (There is reason to believe that of late the condition of needlewomen has greatly improved.)

The pit which society has provided for friendless girls, it should not pretend to ignore: for prostitution is a canker which gnaws at the heart of society. . . . The chief source of all this misery and vice is the miserable remuneration of women's work. To cure the evil we must remove the causes, while at the same time we endeavour to lessen the effect.

We should have been glad to see a few extracts from 'Plato's Republic' on the position of women. Conservative on many points, Plato was most advanced on this subject. He would assign the same functions to women as to men, so far as they could discharge them, and give them the same education. His observations on the "nature" of women, a phrase that led captive the astute intellect of Aristotle, are very pertinent. "Nature," he says, is used in two senses. Bald men and long-haired men are of different kinds or nature, but it would not be inferred that, if bald men make shoes, long-haired men must be excluded from the cobbler's art. In another sense,

nature means facility of acquiring any knowledge. Now, in some few things, said Plato, women surpassed men, as in making pastry and preserves, but in most things the men are superior. Both sexes have a share of natural gifts, and women ought to be admitted to all pursuits as well as men, though in none would they attain to equal excellence. Women, like men, display predilections for knowledge, for war, or for money-making. Some are fit to be rulers. To give women the education necessary to fit them for these pursuits is not against nature; it is the existing usage which contradicts nature. So he would have the women strip for gymnastics, and the wives of the guardians must take part in war, the lighter task being assigned to them on account of their comparative weakness. In all this Plato saw nothing absurd, for what is useful is noble, what is hurtful is base (τὸ μὲν ὠφέλιμον καλόν, τὸ δὲ βλαβερὸν αἰσχρόν). Making allowance for the touch of extravagance that runs through the whole of the 'Republic,' these views, put forward by Plato more than two thousand years ago, are very refreshing; they attest the vitality of truth, and the greatness of the obstacles to its realisation.—*February 25, 1871.*



THE VICE OF CONTENTMENT.

OF all the conventional virtues, none occupies a more prominent place in sermons and copy-books than contentment. We do not know what Mr Tupper says about it, but his illustrious predecessors tell us that a contented mind is a continual feast. To the poor is the same gospel preached, and they are constantly enjoined to be content with the station in which they find themselves. Against so much authority it would be impossible to contend; and it must suffice to show that the favourite virtue of proverb-mongers and divines is not without exception. When Socrates entered on his philosophical mission, encouraged by the oracle of his country, the task he set himself was to destroy the contentment of his fellow-citizens, and to make them thoroughly dissatisfied with their knowledge and opinions. His work was like a gadfly to sting the sleek horse of Athens, and to rouse it from its easy self-satisfaction, to make it conscious of its ignorance by emptying it of all the false images of knowledge.

Contentment, therefore, is a virtue or a vice according to circumstances. One is contented whose ideal of happiness is realised. But this is not anywhere called a virtue. The contentment that is inculcated by moralists, is the breaking down of our ideal

to fit in with our circumstances, and the suppression of desires that either cannot be gratified, or cannot be gratified without a disproportionate expenditure of labour, or the neglect of important duties. If an ideal is merely the reflection of an insatiable vanity, the propriety of attempting to curb it is manifest; as this is the proper case for the ancient maxim, "If you desire to be rich, study not to increase your goods, but to diminish your desires." But in regard to all wholesome and natural desires, one does well never to be contented with what one has, and yet never to be unhappy about it. The motto "*Excelsior*" implies a certain dissatisfaction with what exists, but it need not be very much; a very little discontent in a well-regulated mind may suffice to prevent it from falling into stagnation. One can hardly recommend contentment to our agricultural labourers, with their large families and slender wages. Unless they are stirred up by the demon of discontent, it is hard to see how their position can be improved. Contentment with such a position is the last degradation. A man is never wholly a slave until he becomes content with the loss of his freedom. The lowest stage is to be willing to be a slave.

There are some things, however, we should never be contented with, as bad laws and bad social arrangements. The evil they do is not confined to ourselves. They are a perpetual fountain of mischief. If we leave them untouched, the work of reformation is all the harder for our successors. Self-ease may plead for toleration of abuses, but the voice of duty admits no indulgence. Least of all should any class of persons submit to injustice, or to a low and unworthy conception of their work. Contentment with unjust

treatment is the depth of personal abasement. When once a slave feels pride in his yoke, his subjection and degradation are complete. We may feel sure that no one would ever be reconciled with a low idea of his place in creation, unless some compensation were made to him. It is when the lower part of his nature is bribed that it is possible to subjugate the higher; the cry for freedom is often stifled in "the flesh-pots of Egypt." It thus is often a duty to be discontented, when our inclination leads us the other way. More especially is this the case if it happens that we escape the direct mischievous effects of an institution to which the class we belong to is subject, while many of our comrades groan under it, and silently beseech our help.

Whatever be the reason, contentment has nowhere else been so conspicuous a vice as among women. As a class, whatever the treatment to which they have been subjected, women have never shown an inclination to rebel. In casting our eye back along the pages of history, we find only one class that never troubled the world with insurrections. They have been shut up in their own homes, as in ancient Greece, or in India; they have had to submit to the tyranny of polygamous husbands; they have been made the prey and sport of combatants; but they have never, as a class, attempted to work out their own deliverance. This is why the women in Utah have been found to make a petition for polygamy. They cannot plead the sanctity of immemorial usage in their community, for their polygamy is not a generation old; they cannot excuse themselves by the general practice of the civilised world, for polygamy is confined to very ancient, or very backward, societies.

In spite of the novelty of the usage, the women in Utah, the young and free, as well as those that are "too much married," are not only content with the system of Brigham Young, but are even found among its passionate advocates. This is very striking when we remember how polygamy wounds feminine pride to the very quick, and lacerates the best feelings of women. But the explanation is simple. Polygamy, as such, would find no advocates among the women; if it were to stand on its own merits, as a social institution merely, it would be consumed with their wrath. But it is, so they think, commanded by the Deity; it is a part of their religion, and upon their submission to it depends their everlasting welfare. When a woman finds her husband take a second, or a third wife, she tries to accept it as a heavenly dispensation; and when, as inevitably happens, storms arise, she blames herself or her husband or the other wives, but never dreams of tracing her grievances to the odious institution of polygamy. If she feels inclined to fret, she prays for a better disposition, and comes to regard the dictates of her higher nature as suggestions of the Evil One. Her understanding, once subjugated by a false worship, lends itself to the suppression of her better moral feelings.

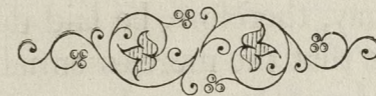
If such facts are borne in mind, there is no difficulty in appreciating the argument, so commonly used against improving the status of women, that they are perfectly satisfied with their condition. Whence does this contentment arise? Certainly not from any provision for their welfare. If Comte's views were adopted, and a pension given by the State to every unmarried woman, we could understand their acquiescence. Perhaps we might think that they lost their

birthright for a mess of pottage, but then they would have the pottage, and that would be something. But we have not yet accepted Comtism, and we hold that women should be dependent, without taking care that they shall always have some one to depend upon. It should not excite surprise if some women, finding in their bitter experience, how frail often is the protection in which they are invited to trust, should think that it would be better if their voices were listened to in the making of laws.

But there is no denying that many women are contented with their subordinate position. Some, like the Mormon women, think that our social usages are of divine obligation, and that the subjection of one-half the species to the other half is a matter of religious duty. Considering the want of scientific instruction in the teaching of boys, and still more of girls, no one can be astonished at the diffusion of such an idea. Those who are ignorant of the history of civilisation cannot be expected to rate some social arrangements at their true value. We know well that the subjection of women is of far other than heavenly origin, and that it is most rigorously enforced among the races that are not most remarkable for high religious principle. The farther back we go, the stronger is the supremacy of men. Savages have the belief in its most severe form. They have an unhesitating conviction that women were made for them as toys or beasts of burden. The highest moral idea of Kant's, that every moral being is an end-in-himself, and not a means or instrument for another, is one of slow growth; and one of which women have, as yet, but partially reaped the benefit.

But there is another class of women, who bear the palm of contentment. In every system there is a large amount of happiness. It will not be denied that the Hindoo conception of marriage, and the practice of marrying children, are very pernicious and degrading to women; but an impartial observer would be obliged to admit that the average amount of domestic happiness was not much less in India than in England. Nay, if we put it to a plébiscite, and asked the women of India whether they would not rather have our system, the answer of the great majority would be an indignant refusal. If it be said they are unenlightened, then what becomes of the argument from their contentment? Does it not show that the mere fact of their being satisfied with a bad system is a reason why, if possible, we should make them discontented with it? So, in this country, a great many women, having found in life as much as they had been taught to expect, are perfectly contented, and, so far, may be left to themselves; but they go farther, and condemn those who are not contented. They do not wish any alteration, because they do not suffer by the existing system. It is a very easy virtue to be content with an institution that smites others and spares yourself. To be content that our neighbour's house should be on fire does not require any heroic stress of principle. To be content with the misery that is only at the next door, and has not reached us, is not very virtuous or magnanimous. Yet of this kind is most of the contentment of women under their present disabilities. A woman who has no money, except what a successful husband liberally gives her, is indignant that women who are exposed to the depredations of mercenary husbands should

ask the protection of the law. Women who find in marriage an easy livelihood are eloquent in their opposition to those unfeminine creatures who, not being able to catch a husband, are anxious to support themselves in what they call "unfeminine" occupations. Those who are lucky under the present system loftily tell us that they are perfectly content "with their sphere." If we subtract from the class of women those who are content because they are personally well off and those who are the victims of perverted religious teaching, we shall find not many left to praise the existing arrangements. Now, it is the duty of those who are well off to be discontented—not with their individual lot, but with a bad system from which many suffer. They ought to shake off the vice of contentment, and help those who are not equally the favourites of fortune.—*January 27, 1872.*



WOMEN AND WAR.

PEOPLE have often wondered why so little respect is shown to members of the dramatic profession. In ancient Rome it was almost infamous—nowadays there is a lingering belief that it is not altogether respectable—to be an actor. The truth appears to be that no class whose object is to minister to our pleasures ever enjoys the highest measure of respect. The higher the pleasure that is given the more will sincere regard be shown, but it will always be tinged with a certain lightness of estimation. On the other hand, the clerical profession always obtains great deference from religious people (an M.P. has been known to fall on his knees in the lobby of the House of Commons before a Bishop), because the interests with which it deals are of momentous importance. It may, therefore, be laid down as a pretty safe general rule that the more essential and important the services rendered by any class to the community, the greater will be the measure of respect accorded to it. To this rule the female sex is no exception.

Among savages, the low estimation in which women are held is due to their small social value. The first state of mankind is generally a war with wild beasts; the next is war with one another. The

savage is, by the necessity of his position, a fighting animal. Women being much weaker than men, and subject to certain drawbacks, are seldom even a good second line of defence. The brunt of the conflict necessarily falls on men. Hence the practice among nearly all savage tribes of killing their female children, and making up the deficiency by stealing wives from communities less warlike. It pays the men better, so to speak, to destroy most of the infant females, and to practise martial exercises whereby they may hope to secure wives when they want them. The very slow increase of population favours such a mode of life. Tribes that live by hunting require immense room, sometimes an allowance of nearly one hundred square miles to each individual. Their surplus population is kept down by fighting. As, however, women are the spoil of the conquerors, they are less reduced in numbers, and a greater proportion of females will reach old age, so that a good many of them may be killed when young, without any danger of inordinately reducing the population. Since women are of small utility to savages, we need not be surprised if they should not be highly esteemed. Sir John Lubbock says an Australian probably cares less for his wife than his dog, and, when he has eaten both, has perhaps a more affectionate recollection of the dog. Lady Morgan says of the semi-civilised man of Australasia: "He marked her (woman) at the hour of her birth for his slave, by breaking the joints of her forefinger; he renewed the covenant of his supremacy in her first youth, by knocking out her front teeth; and when he elected this bond-slave as the object of his passions, he intimated his preference by spitting in her face and forcing her to his den. . . ."

He loaded her shoulders, wounded by his stripes, with weights which his own indolence refused to bear, and speared her to the earth if she resisted the imposition."

As civilisation advances, women are more valued because they are more useful. When the sole object of a man's life is to protect himself from wild beasts and procure a simple dinner, he is not obliged to rely on the assistance of women. But in the pastoral state man has more complex interests; he requires better food, and he begins to see in woman a cook, weaver, and tailor. He might force woman to render him those services, but he would soon find out that kindness was a better way. Hence, although a pastoral people may be very warlike, it will give women an improved, though still very subordinate, position. Yet more favourable to women is the introduction of agriculture, and the multiplication of the arts and wants of life. We find an apt illustration of this state of society among the German tribes that overthrew the Roman Empire. They are spoken of sometimes as barbarians, but the expression is misapplied. They were not rich, they combined in large numbers only for special purposes, and they had no great architecture; but they possessed the essentials of civilised society. They were much what a colony of English settlers would be in a remote continent, if their political instincts were not sufficiently strong to establish a permanent government. Their habits of fighting arose from the constant pressure of a growing population; an irruption of barbarians on the Roman frontiers is the ancient prototype of our peaceful colonisation. It was inevitable, however, that their

warlike habits should be prejudicial to women. The sword was not only the instrument for settling disputes between different tribes, but it was the last appeal in all quarrels. If two men could not agree they had to fight it out. However little such a tribunal might coincide with justice, it had the merit of favouring the influence of natural selection. The hardiest alone could triumph with such a system of judicature. It was a tribunal where women would, as a rule, come off second best. Usually when a woman was wronged, or thought herself so, she was allowed to fight by proxy, if she could get a champion; but sometimes, *per audaciam cordis*, she preferred to avenge herself. Women were, therefore, in a subordinate position, because they were forced to trust to individual men to protect their dearest rights, and even ensure their personal safety. Such a condition was not inconsistent with a great deal of respect, and many of the German tribes held the curious superstition that women had the art of divination or prophecy, so that what power they wanted in this world was in a measure compensated by their greater authority in relation to futurity. Tacitus tells us they seldom undertook any important expedition without consulting their "wise women."

A far greater step in the advancement of women was chivalry. This was an overstrained devotion to women as a reaction from the licentiousness and violence of the feudal period. It exhibits a struggle between the brutalising influence of war and the finer conceptions of the character of women inherited as a mixed tradition from Roman law and German customs. A state of constant warfare, such as we find in the middle ages, would, if unchecked, ulti-

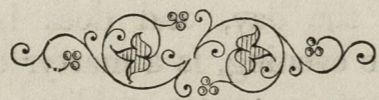
mately have destroyed European civilisation. The horrible treatment to which women were subjected by the victorious soldiery is well known; and such is the essentially degrading character of war, that even at the present day it is thought a merit in disciplined soldiers to abstain from gross outrages on women in the enemy's territory. Chivalry was an attempt to preserve women from the polluting influence of war. Its extravagance, so well ridiculed in 'Don Quixote,' was natural to the period. An age that produced the Crusades was quite equal to the most fantastic devotion to women, albeit the devotion was perhaps more frequently expressed in words than in deeds. At the same time the waters were too troubled for women to swim in; they were necessarily kept in the background. Law, therefore, could hardly venture to impose duties on woman; it sought to find for her the shelter of a male breast. Women were recognised only, or chiefly in an indirect manner, through their husbands or relatives. Inasmuch as law imposed few duties on women, it could not bestow many rights; it dealt, in the first instance, with their natural or acquired protectors. Such is the general and most favourable construction of the principle of the English common law, and we shall not say there was no reason for it.

The scene is now changed. War, once the normal state, is now felt to be a painful and almost unbearable anomaly. The unit of society is not the fighting man; it is the labourer. Industry has supplanted war. The wager of battle has given place to trial by jury; the knight has been superseded by the policeman. The old theory of protection of women is obsolete, because the necessity for it has dis-

appeared. If women are allowed a fair field and no favour, they are quite able to support themselves. The immense majority are self-supporting. It is only in the upper classes that we find women in a state of helpless dependence. The working class has been emancipated from the traditions of feudalism by the stern teaching of necessity: the women have been obliged to work. But the middle class is still in the bondage of feudal notions, and allows itself to be dominated by exploded ideas. The reason is not far to seek. In the dark ages all power and respect were centred in the feudal hierarchy; there were no merchants to outstrip noblemen in splendour; the poor cultivators of the soil were too humble to imitate the great lords of the soil. When, however, wealth began to increase; when lordly proprietors fell into difficulties, and required the help of bankers; when their estates passed into plebeian hands, the new race of proprietors did their best to follow closely in the footsteps of the class into which they had forced themselves. The infection spread lower; the habits and manners of aristocratic society were imitated by wealthy commoners. Thus the idea of "gentleman" and "gentlewoman" was indissolubly connected with the members of a wealthy and idle class. The "gentleman" who hires a horse for Rotten Row in the middle of the day, and does his work inconveniently in the evening, is a martyr to an antiquated prejudice. From no more sublime origin than the half-barbaric fashions of the middle ages do we derive the absurd idea that a lady ought not to work, that her existence is purely ornamental, that her utility consists in being useless.

There is scope for women in industry, although

not in war. Women can work much better than they can fight. Not to employ them in industry is a prodigious waste. But it is more. Women form the great mass of the non-combatant population; their interests are imperilled by any breach of the peace; their whole influence would naturally be unfavourable to war. By emancipating women we should liberate a great peace-loving power, and enormously strengthen the pacific tendency of commerce. If, in addition, women obtained the political influence given to wealth or labour, the security of peace would be increased. In war they have everything to lose, nothing to gain, and the natural tenderness of their dispositions would make them averse to encouraging bellicose passions. Thus if the forces acting upon modern society were allowed free action, they would raise women to a position more dignified and useful than they have ever before enjoyed; at the same time the elevation of women would react on those forces, and help to secure for them an universal sway.—
February 25, 1871.



WOMEN AND WORK.

IN India the ambition of the humblest classes when they become rich enough is to seclude their women in the privacy of the zenanah. Poverty may compel them to send their wives to market, or their daughters to draw water, and thereby to expose them to the rude gaze of men; but, as soon as they can afford it, they give the shelter of what we should call a prison, what they more kindly, and, perhaps, with truth, call a home. Although comparatively only a fraction of the female population of India enjoy the honour of life in the zenanah, yet the example of the upper classes operates as an ideal, which affects the lives of all the women. In like manner, Englishmen generally hold that women should live in the sanctuary of home, as wives, if possible—if not, then as dependents. What “the rude gaze of men” is to a fastidious Hindoo, that to an equally enlightened Englishman is “the rude contact with men.” The picture, in both cases, has, doubtless, a pleasing side. It is so grateful to human nature, especially to male human nature, to exercise authority; and when this authority is represented in the relation of a tender husband to a trusting and obedient wife, we can have no difficulty in appreciating the attractiveness of the picture. Nearly everybody loves power, and nearly

everybody hates tyranny ; the golden mean, a power lovingly used and sweetly submitted to, exercises a well-known effect on the imagination. It is a combination which, uniting one of the strongest instincts of brutes with a sense of justice peculiar to man, is naturally fascinating. The proper destiny of women, we are, therefore, assured, is to be sheltered in homes provided and maintained by men. There may be a few persons, not so provided for, to whom employment ought to be given ; but the cases are so entirely exceptional, that we should not ask that the law may be altered or modified on their account ; for what, after all, is the convenience of an insignificant minority ? It is a hardship for the few who do not find a haven of safety in the domestic ark to be exposed shelterless to the storms of life ; and it would, in their interests, be a kindness to open professions to them ; but society must suffer the minority to be shipwrecked, if that be necessary, to maintain the condition and feelings most favourable to the ease and security of domestic life. Institutions designed for the benefit of all, and essential to the preservation of society, must not be imperilled for the convenience, or even for the existence, of a few old maids.

One might be tempted to argue that the interests of the majority do not require the sacrifice of the few ; and that it is only the slothful self-content of a prosperous condition that makes anybody think so. One might say that surely marriage is not such an odious institution that women must be driven into it by excluding them from all occupations ; and that, even so, the sacrifice of spinsters is too heavy a price to pay. But there is clearer ground. The returns of the census take away the foundation of the popular

theory. The results of the census of 1851 are borne out by the census of 1861, and will be more strikingly confirmed by the census of 1871. One fact alone ought to be decisive. The actual surplus female population is nearly a million ; and, even if all our soldiers and sailors were at home, would still amount to three-quarters of a million. Seeing that polygamy is not allowed, even if every man were to marry, there would remain three-quarters of a million to whom the sweets of domestic life are forbidden by an inevitable arithmetical necessity. Nay, more, of unmarried women above the age of twenty, there were, in 1861, upwards of two-and-a-half millions, while the married women numbered a trifle below four millions. If the prevailing social theory be sound, let us know what it means. It requires not the sacrifice of a small minority, although that would be no light matter, but that out of every three women one shall be left in penury and idleness, in order that a system may not be affected which provides for the other two. What, then, is to be said of a theory of the position of women which leaves a third of the population wholly out of account ?

There is a figure of speech, taking the part for the whole, against which boys are put on their guard. This is the gigantic fallacy that pervades the discussions on this topic. Writers in the press look at the subject from a middle-class point of view. One small section of the people fills their horizon, and is taken by them for the whole population. The error is natural ; but its effects are, nevertheless, painful and ludicrous. Our public instructors spin a web which they imagine is wide enough to cover the whole body politic, but in reality is only big enough to

bandage their eyes. From the shallow speculations built on an imperfect survey of the facts, we may go to the census, and ask how far the domestic theory is applicable to the circumstances of English women. Mr J. D. Milne, in a very careful and excellent work that has just been published,* thus sums up the census returns: "Three millions, or nearly one-half the whole number of women above twenty years of age, have *no* place in non-domestic industry, and remain at home as 'wives' and 'daughters;' one million occupy a secondary place in industry as 'farmers' wives,' 'shop-keepers' wives,' &c. ; and the remaining two millions and a-half are engaged in non-domestic occupations on their own account, or are of independent means." To make this fact more impressive, we shall quote the statistics for the census of 1851 and 1861, as referring to women above the age of twenty :

	1851.	1861.
Engaged in independent industry, or possessed of independent means -	2,153,924	2,496,166
Wives and daughters (above 20) of farmers, innkeepers, shopkeepers, shoemakers, or specially returned as such - - - - -	459,115	458,021
Wives, widows, and daughters returned as of no occupation - - - - -	3,227,153	3,632,372
Paupers, &c. - - - - -	158,192	80,156
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	5,998,384	6,666,715

Those who, in the face of such facts would, at the dictates of a sentimental theory, still shut the door of useful employment against women, must be capable

* *Industrial Employment of Women in the Middle and Lower Ranks.* By John Duguid Milne, Advocate. Revised Edition. Longmans.

of a sublime inhumanity. Carry out your beautiful and tender conception, insist upon the triumphing of your fine theory, and you sweep two millions of women into the workhouse or into the grave. But we will not attribute to inhumanity what is more easily explained by ignorance; for the lesson to be read in the miserable tables of the census is plain and manifest. It is no longer a question whether women shall be admitted to industrial occupations, and be allowed to earn a living by their own exertions; the only question that can be raised is, from what occupations or professions they should be excluded. To this question, we presume, there can only be one answer. No one will dare to say that women should be admitted to menial, ill-paid drudgery, but that they should be refused entrance to the higher and better paid professions. It is for women themselves to find out the occupations that are most suitable to them; and, just as in the case of men, they must be allowed to find their own level.

In spite, therefore, of the abstract idea so generally prevailing in regard to the proper sphere of women, we find the hard fact that such a theory is only applicable to the situation of one-half of the adult female sex; to the other half it is partially or wholly unsuitable. It does not, however, fail to exercise a profoundly mischievous influence. It cherishes the notion that the only proper or honourable employment for women is maternity, and that, if that fails them, they ought rather to remain in idleness than soil their fingers with work belonging to the sphere of men. The result is that all, or nearly all, who can afford to keep their women idle, do so. By the accidents of life, and the recklessness of heads of families,

it inevitably follows that a large number of those "protected" women are continually thrown on the world without means of subsistence or training likely to be of use to them. But a far larger class will continue in genteel poverty, too proud to work, rightly ashamed, and not absolutely forced, to beg. There is always a greater number of women whose time is of no pecuniary value, and who yet are the better for making a little money. The laws of political economy, and melancholy experience, complete the picture. Those women who do work for their own living find in competition with them other women, who are kept at home, and who are glad to earn a very little. The unskilled labour of women is therefore ill-paid; and those tasks that are easily learned are not sufficiently remunerated. All observers are agreed that in the generality of instances the low wages of women do not arise from the poor-ness of their work, but from the overcrowding of the market, in consequence of the worthlessness of time to many women.

The evil is fearfully great, and it must be confessed that a remedy is not easily found. According to the census, nearly two-thirds of the women find in some form or other a refuge in matrimony; and, with a chance of two to one in her favour, a young girl is not likely to regard a business as anything but a makeshift. Industrial employment is to a woman, although not to a man, the complement of a state of celibacy; and women may well be excused if they are not content with a condition that has all the discomfort, and none of the gilding, of monastic life. Our social system imposes on about two millions of women a vow of chastity and poverty, and it need

excite no astonishment if these involuntary nuns ceaselessly endeavour to escape from their position. All the unctuous flattery of devotees, all the watchfulness of lady superiors, all the absence of worldly cares, and all the consciousness of superior holiness, are wanted to reconcile women to a lot that they have freely chosen. We seldom consider the pressure put upon our two and a-half millions of adult unmarried women, whose position is worse than that of nuns, embittered by the recollection of withered hopes or vulgar cares. The painful dilemma thus emerges, that our mode of life consigns one-third of the adult female population to a position with which they never can be contented, and from which they are constantly struggling to escape.

The difficulty does not so much affect the case of unskilled labour. Women can generally find employment in work that requires little training; for, if they marry, they lose nothing. But when, as in the case of professions, a costly education and much laborious preparation are inevitable, we cannot, as a general rule, expect a father to put out his money until he has come to give up all hope of a husband for his daughter, and then it is too late to begin. The remedy is clear, though prejudice may hinder its adoption. Is it in the nature of things that married women should have no employment beyond the nursery? It must be borne in mind, looking at the question from a pecuniary point of view, that nursing is very nearly unskilled labour—that is to say, it does not require, or at least rarely obtains, much preliminary instruction. In the working classes every woman, being the nurse of her own children, has to learn by experience, guided by the empirical observa-

tions of her female friends. In the case, therefore, of a woman, engaged in a highly-skilled and well-paid occupation, she would always be able to afford servants to do the greater part of the work. This is pretty much the existing practice with all who can afford it. A lady likes the drudgery of the nursery just as little as the drudgery of the kitchen, and is always well pleased to delegate her functions to servants. Probably a family would be quite as well attended to when the lady of the house made visits of usefulness, for which she got payment, as now when her time is spent in visits of ceremony, for which she neither receives nor deserves payment. The time would not be wasted in an elegant manner; but the receipt of cash for useful services would be no contemptible compensation. At all events, some satisfactory means ought to be provided to enable women, in all circles alike, to gain their own livelihood. It would, after trial, prove equally agreeable to both men and women. It would confer the boon upon women of a consciously useful life; it would relieve men from a burden. It would, indirectly, solve other problems. With two millions and a half of unmarried, adult women, what can be expected but a state of things by which millions of men are degraded, and thousands of women are brought to far worse degradation? Would there be fewer marriages, if women were self-dependent and less helpless? Would not the self-dependence cause the greatest of all our social cankers to be vastly lessened, if it could not be altogether removed?—*January 13, 1872.*

DOWRIES.

THE dictum embodied in the constitution of the United States, "All men are free and equal," expresses the strongest political force of modern times. The language of the dogma has indeed been criticised, and it is not free from ambiguity. It has been said to be palpably untrue, for men are subject to the most diversified inequality. It refers, however, not to the faculties or powers of men, which are infinitely various, but to their rights. It means that the law should be no respecter of persons, that in its presence the poorest and the richest ought to be on exactly the same level. It means that there should be no privileges, that the State should have no pets in its family, selected for special fondling and care, while the rest are left out in the cold. It means that Parliament, in making laws, equally with the judges in administering them, should not place a higher value on the happiness of some than it does on that of all. It rests on the right of all men to happiness, and on the duty of the State to promote equally the welfare of all. If the principle of equality is understood in this sense, its application to women is apparent, and not less its right to determine the relation in which women have the deepest interest,—

marriage. Marriage must be a union of persons who have an equal claim to happiness, of whom neither is degraded to be a mere instrument for the gratification of the other. The idea of subordination, in the sense that the woman's happiness is to be considered after the man's, may be numbered among the things that are dead or dying. The superficial danger is that by some persons mere equality may be said to be too little; that women's happiness ought to be secured first, and not last.

Equality has its duties as well as its rights. Equal rights imply equal responsibilities. Equality in marriage is not possible unless it goes farther than sentiment; there must be equality also in material interests. Women must be able to meet men with a pecuniary independence. Where the purse is, there power finds its centre of gravity. When the House of Lords ceased to have any control over money bills, it would not have been difficult to foretell that the glory would depart from the nobles, and the sceptre would remain with the plebeian house. He who has the burden of providing funds ought to have the right of determining their application. That is the most wasteful scheme possible in which the spending and the winning of money are disjoined, in which the person who earns the money has nothing to do with the spending of it, and the person who spends has none of the trouble of gathering it together. So long, therefore, as the husband must find the income, he must have the chief, if not the exclusive, voice in settling the expenditure. And, as most questions are at one time or another pecuniary questions, the husband has the power, if he chooses to use it, of governing his

wife's actions, and subordinating her wishes to his own. If the husband consults his wife's views, it is from generosity, or forbearance, and the motive power is supplied by affection or "nagging." In order that a woman may secure her comfort by right, and not by sufferance, she must not be dependent on marriage for a subsistence.

The teaching of history is that equality and pecuniary independence go hand-in-hand. In the days of the patriarchs a suitor had to pay for his wife. But in our more advanced civilisation a woman who has a dowry may be said to pay for herself. At the first glance, the contrast would seem all in favour of the ancient system. In those times, it may be said, men must have put a wonderful value on women, when they actually paid a sum for the privilege of keeping them. Halcyon days for those that reared daughters, when the expense of bringing them up was reimbursed by their sons-in-law. There we must look for the real golden age, when the daughters of men were so eagerly coveted, and handsomely paid for. And, then, what a miserable age is ours in which the old happy state of things is entirely reversed, and men can hardly be persuaded to take wives, without the bribe of a dowry! On a closer inspection, however, we find that our apparent degeneration is really a development; and that the old practice, so far from being an evidence of the high regard of men to women, is the surest mark of female degradation. The idea contained in the most ancient forms of marriage prevailing among the Roman people was that marrying a woman meant acquiring the ownership of her. One ceremony was an ordinary sale; the husband bought the wife from her father with

good money, as he did his cattle or his slaves. Another consisted in obtaining the proprietary right over a wife by a year's unbroken cohabitation. The position of the wife was low. In legal parlance, she was said to be the daughter of her husband, at a time when children had no rights of ownership, when all their earnings went to their father, when they were incapable of gaining by any contract, and when even their life was at the father's mercy. So the wife had nothing she could call her own; she was the menial servant of her husband and owner. Moreover in this phase of society polygamy generally prevailed, a system that signifies and seals the most degrading opinion as to the sphere of woman.

But, as manners improved, all this was changed. During the centuries that cover the rise and fall of Rome there was manifested a steady, continuous, and wonderful development of legal conceptions. What religion was to the Jews, what philosophy was to the Greeks, what free institutions have been to the English, law was to the Romans. The Romans shared the great political sagacity that has characterised the history of England; their system was expansive and elastic; it absorbed the new ideas required by change of circumstances, but it adhered by the ancient landmarks, and moved on the lines that tradition had consecrated and custom had made easy. By the aid of Roman history, we can bridge the gulf that separates the ancient from the modern standpoint. It was by slow and imperceptible steps that the Roman wife conquered her independence. No attack was made on the law as established, for it was not in that way changes were brought about in those days; but under the shadow of the law there sprang up new

ideas,—ideas of the dignity of women and of their rights to freedom. The support of the popular voice was silently withdrawn, and the old legal relation crumbled into dust. It perished of inanition. The new relation henceforth to prevail between the sexes was based on contract. In the olden times, a father procured for his daughter any husband that he liked; her wishes had no effect on the validity of the transaction by which she passed under the yoke of a new master; but, under the late morality, her consent was essential to the contract. The thralldom in which she was formerly held, and her pecuniary dependence, were both removed, and henceforth the Roman wife entered into marriage on equal terms with her husband. It is at this point, where the tyranny of the husband ends, that the custom of dowries begins. The wife, no longer purchased by her husband, brought a contribution to defray the joint expenses of the household. Except as to what was included in the dowry according to agreement, the wife's property remained under her own control, and her husband could not intermeddle with it. Taken as a whole, this was the noblest marriage-law that ever existed. It was based on the great principle of equality, and upon pure mutual affection, not disfigured by patronising airs on the one side, or miserable dependence on the other. This was the origin of the dowry,—the symbol and safeguard of woman's moral dignity and just influence.

With a singularly perverse ingenuity, the English law contrived to blend the worst parts of the purchase system and the dowry system, and to leave out their redeeming features. It maintained the servile dependence of the wife as it existed in the rude period

of Roman history, but, instead of conjoining with it payment for wives, it took the dowry from the more refined jurisprudence, and deprived woman of the independence for which it was an equivalent. It injured women doubly, it robbed and enslaved them. But when things come to the worst they mend. To make the husband master not only of his wife, but of her fortune, was too much for her relatives, and a means of evasion was discovered, by which, with the aid of the oft-abused Court of Chancery, marriage ceased to operate, like felony, as a forfeiture of the woman's property. All who employ lawyers to prepare marriage settlements have long taken advantage of this silent abrogation of the common law, and in 1870 Parliament attempted to confer this privilege upon the thoughtless and the poor. Two different conceptions of marriage, corresponding to two different systems of law, have prevailed together in this country, illustrating, in a telling way, the old abuse of having not only one law, but one moral code, for the rich, and another for the poor. Among those who possess realised property, a marriage-settlement is resorted to as the means of preserving the pecuniary independence of the wife, and the relation of marriage is no longer of a servile nature. The wife is, and is desired to be, the equal and companion of her husband. The old tradition, that a husband could inflict moderate chastisement on his wife, is, in the well-to-do classes, extinct. In a recent notorious case, Lord Penzance gave husbands to understand that if their wives spontaneously yield them deference and submission, good and well, but husbands must be very careful how they try to win obedience by too much moral suasion. This expresses the belief of all reason-

able men; the few who look to ordering about a wife as one of the pleasures of matrimony, must be cautious in trying to fulfil their desires lest they should have to listen to something disagreeable from Lord Penzance. Unfortunately among the poorer sort, the law has hitherto sanctioned the pillage of wives' property by their husbands, and the old privilege of chastising wives has been kept up.

Marriage being in its material interest a species of partnership, a question arises, what is the best form for the contribution of the wife to take? Is it money or work? In the working class the question is easily settled; both husband and wife contribute toil or its equivalent—wages. When a woman has no children, she usually endeavours to add to her husband's earnings by making wages herself. This question, also, is easily solved in the relations of the propertied classes. Both husband and wife, living upon past accumulations, bring a contribution to the common expenses, the husband's share being generally, but not always, the greater. But to professional and business men the question has proved a great stumbling-block. They find it hard to save money for dowries. Indeed, the utility of dowries in this class admits of grave doubt. What profit is it to a man to get a dowry with his wife, if he has to repay it with compound interest, in the shape of dowries to three or four daughters? Very often men fall under the load, and the unfortunate girls are left without any provision. Their position is truly melancholy. Like the steward in the parable, they cannot work, and to beg they are very properly ashamed; but, unlike the steward, they have done nothing to deserve so hard a fate. May not the

true remedy for those evils be the introduction of women into suitable employment? It is worth considering whether they should not have some more certain livelihood than the chance of marriage. Many poor folks keep their daughters at home simply because, if they were sent out, their earnings would be too small to be worth having. A doctor, struggling to bring up a family on two or three hundred a year, would be glad to teach his daughters any business by which they would eventually make a hundred or a hundred and fifty a year; but he prefers keeping them idle at home, to making them drudges for a paltry thirty or forty pounds. But if the professions and the higher walks of business were open to women, all who were not occupied with the cares of maternity would make a living independent of the caprice of friends or the accidents of fortune. We should have a diminution in the number of women who are a burthen on their friends, if they are so lucky as to have any friends. We should be spared the wretched cases of women, delicately nurtured and well educated, left as helpless in the world as infants, and with little more capacity to earn even a subsistence. What is wanted is that the dowry of daughters shall take the shape of a professional education, or a share in a good business.—*January 7, 1871.*



THE LAW OF BREACH OF PROMISE.

I.

THE last department of law to submit to the more widely diffused conceptions of justice that prevail in modern times is that which deals with the relations of the sexes. In the law regulating the property of married persons, the power of bad husbands to rob their wives was supposed to be compensated by giving bad wives the power to rob their husbands. Nothing can be more absurd and inconsistent than the legal treatment of infanticide: it is called murder, and it is punished as petty larceny. The law shields the chastity of women in cases where they are presumably able to look after themselves; but, in the most exposed situation of all, domestic servants are left at the mercy of their masters. When a poor woman is beaten by her husband, the law, if it interferes at all, instead of giving him a sound whipping, and compelling him to provide for his family, affords its kindly help by sending the woman to the workhouse and the husband to prison.

If the law sins in those graver matters, we need not expect it to be very righteous in the less. The breaking of a man's heart by a woman even, so to speak, feloniously and with malice aforethought, is

regarded in practice as a rather clever and cheerful exploit; but if a man breaks a woman's heart, with the most innocent intentions, and for her own real benefit, he is punished with exemplary damages. It is worth considering how far this confused state of law reflects a distracted public opinion, or is in harmony with the exigencies of modern society.

A fundamental principle, not only of law, but also of morality, is that there should be no punishment where there is no guilt, no malicious or wicked intention. It is therefore a consistent view to hold that punishment, in cases of breach of promise, is awarded to heartless deceivers. Those who have deliberately inveigled others into the snares of love, from a desire of conquest, intending all along to throw them off, are guilty of an offence for which pecuniary damages are an absurdly inadequate and irrelevant punishment. But it may fairly be questioned whether even a small fraction of those unlucky swains who have to pay for their amours are really guilty of any such offence. There are, of course, some, not always of the male sex, who plume themselves on their conquests as a Red Indian does on his scalps. If, occasionally, one of these creatures receives the chastisement that Desdemona wrongly suffered,—a natural incident in the mode of warfare they indulge in,—society cannot affect much sorrow, although it may have a word to say against a breach of the peace. Who sets his neighbour's house on fire should not be angry when his own is burnt down. But when such crimes are not visited with private reprisals, can Courts of Law undertake to deal with them? Could our judges, sitting as a Court of Cupid, on the criminal side, take cognisance of such misde-

meanours? We fear not. They cannot decide without evidence, and by what proofs could the crime of "jilting with malice aforethought" be brought home to the delinquents? Courts of Justice are confined within strict limits that they cannot overpass; there are offences that must go unpunished, and among them we must include jilting.

For those reasons, we throw out of consideration all cases where jilting is a pastime or sport, resorted to for the excitement of the chase and being "in at the death," and restrict the discussion to those cases where in the breach, as well as in the making, of promises of love, there has been good faith. The law applicable to breach of promise takes no account of honesty or integrity of purpose, and, unless the law can be maintained when promises are made in a spirit of fairness, it cannot be supported at all. To cope successfully with this problem, the jurist must pay some attention to the nature of love. Unfortunately with the poets, the chief authorities on this subject (for it has generally been looked upon by philosophers as beneath their notice), consistency has never been the chief of virtues, and their accounts of it are hardly reconcilable with each other. Plato, who was a poet as well as a logician and philosopher, discussed the subject, and left his mark upon it. In one of his dialogues he describes it as a species of mania; genius and inspiration are kinds of mania, and so is love. Others, regarding love from a physiological point of view, hold that it is a nervous epidemic that attacks adolescence, just as measles and the whooping-cough persecute babyhood. But whatever its pathological characters, all are agreed that it is caught like fever; that it is often communicated

without the consent and against the will of the patient; that one might as justly be punished for taking cholera as for being in love; nay, that the victim, so far from meriting harsh treatment, never more deserves the condolence of friends. The progress of the distemper varies with the constitution and habits of the patient. Sometimes it is like a low fever, wasting the strength and never coming to a crisis; or it is a sharp attack producing delirium for a day or two, but passing off and leaving the patient in his usual health; or it is like an intermittent fever that will neither stay nor go away; or, like the small-pox, it leaves scars behind it; or it sends the patient to a madhouse, or, though seldom, to the grave. Without accepting these views as a creed, we may take them as similitudes to illustrate the proposition that the decay of love, equally with its germination and growth, is beyond the full control of the will, and therefore cannot establish any moral or legal responsibility. Some writers, like Dr Whewell, believe the contrary; they hold our affections to be subject to the will, and that they may be cultivated with as much certainty and success as a market gardener rears cabbages. The process is simple. Given a person whom one is to be taught to love, the recipe is—turn your eyes steadily towards the amiable side of the person's character, and, if he does not appear to have one, believe that it is concealed; then avert your gaze from all the unlovely features, and habit will generate love. Whether any one would think such a love-on-false-pretences worthy of cultivation is doubtful. Dr Whewell has missed his aim: he promised apples, but he has given only crabs.

The verdicts of juries have been a great puzzle. When it is only for wounded feelings that they are asked to give damages, they are obdurate. When a man unfolds the tale of blighted hopes, he is laughed out of court. But when lovely woman presents herself, the scene is changed, the jury awakes to anger, and gives heavy damages. Whence this difference? Is it that men are so insensible to grief that compassion for them would be thrown away? One explanation is found in the gallantry of juries. When a woman of interesting appearance comes as a suppliant, what man could refuse the gentle request, especially when he can gratify his generosity at the expense of the defendant? And if the jury are rewarded with a gracious smile, how great their gain at so small a cost! Without detracting from the force of this reasoning, it may be said not to go to the root of the matter. We suspect there is a more powerful motive at work; juries have a reason for the faith that is in them, although it may not be a pretty one. They cannot forget that the loss of a lover means more to a woman than to a man, and that the disappointed maiden, in addition to breaking her heart, loses a share, during their joint lives, in her intended husband's income. The lover might go,—but the settlement! We expect the jury is, after all, not so much concerned about the daughter; their hearts bleed for the father, who is mortified by the loss of an expected son-in-law. They picture to themselves the disconsolate father, who, although he would be ashamed to confess it, would not be sorry to see his daughter maintained at some other person's expense; they remember the anguish with which he must count the loss of precious opportunities; they know that every

hour of courtship diminishes the chance of other arrangements; and, accordingly, they give compensation. Let young men beware! Those moments that seem, as they pass, an eternity of bliss, yielding its own reward, have each their price, and will be changed by the chemistry of law into coin of the realm. We can only wonder at the audacity which, after tampering with a daughter's heart and trifling with a father's pocket, dares to go before a jury, composed chiefly of heads of families. The unctuous oratory of counsel for the plaintiff, the spicy jokes of counsel for the defendant, are merely the outward mask, and beneath both the solid arguments are judiciously left to simmer in the minds of the jury. If the true grounds were bluntly and nakedly put forward, women would be ashamed to ask, and juries to give, compensation.—*January 14, 1871.*

II.

THE law of breach of promise exemplifies, in addition to the incongruities just pointed out, a flagrant departure from recognised principles. Usually, when the law imposes serious obligations, it takes pains to hinder them from being rashly incurred. Thus many weighty acts, and especially promises made without value received, require the solemnity of a deed. This is the best justification for those legal ceremonies connected with marriage which were introduced by Lord Hardwicke in England, and the absence of which in Scotland has been a fruitful cause of scandal and injustice. The proclamation of banns, or the purchase of a license, costs money

and trouble, and makes a pause, during which those who are entering matrimony may reflect before they cross the Rubicon. This is well; but one may have gone too far to retract. Those who have promised to marry are compelled to do so, unless they are prepared to pay heavy, and sometimes ruinous, damages. Now, what precautions are taken to prevent rash and ill-considered promises? It is in vain to step in at the last moment with an idle parade of ceremony, when the parties are committed almost beyond a possibility of extricating themselves. So far from any care being shown to restrain the imprudent from rashly forfeiting their liberty of choice, inconsiderate words, and, even without words, mere conduct, are made sufficient to establish a promise of marriage. Thus many who, if pulled up face to face with impending matrimony, would perceive the danger of a hasty union, are led on, little by little, to make promises to persons of whom they know next to nothing. It is easy, and especially for lovers, to promise; the difficulty is to avoid what may be construed into a promise; and to give legal effect to the articulate or inarticulate expressions of transient emotion, is to set a trap to catch the simple and unwary. The law is in league with matchmakers to draw guileless souls into the meshes of wedlock. The promotion of a marriage is one of the cases where a Hindu is allowed by his religious institutions to tell a lie; so our law seems to regard marriage as so desirable an object that we must not too scrupulously inquire into the means by which it is brought about.

Flirtation is a game at which, under our law, women play with loaded dice; they may do as

much jilting as they please—an enjoyment that no one can practise at their expense with impunity. Promise of marriage is the artful invention by which the law enters into their matrimonial schemes, and facilitates their execution. But the picture has an obverse side, as all gallantry has. The seeming indulgence is a poisoned gift. The law arrays in irreconcilable antagonism the honour and the interests of women. No woman of the least spirit would use a promise as a halter round a man's neck to drag him into marriage. She would scorn to force from his lips the impossible promise to love and cherish her. We do not say that no woman who respected herself would sue upon a breach of promise, for that is often the only, or at least most convenient, remedy for wrongs that, under any system of law, would demand redress. But, generally, the women who bring such actions are mercenary adventurers, who seek revenge for baffled intrigues, and find it pays them better to lose a husband than to get one. This is an additional reason for a change in the law: the women who, if such a thing were possible, ought to succeed, never ask compensation. But though the honour of women forbids their going through the disgusting ordeal of a trial for breach of promise, their interests almost require them to do it. The generality of women are, we were going to say, trained for marriage, but, to be safe, let us say, destined for it. Without property, with no bread-winning knowledge or art, they can choose only between marriage and dependence on their relatives, if they have any. The position is deplorable, but it is not of their seeking; it is prescribed by custom, and must be recognised by law. It is a woman's

business to get a husband, one that she likes, if possible; but, at all events, a husband. Cœlebs in search of a wife was often in comical situations; but a girl in search of a husband can hardly be said to follow an honourable calling. It is not her blame, however, if she accepts a man for whom she does not care, "lest a worst fate should befall her." Who can feel surprise at the deep tone of dejection that occasionally marks the writings of our best women when touching on the position of their sex? The ignominy of the situation assigned conventionally to women is only rendered tolerable in those cases where strong affection submerges everything, an affection that the best laws cannot make, and that the worst cannot altogether destroy.

But is the law, except in the narrowest sense, for the interest of women? It cannot be really for their interest to use promises as whips to drive reluctant bachelors into the fold. It cannot be desirable to establish unions on earth that are not ratified in heaven, but, on the contrary, are registered there as sins of commission. It surely would be the climax of folly to begin a life-voyage, from which there was no return, with a mutinous crew. With every precaution, the old rumbling matrimonial coach, loaded with passengers, will sometimes get out of gear; but if it starts without any supply of oil, it runs a considerable risk of catching fire and being burnt down. A life-engagement is exposed to so many trials and perils, that, but for the toleration that springs out of mutual affection, it would almost inevitably be a failure. It is not an enterprise to be begun with half-hearted faith. But such is the unfortunate pecuniary dependence of women, men

sometimes go into marriage with deep misgivings, which, on every ground, would have better taken articulate utterance, or warmed into rebellion. There is a great temptation to drift with the stream, even when there is no longer a belief that it leads to any desirable haven. A man cannot help seeing that, after a long engagement, the value of his *fiancée* in the matrimonial market has been considerably depreciated; and that, if he fails to carry out his promise, she suffers a great, perhaps irreparable, loss. Yet his opinion of her may have changed; often the first illusion passes away before marriage; and he is convinced that marriage would be a mistake. It would be a real kindness to many a woman, if her dissatisfied lover had the courage to be cruel, and to terminate an engagement that could only lead her, irrecoverably, into a false position.

It thus appears that the seemingly unfair preference shown to women in cases of breach of promise admits of full, but damning, justification. If marriage be regarded, as it practically is, as the sole or chief occupation of women, they must be compensated for the loss of promised engagements. If women are assimilated to upper servants, it is fair that they should have the same remedy as a cook who has been disappointed in a situation offered to her. If they are to be kept in the house of bondage, they ought also to taste of the fleshpots of Egypt. In an ordinary breach of engagement the damages are assessed at an amount that would give the rate of wages agreed on during the time that the servant is looking out for a new master. And as it is more difficult to get a situation as wife than as housekeeper, it follows that the damages should be heavier, espe-

cially when the woman has been kept on so long that she has small chance of other matrimonial employment. The exact sum is hard to fix, for, whereas an ordinarily good servant is sure to get into service sooner or later, it might happen that the only person in the world who would think of marrying a woman was her fickle and faithless lover; in which case, according to correct principles, he ought to pay her an annuity for life equal to the value of her position as his wife. This scale would alone be just to her, and, of course, it would be monstrously unjust to him; for it would virtually drive him to marry the objectionable woman, from the impossibility of his being able to keep a wife after paying the necessary fine. On the other hand, if a woman were very eligible and much sought after, she ought to receive scarcely any compensation; when a woman has many admirers, the loss of one cannot be considered serious. We fear juries are not quite consistent, and that they occasionally give a pretty woman heavy damages, when they ought to send her empty away.

A simple repeal of the law would not affect the real evil, which lies deeper, and has its roots firmly fixed in custom. The disgraceful thing is, not that the law should give a pecuniary *solatium* to a woman for the loss of a husband, but that the circumstances in which society places her should allow, nay, almost compel, her to demand it. So long as women are obliged to seek marriage as a livelihood, nothing is to be gained by asking the law to disregard the ignominious fact. The law does not fall behind our social arrangements, but our social arrangements lag miserably behind the best moral ideas of the time. It would be unfair to say that the best men look with

disgust on such a relation of the sexes as the law discloses to us, for if the real sentiments of the generality of men were expressed, the established custom would find few, if any, devotees. The only thing that reconciles men is the habit in all discussions relating to social topics of this nature, of calling an iron spade a silver trowel, and of thinking it fine to talk about women in a style that was ridiculous in the time of the Knight of La Mancha. How few are the compliments to women that do not contain a latent sneer. When a sensible man talks of women being placed on a high pedestal, we should expect him to add, "and under a glass shade."

The only way to get rid of the anomalies of the law is to change that social custom which restricts women to matrimony as the only business of their life. Quite apart from the enormous waste involved in this practice, there being so many more women than are wanted, it is to be condemned as giving women a mercenary interest in marriage. Instead of modelling the relation of the sexes after the law of master and servant, we ought to follow the analogy of partnership, on the basis of pure affection. If unmarried women were independent of wedlock, they would not forsake their state of single blessedness, except when they liked, and for whom they liked. The employment of women in industrial occupations is the real solution of the problems that confuse the law and perplex the conscience. The independence of women is the only means by which mercenary inducements can be banished, and the purity of marriage generally secured. If a woman were in business, or had a profession, nothing more could, with decency, be heard of breaches of promise. Men

would no longer, from mistaken tenderness, go into marriages when they had ceased to care for their *fiancées*. A woman would have the best assurance that her lover was not risking his happiness to save her from beggary. Mothers, relieved from the arduous duty of finding husbands for their daughters, might direct their energy to more useful tasks. Girls, no longer anxious about their future, would be free to marry or not, just as they pleased. "Old maid" would be no more a term of reproach, when it became clear that it did not mean that a woman was baulked in the great enterprise of her life. There might be fewer marriages, but as they would probably indicate affection on both sides, they would have a greater chance of leading to happiness. The social value of women would be greatly increased, and their influence would be more marked. In short, a time might come when the bringing of a man-child into the world would be no cause for special rejoicing, and the birth of a daughter would cast not the least shade of disappointment over the brows of her parents.—*January 21, 1871.*



THE NOVEL-READING DISEASE.

PHYSICIANS are familiar with a complaint which, although sufficiently specific, has yet no name of its own. The patient suffers from an alarming and morbid thirst, and consumes a perfectly fabulous amount of fluid, almost always of an unwholesome nature. Tea in a highly dilute shape, *eau sucrée*, raspberry vinegar and water, soda water, or some other such abominable mess, is taken by the gallon, and the unnatural craving is stimulated by indulgence.

*Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops
Nec sitim pellit.*

Wholesome food is refused; no exercise is taken; and the patient finally sinks into a flabby and sickly condition, which nothing but severe and determined treatment will shake off. This dropsical habit of body finds its exact analogue in the species of mental dropsy which is produced by over-indulgence in three-volumed novels. This terrible complaint is one of the worst evils which modern civilisation has brought with it. Its progress is gradual, very insidious, and often almost imperceptible. At first, all that is noticed is that the sufferer is apt to be found bent over a novel at unnatural hours—as, say, in the early morning, or in the middle of a beautiful sum-

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mer's afternoon. Soon, however, the disease becomes more pronounced, and in its worst stages novels are got through at the rate of three or four or even five a-week, or at an average, in a severe and chronic case, of some two hundred and fifty or three hundred a-year. At first some discrimination is exercised, and one writer is, perhaps, preferred to another—Mr Trollope, say, to Mrs Ross Church, or "Ouida" to the author of *Guy Livingstone*. Very soon, however, the taste becomes deadened and blunted, and all power of distinction and appreciation is lost. In this stage, the unhappy patient can no more go without her novel than can a confirmed dipsomaniac without his dram. The smaller circulating libraries, which lend out very second-hand novels indeed at a penny a volume, are put under contribution, and any amount of garbage is swallowed wholesale. Quality is held absolutely of no importance, and quantity is everything. The very process of reading becomes more or less mechanical, and seems to afford a species of mechanical pleasure or satisfaction, a novel of the feeblest possible type being read as religiously from cover to cover, and yielding apparently as much enjoyment, as if it were a second *Romola*. It is no uncommon thing for a young lady, in whom the complaint has assumed a chronic form, to have read the whole of Scott, the whole of Thackeray, the whole of Dickens, the whole of Trollope, the whole of Annie Thomas, the whole of Mrs Ross Church, the whole of Miss Braddon, and, into the bargain, some four or five hundred other novels, by less famous hands. When the disease is thus confirmed, the dropsical habit of mind becomes apparent. The conversation of the patient

becomes flabby and limp. Her interest in all ordinary subjects — except, perhaps, the latest fashions, or the more scandalous portions of evidence in the Tichborne case, or the marriage of the Princess Beatrice—flickers feebly in the socket, and finally dies out. The last stage—that of absolute imbecility—is now, unless very powerful remedies are exhibited, a mere matter of time.

So much for the symptoms or diagnosis of the disease. Its prognosis depends greatly upon the natural constitution of the patient; but is, as a rule, unfavourable. Even where vigorous treatment has been adopted, and has apparently effected a radical cure, there is always danger of a serious relapse. And even if the cure be permanent, the patient is none the less permanently enfeebled, and will always remain incapable of any severe or protracted mental exertion. It is, indeed, upon the whole, unwise to encourage delusive hopes of a complete cure. The disease is as obscure, as insidious, and as little capable of control, as is softening of the brain itself; and it is doubtful whether we ever do more than for a while to arrest its course. What is most sad is the self-deception of the patient herself, which is very analogous to that of the habitual drunkard. She is, as a rule, convinced that her evil habit is perfectly under her own control; that she could, if she chose, begin to-morrow, and never open a novel again. She is, indeed, fruitful in such good resolutions; but if any attempt is made to secure total abstinence even for a day, she will resort to subterfuges as pitiful as those to which a dipsomaniac will have recourse if deprived of his accustomed dram, and will tell any falsehoods or use any evasion rather than struggle

with the cravings of her diseased appetite. In such hopeless cases even the most judicious firmness is of very little avail.

It is curious and interesting to observe that as this comparatively new female disease has grown more virulent and intense, the old disease of scandal-talking has become comparatively rare. It is, of course, physically difficult to talk scandal and to read a novel at one and the same time. Our grandmothers used to devote three or four hours every day to discussing the virtues and vices of absent friends over a dish of tea. Our sisters loll in American chairs, and listlessly turn over a third volume; and the concentrated and slightly venomous interest which used to be excited by the peccadilloes of some half-dozen neighbours is now languidly diffused over the doings of some four or five hundred washy creations of a washy imagination. It is, of course, possible, nay, even probable, that were novel reading sternly repressed, scandal and gossip would revive. Were it not for this consideration, it is an open question whether the novel traffic ought not to be dealt with as stringently as Mr Bruce proposes to deal with the liquor traffic; whether it would not be well to enable the ratepayers of a district to limit the number of the circulating libraries, or even to close them altogether; and to place the "habitual" novel-reader under some such paternal restraint as that to which Dr Dalrymple wishes to subject an "habitual drunkard."

It is too clear, unfortunately, why it is that so many women thus waste their time and rot their minds. They read novels, exactly as some young men smoke and drink bitter beer, for sheer want of something to

do. And upon the whole a silly girl floundering about upon the sofa and reading a silly novel is a far pleasanter sight than is an unwholesome-looking youth sprawling over a bar, and mining his worthless constitution with nicotine and alcohol. Each is a melancholy specimen of brainlessness, due almost entirely to neglected education. But the brainlessness of the man is, as might be expected, coarser and more animal than that of the woman. The education which has been needed is no very great or wonderful matter. "Sweetness and light" of a high order will never be very generally diffused. Plato, Aristophanes, Rabelais, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Molière—none of these will ever be as widely read as the 'Pickwick Papers.' A certain number of novels, always more or less feeble, will be written every year, and, being written, will be read. That ordinary and moderate novel-reading will ever be stamped out is not for a moment to be hoped. The education which is wanted to cure the vice of inordinate novel-reading is one which should give an intelligent interest in the matters of every-day life. In this respect it is impossible to deny that women are almost intentionally neglected. They are given to understand that political questions are beyond their sphere and above their comprehension. There is hardly one man in ten who would not literally lose patience if his wife, or his sister, or his daughter were to ask him some natural question about "reductions *ex capite*," or the nature of prerogative, or the constitution of a trades-union. Such a question almost always provokes a vague and unsatisfactory, if not a surly, reply. While as for endeavouring to educate a woman by carefully talking to her about what is

going on, and explaining step by step what she does not understand,—the very notion of such a thing would be scouted as Quixotic in all but a very few families. The result is that a married woman, and even more so a young girl, lives almost as entirely out of the world as does a college tutor. She reads novels for the same reason as he reads Plutarch, or Seneca, or Polybius, or Livy, in naïve ignorance that there is any more profitable occupation. Cobden's much misunderstood sneer did not mock knowledge of the Ilissus, but minute knowledge of Ilissus *plus* absolute ignorance of Chicago, exactly as one might laugh at a Trollopologist who knew accurately the family history of the Dukes of Omnium, but had never heard of Lord Derby or Lord John Russell. What a woman needs is an education which shall enable her to read and follow the Parliamentary debates instead of the police and divorce reports; and when women are thus educated, then feeble novels and feeble novelists will not vex our souls to the horrible extent to which they irritate us at present. Of such an education we may say that it is οὐκ ὀστράκον πριστροφὴ ἀλλὰ ψυχῆς περιαγωγὴ, nor is it to be got in books, unless, indeed, books can give sound, healthy common-sense, and wholesome interest in common subjects. But men can give it by making the women of their family their companions; and that they should neglect to give it, shows, after all, how inveterately deep-seated is the extraordinary notion that the intellectual difference between men and women is one of kind and not of degree.—August 26, 1871.

RISING IN LIFE.

THERE is no theme upon which admirers of the English Constitution are more accustomed to dilate than the opportunity it affords for rising in life. Our superlative Constitution places no obstacle in the way of the humblest subject. The son of a sweep may become a Lord Mayor, and the son of a barber be entrusted with the keeping of her Majesty's conscience. The son of a peer is but a gentleman, says an eloquent Whig, and any gentleman may become a peer. The time has been when a Mayor could congratulate a Lord Chancellor upon having "risen from the very dregs of the people." It is one of the merits of the present Ministry, for which they have received but scant congratulation, that they have greatly increased the openings for merit, both in the army and in the civil service. Mr Forster, too, is evidently sincere in trying to provide the first rays of superior intelligence with encouragement, and to afford the means of the best education to the poorest. All this is most admirable; for we have no sympathy with the spurious philanthropy that, under the pretence of elevating a whole class, would discourage individuals from getting out of it. Two movements ought always to be going on. There should be a constant improvement in the position of those whose labour

depends upon manual strength or dexterity; but every community requires, and all the more requires as it becomes more complex and civilised, a class whose work is of an intellectual character; and it is highly desirable that that work should be performed by those who are endowed with the best brains, no matter in what position of life they may accidentally be born.

But it would be superfluous to say anything in behalf of "rising in life." It is part of an Englishman's religion. It is an axiom in his worldly creed, and the object of his earnest and unceasing practical attention. It is sometimes presented in a shape extremely repulsive, as if rising in life meant a mere scramble for the means of bodily nourishment and enjoyment. If this were proposed as an object in life,—a fierce struggle for the opportunity of physical enjoyment,—a more contemptible or vulgar end could not be conceived. It would be a contest from which every superior man would hold aloof with disdain. He would leave the pursuit to the ignoble race of whom an excellent book says that "their god is their belly." The mode in which "rising in life" is commonly spoken of gives occasion to misconception. The material results of superior intelligence and energy naturally draw attention to themselves, and Englishmen, who entertain considerable scepticism of intangible results, are accustomed to applaud energy, so to speak, embodied in visible wealth. But there is another peculiarity of our countrymen, long ago pointed out in another connection by Mr Mill, that continually misleads those who take them at their word. It is their constant habit of self-depreciation. It is our affectation of pursuing steadily our own interests that exposes the most generous and unself-

fish of nations to the taunt of following a selfish policy. There is another reason. John Bull has a soft bit in his heart; he is not exactly ashamed of it, he would not for the world parade it, but he is somewhat afraid of making a fool of himself. Hence, even when he is moved by the purest sentiment, he tries to make out that his conduct is shaped by a calculation of interest. Great care must, therefore, be taken in interpreting the language of his commonplace ambition; it no more implies a grovelling or unworthy theory of life than his habitual grumbling indicates any doubt as to the perfect wisdom of the British Constitution. While he entertains a healthy dread of high-flown and florid expressions of sentiment, he is far from holding that the noblest faculties have no purpose but to serve the lowest.

If we define "rising in life" as placing the best men in the best places, giving the highest work to those who have the highest capacity—as the aim of a well-ordered commonwealth, to put every one in their place, the intellectual to intellectual work, and the rest to such as is suitable—then a serious question suggests itself. Do we not habitually, in thought and speech, when speaking of "rising in life," refer to men only, and forget or ignore the other, and as we ironically say, the better half of the species? Singularly enough, it never occurs to us that, while human excellence is found in both sexes, we never promote it except in the case of men. With all our apparatus, free competitions, endowed schools, and scholarships for the poor, we provide ladders enough for boys, but not for girls. Why should the great gift of intelligence be allowed to run to waste, because the body in which it is enshrined belongs to one sex and not

to the other? The loss is not imaginary. Bishop Temple, from his experience of boys in the middle and upper class, calculates that about three boys out of a thousand should at all hazards get a superior education; he thinks the nine hundred and ninety-seven may very well be left to such education as their parents can give them. This estimate probably does not err on the side of excess. What is true of boys is, we imagine, true of girls, that only about three in the thousand have such pre-eminent ability as to require careful provision for their higher education. At this rate, nearly fifty thousand women in this country would deserve the best training that could be given them. Taking a rough estimate, at least forty thousand must be born in a station where they have no access to the means of superior education, and must live and die unknown and unheard of, "mute inglorious Miltons." To only a few stragglers in this great army of intelligence does good luck ever bring the opportunity of making their talents a source of enjoyment to themselves and of usefulness to the community. Our social system is so arranged that nearly one-half of the superior intellect of the nation is doomed to waste.

It might be said that an equal number of poor boys exist, and that, as they rise in life, they can carry the clever girls with them. Unfortunately, however, marriage, the usual sop offered to women, can have very little application in this case. Men who rise in life prefer to seek wives in the circle that they enter rather than in that from which they have come. Ever so small an elevation, as that from a shop to a pulpit, is a prolific source of breach of promise; the aspiring male seeks the honour of a

more exalted alliance than he can find in a milliner's shop. But even if the geniuses among men were to select wives from their own class, they would be far more likely to take them from the nine hundred and ninety-seven than from the three. Let us suppose, however, that all difficulty is overcome; that the man who rises in life, instead of marrying a respectable mediocrity of higher station, goes down to the "dregs," and picks up a pearl, is it, after all, the highest use to which a gifted woman can be put—to amuse a gifted man? As a means of raising women of exceptional ability to a position where their merits can be duly appreciated, marriage is altogether out of the question. If that is their only hope, poor girls may well despair of their lot.

What becomes of this untapped fountain of intelligence? Does it irrigate and nourish the lower strata of society? Unfortunately, it is like a rare wine, priceless to connoisseurs, but thrown away upon country bumpkins. The uneducated taste turns from it, and prefers its strong, common ale. Very superior intelligence is as useless to surrounding stupidity as the light of the sun to the blind. The eye sees only what it has the gift to see; and it is the unavoidable fate of obscure genius to live and die undiscovered and unappreciated. The least evil that can happen to a poor girl, who is the unfortunate recipient of great powers, is that they shall do her no harm. Not unfrequently, however, cleverness is a snare and a danger. If it is accompanied with the impulse to use it, and with a proper discontent, it compels its possessor to burst through the barriers erected by custom for her imprisonment, and to encounter perils and temptations of every

kind. Too often it happens that "the light that leads astray is light from heaven." Oppressed and stifled nature is not always choice and fastidious in the means by which it seeks relief.

The injustice and wrong done to the ablest women by our social prejudices are grave; but what is not less striking, at first sight, is the wanton folly by which the community sacrifices so much invaluable help. But it is only in appearance. A free course for talent has always been more of a name than a reality even for men. It is only by the progress of radical principles that the duty of the State is regarded in a new light. The policy that is always gaining strength is that merit or capacity, and not pot-luck or prescription, shall be the title to high position. Every class that has gained supreme power has tried to grasp all honours and offices; but, by degrees, the divine right of superior fitness is coming to be recognised as the only guiding principle. The victory of this principle will not be complete until poor girls, as well as poor boys, are provided with the means of qualifying them to fill high posts. Patrician has succumbed to plebeian, rich to poor, and so must masculine privilege before the simple demand of justice. The very same moral law that wins victory for men will gain victory for women. The time must come, and before long, when aspirants to the honourable offices will try themselves by the test, not of rank, or family, or wealth, or sex, but by that of ability. That triumph of justice will, as is always the case, be a blessing not only to those who have been wronged, but also to the unjust; in the same way as injustice always entails a double mischief, being an injury alike to the sufferer and to the wrong-doer.—*November 11, 1871.*

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

THE education of women is a subject that is daily receiving more attention, and the result of most of the consideration that has been bestowed upon it is a conviction that it fails in all the purposes for which it is intended. As to what these purposes are, opinions differ widely. Some people say that women should be educated simply to be good wives and mothers, and that, as to be a good wife and mother knowledge of a domestic nature is all that is requisite, needlework, cookery, and such amount of domestic medicine as will enable her to look after her children's health, and tend her husband when he is ill, should take the most important place in a woman's education. Others give precedence to accomplishments. Domestic knowledge, they believe, comes instinctively to a woman when she needs it; but not so playing the piano, singing, dancing, drawing, and speaking French and German, and as without all or most of these acquirements a woman cannot take her position in society with that distinction which will help her to make an advantageous marriage, the whole anxiety of prudent parents is that their daughters should attain a proficiency in these respects. The former class of thinkers universally, and the latter pretty generally, admit that the present system of education

utterly fails to supply what they respectively demand.

The old-fashioned people complain bitterly of the ignorance of girls in all useful knowledge. They cannot keep house accounts, they neither can make puddings or direct servants in making them, they cannot make or mend their own clothes, and in a sick room they are either so nervous or so careless that their presence is worse than useless. On the other hand, we hear of girls, after years of school training, playing out of time and singing out of tune. Mothers discover that their daughters cannot produce the simplest sketch except under the drawing-master's eye, and fathers grumble that, after an undue proportion of their incomes has been spent in boarding-school bills, when they take their girls abroad they cannot speak a foreign language so as to make themselves understood. The girls know it all themselves, and know, too, that—with rare exceptions—for their success in society they must depend upon their good looks, their style of dress, and their piquancy of manner, none of which they acquired in the school-room.

Another cause that has operated very powerfully in producing this feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing system of education for women is the tone adopted by an influential portion of the press when dealing with social questions. In all cases where it is possible to introduce the subject, the conduct and character of women are subjected to a rigorous and scathing criticism, with generally unsparing condemnation. And almost every social difficulty and defect is attributed to this cause. The question of the increasing reluctance of men to marriage has long ago

been settled as the result of the great extravagance of women in dress and their love of expensive amusements, which in the present day render a wife too costly a luxury for any but a rich man to indulge in. The loose tone in conversation and manners which has begun to pervade society, and is recognised under the name of *fastness*, is attributed to the fact that respectable women—supposed to be the real censors of public morals—not only tolerate it in men, but make strenuous and successful efforts to acquire it themselves. Women, according to these analysts of human nature, are silly, ignorant, idle, extravagant, and immoral. There are a certain number of people, no doubt, who find women's charms enhanced by their silliness and ignorance, and there are some men to whom a woman's chief attraction lies in her efforts, even when they pass the bounds of decency, to attract him; but these are few: the majority prefer women to have, if not knowledge, at least common sense, and if not a sound, strong judgment, at any rate some discretion, and reluctantly they admit the fact that, in too many instances, they possess neither.

If this be a correct statement of the facts, what is the cause? Some discover it in the nature of women themselves, whom they pronounce to be afflicted with such unreasonableness, frivolity, and weakness of mind, that, if we were to believe them, the only wonder would be that women are not a great deal worse than they are. Others, however, lay all the blame upon the system of women's education, which they say engenders frivolity of mind, and cultivates ignorance by excluding the really valuable branches of knowledge. The latter opinion is the true one. The plan of education at present pursued with women syste-

matically represses all the best faculties of the mind. Everything that is taught is taught dogmatically, and consequently the powers of research, inquiry, analysis, and reason either are altogether crushed, or rust for want of use. The subjects that necessitate their exercise in some degree, such as science and philosophy in their various branches, are omitted. The memory is overtaxed, everything being taught as indisputable fact to be committed to it, and retained there unaltered; and the consequence is that too frequently it breaks down.

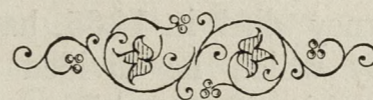
Some ludicrous examples of this are to be found in the Report of the Schools Commission. From Mr Hammond we learn that a girl, in reply to a question about Lord Bacon, answered, "He lived in the reign of Henry III.; he discovered a great many things in chemistry and discovered gunpowder." And another, "Lord Bacon was a celebrated philosopher, and he invented gunpowder." To the question, "How do nouns substantive form their plural number?" he obtained the reply, "Sometimes by changing a vowel, as 'ox, oxen';" and to "How is the past tense of verbs formed?" one answered, "By adding d or ed as 'sing, sang';" and another, "more, most." "It is incredible," he says, "how many girls from nearly every school write down such answers."

Since the Report of the Schools Commission has been published—and, though in a less measure, before—there has been a good deal of well-meant agitation set on foot on the subject, and, in consequence, some slight steps have been made to improve the condition of things. Under pressure of this kind, a few school-mistresses announce courses of scientific lectures in their prospectuses. They have an English Literature

class, and—but rarely—a Philosophy class. An English Literature Professor comes twice a week, and hears the pupils recite carefully pruned passages from Shakespeare's plays, and copious extracts from the 'Proverbial Philosophy' of Mr Martin Tupper. Orthodox clergymen are engaged to instruct the young ladies in geology and astronomy, and pic-nic parties are organised in the summer for botanising purposes. But science taught after this fashion is, if not absolutely mischievous, at least nearly useless. It is a mere dogmatic cramming of facts that calls for no wholesome effort of reasoning or analysis, and only imposes another burden upon the already overweighted memory. And almost the same may be said of the English Literature classes. The practice of studying the works of great writers, simply by learning isolated passages by rote, fails to create any interest in the mind of the learner in the works themselves; and as many are generally studied all at the same time, painful confusion between Shakespeare and Mr Tupper, Milton and Mrs Hemans, is a not unfrequent result. The works of no writer being studied in entirety, the real bent of his mind is never ascertained, the movement of his thought is not followed, and the source of his ideas is not discovered. Consequently, what is read leaves no tangible impress on the feelings or fancy of the reader, and the memory cannot hold it distinct and clear from all else.

Such slight modifications, then, as these cannot satisfy those who, not believing that women any more than men are born unreasonable, silly, or weak in mind, are utterly discontented with a system framed to produce those consequences. They demand nothing less than its complete destruction, and the substitu-

tion of another in its place. What that other should be will prove, perhaps, a difficult question to answer. Our mode of educating boys is, as yet, far from perfect; but boys are far better off than girls. The arbitrary will of parents does sometimes interfere; but, as a rule, the rudiments of most branches of useful knowledge are taught, and the peculiar bent of the mind thus ascertained is considered as to what shall be followed up in a higher degree, to the highest degree attainable by the student if he pleases. If this, and the renunciation of all dogmatism whatsoever, and the proper and due exercise of all the faculties and powers of the mind, be taken as a basis, careful consideration will be sure to produce a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.—*July 29, 1871.*



MOTHERS' WRONGS.

IF any further proof were wanting of the inequality of some of our laws as they affect women and men—two very remarkable cases that have recently been tried in the Court of Chancery, in Dublin, would amply furnish it.

In 1843 a Roman Catholic, of the name of Kearney, emigrated to Australia, and there in 1855 married a Miss Hamilton, a Protestant. They had four children, boys, born between the years 1856 and 1864, who were all baptized Roman Catholics, but—with the father's consent and approval—were educated Protestants by their mother, and on different occasions attended Protestant places of worship with her. Mr Kearney died in 1865, having previously made a will by which he divided his fortune of 20,000*l.* between his wife and children, appointing her co-guardian of the latter with his two brothers and a friend, Thomas M'Cormick,—all Roman Catholics, and one of the brothers a priest. By the will he also directed that his wife and children should return and live in Ireland, and further desired that the children should be "piously and religiously brought up." In pursuance of this, the two eldest were placed in the French Roman Catholic College at Blackrock,

from which they were afterwards removed by the mother, when a petition was filed in the Court of Chancery by the Kearneys and M'Cormick, praying that all the children might be brought up Roman Catholics. Mrs Kearney filed a counter-petition, praying that they might be made wards of the Court. Both were heard before Lord O'Hagan, who decided against Mrs Kearney, and in favour of the other guardians. In delivering judgment, he said that "the expressed directions, or the *presumed desire* of the father, could not be overborne by any opposition on the part of the mother, and he saw nothing in this case which could warrant the education of the children being otherwise than in the religion of the father." In the case of the two elder boys, however, whose riper years and more advanced intelligence required the application of a different principle, as they had declared themselves to be Protestants, and determined to remain Protestants, he decided that they should follow their own inclinations, and remain in their mother's faith, that in which they had been brought up. But with the two younger it was different. "Their age and capacity did not enable them to form decided religious opinions for themselves; they should therefore be brought up strictly in the Roman Catholic faith." In reference to the argument that the separation of young children from their mother, and bringing them up in a different religion from hers, would be attended with evil consequences, he observed "that this was no doubt one of the misfortunes arising from mixed marriages: the same argument had been pressed in the case of *Hawksworth v. Hawksworth*, and the decision of the Court thereon was the same that he

felt bound to give, viz., that *the law left him no alternative* but to pronounce that in the absence of special circumstances — such as the very decided opinions of the two elder of the young Kearneys—the religion of the father must regulate the religion of the child.”

The other case to which we have alluded was that of Meades minors, which was tried by Lord O'Hagan in December, 1870, and was still more remarkable than the foregoing. In Ireland, in the year 1860, Mr Meade, a Protestant, married a Miss Ronayne, a Roman Catholic; before their marriage an agreement being entered into by both that if they had children the sons should be brought up Protestants, and the daughters Roman Catholics. Two children were born, both girls, and Mrs Meade died a few days after the birth of the second. On her death-bed, however, the agreement between her and her husband as to the religion of the children was re-confirmed, he, at her earnest request, solemnly promising to abide by it, and ensure its being carried out by entrusting the care and education of the children to her sister, Miss Ronayne, a Roman Catholic. Mr Meade kept his promise so far as having the second child baptized, as the first had been, a Roman Catholic; and by bringing his sister-in-law to reside in his house, and giving her the sole charge of the education of his children—for eight years. Then he took for a second wife a Protestant lady, and thereupon he entirely changed his mind with regard to the religion of his children and his agreement with his first wife: the latter he decided to break, and, in consequence, informed Miss Ronayne that she must discontinue all religious instruction of his daughters, as in

future they were to be brought up in the Protestant faith, that of himself and his present wife. Not, however, being satisfied with the manner in which Miss Ronayne carried out his wishes, he removed the children from her care altogether. She and the other relations of the first wife then filed a petition in the Court of Chancery, praying that he should be compelled to fulfil his promise, and have his children brought up in the religion of their mother. The Lord Chancellor, however—though strongly condemning Mr Meade's conduct—decided that his will must be paramount in determining the religion of his children; they should remain in his charge, and be educated as he thought fit.

It is not to the religious aspect of these two cases that we wish to call attention, though in that respect they present some very remarkable features, but to the fact, which they plainly demonstrate, that according to our English law a woman has no right whatever to exert any control over the education and training of the children she has brought into the world and reared. In event of the father's death she is responsible for their support and maintenance if he has not made the necessary provision. But she must not teach them what she believes to be true, if it be contrary to even the supposed faith of their dead father; his “presumed desire” is paramount to every claim of hers, and if she will not consent to teach them what she believes to be absolutely false, she must give them up to strangers that they may teach it to them! But though the “presumed desire” of a dead father must overrule the most consistently held beliefs and emphatically declared wishes of a living mother, when the case is reversed, and the father is the sur-

vivor, all the rights of it are reversed also. Then the most solemn agreements entered into between the parties, and reiterated promises, are no security to a woman. The law recognises no rights of a woman in her character of mother. If her husband be dead, the fact of his having been baptized in a particular creed, or, if he be living, his merest caprice, alone can regulate the religion of their mutual offspring.

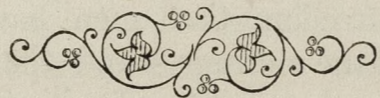
These are facts that women as a rule seem to lose sight of, probably because men as a rule leave the religious education of their children mostly to the children's mothers. Mrs Kearney never seems to have entertained a doubt that her children belonged as much to her as to her husband during his lifetime, and after his death to her alone; until Lord O'Hagan rudely undeceived her by explaining the law of the matter, which "left him no alternative" but to pronounce that she had no right to them whatsoever. Mrs Meade seems to have entertained some misgivings when she required a special agreement on the subject before marriage, and anxiously got the agreement ratified by a promise from her husband to her on her death-bed. But she did not know that, though the law would have recognised Mr Meade's agreement with her to marry her, it would not recognise the agreement with her as to the education of their children, upon which no doubt, however, the first agreement entirely depended. Had Mr Meade broken his agreement to marry her, he might have been made to pay some thousands of pounds, because in that case the law would have regarded her simply as a citizen and the agreement as a business agreement, bound to be carried out; while in the

agreement as to the education of her children it regarded her as a woman and a mother, and as such the agreement was not bound to be carried out with her. If Mr Meade had made a solemn promise before witnesses to a dying partner in business, it is most probable that the law would have compelled him to perform it—at any rate that feeling called honour, which is considered a law in itself, would no doubt have held him to it; but neither law nor honour obliged him to keep his promise to his dying wife and the mother of his children.

These are considerations which cannot be too forcibly impressed upon the minds of women. Not all, as yet, desire the rights of intelligent human beings to personal freedom; not all ask for the rights of citizens, to help in making the laws; many are content without their rights as wives to possess their own property; some are even satisfied that, as daughters, they have no right to choose their own husbands. But there is not a woman in the world in whose breast Nature has not implanted the sense of her rights as a mother;—and yet these are the rights that, of all others, she does not possess. Except in the matter of education, women have the same personal freedom that men have; and, with the exception of the suffrage—and that seems likely to come soon—the rights of citizens have been conceded to them. Married women can now own some, at least, of their own property; and the law will neither permit a parent to force a daughter into a marriage against her wish, nor prevent her forming one according to her own inclinations and contrary to his. But as a mother a woman is still the most powerless of human beings; she has

no rights at all, as such. The children have claims on her as their mother. She brings them into the world with pain, she must nurse them, and on her their whole care and charge is thrown while they are in the first weak and helpless condition of their being. But, once she has done for them what nobody else can do, all her claim to them ceases. They belong entirely to their father; or, if the father be dead, to his father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or friend, especially if the religion he "adopted" at the font, when he was an infant of a week old, is not the religion which she professes and would wish to teach them, and if it can be "presumed" that he desired they should be taught his creed.

This is surely one of the wrongs of women which most sorely need redress; and certain it is that, if women had anything to do with making the law, it would not long remain so.—*June 10, 1871.*



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BLACK & WHITE SLAVES.

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BLACK AND WHITE SLAVES.

MR HORACE GREELEY'S sentiments regarding the woman question are, of course, eagerly discussed by friends and foes during the present struggle for the Presidency of the American Republic. All his past utterances on the subject have been carefully collected and compared, and a balance struck between them—for they are not altogether consistent. Among the strangest of these is one on the hopelessness of attempting female emancipation. Whenever, he is reported to have said, Providence intends a wrong to be redressed, the relief is obtained by armed revolution. Wherever armed revolution is in the nature of things impossible, as in this case, it is a sign that the wrong is not remediable, and that its existence is in accordance with the designs of Providence. Some notion of this sort has been suffered to influence public opinion with regard to the claims of oppressed nationalities on extraneous assistance. It is held that a nation which cannot free itself from the grasp of another is not worthy of freedom. The sentiment is not generous, but something may be said for it, and it is certainly convenient. Nothing of the kind, however, can possibly be true of oppressed classes within a nation, such as serfs, slaves, and women. Their emancipation must clearly proceed from those above them, seeing that the conditions of oppression under which they labour render the mass of them unable to see their way to freedom and prevent the possibility of their taking active measures to obtain it. When Mr Greeley mentioned armed revolution as

the only means of redress permitted to the oppressed by a Providential government of the world, he surely forgot that the abolition of serfdom throughout Europe generally proceeded from the action of the classes above the serfs, that this was especially the case recently in Russia, and that the emancipation of the negro slaves in the English colonies was entirely the work of a comparatively small number of philanthropic Englishmen.

The parallel between the agitation in favour of that great act of justice and the present movement in support of female emancipation is much closer than might at first sight be supposed. The controversy regarding the lawfulness and social advantages of negro slavery is now much forgotten; but as the arguments of bigotry and self-interest are alike, whatever the subject matter may be, it will not be amiss at the present moment to recall a few which were thought very conclusive in their day, but which the narrowest Conservative would now be ashamed to repeat, and to show how closely they have been revived to check the attempt at improving the condition of women.

One was the alleged contentment of the slaves. Now human nature is so constituted that a minimum of happiness will, by force of habit, appear sufficient to an individual who has known no better condition. When to this natural peculiarity is added early training, and the unceasing inculcation by authority of the duty of contentment, it is not surprising that a good imitation of the quality is produced; but it never lasts when the opportunity of a happier existence is afforded. Thus many women are contented because they have no means of judging how better treatment would affect them, and because early education and theological figments blind them to the real evils of their lot.

Another argument was that irresponsible power in the hands of the superior is not dangerous to the inferior, since a man is sure to have a regard to the safety of

his own property. This statement, as it regarded the slave, was abundantly contradicted by fact. A slave-owner in a passion did not always stop to calculate the money-value of the slave whom he tortured to death, neither did this principle prevent his "working him up," that is, making him labour to the point of exhaustion and death, rather than keep him in old age. Something closely resembling these proceedings may be seen every day in this country in the case of working-men's wives; and, granting that extreme bodily ill-usage is rare, especially in the upper classes, who can say that the enormous power legally possessed by men over women is always used in the interest of, and to promote the welfare of, the latter? Does not the ownership which is supposed to produce so much fine feeling often mean nothing more than the power of interfering in every way with the action of the owned, repressing her best faculties, and condemning her to a life of forced inaction, or to a prescribed routine of uncongenial occupations?

But the most favourite argument against abolition was that slaves were unfit for freedom on account of their lack of certain virtues necessary to independence; and this was a plea that gave abolitionists a good deal of trouble, as it was most used, not by those truculent advocates of slavery, who supported the system *coute qui coute*, from interested motives or natural brutality, but was brought forward by persons who had the welfare of their fellow creatures at heart. The late Lord Derby, then Colonial Secretary, noticed this argument in the speech with which, on the 14th of May, 1833, he opened the debate on the Government measure for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies. "We are told," he said, "that the slaves, at the present moment, are unfitted for the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom; . . . that they have no forethought, no discretion; and that, in short, they would be totally ruined were you to throw them loose upon the world." These considerations he disposed of as follows: "It is slavery which prevents

them from exercising the virtues of foresight and prudence; it is slavery which leaves them nothing to labour for; it is slavery which takes away from them all the incentives to industrious labour, which debars them from all the ties of social intercourse; and then you declare that they are ignorant of the duties of social life—that they have no foresight, no industry, no prudence, no discretion, and, therefore, they must continue in a state of slavery.” In a style precisely similar to these strictures on the character of the slaves, the enemies of female progress point to certain faults which they consider a perpetual bar to any improvement in the condition of women, want of independence of thought and judgment, want of candour and of moral courage, want of business-like habits and promptitude of decision, and, in short, a hundred other failings of the same nature, which are obviously the result of the very state of things the objectors wish to perpetuate.

The parallel between the struggle for the abolition of slavery and that for the emancipation of women holds good in some other points. It was said in 1833 that, though the power of parting the slave mother and child was the undoubted right of the slave-owner, common humanity would so generally prevent its exercise that the clamours of abolitionists on this subject were mere outbursts of sentimental exaggeration. Practically, common humanity did not interfere to prevent this iniquity, and it does not seem to act with greater vigour in the analogous cases to which we can point in the present day.

Again, the friends of the negroes had to make their way through social persecutions and misrepresentations, which are reproduced, in no slight measure, to the annoyance of the supporters of the cause of female advancement. All sorts of terms of abuse, from “negro-worshippers” to incendiaries, were applied to all those who ventured during the latter days of slavery to hint that a black skin did not deprive a man of his natural right to freedom. So now the friends of woman are

accused of recklessly undermining her true happiness and usefulness, and altogether altering her position in the economy of nature, because they endeavour to secure her personal safety, her property, and her equal right with the father to the custody of her children, and because they would substantiate her claim to admission to all professions for which she shows an aptitude.

But brighter times are approaching, and if woman's cause cannot abide Mr Horace Greeley's singular test, it has the same machinery to support it as that which was successful in bringing the sorrows of the negro to a happy termination. The slave, powerless to help himself, too completely crushed even to seek deliverance, found friends among the finest minds in England: woman is not so helpless or so ignorant, but she must yet lean for help and support in a struggle which still promises to be severe, on the men who, overcoming the natural prejudices of their sex at the call of justice and mercy, have not hesitated to cast in their lot with those who have no claim but that of necessity on their generous assistance. If they who obtained liberty for the negroes still live in the hearts of all who love fair dealings between man and man, the names of those who now plead the cause of women in Parliament, and who support it in the press, will not be forgotten. The friends of liberty all over the world reverence the names of Clarkson, Macaulay, and Fowell Buxton; the nobler subjects of the greater emancipation will cherish in as grateful remembrance the names of such men as John Stuart Mill, Henry Fawcett, Russell Gurney, Sir John Coleridge and others who have afforded them help in their time of need.

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REASONS

FOR AND AGAINST THE

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

BY

✓ MRS. BODICHON.

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REASONS

FOR AND AGAINST

THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

THAT a respectable, orderly, independent body in the State should have no voice, and no influence recognised by the law, in the election of the representatives of the people, while they are otherwise acknowledged as responsible citizens, are eligible for many public offices, and required to pay all taxes, is an anomaly which seems to require some explanation. Many people are unable to conceive that women can care about voting. That some women do care, has been proved by the Petitions presented to Parliament. I shall try to show why some care—and why those who do not, ought to be made to care.

There are now a very considerable number of open-minded, unprejudiced people, who see no particular reason why women should not have votes, if they want them; but, they ask, what would be the good of it? What is there that women want which male legislators are not willing to give? And here let me say at the outset, that the advocates of this measure are very far from accusing men of deliberate unfairness to women. It is not as a means of extorting justice from unwilling legislators that the franchise is claimed for women. In

so far as the claim is made with any special reference to class interests at all, it is simply on the general ground that under a representative government, any class which is not represented is likely to be neglected. Proverbially, what is out of sight is out of mind; and the theory that women, as such, are bound to keep out of sight, finds its most emphatic expression in the denial of the right to vote. The direct results are probably less injurious than those which are indirect; but that a want of due consideration for the interests of women is apparent in our legislation, could very easily be shown. To give evidence in detail would be a long and invidious task. I will mention one instance only, that of the educational endowments all over the country. Very few people would now maintain that the education of boys is more important to the State than that of girls. But as a matter of fact, girls have but a very small share in educational endowments. Many of the old foundations have been reformed by Parliament, but the desirableness of providing with equal care for girls and boys has very seldom been recognised. In the administration of charities generally, the same tendency prevails to postpone the claims of women to those of men.

Among instances of hardship traceable directly to exclusion from the franchise and to no other cause, may be mentioned the unwillingness of landlords to accept women as tenants. Two large farmers in Suffolk inform me that this is not an uncommon case. They mention one estate on which seven widows have been ejected, who, if they had had votes, would have been continued as tenants.

The case of women farmers is stronger, but not much stronger, than that of women who, as heads of a business

or a household, fulfil the duties of a man in the same position. Their task is often a hard one, and everything which helps to sustain their self-respect, and to give them consideration and importance in the eyes of others, is likely to lessen their difficulties and make them happier and stronger for the battle of life. The very fact that, though householders and taxpayers, they have not equal privileges with male householders and taxpayers, is in itself a *deconsideration*, which seems to me invidious and useless. It casts a kind of slur on the value of their opinions; and I may remark in passing, that what is treated as of no value is apt to grow valueless. Citizenship is an honour, and not to have the full rights of a citizen is a want of honour. Obvious it may not be, but by a subtle and sure process, those who without their own consent and without sufficient reason are debarred from full participation in the rights and duties of a citizen, lose more or less of social consideration and esteem.

These arguments, founded on considerations of justice and mercy to a large and important and increasing class, might in a civilised country, and in the absence of strong reasons to the contrary, be deemed amply sufficient to justify the measure proposed. There remain to be considered those aspects of the question which affect the general community. And among all the reasons for giving women votes, the one which appears to me the strongest, is that of the influence it might be expected to have in increasing public spirit. Patriotism, a healthy, lively, intelligent interest in everything which concerns the nation to which we belong, and an unselfish devotedness to the public service,—these are the qualities which make a people great and happy; these are the

virtues which ought to be most sedulously cultivated in all classes of the community. And I know no better means, at this present time, of counteracting the tendency to prefer narrow private ends to the public good, than this of giving to all women, duly qualified, a direct and conscious participation in political affairs. Give some women votes, and it will tend to make all women think seriously of the concerns of the nation at large, and their interest having once been fairly roused, they will take pains, by reading and by consultation with persons better informed than themselves, to form sound opinions. As it is, women of the middle class occupy themselves but little with anything beyond their own family circle. They do not consider it any concern of theirs, if poor men and women are ill-nursed in the workhouse infirmaries, and poor children ill-taught in workhouse schools. If the roads are bad, the drains neglected, the water poisoned, they think it is all very wrong, but it does not occur to them that it is their duty to get it put right. These farmer-women and business-women have honest, sensible minds and much practical experience, but they do not bring their good sense to bear upon public affairs, because they think it is men's business, not theirs, to look after such things. It is this belief—so narrowing and deadening in its influence—that the exercise of the franchise would tend to dissipate. The mere fact of being called upon to enforce an opinion by a vote, would have an immediate effect in awakening a healthy sense of responsibility. As far as experience goes, the power women have had as householders to vote at the School Board Elections has been an unmixed good. It has certainly drawn public attention to the education of girls, and, in many places, has awakened an ardent

interest in new subjects among women themselves, by the simple fact that they had had to discuss the different opinions of the candidates. There is no reason why these women should not take an active interest in all the social questions—education, public health, prison discipline, the poor laws, and the rest—which occupy Parliament, and they would be much more likely to do so, if they felt that they had importance in the eyes of members of Parliament, and could claim a hearing for their opinions.

Besides these women of business, there are ladies of property, whose more active participation in public affairs would be beneficial both to themselves and the community generally. The want of stimulus to energetic action is much felt by women of the higher classes. It is agreed that they ought not to be idle, but what they ought to do is not so clear. Reading, music and drawing, needlework, and charity are their usual employments. Reading, without a purpose, does not come to much. Music and drawing, and needlework, are most commonly regarded as amusements intended to fill up time. We have left, as the serious duty of independent and unmarried women, the care of the poor in all its branches, including visiting the sick and the aged, and ministering to their wants, looking after the schools, and in every possible way giving help wherever help is needed. Now education, the relief of the destitute, and the health of the people, are among the most important and difficult matters which occupy the minds of statesmen, and if it is admitted that women of leisure and culture are bound to contribute their part towards the solution of these great questions, it is evident that every means of making their co-operation enlightened and vigorous should be

sought for. They have special opportunities of observing the operation of many of the laws. They know, for example, for they see before their eyes, the practical working of the law of settlement—of the laws relating to the dwellings of the poor—and many others, and the experience which peculiarly qualifies them to form a judgment on these matters ought not to be thrown away. The fact of the election of a certain number of ladies to the School Boards has done away with much of the prejudice against women being of any use out of their families and parishes. If it becomes customary to allow them to be useful to their towns, we may expect to see them, without unkind criticism, allowed to be useful to counties, even to the country at large. We all know that we have already a goodly body of rich, influential working-women, whose opinions on the social and political questions of the day are well worth listening to. In almost every parish there are, happily for England, such women. Now everything should be done to give these valuable members of the community a solid social standing. If they are wanted—and there can be no doubt that they are—in all departments of social work, their position in the work should be as dignified and honourable as it is possible to make it. Rich unmarried women have many opportunities of benefiting the community, which are not within reach of a married woman, absorbed by the care of her husband and children. Everything, I say again, should be done to encourage this most important and increasing class to take their place in the army of workers for the common good, and all the forces we can bring to bear for this end are of incalculable value. For by bringing women into hearty co-operation with men, we gain the benefit not

only of their work, but of their intelligent sympathy. Public spirit is like fire: a feeble spark of it may be fanned into a flame, or it may very easily be put out. And the result of teaching women that they have nothing to do with politics, is that their influence goes towards extinguishing the unselfish interest—never too strong—which men are disposed to take in public affairs.

Let each member of the House of Commons consider, in a spirit of true scientific enquiry, all the properly qualified women of his acquaintance, and he will see no reason why the single ladies and the widows among his own family and friends should not form as sensible opinions on the merits of candidates as the voters who returned him to Parliament. When we find among the disfranchised such names as those of Mrs. Somerville, Harriet Martineau, Lady Burdett Coutts, Florence Nightingale, Mary Carpenter, Lousia Twining, Emily Davies, and many others scarcely inferior to those in intellectual and moral worth, we cannot but desire, for the elevation and dignity of the Parliamentary system, to add them to the number of electors.*

It need scarcely be pointed out that the measure has nothing of a party character. We have precedents under two very different governments, those of Austria and Sweden, for something very similar to what is now proposed. Now, let us calmly consider all the arguments we have heard against giving the franchise to women.

Among these, the first and commonest is—Women do not want votes. Certainly that is a capital reason

* At Pontefract 199 men out of 1236 voters, or nearly one-sixth, were unable to read and had to be assisted in filling up the ballot paper—and yet women are rejected on the ground of incompetency.

why women should not have votes thrust upon them. There are many men who do not care to use their votes, and there is no law compelling them to vote. The statement, however, that women do not wish to vote, is a mere assertion, and may be met by a counter-assertion. Some women do want votes, which the petitions signed, and now in course of signature, go very largely to prove.* Some women manifestly do; others, let it be admitted, do not. It is impossible to say positively which side has the majority, unless we could poll all the women in question; or, in other words, without resorting to the very measure which is under discussion. Make voting possible, and we shall see how many care to avail themselves of the privilege.

But, it is said, women have other duties. The function of women is different to that of men, and their function is not politics. It is very true that women have other duties—many and various. But so have men. No citizen lives for his citizen duties only. He is a professional man, a tradesman, a family man, a club man, a thousand things as well as a voter. Of course these occupations sometimes interfere with a man's duties as a citizen, and when he cannot vote, he cannot. So with women; when they cannot vote, they cannot.

The proposition we are discussing, practically concerns only single women and widows who have freeholds, or other county qualifications, and for boroughs, all those who occupy, as owners or tenants, any dwelling house within the borough, or a lodging of the value of £10 a year. Among these there are surely a great number whose time is not fully occupied, not even so

* The number of signatures in 1871 were 186,976. Last Session 355,806 signatures were presented, of which about one-half were women.

much as that of men. Their duties in sick-rooms and in caring for children, leave them a sufficient margin of leisure for reading newspapers, and studying the *pros* and *cons* of political and social questions. No one can mean seriously to affirm that widows and unmarried women would find the mere act of voting once in several years arduous. One day, say once in three years, might surely be spared from domestic duties. If it is urged that it is not the time spent in voting that is in question, but the thought and the attention which are necessary for forming political opinions, I reply that women of the class we are speaking of, have, as a rule, more time for thought than men, their duties being of a less engrossing character, and they ought to bestow a considerable amount of thought and attention on the questions which occupy the Legislature. Social matters occupy every day a larger space in the deliberations of Parliament, and on many of these questions women are led to think and to judge in the fulfilment of those duties which, as a matter of course, devolve upon them in the ordinary business of English life. And however important the duties of home may be, we must bear in mind that a woman's duties do not end there. She is a daughter, a sister, the mistress of a household; she ought to be, in the broadest sense of the word, a neighbour, both to her equals and to the poor. These are her obvious and undeniable duties, and within the limits of her admitted functions; I should think it desirable to add to them—duties to her parish and to the State. A woman who is valuable in all the relations of life, a woman of a large nature, will be more perfect in her domestic capacity, and not less.

If we contemplate women in the past, and in differ-

ent countries, we find them acting, in addition to their domestic part, all sorts of different rôles. What was their rôle among the Jews and the Romans? What was it in the early Christian churches? What is it amongst the Quakers? What is it in the colliery districts,—at the court of Victoria? We can conjure up thousands of pictures of women performing different functions under varying conditions. They have done and do, all sorts of work in all sorts of ways. Is there anything in the past history of the world which justifies the assertion that they must and will do certain things in the future, and will not and cannot do certain other things? I do not think there is.

But to return to my argument, and supposing that there were enough data in the past to enable us to predict that women will never take sufficient interest in politics to induce even widows and single women to wish to vote once in several years, should we be justified in realising our own prediction, and forbidding by law what we declare to be contrary to nature? If any one believes, as the result of observation and experience, that it is not a womanly function to vote, I respect such belief, and answer—only the future can prove. But what I do not respect, is the strange want of toleration which says—‘You shall not do this or that.’ We do not want to compel women to act; we only wish to see them free to exercise or not, according as they themselves desire, political and other functions.

The argument that ‘women are ignorant of politics,’ would have great force if it could be shown that the mass of the existing voters are thoroughly well informed on political subjects, or even much better informed than the persons to whom it is proposed to give votes.

Granted that women are ignorant of politics, so are many male householders. Their ideas are not always clear on political questions, and would probably be even more confused if they had not votes. No mass of human beings will or can undertake the task of forming opinions on matters over which they have no control, and on which they have no practical decision to make. It would by most persons be considered waste of time. When women have votes, they will read with closer attention than heretofore the daily histories of our times, and will converse with each other and with their fathers and brothers about social and political questions. They will become interested in a wider circle of ideas, and where they now think and feel somewhat vaguely, they will form definite and decided opinions.

Among the women who are disqualified for voting by the legal disability of sex, there is a large number of the educated class. We shall know the exact number of women possessing the household and property qualifications, when the return ordered by Parliament has been made. In the meantime, the following calculation is suggestive. In the ‘London Court Guide,’ which of course includes no houses below the value of £10 a year, the number of householders whose names begin with A is 1149. Of these, 205, that is more than one-sixth, are women, all of whom are either unmarried or widows.*

The fear entertained by some persons that family dissension would result from encouraging women to form political opinions, might be urged with equal force

* The returns of the municipal voters is a fair indication. There were 11,189,657 men in England and Wales represented by 1,250,019 voters in boroughs and cities, and 801,109 voters in counties; in all, 2,051,128. There were 11,663,705 women represented by 108,838 municipal votes. Taking the proportion of women to men who had the municipal vote, there would be altogether about 170,000 women who would obtain the franchise by the Bill.

against their having any opinions on any subject at all. Differences on religious subjects are still more apt to rouse the passions and create disunion than political differences. As for opinions causing disunions, let it be remembered that what is a possible cause of disunion is also a possible cause of deeply-founded union. The more rational women become, the more real union there will be in families, for nothing separates so much as unreasonableness and frivolity. It will be said, perhaps, that contrary opinions may be held by the different members of a family without bringing on quarrels, so long as they are kept to the region of theory, and no attempt is made to carry them out publicly in action. But religious differences must be shown publicly. A woman who determines upon changing her religion—say to go over from Protestantism to Romanism—proclaims her difference from her family in a public and often a very distressing manner. But no one has yet proposed to make it illegal for a woman to change her religion. After all—is it essential that brothers and sisters and cousins shall all vote on the same side?

An assertion often made, that women would lose the good influence which they now exert indirectly on public affairs if they had votes, seems to require proof. First of all, it is necessary to prove that women have this indirect influence,—then that it is good,—then that the indirect good influence would be lost if they had direct influence,—then that the indirect influence which they would lose is better than the direct influence they would gain. From my own observation I should say, that the women who have gained by their wisdom and earnestness a good indirect influence, would not lose that influence if they had votes. And I see no neces-

sary connection between goodness and indirectness. On the contrary, I believe that the great thing women want is to be more direct and straightforward in thought, word, and deed. I think the educational advantage of citizenship to women would be so great, that I feel inclined to run the risk of sacrificing the subtle indirect influence, to a wholesome feeling of responsibility, which would, I think, make women give their opinions less rashly and more conscientiously than at present on political subjects.


It was no doubt true, that in many places polling was carried on in a turbulent and disorderly manner. All arguments against women voting, based on this former state of things are now of no force, the ballot has mended this evil; and elections for members of Parliament will in future be as orderly, we believe, as elections for the School Board. Those opponents of women's suffrage who have had no objection to found their opposition upon but the unfitness of the polling booth for women, are now of course no longer opponents.

There are certain other difficulties sometimes vaguely brought forward by the unreflecting, which I shall not attempt to discuss. Such, for example, is the argument that as voters ought to be independent, and as married women are liable to be influenced by their husbands, therefore unmarried women and widows ought not to vote. Or again, that many ladies canvass, and canvassing by ladies is a very objectionable practice, therefore, it is inadmissible that women should have any direct and open method of influencing elections. Into such objections it is not necessary here to enter.


Nor is it needful to discuss the extreme logical consequences which may be obtained by pressing to an

undue length the arguments used in favour of permitting women to exercise the suffrage. The question under consideration is, not whether women ought logically to be members of Parliament, but whether, under existing circumstances, it is for the good of the State that women, who perform most of the duties, and enjoy nearly all the rights of citizenship, should be by special enactment disabled from exercising the additional privilege of taking part in the election of the representatives of the people. It is a question of expediency, to be discussed calmly, without passion or prejudice.

In England, the extension proposed would interfere with no vested interests. It would involve no change in the principles on which our Government is based, but would rather make our Constitution more consistent with itself. Conservatives have a right to claim it as a Conservative measure. Liberals are bound to ask for it as a necessary part of radical reform. There is no reason for identifying it with any class or party in the State, and it is, in fact, impossible to predict what influence it might have on party politics. The question is simply of a special legal disability, which must, sooner or later, be removed.



A WOMAN'S VOICE.



I wonder, Mr. Editor,
Why I can't have a vote,
And I will not be contented
Till I've found the reason out.



I am a working woman,
My voting half is dead;
I hold a house, and want to know
Why I can't vote instead.

I pay my rates in person,
Under protest, tho', 'tis true,
But I pay them, and am qualified
To vote as well as you.

I like my neighbour very well,
But still I like what's fair,
And paying a rate for him to vote,
Is neither fair nor square.

My "compound" rate was heavy enough,
But this qualification's worse;
If the franchise will not have my voice,
Let it do without My Purse.

FROM THE "LEEDS EXPRESS."

The Earl of Morley presented petitions in favour of female suffrage from certain inhabitants of Manchester.
 Lord Russell presented a petition from Canterbury for removal of electoral disabilities of women; and petitions from Bourton-on-the-Hill, Meriton in the Marsh, and persons residing in the neighbourhood of the latter place.

**PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN SUFFRAGE
 PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT DURING THE
 SESSION OF 1872.**

HOUSE OF LORDS.

February 29th.

Lord CLINTON presented a petition from Lawrencekirk, Kincardineshire, praying for the removal of electoral disabilities of women.

March 4th.

Lord AIRLIE presented a petition from certain inhabitants of the burgh of St. Andrew, praying that the right of voting for members of Parliament may be conferred on women.

March 14th.

The Earl of AIRLIE presented a petition from Forfar, in favour of conferring upon women the right to vote for members of Parliament.

March 22nd.

The Earl of AIRLIE presented a petition from the Executive Committee of the Haddington Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, praying that the Parliamentary franchise may be conferred on women.

April 11th.

The Earl of ROSEBURY presented a petition from the inhabitants of Windy Nook, near Gateshead, Durham, in favour of an extension of the political franchise to women.

April 16th.

Lord RAVENSWORTH presented a petition from South Shields, in favour of women's suffrage.

April 18th.

The Earl of DUFFERIN presented a petition from a public meeting of the inhabitants of Stalybridge, and also one from a public meeting at Cumbernauld, Dumbartonshire, to remove the electoral disabilities of women.

April 19th.

The Earl of DUCIE presented a petition from women householders and ratepayers of Bath, in favour of female suffrage.

April 24th.

The Earl of MORLEY presented petitions in favour of female suffrage from certain inhabitants of Manchester.

Lord ROMILLY presented a petition from Canterbury for removal of electoral disabilities of women ; and petitions from Bourton-on-the-Hill, Moreton-in-the-Marsh, and persons residing in London and the neighbourhood to the same effect.

April 26th.

Lord LYTTELTON presented a petition from Stourbridge in favour of removing the electoral disabilities of women, and from Worcester to the same effect.

April 29th.

Lord ROMILLY presented a petition from some of the inhabitants of Putney and Wandsworth in favour of removal of electoral disabilities of women ; from some of the inhabitants of Rugby, Dinas-y-Mowddy, Merionethshire, Northampton, Norwich, and Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, to the same effect.

April 30th.

Lord ROMILLY presented petitions from inhabitants of Canterbury, Portsmouth, Greenwich, Lambeth, Chelsea, Bognor and North and South Bersted, and Stow-on-the-wold, Gloucestershire, to remove the electoral disabilities of women.

May 2nd.

The Earl of AIRLIE presented a petition from the inhabitants of New Castleton, Roxburghshire, praying that the Parliamentary franchise may be conferred on women.

May 4th.

The Earl of SHAFESBURY presented petitions in favour of female suffrage from Chelsea, Lambeth, Newington Causeway, and Brighton.

June 7th.

The Earl of SHAFESBURY presented a petition for women's suffrage from North Shields.

June 11th.

The Archbishop of YORK presented petitions from Middlesborough against the exclusion of women from voting for Members of Parliament.

June 13th.

The Bishop of MANCHESTER presented a petition from 106 inhabitants of Ardwick, Manchester, praying for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women.

[The above is not a complete list of petitions.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The petitions marked ¶ have the addresses of some or all of the petitioners affixed.

The petitions marked § are signed officially.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—AGAINST.

Mar. 13	§Dundee, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of ...	Mr. Armitstead	Seal	1
April 8	§Arbroath, Magistrates and Town Council of ...	Mr. Baxter	...	Seal 1
May 1	§Inverness, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of, J. Mackenzie, provost ...	Mr. Mackintosh		1
Total number of Petitions 2—Signatures				3

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—IN FAVOUR.

Feb. 6	§Northampton, Meeting at ; M. P. Mansfield, chairman	Mr. Gilpin	.....	Seal
" 8	§Warrington, Meeting at ; Peter Rylands, chairman	Mr. Rylands	...	1
" 12	§Rotherham, Meeting at ; J. M. Habersham, chairman...	Mr. Beaumont...		1
" 12	§Oban, Meeting at	Mr. Craufurd	...	1
" 12	§Bristol, Meeting at ; Kate Amberley, president ...	Mr. Morley	...	1
" 12	§Galston, Meeting at ; Andrew Black, chairman ...	Mr. McLaren	...	1
" 12	§Edinburgh, Meeting at ; R. Anstruther, chairman	Mr. Miller	...	1
" 12	§Bury, Meeting at ; R. H. Alcock, chairman	Mr. Philips	...	1
" 12	§Hawick, Meeting at ; Stephen Anderson, chairman	Mr. Trevelyan...		1
" 12	§New Cumnock, Meeting at ; David Brown, chairman	Sir David Wedderburn	...	1
" 12	§Mauchline, Meeting at ; William Stevens, chairman	"		1
" 12	§Catrine, Meeting at ; David Greenhill, chairman	"		1
" 12	§Kilbirnie, Meeting at ; Alexander Lamberton, chairman	"		1
" 13	§Stafford, Meeting at ; William Lloyd, chairman	Mr. Salt	...	1
" 13	§Leicester, Meeting at ; Archibald Forbes Macdonald, chairman	Mr. Taylor	...	1

Feb. 14	†Manchester (St. James's Ward)	Mr. Birley...	1,202
" 14	†Salford (Greengate Ward)	Mr. Charley	654
" 14	§Pontefract, Meeting at; Edward Potter, chairman	Mr. Childers	1
" 15	†Saint Andrews, Meeting at; A. Bethune, chairman	Sir Robert Anstruther	1
" 15	†Manchester (Exchange Ward)...	Sir Thos. Bazley	352
" 15	†Manchester (Collegiate Church Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	812
" 15	†Stirling	Mr. Campbell	1,006
" 15	Stromness (Orkney)...	Mr. Dundas	228
" 15	§Stromness(Orkney), Meeting at; John Stanger, chairman	"	1
" 15	Stromness, Members of the Town Council	"	9
" 15	§Ardrossan, Meeting at; Alex. Cross, chairman	Mr. Finnie	1
" 15	§Dalry, Meeting at; William Burt, chairman	"	1
" 15	†Dublin, Meeting at	Mr. Pim	254
" 15	†Blackrock	"	107
" 16	Manchester (St. John's Ward)	Mr. Jacob Bright	1,548
" 16	†Manchester (St. Ann's Ward)	"	244
" 16	§Stirling, Meeting at; Thomas Lowe, chairman	Mr. Campbell	1
" 19	§Newcastle-on-Tyne, Meeting at; T. Bayfield, chairman	Mr. Cowen	1
" 19	†Maidenhead	Mr. Walter	16
" 20	§Wakefield, Meeting at; Goodwyn Barmby, chairman	Mr. S. Beaumont	1
" 20	†Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Birley	561
" 20	†Glasgow	Mr. Dalglish	3,266
" 21	†Manchester (Cheetham Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	749
" 21	†Salford (St. Matthias Ward)	Mr. Cawley	650
" 21	§Masham, Meeting at; T. Penistone, chairman	Colonel Duncombe	1
" 21	§Northallerton, Meeting at; Jno. Manners, chairman	"	1
" 21	Coniston, Inhabitants of	Col. Wilson Patten	88
" 21	§Oldham, Meeting at; Isaiah Lee, chairman	Mr. Platt	2
" 22	†Paisley, Inhabitants of	Mr. Crum-Ewing	1,613
" 22	§Falmouth, Meeting at; Howard Fox, chairman	Mr. Robt. Fowler	1
" 22	R. Macdonell	Colonel Sykes	1
" 22	May M'Combie	"	1
" 22	Margaret Anderson	"	1
" 22	Euphemia Mowatt	"	1
" 23	Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Birley	563
" 23	Inverary, Inhabitants of	Mr. Crauford	43
" 23	§Hampstead, Meeting at; W. D. Christie, chairman	Lord G. Hamilton	1
" 23	§Portpatrick, Meeting at; A. Urquhart, chairman	Sir John Hay	1
" 23	Portpatrick, Inhabitants of	"	134

Feb. 23	Longtown, Meeting at; A. Gibson, chairman	Mr. C. Howard	1
" 26	†Manchester (St. George's Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	650
" 26	†Keith, Inhabitants of	Mr. Robert Duff	203
" 28	Salford (St. Matthias)	Mr. Cawley	673
" 28	†Dumfries, Inhabitants of	Mr. Jardine	1,040
" 28	§Sanquhar, Meeting at; Wm. Kay, chairman	"	1
" 28	Dumfries, Meeting at; Thomas Shortridge, chairman	Mr. Jardine	1
" 28	§Penpont, Meeting at; Adam Black, chairman	Major Walker	1
" 28	§Langholm, Meeting at; Robert Black and another	"	2
" 28	†Mousewald, Inhabitants of	"	94
" 29	Corston,	Mr. Gore Langton	152
" 29	Salford,	"	102
Mar. 1	†Saint Andrew's,	Mr. Ellice	203
" 1	§Glenluce, Meeting at; Bryce F. Wood, chairman	Sir John Hay	1
" 4	§Manchester, Meeting at; S. A. Steinthal, chairman	Mr. Jacob Bright	1
" 4	§Forfar, Meeting at; R. Stevenson, chairman	Mr. Carnegie	1
" 4	§Laurencekirk, Meeting at; Patrick Dickson	Mr. Nicol	1
" 5	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	Mr. Jacob Bright	1,026
" 5	Manchester (Cheetham Ward)	"	704
" 5	§Stonehaven, Meeting at; John Thomson, chairman	Mr. Nicol	1
" 6	Loanhead, Inhabitants of	Sir A. Maitland	217
" 6	†Dalkeith,	"	182
" 7	§Perth, Meeting at; W. Knowles, chairman	Mr. Kinnaird	1
" 8	†Manchester (St. George's Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	1,066
" 8	†Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Birley	1,140
" 8	Clifton, Inhabitants of	Mr. Morley	209
" 11	§Coventry, Meeting at; Thomas Wyles, president	Mr. Eaton	1
" 11	†Glasgow, Inhabitants of	Mr. Graham	3,465
" 11	†Stoke Bishop,	Mr. K. Hodgson	45
" 11	†Clifton,	"	44
" 11	Shirehampton,	"	135
" 11	†Torquay,	Dr. Lush	50
" 11	Holywood,	Mr. M'Laren	85
" 12	§Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Municipal Corporation of	Mr. Headlam	Seal 1
" 12	§Hartlepool,	Mr. Jackson	Seal
" 12	§Huddersfield, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of under their Corporate Common Seal	Mr. Leatham	Seal
" 13	§Malton, Meeting at; J. Craven, chairman	Mr. C. Fitzwilliam	1
" 13	§Banbury, Meeting at; W. Banton, chairman	Mr. Samuelson	1

Mar. 13	Newton SaintLoe, Inhabitants of	Sir William Tite	105
" 14	§ Burntisland, Meeting at ; David Low, chairman ...	Mr. Aytoun ...	1
" 14	§ Wakefield, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of, in Council assembled ...	Mr. S. Beaumont Seal	
" 14	Kirkwall, Meeting at ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	69
" 14	E. C. Wolstenholme ...		1
" 14	Elizabeth Cobb ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	1
" 14	¶ Leeds, Female Inhabitants of	Mr. Carter ...	48
" 14	Salford (St. Matthias and Trinity Wards) ...	Mr. Cawley ...	1,017
" 14	§ Salford, Corporation of ...	" ...	Seal 1
" 14	§ Bootle-cum-Linacre, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of	Mr. Cross ...	Seal 2
" 14	§ Truro, Meeting at ; W. H. Jenkins, chairman ...	Sir F. Williams	1
" 14	§ Helston, Meeting at ; James Hy. Hoskin, chairman	Mr. A. Young...	1
" 15	¶ Merthyr, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Fothergill...	133
" 15	§ Merthyr Tydfil, Meeting at ; T. D. Matthias, chairman	Mr. Richard ...	1
" 15	§ Cardiff, Meeting at ; John Coralis, chairman ...	" ...	1
" 15	Neath and Llanelly, Inhabitants of ...	" ...	20
" 15	§ Peterborough, Meeting at ; B. Taylor, chairman...	Mr. Wells...	1
" 18	§ Dollar, Meeting at ; J. Duncan-son, chairman ...	Mr. Adam...	1
" 18	Manchester (St. George's Ward) and Town Council of ...	Sir Thos. Bazley	1,084
" 18	§ Stirling, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of ...	Mr. Campbell ...	Seal 1
" 18	§ Chipping Wycombe, Meeting at ; T. Gilbert, chairman ...	Mr. Carington ...	1
" 18	§ Rochdale, Meeting at ; W. T. Shawcross, Mayor, chairman ...	Mr. Thos. Potter	1
" 18	§ Dewsbury, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of ...	Mr. Serj. Simon	Seal 2
" 19	§ North Shields, Meeting at ; Mary Ann Hodgkin, president	Mr. W. Beaumont	1
" 19	§ Bristol, Meeting at (Women Burgesses of St. Paul's and St. James); Mary A. Estlin, president ...	Mr. K. Hodgson.	1
" 19	§ Liskeard, Meeting at ; Richard S. Raby, Mayor...	Mr. Horsman ...	1
" 19	Finsbury, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Lusk ...	1,012
" 19	§ Innerleithen, Meeting at ; A. Lennie, chairman...	Sir G. Montgomery	1
" 19	§ Kirkwall, Meeting at...	Mr. Pender ...	Seal 1
" 19	§ Tewkesbury, Meeting at ; T. Wilkinson, chairman ...	Mr. W. E. Price	Seal 1
" 19	§ Edinburgh, Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of ...	Mr. M'Laren ...	Seal 1

Mar. 20	Salford (Trinity Ward) ...	Mr. Cawley ...	1,127
" 20	North Berwick, Inhabitants of	Sir H. F. Davie...	99
" 20	Chelsea, ...	Sir Henry Hoare	1,185
" 21	¶ Tower Hamlets, ...	Mr. Ayrton ...	1,023
" 21	§ Arbroath, Meeting at ...	Mr. Baxter ...	1
" 21	§ Ledbury, Meeting at, P. R. Spencer, chairman ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	1
" 21	¶ Manchester (St. Michael's Ward) ...	"	1,047
" 21	¶ Manchester (St. Michael's Ward) ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	1,074
" 21	Stafford, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Salt ...	63
" 21	¶ Westminster, ...	Mr. Wm. Smith	1,716
" 22	¶ Bath, ...	Mr. A. Herbert	2,028
" 22	Harlech and Llanfair, ...	Mr. Holland ...	26
" 22	¶ Deal, ...	Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen ...	20
" 22	¶ Edinburgh, ...	Mr. M'Laren ...	2,031
" 22	§ Tower Hamlets, meeting at, B. Lucraft, chairman ...	Mr. Samuda ...	1
" 22	Samuel Courtauld, and others	Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson ...	25
" 22	§ Buckingham, Meeting at, John Small, chairman ...	Sir H. Verney ...	1
" 22	Peterborough, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Wells ...	1,272
" 25	§ Burntisland, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of, D. Jackson, Provost	Mr. Aytoun ...	1
" 25	¶ Leeds Women, Municipal voters of the North Ward ...	Mr. Carter ...	63
" 25	¶ Rothesay, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. C. Dalrymple	107
" 25	Haddington, ...	Sir H. F. Davie	232
" 25	Haddington, Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage ...	"	13
" 25	¶ Bolton, Inhabitants of ...	Colonel Gray ...	1,237
" 25	§ Newark, Corporation of ...	Mr. Hodgkinson	Seal 1
" 25	Maxwelltown, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Jardine ...	236
" 25	¶ Lambeth, ...	Sir J. Lawrence	1,335
" 25	§ Lambeth, Meeting at, George W. Murphy, chairman...	Mr. M'Arthur ...	1
" 25	§ Wick and Pultneytown Young Men's Improvement Association, G. M. Sutherland, president ...	Mr. M'Laren ...	1
" 25	§ Hawick, Meeting at ; John Nichol, chairman ...	Mr. Trevelyan...	1
" 25	Windy Nook, County Durham, Meeting at ...	Sir H. Williamson	1
" 25	Tinwald, Inhabitants of ...	" ...	67
" 26	¶ Dollar, ...	Mr. Adam ...	442
" 26	§ Bath, Meeting of Women Householders and Rate-payers ; A. G. Langton, president ...	Mr. D. Dalrymple	1
" 26	¶ Chelsea, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Eastwick ...	1,455
" 26	Galashiels, Meeting at ; Alex. Munro, chairman ...	Mr. Trevelyan...	1

Mar. 26	§Wrexham, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of ...	Mr. W. Williams	Seal 1
April 4	¶Leeds, Female Municipal Voters Holbeck Ward ...	Mr. Carter	150
" 4	Dunbar, Meeting at; William Purves, chairman ...	Sir F. Davie	1
" 4	§Falmouth, Mayor, Aldermen and others of ...	Mr. Eastwick	Seal 1
" 4	Peebles, Meeting at; Robert Todd, chairman ...	Sir George Montgomery	1
" 4	§Crieff, Meeting at; D. R. Williamson, chairman ...	Mr. Parker	1
" 4	John Giles and others ...	Mr. Seely	789
" 4	§Stockport, Meeting at; John Walthew, chairman ...	Mr. John Smith	1
" 5	§Stalybridge, Meeting at; J. F. Cheetham, chairman ...	Sir E. Buckley...	1
" 5	§Elgin, Meeting at; Alexander Russell, chairman ...	Mr. Grant Duff	1
" 5	¶Woolwich, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Gladstone	3,512
" 5	Lerwick, " ...	Mr. M'Laren	16
" 5	§Bristol, Meeting of Women Burgesses of St. Michael's and St. Augustine's Wards; Mary Ann Eulin, president ...	Mr. Morley	1
" 5	¶Bristol, Inhabitants of ...	"	1,013
" 5	§Cheltenham, Meeting at; A. M. Brown, chairman ...	Mr. H. Samuelson	1
" 5	Greenwich, Inhabitants of ...	Sir D. Salomons	1,105
" 5	Dalry, " ...	Sir David Wedderburn	48
" 8	Manchester (New Cross Ward)	Sir T. Bazley	1,036
" 8	Manchester (New Cross Ward)	"	1,035
" 8	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	"	1,046
" 8	W. T. Wood and others ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	3
" 8	Salford, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Charley	1,036
" 8	Salford " ...	"	1,131
" 8	§Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Meeting at; John Glover, chairman ...	Mr. Cowen	1
" 8	Chelsea, Meeting at ...	Mr. Eastwick	1
" 8	§South Shields, Meeting at; Edwd. Moore, chairman ...	Mr. Stevenson	1
" 8	§Beverley, Meeting at; William Lambert, chairman ...	Mr. Sykes	1
" 8	Edinburgh, Members of the Executive Committee ...	"	4
" 9	Frances Wood Smith ...	Mr. Adams	1
" 9	M. Cadogan ...	"	1
" 9	Maria Murray ...	"	1
" 9	Dollar, Members of Executive Committee ...	"	6
" 9	§Bramley, Meeting at; C. Mary Monckton, president ...	Mr. Baines	1
" 9	Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Birley	1,063
" 9	Manchester (St. George's Ward)	"	1,122

April 9	Manchester (Medlock-st. Ward)	Mr. Birley	1,056
" 9	§Dumbarton, Meeting at; John Kirkpatrick ...	Mr. P. Bouverie	1
" 9	Chelsea, Inhabitants of ...	Sir Charles Dilke	1,025
" 9	§Keith, Meeting at; W. Gillespie chairman ...	Mr. Grant Duff	1
" 9	Cumbernauld, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. A. Ewing	33
" 9	Alexander Henderson ...	"	1
" 9	Westminster, Inhabitants of ...	Capt. Grosvenor	1,450
" 9	Wilmslow, " ...	Mr. Legh	112
" 9	§Forres, Meeting at; Robt. Peat, chairman ...	Mr. Mackintosh	1
" 9	Forres... ..	"	93
" 9	§Nairn, Meeting at; C. B. Mackintosh, chairman ...	"	1
" 9	§Inverness, Meeting at; J. Mackenzie, M.D., chairman ...	"	1
" 9	§Chatham, meeting at; W. Kington, LL.D., chairman ...	Mr. W. Martin...	1
" 9	Silksworth, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Pease...	60
" 9	Rochdale, " ...	Mr. Thos. Potter	2,026
" 9	Berwickshire, " ...	Mr. Robertson...	61
" 9	Westruther, " ...	"	29
" 9	Dunse, " ...	"	63
" 9	Corby, " ...	Mr. Welby	78
" 10	Margaret Stewart ...	Mr. Adam	1
" 10	M. Herriot... ..	"	1
" 10	Keynsham, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. D. Dalrymple	125
" 10	Stroud, " ...	Mr. Dickinson...	201
" 10	¶Lambert, " ...	Mr. M'Arthur	2,072
" 10	¶Musselburgh, " ...	Mr. Macfie	110
" 10	Edinburgh, Meeting of Female Inhabitants; Mary Burton, president ...	Mr. M'Laren	1
" 10	Elizabeth A. Macqueen ...	"	1
" 10	Auchinlech, Meeting at; Wm. Andrews, chairman ...	Sir D. Wedderburn	1
" 11	§Montrose, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of ...	Mr. Baxter	Seal 1
" 11	§Middlesborough, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of ...	Mr. Bolckow	Seal 1
" 11	§Paisley, Meeting at; Thomas Coats, chairman ...	Mr. Crum-Ewing	1
" 11	¶Kirkcolumb, Inhabitants of ...	Lord Garlies	159
" 11	Stoneykirk, " ...	"	131
" 11	Newluce, " ...	"	91
" 11	§Whitby, Meeting at; Rev. J. Warnes, chairman ...	Mr. Gladstone...	1
" 11	Worcester, meeting at; James F. Airey, chairman ...	Mr. Laslett	1
" 11	¶Marylebone, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. H. Lewis	1,011
" 11	¶Marylebone, " ...	"	1,000
" 11	¶Marylebone, " ...	"	1,008
" 11	¶Castle Douglas, " ...	Mr. Maxwell	134
" 11	Ashton-under-Lyne, " ...	Mr. Mellor	2,080

April 11	Newcastleton, Inhabitants of...	Lord H. Scott ...	156
" 11	†Finsbury, " ...	Mr. Torrens ...	1,751
" 11	†Brighton, " ...	Mr. White ...	1,799
" 12	†Rotherham, " ...	Mr. H. Beaumont	122
" 12	Manchester (Medlock-st. Ward)	Mr. Birley ...	1,047
" 12	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	" ...	1,027
" 12	§Jedburgh, Meeting at; Wm. Elliot, provost, chairman	Sir H. Davie ...	1
" 12	Longhope, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Dundas ...	33
" 12	Stennis, Orkney, " ...	" ...	107
" 12	Sandwick, Orkney, " ...	" ...	10
" 12	Orphir, Orkney, " ...	" ...	28
" 12	†Metropolis, " ...	Mr. Eastwick ...	978
" 12	†Moss Side, Lancashire, " ...	Mr. A. Egerton .	90
" 12	Strachur, Ayrshire, " ...	Marquis of Lorne	90
" 12	Agnes Lillie	Mr. M'Laren ...	1
" 12	Agnes Lawrence	" ...	1
" 12	†Dublin, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Pim ...	549
" 12	§Ripley Local Board of Health...	Mr. R. Smith ...	Seal 1
" 12	Old Cumnock, Inhabitants of...	Sir D. Wedderburn ...	14
" 12	§Old Cumnock, Meeting at; J. Mc.Kinnon, chairman...	" " ...	1
" 12	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead, Inhabitants of ...	" " ...	1,064
" 12	Wakefield, " ...	" " ...	135
" 8	Wm. Thorold Wood and others	Mr. Jacob Bright	3
" 15	§Kirkcaldy, Town Council of ...	Mr. Aytoun ...	Seal 1
" 15	Manchester (New Cross Ward)	Mr. Thos. Bazley	1,049
" 15	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	" "	1,026
" 15	§Middlesborough, Meeting at; J. Dunning, chairman...	Mr. Bolckow ...	1
" 15	Great Berkhamstead, Inhabitants of, county of Herts.	Mr. Brand ...	79
" 15	Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	Mr. Jacob Bright	1,015
" 15	North Wootton, Inhabitants of	" "	16
" 15	§Manchester, Municipal Corporation of ...	" "	Seal
" 15	Salford, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Cawley " ...	1,030
" 15	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Inhabitants of ...	Sir J. Cowen ...	1,006
" 15	§Northampton, Municipal Corporation of ...	Mr. Gilpin ...	Seal 1
" 15	Oswestry, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. J. O. Gore...	49
" 15	St. Asaph, " ...	Sir J. Hanmer...	54
" 15	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne, " ...	Mr. Headlam ...	1,025
" 15	§Hartlepool, Meeting at; C. Nielson, Chairman ...	Mr. Jackson ...	1
" 15	Denbighshire, Inhabitants of	Mr. M'Laren ...	35
" 15	§Hanley, Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of ...	Mr. Melly ...	Seal 1
" 15	§Wick & Pulteney Town, Meeting at; D. Berry, chairman ..	Mr. Pender ...	1
" 15	†Dublin, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Pim ...	2,042
" 15	†Tipperary, " ...	" ...	1,041
" 15	†Limerick, " ...	" ...	25

April 15	Londonderry, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Pim ...	30
" 15	†Westmeath " ...	" ...	20
" 15	†Waterford " ...	" ...	31
" 15	Longford " ...	" ...	22
" 15	Wexford " ...	" ...	61
" 15	†Cork " ...	" ...	31
" 15	†Tower Hamlets " ...	Mr. Samuda ...	1,249
" 15	§Stockport, Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of ...	Mr. John Smith	Seal 1
" 15	†Rhyl, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. W. Williams	13
" 15	Pentcaitland, Haddingtonshire, Inhabitants of ...	" " ...	33
" 15	Denbigh " ...	" " ...	20
" 16	§Darlington, Meeting at; D. Dale, chairman ...	Mr. Backhouse...	1
" 16	Southwark, Inhabitants of ...	Col. Beresford ...	1,534
" 16	†Stalybridge " ...	" " ...	1,185
" 16	§Glasgow, Meeting at; W. M'Ewan, chairman ...	Mr. DalGLISH ...	1
" 16	Helen Henderson ...	" " ...	1
" 16	Margaret M'Ewan ...	Lord Garlies ...	1
" 16	Lambeth, Inhabitants of ...	Sir J. Lawrence	2,076
" 16	Marylebone " ...	Mr. H. Lewis ...	1,483
" 16	§Southwark, Meeting at; John Sinclair, chairman ...	Mr. Locke ...	1
" 16	Finsbury, Inhabitants at ...	Mr. Lusk ...	1,578
" 16	§Stourbridge, Meeting at; H. Sherrard, chairman ...	Mr. Lyttelton ...	1
" 16	Ashton-under-Lyne, Inhab. of	Mr. Mellor ...	40
" 16	§Guisborough, Meeting at; Robt. Wright, chairman ...	Mr. Milbank ...	1
" 16	†Stockport, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Tipping ...	613
" 16	§Prescott, Local Board of ...	Mr. Turner ...	Seal 1
" 16	Glencaple, Inhabitants of ...	Major Walker ...	82
" 16	J. Knotts, Essex Park, near Dumfries ...	" " ...	1
" 16	J. Fergusson ...	" " ...	1
" 16	J. W. Paterson, Craigend, Dumfries ...	" " ...	1
" 17	E. Haddock and others ...	Colonel Amcotts	116
" 17	†Glasgow, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Anderson ...	8,095
" 17	§Leominster, Meeting at; J. Southwell, chairman ...	Mr. R. Arkwright	1
" 17	Devizes, Inhabitants of ...	Sir T. Bateson...	80
" 17	§Canterbury, Meeting at; John Brent, chairman ...	Mr. B. Johnstone	1
" 17	Leeds, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Carter ...	1,435
" 17	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, " ...	Sir Jos. Cowen	129
" 17	†Tiverton, " ...	Mr. Dalrymple...	315
" 17	†Eliza L. Morton and others ...	Mr. W. Egerton	14
" 17	Paisley, Renfrewshire Branch of National Society for Women's Suffrage ...	Mr. Crum-Ewing	6
" 17	Lesswalt, Inhabitants of...	Lord Garlies ...	72
" 17	§Greenock, Meeting at; D. Campbell, chairman ...	Mr. Grieve ...	1

April 17	†Gateshead-on-Tyne, Inhab. of	Sir William Hutt	1,151
" 17	Holm Cultram, Local Board of	Lord Muncaster	5
" 17	Esther Ramsbottom and others	Mr. Philips	232
" 17	†Whittlesea, Inhabitants of	Lord Royston	44
" 17	Cheltenham,	Mr. H. Samuelson	472
" 17	†Cheltenham, Lucy F. Phillips	"	1
" 17	Cheltenham, Lucy F. Phillips	"	1
" 17	†Heaton Norris, Inhabitants of	Mr. B. Smith	311
" 17	K. Amberley and others...	Lord Somerset...	245
" 17	St. Helens, Inhabitants of	Mr. Turner	79
" 17	Bath,	"	1,231
" 18	Bourton-on-the-Hill	Sir M. H. Beach	102
" 18	§Hunslet, Meeting at; Catherine M. Bucton, president	Mr. Carter	1
" 18	Bridge of Allan, Inhabitants of	Admiral Erskine	44
" 18	Harrow, and other places	Lord Hamilton	20
" 18	§Wishaw, Meeting at; John Wardrop, chairman	M. J. Hamilton	1
" 18	§Lambeth, Meeting at; Eliza Orme, president	Sir J. Lawrence	1
" 18	Macclesfield, Inhabitants of	Mr. Legh	125
" 18	†Marylebone,	Mr. H. Lewis	1,001
" 18	§Uxbridge, Meeting at; George Jimes, chairman	"	1
" 18	Stranraer, Inhabitants of	The Lord Advocate	103
" 18	§Wigtown, Town Council of; W. McKie, chairman	"	1
" 18	†Stranraer, Inhabitants of	"	534
" 18	Matlock,	Mr. M'Laren	91
" 18	Lasswade & Bonnyrigg, Inh. of	Sir A. Maitland	212
" 18	†Edinburgh	Mr. Miller	1,024
" 18	Birmingham,	Mr. Muntz	992
" 18	†Tavistock,	Mr. A. Russell	169
" 18	§Tynemouth, Meeting at; J. Green, chairman	Mr. E. Smith	1
" 18	E. Jones and others	"	1,136
" 18	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Inh. of	"	2,183
" 19	Schilbotel,	Mr. Jacob Bright	16
" 19	†Canterbury,	Capt. Brinkman	328
" 19	§Sunderland, Meeting at; Benj. Glover, chairman	Mr. Candlish	1
" 19	†Salford, Inhabitants of	Mr. Charley	112
" 19	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne,	Sir Jos. Cowen	1,032
" 19	†Middleton,	Mr. A. Egerton	604
" 19	Saltcoats,	Mr. Finnie	75
" 19	Kilwinning,	"	55
" 19	Irvine,	"	56
" 19	Inch,	Lord Garlies	359
" 19	Lochryan,	"	104
" 19	Galloway, National Society for Women's Suffrage	"	7
" 19	Kirkmaiden, Inhabitants of	"	107
" 19	Cefn Coed,	Mr. Holford	53
" 19	†Leith,	Mr. Macfie	463
" 19	†Bury,	Mr. Philips	629

April 19	Alnwick, Inhabitants of	Mr. Ridley	46
" 19	†Finsbury,	Mr. W.M. Torrens	2,707
" 22	†Alloa,	Mr. Adam	75
" 22	†Manchester,	Mr. Jacob Bright	2,635
" 22	Manchester (Medlock-st. Ward)	"	640
" 22	Southport, Inhabitants of	"	78
" 22	Altrincham,	"	112
" 22	†Manchester (Ardwick Ward)...	"	1,060
" 22	Manchester (St. Luke's Ward)	"	76
" 22	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	"	1,412
" 22	†John Henry Greenwood and others	"	851
" 22	Manchester (St. Michael's Ward)	"	1,883
" 22	Chesterfield, Inhabitants of	"	39
" 22	†Maria Sharman and others	"	92
" 22	Thomas Pocherry and others...	"	68
" 22	†G. Fenton and others	"	117
" 22	Salford, Inhabitants of	Mr. Cawley	1,626
" 22	†Marylebone,	Sir T. Chambers	1,417
" 22	†North London,	"	1,019
" 22	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne,	Sir J. Cowen	2,043
" 22	§Inverary, Meeting at; Walter Malcolm, chairman	Mr. Craufurd	Seal 1
" 22	§Banff, Meeting at; J. Wood, chairman	Mr. Grant Duff	Seal 1
" 22	Harrow, Inhabitants of	Viscount Enfield	127
" 22	†Edgware,	"	146
" 22	Great Stanmore,	"	40
" 22	†Hendon,	"	108
" 22	§Todmorden Board of Guardians, Wm. Dugdale, chairman	Mr. Jos. Fielden	Seal 1
" 22	Belmont, Jane Taylour	Lord Garlies	1
" 22	§Port Glasgow, Meeting at; H. Berkinfil, chairman	Mr. Grieve	1
" 22	†Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Inh. of	Mr. Headlam	1,111
" 22	§Bristol, Meeting at; Mary A. Estlin, president	Mr. K. Hodgson	1
" 22	†Gateshead, Inhabitants of	Mr. Hutt	2,185
" 22	Hexham,	Mr. M'Laren	307
" 22	†West Middlesex,	Mr. H. Lewis	1,118
" 22	†Marylebone,	"	1,055
" 22	†Edwin Hill and others	"	1,533
" 22	§Glastonbury, Meeting at; J. Hullreid, chairman	Mr. N. Grenville	1
" 22	Rochdale, Inhabitants of...	Mr. T. Potter	1,226
" 22	Redruth,	Mr. St. Aubyn	263
" 22	†Trinity,	Sir A. Maitland	39
" 22	Melrose,	Mr. Trevelyan	49
" 22	Melrose, Madeline M. Daniell and others	Sir D. Wedderburn	54
" 22	Wigan, Inhabitants of...	Wr. Woods	720
" 23	Kings Lynn,	Mr. Jacob Bright	182
" 23	†Thetford,	Sir Robt. Buxton	132
" 23	†Southampton,	Mr. Cowper-Temple	519
" 23	†East Retford,	Viscount Galway	230

April 23	Glencuce, Inhabitants of	... Lord Garies	... 14
" 23	†Glencuce,	" ...	557
" 23	Newcastle-upon-Tyne,	" ... Mr. Headlam	... 1,523
" 23	†Stratford,	" ... Mr. Hibbert	... 440
" 23	†Oldham,	" ...	743
" 23	Frome,	" ... Mr. T. Hughes...	157
" 23	§Taunton, Meeting at; W. R. Clarke, chairman	... Mr. James...	... 1
" 23	Annan, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Jardine	... 171
" 23	Kidderminster,	" ... Mr. Lea	... 112
" 23	†Finsbury,	" ... Mr. Lusk	... 2,030
" 23	†Lambeth,	" ... Mr. M'Arthur	... 1,705
" 23	§Airdrie, Meeting at; R. Hamilton, chairman	... Mr. Merry	... 1
" 23	†Falkirk, Inhabitants of	... "	... 210
" 23	§Tenby, Mayor, Aldermen, and Town Councillors of	... Mr. Meyrick	... Seal 1
" 23	†Sheffield, Inhabitants of...	... Mr. Mundella	... 1,298
" 23	§Tewkesbury, Meeting at; T. Wilkinson, chairman	... Mr. W. E. Price	... 1
" 23	Tewkesbury, Inhabitants of	... "	... 126
" 23	§Banbury, Meeting at; John Butcher, chairman	... Mr. Samuelson...	... 1
" 23	§Pollockshaws, Meeting at; W. Potterton, chairman	... Mr. Bruce...	... 1
" 23	§Lincoln, Meeting at; John Giles, chairman	... Mr. Seeley	... 1
" 23	†Galashiels, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Trevelyan	... 458
" 23	†Dunsion,	" ... Major Walker	... 49
" 23	†Penpont,	" ... "	... 81
" 23	†Torthorwald,	" ... "	... 146
" 17	Selkirk, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of	... Mr. Trevelyan	... 5
" 24	Burntisland, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Aytoun	... 139
" 24	†Manchester, Female	" ... Sir. T. Bazley	... 47
" 24	Manchester,	" ...	... 2,814
" 24	Manchester,	" ... Mr. Birley...	... 1,180
" 24	Manchester,	" ...	... 2,840
" 24	Bath	" ... Mr. Jacob Bright	... 2,111
" 24	†Manchester,	" ...	... 236
" 24	†Thomas Dale and others...	... "	... 91
" 24	Stalybridge, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Buckley	... 819
" 24	§Dunfermline, Meeting at; W. Dick, chairman	... Mr. Campbell	... 1
" 24	South Queensferry, Meeting at; R. G. Jeffreys, Commander R.N., chairman	... "	... 1
" 24	Leeds (North West Ward)	... Mr. Carter	... 30
" 24	Leeds (East Ward)	... "	... 72
" 24	†Marylebone, Meeting at; W. D. Christie, chairman...	... Sir T. Chambers	... 1
" 24	†Marylebone, Inhabitants of	... "	... 1,963
" 24	†Annie H. Macdonell and others	... "	... 280
" 24	†Newcastle-on-Tyne, Inhab. of	... Sir J. Cowen	... 2,013
" 24	†H. Roberts and others	... Mr. Eastwick	... 702
" 24	†E. L. Templer and others	... "	... 76

April 24	§Queensbury, Meeting at; Elijah Lee, chairman	... Mr. Eastwick	... 1
" 24	†Plymouth, Inhabitants of	... "	... 5
" 24	†Bridport,	" ...	... 31
" 24	†Coventry,	" ... Mr. Eaton	... 537
" 24	†Flixton,	" ... Mr. A. Egerton	... 17
" 24	†John Brierley and others	... "	... 28
" 24	Dinas-y-Mowddy, Inhab. of	... Mr. Holland	... 37
" 24	Mary Fisher, of Carlisle	... Sir W. Lawson...	... 1
" 24	Dartford, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Mills	... 371
" 24	†Tunbridge,	" ...	... 76
" 24	†Chipping Norton	... Colonel North	... 53
" 24	Garstang,	" ... Mr. F. Stanley	... 28
" 24	Peterborough,	" ... Mr. Wells...	... 919
" 24	†Henry Peacock and others	... Mr. White	... 194
" 24	†Eliza Webster and others	... "	... 2,271
" 24	Stow-on-the-Wold, Inhab. of...	... Mr. Yorke...	... 24
" 24	†Newquay,	" ...	... 295
" 25	Darlington,	" ... Mr. Backhouse...	... 2,547
" 25	†Clonmel,	" ... Mr. Bagwell	... 1,020
" 25	†Bognor,	" ... Col. Barttelot	... 274
" 25	Arabella Shore and others	... Mr. Benyon	... 44
" 25	§Newcastleton, Meeting at; J. Black, chairman	... Marq. of Bowmont	... 1
" 25	Manchester, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Jacob Bright	... 864
" 25	East Peckham,	" ...	... 151
" 25	†Thame and other places,	" ... Mr. Cartwright	... 30
" 25	†Chelsea,	" ... Sir C. Dilke	... 1,118
" 25	†Birmingham,	" ... Mr. Dixon	... 1,024
" 25	†Falmouth & other places	" ... Mr. Eastwick	... 349
" 25	†Jas. G. S. Anderson and others	... "	... 5
" 25	†John Stuart Mill and others	... "	... 25
" 25	Coventry, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Hill	... 389
" 25	George Edgecombe and others	... Mr. Horsman	... 86
" 25	Dumfries, Female Inhab. of	... Mr. Jardine	... 61
" 25	†Lochmaben,	" ...	... 125
" 25	†Portobello,	" ... Mr. Macfie	... 469
" 25	†Rochester and Strood,	" ... Mr. P. Martin	... 202
" 25	†Rugby,	" ... Mr. Newdegate...	... 1,348
" 25	Lucy Fegan	... Mr. Pim	... 1
" 25	†Dublin, Inhabitants of	... "	... 40
" 25	Ellen Brennan	... "	... 1
" 25	†Dublin, Inhabitants of	... "	... 26
" 25	†Rathmines,	" ...	... 124
" 25	†Gloucester,	" ... Mr. W. E. Price	... 44
" 25	†Lewisham,	" ... Sir D. Salomons	... 1,069
" 25	§Chelsea, meeting at; M. J. Fawcett, chairman	... "	... 1
" 25	†Dumfries, Inhabitants of	... "	... 3
" 26	Derby, Meeting at; T. Roe, chairman	... Mr. M. Bass	... 1
" 26	†Manchester, Inhabitants of	... Sir T. Bazley	... 570
" 26	Coxlodge,	" ... Mr. Beaumont...	... 381
" 26	Manchester,	" ... Mr. Birley	... 1,044
" 26	D. Archer and others	... Mr. Jacob Bright	... 14
" 26	†Alex. Macmillan and others	... "	... 245

April 26	¶Loughborough, Inhabitants of	Mr. Jacob Bright	28
" 26	Exeter	"	180
" 26	Nottingham,	"	26
" 26	¶Stapleton, M. Davonport Hill and others	"	31
" 26	¶Sheldon Amos and others	"	153
" 26	¶Southwark and other places	"	1,170
" 26	Manchester, Inhabitants of	"	1,705
" 26	Bournemouth,	"	16
" 26	¶James Kemp and others	"	211
" 26	Bramley, Inhabitants of	Mr. Carter	535
" 26	Bramley, Women's Suffrage Committee, Sarah Myers secretary	"	1
" 26	Salford, Inhabitants of	Mr. Charley	90
" 26	¶Newcastle-on-Tyne,	Sir J. Cowen	1,603
" 26	¶Blaydon-on-Tyne,	"	699
" 26	¶Dunbar,	Sir H. F. Davie	54
" 26	Swerton and other places	Mr. Denman	247
" 26	Shrewsbury, Inhabitants of	Mr. Figgins	164
" 26	§Greenwich, Meeting at; J. B. Langley, chairman	Mr. Gladstone	1
" 26	¶Woolwich, Plumstead, and other places	"	1,302
" 26	¶Greenwich and other places	"	1,399
" 26	Greenock, Inhabitants of	Mr. Grieve	291
" 26	Wishaw,	Mr. J. Hamilton	568
" 26	Agnes Neilson	"	1
" 26	F. S. Taunton and others	Mr. V. Harcourt	54
" 26	Oxford University, Fellows of Colleges of	Mr. G. Hardy	24
" 26	Cheetham Hill, Inhabitants of	Mr. S. Henry	254
" 26	Lenton and other places	Mr. A. Herbert	1,568
" 26	Basford, Inhabitants of	"	1,591
" 26	¶Nottingham,	"	13,420
" 26	§Royton Local Board, B. R. Bentley, chairman	Mr. Hibbert	1
" 26	Gateshead, Inhabitants of	Sir W. Hutt	1,905
" 26	§Throston Local Board	Mr. Jackson	Seal
" 26	Hartlepool, Inhabitants of	"	7
" 26	Bridgewater,	Mr. Langton	182
" 26	Hampstead,	Mr. H. Lewis	1,200
" 26	§Brentford, Meeting at; G. Faithful, chairman	"	1
" 26	Chithorn, Inhabitants of	The Lord Advocate	135
" 26	Oldbury Unitarian Congregation	Mr. Lyttelton	72
" 26	Cork, Inhabitants of	Mr. Maguire	1,198
" 26	¶Louisa Corney and others	Mr. M'Arthur	44
" 26	¶Edinburgh, Inhabitants of	Mr. M'Laren	995
" 26	¶Edinburgh (St. Andrew's)	"	39
" 26	¶Mary Ann Sleep	"	1
" 26	¶Mary S. Brown	"	1
" 26	¶Chatham, Inhabitants of	Mr. Otway	342
" 26	¶Putney and Wimbledon,	Mr. Peek	71
" 26	Rochdale,	Mr. T. Potter	622
" 26	Wexford,	Mr. Power	103

April 26	¶R. Taylor and others	Mr. Rathbone	1,310
" 26	¶Chelmsford, Inhabitants of	Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson	81
" 26	¶Westminster,	Mr. W. H. Smith	2,200
" 26	¶Troedyrhew,	Mr. Talbot	60
" 26	¶Merthyr Tidvil	"	62
" 26	¶C. J. Evans and others	"	677
" 26	¶Swinton and Radford, Inhabit. of	"	1,750
" 26	¶Henry Rees and others	"	197
" 26	Abercannaird, Inhabitants of	"	40
" 26	§Haddingtonshire, Branch of the National Society for Women, Chas. Netman, chairman	"	1
" 29	Birmingham, Inhabitants of Hall Green	Mr. Amphlett	11
" 29	Kirkcaldy,	Mr. Aytoun	456
" 29	Fifeshire, Branch of National Society of Women's Suffrage	"	11
" 29	§Kirkcaldy, Meeting at; Robert Douglas, chairman	"	1
" 29	Burntisland, Executive Committee of the Fifeshire Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage	"	11
" 29	¶Wandsworth, Inhabitants of	Sir R. Baggallay	54
" 29	¶Derby,	Mr. Michael Bass	190
" 29	¶Middlesborough,	Mr. Bolckow	1,012
" 29	¶Rutherglen, Samuel Baker and others	Mr. P. Bouverie	197
" 29	¶Kilmarnock, Inhabitants of	"	69
" 29	§Rutherglen, Meeting at; Samuel Baker, provost	"	1
" 29	§Dumbarton, Provost, Magistrates, and Council of; Samuel Bennett, provost	"	Seal 1
" 29	¶Glossop, Inhabitants of	Mr. Jacob Bright	80
" 29	Manchester,	"	1,452
" 29	¶Manchester	"	1,135
" 29	¶Newark-upon-Trent,	Mr. Bristowe	274
" 29	Dunfermline,	Mr. Campbell	361
" 29	§Leeds, Women's Suffrage Committee (Hunslet Ward), Caroline Walker, sec.	Mr. Carter	1
" 29	§Leeds Women's Suffrage Committee (North West Ward), Madel. Neville, secretary	"	1
" 29	§Holbeck, Women's Suffrage Committee; Dinah Goodall, secretary	"	1
" 29	§Leeds, Central Women's Suffrage Committee; Catherine Mary Buckton, hon. sec.	"	1

April 29	§Marylebone, meeting at; W. D. Chester, chairman ...	Sir T. Chambers	1
" 29	§Salford, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Charley	832
" 29	§Southampton, Meeting at; S. Tryon, Major-General, chairman ...	Mr. Cowper-Temple	1
" 29	Oban, Members of the Executive Committee ...	Mr. Craufurd	4
" 29	†Samuel McTavish, of Rothesay, Bute ...	Mr. C. Dalrymple	1
" 29	§Scarborough, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of ...	Mr. Dent	Seal
" 29	†Birmingham, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Dixon	685
" 29	†Chippenham	Mr. Goldney	608
" 29	†Greenock, Committee of the National Society of Women's Suffrage ...	Mr. Grieve	10
" 29	†Metropolis, Inhabitants of ...	Lord G. Hamilton	549
" 29	†Dublin, Annie Harkett ...	Mr. Ion Trant Hamilton	1
" 29	Glasnevin, Inhabitants of ...	"	32
" 29	†Phibsborough, "	"	22
" 29	†Boosterstown, "	"	202
" 29	†Newcastle-on-Tyne, "	Mr. Headlam	2,084
" 29	†Newcastle-on-Tyne, "	"	1,460
" 29	†Preston, "	Sir T. Hesketh...	210
" 29	Tunbridge Wells, "	Vicount Holmesdale	27
" 29	Sanquhar, "	Mr. Jardine	198
" 29	†Scarborough, "	Sir H. Jonstone	228
" 29	§Perth, Executive Committee, John Wallace, convener	Mr. Kinnaird	1
" 29	Meath, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. McEvoy	403
" 29	Edinburgh, Sophia L. Jex Blake	Mr. M'Laren	1
" 29	Anstruther, Inhabitants of ...	"	57
" 29	†Janet, Euphemia, and Sophy M'Laren ...	"	3
" 29	†Bristol Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Morley	5,449
" 29	Sligo, "	Mr. O'Connor	60
" 29	Coupar Angus, "	Mr. Parker	68
" 29	Jean McDougal ...	"	1
" 29	†Comrie, Inhabitants of ...	"	261
" 29	§Dunkeld, Executive Committee, James Mackenzie...	"	1
" 29	Margaret Sinclair ...	"	1
" 29	§Stromness, Executive Committee, James Spence ...	Mr. Pender	1
" 29	§Tain Executive Committee; W. Smith, convener, Edwd. M'Lardy, secretary ...	"	2
" 29	§Invergordon and Rosskeen Inhabitants of; John Ross	"	1
" 29	Wick, Inhabitants of ...	"	147
" 29	§Wick, Executive Committee ...	"	4
" 29	§Invergordon, Meeting at; A. Munro, chairman ...	"	1

April 29	§Dingwall, Meeting at; S. Eneas Adam, chairman ...	Mr. Pender	1
" 29	Tain, Inhabitants of ...	"	221
" 29	†John Smith and others ...	Mr. Phillips	205
" 29	Anna Anderson... ..	Mr. Pim	1
" 29	Elizabeth Wheelan ...	"	1
" 29	Limerick, Inhabitants of ...	"	106
" 29	†Roscommon, "	"	116
" 29	†C. H. C. Rhode and others ...	Mr. Rathbone	127
" 29	§Johnstone, Meeting at; John Fraser, chairman ...	Mr. Bruce...	1
" 29	§Kilbarchan, Meeting at; John Fraser, chairman...	"	1
" 29	Paisley, Inhabitants of...	"	25
" 29	†South Shields	Mr. Stevenson	2,406
" 29	†North Shields	Mr. E. Smith	2,506
" 29	†Erith and Belvedere, "	Mr. John Talbot	651
" 29	†Sydenham and Forest Hill, "	"	381
" 29	†Bath, "	Sir William Tite	69
" 29	†Galashiels, Committee ...	Mr. Trevelyan	8
" 29	†Hawick, "	"	8
" 29	Parkhill, Inhabitants of ...	"	30
" 30	†Newport, "	Sir R. Anstruther	92
" 30	Tayport, "	"	144
" 30	†Macclesfield, "	Mr. Brocklehurst	133
" 30	Market Lavington, "	Lord Chas. Bruce	119
" 30	§Market Lavington, Meeting at; S. Saunders, chairman	"	1
" 30	William Sugden and others ...	Sir Edwd. Buller	10
" 30	†William Miller and others ...	Mr. Candlish	3,324
" 30	†Leeds, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Carter	1,411
" 30	†Leeds, "	"	10,437
" 30	†Wm. B. Carpenter and others	Sir T. Chambers	276
" 30	†Alice Westlake and others ..	"	298
" 30	†North London, Inhabitants of	"	524
" 30	†North London, "	"	476
" 30	†Dublin, "	Sir D. Corrigan	1,016
" 30	†Jedburgh, "	Sir H. F. Davie	265
" 30	§Haddington, Meeting at; Robt. Porteus, bailie ...	"	1
" 30	Whitchurch, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Eastwick	4
" 30	Whittlesea, "	"	5
" 30	Dodsworth, "	"	10
" 30	†Deal, "	"	15
" 30	†Windsor and Eton "	Mr. Eykyn	107
" 30	†Kensington, "	Mr. Fawcett	763
" 30	Fulbourne, "	"	7
" 30	†Whitby, "	Mr. Wm. Henry Gladstone	847
" 30	†Josephine E. Butler and others	Colonel Grant	2,844
" 30	†Taunton, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. James	805
" 30	Birkenhead National Society for Women's Suffrage ...	Mr. Laird	6
" 30	§Birkenhead, Meeting at; J. S. Binns, chairman ...	"	1
" 30	†Birkenhead, Inhabitants of ...	"	657

April 30	Wigan, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Lancaster ...	659
" 30	†Finsbury	... Mr. Lusk ...	1,684
" 30	Stourbridge	... Mr. Lyttelton ...	116
" 30	Evesham,	... ..	41
" 30	†Newhaven,	... Mr. Macfie ...	33
" 30	§Lambeth, Meeting at; F. W. Chesson, chairman	... Mr. M'Arthur ...	1
" 30	†Aberdeen, Inhabitants of	... Mr. M'Laren ...	905
" 30	§Dumfries, Branch of National Society for Women's Suffrage; J. B. Harkness, honorary secretary	... ..	1
" 30	Peebles Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage...	... Sir G. Montgomery	6
" 30	Innerleithen Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage	... ..	7
" 30	Peebles, Inhabitants of	... ..	59
" 30	†Samuel Charlesworth & others	Mr. Mundella ...	92
" 30	†Sheffield, Inhabitants of...	... ..	1,666
" 30	†Frederick Impey and others	Mr. Muntz ...	593
" 30	†Crieff, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Parker ...	68
" 30	Wick, Provosts, Magistrates, and Town Council of	... Mr. Pender ...	Seal 1
" 30	Christina Coyle...	... Mr. Pim ...	1
" 30	Dunboyne, Inhabitants of	... ..	120
" 30	Blackrock,	... ..	110
" 30	Tipperary,	... ..	637
" 30	Dublin,	... ..	1,013
" 30	Cavan,	... ..	110
" 30	Kilkenny,	... ..	124
" 30	Meath,	... ..	103
" 30	†Cork,	... ..	40
" 30	Monaghan,	... ..	53
" 30	Kildare,	... ..	120
" 30	†Mima Addison and others	... Mr. Rathbone ...	819
" 30	Edward Allen and others	... Mr. Ridley ...	26
" 30	†Stoke-upon-Trent, Inhab. of	... Mr. Roden ...	101
" 30	†Burnley,	... Mr. R. Shaw ...	2,009
" 30	†Westminster,	... Mr. W. Smith ...	3,869
" 30	†Dumfries,	... Major Walker ...	264
" 30	§Moffat, Meeting at; Samuel Nield, chairman, and two others	... ..	3
" 30	Newbridge, Inhabitants of	... ..	64
" 30	Wellington, Edward Jones and another	... ..	2
" 30	†Chelsea, Inhabitants of	... ..	1,720
" 30	†Hammersmith,	... ..	1,176
" 30	†Worcester,	... ..	373
" 30	Kirkmahoe,	... ..	66
May 1	§Hereford, Meeting at; Edwin E. Bosley, mayor...	... Major Arbuthnot	1
" 1	†Tower Hamlets, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Ayrton ...	935
" 1	†Darlington,	... Mr. Backhouse...	19

May 1	†Cirencester, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Bathurst ...	111
" 1	†Manchester,	... Mr. Jacob Bright	514
" 1	Margaret Sutcliffe and others...	... ..	500
" 1	†Salford, Inhabitants of	... ..	718
" 1	Manchester	... ..	891
" 1	†William Lister and others	... ..	409
" 1	†John Linskill	... ..	328
" 1	†Robert Burn	... ..	16
" 1	†Llandyssul, Inhabitants of	... ..	125
" 1	†Elizabeth Swanwick and others	... ..	73
" 1	†Broadway, Inhabitants of...	... ..	242
" 1	†Hornsey and Highgate,	... ..	329
" 1	§Norwich, Meeting at; James Freeman, chairman	... Mr. Colman ...	1
" 1	†Newcastle, Inhabitants of	... Sir J. Cowen ...	27
" 1	†Mary Jane Collins and others	... ..	85
" 1	†Elizabeth Hardcastle & others	Sir C. Dilke ...	23
" 1	Chelsea, Inhabitants of	... ..	2,548
" 1	†Ann Strahan and others...	... Mr. Eastwick ...	125
" 1	†Cambridge, Inhabitants of	... ..	536
" 1	†Caroline Stansfeld and others	... ..	522
" 1	†James Edmunds	... ..	503
" 1	†Caroline E. Williams	... ..	444
" 1	†William Shaw	... ..	350
" 1	†Harriet Isabella Mill	... ..	138
" 1	†Westminster, Inhabitants of	... ..	24
" 1	†Buckingham,	... ..	256
" 1	Andover,	... Mr. Fawcett ...	38
" 1	†Northampton,	... Mr. Gilpin ...	853
" 1	Stamford,	... Sir John Hay ...	109
" 1	†Hereford,	... Mr. Hoskyns ...	685
" 1	†Bristol,	... Sir G. Jenkinson	1,114
" 1	Belfast,	... Mr. W. Johnston	327
" 1	Forres, Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage...	... Mr. Mackintosh	5
" 1	Lambeth, Inhabitants of...	... Mr. M'Arthur...	1,147
" 1	†Leitrim,	... Mr. Maguire ...	38
" 1	†Merrion,	... ..	104
" 1	†Queen's County,	... ..	51
" 1	†Wexford,	... ..	46
" 1	†Dublin,	... ..	212
" 1	Catherine Dorothy Robertson	... ..	1
" 1	Mary Ann Noble	... ..	1
" 1	Marianne Beattie	... ..	1
" 1	†Limerick, Inhabitants of...	... ..	...
" 1	†Stoke-upon-Trent,	... Mr. Melly...	148
" 1	†Edinburgh,	... Mr. Miller ...	870
" 1	†Tunbridge Wells	... Mr. Mills ...	59
" 1	†Erith,	... ..	673
" 1	†Bristol,	... Mr. Morley ...	1,177
" 1	†Amelia Cornish and others	... ..	35
" 1	†Plymouth, Inhabitants of	... Mr. Morrison ...	1,093
" 1	§Street Local Board of Health, Joseph Clark, chairman	... Mr. Neville-Grenville ...	1

May	1	¶Dundee, Inhabitants of ...	Sir John Ogilvy	3,720
"	1	¶Kilrush, " ...	Sir C. O'Loughlen	85
"	1	¶Guildford, " ...	Mr. Onslow	25
"	1	Lincoln, " ...	Mr. Palmer	574
"	1	Dunkeld, " ...	Mr. Parker	164
"	1	¶Esther Quiggin and others	Mr. Rathbone	136
"	1	¶Warrington, Inhabitants of	Mr. Rylands	250
"	1	¶South Shields, " ...	Mr. Stevenson	683
"	1	¶Mary Wilson, 188, Gallogate...	Colonel Sykes	1
"	1	¶Aberdeen, Inhabitants of ..	"	992
"	1	¶Mrs. Allen, 93, Queen-st., Aber- deen	"	1
"	1	Aberdeen Branch of National Society for Women's Suffrage... ..	"	6
"	1	Margaret Murray	"	1
"	1	¶Dublin, Inhabitants of ...	Colonel Taylor...	1,006
"	1	¶Islington, " ...	Mr. Torrens	352
"	1	¶Finsbury, " ...	"	2,310
"	1	¶Hawick, " ...	Mr. Trevelyan...	405
"	1	¶Selkirk, " ...	"	237
"	1	¶Laurencekirk, " ...	Mr. Woods	25
"	1	¶Finsbury, " ...	"	1,441
"	1	Annie Norry, Aberdeen ...	"	1
"	2	Framlingham, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Corrance	84
"	2	¶Liverpool, " ...	Mr. Graves	132
"	2	Croydon, " ...	Mr. King	135
"	2	¶Leith, " ...	Mr. Macfie	87
"	2	Edinburgh, " ...	Mr. M'Laren	546
"	2	Pollokshaws, " ...	"	40
"	2	E. C. Stevenson	"	1
"	2	¶Louise Knaws and others	Mr. Muntz	174
"	2	¶Ramsgate, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Pemberton..	22
"	2	Dublin, Teachers and others, Queen's Institute... ..	Mr. Pim	30
"	2	Halstead, Inhabitants of... ..	Mr. Round	128
"	2	¶Carmarthen, " ...	Sir John Stepney	73
"	2	Crewe Local Board; J. Wads- worth	Mr. F. Tollemache	Seal 1
"	3	South Queensferry, Inhabt. of	Mr. Campbell	91
"	3	¶Newcastle-upon-Tyne, workmen in the Ouseburn Engine Works	Sir John Cowen	66
"	3	Emily Faithful and others	Mr. Disraeli	27
"	3	¶Tranent and Prestonpans, In- habitants of	Lord Elcho	158
"	3	Perth, " ...	Mr. Kinnaird	420
"	3	¶Carlisle, " ...	Sir W. Lawson..	153
"	3	§Nairn, Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage; F. B. Mackin- tosh, chairman	Mr. Mackintosh	1
"	3	§Inverness, Branch of National Society for Women's Suffrage; J. Mackenzie, provost, chairman	"	1

May	3	§Thurso Committee, J. Galloway, convener	Mr. Sinclair	1
"	3	Aberdeen, St. Paul-st. Evangeli- cal Union Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association	Colonel Sykes	25
"	6	¶South Shields, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Jacob Bright	9
"	6	Street, " ...	"	90
"	6	¶Portsmouth, " ...	"	304
"	6	¶Hampstead, " ...	"	127
"	6	West Bromwich, " ...	"	15
"	6	Devonport, " ...	"	1,198
"	6	¶Forest Hill, " ...	Mr. Fawcett	26
"	6	Hackney, " ...	Mr. Holmes	342
"	6	Hackney, " ...	"	422
"	6	Hackney, " ...	"	484
"	6	Duddingston, " ...	Sir A. Maitland	32
"	6	Liberton, Mary Burton	"	1
"	6	§Dalkeith, Executive Council of the Society for Women's Suffrage; A. Mitchell, convener	"	1
"	6	Granton, Inhabitants of	"	15
"	7	¶Gosport, " ...	Lord Henry Scott	48
"	7	¶Stafford, " ...	Mr. Talbot	70
"	6	Manchester, " ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	1,452
"	6	Dublin, " ...	Sir D. Corrigan	1,016
"	8	¶Greenwich, " ...	Mr. Gladstone	944
"	8	Margaret Hunter and another	Mr. M'Laren	2
"	8	¶Bethnal Green, Inhabitants of .	Mr. Reed	1,062
"	10	Inverurie, " ...	Mr. M'Combie	55
"	13	Dumbarton, " ...	Mr. P. Bouverie.	558
"	13	Lymm, " ...	Colonel Legh	23
"	13	§Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Local Board, R. Lloyd, chairman	Mr. Hanb.-Tracy	2
"	31	Hereford, Inhabitants of... ..	Mr. Hoskyns	46
"	30	Leicester, " ...	Mr. Taylor	500
June	3	§Cockermouth, Meeting at; W. Irwin, chairman	Mr. Fletcher	1
"	3	Ripple, Tewkesbury, and Upton- on-Severn, Inhab. of	Mr. Knight	46
"	11	§Blindcrake, Meeting at; James Cooper, chairman... ..	Mr. Wyndham...	1

Total number of Petitions 843—Signatures 355,801

Summary of petitions presented respecting the Women's Dis-
abilities Removal Bill during the session up to June 14, 1872, taken
from the twenty-sixth Parliamentary report :—

Women's Disabilities Removal Bill—	No. of Petitions		Signatures.
	signed Officially	No. of or under Seal. Petitions.	
Against...	3	3	3
In favour	171	843	355,801

DIVISION LIST.

Order for Second Reading read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months:"—(*Mr. Bouverie*)—Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—The House divided; Ayes 143, Noes 222.

AYES.

Adderley, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles	Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth
Allen, W. Shepherd (Newc. U.L.)	Dimsdale, Robert
Amphlett, Richard P.	Dixon, George (Birmingham)
Anderson, George	Downing, M ^c Carthy
Anstruther, Sir Robert	Elliot, George
Bagwell, John	Ewing, H. Ewing Crum (Paisley)
Bateson, Sir Thomas	Ewing, Archibald Orr (Dumbarton)
Bazley, Sir Thomas	Fawcett, Henry
Beaumont, Somerset A. (Wakefield)	Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Beresford, Lt. Col. Marcus	Fletcher, Isaac
Birley, Hugh	Fordyce, William Dingwall
Blennerhasset, Rowland P. (Kerry)	Forester, Right Hon. General
Brewer, Dr.	Forster, Charles (Walsall)
Brocklehurst, William C.	Fortescue, Hon. Dudley F. (And.)
Browne, George Ekins (Mayo)	Fowler, Robert N. (Penryn)
Buckley, Nathaniel (Stalybridge)	Gavin, Major
Callan, Philip	Goldsmid, Sir Francis (Reading)
Cameron, Donald	Gourley, Edward T.
Campbell, Henry	Graham, William
Carter, Robert M.	Gray, Sir John (Kilkenny)
Cawley, Charles E.	Grieve, Jas. Johnstone (Greenock)
Chadwick, David	Grosvenor, Hon. Norman (Chester)
Charley, William Thomas	Hadfield, George
Cholmeley, Captain (Grantham)	Hanbury, Robert William
Clifford, Charles Cavendish	Harris, John Dove
Coleridge, Sir John Duke	Herbert, Hon. Auberon E. W. (Not.)
Corrigan, Sir Dominic	Heron, Denis Caulfeild
Cowen, Sir Joseph	Hibbert, John Tomlinson
Cowper-Temple, Rt. Hn. W. (H'ts.)	Hoare, Sir H. Ainslie (Chelsea)
Cubitt, George	Hodgkinson, Grosvenor
Dalglish, Robert	Hoskyns, Chandos Wren
Damer, Captain Dawson	Howard, James (Bedford)
Davie, Sir H. R. Fergusson (Hadd.)	Hunt, Right Hon. George Ward
Delahunty, James	Illingworth, Alfred
Denman, Hon. George	Jenkinson, Sir George S.
Dickinson, Sebastian S.	Johnston, William (Belfast)
Digby, Kenelm Thomas	Johnstone, Sir Harcourt (Scarbo)

Jones, John	Potter, Thos. Bayley (Rochdale)
Kennaway, John Henry	Powell, Walter (Malmesbury)
Kinnaird, Hon. Arthur Fitzgerald	Price, Wm. Edwin (Tewkesbury)
Knightley, Sir Rainald	Rathbone, William
Lambert, Nathaniel Grace	Redmond, William Archer
Lancaster, John	Robertson, David
Langton, W. Gore	Rylands, Peter
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid	Samuelson, Henry B. (Cheltenham)
Lea, Thomas (Kidderminster)	Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir Henry J.
Lewis, Harvey (Marylebone)	Shaw, Richard (Burnley)
Liddell, Hon. Henry George	Sherlock, David
Lusk, Andrew	Sherriff, Alexander Clunes
MacEvoy, Edward	Sinclair, Sir John G. Tollemache
Macfie, Robert Andrew	Smith, John Benjamin (Stockport)
M ^c Combie, William	Smith, Eustace (Tynemouth)
M ^c Lagan, Peter	Smyth, Patrick James (Westmeath)
M ^c Laren, Duncan	Stacpoole, William
Maguire, John Francis	Stansfeld, Rt. Hon. James
Mahon, Viscount (Suffolk E.)	Straight, Douglas
Manners, Rt. Hn. Lord J. (Leic. N.)	Sykes, Col. Wm. Hen. (Aberdeen)
Mellor, Thomas W.	Talbot, Chris. R. M. (Glam.)
Melly, George	Taylor, Rt. Hn. Col. (Dublin Co.)
Miller, John	Taylor, Peter Alfred (Leicester)
Mitchell, Thomas Alexander	Torrens, W. T. M ^c Cullagh (Finsb.)
Morley, Samuel	Trelawny, Sir John Salusbury
Morrison, Walter	Trevelyan, George Otto
Mundella, Anthony John	Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. Pelham
Muntz, Philip Henry	Wedderburn, Sir David
Neville-Grenville, Ralph	Wells, Edward (Wallingford)
Northcote, Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford H.	West, Henry Wyndham
Ogilvy, Sir John	Wheelhouse, William S. J.
Palmer, John Hinde (Lincoln)	Whitworth, Thomas
Pender, John	Williams, Watkin (Denbigh)
Playfair, Lyon	Wingfield, Sir Charles
Plimsoll, Samuel	

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Jacob Bright and Mr. Eastwick.

NOES.

Adair, Hugh Edward	Beach, Sir Michael Hicks (Glos. E.)
Adam, William Patrick	Beaumont, W. B. (Northumb. S.)
Akroyd, Edward	Bentall, Edward H.
Amcotts, Colonel W. Cracroft	Bentinck, G. Cavendish (Whit'vn)
Amory, John H.	Bentinck, George W. P. (Nortf. W.)
Annesley, Hon. Colonel Hugh	Bolekow, Henry W. F.
Arbuthnot, Major George	Bonham-Carter, John
Archdale, Captain Mervyn	Bowring, Edgar A.
Armitstead, George	Brady, John
Assheton, Ralph	Brassey, Henry A. (Sandwich)
Ayrton, Rt. Hon. Acton Smee	Brassey, Thomas (Hastings)
Aytoun, Roger Sinclair	Brinckman, Captain
Bailey, Sir Joseph Russell	Broadley, W. H. Harrison
Baker, Richard B. Wingfield	Brooks, William Cunliffe
Barclay, Alexander Charles	Bruce, Rt. Hon. Lord Ernest (Marl.)
Baring, Thomas	Bruce, Rt. Hon. H. Austin (Renfr.)
Barnett, Henry	Buckley, Sir E. (Newc.-under-L.)
Barrington, Viscount	Burrell, Sir Percy
Barttelot, Colonel	Bury, Viscount
Bass, Arthur (Staffordshire E.)	Butler-Johnstone, Hen. A.
Bates, Edward	Candlish, John

Cardwell, Rt. Hon. Edward
 Carington, Hon. Capt. William
 Cartwright, Fairfax (Northamp.)
 Cave, Rt. Hon. S. (New Shoreham)
 Cavendish, Lord F. C. (York, W. R.)
 Cavendish, Lord G. (Derbysh. N.)
 Child, Sir Smith
 Childers, Rt. Hn. Hugh Culling E.
 Cholmeley, Sir Montague (Linc. N.)
 Clay, James
 Clive, Col. Hon. G. Windsor
 Clowes, Samuel William
 Cochrane, Alex. D. W. R. Baillie
 Cogan, Rt. Hon. Wm. Henry Ford
 Cole, Col. Hon. Henry Arthur
 Colebrooke, Sir Thomas Edward
 Colman, Jeremiah James
 Conolly, Thomas
 Craufurd, Edw. Henry J. (Ayr)
 Crawford, Rob. Wygram (London)
 Crichton, Viscount
 Croft, Sir Herbert G. D.
 Cross, Richard Assheton
 Dalrymple, Donald (Bath)
 Dalrymple, Charles (Butesh.)
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dease, Edmund
 Dent, John Dent
 Dick, Fitzwilliam
 Dowdeswell, William Edward
 Dowse, Right Hon. Richard
 Duff, Robert William (Banffsh.)
 Duncombe, Hon. Colonel
 Dundas, Frederick
 Du Pre, C. George
 Eaton, Henry William
 Edwards, Henry
 Egerton, Hn. Alg. Fulke (Lanc. S.)
 Egerton, Capt. Hon. F. (Derby, E.)
 Egerton, Sir Phil. Grey (Chesh. W.)
 Egerton, Hon. Wilb. (Chesh. M.)
 Enfield, Viscount
 Ennis, John James
 Erskine, Admiral John E.
 Eykyn, Roger
 Fielden, Joshua (Yk. W. R., E. D.)
 Floyer, John
 Foljambe, Francis John Savile
 Forde, Colonel
 Foster, Wm. Henry (Bridgnorth)
 Fowler, William (Camb. Bo.)
 Galway, Viscount
 Garlies, Lord
 Gladstone, Wm. Henry (Whitby)
 Glyn, Hon. George Grenfell
 Goldsmid, Julian (Rochester)
 Gore, J. Ralph Ormsby (Salop, N.)
 Gore, Wm. Rd. Ormsby (Leitrim)
 Gower, Hn. E. F. Leveson (Bodmin)
 Graves, Samuel Robt. (Liverpool)
 Greene, Edward
 Grey, Right Hn. Sir Geo. (Morpeh)
 Grove, Thomas Fraser
 Guest, Montague John (Youghal)
 Hamilton, Lord Claud J. (King's L.)
 Harcourt, W. G. G. V. Vernon
 Hardy, Rt. Hon. Gathorne (Oxf. U.)
 Hardy, John (Warwick S.)
 Hardy, John Stewart (Rye)
 Headlam, Rt. Hon. Thos. Emerson
 Henley, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Oxfordsh.)
 Henley, Lord (Northampton)
 Heygate, Sir Fred. W. (Lond. Co.)
 Hodgson, Kirkman D. (Bristol)
 Holford, J. Price Gwynne
 Holland, Samuel
 Hope, Alex. J. B. Beresford
 Horsman, Right Hon. Edward
 Hughes, W. Bulkeley (Carnarvon)
 James, Henry
 Johnston, Andrew (Essex S.)
 Kavanagh, Arthur MacM.
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Ughtred James
 Kekewich, Samuel Trehawke
 Kingscote, Colonel
 Knatchbull-Hugessen, Edw. H.
 Knox, Hon. Colonel Stuart
 Lacon, Sir Edmund H. K.
 Laird, John
 Lawrence, Sir James C. (Lambeth)
 Lawrence, William (London)
 Learmonth, Alexander
 Leatham, Edward Aldam
 Legh, William J. (Cheshire E.)
 Lennox, Lord Geo. Gordon (Lym.)
 Lewis, John D. (Devonport)
 Lindsay, Hon. Col. Chas. (Abing.)
 Lindsay, Col. Robt. Loyd (Berks)
 Locke, John
 Lopes, Henry C. (Launceston)
 Lowther, Hon. Wm. (Westmorland)
 Lytton, Hon. Charles George
 Mackintosh, Eneas William
 M'Arthur, William
 M'Mahon, Patrick (New Ross)
 Marling, Samuel Stephens
 Matthews, Henry
 Mills, Charles Henry (Kent W.)
 Mitford, William Townley
 Monekton, Francis (Staffordshire)
 Monekton, Hon. Geo. (Notts.)
 Monk, Charles James
 Morgan, C. Octavius (Monmouth)
 Morgan, Geo. Osborne (Denbigh)
 Mowbray, Rt. Hn. John Robert
 Muncaster, Lord
 Murphy, Nicholas Daniel
 Newdegate, Charles Newdigate
 Newport, Viscount
 Nicholson, William
 North, Colonel
 O'Conor, Denis Maurice (Sligo Co.)

O'Conor Don, The (Roscommon)
 O'Loughlen, Rt. Hon. Sir Colman M.
 O'Reilly-Dease, Matthew (Louth)
 Pakington, Right Hon. Sir John
 Palmer, Sir Roundell (Richmond)
 Parker, Lt.-Col. Windsor (Suff. W.)
 Patten, Rt. Hon. Colonel Wilson
 Pease, Joseph Whitwell
 Peel, Arthur Wellesley (Warwick)
 Philips, R. Needham
 Phipps, Charles Paul
 Pim, Jonathan
 Plunket, Hon. David Robert
 Portman, Hon. W. Hen. B.
 Potter, Edmund (Carlisle)
 Raikes, Henry Cecil
 Ridley, Matthew White
 Russell, Arthur (Tavistock)
 Salomons, Sir David
 Salt, Thomas
 Samuda, Joseph D'Aguiar
 Seymour, Alfred
 Simonds, William Barrow
 Smith, Abel (Herts)
 Smith, Fred. C. (Notts, N.)
 Smith, Rowland (Derbyshire S.)
 Smith, Samuel George (Aylesbury)
 Somerset, Lord Henry R. C.
 Stanley, Hon. Fred. (Lanc. N.)
 Steere, Lee
 Stone, William Henry
 Storks, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Knight
 Strutt, Hon. Henry
 Stuart, Colonel
 Talbot, John Gilbert (Kent, W.)
 Thynne, Lord Henry Fred.
 Tite, Sir William
 Tollemache, Major W. F. (Ches. W.)
 Torrens, Robert R. (Camb. Boro.)
 Tracy, Hn. Chas. R. D. Hanbury
 Turner, Charles (Lanc. S. W.)
 Turnor, Edmund (Linc. S.)
 Vandeleur, Colonel
 Verney, Sir Harry
 Vivian, Henry Hussey (Glamor.)
 Walpole, Hon. Fred. (Norf. N.)
 Watney, James
 Weguelin, Thomas M.
 Welby, William Earle
 Wells, William (Peterborough)
 Whatman, James
 Whitwell, John
 Williams, Sir Fred. M. (Truro)
 Winn, Rowland (Linc. N.)
 Winterbotham, Hen. Selfe Page
 Wyndham, Hon. Percy
 Wynn, Sir Watkin W. (Denbighs.)
 Wynn, Chas. W. Williams (Mont.)

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Bouverie and Mr. Scourfield.

PAIRS.

FOR	AGAINST.
Brise, Colonel S. B. Ruggles	Pell, Albert
Brown, A. H.	Seely, Charles
Dickson, Major	Sackville, S. G. Stopford-
Disraeli, B.	Hutton, John
Figgins, J.	Walter, J.
Gilpin, C.	Cartwright, W. C.
Herbert, H. A.	Milles, Hon. George W.
Hesketh, Sir T. G.	Waterhouse, S.
Hill, A. S.	Walker, Major
Holmesdale, Viscount	Yarmouth, Earl of
Lennox, Lord H.	Denison, C. B.
Lopes, Sir Massey	Paget, Major
Miall, E.	St. Aubyn, J.
Richard, H.	Leeman, G.
Round, J.	Bowmont, Marquis of
Simon, Sergeant	Verner, E. W.
White, J.	Hanmer, Sir J.
Yorke, J. R.	Tollemache, F.