WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

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ANNUAL MEETING

OF

Che Edinburgh Rational Society for Women's Suffrage

HELD 20th MARCH 1903,

IN

THE OAK HALL, 70 PRINCES STREET,

Miss LOUISA STEVENSON in the Chair,

AT WHICH THE

THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

Of the Society was adopted.

SPEAKERS.

MISS LOUISA STEVENSON, MISS KATE RYLEY, SOUTHPORT, REV. A. M. SUTHERLAND, MISS FLORA C. STEVENSON, C. E. PRICE, Esq., J. W. GULLAND, Esq., Ex-Bailie LEWIS.

> EDINBURGH: THE DARIEN PRESS, BRISTO PLACE.

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OF

COMMITTEE.

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This Society consists of all friendly to its objects, and who subscribe to its Funds.

EDINBURGH

Mational Society for Women's Suffrage.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage held its Annual Meeting in the Oak Hall, 70 Princes Street, on Friday afternoon, 20th March 1903, at three o'clock. Miss Louisa Stevenson presided, and there was a good attendance.

Among those present were—Mrs Steel, Miss Flora C. Stevenson, the Rev. A. M. Sutherland, Mrs Sutherland, Miss Kate Ryley, Southport; Miss S. E. S. Mair, Mrs Lang Todd, C. E. Price, Esq., Mrs Leslie Mackenzie, Mrs Cash, Aberdeen; J. W. Gulland, Esq., Lady Struthers, Mrs Christison, Mrs Gibson, Mrs Balgarnie, Miss Clapperton, Miss Brand, Mrs Clark, Ex-Bailie Lewis, Mrs Robertson, Dunfermline; Mrs Forman, Miss M'Laren, Mrs Binnie, Mrs Boémé, Edwin Adam, Esq., Mrs Lovell Gulland, Mrs Allan Campbell, Bailie Waterston, Miss Lawrie, William Watson, Esq., C.A., Mrs and Miss Morison, Miss Lawrie, William Watson, Esq., M.D., Mrs Watson, Miss Anderson, Mrs Taylor, Glasgow, and others, including a large number of members of the Society.

Miss METHVEN, the Honorary Secretary, intimated apologies for absence from—Mrs Duncan M'Laren, Newington House (President of the Society), Walter S. B. M'Laren, Esq., the Lady Frances Balfour, J. E. Parrott, Esq., LL.D., the Rev. George Jackson, B.A., Miss E. S. Haldane, Cloanden; the Rev. Leonard M. Isitt, Mrs R. A. Watson, Dundee ("Deas Cromarty"), Councillor Douglas, the Rev. Dugald Butler, Mrs Butler, and others.

"Deas Cromarty" wrote :---

"I have intended for some time back to write and thank you for the Report of the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage, and express my concurrence in the demand that women and men shall stand on one equal footing in the matter of the franchise. 'Taxation without representation is tyranny.' We are being forced back, every day, on that old protest; and the woman taxpayer is being driven back upon it, finding, as she does, that her services in canvassing, &c., are willingly accepted by Members of Parliament who, nevertheless, remain opposed to the principle that 'taxation and representation go together' — opposed, at any rate, to the woman's share in this great principle. But the woman's share must no longer be ignored. I would certainly attend your meeting on Friday if engagements permitted. Accept this as a note of apology for absence."

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The Rev. George Jackson wrote as follows :---

"I am very sorry indeed that I cannot be with you on the 20th. I have two or three meetings in England that week, as well as two or three in Edinburgh, and I simply dare not add to their number. It is a real disappointment to me, as I am very much interested in your work. It is particularly difficult to refuse anything that Mrs M'Laren asks. I hope you will have a good meeting."

Miss LOUISA STEVENSON moved the adoption of the Committee's Report and Financial Statement, copies of which had been distributed among the audience, the Report being as follows :—

The Committee are glad to report that, though there has again been no opportunity of bringing forward the question of Women's Parliamentary Enfranchisement during the last Session in the House of Commons, there has been no lack of interest taken in the subject in different parts of the country. Meetings have been held, and a large amount of literature has been distributed, with the gratifying result that a number of new members have been added to the Society.

The list of members, however, which we publish with this Report does not show the real increase of numbers as compared with last Report, for the reason that by arrangement with the Women's Suffrage association which has lately been re-organised in Glasgow, a transference has been made of several members who reside in the West of Scotland. We welcome the co-operation of our friends in the West, and we venture to express the hope that they will share with us at no distant date in a victory for our movement.

Part of the work of the Committee during the year has been the spreading of an active interest in the question of Women's Suffrage among the women textile workers in some of our Scottish manufacturing towns. We were fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Miss Reddish, of Bolton, whose successful work among the textile workers of Lancashire and Yorkshire we referred to in our last Report.

Miss Reddish took up the towns of Dundee, Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy, Arbroath, Brechin, and Forfar, and in all those places she enlisted helpers in the work, who visited the factory women and interested them in the movement. They had much encouragement in their work, finding as a rule a ready response from the working women, many of whom expressed strong convictions as to the great need for the admission of women to the right of citizenship as Parliamentary voters, so that they might possess an instrument whereby they could raise the conditions which affect their labour. Having discovered that men had benefited by the vote, they were convinced that it would also be good for them.

That it is of the utmost importance that the women's point of view should in justice be considered, has just been presented with force to the women textile workers of Lancashire. In the bye-election in the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire, a Trades Union candidate, Mr Shackleton, has been elected; and it happens that the majority of the members of Textile Trade Unions in the Division are women; and as the funds of the Unions have been levied for the expenses of the election, and women have had to pay as well as men, the women feel that it is a decided hardship that they have no legal claim on their Member of Parliament to represent their interests as the men now have. We are glad to note, however, that Mr Shackleton is in entire sympathy with the women in their feelings on this matter. In his opening speech at the election (as is stated in the Report of the Manchester Society for Women's Suffrage) he said that "the Women's Suffrage question pressed very earnestly upon factory workers. Knowing that if he was returned to Parliament his chief financial support would come from females in the Trade Union, he said it was unfair that they should be called upon to pay taxes for his election and maintenance, and not have a voice in his selection. On broader principles, he claimed that they had a right to have a voice in the affairs of this great nation."

It is also gratifying to us to learn that Mr Shackleton has been willing to put his views into practice by undertaking to ballot for a day to bring forward a Women's Suffrage Bill in the House of Commons.

The work undertaken by the Committee last year among the Scottish women textile workers was very successful, and resulted in the organising of Petitions to the House of Commons praying for the Parliamentary Enfranchisement of Women—the Petitions being signed by over 4,000 women.

It is proposed that these Petitions be presented personally to the Members of Parliament from whose constituencies they have emanated, as was done with the English Petitions presented by deputations in the House of Commons last year. It is hoped in this way to gain a firmer hold on the convictions of the several Members of Parliament as to the earnestness of women in their desire to have this reform carried. Owing to the very fact of their being voteless, women have great difficulty in getting their claims attended to. Meetings are held, and resolutions are passed and forwarded to the Member of the constituency begging him for his support in Parliament, but these resolutions are, as a rule, merely coldly acknowledged, without any expression of opinion on the subject being given at all.

Such treatment is disappointing to the workers for the movement. But we cannot allow discouragement to cause us to relax our efforts. We have to persevere rather with the more earnestness until our cause is won.

Interesting meetings have been held in Edinburgh in connection with the Southern Division Women's Liberal Association, the Women's Co-operative Association, the Young Women's Guild of United Free St Bernard's Church, and the House Guild of the Atholl Crescent Missionary Training Institute.

Successful meetings have also been held in connection with the Women's Liberal Associations in Paisley, and Gordon, Berwickshire.

On these several occasions papers were read by Mrs Clark, Miss Lees, Miss Methven, Mrs Steel, and Miss J. F. Wilson.

The Committee have also considered it advisable to hold meetings in those places where the women workers have been organising Petitions, and a beginning has been made with Dunfermline. Successful gatherings have lately been held there, and addresses given by members of the Committee. The first meeting was held in connection with the Women's Co-operative Guild, when a paper was read by Miss Methven. The second meeting was held under the auspices of the Women's Liberal Association, and an address was delivered on this occasion by Mrs Steel. A third meeting took place in connection with the British Women's Temperance Association. From each of those meetings a letter was sent to the Member for the constituency, the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, praying him to use his influence to bring about without delay the extension of the Parliamentary Franchise to those women who possess the qualifications which entitle men to this privilege. The following resolution was also proposed at the second meeting :— "That the Dunfermline Women's Liberal Association should agree to adopt as the groundwork of their constitution, the principle that no assistance should be given in Parliamentary elections to candidates who are opposed to the political enfranchisement of women." This resolution did not find a seconder, but the question was afterwards freely discussed, and hope was expressed that, after further thought on the subject, this course of action would be sanctioned by the Association.

It is earnestly to be desired that this principle will at an early date be adopted by all women's political associations: for the members of Women's Suffrage Societies become every day more strongly convinced that this attitude of so many members of women's political associations in being willing to assist into Parliament men who refuse to recognise the right of women to the full privileges of citizenship, does more than any other kind of opposition to retard the gaining of this necessary reform. What strikes Women's Suffrage workers as most unfortunate is that the members of these associations should so readily have acquiesced in the plans of work arranged for them. We had imagined at the outset that women's political associations were formed so that the women's point of view might be considered in relation to politics, and that questions specially affecting them would receive more attention than had ever been given them before; and that, above all, the question of the political enfranchisement of duly qualified women would at last be acknowledged as an essential item of political creed. But instead of this, each year shows that the real reason for forming women's associations under the influence of the several political parties has been that women might be enlisted to help with the work of increasing the efficiency of the existing party programmes and organisations, to strengthen each party indirectly by assisting in the heavy detail work of the men's associations. These women workers give assistance in canvassing-many, unfortunately, as already noted, do not object to canvass for votes for candidates who are opposed to the canvassers having votes themselves,-they also do their share of the hard work of tracing lost electors, they assist in getting up bazaars for men's political clubs, and make themselves useful in many other ways. Not that there is any reason why women should not take part in the accessory work of various kinds which all good causes entail, but the objectionable part of the arrangement is that these kind helpers are made to understand that any aspirations they may have as to taking their legitimate, direct, and effective share in the politics of the nation, by being themselves enfranchised, must

be kept carefully in the background. We would have expected that in return for such help, men politicians would have been ashamed to defer any longer this act of justice to women; but it is evident that as long as women are willing to remain in this inferior and illogical position the members of the various political parties have no intention of lifting them out of it. It is for the women's political associations then to bestir themselves, and the Committee earnestly hope that they will not rest until this essential reform is carried into law.

Another part of the work of the Committee during the year has been the sending of letters to men's political associations in the different constituencies requesting them to get the question of Women's Suffrage adopted by their central organisations. We are very glad indeed to report that we have had most encouraging replies from many of these associations; but, as we have already stated, we feel that such requests from the Society would be more productive of successful results if we could gain the co-operation of the corresponding women's associations.

In the Report of last year we referred to the interesting deputations of women factory workers who presented petitions to Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. We have pleasure in recording another important petition which has since been presented in a similar way, that of the women graduates of Great Britain and Ireland. The petition was signed by 750 women graduates, and was presented by a large deputation of the graduates, who were introduced in the Grand Committee Room of the House of Commons to the Members representing the Universities. The Members present were Mr Lecky (Dublin), Mr Talbot (Oxford), Sir William Anson (Oxford), Sir John Batty Tuke (Edinburgh and St Andrews), and Mr Campbell (Glasgow and Aberdeen). The petition ran as follows :---

" The Humble Petition of the undersigned Women Graduates of the Universities of London, Victoria, Durham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St Andrews; the University of Wales, and the Royal University of Ireland,

"Sheweth-

"That your Petitioners, being Graduates of Universities in the United Kingdom--many of them actually qualified to be registered as voters for the representation of their University-are of opinion that lack of political status causes serious detriment to women in matters affecting their work and influence in education.

"They submit-

- "(a) That the needs of girls and women for Technical tion.
- "(b) That in the Secondary Schools the claims of girls to a recognised.
- "(c) That in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge tions are not admitted to Degrees.

"Further, your Petitioners regard with alarm any proposals to create local educational authorities for Primary and Secondary Schools to which women would not be eligible for election.

"They submit that the education of the children of the country is largely in the hands of women, who are nevertheless at serious economic disadvantage in their profession, owing to their exclusion from the Franchise, and that the only permanent safeguard to the present and future interests of women in all matters of education is the recognition of their claim to be registered as Parliamentary Electors.

"Wherefore your Petitioners humbly pray your Honourable House to pass a measure enfranchising those women who have the qualifications entitling men to vote."

Miss Esther Roper, B.A., Miss Beatrice Harraden, B.A., Mrs Enid Stacey, B.A., Miss E. Howarth, M.A., Mrs Clothier, B.Litt., and Miss Cooke, M.A., set forth the views of the Petitioners in excellent speeches.

There have been several interesting occasions during the year in our own city on which the subject of Women's Suffrage has been brought forward, though not in connection with this Society. One of these was in connection with the visit of the Colonial Premiers to Edinburgh and the conferring of honorary degrees upon them by the University. The incident of especial interest to us was that in introducing Mr Seddon, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Sir Ludovic Grant, the Dean of the Faculty of Law, referred to the women of New Zealand being politically enfranchised. Sir Ludovic said, "In respect of recent developments in the Scottish Universities, I must not omit to mention that Mr Seddon is the first responsible Minister in the Empire who has passed a bill for Women's Suffrage."

Advantage was taken of the visit of the Premiers to this country to present to Sir Edmund Barton, the Premier of the newly formed

Education have met with very inadequate recogni-

fair share of Educational endowments are not

women who have passed all the qualifying examina-

Australian Commonwealth, and to Mr Seddon, addresses from the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. These addresses were presented, on two separate occasions, by deputations, of which Lady Onslow, Mrs Fawcett, Lady Frances Balfour, Lady Henry Somerset, Mrs Percy Bunting, and others, were members; and interesting replies were made by the Premiers, expressing their satisfaction with the adoption of Women's Suffrage in Australia and New Zealand. Sir Edmund Barton explained that as the Federal Parliament has placed the Enfranchisement of Women on the Statute Book, all the women of Australia have now a vote for the Commonwealth, although only two of the six federated States had as yet extended the Franchise to women. Sir Edmund, however, did not imagine that it would be long before the four remaining States-Victoria, New South Wales,* Queensland, and Tasmaniawould follow the good example of the others and admit women as electors for their State Parliaments. Sir Edmund added that "nothing but good had come from the adoption of Women's Suffrage in Australia." Mr Seddon also, on the occasion of the presentation of the Address and on many other occasions during his visit, spoke with enthusiasm of the entirely satisfactory results which the political

enfranchisement of women had shown since its adoption in New Zealand eight years ago. He expressed great surprise also that Britain should be so far behind on this subject, and he hoped that the good example set by the Colonies would soon be followed by the Mother Country.

The history of the movement for Women's Suffrage in the Colonies is of great interest to us at home. We find that they have to fight against the same opposition there as we still have here. One of the arguments used there has been the one which meets us so constantly—that women themselves do not want the vote, that they do not make use of the votes they have, and that they would not use the Parliamentary vote if they got it. It is a satisfaction to us to note that the newspapers are recording how unmistakably this objection is being answered by the women of Australia. Just to quote from one newspaper, *The Sydney Bulletin*. It is there stated that "rumours were in circulation that Australian women, having been given the Franchise, would never use the privilege. But the actual compiling of the electoral roll has put another face on the matter, proving the women to be most eager to enjoy their political rights."

* Since the occasion of Sir Edmund Barton's speech, the victory for Women's uffrage has been won in New South Wales.

Another interesting occasion in Edinburgh which, though not directly connected with this Society, brought into prominence the question of Women's Suffrage, was the Conference held in October of the National Union of Women Workers. A very successful Women's Suffrage meeting was held on the opening day of the Conference. The Countess of Aberdeen presided, and addresses were given on the position of the movement at home and in the Colonies by Miss Louisa Stevenson, Mrs Sheldon Amos, Lady Frances Balfour, Mrs Greenlees, and others. The strong interest felt in the question was proved by the passing, at the meeting of Council held two days later, of the following Resolution, which was proposed by Miss Louisa Stevenson and seconded by Mrs Arthur Francis:—"That without the firm foundation of the Parliamentary Franchise for women, there is no permanence for any advance gained by them."

The truth embodied in this Resolution has been brought home to women very forcibly in connection with the passing of the Education Bill, which, through the transferring of the educational authority in England to County and Borough Councils, for which women are not eligible as members, is a deprivation to women and to the public. For though the new Education Act provides that women shall be co-opted to the Education Committees by the members of the County and Borough Councils, it is widely acknowledged that this places women in a very inferior position to being directly elected by the public to School Boards, on which they have admittedly done such good work. The same is experienced now as happened in London two years ago, when the London Vestries were changed into Borough Councils. In the same way women who had been members of Vestries, and had done excellent work as such in the service of the community, were deprived of these privileges through their ineligibility for seats on the Borough Councils. As a remedy for these unfortunately retrograde steps, women have become more and more convinced that the possession of the Parliamentary vote is of urgent necessity.

The Committee regret to record the death of Miss Forbes, Aberdeen, who had been for some years an interested member of the Society.

We also record with regret the death of two well-known workers in the Women's Suffrage movement—Miss Helen Blackburn and Mrs Cady Stanton.

II

that every qualified woman, be she Liberal, Unionist, or Conservative, should have the right to have her name inscribed on the register of qualified voters. Difference of political opinion had not hindered them from joining heart and hand in working loyally together with this end in view; indeed, they found that the more they respected one another's opinions in such matters, the clearer became the light which shone upon their own. It was very difficult to say why this battle had been so long in being won, considering that no one had ever been known to furnish any arguments against it to which any respect could be paid. Still, the old opponents kept saying the same thing. Only the other day, when referring to it casually, a gentleman turned to her and said, "Well, but you forget that might and power must be behind everything." She reminded him of what was a well-known fact in regard to the re-organisation of the army, that 50 per cent. of the men who applied to recruiting officers for enlistment were rejected on the ground of want of strength. In a report issued a short time ago in connection with the city of Manchester, it was stated that out of the 11,000 men who presented themselves to a recruiting sergeant, 8,000 were rejected, while many more were further rejected when they came to be inspected by the medical officer. Now, had those people who were rejected on account of physical disability to fight been deprived of their votes, there would have been some reason in the argument that because women did not fight they must not vote. (Laughter and applause.) Another fact that struck one as rather remarkable was that in spite of all the talk in recent times about Imperialism and the unity of the Empire, they of the mother-country were left outside the privilege of the franchise, while their sister-women in the Colonies were admitted to it. (Applause.) If there were any real earnestness in this demand for unity, she thought that one of the first steps would be to put the women of the country on an equal footing. The Report alluded to the visit of the Colonial Premiers to this country, and in connection with this she thought it was encouraging to note that Sir Edmund Barton had explained that as the Federal Parliament had placed the Enfranchisement of Women on the Statute Book, all the women of Australia have now a vote for the Commonwealth, although only two of the six federated States had at that time extended the Franchise to women. He did not, however, imagine that it would be long before the remaining States would follow the good example of the others, and admit women as electors for the State Parliaments, and New South Wales had already done so. Sir Edmund added that "nothing but good had come from the adoption of Women's Suffrage in Australia." This strong testimony from the Premier of the Australian Common-

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Miss Blackburn, as Honorary Secretary of the Central Committee for Women's Suffrage in London, as editor also for a number of years of the Englishwoman's Review, and as author of the excellent "Record of the Women's Suffrage Movement," lately published, has done much to advance the cause of Women's Enfranchisement. She will be widely missed by all who take an interest in the work to which she devoted herself, and she will be ever gratefully remembered for all that she so successfully accomplished.

The field of Mrs Cady Stanton's work has lain chiefly in America, but her influence has not been confined to her own nation. As was stated in the resolution of sympathy from the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, "The Committee recognise her not only as one of the originators of the movement for Women's Suffrage in the United States but also as one whose life has been a force in the movement for the Enfranchisement of Women in other countries as well as her own."

We are grateful for the memory of these pioneers, whose influence will ever remain, and we are grateful for the inspiring help of those who are still with us. It is they who have opened up the way of wider interests for women, and it is for those who come after them to spare no effort for the attainment of this great measure of justice for women for which they have so earnestly worked.

Miss LOUISA STEVENSON, on rising to move the adoption of the Annual Report, was very cordially received. She said she would first of all call their attention to the fact that it was the thirty-second Report of the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage. For thirty-two long years they had been doing their utmost to lay their claims before the public and before Parliament-they all knew with what results. There was one matter upon which she thought the members of the Society were greatly to be congratulated-that during the course of those thirty-two years they had had the great privilege of having Mrs Bright M'Laren as their President. (Applause.) She was perfectly certain that many of the members who had not had opportunities for coming into contact with Mrs M'Laren could have no idea of how, during all this long weary time, her enthusiasm had inspired and encouraged them to go on in their demand for what they considered fair. (Applause.) There was one characteristic of their Society to which she wished to call attention, and that was that it had absolutely nothing to do with party politics. (Applause.) Every shade of political opinion was represented on the Committee. They were, however, unanimous in their demand

wealth had been corroborated by many of the other Premiers, and she thought that any one who had any fear as to the effect of women's enfranchisement might take courage from this, and believe that what worked well in Australia would work equally well in this country. (Hear, hear.) They were often asked why it was that these meetings, held so frequently, did so little good. She had already publicly quoted what had been said in this connection by a member of Parliament, who put the case into a nutshell thus :--- "For women to meet and demand this franchise is simply like-so long as they are not enfranchised-pulling a bell-rope with no bell at the end to ring, or like speaking into a telephone with no one at the other end to listen." They had been doing these things for thirty-two years, and yet, so far as they knew at present, though they were much further on, they were not in sight of the attainment of what they were asking for. They must, however, bear in mind that there had been no opportunity for them to judge of the opinion of the present Parliament as to the state of this question, and they could hardly tell where they stood till a vote was taken in the House on a Women's Suffrage Bill. It was a trying position, therefore, for the Society, but they did not intend to allow themselves to be discouraged in going working steadily on in the earnest hope that right would in the end triumph. She, personally, felt perfectly sure that this would be the case. One of the most hopeful signs of their work recently had been the demand for this vote from the women textile workers in different parts of the country. Those women knew where the shoe pinched; they knew how they were hampered by the want of political representation. Miss STEVENSON then proceeded to read from the Report a paragraph relating to the bye-election in the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire in relation to the women members of Textile Trade Unions in that Division, and to Mr Shackleton's having undertaken to ballot for a Women's Suffrage Bill in the House of Commons. Continuing, Miss STEVENSON said they all knew, however, that unless a Member of Parliament secured a place amongst the first ten or twelve in the Ballot, there was very little hope of his being able to do anything to help them in the way of bringing forward a Bill.

It was also encouraging to note in the Report that petitions to the House of Commons praying for the Parliamentary Enfranchisement of Women had been organised among the Scottish Women Textile Workers. Some work had been done in Dundee, Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy, Arbroath, Brechin, and Forfar, and in all those places the factory women were interested in the movement. Those women had discovered that men had benefited by the vote, and they naturally supposed that they themselves would also

benefit in the event of their being enfranchised in the same way. She would call their attention also to a remarkable Petition signed by 750 women graduates of the different Universities of the United Kingdom and Ireland, which was presented by a large deputation of the graduates, who were introduced in the Grand Committee Room of the House of Commons to the Members representing the Universities. It seemed to her almost incomprehensible that women with all the culture which is gained by University studies and the taking of a degree should be absolutely debarred from taking part in what would be the policy of their country. (Hear, hear.) It was at the same time the opinion of many that if success were to come to them, it would come largely through the textile workers, for to those women especially, the possession of the vote was a matter of life and death-of bread and butter, as it was called -and their influence, properly organised, would affect Parliament even more strongly than that of the University women. It was a strange thing that the present Government, which had been so long in power, had done nothing for Women's Suffrage. The Prime Minister, speaking at a Unionist meeting in Manchester in 1891, said, "If you really mean to go in and deal with the anomalies of representation in the spirit of statesmen, you are bound to have the Women's Suffrage Bill." Now, here was an acknowledgment from the Prime Minister of the country that the Government was not acting in a statesmanlike way in refusing women the vote, and still there was no word of its bringing forward such a measure. She thought that they might possibly be nearer success than they imagined, but at the same time she believed they must all work as though they felt that all the work was yet to be done. One never knew when the tide would turn, and they must hold themselves ready to take their part in assisting in the legislation of their country when the time came. Miss STEVENSON concluded by formally moving the adoption of the Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Edinburgh National Society for Women's Suffrage, in which was included the Financial Statement.

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The Rev. A. M. SUTHERLAND, in seconding the adoption of the Report, said he had no qualification, as far as he could conceive, for taking up such an honourable position as had been assigned to him at that time, except perhaps from the point of view that when a man looked at a subject for the first time it was probably more interesting and fresh than when one had looked at it, say for thirtytwo years, and had become acquainted with all the intellectual aspects of the question. He had only lately come to study the

question of Women's Suffrage. Zola once said that when he was going to write a book of travel he depended entirely upon the first fortnight's impressions of his travel, and he (the speaker) was in a somewhat similar position with regard to the subject in hand. He had not been led to it along the usual lines. The first time the question came closely and practically before him was in connection. with the subject of the Temperance crusade. He found in existence, for example, a great body of women, an association of great-hearted saintly women, full of hope and faith in Christ, toiling and moiling. at this great question of temperance. He found that they had a thousand centres at which they could focus at any time the opinion of the women of the country, and he thought that here was a splendid institution for settling the great problem of intemperance. To his dismay, however, he discovered that even after those women had focussed their opinion and expressed it, they had no power to carry it into action, and it seemed to him that that was a somewhat anomalous position for them to hold. Although a woman showed that she had brains and capability enough to plan and organise her work in this way, she was denied the power to carry her plans into execution! If all the women in Britain were not members of the Women's Suffrage Society, in his opinion, they ought to be. He could not conceive the British Women's Temperance Association being outside this Society. It was not enough for British women to wish that they should have the vote. As one of the Society's members once said, "You must intend it as well as wish it." (Applause.) By uniting strongly together, he thought, they would impress their views more strongly on the country. He certainly had always asked himself why women had not the vote? he had never been able to understand it, and had tried to discover the reasons of its being denied to them. He found it said again and again that women did not want it, that they would not use it if they had it. He had just heard, however, that the women of Australia had wanted it, and had used it too.

Miss STEVENSON—At the last election 75 per cent. of the women voted.

Mr SUTHERLAND, resuming, said that was certainly an argument for their stirring themselves more than ever to declare that it was not only a question of wishing to have the vote theoretically, but to have it in order to carry out some practical purpose. He read the other day of a speech made by a distinguished authority at Munich, in which it was argued that there were certain things that women could not do, and it was pointed out that in the region of creative genius Nature had never produced a woman Handel or a Shakespeare. The doctor said, however, that there was one region in which women were not only equal but superior to men-the region of social science. That was the region where they needed the vote most. Then people said, "It would spoil women to have a vote. They are the angels of the house." He agreed they were the angels of the house, but angels had to protect the home, and they also needed means of protecting it. What could be a better way of being a true angel of the world than by saying what foes should or should not enter into domestic life? (Hear, hear.) He had heard it said that women would be out of place in the turmoil of political life, but if they entered the turmoil to fight for men (as in organisations like the Primrose League), why should not they enter it to fight for themselves as well? Why should they be out of it when the victory was won? This argument against the enfranchisement of women, that its effect would be to destroy the charm of womanhood, was very often used. He did not think, however, that Miss Stevenson was any less charming to-day than when she entered the School Board. For his part he was inclined to think that women would really throw a charm over the whole situation. The real fact was that charm came from character, and when a woman was using her qualifications where she could be of use, her character was developed in the process. A great many of the arguments used about this matter seemed to proceed either from men who did not want women to have the vote or from their wives. Not long ago there was a body of women who protested against themselves getting a vote. Surely they must have been under the spell of those already in possession of the vote! When travelling in North Africa in the springtime, he was very much saddened to discover the position of women there among the Moors, the Arabs, the Bedouins, and the Berbers, and he felt what a fatal blot that was upon the Moslem faith. He felt thankful that he belonged to a country where the women were free, and where they enjoyed all the rights and privileges which Christ conferred upon them. But was there not a remnant of paganism lingering in our country still, so long as men would not allow women to have this political liberty which was their right? (Hear, hear.) He maintained strongly that the more this question was looked into, the less reason was found for keeping back the vote from women. He felt that he would soon become very enthusiastic about the subject, although he was as yet only a beginner, because the more one looked into it, the more interesting it became. Women were supposed to be in the position of having no will of their own, but he maintained that men who believed that of women had not gauged them properly at

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all. As soon as women had really made up their minds that they wanted the vote, men would not be able to refuse it. They must enlarge their borders and make men realise that they would not rest satisfied until they had it. He should like to have the British Women's Temperance Association more closely bound up with this Society, so that they might band together to show their firm determination never to relax their efforts till they had secured, as effectually and rapidly as possible, the right for which they had striven so long. He had much pleasure in seconding the adoption of the Report.

Miss STEVENSON—Ladies and gentlemen, the Report has been formally moved from the Chair and duly seconded. Is it your pleasure that it be adopted?

The motion having been carried unanimously,

Miss KATE RYLEY, Southport, moved the following Resolution :--

"That this Meeting is of opinion that our legislators should pass without delay a measure for extending the Parliamentary franchise to women, seeing that it is an injustice, not only to women themselves, but to the country generally, that women should be denied the right of taking their effective share in the legislative work of the State; and that this injustice is emphasised by the fact that the women of Great Britain are now in this respect placed in a lower position than the women of our Colonies."

Miss Ryley said she considered it a very great honour to have been asked by the Committee of the Society to speak there that afternoon. She came from the south, where people were accustomed to look up to Scotland as something like a pioneer in all matters of liberty. She had found it necessary to come to Edinburgh to get a little inspiration as to what they were to do in England to resist what she could not help calling the very iniquitous new Education Act. She had heard that the Edinburgh people had some years ago gone through a similar ordeal when they resisted the Edinburgh Annuity Act or Tax. From the volumes and pamphlets bearing on the subject she had learned how the people in Edinburgh had resisted a tax of which they did not approve nigh unto death. If Edinburgh had given them that example, she thought the question of Women's Suffrage ought to be considered that afternoon from the most drastic point possible. What were they to do? Miss Stevenson had told them that the Report was the thirty-second of the Society, and had acknowledged at the same time that very little material progress had been made during those thirty-two years. What was the reason of this state of things? She would like with their permission to give them what she considered some of the points upon which their failure to attain their object might be based. One reason of their failure was that they were working to-day against some difficult odds. Since the passing of the Married Women's Property Act, due largely to the efforts of Mrs Jacob Bright, great numbers of women had entered business life, had taken up professions and arts, and had all their energies so employed in one direction that they had no time left to devote to the gaining of their Parliamentary freedom. Then they had lost another great section of their allies and supporters by the passing of the Act of 1870 (unfortunately destroyed now in England by the new Education Act), by which women were enabled, without any distinction of sex or qualification by marriage or otherwise, to stand as the equals of men for election to School Boards. They in Scotland would have to see to it that they did not allow their School Boards to perish, as theirs in England had done, by a stroke of the pen! Well, School Boards and other Boards were responsible for another subtraction from the number of women who might otherwise have been free to help in the work of Women's Suffrage Societies.

Miss Ryley then proceeded to state at some length her views with regard to the part taken in politics by women since the early days of the Primrose League, and the position of the different political parties in relation to the Women's Suffrage question. Women had been encouraged to work for Parliamentary candidates on the understanding that, in return, the claims of Women's Suffrage would be recognised and supported in the House. This arrangement worked smoothly enough until men of both parties began to be alarmed at the ground being gradually won by the question, and to retreat from their position in regard to it. Some women allowed themselves to be bought off, other brave women (on both sides of politics) stood firm, and the struggle was now still being vigorously carried on. She thought there was not much doubt as to how it must inevitably end, if women remained consistent and persevering in their efforts. But the question was what were they to do to attain their object? There was one way in which they could all help on this movement for Women's Suffrage, and that was by approaching Members of Parliament personally and asking them to bring pressure to bear on the Government. They in Southport had tried this plan with their representative, and the results had been most satisfactory. He appointed a day and hour for one

or two of them to meet him in the House of Commons, and when he had expressed himself in favour of women standing for election to School Boards, the delegates asked him if nothing could possibly be done to retain their services on such bodies. His reply was, "As at present advised, we do not see our way to allowing women to stand for contested elections." When asked for a reason, he gave this most remarkable one: "We men feel that when women contest elections with us, their blandishments are such that they put us in a very awkward position !" (Laughter.) He admitted that if sufficient pressure were brought to bear, it was not unlikely that Government would change its opinion, and added, "and very glad we shall be to welcome women if they will come in and take their part." She hoped the women of Edinburgh would follow this example, and interview their Parliamentary representatives on the subject of Women's Parliamentary Enfranchisement. In nine cases out of ten the results would be found to be satisfactory. If this were done systematically, they would be able to get a consensus of the opinions of the present Members of the House of Commons, without waiting till a vote was taken on the subject. Before concluding, she would like to give them a message from Mrs M'Laren to the effect that she (their President), whilst rejoicing. that girls were expected in these more advanced times to take up games and physical training as a needful part of education, was sometimes afraid there was a danger of too much energy being devoted to pleasure : amusements and athletics too often forming their chief topics of conversation. She also deprecated the Press treating prominent women as though the object of their existencewas to act as advertisements of extravagant and fashionable dress. The speaker concluded by moving the Resolution, which was seconded by

Mr J. W. GULLAND, who said that it was not necessary at this time to argue the question of the right of women to the suffrage, but that there were one or two points before the public at the present time which he thought enforced the claim. The Government had just introduced a Licensing Bill. This was a good Bill as far as it went, but in his opinion it was a Bill upon which the opinion of women as electors should be expressed. (Applause.) If women had votes that Bill would be made a great deal stronger than it was. Then there was talk going on as to the position of women on the introduction of the Scottish Education Bill next year. He was sure that if women had power to vote and if the School Boards were to be retained, they would insist that women should be eligible for election to these Boards. (Applause.) In this connection might

he remark that in his opinion the two most necessary and most useful members of the Edinburgh School Board were Miss Stevenson and Mrs Kerr? (Applause.) He hoped the women of Edinburgh would take care that both those ladies were elected, and then he was sure that Miss Stevenson would be re-elected to the Chair which she so much adorned. (Hear, hear.) If the new Bill were to do away with women on these Boards they should insist that some women should be co-opted to them, because it would be simply disastrous if the work of education were to be taken wholly out of the hands of women. Might he say as an outsider with regard to Women's Suffrage, "Peg away; have meetings of your own, and take advantage of other people's meetings too." He thought it was very good business to use other people's meetings. Let them take advantage of every opportunity of putting in a word for themselves. He hoped the Honorary Secretary would tell Mrs M'Laren how much the citizens of Edinburgh enjoyed her occasional letters to the Scotsman. Something happened, and Mrs M'Laren wrote a letter that hit the nail on the head, and did a great deal of good in a quiet way. It was guite possible that they were much nearer victory than they imagined. The Government seemed to be losing popularity, and it was quite possible that Mr Balfour might yield to pressure a point which he seemed to have already yielded in argument. The Government, in order to ensure a return to power, might give the vote to women in the hope that women might vote for them. Supposing there should be a General Election and the Liberals were returned to power, perhaps they would extend the vote to women in the hope that their differences would be settled and their unity assured. In any case he was certain that women would not have to wait another thirty-two years before getting what they wanted.

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Miss FLORA STEVENSON, speaking in support of the Resolution, said a good deal had been said as to the reasons why women had not yet got the Parliamentary vote. There was no doubt it had been long delayed, but she thought it would be a mistake to come to the conclusion that the work of the Suffrage Society had been in vain, for she was confident that a great many of the advantages which had been given to people educationally and socially had been due to the work of the Women's Suffrage Societies. (Hear, hear.) She believed it was largely due to the action of the Women's Suffrage Societies that the Married Women's Property Bill was passed. She believed it was largely due to the conduct of women in supporting their claims for an extension of the franchise that Parliament in its wisdom allowed women to be elected to School

office-bearers, the result being that in that body they had an organisation equal in progress to any, and certainly second to none in usefulness in the country. (Hear, hear.) Reference had been made to the position of co-opted members on the Educational Boards. Personally, while allowing that co-opted members were perfectly desirable, he believed that members should be popularly elected to those bodies. It seemed to him that to refuse women the right to vote was most unjust and illogical, in view of the fact that during the long reign of the late Queen every Act of Parliament had to get the consent of a woman before it became law. He had heard it said that the Queen simply assented to the Acts of Parliament submitted to her, but any one who read the Life of the Queen by Mr Sidney Lee, recently published, would see that she did something more than merely assent, that she took a keen and intelligent interest in all that concerned her kingdom and her people, showing how perfectly qualified she was to hold her high position. It was also true that in all positions of trust and usefulness filled by women, they had shown how eminently fitted they were to exercise the power of voting. (Applause.)

The Resolution, having been put to the meeting from the Chair, was unanimously adopted.

Mr DAVID LEWIS, rising to propose a hearty vote of thanks to the various speakers, and especially to the lady who had so ably occupied the Chair, said that the subject appeared to him to admit of no discussion. Every conceivable argument that could be stated against it had disappeared many years ago, and so long as they could point to the Parish Councils, to the School Board, and to the various other institutions where women were entitled not only to vote, but to sit upon these bodies, the idea of opposing this simple, just, and righteous measure appeared to him to be outside the question. (Hear, hear.) The speeches they had listened to were admirable. He would like to tell them, by way of encouragement, that they had become a recognised power among the people, more especially in the Town Council. If he might give them a hint, he would suggest that something might be made of their influence in the Town Council, especially at election times, when the help and co-operation of women were solicited by the candidates. When they were invited to help on election committees, let them say, "Before we go on your Committee to work, we want to put to you this question: 'In the event of being returned to the Town Council, will you pledge yourself to introduce a motion into the Council to the effect that the Town Council petition Parliament through its Lord Provost, Magistrates,

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Boards and also to Parish Councils. She was convinced that if women were really in earnest, and if they devoted their efforts to securing the co-operation of every class of women, they would in the end attain their object. Now, a good deal had been said lately as to the position of women under the present English Education Act, and also as to their position under the coming Scottish Education Act. Well, personally, at that moment she felt as if she should like to have been in the position of a co-opted woman. (Laughter.) It would have been a relief to have been saved the turmoil of a contested election. She thought both arrangements might be possible, because the Government in the English Education Bill had made it compulsory that there should be a woman on every one of the Education Committees. It was true that they were not elected by popular vote, but they were co-opted as the men were co-opted by the County Councils and by the Borough Councils. She was quite certain that in any case they in Scotland would lose no opportunity of securing for women and for the electors the power of placing women on their educational authorities. She should also like to say that they in Scotland had always taken advantage of the opportunity of bringing their views before their Members of Parliament, whom they had always found very courteous and encouraging. Indeed, as a matter of fact, if the question of the enfranchisement of women had been left to the Scottish Members, the majority of them would have had it long ago. (Applause.) Miss Stevenson concluded with an appeal to such of the audience as were not already members of the Society to take this opportunity of joining and so identify themselves with its aims and interests.

Mr C. E. PRICE also spoke in support of the Resolution, and said it gave him very great pleasure to do so. When he first received the invitation to this meeting his thoughts went back to a speech he heard delivered on this subject by Miss Wigham, certainly the ablest speech he had ever heard in his life. It was simply scathing in its criticism of the attitude taken up by many in regard to this question. He recalled, too, with great pleasure at the present time, the part taken in this matter by Miss Burton some ten or fifteen years ago. He sincerely hoped that their President, Mrs M'Laren, would be long spared to help and encourage the Society in its efforts. As far as he himself was personally concerned, the only position he could take up in regard to Women's Suffrage was that which a woman herself would take. He held that whatever rights men possessed, women should be placed in exactly the same position. An illustration of the splendid work done by women was found in the Salvation Army, where no distinction of sex was made in the appointing of

and Councillors, in favour of Women's Suffrage?'" (Applause.) He had much pleasure in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the various speakers, and to Miss Stevenson.

The vote of thanks having been cordially given, Miss STEVENSON thanked the meeting in a few words for the kind manner in which it had been received and responded to, remarking that she felt sure they would be glad to hear that Mrs M'Laren was feeling so well that she had seriously thought of coming to the meeting that afternoon. (Applause.)

In response to the appeal for new members, eight ladies gave in their names for enrolment.

Tea was served as usual at the end of the hall, after which the meeting broke up.

We Barno Lewis rising to propose a hearty vote of thinks to occupied the Chair, and that the subject appeared to him to admit occupied the Chair, and that the subject appeared to him to admit of no discussion. Every concernable argument that could be stated against a had disappeared many years ago and so long as they could noted to the Eurish Councie, to the School Board, and to'the various ather assitutions when women were exitiled not only to rote, but to sit areasure appeared to him to be exclude his simple, just, and tightcous measure appeared to him to be outside the question. (Hear, hear.) The speeches they had listened to were admitable. If the would like accounts to the Larish Councie, the top and the transmite measure appeared to him to be outside the question. (Hear, hear.) and the speeches they had listened to were admitable. If the would like to cell them, by way of ecountagement, that they had become a council. If he might give them a finit, he would suggest that something reight be made of their influence in the Town council. If he might give them a finit, he would suggest that especially at election times, when the help and co-operation of wome on election committees, let, them any "Belore we go on you wate solicited by the candidates. When they wate invited to help to instoches their returned to the Town councies their returned to help and co-operation of women is an election to committees, let, them any "Belore we go on you wate solicited by the candidates. When they were invited to help to instoches their returned to the Town councies their returned to help and co-operation of women is instoches the town to put to you this question is in the councies their returned to the Fown to instoches a motion into the Fown founce in the Town to instoches and returned to the Fown to instoches and returned to the fown the fourth for your the first the Town to instoches and returned to the Fown fource in the direct that the Fown

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SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS FOR 1902.

| Affleck, Miss, 38 Heriot Row | | | | £0 | 2 | 6 |
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| Allan, Mrs, Ardlui, Leven | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Anderson, Miss, 2 Church Street | | | | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Arthur, Mrs, of Barshaw, Paisley | | | | 1 | 0 | 0 |
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| Baird, Mrs, 3 Granby Road | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Baker, Miss Eve, Albany Chambers, Glasgow | | | ···· | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Balfour, Miss, 9 Bruntsfield Crescent | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Balgarnie, Mrs, 35 Drummond Place | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Bartholomew, Mrs J. G., Falcon Hall | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Bell, Mrs J. H., 39 Comely Bank Place | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Bennet, Miss, c/o Mrs M'Laren, Newington I | House | | | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Bertram, Mrs, 13 North Fort Street, Leith | •••• | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Berwickshire Ladies' Club, Members of- | | | | | | |
| Burnet, Mrs, Hutton Manse, Berwick-on- | Tweed | | | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Gillies, Mrs, Edington Mills, Chirnside | | | | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Hope, Mrs, Sunwick, Berwick-on-Tweed | | a c | | 0 | 2 | 0 |
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| Oldham, Miss Ethel M., c/o Mrs Somerva | ail, Chirn | side | | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Binnie, Mrs T. F., 90 Inverleith Place | | | | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Black, Rev. C. M., 22 Merchiston Park | | | | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Blackie, Mrs John Stuart, 30 Walker Street | | | | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Blair, Mrs, Dalrymple Street, Girvan | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Bowman, Miss M. H., Craigendarroch, Skelm | orlie | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Braid, Miss, 3 Portgower Place | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
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| Campbell, Mrs Allan, 23 Lauriston Gardens | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Campbell, Miss, 3 Park Circus, Ayr | | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
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| Christison, Mrs, 20 Magdala Crescent | 8 | | | 0 | 2 | 6 |
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| Craven, Miss, 65 Hoghten Street, Southport | | | | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Cruikshank, Miss, 56 Montpelier Park ... Cunningham, Mrs, 14 Ramsay Garden ... Currie, Miss Campbell M., Trinity Cottage

Douglas, Councillor R. A., J.P. ... Douglas, Mrs Charles, Auchlochan, Lanarkshire, Duguid, Miss Susan, M.A., Newmains, Lanarksh Durnan, Mrs, 14 Glasgow Street, Glasgow

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Forbes, Mrs Lindsay, Drydenbank, by Loanhead Forman, Mrs, 51 Great King Street ... Friend, A

Galloway, Miss E., 50 Montpelier Park Garry, Miss, Dean Bank Institution ... Gibson, Mrs Margaret Dunlop, LL.D., Cambrid Gibson, Miss Annie, 19 Bernard Terrace Gilbert, Mrs, 187 Bruntsfield Place ... Gillies, John, Edington Mills, Chirnside Gowan, Mrs, Bank House, 14 George Street Graham, Mrs, 19 Corrennie Gardens ... Gray, Mrs Robert, 59 George Street ... Gray, Miss Marion I., M.A., 59 Dick Place

Haig, Miss C. W., 87 Comely Bank Avenue
Hardy, Miss L., 5 Melville Street ...
Harvey, Misses, 21 Regent Terrace ...
Hastie, Miss Elizabeth, Colville House, Ayton
Hay, Miss Jane, 17 Merchiston Avenue
Hodgson, Mrs, Huntly, Colinton ...
Hogge, Rev. J. M., M.A., 5 Hartington Place
Home, Miss J. W., 23 Howe Street ...
Hope, Mrs, East Barnes, Dunbar ...
Hope, Miss Emily J., 5 East Brighton Crescent
Houldsworth, Miss, 3 Ainsiie Place ...
Howard, Miss Annie, 1A Hill Place ...

Inglis, Miss Elsie Maud, M.B., C.M., 8 Walker Ivory, Mr and Mrs James, 16 Coates Gardens

Johnston, Miss Jane, Chaplain's House, Craiglo

Kemp, Miss Agnes, 54 Frederick Street Kemp, Miss Janet, 54 Frederick Street... King, Miss E. S., 36 Warwick Street, Glasgow Kinnell, Miss E. Beverley, 22 Whitehall Street, Kirk, Mrs, Rowan Bank, Bathgate ... Knott, Mrs Cargill, 42 Upper Gray Street

Lawrie, Miss, 28 Nelson Street ... Lee, Miss, 13 Montpelier Park ... Lee, Miss Constance, 13 Montpelier Park

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