

Women's Franchise.

No. 26.

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Notice to Contributors and Subscribers.

Articles containing information on the subject of Women's Suffrage should be addressed to the Editor, who will return those not considered suitable as soon as possible if a stamped addressed envelope is sent with the MS. As the paper is on a voluntary basis, and all profits go to help the cause, no payments are made for contributions. Subscriptions for the weekly numbers to the end of March (3s. 3d.), or less if so desired, should be forwarded to the Publisher. Back numbers can still be obtained.

'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE,'

EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING OFFICE,
13, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

Notes.

THERE can be but one seasonable greeting for the Editor to send to readers of *Women's Franchise*—May the coming year see well and truly laid that foundation-stone of "equal rights" upon which alone can the noble edifice of political justice and social well-being be reared.

AS undoubtedly there are thousands who are anxious to help forward the cause, but who, for varied reasons, have not been able to adopt any of the methods at present in force, we wish to suggest to such that they can help by undertaking to see that somewhat of the comprehensiveness of the movement is brought home to at least one person by their regular weekly receipt of this paper. We ourselves have, on occasion, forwarded copies to Members of Parliament, the press, public institutions, &c., but to be effective the journal should be sent regularly. To avoid overlapping, and as an easy means of acknowledgment, we propose to publish weekly the names of friends who have kindly promised to send copies, and the names of those who will thus receive the publication. Who will be first with the Prime Minister? Of course we are aware of the old proverb, that you can bring a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink; still, we would urge that the fact of seeing that there is water placed before the horse prevents the animal from trying to make others believe that there is no water, which, metaphorically speaking, is what certain Ministers have lately been doing.

WE feel it incumbent on us to mention that the promoters of this paper are suffering inconvenience by the tardy fulfilment of promises of help. We shall be most pleased to welcome those who are willing to assist the paper, either with time or money, at the office of this journal, to talk over the subject of ways and means, but would suggest that an explanatory letter in advance asking for an appointment will prove a convenience.

THE Annual Reports of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and of the London Society for Women's Suffrage are now before us, and from them we see what good work has been done during the past year. The four quarterly meetings of the National Union, which were held at Newcastle, London, Cambridge and Manchester respectively, were attended by delegates from nearly all the branches, and have also proved most useful in arousing interest in the work. The accounts given of the public procession, the Worcester Election Petition, and the Wimbledon by-election are interesting reading. With regard to the last we are glad to be reminded that "out of the six Parliamentary elections which have taken place in the Wimbledon Division during the last twenty-two years, only three have been contested by the Liberals, and in one of those three their candidate polled 697 votes less than did Mr. Russell." Included in the report is an account given by each branch of its year's labour, and these show us what headway the cause is making in the country, and what energy and good organizing capacity are being put into the work.

THE London Society's report is equally encouraging. We learn that nearly 230 new members have been enrolled during the year, a large number of drawing-room gatherings have been held, while many important public meetings have been arranged by local committees and local secretaries. It is satisfactory to read that these meetings are now a source of profit to the Society through the sale of tickets and the collections. Both Societies plead for more money to carry on and extend their work.

A RESOLUTION in favour of the complete legal and political equality of women with men was recently presented by M. G. Martin to the General Council of Loir-et-Cher. It was in the form of a request from the Council to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies to reform the "Civil Code," which is notoriously unfair to women, and also to grant to women political rights. The Chairman of the Committee on General Affairs, to whom the resolution was referred, is strongly opposed to granting his countrywomen any of the rights they claim, and spoke adversely on the resolution. M. Martin insisted upon a vote being taken, but at the same time divided the resolution into two separate issues—*i.e.*, a revision of the Civil Code, which would place women on a legal equality with men, and the granting of the Suffrage to women. The first was passed, and M. Martin decided that he would not press for a vote being taken upon the second. This was, however, insisted upon by an opponent, with the result that fifteen members voted against giving women the Franchise, and two for it. The resolution praying for equal legal rights for both sexes will therefore be presented to the French Chamber, and there is every hope that the example set by the General Council of Loire-et-Cher will be followed by the councils of other districts.

The Suffrage in Other Lands.

POLAND.—Interesting news comes to hand from the "land of slavery," as my correspondent Madame Lubinska rightly calls this unfortunate country. Even here the women's movement is making way, in spite of many obstacles. For the last twenty years all unions of women have been forbidden, and only two years ago was it possible to found the Union of Polish Women, under the presidency of Madame Paulina Kuczalska-Reinschmit. "We endeavour," says my correspondent, "to make propaganda and agitation, to work for general opinion, and change it for our purpose, from sleepy indifference into conscious help." During February and March of this year seven meetings were held, all well attended and remarkable for animated discussion. As a result the press felt bound to touch on the Union's work, some papers characterizing it as "insanity," while the more liberal organs treated it with indifference. But absolute silence was no longer possible. A petition in favour of Women's Suffrage was drawn up by the Union, and received 4,000 signatures in six weeks. It was then forwarded to the Duma. Discussions are held in the Union rooms every Tuesday evening, and they are already bearing fruit in the awakening of interest among women of all classes. "Our whole nation has so long been constrained to silence (women especially) that we must teach and be taught how to defend and propagate our most cherished ideas in open speeches." The Union now publishes a monthly paper in defence of women's rights called *Ster* (Rudder). It has also organized three large meetings during the year, which were attended by provincial members as well as the ladies of Warsaw.

This is the text of the appeal circulated with the petition to the Duma:—

"Polish women,—Behind us is the past of dead slumber. The needle of justice on the clock of liberty points at last to the hour of enfranchisement. Woman with loud protest is casting aside the slavish docility of her existence. She cannot fulfil her duties as a citizen as long as her voice cannot declare the conditions of those duties."

Women need to be free mothers of free children. The suffrage, which on the ground of sexual difference refuses to summon women to the ballot, is not universal; it is a privilege claimed by a minority of men. (Of the 11,600,000 inhabitants of Poland 6,000,000 are women.) In the name of truth, because the exclusion of women from the work of legislation causes a general deadening of conscience, lowers the morals and health of society, and is the cause of many injuries to the dignity of women, we send to all Polish women this appeal.

"Let us gather together all our strength, to awaken in the conscience of woman the understanding of the great wrong done her, and in the man the desire to escape the reproach of wronging her. Let us collect to this appeal signatures from all women and men, to show that we demand a really equal and universal suffrage law, with direct and secret ballot, and without distinction of sex, creed, or nationality."

I thank Madame Lubinska most heartily for her interesting letter, and hope that she will send me further news, and that the earnest work of our Polish sisters may not go unrewarded.

A. ZIMMERN.

Vox Populi Vox Dei!

It has often been pointed out that the leader of any flock or herd of animals attains that position by common consent; the superiority of power has been tried and acknowledged, tried by sundry skirmishes with other claimants, skirmishes which always ended in victory to the leader. A like process of selection took place among the various tribes of men. As social conditions became more complex the advantages of hereditary leadership were seen to be great as a means for avoiding wars of succession, and out of the hereditary idea sprang the idea of the divine right of kings. Puffed up by the splendour of his position and the flattery of his followers, the king claimed the land of his fathers as his own, and parcelled it out to his nobles on terms of fealty. They in their turn did the same by their sub-

ordinates; all along the line was a chain of duty, the non-completion of which might result in confiscation of privilege and loss of estate. If human nature had been perfectly single-minded and seeking the will of God before all things this plan would have answered extremely well; but, as Dante remarks, "I regi son molti e i buoni son pochi."

The peoples were not slow to discover this and to chafe under the tyranny of their monarchs. In our own country the powerful barons wrested from King John the Magna Charta; the granting of that charter was actuated by fear. In Henry III.'s reign the burghers and burgesses were summoned to Parliament; the burgesses could, and, save in exceptional cases, preferred to appear by proxy. This shirking of duty has led to our exclusion from a voice in public affairs. But those were rough days, when the development of the mailed fist was more thought of than that of reason. The final appeal was not to arbitration, but to arms. This mode of argument the ladies naturally left to men, for their own skill was developed in the direction of healing rather than of wounding. When the strength of the barons had been weakened by civil war, the power of the burghers began to make itself felt; not only by gentle reason but by threats did the commons get their claims attended to, and when the divine right of kings came into collision with the will of the people that collision resulted in the overthrow of the monarchy and the decapitation of Charles I. Privileges are seldom graciously and willingly relinquished as were those of the Samara. The whole of our constitutional development shows a struggle, not unattended by violence, on the part of the people to acquire a right to make their voice heard in the house of representatives.

The days which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill of 1834 were marked by scenes of outrage and lawlessness of all descriptions—burning of ricks, breaking of machinery, destruction of property, and assaults on persons being everywhere frequent.

This is the course along which the unemotional man has won his way to enfranchisement, and we are so well used to it that it fails to excite attention. If, however, a few women disturb public meetings by getting up and asking questions, or in other ways trying to call for a consideration of their claims to be regarded as part of the nation, and to have some voice in the making of laws which dispose of their persons and property, the whole movement is so unexpected that quiet, respectable, unthinking folk are scandalized, such conduct is declared to be a flagrant display of their emotional temperament and a proof of their unfitness to be entrusted with a vote. Recently at Nottingham, a gallery full of men, 300 strong, cat-awailed, hooted, whistled, hissed, sang, played Jew's harps, mouth organs, &c., and the whole scene was passed over with little or no comment by the press, though the meeting was rendered futile and no hearing could be obtained for the speaker.

It is a great pity that women should be driven to use such means of advertising their case as are now being devised by some of those interested in the enfranchisement of women, but it is no wonder that they have been led to desperate courses by the conduct of certain of the Ministers of State. It is only a few months since Mr. Asquith, replying to a deputation of ladies, said, "I have never given a moment's serious consideration to the question of the enfranchisement of women." When waited upon by some lady delegates this week at Nottingham, he replied that he was open to argument, though not in favour of the movement. The open door in Mr. Asquith's mind must be a very small one, since the arguments of the last forty years have failed to make him give "one moment's serious consideration to the question." Or have the disturbances of the last six months pushed that door a little further ajar?

Reviews of Books.

BRITISH FREEWOMEN: THEIR HISTORICAL PRIVILEGE. By Charlotte Carmichael Stopes. Third Edition. (Sonnen-schein. 2s. 6d.)

We give our hearty thanks to Mrs. Stopes for this book. It supplies one stone for the arch which has yet to be built across

the chasm of ignorance of the part played by women in the history of England, and of their share in the national life. Modern Englishmen are afraid to let women share in the election of a Parliament, lest they should go on to demand a place in the Parliament which they have helped to choose. Mrs. Stopes tells us how these Saxon ancestors of ours, more brave, more just, more generous than their sons, admitted their women to the Saxon witenagemot, which is the mother of our Parliament. Here (on page 11) we read how at the council, or witenagemot, of the Kentish men under Wightred their king, held about A.D. 694 at Beconceld [Bapchild, near Sittingbourne], the queen and abbesses attended and signed the decisions. But even Mrs. Stopes hardly tells us the whole story. Turning to the charter itself, as given in 'Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents,' edited by Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 238, we find it was signed by or on behalf of King Wihtrud, his consort Queen Werburga, their son Alric, the Archbishop of Canterbury, two other sons of the King (apparently by a former wife), the Bishop of Rochester, five abbesses, and nine presbyters. Thus of twenty-one persons who signed the charter, six were women.

Mrs. Stopes also tells us (p. 69) that:—

"The abbesses, especially those of Shaftesbury, Barking, Wilton, and St. Mary of Winchester, holding directly of the King, were summoned to Anglo-Norman Parliaments, as they had been summoned to Anglo-Saxon Witenagemots. Selden mentions their summons of 5 Edward I. as being extant in his time; their summons, twenty-nine years later, to the Parliament of 34 Edward I. is still extant, written in the same manner and terms as those of the other clergy."—Palgrave's 'Parliamentary Writs,' 34 Edward I.

It is interesting to compare with this the following passage from the 'Constitutional History' of Dr. Stubbs (iii. 438, 439):—

"No lady of any rank whatever was ever summoned either in person or by proxy to a full and proper Parliament. There are instances of countesses, baronesses, and abbesses being summoned to send proxies or to furnish their military service, but not to attend Parliament as peers. The nearest approach to such a summons is that of four abbesses, who in 1306 were cited to the great council held to grant an aid on the knighting of the Prince of Wales."

In a footnote Dr. Stubbs adds, "The abbesses summoned in 1306 were those of Barking, Wilton, Winchester, and Shaftesbury." Neither Mrs. Stopes nor Dr. Stubbs explains why these particular abbesses were summoned, but I find in a fragment of an old folio history of England in my possession (which I think is Tindal's English translation of Rapin), vol. i. p. 764, "The Prioress of the Nunnery of Wilton was a Baroness by her Title, as were also those of Shaftesbury, Barking, and St. Mary's in Winchester, which were the only ones that were so in England. See Fiddes, 'Lif. Wols,' p. 398." According to Blackstone (book i. ch. ii.), the bishops sit in the House of Lords in right of the ancient baronies annexed to their sees.

It should be noted that even on the facts as stated by Dr. Stubbs, these four women took part in the exercise of one of the most cherished prerogatives of our present House of Commons, levying taxes, and it would seem that the only reason why this particular tax was granted by a "great council," and not by Parliament, was that it fell within the three exceptions of the 12th clause of Magna Charta. Pollock and Maitland ('History of English Law,' book ii. ch. ii. §11), cite Rolls of Parliament, iv. 270 (A.D. 1425), "the Earl of Norfolk had issue Margaret his heir, 'to whom no place in Parlement myght apperteine, by cause she was a woman.'"

Then we have in Mrs. Stopes's book (p. 84) an interesting account of the elections of knights of the shire for Yorkshire in 1411 and 1414, in which Lucia, Countess of Kent, and Margaret, widow of Sir Henry Vavasour, voted by their attorneys. Here Mrs. Stopes is fully supported by Dr. Stubbs ('Const. Hist.,' iii. 411). I am tempted to refer to the famous cases of Dame Dorothy Packington and the borough of Aylesbury and Dame Elizabeth Copley and the borough of Gratton (pp. 86-93), but I seem to see the Editor frown at the length of this review, and I forbear.

I have but touched on some points which bear more directly on the question of Women's Suffrage as specially

concerning the readers of *Women's Franchise*; but the book covers a wide field, and abounds in interesting matter concerning the women of England. Notwithstanding the title and the fact that Mrs. Stopes is herself a native of Scotland, hardly anything is said of the women of Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, the last the only women in Britain who now possess the right of electing those who make the laws by which they are governed. Our author doubtless felt the difficulty of getting an ox into a teacup.

Mrs. Stopes is especially to be commended for the biographical parts of her book, her inspiring accounts of Boadicea, Anne Clifford, and Mary Astell.

This new edition contains so much additional matter, including an elaborate index of 16 pages, that even those who possess a copy of an earlier edition will do well to get it.

CHAS. W. PIDDUCK.

THE CONVERT. By Miss Elizabeth Robins. (Methuen.)

GENERALLY speaking, the press in their reviews have dwelt at length upon certain aspects of this book upon which, happily, we do not feel called to enlarge, though, with an eye to the unconverted, we could have wished for a more elucidatory title, as we admit that the book is not so entrancing as to avoid a sense of annoyance being uppermost in the minds of those who conceive themselves tricked into buying the book by the title. Reviewers have quarrelled with its lack of artistry, and, dubbing it a mere tract on the question of Women's Suffrage, have decided that it is likely to bore any but the truly converted. Since this is precisely the standpoint from which we and, unhappily (because we wish our opponents would read our paper more), the majority of our readers will regard it, we cordially and gratefully welcome so graphic a representation as it affords of recent phases in the struggle, and can attest that, so far as we are concerned, there is not a boring page in the book. Who that has ever attended an open-air meeting early in 1907 but will have the scene recalled in these brilliant descriptions. The face and figure of the speaker lives again; we seem to hear the running commentary of the crowd: "Wot 's the matter with yer, any-way?" "Can't yer get a husband?" and such like irrelevancies; see the choleric old man gesticulating with his umbrella and earning volumes of approval by the remark, "If what the world needed was Woman's Suffrage it wouldn't have left it to a minx like you to discover it." Who has not heard the man in the street exclaim, "'Oo's Mill?" when the name of that great Liberal is mentioned? And altogether how delightful it is to find in these pages something which can be placed in the hands of our stay-at-home friend, with the knowledge that in so doing we are presenting her with a true and exact account of what more vigorous spirits are doing. How pathetic is the figure of the "wizened creature of about fifty," in rusty black, widow of a stonemason and mother of four children, who talks of her home in "'Ackney, what it looks like when a child's got only one parent, that one is the mother," and whose tormentors give her no peace.

"Say, let up, old gal!"

"About time you had a rest, mother."

"If the mother dies," she is saying, "wot 'appens?"

"Let's 'ope she goes to heaven," responds the would-be witty man.

It must not be imagined from our quotations that the environment is exclusively "low life." There is plenty of light and shade in the book, much delightful dialogue, and though there is little or none of the incident for which one looks in the ordinary novel, the succession of scenes in which the *dramatis personæ* reveal their personalities is vividly realized. We find it a matter for regret that Miss Robins has not seen fit to modify in her book an incident in the past of the heroine which seemed to mar its forerunner, the play of 'Votes for Women.' It in no wise heightens the appeal of Vida Tevering in Trafalgar Square that she should in her own person have suffered evil. The wrongs of our sisters sear, or should sear, our souls, though we ourselves were never the victims of misfortune; and the climax,—the granting of a great evolutionary principle from mere personal impulse—is unconvincing and unsatisfying.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

OBJECT.—To obtain the Parliamentary Suffrage for Women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to Men.

The Union is a Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Hon. Secretaries: MISS FRANCES HARDCASTLE, M.A. MISS FRANCES STERLING.

Telegrams: "VOICELESS, LONDON."

Treasurer: MISS BERTHA MASON.

Parliamentary and Organising Secretary: MISS EDITH PALLISER.

Telephone: 1960 VICTORIA.

OFFICES: 25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

The Union will send Organising Agents, Speakers, or Literature to any place requiring them, its desire being to form a Women's Suffrage Society in every County and Borough. All persons interested in the movement, or desiring information about it, are requested to communicate with the Secretaries. Increased Funds are needed for the growing work of the Union, and Subscriptions will be gladly received by the Treasurer.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1907.

Chairman—MR. WALTER S. B. MCLAREN.

MISS MARGARET ASHTON
THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR
MISS FLORENCE BALGARNIE
MRS. ALLAN BRIGHT

MR. A. CAMERON CORBETT, M.P.
MISS EDITH DIMOCK
MISS I. O. FORD
MISS MARTINDALE, M.B., B.S.

MRS. PECHERY PHIPSON, M.D.
MRS. BROADLEY REID
HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL
MRS. PHILIP SNOWDEN

LADY STRACHEY
And the Hon. Officers,
ex officio.

Current Topics.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.—The office will be closed for the Christmas holidays from December 24th to 28th inclusive.

We are reproducing in our issues for this week and next a facsimile of two new pictorial leaflets, the blocks for which have been presented by a member of the Union as a Christmas present. The leaflets are printed and published by the Artists' Suffrage League for the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.—The next Quarterly Council Meeting of the Union will take place in London on Wednesday, January 29th. A reception will be held on the evening of the same day in the Grand and Victoria Halls of the Criterion Restaurant, from 8 to 11 P.M. There will be speaking for an hour in the middle of evening, Mrs. Fawcett taking the chair at 9 o'clock. The subject for all speakers is "Why I believe in Women's Suffrage." Mr. C. Trevelyan, M.P., Mr. J. C. Wedgwood, M.P., Mr. H. G. Wells, Lady Strachey, Mrs. Swanwick, and Mrs. C. D. Rackham have promised to speak. Tickets, including refreshments, price 3s. 6d., can be obtained at the offices of the Union, 25, Victoria Street (5th floor).

Hon. Secretaries of Branches and other members and friends of the Union are reminded that notices of meetings arranged in their districts should be *regularly* sent for insertion under 'Forthcoming Events.' Details as to time, place, and, if possible, speakers should invariably be given. Many announcements are rendered useless to our general readers by the omission of the hour (afternoon or evening) of the proposed meeting.

In like manner reports of such meetings, when held, are gladly received. They should, above all, be bright and concise, and contain touches more of local interest than very full details of the speeches themselves. The name of the Chairman should always be stated, and the terms of the resolution, if any.

Mid-Devon By-Election.

It is hoped that all our friends who can do so will respond to Miss Palliser's appeal in last week's *Women's Franchise* for volunteers after Christmas. Any members whose holidays extend into the New Year cannot do better for the cause than by spending it in the neighbourhood of Newton Abbot, where they should report themselves at the National Union's

Committee-room at 70B, Queen Street. Speakers for open-air meetings will be specially in request.

The opening of the Committee Rooms has been attended with considerable interest. The posters cause little groups of men and women to collect and speculate on the perplexed "John Bull" and all the questions by which he is surrounded.

A number stop to read the nine reasons for supporting Women's Suffrage, read it religiously from No. 1 down to No. 9. If I show my face at the window, there are cries of, "Look 'eer, look 'eer at the Suffragette!" and when I leave, I am followed by cries of "Give women the vote!" In one shop I saw two drawings, one an outrageous caricature of a woman in the historic thick-soled boots, skirts just below the knee, eye-glass, bowler hat, &c., labelled "Suffragette—Fancy." Another drawing represented a very charming fashionably dressed young lady, labelled "Suffragette—Reality." These in a very respectable stationer's shop, mingled with Christmas cards, shows how even in a quiet country town in Devon the question of Women's Suffrage has made its way.

Our opening meeting was held to-night in the Market Place. A friendly coal merchant put his trolley at our disposal. It was a misty evening—at least, the kind of mist which has prevailed here since Friday, and which is called rain in other parts of the country.

Mrs. Stanbury began her speech to a group of about thirty, which grew in some magic manner to a crowd of 400 in the space of a quarter of an hour—a very quiet, orderly crowd, packed closely together, and a crowd made up of all sorts and conditions of men. A number of women and young girls were also present. At the close of Mrs. Stanbury's and my speeches questions were invited, and several were put. These led to a discussion, which lasted about twenty minutes. There were cries of "Go on; tell us some more." The meeting lasted from 7.10 to 8.30. A very valuable and interesting meeting.

Early in the afternoon I visited Kingskerswell with a view to arranging a dinner-hour meeting at the Potteries there; but the proprietor would not allow any one to address the men. On Friday Mrs. Stanbury and I are going to speak at Abbotskerswell, a small country village about one mile and a half from Newton. We are informed that there is a small square not far from the church, where men and women gather to discuss the news of the day. It is there we intend to make our pitch.

S. PALLISER.

The Women's Movement Abroad and in the Colonies.

THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE headquarters at Warren, Ohio, are publishing a sample set of Political Equality leaflets at 15 cents per hundred. They are both grave and gay, and the set includes, among others, President Roosevelt's words on equal rights, the Bible for Woman Suffrage, by Bishop Bashford, a leaflet on Women's Duties, and a humorous reply to Miss Marie Corelli's observations on Women's Suffrage entitled 'Captivated Calves.' Our readers may find these leaflets useful, and they can be ordered from the above address.

The latest triumph the Dutch women have scored is that of breaking through the idea that only men have a right to belong to the professional body of the universities, which in Holland are fully open to women. Mlle. Loke, Professor at the Secondary School for Girls at the Hague, has been appointed Lecturer on French literature at the University of Groningen.

The wife of M. Martin, who recently succeeded in getting a resolution in favour of equal legal rights for both sexes passed by the General Council of Loir-et-Cher, is well known in French scientific, literary, and feminist circles. She is a prominent member of the French Council for women, and President of the Suffrage Committee which has been recently formed by the Council. She has been several times decorated for her services to science, and she is the editor of the well-known French paper, *Le Journal des Femmes*.

The number of women in the United States who are supporting themselves and others has more than doubled between 1880 and 1890. The latest Census Report places their number at 5,329,807, whilst the New York League of Self-Supporting Women numbers 12,000 members. This must, however, be very far short of the actual number of women in that city who are the mainstay of their homes, for *The Women's Journal* tells us that there are 50,000 women in New York who are supporting their husbands.

The Japanese women are quite as eager to study foreign habits and customs as are their menfolk, and every year sees larger numbers leave their native land for Europe and America. The celebrated Japanese artist Madama Sada Yacco is among the most energetic of her countrywomen in seeking new ideas. She has just arrived in Paris, where she intends to devote most of her time to studying the workings of the French conservatoire, with a view to starting a similar institution in Tokio, in which it is proposed to train artists for the Japanese imperial theatres.

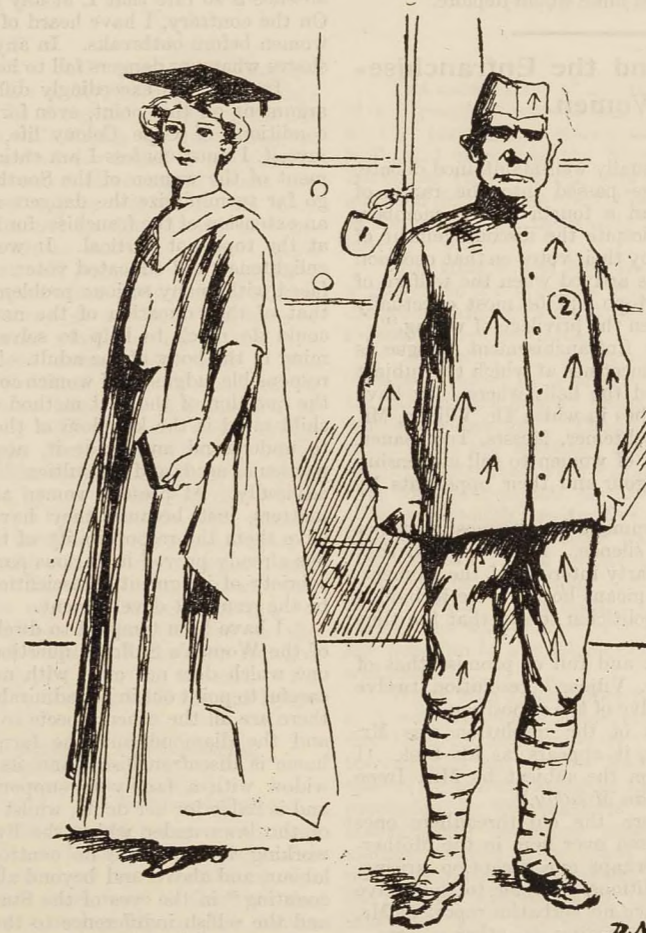
At a recent meeting of the Board of Governors at Canterbury College, New Zealand, the question of the salaries of the teachers was discussed. The great difference between the respective salaries of the men and the women came under notice. It appears that the average salary of the men teachers in the Boys' High School is almost double that of the women teachers in the Girls' High School, though the standard of work

is the same for both schools, and the girls out-number the boys. The Chairman of the Board is reported to have said that though he was not in favour of equal pay for equal work, he thought the difference in the salaries too great. The Board, however, did not raise the women's salaries.

A new French paper, devoted to the political, scientific, and other interests of women, and especially to their enfranchisement, has just appeared. It is called *La Suffragiste*,

and is edited by that indefatigable worker for the rights of women, Dr. Madeleine Pelletier, who has thus considerably added to her many other labours. The price at which it is issued, 2 francs a year, places it within the reach of most Frenchwomen. It takes no party lines, but gives all points of view, and its sole aim is to raise the position of Frenchwomen, and to work for their political enfranchisement. Dr. Pelletier's leading article on the aims of her paper contains the following excellent remarks: "Il n'est pas question d'une lutte de sexe, mais bien d'une lutte pour la défense des droits de notre sexe. . . . Nos ennemis ce ne sont pas les hommes en général; ce sont ceux d'entre les hommes qui nous refusent nos droits par égoïsme et celles d'entre les femmes qui par sottise ou bassesse se font les adversaires de leur propre affranchissement." We wish the paper every success. The editorial address is 62, Rue Darnémont, Paris.

POLLING BOOTH



COMPANIONS IN DISGRACE.

Convicts and women kindly note,
Are not allowed to have the vote;
The difference between the two
I now will indicate to you.

When once the harmful man of crime,
In Wormwood Scrubs has done his time,
He at the poll can have his say,
The harmless woman never may.

Hutchinson spoke. On December 11th we held another at Mrs. Oscar Rowntree's, Clifton, York, and had a very full room. Mrs. Edwin Gray, Miss Pringle (Whitby), and Miss Wilkinson gave short addresses. A good quantity of literature and many copies of *Women's Franchise* were distributed. We feel as if greater interest was being aroused in our question, and early next year we are arranging to hold further meetings.

C. F. TAYLOR,
Hon. Treasurer.

Branch Societies.

YORK WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—We have been busy lately in York with meetings. Miss Ford (Leeds) and Miss Palmer (Harrogate) spoke for us on November 20th in the Friends' Meeting House.

On Wednesday, November 27th, a drawing-room meeting took place at Mrs. Procter's, Nunthorpe, and there was a very good attendance and quite an animated discussion afterwards. Miss Palmer (Harrogate), Mrs. Edwin Gray, and Miss

MISS MARGARET ASHTON, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Union, gave an address on Women's Suffrage at the meeting of the Young British Liberals Society on Friday, December 6th. She traced the history of the movement, and quoted numerous legal and social disabilities of women, which, she said, would not be removed until they had the power of the vote behind them. Women were not secure in their position on local governing bodies, as at any time a Bill might be passed which would deprive them of their liberty to serve in this way. Miss Ashton complained that men did not regard Women's Suffrage as a serious question; but it was really an urgent matter, as women felt their position acutely. She was afraid that men would wait too long; that they would not see the justice of their cause until it was too late, and things might happen which both men and women alike would deplore.

The Cape Parliament and the Enfranchisement of Women.

ON July 4th last, after an unusually well-maintained debate, the question of Women's Suffrage passed into the range of practical Cape politics. More than a fourth of the members of the Cape House of Assembly, despite the discouragement of most of the party leaders, recorded by their votes on that occasion that in their opinion "the time has arrived when the welfare of the people of the Cape of Good Hope will be most effectually conserved by conferring upon women the privilege of voting."

In Cape Town the Women's Enfranchisement League is already a strong organization, and meetings at which the subject has been discussed have overflowed the halls where they have been held. But the series of speeches in which Dr. Viljoen, Mr. Cronwright Schreiner, Mr. T. L. Schreiner, Messrs. Tod, Sauer, and Malan asked for the admission of women to full citizenship surprised their friends by their vigour and their opponents by their cogency.

The supporters of the Government for the most part met their arguments with an eloquent silence. It is supposed that the reform would jeopardize the party interests of the moment, and many of those who are by no means hostile were forbidden by the rigorous conscience of the politician to say that the time had "now" come.

Nevertheless it was significant and full of promise that of the twenty-four supporters of Dr. Viljoen's resolution twelve were of the party in power, and twelve of the opposition.

The leader of the opponents of the resolution was Mr. Merriman, and Mr. Merriman was, it appears, at his best. (I quote from an interesting article on the subject by Mrs. Irene MacFadyen, published in *The African Monthly*.)

Mr. Merriman's arguments were the old threadbare ones to which we are accustomed to listen over here in the Mother-country year in, year out, with perhaps one exception, arising, no doubt, from peculiar local conditions. I refer to the native problem. I much regret that I have no verbatim report of Mr. Merriman's speech at hand; but according to other reports—and I have no reason to suppose that they are incorrect in the main—his argument on this particular point seems to have been something like this—Society is organized force, and the natural man is at bottom an animal. There is an Indian Rajah who has said that, if the British left India, within six weeks there would not be left in Bengal a rupee or a virgin. Woe, then, to women if by marking a ballot paper they let loose upon themselves the natural man—Mr. Merriman and his Rajah!

Mr. Merriman's peroration was eloquent, though not very apposite, "Let women rather learn to keep to their homes, to train their children, and to be counsellors to their husbands by going to the pages of Shakespeare and studying the character of Juliet" (who, by the way, died homeless and childless at the age of fourteen). In all this Mr. Merriman, as the protagonist of man, was showing us how to throw the cold light of logic on to a political problem. He had a bad case. As was remarked later in the debate, How powerful would have been his plea if he had been on the other side!

But to return briefly to the native question: it being a question we have not with us at home, it is of interest to see how Women's Suffrage may affect it, or *vice versa*.

The native territories of Cape Colony have four representatives in the Cape Parliament, three of which voted for the resolution—and why? Mrs. MacFadyen is able to give us the answer out of her own personal knowledge. She claims that these members were interpreting correctly the sentiment of their constituents. "There is no man who owes so much to his women as the frontiersman. She manages his business in his frequent absences. Until the pioneer marries there is no society. His wife shares every danger and every privation. The native is more of a gentleman than Mr. Merriman's rajah, and such a thing as an attack on a trading station in the husband's absence is so rare that I, at any rate, have never heard of one. On the contrary, I have heard of many instances of warnings to women before outbreaks. In any case, vote or no vote, the wife shares whatever dangers fall to her husband's lot."

In fact it is exceedingly difficult to follow Mr. Merriman's argument on this point, even for one fully conversant with the conditions of Cape Colony life, as Mrs. MacFadyen is. For myself, I must confess I am entirely at a loss. The enfranchisement of the women of the South African colonies would surely go far to minimize the dangers arising from the native. Such an extension of the franchise, for instance, would be horizontal—at the top—not vertical. It would be a reinforcement of the enlightened and educated voter. The men of these colonies are faced with many serious problems, none perhaps so difficult as that of the education of the native. Surely their womenkind could do much to help to solve it. The native has a child's mind in the body of the adult. There is no sphere in which the responsible judgment of women could be of more service than on the question of the best method of developing his powers. The child mind is the kingdom of the woman, and no man is so fit to understand and guide it, nor to find the way to meet its particular needs and difficulties. I write "responsible judgment" advisedly. At present women are often irresponsible in public matters, just because they have no responsibilities to fulfil. Give them the responsibility of the franchise, and, as experience has already proved in various parts of the world, understanding, sobriety of judgment, conscientiousness, and common sense will be the resultant development.

I have been tempted to dwell at some length on this aspect of the Women's Suffrage question in South Africa because it is one which does not exist with us. But, as Mrs. MacFadyen is careful to point out in her admirable review of the whole situation, there are all the other aspects so familiar here. While the gold and the diamond and the farming industries have votes the home is disenfranchised, and its interests unrepresented. The widow with a family to support and educate pays her taxes and is liable for her debts, whilst she has no voice in the making of the laws under which she lives. The professional and the working woman have no control over the conditions of their labour, and above and beyond all there is the indignity of "not counting" in the eyes of the State, with the demoralizing effect and the selfish indifference to the well-being of the community such a condition invariably fosters among the "sheltered" women.

NORAH CHESTERTON.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

January Meetings.

2nd	High Wycombe W.S. Society. Guildhall	Mrs. Hylton Dale J. S. Stooke-Vaughan, Esq.	P. M. 3.30
22nd	Fleet W.S. Society. Annual Meeting	Hon Sec.: Mrs. Kayser Speaker: Miss Bompas	—
23rd	London Society "At Home"	25, Victoria Street, S.W. (6th floor)	4-6.30

* * * All communications intended for the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies' columns should be addressed to the Secretary, 25, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., and should reach the office not later than first post Saturday each week.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Women's Freedom League (late W.S.P.U.).

OFFICES: 18, BUCKINGHAM STREET, STRAND, W.C.

Telephone: 15143 CENTRAL.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Hon. Treasurer: MRS. DESPARD.

MRS. COATES HANSEN
MISS HODGSON
MISS IRENE MILLER
MISS FITZHERBERT

Hon. Organising Secretary: MRS. BILLINGTON-GREIG.

MRS. DRYSDALE
MRS. EILEEN MITCHELL
MRS. WINTON-EVANS
MRS. JOSEPH CLAYTON

Hon. Secretary: MRS. HOW MARTYN, B.S.C.

MRS. SANDERSON
MRS. BELL
MRS. HOLMES
MISS MANSELL

Notes.

SIR EDWARD GREY.—We feel sure that English seamstresses working sixteen hours a day, earning six shillings a week (if they are lucky), will be delighted to hear from Sir Edward Grey that our relations with Russia are quite friendly. As they hastily swallow their meal of dry bread it will console them to reflect that if a Conservative Government comes into power to-morrow the Convention will be worked in the same spirit in which it has been contracted by the Liberal Government. Patriotic British female clerks who are doing "man's work" with a third of man's pay will jump for joy when they realize that there is to be no interference with Persian affairs. The British cook-wife (with no pay at all) will shed tears of gratitude into the husband's dinner when she learns that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is more secure than ever. The women teachers accept less wages than the men teachers for the same work because they are so honoured and uplifted at the thought of being employed by a Government which brings such blessings upon those happy lands. Oh! do not let us hamper these noble Liberal gentlemen in their efforts to bring civilization to the poor foreigner by our selfish cry of "Votes for Women!" Sir Edward Grey is right when he says politics are not for women. Politics are for Russia, Germany, Japan—geographical entities compared with which English women and children sink into insignificance. The British mother, who has no children of her own until she neglects them, must not be absorbed in egoistic joy at her restored motherhood as she paces her solitary cell, she must remember that Sir Edward Grey is watching over her country, by courting the smile of a German Emperor. She will say, in the words of the old hymn (slightly altered),

I thank the goodness and the grace that on my birth have smiled,
And seen to it that I was born an English female child.
I thank the Sun that on my path has cast this one bright ray,
'Midst toil and hardship, pain and want, I have Sir Edward Grey.

LIBERALISM.—Once more the crime of being women has been brought home to members of our League. The disgraceful and savage way in which our members were treated at the Shoreditch Liberal meeting serves once more to illustrate the danger of leaving political power exclusively in the hands of a sex the majority of whose members are so manifestly unfit for it. We do not believe that the Liberal leaders encourage unfair, insulting, and unprovoked attacks on women on the part of their half-civilized followers, but they seem strangely incapable of checking it. Perhaps if they realized that women most certainly are going to be voters in the near future, they might see the "inexpediency" of a policy which is rapidly making Liberals and women regard each other as natural enemies.

It is of course delightful to bring about peaceable relations between England and Japan, but the interests of the Liberal Party, and the interests of the race (which is of less importance) seem to demand peaceable relations between English men and women. When the Conservatives step in and enfranchise women with a wave of their magic wand, they will earn the gratitude of all those simple women who believe that politicians do justice for the sake of justice. In those days gratitude will mean votes. Then the Liberals will be sorry. But perhaps they will repent before it is too late.

Politics in Shoreditch.

THE sacred duty of ascertaining and carrying out "the will of the people" was the main theme of much fervid eloquence on the part of Dr. Macnamara, M.P., Sir W. Randal Cremer, M.P., and others, at the Shoreditch Town Hall, on Thursday, December 19th. It was only when a woman stood up to ask a question (in question-time) that it was evident that in the minds of the audience "the people" of this country are of one sex only.

Mrs. Holmes and Miss Irene Miller, who endeavoured to put questions to the speakers, might have been specimens of some dangerous kind of animal peculiarly inimical to man, from the reception they met with.

"Police!" "Chuck 'em out!" all the now too familiar warcries were raised in overpowering volume. It was in vain that Dr. Macnamara poured scorn on the heads of the zealous and agitated stewards. "These ladies are perfectly in order," he cried. But the audience did not care whether they were in order or not—they were women, and they were going to raise that eternal question about "votes for women" again—and that was enough; so for five minutes they howled while Mrs. Holmes stood on a chair and vainly endeavoured to ask Dr. Macnamara if, being in favour of the policy of carrying out "the will of the people," he would push a measure in Parliament that would ensure that same will being represented. Finally she was invited on to the platform, from where she put her question to a pandemonic accompaniment of cheers, hoots, and cat-calls.

When Miss Irene Miller rose, a free fight raged round her; a chivalrous youth endeavoured to protect her, and, enraged doubtless by his "unmanly" conduct, the stewards proceeded to rush him out. Miss Neilans and Miss Lawson were also ejected for remonstrating at this procedure, and then Miss Miller proceeded to the platform, where her question received Dr. Macnamara's courteous attention. Mrs. Heasman made a valiant attempt to be heard from the body of the hall, but it was impossible to distinguish her words through the howls of the gallant supporters of the great Liberal principle—"No taxation," &c. The speeches that were given that night were excellent examples of the usual political oratory. One gentleman, after carefully proving that infant mortality was greatest where slums were thickest, proceeded to state, with passionate indignation, that this terrible mortality was due to the criminal neglect and ignorance of the mothers of this nation. Whether the mothers were responsible also for the existence of the slums, he did not state.

The representatives of the League who attended the meeting sent up a letter to the chairman announcing their intention of asking questions, and that if they were given an opportunity of doing so, they were prepared to observe all the rules of public meetings. They did so rigorously. As Dr. Macnamara scathingly said: "It is the stewards of this meeting who are responsible for the disorder," and at the end of his answers to the questions he publicly and sternly denounced the treatment meted out to the women. In spite of this, however, the country heard next morning through the channels of the press how a Liberal meeting had once more been broken up by the "noisy Suffragists."

MARION HOLMES.

Public Meeting at Sutton.

THE meeting held in the Public Hall, Sutton, on Monday, December 16th, resolved itself for a time into a triumphant demonstration of the methods of the opposition. Cat-calls, motor-horns, whistles, hootings, bags of flour, sulphuretted hydrogen, and rats were the brilliant arguments brought to bear against the plea of women for the rights of citizenship—arguments quite worthily characteristic, it must be admitted, of the class of intellect that devised them. Long before the meeting commenced it was evident that an organized attempt was to be made to break it up. As soon as the doors were opened a crowd of youths and small boys, with a besprinkling of older men, rushed the gallery. The appearance of a well-dressed burly youth provoked tremendous enthusiasm—the leader, as was fully proved later. This reception did not meet with his approval, however, for he sternly ordered his followers to "sit down, and be quiet!" The arrival of the speakers—Mrs. Despard, Miss Murby, and Mrs. Wyn Nevinston—was the signal for their finest effort in the way of howling—and it really was quite Olympic! Mrs. Despard rose to speak after Mrs. Wyn Nevinston had made several determined but fruitless attempts to gain order. "We want—votes—for—women!" chanted the crowd in unison. "Noise is not argument," was Mrs. Despard's first hit. Three cheers for Asquith, and "For he's a jolly good fellow" (very much out of tune), were enthusiastically given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's distinguished admirers. "God save the King" and "We won't go home till morning" followed as a natural sequence.

Then came the event of the evening. There was a sudden bending of the sea of heads, a momentary hush, then a cry of "Rats!" from the gallery. Three women, hastily followed by six or seven men, came on to the platform. From where I sat I had an uninterrupted view of the brave leader and his followers, and it was evident from their puzzled faces that something had gone wrong. "Rats!" they called again, almost imploringly, but it was no use—their principal squib had missed fire. Not a single feminine scream was heard, and the women for the most part were sitting quietly in their seats, while many of the men mounted guard—on the chairs! It was most reprehensible. One terrified male sought refuge on the literature table, but our gallant young literature secretary repulsed him firmly. "But there are rats loose!" he gasped. "I can't help that," she replied, helping him down. "These books are for sale, not to be sat on; you must come down." And he had to.

Finally, we resorted to strategem. Mrs. Despard and Miss Murby descended into the body of the hall and attempted to speak from there, while willing helpers approached the large contingent of the genuinely interested, and advised them to make their way quietly to the Committee Room where the meeting would be held. This was done, chairs were hastily arranged, and the doors kept by a strong body of police and generous male sympathizers. As soon as it realized the situation, the mob hurled itself against the doors again and again, and a good deal of damage was done to the fixtures of the hall, but the fortress was well kept, and Mrs. Despard spoke for three-quarters of an hour to a circle of delighted listeners. They crowded round her at the end of her eloquent and inspiring address, in a perfect transport of admiration, and I have heard from many sources since that we have won a good many converts in Sutton. Indeed, in justice to some of the stalwarts of the football club, I must mention that towards the end of the evening they approached some of our members, and after apologizing amply and humbly for their conduct, formed themselves into an impromptu guard of honour, and kept the crowd away.

The Croydon Branch has determined to hold another meeting in Sutton as soon as possible. There are people ready there now to champion the cause of Women's Freedom.

M. H.

[It must be added that the Women's Freedom League will have to pay 5l. damages for the honour of affording amusement to Sutton male voters.—Ed. W. F. L. Columns.]

Queen's Hall Meeting.

THE magnificent demonstration at Queen's Hall was a meeting of which the Men's League may well be proud, and which should encourage them to repeat this success at an early date.

As ultimately we shall have to gain the vote through men's votes, perhaps the most hopeful feature of the present struggle is the existence of a league of voters. We ought, therefore, to do all in our power to induce men to join a League which is collecting together a body of men voters too powerful to be ignored by either political party.

At the close of the meeting Mrs. Despard took the opportunity to move a vote of thanks to the speakers, and especially to the Men's League, for coming to our assistance in the great struggle. In doing this Mrs. Despard expressed the feelings of the Women's Freedom League generally, the members of which formed no small part of the audience, as was shown by the enthusiastic reception accorded her.

Miss Bertha Mason, of the National Union of W.S.S., seconded the vote of thanks and endorsed all the feelings of gratitude to the Men's League which Mrs. Despard had expressed.

The Coming Conference.

A large meeting will be held at Essex Hall on January 4th, for which tickets can be obtained from the office.

On the 31st a private Conference will be held at 18, Buckingham Street, at which branches can instruct their delegates to raise questions of tactics or any other points on which the policy of the League is not clear to them. On Saturday, February 1st, the public Conference will be held, and in the evening a large demonstration. Resolutions for the Conference and nominations for the Committee should be sent to the Secretary before January 1st.

Women's War Cry.

[Tune: 'SCOTS WHA HAE WI' WALLACE BLED.']

1. Women, who have suffered long
Laws and Customs cruel, wrong,
Sister-Thralls! Sad, voteless throng,
Now's the time to strive, be strong.
- Chorus: Unite to strike! We must be free,
Gain God's great gift, blest Liberty!
2. Lib'rals meanly skirk our claim,
Magistrates insult us, blame,
Flung, like rubbish, from Men's halls,
Sisters! make men hear our calls.
3. How to do it? Just one way:
Vow no tax we e'er will pay
While with fools and felons class'd
Impotent as in the Past.
4. What's Woman's place in Policy
In this our Britain—misnamed "free"—
Kept powerless, like babes at home
Voteless, like Outcasts doom'd to roam!
5. Our rights as Citizens forgot,
Citizens' burdens are our lot,
While misled, foolish cowards cry—
"Obey, pay, suffer, till you die!"
6. No blows, no fines, no prison, fear,
Despise M.P.'s indecent jeer,
And Harcourt, Asquith, Cremer's sneer—
For God above our Cause will hear.
7. He sees us crushed by ceaseless care,
Sees "sweated" Toilers' hovels bare,
Sees mocked, defied, our tears our prayer,
Sees wicked Laws inflict despair.
8. Pocket-logic rulers feel—
Though 'gainst Truth more strong than steel—
A want of Cash will clear men's sight,
Our shameful Wrongs they'll quickly right!
9. Thus, till we Vote as now do men,
Get bare, grudging justice granted then,
Sisters! combine no tax to pay,
We'll triumph! That's the surest way.

ISOLA ANNE D'AQUILLAR BURTON.
(A Thirty Years' Suffragist.)

Branch Notes.

Bromley Branch.—At its last meeting this branch decided to hold a public meeting as soon as possible in the Co-operative Society's large hall, and to invite Mrs. Billington-Greig, Mrs. Despard, and Miss Margaret McMillan to speak.

The Hon. Sec., Miss Agnes Evans, was elected to be the delegate at the forthcoming Conference.

Clapham Branch.—A rather fresh point of view was taken by Miss Amy Otter in a lecture at Mrs. Johnson's, Trouville Road, on 'Women and Children in Shops.' Miss Otter gave an account of the many laws and by-laws and their action which regulate, or fail to regulate, the life of the feminine half of humanity, and ended by enforcing the necessity of voting power, if for nothing else, to do away with the demoralizing effect of supervision instead of self-reliance.

Croydon Branch.—The Sewing Meetings for the forthcoming Sale of Work are held at Mrs. Dempsey's, 8, Clifton Road, South Norwood. Materials sent to that address would be gladly utilized.

Northern Heights Branch.—The last two meetings of this branch were particularly enjoyable because of the interesting and instructive addresses given by Miss A. Bawden (of Hackney) on 'The Value of the Franchise,' and Mrs. Nicholson Clark on 'Women in Municipal Government.' Three new members have joined. The Discussion Circle of the Holloway Ethical Society wanted a debate on 'Suffragette Methods' at their fortnightly meeting. Miss Fitzherbert kindly consented to speak for, but no lady could be found to speak against.

Eventually Mr. Malcolm Mitchell very kindly took part, and every one present thought it a great pity so few were there to profit by the two addresses.

If any readers have friends living in North London who might like to receive notices of Suffrage meetings, will they send their addresses to Miss Thompson, 43, Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End?

Letchworth Branch.—The members of this branch are busy getting up their "Cinderella," a notice of which appears in 'Forthcoming Events.'

THE TREASURER is delighted to announce that two more of the 20l. have been promised, so the first sum which was promised conditionally is now secured.

LITERATURE.—Our members will be interested to know that the Rev. R. J. Campbell has very kindly given us permission to print the speech he made at the Men's League meeting on the 17th inst.

Those of us who heard it are full of gratitude to Mr. Campbell for this Christmas gift, and very desirous that the pamphlet should be put into circulation at once. In order that this should be done, several members have come forward and given special donations to meet the printing expenses. Will others also help? Perhaps it is not generally known that the literature department accounts are kept absolutely separate from the general accounts of the W.F.L.

The Literature Secretary hopes that members will, with their usual generosity, come forward and help the exchequer.

Correspondence.

DEAR STR.—In connexion with the matter mentioned in last week's issue of *Women's Franchise*, that is the refusal of the magistrate to grant a vaccination exemption certificate to the lady whose husband is in Australia, it seems to me that her position is quite clear. She is not the person responsible for obtaining the certificate of exemption, therefore she cannot be responsible for having the child vaccinated.

Let her refuse to have the operation performed and let the "parent" in Australia be prosecuted for the omission.

I am, yours truly,

(Mrs.) J. E. RAND.

3, Holly Terrace, West Hill, Highgate, N.

Scottish Notes.

THE Scottish headquarters and the office of the Hon. Organizing Secretary, situated at 30, Gordon Street, Glasgow, will be opened officially on January 9th. It is intended on that day to have an afternoon opening ceremony and an evening At Home, so that both members and friends from a distance and working members in Glasgow will be able to attend. The situation of the new office is extremely good. The three principal Glasgow stations are all within five minutes' walk, so that it is convenient for country and suburban supporters; and as Gordon Street is the centre of the shopping area, and the trams from all parts converge towards it, the office is equally convenient for Glasgow residents.

The appeal for furnishings for the office is again repeated. Unless a sufficient number of gifts are received by January 7th, the Office Sub-Committee will be compelled to purchase the necessary articles. A very good suggestion has been made to me, and I have much pleasure in making it public. We shall need quite a number of small collapsible chairs for meetings, socials, &c. These can be purchased wholesale for 2s. 6d. The practical friend above named suggests that all those who cannot give an article of furniture should send half-a-crown for the purchase of a chair. Gifts, postal orders, and cheques should be sent without delay to Mrs. Graham Moffat, 15, University Avenue, Glasgow.

I am very happy to be able to announce that Miss Anna Munro has consented to take up the duties of my private secretary. There will thus be two of us in the office, and during my necessary absences from Scotland on organizing and general national business I shall be content in the knowledge that a thoroughly capable and enthusiastic Suffragist will be left in charge. When the Scottish funds fulfill their present promise I hope that we shall be able to increase the staff in Glasgow, and hand over the administration of the Scottish organizing and propaganda work to some other member, leaving me free for the development and direction of organization throughout the whole country.

Amongst the week's engagements those in Edinburgh and Leith have been the most successful, though the Kilmarnock meetings and the one at Bearsden were also full of promise. Kilmarnock suffers from a lack of funds, but the local workers intend to remedy this defect by following the example of the Glasgow Western Branch and arranging a jumble sale or a cake and candy sale. The Glasgow Western is 10l. richer from its effort of last week.

Mrs. Bell, 39, Comely Bank Place, Edinburgh, asks me to repeat the appeal for gifts for the great sale of Suffragist work. She hopes to have to seek storing room long before the end of February. The date of the sale is fixed for the end of March.

T. BILLINGTON-GREIG.

ESSEX HALL MEETING.—Tickets for 1s. and 6d. are now to be obtained at the Office.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From January 2nd to January 6th.

			P.M.
Thurs.	Social Meeting, 18, Buckingham Street		3.30-6
	Central Branch, 18, Buckingham Street	Mrs. Tweedy	8
Fri.	Battersea Branch, 37, Park Road, St. John's Hill, S.W.	Mrs. Duval	8
Sat.	Public Meeting, Essex Hall	Mrs. Despard	8
Jan. 4		Miss Murby	
		Miss Irene Miller	
Mon.	"Cinderella," Howard Hall		8
Jan. 6			

. All communications intended for the Women's Freedom League columns should be addressed to The Editor, W.F.L., 18, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

OFFICE: 38, MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Telephone: 9953 CENTRAL.

Notes and Comments.

THE Queen's Hall Meeting is over, and with it the Men's League has introduced itself to the public. Nine months have passed since the League was formed by three or four enthusiasts who felt that the time had arrived—nay, that it was long past!—for men to take their share in the work of removing a stain upon the escutcheon of British justice and enlisting in the service of the nation that wisdom, that sympathy, that expert knowledge which women can and ought to give.

Steadily and yet rapidly throughout these nine months the League has been acquiring strength. From all parts of the country men have expressed their approval of its principles, and a large number have joined and given practical proof of their sympathy and approbation. The great majority are electors; the great majority are thinking men, whose opinion is based on knowledge of the country's needs, men who, therefore, are unlikely to change their opinions, and still more unlikely, having put their hands to the plough, to turn back.

The Men's League is working not solely to wipe out an age-long injustice which one sex has put upon another, but also for the England of the future, urged on by the strong conviction that the greatest service we can render to the generations which are to come is to make it possible for both sexes to work hand in hand for the common good of society.

It is, therefore, with profound satisfaction that we look back upon our first public demonstration, a report of which we subjoin. From all quarters we have received most generous tributes of congratulation, and we are glad to say that already a number of men have expressed their desire to join the League.

One interesting lesson we have learned for ourselves, namely, the real attitude of the leading newspapers. We propose next week to publish a comparative table of the reports which appeared in the press. We cannot refrain, however, from anticipating this general statement by referring with high appreciation to the fact that *The Daily News* devoted to the subject its principal leading article, in which the case for Women's Suffrage was set forth with cogency and enthusiasm.

We propose at an early date to issue reports of the speeches in pamphlet form as propagandist literature, and we hope that our friends will let us know in good time whether they wish to be supplied with copies. Owing to insufficiency of space, we are unable fully to report the proceedings at the Queen's Hall meeting in a single number. Our account will therefore be completed next week.

The Queen's Hall Meeting.

UNDER the auspices of the Men's League a public meeting was held in the Queen's Hall on Tuesday, December 17th, at 8 o'clock. The doors were opened at 7 o'clock, and in a very few minutes the few tickets which had not been sold from the League's office were sold out. From 7.30 to 8 an organ recital was given by Mr. Benjamin Dale, A.R.A.M., F.R.C.O., who very kindly gave his services. At 8 o'clock, when Mr. Herbert Jacobs (Chairman of the Executive Committee) led the speakers on to the platform, the great hall was absolutely full, except for the balcony, which, in view of recent events, the Committee had decided to close, for the greater safety and comfort of the ticket-holders. The numbers who were turned away from the doors would have amply sufficed to fill the gallery three times over.

The speakers were Mr. W. H. Dickinson, M.P., the Earl Russell, Mr. I. Zangwill, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, and the Rev. Canon Hicks (of Manchester). Among those on the platform were Mr. H. C. Brodie, M.P. (Reigate), and Mr. B. S. Strauss, M.P., Mrs. Despard, Mrs. How Martyn, Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Drysdale, Mrs. Mitchell, and Miss Irene Miller of the Women's Freedom League, Mrs. Philip Snowden, Miss Mason, Miss Strachey, and Miss Hardcastle, of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, while Miss Gawthorpe and other members of the National Women's Social and Political Union were present in the audience. The cordial co-operation of all the women's societies was a significant feature of the meeting, showing as it did that, however much the various organizations may differ in their methods, they are united in friendship and enthusiasm for their common cause.

THE CHAIRMAN, in his opening remarks, briefly described the formation and objects of the League. "Its continued existence is assured," he said; "but we all hope for its speedy extinction. We hope for that with the knowledge that its dissolution can only be brought about by the passing of a Bill for the enfranchisement of women." (Applause.) He went on to say that the League was composed of men who intended to use their votes for bringing about the enfranchisement of women. It represented men of all shades of political opinion, "from the bluest Tory to the reddest Socialist harmoniously and loyally working together in support of our great cause." He then read a number of messages and sympathetic letters from friends who expressed their regret at not being able to be present—from Mrs. Fawcett, the Lord Bishop of Hereford, Archdeacon Wilberforce, Sir William Bull, M.P., Sir Andrew Torrance, M.P., Sir Henry Cotton, M.P., Mr. Leif Jones, M.P., Mrs. Jacob Bright, and others. He read also a message from Miss Theresa Lubinska, secretary of the Polish Women's Union (this was published in the last number of *Women's Franchise*), and then called upon Mr. W. H. Dickinson to move the resolution.

MR. W. H. DICKINSON, M.P., then moved the following resolution:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting the Parliamentary Franchise should be granted to women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men."

Having alluded to the large audience which had gathered together, Mr. Dickinson briefly explained the relation of the Men's League to the question of Women's Suffrage. Declining altogether to criticize the methods of the other societies, he enlarged on the fact that the duty of the Men's League is to enlist and unite the forces of thinking men in support of the great cause, and to show to the men voters that "the claim, the demand, that women are making to be allowed to participate in the Franchise is not only a claim which justice must yield to them, but a claim which political expediency should be only too ready to extend to them." (Applause.) For years past the work had been going on, but it was only recently that it had become impossible for any serious man to regard the subject as a joke. In other countries, and in our own as regards the municipal franchise, the claim of women had been recognized in spite of the "somewhat foolish sententious utterances" of men, "the folly of which was only permitted by the long-suffering of womankind." One objection after another had been given up, from that of the University of Bologna, which in 1737 described woman as "the foundation of sin, the weapon of the Devil, the cause of man's banishment from Paradise," to that of Mr. Labouchere, who feared that women might in some case obey conscience rather than the Party Whip.

So hard pressed were men to find a respectable reason for opposition that Dr. Massie, a Liberal M.P., actually fell back upon the strange device of alarming his Nonconformist friends

by telling them that the enfranchisement of women would mean the strengthening of the Established Church. The speaker proceeded to quote Mr. Lloyd-George's significant declaration, "If women demand the vote it will be an intolerable act of oppression on the part of men to deny the demand." (Great applause.) For his own part he would go further, and say that, if there were no such demand, it would still be an act of oppression to refrain from granting it. "Unless you can show that it is to the detriment of the State to grant women the Suffrage, I say that you are bound to treat women as citizens of the State, and to put them in precisely the same position of political power as men have managed to obtain for themselves." (Renewed applause.) Women were wealth producers; they were prominent in all walks of life, from the workshop to politics. "Is it better to have woman openly entering into political life, or clandestinely sharing in it?"

In America and in the colonies all the evidence goes to show that women stand for decency, and are keen on the great social reforms. The late Lord Salisbury, Dr. Clifford, and many others firmly believed that this would be the case in England. Why, then, does the Liberal party, which puts itself forward as the champion of justice and purity and social progress, hang back in this great movement? The great thing was that when women have the vote they should have as full and fair a representation of themselves as man has or is allowed to have in the future. "I believe that the time is much nearer than many of us think when woman will be admitted to her full rights as a citizen of this great empire." (Loud and prolonged applause.)

THE EARL RUSSELL, who followed, having paid a tribute to the work of Mr. Dickinson in introducing Women's Franchise Bills to the House of Commons, explained that he himself believed in Women's Franchise not only as a matter of justice, but also—and in greater degree—as likely to produce benefit to both men and women. The noble lord proceeded to criticize the attitude of various classes of persons, showing how partial and narrow-minded were many of the lukewarm advocates, and how fatuous were the arguments of many opponents. Some men seemed to think that all women must perpetually be looking after the comfort of men or the welfare of children; others were apparently inclined to compare unfavourably the capacity of the ordinary woman with that of the individuals who "prop up public-houses," the sanity of a mother with that of a man in love. No examination is necessary for a man who claims the vote; why should a woman be deprived of it because some men doubt her intelligence? All such objections were beside the point. The fundamental reason for granting the vote is that the voters' wishes may be ascertained. (Applause.) They may be foolish, but time alone could show their folly. Economically women were at a disadvantage—in the factory, in the wages market generally, "they have to be happy with what they can get." Women's Trades Unions had some effect, but the Parliamentary franchise would give them still greater power; candidates would be compelled to listen to their needs. (Loud applause.) Women had worked hard in political matters, but the promises made to them in regard to the Franchise were always made with an infinity of mental reservations.

The noble lord then dealt with the results of the recent policy of the militant societies, and enthusiastically admitted that it could claim the credit of changing the movement from an academic into a practical question. No one really liked to be "lectured by a complacent magistrate," but so illogical, and so uninfluenced by anything except violence and rowdiness is the English political mind, that until you adopt these rowdy tactics you remain a mere jest, a mere pious wish. (Great applause.) Women have been fooled long enough. They do not intend to be fooled any longer. (Renewed applause.) At the same time, while conceding to women the fullest freedom of judgment as regards their policy, and as an enthusiastic Suffragist, the speaker regretted the breaking-up of meetings. "Where there is a set meeting, and a set number of speakers, who have certain speeches to make, and a large audience that wishes to hear them, to prevent that meeting taking place, and prevent it being held, is, to some extent, an interference with the right of free speech. (Applause.) What would your own

feelings be if your meeting to-night were broken up in that way?" (Applause.) Lord Russell then concluded his speech by expressing the opinion that the responsibility and power which women will acquire with the Franchise will make them better women and better citizens. He welcomed the work of the Men's League. (To be continued.)

Woman's Freedom.

CHATS ABOUT PERSONS AND BOOKS.

No. 1.—Mrs. Aphra Behn and her Works—(continued.)

ON her return to England Aphra Johnson made the acquaintance of Mr. Behn, a City merchant of Dutch extraction, whom she married. He is said to have been of a good position, but in 1666 she became a widow, and with her widowhood apparently had to earn her own living, for almost immediately after we find her in Antwerp as an agent of the English Government. Charles II. had received her at Court, for she had given him so pleasant and rational an account of his affairs in Surinam that he desired her to publish them. In addition to this we have the testimony of a lady friend, who wrote of her in 1705: "As her mind so her body was adorned with all the advantages of our sex. Wit, beauty, and judgment seldom meet in one, especially in woman (you may allow this from a woman), but in her they were eminent." So, we do not wonder that the impressionable Monarch sent her on a mission to find out what the States were contemplating against England. She encountered great difficulty and danger at Antwerp, but, with a woman's tenacity, she stuck to her post and discovered to the English Government that "Cornelius de Wit had with de Ruyter proposed to the States to sail up the river Thames and destroy the English ships in their harbours." Her information was correct, but it was ignored by the authorities at home, and she writes to her friend: "But I have often observed your busy young statesmen, so very opinioned of their own designs that they are so far from encouraging those of another, if good, that they cannot forgive their proposal, and sacrifice a public good to their particular pride."

We have looked up the calendar of State Papers 1666-67 and find the Government treated her most shabbily. We quote extracts from two pathetic letters:

Aphra Behn, alias Astrea, from Antwerp, to Lord Arlington—"Is in debt and in extreme want herself, and as encouragement for her service, is likely to lose all her things and be put into prison; has pawned her rings and all she had; begs not to be ruined and disgraced in a strange place."

Again—"Wants a Bill for 100*l.*, of which her friend shall have part; cannot return without it; is a poor stranger and her life depends upon it. Did not desire the place she has, nor the voyage; must come by this convoy or will have to stay two months longer."

Women, do not put your trust in princes, nor in Governments either! Poor Aphra Behn (Astrea) went to Ostend and Dunkirk, where, with Sir Bernard Gascoign and others, she took ship to England. The vessel was split in sight of the land, but the people, by the help of the inhabitants and boats from shore, were all saved, and Astrea arrived late and tired in London.

From henceforth she devoted herself to literature. No woman had been known in England previously who made literature her sole profession for the purpose of obtaining a livelihood. We may imagine that her early struggles were keen, but being a woman of courage, wit, and remarkable diligence, to which was joined extensive worldly knowledge, she succeeded where weaker ones might have failed. She was able to find a publisher for her works, and what was more wonderful still, considering the position of women at that period, a theatre where her comedies were acted. She wrote 'Abdelazar' in 1677, in which we read the sweet song 'Love in phantastic triumph sat.' Swinburne calls it "That melodious and magnificent song." In the same year appeared 'The Rover,' 'Debauchee,' and the 'Town Fopp.'

(To be continued.)

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