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REFERENCE

Women's Suffrage Publications Volume 2.

1871-1872.

Women's Suffrage. Great Meeting in Edinburgh Edinburgh 1871.
 Electoral Disabilities of Women. By Milner & Garrett Fawcett. A Lecture Liverpool 1871.
 The Debate in The House of Commons on the Women's Disabilities Bill London 1871.
 Extracts from Mr. Mill's Subjection of Women London
 Geo. Ward Hunt, M.P. on Women's Suffrage. Tower of Commons 1871.
 Lord John Manners, M.P. on Women's Suffrage. Tower of Commons 1871.
 Sir Wilfred Lawson, BART., M.P. on Women's Suffrage. Speech at Carlisle. 1871.
 4th Annual Report. Manchester, National Society for Women's Suffrage. Manchester 1871.
 Women's Suffrage. 3rd Annual Meeting in Edinburgh Edinburgh 1872

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1871-1872

EDINBURGH N.S.W.S.	Women's suffrage - great meeting in Edinburgh, 1871.
FAWCETT, M.G.	Electoral disabilities of women - a lecture.
N.S.W.S.	The debate in the house of commons on the women's disabilities bill.
MILL, J.S.	Extracts from Mr Mill's subjection of women.
HUNT, G.W.	On women's suffrage.
MANNERS, Lord	On women's suffrage.
LAWSON, W.	On women's suffrage.
MANCHESTER N.S.W.S.	4th annual report of the executive committee, 1871.
EDINBURGH N.S.W.S.	3rd annual meeting in Edinburgh, 1872.
ROBERTSON, A.I.	Women's need of representation.
BECKER, L.	The political disabilities of women..
ARNOLD, A.	Women's suffrage - in seasonal proceedings.
BRIGHTON N.S.W.S.	Women's suffrage - explanatory statement.
ANONYMOUS	Taxation versus representation.
GARRETT, R.	The electoral disabilities of women - a lecture.
COLERIDGE, J.D.	The attorney-general on women's suffrage.
EXAMINER, The	The woman question.
EXAMINER, The	Black and white slaves.
BODICHON, B.	Reasons for and against the enfranchisement of women.
ANONYMOUS	A woman's voice.
ANONYMOUS	Petitions presented to parliament in favour of WS..., 1872.
N.S.W.S.	Report of the executive, 17.7.72.
ANONYMOUS	A word to women-householders.
C.C.N.S.W.S.	Opinions of eminent statesmen on women's suffrage.
C.C.N.S.W.S.	Opinions of: eminent persons; M.P.s; persons.
MANCHESTER N.S.W.S.	5th annual report of the executive committee, 1872.
BRIGHT, J.	Speech of J. Bright delivered at 5th annual meeting of Manchester N.S.W.S.
FAWCETT, H.	On women's suffrage - Birmingham, 6.12.72.
STURGE, E.M.	On women's suffrage - Birmingham, 6.12.72.
BATH N.S.W.S.	Report of 1872.

REFERENCE

-2-

Women's Suffrage Publications 1871-1872 Vol. 2.

Women's Need of Representation by Miss A. Robertson

The Political Disabilities of Women, from the

"Westminster Review"

Manchester 1872

Women's Suffrage by Arthur Arnold. 8th Feb. 1872

Women's Suffrage. Explanatory Statement. Brighton 1872

Taxation versus Representation. From "Manchester

Examiner + Times". 16th Feb. 1872.

The Electoral Disabilities of Women by Rhoda Garrett Cheltenham 1872

The Attorney General (Sir John Duke Coleridge) on printed

Women's Suffrage

Manchester

The Woman Question. Reprinted from "The Examiner" London 1872

Black + White Slaves. From "The Examiner" 19th Oct. 1872 London 1872

Reasons for + against the Enfranchisement

of Women by Mrs. Bodichon

London 1872

A Woman's Voice from the "Leeds Express."

380 0110745

REFERENCE

- 3 -

Women's Suffrage Publications Vol. 2.

1871 - 1872.

Petitions in Favour of Women Suffrage. Presented
to Parliament during the Session of 1872.

House of Lords. House of Commons

National Society for Women's Suffrage. Report. 17th July 1872

National Society for Women's Suffrage. The Central Committee.

A Word to Women Householders. Printed
London.

Opinions of Eminent Statesmen on Women's Suffrage

Opinions of Eminent Persons on Women's Suffrage. Leaflet 2

Opinions of Members of Parliament on Women's Suffrage. Leaflet 3

Opinions of Eminent Persons on Women's Suffrage. Leaflet 4

5th Annual Report of the Manchester National

Society for Women's Suffrage Manchester 1872

Speech of Jacob Bright, MP. Manchester National

Society for Women's Suffrage Manchester 1872

Mrs. Fawcett on Women's Suffrage. Birmingham.

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LAWSON
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EDINBUR
ROBERTS

REFERENCE
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-4-

Women's Suffrage Publications Vol. 2.
1871-1872.

Miss E. M. Sturge on Women's Suffrage. Birmingham
6th Dec. 1872.

Report of the Bath Branch of the National Society
for Women's Suffrage. 1872. Bath 1873

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Vol. 2

GREAT MEETING IN EDINBURGH

IN

THE MUSIC HALL,

ON 12TH JANUARY 1871,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

✓ THE EDINBURGH BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY
FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHN GREIG & SON.

MDCCLXXI.

71 M
HEAVY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

MRS M'LAREN, Newington House, PRESIDENT.

- MISS BURTON, Liberton Bank.
- MISS CALDWELL, 2 Victoria Terrace, Portobello.
- MISS CRAIG, 6 Carlton Street.
- MISS A. CRAIG, 6 Carlton Street.
- MRS CRUDELIUS, Chapelside, Trinity.
- MISS DICK LAUDER, 12 Melville Crescent.
- MRS FERGUSON HOME of Bassendean.
- MISS M. HUNTER, 5 Great Stuart Street.
- MRS LOW, 30 Minto Street.
- MRS M'QUEEN of Braxfield.
- MRS NICHOL, Huntly Lodge.
- MISS E. STEVENSON, 13 Randolph Crescent.
- MISS WALKER, 7 Queen's Crescent.
- MRS WIGHAM, 5 Gray Street.

MISS HUNTER, 5 Great Stuart Street, TREASURER.

MISS WIGHAM, 5 South Gray Street,
MISS AGNES M'LAREN, Newington House, } SECRETARIES.

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

GREAT MEETING

IN FAVOUR OF

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,

IN THE

MUSIC HALL, EDINBURGH, JANUARY 12. 1871.

A PUBLIC MEETING was held in the Music Hall, on the 12th of January, in favour of conferring the Electoral Franchise on those Women who are duly qualified as being the owners or occupiers of lands or houses in their own right. Considerable interest was manifested in reference to the proceedings, as it was known that Mr John Stuart Mill would address the meeting. The large hall was crowded in every part, upwards of 2000 being present, a large proportion of whom were ladies. As Mr Mill appeared, accompanied by Mr and Mrs M'Laren, he was received with loud and prolonged applause. Amongst those on the platform were—Sir John Murray, Bart., of Philiphaugh; Mr Miller, M.P.; Professor and Mrs Kelland; Professor and Mrs Masson; Mrs and Miss Wigham; Professor and Mrs Fraser; Professor Calderwood; Rev. Dr Wallace; Bailie Lewis; Miss Dick Lauder; Miss Hunter; Miss Craig; Mrs M'Queen; Mrs Low; Miss Walker; Miss Agnes M'Laren; Mr and Mrs Wm. Smith; Dr Findlater; Councillors Mossman, Millar, Bladworth, Wormald, Sloan, and Murray; Messrs Hugh Rose, M'Crie, Cox, W.S., John Cox of Gorgie, John M'Laren, Advocate; John Greig, and others.

On the motion of Professor Calderwood, Mr Duncan M'Laren, M.P., took the chair.

✓ The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, remarked that the fact of his having presided at a similar meeting last year, seemed to him, and to others, a very good reason why he should not have been asked to take the chair this year; and, accordingly, the Ladies' Committee, who had had the whole management—for the gentlemen had nothing whatever to do with it, and the ladies were pre-

sent on the platform to vindicate their own rights—(applause)—in the exercise of their discretion, very properly asked Sir Robert Anstruther, M.P., and Dr Lyon Playfair, M.P., severally, to take the chair at the present meeting. Sir Robert had written a very warm and friendly letter, which, unfortunately, had been mislaid; but in which he said he would not only have been glad to have attended the meeting, but would have been delighted to have presided, had not serious illness in his family prevented his leaving London. Sir Robert further stated that he felt most earnest in the cause of women's suffrage, and that the promoters of the movement might depend upon his services in a still more important arena—namely, the House of Commons. Dr Lyon Playfair had also been prevented from attending by family affliction; and he wrote—"I much regret this, for I should like to have reviewed the feeble positions taken up by Mr Bouverie and Mr Gladstone at the last debate in Parliament, and to have shewn how much the question has been strengthened by the late school elections. The chief argument of Mr Bouverie was, that it would injure women to expose them to the rough practices of an election. I went into the various polling-places in London at the recent election, and it was charming to see the interest of the female voters, and the orderly way in which everything proceeded. Their admission as voters will doubtless alter the tone of elections, but it will be by softening and improving it, just as women have softened and improved the habits of modern society." (Applause.) Sir David Wedderburn wrote—"I am very sorry I cannot be present at the meeting in Edinburgh, as I have engagements which will keep me in the south till the end of the month. You must not be afraid that I am one of the pusillanimous on the question of women's rights. The more I think on the subject, the better satisfied am I that women ought not to be content until they have obtained absolute equality—political, civil, and social—with men. Miss Garrett has already done this for herself individually, and I look upon her as a pioneer who ought soon to have many followers. In the mean time, the Parliamentary franchise is the thing to aim at as the best means of obtaining other ends, and I have no doubt your meeting will be a success." Letters had likewise been received from Mr M'Lagan, M.P., who was, unfortunately, detained in London, but who promised his cordial support in the House of Commons; from Professor Caird of Glasgow; and from Professor Baynes, St Andrews; and from many influential citizens—all expressing approval of the object of the meeting. He then read letters from Rev. Henry Renton, Kelso, and Mr M'Lennan, Advocate, who were to have spoken to-night, but were unavoidably absent on account of illness. Mr M'Laren went on to say that the progress of the cause had been very great within the last few months, and although it was sneered at by many, and laughed at and treated with contumely, he thought it was as certain to be ultimately carried as any question that was now the subject of public discussion in this country. (Applause.) The city and county of Edinburgh, and the burghs around, deserved to be specially noticed for the way in which their

representatives in Parliament had given the movement their support. The member for the County voted for it, as did the member for the University of Edinburgh, the member for the burghs of Leith, Portobello, and Musselburgh, and the members for the city of Edinburgh. The member for Linlithgowshire, intimately connected with our County, had also given the movement his cordial support. Then the Town Council of Edinburgh had the distinguished honour of being the first public body that petitioned Parliament for women's suffrage. (Applause.) The people of this district had, therefore, in their public capacity, done all that could possibly be expected, and he hoped that individually they would continue to exercise the influence they had in promoting the object in view.

Miss WIGHAM, one of the secretaries (who was received with most enthusiastic applause), then read the annual report of the Edinburgh branch of the Society:—

"The close of another year calls for a brief report of the proceedings of our committee, and of the progress of our cause. The work of the year commenced with a successful public meeting, held on the 17th January 1870, in the Queen Street Hall. The arguments in favour of women's suffrage on that occasion, so eloquently urged by able men of high position and influence, were intelligently responded to by a crowded and enthusiastic audience. A full report of this meeting has been extensively circulated through the press, and in a pamphlet form.

"No arguments of weight have been brought forward against the *justice* of conferring the electoral franchise on women; and those adduced against its expediency have been sufficiently and easily refuted. Referring our readers to the report we have mentioned for the removal of any lingering doubt they may have on this matter, we shall briefly recapitulate the operations of the Society.

"Aware of the important influence of public meetings, the committee, exerted themselves to promote them generally, and so successfully that thirty-nine meetings on the question of women's suffrage have been held during the year in various parts of Scotland.

"It was announced in our last annual report that Mr Jacob Bright and Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke were prepared to introduce into Parliament a bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women. The committee, therefore, in conjunction with others, directed its efforts to procure petitions in support of the bill. The result was that 299 petitions, with 24,805 signatures, were sent from Scotland; including petitions from the Edinburgh Town Council and other public bodies, and from twenty public meetings held in different towns.

"The committee desire to refer with grateful appreciation to the able services of Miss Taylour of Belmont, Stranraer, in delivering lectures in many towns in Scotland and the north of England. Her hearty and gratuitous services have aroused much public interest in the cause; and petitions in favour of women's suffrage, numerous, signed, invariably resulted from the meetings she held. In many of the towns the Chief

Magistrate and other gentlemen accompanied her to the platform. Miss Taylour, in her more recent efforts, has had the efficient aid of Miss Burton, of Edinburgh. Together they have visited Glasgow, Dumfries, Wigtown, Castle Douglas, Whithorn, Ayr, Ardrossan, Irvine, and Helensburgh; and wherever they have gone, they have been enthusiastically received. Since our last report, committees kindred to our own have been formed in Glasgow, Aberdeen, St Andrews, and Galloway.

"During last session of Parliament, 527 petitions were sent from English and Irish committees, with 109,761 signatures, in support of Mr Jacob Bright's bill. This bill was introduced by him, and passed the second reading by a majority of 33. On this occasion, the Home Secretary (Mr Bruce) declared, on the part of the Government, that they had not considered the question sufficiently to express an opinion upon it. When, however, the following week, Mr Jacob Bright moved that the bill be committed, it was found that the Government had abandoned their original position of neutrality, and having exercised their influence against the bill, they succeeded in getting it thrown out.

"On the second reading, 124 members had voted for the bill, including the Solicitor-General for England (Sir J. D. Coleridge) and other influential members of the Government. On the last occasion 94 only voted in favour, 58 of those who had previously voted for us being absent from the division, which it may be mentioned took place at two o'clock in the morning. Of these absentees 23, however, paired in our favour, bringing the total number of active supporters up to 119; and 17 of those who voted in this last division had never voted for us before. In this way, although we lost the support of out-and-out followers of the Government, we congratulate ourselves on the fact, that 170 members of the House of Commons have voted in favour of women's suffrage; and to shew that this is no party question, we may add that men of all shades of politics were found on our side.

"Since Mr John Stuart Mill, from his strong sense of justice, had the courage to bring this question before Parliament, the number of our supporters has been more than doubled. Whilst always remembering the debt of gratitude we owe to Mr Mill, we would also express our thanks to Mr Jacob Bright for his efforts in our cause last year, and to all the members who gave us their support; amongst whom we rejoice to record the names of all the representatives connected with Edinburgh, the members for the city, the county, and the University, as well as the member for Leith. We trust that in the coming session Mr Jacob Bright will be still more largely supported when he again introduces his bill. In England efforts are still progressing. An influential meeting was recently held in Manchester; and other great meetings have been held during the year, all having local and general interest. Full particulars of everything connected with the movement will be found in *The Woman's Suffrage Journal*, issued monthly by the Manchester Committee, large numbers of which have been circulated by us during the past year.

The readiness with which women have exercised their newly-acquired municipal franchise in England shews their capacity to take part in public matters, and also refutes the frequently alleged objections to our movement that women do not care for the franchise. The perfect good order which prevailed at these elections proves the possibility of women voting without anything occurring which would be unpleasant for women to witness.

"The fact that Mr Forster's Education Bill was so framed as to entitle women to vote and serve on School Boards shews that the Government recognises the importance of woman's aid in educational movements. The public voice has responded to this feeling by electing women, in several instances by large majorities, to take their seats at the school boards. This movement is eminently calculated to promote the further enfranchisement of women. It is 'another contribution to the freedom of humanity, and when we join in breaking off from society the heavy chain of legal, political, and social inequality, we are helping to give to humanity a time when, absolutely free, emancipated from every inequality, it shall make a mighty bound forward into the future, stronger and more ardent to do everywhere and always whatever works to the progress of truth, of justice, and charity.'

The Treasurer's statement, she said, included a balance from last year of £8, 9s, and the subscriptions and donations amounted to £162, 10s. 6d.—total, £170, 19s. 6d.; the expenses, including £87, 13s. 11d. for expenses of thirty-nine public meetings, were £176, 18s. 4d.—leaving a balance due to treasurer of £5, 18s. 10d. She thought it necessary to read the Treasurer's statement in order to shew that they could conduct the movement economically. (Laughter and cheers.)

Mr HUGH ROSE seconded the motion. The Ladies' Committee, he remarked, anxiously desired that those who were friendly to this movement, should go a little further than merely shew their sympathy with it by their presence on such occasions as this. The ladies hoped that those friends would cordially unite in raising the necessary means to agitate the question throughout the length and breadth of the land. (Hear, hear.) He was glad to say that a gentleman in England had remitted £100 to the Ladies' Committee, with which to commence the work of 1871. (Applause.) Two ladies, also from England, had sent £10 each. (Applause.) He trusted that Edinburgh would shew herself on this occasion worthy of the reputation she enjoyed of taking the lead in everything that was true, liberal, and just. (Applause.)

The motion was agreed to.

✓ Mr JOHN STUART MILL, who was received with great enthusiasm, the audience rising and waving their hats and handkerchiefs, said—If there is a truth in politics, which is fundamental—which is the basis of all free government—it is that when a part of the nation are the sole possessors of power, the interest of that part gets all the serious

attention. This does not necessarily imply any active oppression. All that it implies is the natural tendency of the average man to feel what touches self, of vastly greater importance than what directly touches only other people. This is the deep-seated and ineradicable reason why women will never be justly treated until they obtain the franchise. They suffer, assuredly, much injustice by the operation of law. But suppose this changed; even then—even if there were no ground of complaint against the laws, there would be a break-down in their execution as long as men alone have a voice in choosing and in removing the officers of Government. All our recent constitutional reforms, and the whole creed of reformers, are grounded on the fact that the suffrage is needed for self-protection. All experience proves that if one part of the community is held in subjection by another part, it is not trusted with the ordinary means of self-defence, but is left dependent on the good-will and pleasure of those who are more privileged, the most vital interests of the subject-portion are certain to be, if not recklessly trampled upon, at least postponed to almost anything else. The treatment of women is certainly no exception to the rule. They have neither equal laws nor an equal administration of them. The laws treat them as they could not long be treated if they had the suffrage; and even if the laws were equal, the administration of the laws is not. Police magistrates and criminal judges cannot be exceptionally bad men; they are not chosen for their bad qualities; they must be thought, by those who appoint them, to represent fairly, or better than fairly, the moral feelings of average men. Yet, what do we see? For an atrocious assault by a man upon a woman, especially if she has the misfortune to be his wife, he is either let off with an admonition, or he is solemnly told that he has committed a grave offence, for which he must be severely punished, and he then gets as many weeks or months of imprisonment as a man who has taken five pounds worth of property gets years. We are told that the good feelings of men are a sufficient protection to women. Those who say so, can never, one would suppose, look into the police and law reports. If good feeling does not protect women against being beaten and kicked to death's door every day of their lives, and at last beaten and kicked to actual death, by their special guardians and protectors, can we expect that it will secure them against injuries less revolting to humanity? Most men, it will be said, are incapable of committing such horrible brutality. Perhaps so; but it seems they are quite capable of letting it be committed. If women who are maltreated by their husbands found a defender in every other man who knew of it, they might have some chance of protection without the weapon of the suffrage. But it is never so; slaves did not find it so; serfs did not find it so; conquered nations do not find it so; and neither do women. There are many men who would not consciously do them any wrong; but there must be a great moral improvement in human nature before most men will exert themselves to prevent or to redress wrongs committed by others under the sanction of law. And of these two things—the suffrage for women, and a grand moral improvement in human nature—the suffrage, to my thinking, is likely

to be the soonest obtained. (Cheers.) I could afford to stop here. I have made out an ample case. There is a portion of the population, amounting in number to somewhat more than half, to whom the law and its administration do not fulfil their duty, do not afford even the bodily protection due to all—this half happening to be that which is not admitted to the suffrage. Their most important interests are neglected—I do not say from deliberate intention, but simply because their interest is not so near to the feelings of the ruling half as the ruling half's own interest. The remedy is plain: put women in the position which will make their interest the rulers' own interest. Make it as important to politicians to redress the grievances of women as it is to redress those of any class which is largely represented in Parliament. If nothing more than this could be said in support of their claim to the suffrage, no claim could be more fully made out. (Cheers.) And if the claim is just, so also is it strictly constitutional. One of the recognised doctrines of the British Constitution is that representation is co-extensive with direct taxation. The practice of the Constitution, it is true, for a long time did not correspond with the theory; but it has been made to conform to it at last, in cities and boroughs, provided the tax-payer is of the male sex; but if a woman, she may be the largest tax-payer in the place, and the person of greatest practical ability beside; no matter, she has no vote. This is something very like punishing her for being a woman. The conditions which in the eye of the law and of the Constitution confer a title to a voice in public affairs are all fulfilled by her, with the single exception of having been born a male. This one deficiency, which I humbly submit she cannot help—(laughter)—is visited on her by the privation of a right as important to her as to any man, and even more important, since those who are physically weakest require protection the most. This is not an injury only, but an indignity. I grant that those who uphold it are in general quite unconscious of its being so; but this comes from the inveterate habit of having one rule and measure for all that concerns women, and another for everything else. Men are so much accustomed to think of women only as women, that they forget to think of them as human. (Hear, hear.) It is not only for their own sake that women ought to have the suffrage, but also for the sake of the public. It is for the interest of us all, both men and women, and of those who are to come after us. The reasons that may be given for this are many, but I may content myself with two. One, and the strongest, is what we sometimes hear unthinkingly urged as an argument on the other side—because women have so much power already. (Laughter.) It is true they have much power. They have the power which depends on personal influence over men. They have the power of cajolery—(laughter)—and often that of a petted favourite; power sadly inadequate to their own just and necessary protection against wrong, but sufficient at times to produce only too much effect upon the public conduct of the men with whom they are connected. But as this power, instead of being open and avowed, is indirect and unrecognised, no provision is made for its being rightly used. As it is convention-

ally assumed that women possess no power outside the domestic department, the power which they do and always will possess is exercised without the necessary knowledge, and without the proper responsibility. It having been decreed that public matters are not a woman's business, her mind is carefully turned away from whatsoever would give her a knowledge of them, and she is taught to care nothing about them—that is, until some private interest or private likings or dislikings come in, when of course these private feelings have it all their own way, there being no public principles or convictions to control them. The power, therefore, which women now have in public affairs is power without knowledge. It is also power without responsibility. A man's wife is very often the real prompter either of what he does well and nobly, or of what he does foolishly or selfishly; but as she gets no credit for the one, so she is not held accountable for the other; if she is selfish, a very little art suffices to exempt her from censure though she succeeds in compassing her ends; if she is simple and well meaning, she does not feel bound to inform herself, so as to have a reasonable opinion on what is solely the man's business, though all the while her ignorant prepossessions or her natural partialities may be acting as a most pernicious bias on what is supposed to be his better judgment. From this combination of absence of instruction and absence of responsibility, it comes to pass that, though women are acknowledged to have, as a rule, stronger conscientious feelings than men, it is but a very small minority of women who have anything that deserves the name of a public conscience. How great an evil this is, there needs no argument to shew. What is the greatest obstacle which the friends of political and social improvement have to struggle with—the drag which is constantly obstructing their efforts and disappointing their hopes? Is it not the weakness of the average citizen's political conscience? Is not this the special danger and failure to which popular institutions are exposed—that the elector does not sufficiently feel his obligations to the public, and either stays away from the poll, or goes there and votes on the prompting of some private interest? And how can we hope that he will learn to postpone private interests to public, while he has beside him, in the person of his closest intimate, one who has been trained to have no feeling whatever of his duties to the public, but who has the keenest feeling of his duties to his family, and who, even without intending it, cannot but sway his mind strongly in the direction of the only interests which she understands and appreciates? (Applause.) It must be remembered, too, that this is a growing evil. Time was when the wife was very little a companion of her husband—their lives were apart; the associates of his leisure and of his recreations were other men. But now the home and its inhabitants are so much to a man, that no other influence can, as a rule, compete with theirs. The time, therefore, is come when, if we would have public virtue in our men, we must have it in our women. (Hear, hear, and applause.) And how can a woman have a conscience about the public good, if she is told, and believes, that it is no business whatever of hers? Give women the

same rights as men, and the same obligations will follow. Instead of hanging a dead weight on men's public conscience, their greater general susceptibility of moral feeling will make their habitual influence a most valuable support to the honest performance of public duty. (Loud applause.) This, then, is one of the reasons why it is for the good of all that women should have an admitted right to take part in public affairs. Another is the vast amount of brain power and practical business talent which now runs to waste for want of an outlet into those great fields of public usefulness, in which no one, I suppose, will pretend that such qualities are not very much wanted. Few men, I suspect, are sufficiently aware of the great amount of administrative ability possessed by women; for want of considering that the essential qualities which lead to practical success are the same in what are called small things as in great. It is my belief that, in all those parts of the business of life which depend on the vigilant superintendence and accurate estimation of details, women, when they have the necessary special knowledge, are better administrators than men. And I am now speaking, not of women as they might be—not as some improved mode of education would make them—but of women as they now are, and of the capacities which they have already displayed. If an example is wanted of what women's powers of organisation can accomplish in public life, I appeal to one of the most striking facts of modern times, the Sanitary Commission in the late American War. The history of that Commission ought to be as well known all over the world as it is in America. From the beginning, and throughout, it was women's work. It was planned, organised, and worked by women. The Government was jealous of them at first, but the hopeless inferiority of its own arrangements made it soon glad to make over the first place to them. Not only had such work never been so well done, but nobody had ever supposed it possible that it could be so well done. I am aware that this argument would carry us much farther than the suffrage; but I suppose it will be acknowledged that those who are themselves eminently capable of practical business, must be fit to take a share in the choosing of those to whom practical business is to be entrusted. The ability which is specially required for the exercise of the suffrage—that of selecting the persons most capable for the work that is to be done—is one of the qualifications for business in which women have always excelled. Great queens have in nothing shewn themselves greater than in their choice of Ministers. When the ladies of the Sanitary Commission wanted men to help them, they knew the right men and how to use them; and they distinguished themselves not less by the work which they caused to be done, than by that which they did in their own persons. (Applause.) These are some of the reasons which make it equally just and expedient that the suffrage should be extended to women. It must, at the same time, be borne in mind that, by admitting them to the suffrage, no other question is in the smallest degree prejudged. Supposing it true, what some people are so fond of affirming, that women have nothing to complain of, and that the vast majority of them do not

desire any change; if so, giving them the suffrage can do nobody harm, and would afford them an opportunity of shewing their perfect contentment with their present lot, in a manner beyond the reach of dispute. (Applause.) If what we are told is true, that women ought to be, and always must and will be, in a state of domestic and social subordination to men, why, then they require the suffrage so much the more, in order that the sovereignty of men over them may be exercised under the fitting responsibility. None need political protection so much as those who are in domestic dependence, since none are so much exposed to wrong. On every possible supposition, therefore, they have a claim to the suffrage. And we live at a period of human development, when the just claims of large numbers cannot be permanently resisted. The whole movement of modern society, from the middle ages until now, greatly accelerated in the present century, points in the direction of the political enfranchisement of women. Their exclusion is a last remnant of the old bad state of society—the regimen of privileges and disabilities. All other monopolies are going or gone. The whole spirit of the times is against predetermining by law that one set of people shall be allowed by right of birth to have or to do what another set shall not by any amount of exertion or superiority of ability be allowed to attain. (Applause.) If nature has established an ineradicable and insuperable difference in the capacities and qualifications of the two sexes, nature can take care of itself. What nature has decided may safely be left to nature. But when we find people making themselves uneasy for fear that nature's purposes should be frustrated unless law comes to her assistance, we may be pretty certain that it is not nature they are so careful about, but law pretending to be nature. To all such pretences the growing improvement of mankind is making them more and more adverse. I do not know how long a time it may require to get rid of women's disabilities. Great changes in the habits and opinions of mankind are always slow. But of one thing I am certain—that when once they have been got rid of—when their true aspect is no longer disguised by the varnish of custom and habit—they will appear in the retrospect so devoid of any rational foundation, and so contradictory to the principles by which society now professes to guide itself, that the difficulty which will be felt will be to conceive how they can ever have been defended, and by what possible arguments they can ever have been made to appear plausible. (Loud cheers.) The resolution I have to propose is—“That the ownership or occupation of lands or house being the basis of representation in this country, it is unjust in principle to make sex a ground of disqualification, thereby excluding a large number of intelligent persons well qualified to exercise the electoral franchise; and the recent school board elections in England have proved not only that women are desirous to exercise this right, but that they can do so without the slightest inconvenience.” (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

Mr MILLER, M.P., seconded the resolution. They all knew, he said, the benefit which society had derived in proportion as the influence of women had been brought to bear upon it. We had women exercising powers of which many in the country did not know the extent or value. We had them exercising the powers of representatives of parochial boards; we had them exercising the powers of heritors in districts; we had them exercising the powers of road trustees; and we had some of them exercising the powers of patronesses of church livings. In all these circumstances they had conducted themselves admirably; and why should they not do so in the question of the suffrage? (Hear, hear.) If there had been women's suffrage in this land not long ago, some Acts of Parliament which had been passed, and which many of us deplore, would never have been on the statute-book at all. (Applause and hisses.) The fact is, we want the softening influence of women in connection with the legislation of this country. (Applause.)

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

✓ Professor MASSON said, the resolution he had to propose was as follows:—“That this meeting desire to thank Mr Jacob Bright for his past efforts to remove the electoral disabilities of women, and respectfully request him to reintroduce his bill in the ensuing session of Parliament; and further resolve to petition Parliament at the proper time in favour of the bill; and authorise the chairman to sign the petition in name of the meeting.” This resolution, he said, called them to look back a little to the past. It reminded them of a meeting which was held a year ago in Edinburgh on this subject, when they had the pleasure of listening to a most able and lucid exposition of the whole question by Mr Jacob Bright. (Loud applause.) It recalled to them not only that Mr Bright had done so, and had studied the question and promulgated right views of it long before, but also that on the 4th of May last he had reintroduced the question into Parliament in a most able and impressive manner. (Applause.) He (Professor Masson) had the chance to be present in the House of Commons when Mr Bright moved the second reading of the bill, and he saw the scene which had been described in the report read to them that evening. The second reading was moved by Mr Bright in an admirable, moderate, and striking speech; and he had been supported by five other members of Parliament, one of whom, he was glad to say, was his late colleague, Dr Lyon Playfair—(applause)—who was making himself felt in the House of Commons as he had made himself felt in the society of this city. (Loud applause.) Dr Playfair, growing into political note, had not done as some others wishing to attain the same distinction have done—he had not shrunk from putting his name to, and letting his influence go with, a movement like this, because at present it was perhaps in the minority. All that had passed during the last year in connection with this subject, all the argumentation of their opponents, had only made them more convinced that the measure was a right one, and that it ought again to be brought before

Parliament. (Hear, hear, and applause.) In the course of last year the opposition had coined itself—which it had hardly done before—into a few definitely stated arguments. These arguments might be enumerated and ticketed; and the very phrases in which they appeared in the House of Commons, and in which they appear in newspapers, might be stereotyped, for they always took the same form. He would dare to say, that at the very utmost, these arguments would amount to six or seven numerically; but it was a gain to the other side, and to the whole discussion, that the mere prejudiced opposition which existed had taken the trouble to state itself in articulate propositions at all. One of these propositions is a continuation of the old form of opposition, which lodged itself in the famous phrase—“The sphere of woman, Sir; the sphere of woman.” (Laughter and applause.) They had heard this phrase in all possible varieties of elocution, and in all sorts of tones, and for a time the reasoning of people in the opposition did not extend beyond this. That phrase, however, he was glad to say, had disappeared from the vocabulary of Edinburgh. (Laughter.) No one to his knowledge in any public place had used the phrase for the last twelve months within a radius of five miles of the place where they now were. (Laughter and applause.) The same objection, however, had reappeared in a more special and distinct form, to the effect that there was a natural inequality of the sexes, and therefore there could not be and ought not to be a political equality. Now, what was meant by this phrase of “natural inequality?” It must mean either that there was an inequality of degrees of mental power between the two sexes, or, as he thought those who used the phrase wished it to mean, that there was a diversity of gifts and kinds of power between the two sexes. Whichever of these two meanings lay in the phrase, was there not a natural inequality amongst men? (Applause and laughter.) Were there not unequal degrees of ability and diversities of power and fitness among men!—(hear, hear)—and had it ever been said that on that account there should be no political equality among men? (Applause.) Why, the very nature and meaning of political equality was that all should be equal in the eye of the law in order that the natural superiorities of one man over another, and the natural differences between one man and another, might have fair play and exert and prove themselves to the very utmost. (Loud applause.) When it was proposed to arrange a suffrage among men on any principle of gradation of mental power, or on any plan deduced from observation of differences of faculty and fitness, then, and not till then, might they hear of the proposition he had referred to as regarded women. (Applause.) But he was pretty sure that the more this question was studied, the more that observation was brought to bear on the powers and faculties of women, whatever remains there might be of the notion of difference or even of inequality, the amount of the difference and the amount of the inequality would become less and less in the thoughts of all. (Applause.) Were even the archangel Raphael to appear and tell them he

knew precisely the sphere of woman as compared with the sphere of men, he (Professor Masson) should take the liberty of doubting whether even so serene a judgment had not been rather hasty. (Loud hisses and applause.) All he meant to say was that—(continued hisses and applause)—there might be inequality, and there might be difference, but it was impossible for any of them to tell precisely what or how much it was. The alleged inequality might be represented in the following way:—Suppose the ablest man was far abler than the ablest woman ever had been or ever will be, and suppose the stupidest woman was far more stupid than the stupidest man—(laughter and hisses)—suppose the two sexes were ranged in parallel lines like two thermometers, the masculine gauge going to a greater altitude of ability than the other—was it not to be thought that some of the women at the top of the feminine gauge might be very nearly up to the top in the masculine, and that, at all events, a large proportion of the total number of women would range within the same bounding levels as a large proportion of the total number of men? (Hear, hear, applause, and hisses.) The more practically this was examined into, even at present, when women have not the advantages of competition and stimulus which exist in favour of the other sex, the more was it found that, by all tests possible, they had to conclude that the difference in degree and in kind had been greatly exaggerated. (Loud applause.) Then it had been said that women were not a class; and, consequently, that the argument of fairness, in consideration of the admission gradually to the suffrage of class after class of the rest of the community, did not apply to them. He had heard Mr Beresford Hope, in the House of Commons, lay great stress on this verbal correction, as if it were a kind of discovery, and involved a profound amount of reasoning. What! treat a whole sex as a class! True, they had extended the suffrage to class beyond class among men, and many admitted that this was right, because the interests of different classes required representation; but were women to be spoken of as a class? Well, of course, in that particular way of speaking referred to by Mr Beresford Hope, what the honourable member had said was proper enough. But they might use the same words for different occasions, and they might use the word “class,” as regards women in a way perfectly fair, and yet retain to the full the argument favourable to their side of the subject “Class,” “section of the community,” “division of the community”—the precise phrase used was of little moment; but, certainly, if they looked at those whom the law entitled to the suffrage, those who had a certain amount of property or paid rates, and if they saw a certain large section of that body disabled and not possessing the right they were thus entitled to, that section might fairly enough be spoken of as a class, for they were a large proportion of the community who would otherwise have the vote. (Applause.) Indeed, there were certain classes enumerated by law as disfranchised. These classes were, he believed, minors, criminals, idiots, lunatics, and women. (Laughter.) Minors were excluded because they were under age, criminals because they were criminals, idiots on account

of their idiocy, lunatics on account of their lunacy, and women on account of their womanhood. (Loud laughter, applause, and hisses.) But it had been asked, why did they except married women from the benefit of this proposal? Why were they not logical, why did they not go to the extreme range to which their principles would lead them? Well, he had to say that they were perfectly logical, and also perfectly practical. They were proceeding upon the present basis of the representation, which basis of representation had been defined by the Legislature as consisting in certain property and ratepaying qualifications. If they chose, or if society chose at any time, to say that this system of representation was a crude and rude one—in which probably he should go along with them—(applause)—if it were said that they ought to arrive at a system of representation, the personal system or any other, which would give more scope to individual opinion and desire and energy, then, perhaps, they might alter the shape in which they brought forward this measure; but at present they were strictly logical and consistent, and also practical, in moving simply that those who were disqualified under the present system only by the fact of sex should no longer be so disqualified, but should possess the vote. (Loud applause.) It was also said, in opposition to the scheme, that women did not want the vote. But a great many women did want the vote, and had shewn that they wanted it in all possible ways; and, even if others did not want it, no harm was done, because, if the suffrage were conferred on qualified women, none of these needed to use their privilege unless they chose. The bill was not one to compel women to meddle with politics, or do anything they did not want to do; it was only a bill to enable those to vote who really wished and desired to vote. (Applause.) It was also said that, after all, the injustices done to women were very few under the present system—nothing to speak of. But he thought there had been proof sufficient, in such matters as the marriage laws and the laws concerning married women's property, that women did suffer injustices in a great many instances. (Cheers.) He would give the following passage from Lord Macaulay, which would be accepted as a true statement historically:—"If there be a word of truth in history, women have been always, and still are, over the greater part of the globe, humble companions, playthings, captives, menials. Except in a few happy and highly-civilised communities, they are strictly in a state of personal slavery. Even in those countries where they are best treated, the laws are generally unfavourable to them with respect to almost all the points in which they are the most deeply interested." (Applause.) That was a statement of a general kind by Lord Macaulay, amply borne out by detailed illustrations which had been brought forward of the unjust laws to which the women of this country were subject. (Cheers.) But it was said that these injustices and inequalities affected only married women, and that the very women whom it was proposed now to enfranchise might do almost anything that men might do—that they are not subject to so many injustices. At all events, however, they were subject to this injustice—that marriage for them

was rendered degrading, by having attached to it legal degradation as a necessary condition. If, when those who are unmarried become married, they have to consent to give up even certain rights which they possessed when they were unmarried, must not a strange sense of approaching injustice mingle with the feelings with which the unmarried look forward to marriage, and is there not thus a vitiation of the nature of the marriage-relation itself? And so, by the votes of unmarried women alone, might there not be a swift liberation of marriage from this wrong, and a rectification of the legal state of the married? But why dwell upon specific legal injustices to women, or make out a list of them? Talk of injustices! Were not impediments injustices—impediments fostered by law and removable by law? Let that be thought of, and let them only look round, anywhere, everywhere, through British society! The impediments to women that now existed were the greatest injustices possible. There were impediments in the way of women over the whole of this land—impediments in the way of the pursuit of industries—impediments at every door when they wished to enter on a new career of activity. (Loud applause.) There were about twelve millions of the sex in the population of England and Scotland, and nearly four millions of these were working for their bread in various ways—working for their bread in the most literal fashion; not only domestically, but in the sense in which the words were applied to men. If they considered what occupations these women were practising, they would find that they were always the lowest and most menial. Men who talked about women as being all supported by the earnings of men had no objection to the hard labour of women so long as it was menial and unintellectual; but the moment a woman wished to enter a career of industry that would occupy her highest faculties, that would make her more nearly a co-equal of man, and bring her in earnings and emoluments equal to those that men receive, then the whole of society, immediately in front of her, formed itself into a dead mass of oppugnancy, and woman was flung back. (Great cheering and hissing.) Then, again, let them look for a moment at what was doing in the matter of education. Men might, if their circumstances permitted, continue their training to a very high point. There are parish and primary schools; there are the high schools; then there are the universities, and so on. But all over the country, and by a sort of immemorial tradition, the education of women is kept down to a certain level, far beneath that attainable by men; and so much is this the case that the very notion of a university education for women, or anything of an equivalent, was a novelty that made people a short time ago stare. Yet there was no reason why all state helps and endowments for the highest education of men should not be equally available for women; and to bring about that state of things was an aim worthy of any amount of social endeavour. There was no reason why there should not be an equivalent to their High Schools for girls; and there was no reason why, whenever there was a university in any city, the women of that vicinity should not have the full benefit of the best and most systematic means and appliances for

education that are there established. (Applause.) He was glad to see that the business community of Edinburgh had shewn a fine example in this respect. He would not speak there in general about the great change in their educational institutions effected under the auspices of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh—(hear, hear, and applause)—headed by Mr Boyd. He would not speak of that, as it had been criticised in various ways; but there was one feature in the scheme to which there could be no objection, and which entitled the Company and Mr Boyd to the gratitude and admiration not only of Edinburgh but of the whole nation. That was, that in arranging for bursaries and scholarships for eminent pupils in the various schools the Company had founded, including the Merchant Maiden School, it was provided that there should be such bursaries or scholarships for the most meritorious girls as well as for the most meritorious boys; in order that these girls might pursue their further education in—he would quote the exact words of the Company's own document, so far as he remembered them—"in the universities or elsewhere." (Applause.) That was a look into the future, and he hoped a near future, by the commercial mind of Edinburgh, which ought to shame the mind which professed in many cases to move in higher orbits than the commercial. (Applause.) But to bring about these and other such improvements what was necessary was the suffrage for women. (Hear.) A great many improvements might be carried gradually here and there, but the short cut was the suffrage. When they were able to point to a parliamentary election turned by the votes of women, the knell of all these injustices to women would have begun to be rung. (Applause.) He next adverted to the objection—the grand, final, ever-recurring objection—that if this claim were granted the position of women would be lowered, they would be unsexed, and the respect entertained for women would depart, and so on. (A voice—"Hear, hear," and laughter.) He did not believe it, and he thought he could hint at proofs that would convince them that the very reverse would be the case. (A voice—"Give them, then." Laughter.) The position of women, like all things on this earth, had passed through various stages in the past, and was not now what it once was. The position of women in old times and in savage times, and as represented by savage countries in this day, was one of sheer subjection to brutality in its rudest form. That stage passed away over a large part of the earth, and a stage like that which still holds in the East was attained—a condition of women like that in Oriental countries where polygamy prevailed; and so on the advance had gone till they came to the state of women in Christendom and Western Europe. Now, he would appeal to them whether the romance about women, the sentiment of chivalry, the respect and reverence of man for woman, was not a sentiment that had grown gradually to what it now was by constant modification through these various stages. And, if along a certain number of stages we see this feeling growing and forming itself, have we not a right to suppose that it is susceptible of yet higher modifications, and that, if the same straight line is continued,

the feeling will grow more and more? But there was another way in which he would venture, though it was a daring venture, to express the same thing. They all knew, in the case of one of the greatest men of this earth, one of the greatest mediæval men—Dante—they knew that it had been the wonder of men after him, how in his great poem, which was a vision or symbol of the entire universe and the life of man—it had been a wonder to succeeding generations how that man in the very highest heaven, as a star looking down upon this vast symbol, had placed the name and the image of the woman Beatrice. That had been a wonder ever since. But, perhaps, that had been paralleled. He should not speak what he now spoke if he had not the guarantee of printed words; but, having that guarantee, he would say that there had been a philosopher since whose calm thinkings about all subjects had instructed and enlightened the world even when men differed from him in the results of these thinkings—a man, too, who had more than most men the true Christian feeling of sympathy with the abject and outcast, and whose desire was to do all the good he could in the world before death received him—and it chanced that that man, in the centre of his clear universal thinkings, had also placed the name and image and memory of a woman. That philosopher was Mr John Stuart Mill. (Immense cheering.) Was there a chance that a movement so traditionally and historically carrying on the line of higher and higher modification of sentiment in the whole past, and which had a pre-eminent representative of this kind in the present day, could by any possibility end in lowering women? No, quite the reverse. In an age like the present, when contempt for women was the characteristic of a large number of men—(hisses and counter cheers)—when the talk about women—(renewed hisses and cheers)—among all of us was too apt to be mere jocosity—it was something to be able to look forward, even in dreams, to the possibility of a higher estimate of woman, to be attained generally when she should be seen living and acting in complete civic co-equality with man. (Applause.) What they proposed was, that this bill of Mr Jacob Bright should be introduced next session. Evidently it would be a terrible session; but even in the discussion of such a question as national armaments, it was to be hoped that room would be found for the introduction of this bill, which promises one of the largest, subtlest, deepest, and most beautiful reforms in human society. (Hear, hear.) It was not a party question. There were Tories and Whigs on both sides. Mr Gladstone, he believed, had not given his opinion publicly on the subject. Mr Disraeli had distinctly, and even in speech, shewn sympathy with woman suffrage. (Hear, hear, and a voice "Three cheers for Disraeli.") Whether anything would come out of that he could not say. He would conclude, however, with two practical hints. One was that, until women had the franchise, those who thought they ought to have it might make a test question of it at elections. In the case of a man with whose views he did not in many respects agree, but who was right on this question, he would throw other feelings overboard unless paramount duty was too strong, and

vote for him. (Hisses and applause.) Unless there were a clear public duty the other way at the moment, he certainly would vote for the man who was prepared to give women the suffrage. Another thing was that there were plenty of opportunities, before the consummation aimed at was achieved, of putting women into important social positions. He thought the best policy in such a case would not be to put a man into any post who was favourable to women, but, if they could find a fit woman to put into any post, to do so. They had had a splendid instance of this in London. The thing was unexampled. In the London School Board elections there had been votes given for women, the like of which had never been given for any British human being before on any occasion whatever. That ought to be a signal to them, whenever they could in any way put a woman into an administrative post, to do so, and not wait until they got the suffrage for women generally. (Loud applause.)

✓ Bailie LEWIS said that, in virtue of the principles he held in regard to political economy, he had no alternative but to support the present movement. Wherever there was taxation, in order to secure righteous legislation, the suffrage must be co-extensive with the taxation; and so long as he found women subject not only to local but to imperial taxation, he was driven, as a political economist, to support their enfranchisement. Mr Bouverie was afraid that women would be roughly handled at elections. He (Bailie Lewis) did not believe in anything of the kind, but if Mr Bouverie would like to get rid of that objection, he should come forward as an advocate of the ballot, for with that institution there would no longer be any need for anxiety on the subject. (Applause.) Was it not notorious that in the recent School Board elections, made by means of the ballot, peace and harmony had prevailed to an extraordinary extent? He could not understand the opposition to the present movement. They heard of women being kept in their proper sphere, but so long as he found women in the agricultural districts working in the fields, carting manure, spreading lime, or making drains, he asked if the principle of keeping women in their proper place was applied there? Or, when Grace Darling undertook a task which no man was brave enough to do, did not the country applaud, instead of reminding her that women should keep within their proper sphere? He thought Parliament would be vastly improved by the influence of female suffrage. However men might sneer at and ridicule and oppose the present movement, it was a movement destined to succeed. With 170 members of the present Parliament in favour of the female franchise, with the numbers always accumulating and gaining strength, and with the known persistency and determination of the women engaged in this righteous agitation—(laughter)—ultimate success was certain. He would like if many of the Scotch members were possessed of some of the pertinacity and fixedness of purpose which characterised women in prosecuting their objects. He had no doubt that the great body of the meeting would heartily respond to the resolution he had been called on to second—(ap-

plause)—that they were resolved that whatever other towns and cities might do, Edinburgh would give forth no uncertain sound—(applause)—but that a petition would emanate from the meeting, signed by their respected chairman, in favour of the movement. If he had been consulted in regard to the resolution, he would have ventured to suggest that constituencies be called upon to use their influence with their respective members. He would even have ventured, however much it might have been scoffed at, to suggest that a deputation of ladies be sent to London to press the question. (Laughter.) Whether this might be done in the ensuing session or not, he ventured to predict that the ladies, in pressing on the siege, would one day see it their duty to send a deputation to London to canvass the various members, and either make them support the measure, or give the reasons why they refused to do so.

The resolution was then put to the meeting, and carried by a large majority.

Professor KELLAND said he had a proposal to make which he was sure would meet with no opposition. As good wine needed no "bush," the motion he was going to make needed no preface. He moved a vote of thanks to Mr John Stuart Mill—a man known wherever the English language was spoken, as the greatest of modern philosophical thinkers—as one of the great thinkers who had set his mind to knock down all that opposed the progress of truth and liberty—(great cheering)—who had at great personal inconvenience come down from London, and had to go back again the following morning, simply for the purpose of giving—by the weight of his personal ability, his great knowledge and well-known determination upon this subject—a powerful impetus to the movement. (Loud applause.)

✓ The Rev. Dr WALLACE, who was loudly cheered, said he felt great pleasure, and considered it a very high honour, to have a humble part in advocating this movement by seconding the motion of thanks to Mr Mill—a man to whom every one of them who had the slightest pretension to culture and intelligence would gladly acknowledge himself under obligations of gratitude that could not well be expressed—a great original philosopher who had not speculated for his own amusement, but who had directed earnestly all his great gifts to questions and enterprises bearing directly upon the highest welfare of mankind—a man who had all his lifetime set before himself the noblest objects, and who had striven to promote these, not by appealing to passion or prejudice, but by fairness and honesty of reasoning that was equalled only by the transcendent ability which he had exercised in that direction. (Loud applause.) He was sure that whatever difference of opinion there might be—and difference of opinion might be expected in so large an assembly as that with regard to the conclusions which Mr Mill had advocated before them—there could be but one sentiment of admiration and of gratification at having seen Mr Mill among them that night, and at having listened to an

example of that fair, and close, and honest reasoning which he had made popular in this country, and by so doing had contributed very largely to the development of intellectual veracity amongst them, which was not one of the least important virtues in those days when there were so many temptations to sophistry and the sinking down of the human intellect into ways that were not worthy of its dignity. (Loud cheers.)

The vote having been put and carried unanimously,

Mr JOHN STUART MILL said—I feel most strongly the kind manner in which my name has been received by the meeting, not that I think for an instant that I deserve a tenth part of the kind things said of me by the proposer and seconder of the motion; but I cannot refrain from saying that even much greater trouble than I have been put to in coming from London here would have been much more than requited by the sight of so grand a meeting as this. I know that the cause owes an immense debt to Scotland, and in Scotland to Edinburgh, and I cannot close these few words without moving the thanks of the meeting to a gentleman to whom, more perhaps than to any one in Edinburgh, the cause owes the most—Mr Duncan M'Laren. (Applause.) No one who has exerted himself in this cause has done more to promote it than that gentleman, and, I may add, the ladies of his family. (Hear, hear.) To their exertions may be ascribed the rapid success which has attended this movement, not only in Edinburgh but throughout Scotland. In moving a vote of thanks to Mr M'Laren for his conduct in the chair, I may also add, for his past services in this cause. (Applause.)

The vote having been passed and acknowledged, a vote of thanks was passed to the Ladies' Committee, on the motion of Professor CALDERWOOD.

The meeting then separated with loud cheers for Mr Mill.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
Balance from last year	£8 9 0	Expenses of 39 Public Meet.	£87 13 11
Subscriptions and Donations	137 14 6	Canvassers	20 15 4
Collections at Miss Taylor's Meetings	16 18 4	Printing 5000 copies of Report of Edinburgh Meeting	31 11 0
Received from Galloway Committee	7 12 0	Printing Circulars and Petition forms	15 5 6
Tracts Sold	0 13 0	Prof. Neuman's Lect. (500 copies)	4 14 6
Due Treasurer	5 11 10	Miss Becker's Journal, 8 months	5 18 5
		Postages	11 0 0
	<u>£176 18 8</u>		<u>£176 18 8</u>

We regret that the valuable services of Mrs Nichol, as Treasurer, have been withdrawn on account of her health; while thanking her for these services, we rejoice that we may still have her aid in other departments of our work, and we are glad to have secured the name of Miss Hunter, 5 Great Stuart Street, to fill the office of Treasurer.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

Buchan, Countess Dowager,	£2 0 0	Millar, W. White, 16 Regent Terrace,	£2 0 0
Blyth, Mr E., Lauder Rd.,	5 0 0	Miller, John, M.P., Melville Crescent,	5 0 0
Blyth, Mrs Howard,	0 5 0	Miller, Mrs, Millerfield,	0 7 6
Boog, Mrs, Morningside,	0 2 6	Miller, Wm., Lancaster Gate, London,	3 0 0
Brown, M. H., Arthur Lodge,	0 5 0	Melrose, Mr, George Street,	0 10 0
Brown, Mrs	0 1 0	Mein, Mrs B., Kelso,	0 5 0
Brown, Miss	0 1 0	Malcolm, Mrs, 126 George St.,	0 1 0
Caldwell, Messrs, Waterloo Pl.,	1 1 0	Mutter, Mrs E., Broughton Place,	0 1 0
Caldwell, Miss, Portobello,	0 2 0	Murray, Sir John, Bart., Philiphaugh,	0 10 0
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Christie, H., Dick Place,	0 2 6	Macgregor, Mrs, 7 Merchiston Crescent,	0 1 0
Craig, Miss, 6 Carlton Street,	5 0 0	M'Kinnell, Mrs, Dumfries,	1 0 0
Craig, Miss Agnes, do.	4 0 0	M'Queen, Mrs, 3 Lansdowne Crescent,	4 10 0
Cox, Robert, W S., Rutland St.,	1 1 0	M'Laren, Mrs, Newington House,	10 0 0
Crudelius, Mrs, Chapelside, Trinity,	2 0 0	M'Laren, Miss Agnes, Newington House,	2 0 0
Cross, Mr, Oxford,	0 10 0	M'Laren, Duncan, jun., Newington House,	1 1 0
Dalmahoy, Mr, 9 Forres St.,	0 10 0	Macfie, R. A., M.P.	1 0 0
Dick, Miss, Burntisland,	2 0 0	Mossman, Councillor,	0 10 0
Dick, Miss, 35 Hope Street,	0 2 6	Munro, Dr, Melrose,	0 1 0
Friend, by Mrs Malcolm,	0 1 0	Nichol, Mrs, Huntly Lodge,	10 0 0
Friend, by Miss Dick Lauder,	0 5 0	Nelson, Messrs, Hope Park,	3 0 0
Friend, by Miss Walker,	1 0 0	Noel, Mr Ernest,	1 1 0
Fyfe, Andrew, S.S.C.,	0 10 0	Peat, Admiral,	5 0 0
Gibson, Miss, 1 Forres Street,	6 0 0	Paterson, John, Paisley,	0 2 6
Gibson, Messrs, Princes St.,	0 10 0	Peters, Mrs,	0 5 0
Gifford, Lord, 35 Drummond Place,	2 0 0	Peters, Mrs, 13 Dundas Street,	0 1 0
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Gordon, Mrs, Gordon Street,	0 2 6	Robson, Mr, Palmerston Road,	1 0 0
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Harvey, Mrs, Glasgow,	1 0 0	Simpson, Lady, Queen Street,	0 10 0
Hill, Mrs M., Clerk Street,	0 2 0	Stevenson, Miss E., Randolph Crescent,	6 2 0
Horne, Mrs F.,	1 0 0	Trevelyan, Arthur,	2 0 0
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Kirkland, Eliza, 13 Raeburn Place,	0 6 0	Warren, Mrs,	0 10 0
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Kemp, Mrs, Clerk Street,	0 2 0	Westren, Mr, Princes Street,	0 10 0
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Low, David, 30 Minto Street,	0 5 0		
Low, Mrs, 30 Minto Street,	0 5 0		
Millar, Mr and Mrs, 13 York Pl.,	7 0 0		

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ELECTORAL DISABILITIES
OF WOMEN.

BY
✓ MILICENT GARRETT FAWCETT.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE NEW HALL, TAVISTOCK,

MARCH 11TH, 1871.

Chi dura vince.

Printed for the ✓ Bristol & West of England
Society for Women's Suffrage.

BY
THE TAVISTOCK PRINTING COMPANY, LIMITED, TAVISTOCK.
1871.

✓ PRINTED FOR THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,
AND PUBLISHED BY
MESSRS. TRÜBNER & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.
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OF WOMEN

MILNET GARETT RAYCETT

A LECTURE

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Printed for the National Society for Women's Suffrage
Society for Women's Suffrage

THE TAVISTOCK PRINTING COMPANY, TAVISTOCK

THE ELECTORAL DISABILITIES OF
WOMEN.

The subject of this lecture is one which few are prepared to discuss quite dispassionately. Most people are either enthusiastically in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women, or are violently opposed to it. The former are inclined to think that those who disagree with them must be blinded by prejudice or wilfully opposed to the principles of justice and freedom; the latter look upon a "woman's rights" woman as the incarnation of all that is repulsive; and a woman's rights man, they think, must be bereft of his senses. I desire to approach the subject of the claims of women to the suffrage in a different spirit to either of these contending parties. I will attempt to state fairly and impartially the main arguments on both sides. If I fail in doing justice to the views of those with whom I differ, I shall not do so wilfully, but through ignorance. I will only add before entering upon the general subject that in my opinion this is not exclusively a woman's question, above all, it is not one in which the interests of men and women are opposed. If the exclusion of women from political power be right and just, women as well as men are interested in maintaining it; if it be unjust and antagonistic to the principles of freedom, then men as well as women are interested in destroying it. "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it," is as true as regards national as individual life. Praying your indulgence for many shortcomings, I will at once proceed to give a categorical list of the principal arguments urged against the removal of electoral disabilities of women. You will probably observe that all these arguments could not be used by the same person, as some of them neutralize

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others. It is, however, better to mention them all, as I am anxious not to omit anything which has been urged in objection to women's suffrage. The objections are:—

1. Women are sufficiently represented already by men, and their interests have always been jealously protected by the legislature.

2. A woman is so easily influenced that if she had a vote it would practically have the same effect as giving two votes to her nearest male relation, or to her favorite clergyman.

3. Women are so obstinate that if they had votes endless family discord would ensue.

4. The ideal of domestic life is a miniature despotism. One supreme head, to whom all the other members of the family are subject. This ideal would be destroyed if the equality of women with men were recognised by extending the suffrage to women.

5. Women are intellectually inferior to men.

6. The family is woman's proper sphere, and if she entered into politics, she would be withdrawn from domestic duties.

7. The line must be drawn somewhere, and if women had votes they would soon be wanting to enter the House of Commons.

8. Women do not want the franchise.

9. Most women are Conservatives, and, therefore their enfranchisement would have a reactionary influence on politics.

10. The indulgence and courtesy with which women are now treated by men would cease, if women exercised all the rights and privileges of citizenship. Women would, therefore, on the whole, be losers if they obtained the franchise.

11. The keen and intense excitement, kindled by political strife, would, if shared by women, deteriorate their physical powers, and would probably lead to the insanity of considerable numbers of them.

12. The exercise of political power by women is repugnant to the feelings and quite at variance with a due sense of propriety.

13. The notion that women have any claim to representation is so monstrous and absurd, that no reasonable being would ever give the subject a moment's serious consideration.

The first of these arguments, viz., that women are sufficiently represented under the present system, is an old friend. Its face must be very familiar to all who took part in or remember the great agitation which preceded the Reform Bill of 1867. Those who were opposed to an extension of the suffrage were never weary of repeating that working men were quite well represented; there was no need to give them votes, for their interests were watched over with the most anxious solicitude by noblemen and gentlemen, who knew far better than the artisans themselves, what was good for the working classes. We all know that this opinion was not shared by working men; they pointed to the inequality of the law relating to masters and servants, and the unjust efforts which legislation had made to suppress trade societies. They said, "These laws are unequal and unfair, they will not be amended until we have some hand in choosing the law makers." Besides this, they said, "We bear a large portion of the taxation of the country; for every pound of tea and sugar we consume we contribute so much to the national revenue, and in common justice we ought to be allowed to exercise a corresponding control over the national expenditure." For years and years these arguments were repeated in every town in Great Britain; orators like Mr. Bright, Mr. Ernest Jones, and Mr. Cobden devoted immense energy and splendid eloquence in forcing the claims of the working men to representation on the reluctant middle classes. We all know how that struggle terminated; the obstacles were at length surmounted, and the rights of working men to citizenship were fully recognised. Now I appeal to working men and to all who took their side in the great reform agitation, not to cast aside and repudiate the very arguments which they found so useful during that struggle. I would say to them, "You have reached the top of the wall, don't push down the ladder by which you have ascended." Apply your arguments to the case of women. Are women sufficiently represented? Are there no laws which press unjustly on them? Is that state of the law equitable which relates to the property of a married woman? Is the law equitable which gives a mar-

ried woman no legal right to the guardianship of her own children? Perhaps you do not know that "the married women of this country, when their children are seven years old, have no kind of power to prevent their children from being removed if their husbands choose to remove them!" Would this be the case if women were virtually represented? Finally, using the very same argument which has been so often applied to the working classes—Is it right or just that anyone should be forced to contribute to the revenue of the country, and at the same time be debarred from controlling the national expenditure? Either this argument is good for nothing, or it applies to women as forcibly as it does to men. I think it does apply both to men and women, and that, therefore, it is not accurate to say that women are already sufficiently represented, and that their interests are, under the present system, fully protected.

Now let us turn to the second argument urged against the extension of the suffrage to women, namely, a woman is so easily influenced that if she had a vote it would practically have the same effect as giving two votes to her nearest male relation, or to her favourite clergyman. This is a curious argument; if it were applied indiscriminately to both men and women, very few people indeed would have votes. For instance, it might be said that the *Times* newspaper exercises an extraordinary influence over the political opinions of thousands of people. This is perfectly true; nearly everyone must have noticed how, in ordinary society, the conversation of nine people out of ten echoes the general tone of the leading articles in the day's *Times*. Now it may be said, following out the argument just quoted, the effect of giving all these people votes is only to multiply a million-fold the voting power of the editor of the *Times*, or the writers of the articles in that journal; therefore all people who take their political views from the *Times* ought to be precluded from exercising the franchise. By carrying out the principle, nearly everyone would be disfranchised, except the great leaders of political thought, such as Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Bright, Mr. Mill, Lord Salisbury, and the editors of some of the principal papers. For

there are very few indeed whose political opinions are not biased by the views of some of these distinguished and able men. But perhaps this argument, that women's suffrage would only double the voting power of some men, can best be answered by making way for the next argument, namely, that women are so obstinate, that if they had votes, endless family discord would ensue. Now the people who urge this as a reason why women should not be allowed to exercise the franchise, seem to have an erroneous notion of what a vote is. The mere possession of a vote does not confirm or intensify any opinion. If any man here, at present without electoral power, became a voter to-morrow, would the mere possession of a vote affect any change in his political convictions? A vote is not an opinion, but an expression of opinion. Now let us suppose the case of a family in which the husband and wife hold similar political views; their talk is probably often of politics, and I cannot see that it would make any difference to their domestic happiness if the wife could vote as well as her husband. But you say it is all very well for me to illustrate my argument by the case of a husband and wife whose political views are similar; how would it answer for a wife to have a vote if she disagreed with her husband's political opinions? I reply by asking in return—how does the present system answer? In those cases in which the husband and wife hold different political opinions, one of three things happens: either politics are suppressed as a subject of conversation—the husband goes his own way, and the wife never interferes or obtrudes her own views; or the husband and wife are sensible enough to discuss political subjects and defend their respective opinions with energy, and yet without temper; or else, finally, they take no pains to smoothe over or hide their differences. The wife, for instance, fasts every 30th of January, in honor of the sacred memory of King Charles the martyr; whilst the husband hangs up the death warrant of that monarch, and treasures it as a glorious memento of British freedom. Now in each of these cases the perfect concord and sympathy which form the ideal of marriage are more or less destroyed. What is it which destroys this concord and sympathy? The

answer must be—essential difference of opinion on a subject constantly affecting every-day life. It is the divergence of opinion which destroys the harmony, not the expression of that divergence. Under the present system women cannot be prevented from having political opinions, or from expressing them, and I venture to think that if they had votes there would be more domestic harmony on political subjects than there now is; for then marriages would not so frequently take place between those who hold diametrically opposite political views. Suppose, for instance, that in order to insure conjugal harmony on religious matters, a law were passed to prevent all women going to church. The advocates of such a law might say, "Suppose an Evangelical married a Roman Catholic, what disagreement it would lead to, if the husband went off to one place of worship and the wife to another." As a fact such marriages seldom take place; for it is recognised that women have a right to think for themselves on religious subjects, and there is therefore a strong and reasonable feeling against marriages between people of opposite religious opinions. Would not the same feeling come into existence against marriages between people of opposite political parties, if the political independence of women were recognised. If this feeling were prevalent I believe a higher harmony than any yet generally known would gradually pervade domestic life.

Let us now consider the validity of the fourth objection raised against the enfranchisement of women, namely, "The ideal of domestic life is a miniature despotism, in which there is one supreme head, to whom all other members of the family are subject. This ideal would be destroyed if the equality of women with men were recognised, by extending the suffrage to women." I am ready at once to concede that if the truth of the premise is granted, the truth of the conclusion must be granted also. Family despotism would receive a deadly blow from the extension of political power to women. But let us enquire how and why men—Englishmen at least—have come to consider despotic national government immoral and then let us see whether despotic family government differs essentially in principle from other despotisms.

First let us enquire why despotic national government has been so successfully opposed in this country, and why representative government has been set up in its place. It may be briefly said that despotic government has been got rid of in this country because it has been felt to interfere unwarrantably with individual liberty. The leaders of popular rights from the time of Magna Charta to this day, have always insisted on the importance of preserving individual liberty. Why has the name "Liberty" always had such a magic spell over men? Why has liberty been valued more than life itself by all those whose names make our history glorious? Why have our greatest poets sung the praises of liberty in words that will never be forgotten as long as our language lasts? Is it not because it has been felt more or less strongly at all times that man's liberty is essential to the observance of man's duty? A contemporary philosopher has thus analysed the right of mankind to liberty. He says "It may be admitted that human happiness is the Divine Will. We become conscious of happiness through the sensations. How do we receive sensations? Through what are called faculties. It is certain that a man cannot hear without ears. Equally certain that he can experience no impression of any kind unless he is endowed with some power fitted to take in that impression; that is, a faculty. All the mental states, which he calls feelings and ideas, are affections of his consciousness, received through his faculties. There next comes the question—under what circumstances do the faculties yield those sensations of which happiness consists? The reply is—when they are exercised. It is from the activity of most of them that gratification arises. Every faculty in turn affords its special emotion; and the sum of these constitutes happiness; therefore happiness consists in the due exercise of all the faculties. Now if God wills man's happiness, and man's happiness can be obtained only by the exercise of his faculties, then God wills that man should exercise his faculties; that is, it is man's duty to exercise his faculties, for duty means the fulfilment of the Divine Will. As God wills man's happiness, that line of conduct which produces unhappiness is contrary to His Will. Therefore the non-exercise of the

faculties is contrary to His Will. Either way then we find the exercise of the faculties to be God's Will and man's duty. But the fulfilment of this duty necessarily supposes freedom of action. Man cannot exercise his faculties without certain scope. He must have liberty to go and come, to see, to feel, to speak, to work, to get food, raiment, shelter, and to provide for all the needs of his nature. He must be free to do everything which is directly or indirectly requisite for the due satisfaction of every mental and bodily want. Without this he cannot fulfil his duty or God's Will. He has Divine authority therefore for claiming this freedom of action. God intended him to have it; that is, he has a right to it. From this conclusion there seems no possibility of escape. Let us repeat the steps by which we arrive at it. God wills man's happiness. Man's happiness can only be produced by the exercise of his faculties. Then God wills that he should exercise his faculties. To exercise his faculties he must have liberty to do all that his faculties naturally impel him to do. Then God wills that he should have that liberty. Therefore he has a *right* to that liberty." The only limitation to perfect liberty of action is the equal liberty of all. "Liberty is not the right of one, but of all! All are endowed with faculties. All are bound to fulfil the Divine will by exercising them. All, therefore, must be free to do those things in which the exercise of them consists. That is, all must have rights to liberty of action. Wherefore we arrive at the general proposition that everyone (man or woman) may claim the fullest liberty to exercise his faculties compatible with the possession of like liberty by every other person." Never has the basis of individual liberty been more clearly explained than in this passage. It proves conclusively that despotism being antagonistic to the principle of "the perfect freedom of each, limited only by the like freedom of all," is at variance with the Divine will. How then can the ideal of family life be despotism, when despotism is proved to be antagonistic to the Divine will? If I have dwelt at some length on the importance of recognising the real basis of the rights of man, it is not to prove to you that these rights exist,—all in this room are probably willing to concede that,—

but to "show that the rights of women must stand or fall with those of men; derived as they are from the same authority; involved in the same axiom; demonstrated by the same argument." Much more could be said in defence of the assertion that despotic family government is very far removed from the ideal state. If time permitted I think it could be shown that command is blighting to the affections, and that where anything approaching the ideal of domestic happiness at present exists, the subjugation of all members of the family to the husband and father is not enforced. But it is necessary to pass to the consideration of the next objection to the extension of political power to women, namely, that women are intellectually inferior to men. I am not going to enter upon the vexed question whether the mental powers of men and women are equal. It is almost impossible from want of evidence to prove whether they are or not. It may be very interesting as a philosophical discussion, but I maintain that it is quite irrelevant to the present subject,—that is, whether women ought to have political power. Suppose it could be proved beyond the slightest doubt that on the average the intellectual powers of women were inferior to those of men. If this were fully and satisfactorily established, as a fact, it would not furnish the slightest justification for depriving women of electoral power. Suppose it were also proved that the intellectual powers of the inhabitants of the north of England are superior to those of the inhabitants of the south of England. I can assure you I have often heard very accomplished people assert seriously that this is the case. Would you recognise that as a reason why the inhabitants of the south of England should be deprived of electoral power? Would the people of Tavistock be willing to relinquish their right to the franchise if it were proved to demonstration that on an average and taking them altogether they were intellectually inferior to the inhabitants of Edinburgh? It is ridiculous to suggest such a thing, and yet this absurdity is exactly similar to what is really urged against allowing women to exercise the franchise. But the question may be looked at from another point of view. It is said that women on

the whole are not the intellectual equals of men. Whether this is true I neither affirm nor deny; but even the most ardent asserters of the inferiority of women have never said that all women are inferior to all men. In the sphere of Government I need only mention Zenobia, Maria Theresa, and Elizabeth to remind you that these women's names stand pre-eminent. Let us hear what the authority previously quoted has to say on this subject. Granting for the sake of argument, that the intellect of woman is less profound than that of man, he adds "Let all this be granted, and let us now see what basis such an admission affords to the doctrine that the rights of women are not co-extensive with those of men:—

"1. If rights are to be meted out to the two sexes in the ratio of their respective amounts of intelligence, then must the same system be acted upon in the apportionment of rights between man and man.

"2. In like manner, it will follow, that as there are here and there women of unquestionably greater ability than the average of men, some women ought to have greater rights than some men.

"3. Wherefore, instead of a certain fixed allotment of rights to all males and another to all females, the hypothesis involves an infinite gradation of rights, irrespective of sex entirely, and sends us once more in search of those unattainable desiderata,—a standard by which to measure capacity, and another by which to measure rights. Not only, however, does the theory thus fall to pieces under the mere process of inspection; it is absurd on the very face of it, when freed from the disguise of hackneyed phraseology. For what is it that we mean by rights? Nothing else than freedom to exercise the faculties. And what is the meaning of the assertion that woman is mentally inferior to man? Simply that her faculties are less powerful. What then does the dogma that because woman is mentally inferior to man she has less extensive rights, amount to? Just this—that because woman has weaker faculties than man, she ought not to have like liberty with him to exercise the faculties she has!"

We will now pass to the sixth objection to women's suffrage—that the family is woman's

proper sphere, and if she entered into politics she would be withdrawn from her domestic duties. I may mention in passing—it is a fact to which I do not attach any special importance or regret—that there are some million or so of women in this country without families and without domestic affairs to superintend. The number of women is constantly in excess of the number of men, and so there must always be a certain per centage of women unmarried, and who therefore have no families to be withdrawn from. It is all very well to tell a woman that her sphere is to be a wife and a mother, when there must always be a large number of women unmarried, owing to the simple fact that there are more women in the world than men. But let us look at the case of women who are married, and see whether the objection that politics would withdraw them from domestic duties, is valid. I should like to find out exactly how many hours in the year an elector in such a town as this devotes to his political duties. Do you think that on an average, taking one with another, they spend an hour a week, every week in the year, in discharging their electoral duties? I don't know whether they do, but I doubt it. I don't think an elector, unless he is engaged in some particular work, such as superintending the registration, or as secretary of some political society, need devote as much as an hour a week, no, nor half-an-hour a week, to duties which the franchise imposes on him. Then what does this objection, that the right to vote at Parliamentary elections would withdraw women from domestic duties, really come to? Why soon it will be objected that women should not go to church or out for a walk, because so doing withdraws them from their domestic duties. But it may be urged that it is not merely the exercise of the franchise, but all that an interest in political questions involves,—the reading of newspapers, the attending of meetings, and the like—that would have a mischievous influence in withdrawing women from their domestic duties. But surely the wife and mother of a family ought to be something more than a housekeeper or a nurse,—how will she be able to minister to the mental wants of her husband and her children if she makes the care of their physical comforts the

only object of her life? I do not say that physical comfort is to be despised, but if there is no moral and intellectual sympathy between a husband and wife, or between a mother and her children, a permanent and life-long injury is inflicted on them all, which no amount of physical comfort can in the slightest degree compensate. It is, however, quite erroneous to suppose that an attention to domestic duties and to intellectual pursuits cannot be combined. There is no reason whatever, why wives and mothers should not cultivate their minds and at the same time give proper attention to their domestic affairs. As far as my experience goes, the notion that a woman, in order to manage her house and family well, must devote her whole time and mind to it and do nothing else, is quite incorrect. If I were asked to name the most orderly, neat, bright, and best managed houses that I am acquainted with, I should name those which are respectively presided over by women whose names are justly celebrated for their achievements in literature and science, or for their activity in promoting educational and social reform. Perhaps my experience is exceptionally favourable, but I do not think I know one distinguished woman whose home does not do credit to her taste, refinement, and love of order. I do not, therefore, think the plea that the franchise would withdraw women from their domestic duties, is a valid objection to their enfranchisement.

We now come to the seventh objection. That the line must be drawn somewhere, and if women had votes they would soon be wanting to enter the House of Commons. This objection was some years back considered a conclusive argument against removing the electoral disabilities of working men. At any rate, said the Tories, let us have gentlemen in the House of Commons—fancy sitting next a man who didn't sound his h's. They were also quite certain that working men would be great failures in the House. We all know the reply of the Reformers to such objections as these. They said, "These are questions for constituencies to decide; they are not likely to select a man to serve them in the House of Commons unless he is capable of devoting sufficient time, trouble, and ability to

the discharge of his duties." The selection of a fit person to serve them in Parliament may safely be left to constituencies. At the present time there is no necessity to pass a law that a man wholly immersed in the conduct of a large business, should not offer himself as a candidate for a seat in Parliament. All these things are settled by candidates and constituencies without any legislative interference. As Mr Mill very justly says—I quote from memory—there is no necessity to pass laws to forbid people doing what they cannot do. There is no Act of Parliament needed to enact that none but strong-armed men should be blacksmiths. And so it would prove if all the electoral disabilities were swept away. The would-be-witty caricatures of sickly women fainting in the House of Commons under the weight of their legislative responsibilities would lose their brilliancy and point in the cold light of stern reality. No constituency would deliberately choose a representative who would be quite incapable of serving it faithfully and well. All questions about who should or who should not have seats in Parliament may safely be left to constituencies.

I now turn to the consideration of the eighth objection to the extension of political power to women—that women do not want votes. Notwithstanding the obvious reply that a considerable number of women do want votes, and are continually petitioning Parliament to remove their electoral disabilities, I must confess that this objection to the enfranchisement of women appears to me more formidable than any other which has ever reached me. Of course it makes no difference at all so far as abstract justice is concerned; but still in practical politics abstract justice does not usually weigh much with statesmen, unless it is accompanied by an urgent and pressing demand for the amelioration of the law. There must always be a certain adaptation between the characters of the people, and the rule under which they live. The existence of the Irish Church Establishment was as much opposed to abstract justice in 1769 as it was in 1869, but disestablishment did not take place until the demand for it was so urgent that it could no longer be disregarded. The demand for the

extension of the suffrage to women is daily growing more earnest and more general. The bill now before Parliament has been supported by petitions from every part of the kingdom, signed by many tens of thousands of men and women. In the presence of such facts it cannot be said that there is no demand on the part of women for the suffrage. There is also this very strong argument, which is sometimes overlooked by those who consider that the suffrage should not be extended to women, because the majority of women do not desire to exercise their electoral rights. None of us who desire the extension of the franchise to women wish women to be compelled to vote. Only those who desire political power need exercise their newly-acquired rights. Any woman who thinks that voting would be unfeminine or injurious to her health, would be quite at liberty to refrain from taking part in elections. But it seems to me very unfair that those who don't wish for political power should be enabled to deprive those who do wish for it, of the right to exercise the franchise. Let us now turn to the next objection, namely, that most women are Conservatives, and that their enfranchisement would consequently have a reactionary influence on politics. I have often heard this argument from the lips of men for whom I have the greatest respect, but I never hear it without astonishment and regret. What is representative government if not government by a national assembly chosen by the people to represent their views, and to produce a corresponding influence on the state of the laws? Do those who object to the enfranchisement of women, on the ground that they are usually Conservatives, think that all Conservatives ought to be disfranchised? Surely representative institutions require that all differences of opinion should have their due and proportionate weight in the legislature. No class of persons should be excluded on account of their political opinions. What would be thought of a Conservative who gravely asserted that he thought all Dissenters should be disfranchised because they are generally Liberals? I am almost afraid even to suggest the hard names which such a misguided person would be called by the very people who oppose women's suffrage, because most women are

Conservatives. And yet the two cases are exactly parallel, and equally antagonistic to the fundamental principle of representative government. A representative system which excludes half the community from representation surely is a farce. In my opinion the question ought not even to be asked. "How would women vote if they had the franchise?" The only question ought to be, "Is representative government the best form of government that can be devised? If the answer is in the affirmative the exclusion of women from electoral rights can in no way be justified."

The next objection which I have set down is that the indulgence and courtesy with which women are now treated by men would cease if women exercised all the rights and privileges of citizenship. As I hear this objection the old Bible story forcibly recurs to my mind, of Esau, and how he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Let it be granted that women would no longer be treated with exceptional courtesy and indulgence if they exercised the rights and privileges of citizenship. What do this exceptional courtesy and this indulgence really amount to? I am not going to say that they are valueless, but let us analyse them and see of what sort of things they consist. Women are usually assisted in and out of carriages; they also take precedence of men in entering and leaving a room; the door also is frequently opened for them; they are helped first at dinner; and they are always permitted to walk on the inside side of the pavement. Besides these there are more substantial privileges; such as being allowed to monopolise the seats in a room, or in a railway carriage, in those cases where, owing to overcrowding, some of those present are compelled to stand. I hope I do not unduly underate these little amenities of social life; they are very harmless and perhaps even pleasant in their way; but I think it must be confessed that their practical value is small indeed, especially if the price paid for them consists of all the rights and privileges of citizenship. If the courtesy of men to women is bought at this price, it must not be forgotten that the *sale* is compulsory, and can in no case be regarded as a free contract. But now let us consider whether women would really

lose all the politeness now shown to them if their right to the franchise were recognised. At elections it is not usually the case that those who have votes are treated with the least consideration; but apart from this, how would the courtesy of every day life be affected by an extension of the suffrage to women? I incline to the belief that some of the mere forms of politeness which have no practical value, such as always giving precedence to a woman in entering and leaving a room, would slowly but gradually fall into disuse if the electoral disabilities of women were removed; but I am quite convinced that true politeness, which is inseparately associated with kindness of heart, would not suffer any decrease from the extension of the suffrage to women. As far as my experience goes, those who are invested with political power of any kind are always treated with more deference and respect than those that are destitute of that valuable commodity. The highest political power in the kingdom is vested in a woman, and what man is inclined on that account to be less courteous to her, or less considerate of her feelings? Have the women who have taken part in late municipal and school board elections been treated more rudely since they acquired that instalment of political power? In answer to this objection to women's suffrage—that women would lose in the politeness with which they are now treated more than they would gain in political power—I reply in the first place that women are compelled to pay a great deal too dearly for this politeness, if they are forced to sacrifice for it all the rights and privileges of citizens. And secondly, there is no reason to suppose that the acquisition of political power would cause women to be treated with less courtesy and respect, though some of the mere forms of politeness might disappear, if the equality of the rights of men and women were recognised.

The next objection to the enfranchisement of women is one which has probably never occurred to anyone in this room. I certainly should never have thought of it had I not noticed it in a daily paper, the writers of which have shown the greatest inventiveness and originality in their persistent attacks on women's suffrage.

Argument after argument they have advanced against it, and as no one took much notice of these attacks, I suppose the editor thought that something quite new must be tried. The following was the result. "The keen and intense excitement kindled by political strife would, if shared by women, deteriorate their physical powers, and would probably lead to the insanity of considerable numbers of them." I think if medical men were called upon to reply to such an objection as this, they could easily prove that a great many more people—especially women—suffer in regard to their health, through having nothing to do, and no absorbing interest in life, than through overwork and excitement. If the Editor of the journal just quoted would condescend to practical experience, perhaps he will enquire if those women who have lately taken part in the municipal contests and the school board elections, have since exhibited any alarming symptoms. Such an argument as that just mentioned would be more comprehensible if women were entirely debarred from mixing with the outside world; but as it is, there is nothing to prevent women from sharing the general excitement caused by elections. It is notorious to everyone that they do share it, and I have no hesitation in saying that many of them are a great deal better for it. But suppose it were satisfactorily proved that the health of some women would be injured by the excitement caused by taking part in elections, is that a reason for excluding all women from political power? The health of many men is frequently injured by excessive political work and excitement. Instances of such cases must occur to everyone present. The illness from which Mr. Bright is now suffering, and the extreme exhaustion of the Prime Minister, at the end of the session of 1869, were both doubtless produced by the mental strain attendant on too much political work. But such facts furnish no argument against the exercise of political power by these eminent persons. We all hope the only practical result of their maladies may be to make them more solicitous of their own health than they have hitherto been. It may safely be left to the inhabitants of a free country to take the necessary precautions for preserving their own health; and

if any woman found that the excitement of elections endangered either her mind or her body, no Act of Parliament would be necessary to induce her to withdraw from political strife. It has almost become a proverb that you cannot make people moral by Act of Parliament. I am sure it is equally true that you cannot make them healthy by Act of Parliament.

The next objection urged against the enfranchisement of women, is one which I am not perhaps wrong in saying is the one which has had the most powerful influence in producing the opposition to women's suffrage. Consciously, or unconsciously, most of us are greatly under the dominion of our feelings, even when they are directly opposed to the dictates of our reason. But let it not be forgotten that reason must be listened to sooner or later, and the feelings must ultimately submit to be modified by the understanding. This objection which I believe to be so potent with most people who oppose women's suffrage is "that the exercise of political power by women is repugnant to the feelings, and quite at variance with a due sense of propriety." In Turkey, a woman who walked out with her face uncovered, would be considered to have lost all sense of propriety—her conduct would be highly repugnant to the feelings of the community. In China, a woman who refused to pinch her feet to about a quarter of their natural size, would be looked upon as entirely destitute of female refinement. We censure these customs as ignorant, and the feelings on which they are based as quite devoid of the sanction of reason. It is therefore clear that it is not enough, in order to prove the undesirability of the enfranchisement of women, to say that it is repugnant to the feelings. It must be further enquired to what feelings women's suffrage is repugnant, and whether these feelings are "necessary and eternal," or "being the results of custom, they are changeable and evanescent." I think these feelings may be shown to belong to the latter class. In the first place a feeling that is necessary and eternal, must be consistent, and the feeling of repugnance towards the exercise of political power by women is not consistent; for no one feels this repugnance towards the ex-

ercise of political power by Queen Victoria. In the second place it has been previously shown that the equal freedom of all is a necessary prerequisite of the fulfilment of the Divine Will, and that the equal freedom of a part of the community is destroyed if it is deprived of political power. Now it seems to me in the highest degree blasphemous to assert that the Supreme Being has implanted in man necessary and eternal feelings in opposition to his own will. Again, the state of popular opinion as to what women may, or may not do, is constantly changing in the same country and even in the minds of the same individuals, and the feelings on this subject differ in different classes of the community; it is, therefore, quite impossible to say that these feelings are necessary and eternal. If they are not necessary and eternal they are the result of custom, changeable and evanescent, and are destined to be modified by advancing civilization. It may be that a great deal of the repugnance which undoubtedly exists against women taking parts in politics arises from the disturbance and disorder which are too often the disgraceful characteristics of elections in this country. I should like to say a few words on this point. In the first place the adoption of the ballot and the abolition of nominations, which are almost certain to take place before the next dissolution, will, in all probability, cause elections to be conducted with perfect order and tranquility. A distinguished statesman, whose name I could mention, lately told a friend of mine that his last objection to woman's suffrage would be removed by the adoption of the ballot. In the second place I think the danger of women proceeding to polling places under the present system is greatly exaggerated. As the result of my own experience I can testify that during the last election at Brighton, I was walking about from one polling place to another, the whole of the day; the town was in a state of great excitement; the contest was very severe, and party feeling ran high. I walked through an excited crowd just previous to the close of the poll, after having been assured that it was not safe for me to venture, and I never heard one word or saw one gesture which would have caused reasonable annoyance to the most sensitive and refined lady.

But I can give another and perhaps more striking example from my own experience. During the general election of 1865, I went round to many of the polling places in Westminster, accompanied only by a young girl. We met with no incident whatever which could have alarmed or annoyed anyone. My experience on this point has always been the same, and it is corroborated by the experience of all ladies with whom I am acquainted, who, like myself, have tested by personal experience, whether it is either unpleasant or unsafe for a woman to go to a polling place. Their unanimous testimony has been that there is nothing to deter a woman from recording her vote. I, for one, have too good an opinion of my countrymen, to believe that they would insult or annoy a well-conducted woman in the discharge of what she believed to be a public duty.

I now pass to the last objection, for by this time I am sure you must be getting weary of me. This objection, that the notion of women's suffrage is monstrous and absurd and deserves only to be treated as a joke, is one which is slowly dying a natural death. You still hear of it in remote country districts, but it has received its death blow from the names of the many very eminent persons who are the warm advocates of women's suffrage. Perhaps I need only mention such names as Mr. Mill, Canon Kingsley, Mr. Darwin, Professor Huxley, and Professor Maurice, to remind you that women's suffrage is advocated by men occupying the highest ranks in philosophy, science, and literature. Mr. Mill and others have shown in their writings, the grounds on which they base their support of the claims of women to representation. It is easy to laugh; but when the leading philosophical thinkers of the day use all their weight and influence, and employ their great genius in striving to produce a recognition of the rights of women, their arguments must be met with arguments; they will never be answered by a sneer. I think I have now made a reply to all the objections previously enumerated against women's suffrage. In doing so I have perhaps sufficiently indicated the grounds on which I advocate it. I have endeavoured to show that men's rights and women's rights must

stand or fall together; their maintenance is necessary to the fulfilment of the Divine will—man's happiness. For if God wills man's happiness, and man's happiness depends on his freedom, then God wills man's freedom. "Equity knows no difference of sex. The law of equal freedom necessarily applies to the whole race—female as well as male. The same reasoning which establishes that law for men may be used with equal cogency on behalf of women." These are not my words, they are the words of a great philosopher, whose writings will probably mould the opinions of unborn generations. I refer to Mr. Spencer, and as I have, perhaps, passed rather too briefly over the objections of those who urge that women's suffrage would destroy the harmony of home, I cannot do better than quote in conclusion what he has said on the effect of the complete enfranchisement of women on domestic happiness. "Married life under this ultimate state of things will not be characterised by perpetual squabbles but by mutual concessions. Instead of a desire on the part of the husband to assert his claims to the uttermost, regardless of those of his wife, or on the part of the wife to do the like, there will be a watchful desire on both sides not to transgress. Neither will have to stand on the defensive, because each will be solicitous for the rights of the other. Not encroachment but self-sacrifice will be the ruling principle. The struggle will be, not which shall gain the mastery, but which shall give way. Committing a trespass will be the thing feared, and not the being trespassed against. And thus instead of domestic discord will come a higher harmony than any we yet know."

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THE DEBATE

IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON THE

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL,

ON MAY 3rd, 1871.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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DEBATE ON THE WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

House of Commons, Wednesday, May 3.

On the order of the day for the second reading of this Bill, Mr. JACOB BRIGHT observed that when the question of the removal of the electoral disabilities of women was first brought before the House in 1867 it was regarded with feelings of curiosity, and probably most of those who remained to hear the debate did so in the expectation that they would get some amusement from it. When the Bill, of which he was about to move the second reading, was last year submitted to the House its opponents somewhat under-estimated the amount of Parliamentary support it would receive. They had no idea that in a House of between 200 and 300 it would be read a second time by a considerable majority. Such, however, was the fact, and when it was borne in mind, in connexion with that fact, that there were 170 members of the present Parliament who had, at one time or another, given their sanction to the principle of the Bill, he thought he might state that they now approached the discussion of it with a feeling that they had a subject before them as serious and important as any which had ever occupied the attention of the House or country. He had no means of knowing whether the House would read the Bill a second time to-day; but, if he might judge of the future by the past, he could say if they did not read it a second time to-day they would do so at no distant period. Whatever measures had been generally supported by the large Parliamentary boroughs had found their way to the statute-book. The great towns had recently decided in favour of household suffrage for men; and they had now decided, not with entire unanimity, but with a remarkable approach to it, in favour of this Bill for giving household suffrage throughout the country without any distinction of sex. Edinburgh and Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol, Leeds and Brighton, Oldham and Sheffield, Halifax and Bolton had given an undivided vote in favour of the Bill. He would not go into the general question of unequal legislation as between men and women. He believed the House pretty well understood the whole subject. Women asked for the

Parliamentary suffrage because they bore in common with men all the burdens of the State, and because they believed they had a constitutional right to influence the making of the laws which they had to obey. The great and oppressive inequalities in the laws as between the sexes supplied them with a practical motive of the very strongest kind to endeavour to obtain the franchise, from a knowledge of the fact that only those who could influence the legislative body had any chance of getting their grievances redressed. Two recent cases might be quoted as illustrating the state of the law between men and women. One was the case of a grandchild of Lord Mount-Cashell—a child taken away from the guardianship of its mother by its father. The case was most severely commented on by the Judge, and the Court would have liked to give a decision entirely opposed to that it gave. He did not say that the child, instead of being the property of the father, should be the property of the mother; but in a matter of this kind there should be some just decision, and if there was any choice certainly the child should go to that parent who would best do a parent's duty by it. Another case came before the Courts the other day, and the question was whether in this country a widow had any right to bring up her child in the religion she professed. The father was a Roman Catholic, the mother a Protestant, and the child was eight years of age. The father had left no instructions as to the religion in which the child should be trained; but the relatives of the dead father absolutely controlled the mother, who was obliged to have her child brought up in the Roman Catholic religion, although she herself entirely disbelieved it. Women had discovered that whenever a class of persons hitherto debarred from the franchise were admitted within the political pale, a very decided change soon occurred in the legislation affecting them. Until working men got votes the House had looked with considerable suspicion on Trades' Unions, and would gladly have suppressed them; but now they had legislated for them in a spirit of justice, and probably even of generosity. He did not believe this change was owing to the fact that working men could now meet them at the polling-booth and there assert their powers. He attributed it to a much better motive. When working men were enfranchised the House had been compelled to look at every question which affected them, and were likely, therefore, to arrive at more truthful and just decisions. If women had the franchise the House would get to know their opinions and feelings, and legislation affecting them would be more successful. Had they possessed the franchise, would the Women's Property Bill have met the fate it did? It passed that House and reached the other Chamber, where the voice of justice was not always

heard unless its demands were in harmony with the supposed interests of those who assembled there. What was done with it? The Peers destroyed the Bill and created another. During that process the Government, so far as he recollected, were inactive, and did not lend the slightest assistance to the admirable Bill sent up by that House. He did not blame the Government. They were overweighted with business, having three times more on their hands than they could possibly get through. They must choose what measures they could give attention to, and must do the work of their masters—those who made and could unmake them. To suppose they could give attention to the interests of the unfranchised was to suppose what was impossible. That Bill came back with the principle knocked out of it—a thing of shreds and patches, very good for the lawyers, but very difficult for any one else to understand; and to this hour confiscation of property at marriage was the law for women in this country. The Government had been obliged to take up the subject of university tests, especially during the last two sessions, the object being not to enable Nonconformists to obtain an academical education, but to enable them to enjoy certain emoluments they could not otherwise reach; but how was it with women? A struggle was going on among women for a higher education. At Edinburgh University some half-dozen women of great ability, high character, and industry desired to become qualified as medical practitioners—not seeking emoluments and honours, but simply the education which such institutions were supposed to give; but nobody came down to that House for their relief; no great party was set in motion; the Government was silent while half-a-dozen women were heroically fighting their own battle against a high class trades' union in that city. (Hear, hear.) In the course of the discussion on the Bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister several hon. members referred to what was said to be the opinion women entertained of that measure. The hon. member for Boston (Mr. Collins) had read a passage from the *Women's Suffrage Journal* to show this. That journal, conducted by a woman, was as ably conducted as any journal in the kingdom—(hear, hear)—and more than any other paper represented the suffrage associations of the country. Women, however, were not satisfied with that sort of irregular representation in this House. What they said was that if their opinions were of any value, if their condition was to be studied at all, they ought to express their views by the constitutional method—through the polling-booth, precisely as men did. With a conscientious desire to lessen infanticide, the hon. member for Salford (Mr. Charley) had introduced the Infant Life Preservation Bill. If it affected anyone it affected women, and it

was natural they should consider it. These women's suffrage societies were becoming vigilance committees which watched the legislation of the House with regard to women. They agreed with the hon. member for Salford in his object, but they differed from him in regard to the means by which he proposed to attain it. They had presented a memorial to the Home Secretary against the Bill, and they had sent it to every member. Was it not of some use to hon. members to see the criticisms of women upon the Bill? And if it were, was not their demand a reasonable one, that they should be allowed to express their opinions at the polling-booth? If political disabilities ought to exist at all, it would be more fair to place them on men than on women; if either men or women should be without votes, it ought to be men; and his reason for that opinion was that men had ten times the means of influencing the Legislature of any country apart altogether from votes. They had physical strength, combative qualities, opportunities of meeting, and the almost entire control of the press, the platform, and the pulpit; they were the masters of all the great professions in this country; they had the command of the purse; and when all these things were considered it appeared to him that hon. members sitting on that side of the House, who had always been in favour of representation, could hardly enter the lobby to vote against this Bill without feelings of discomfort almost akin to shame. Among those who opposed the Bill last Session were the right hon. member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Bouverie), the noble lord the member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho), and the hon. member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), and, if he could have selected his opponents, he would have picked out these three members. From the names of his opponents he should expect that they would bring forward arguments drawn from prejudices rather than from reason; and he found that the arguments which did service a few years ago in opposition to the extension of the franchise were disinterred. As it was said that men did not want the franchise, and men were produced who did not want it, so with respect to women now; but during this Session there had been presented to Parliament in favour of the Bill 420 petitions, to which 150,000 signatures were attached; and 150 meetings, of varying character but many of them crowded, had been held in support of it in the United Kingdom, but mainly in Scotland and England. It was said that the franchise would be a curse to women; but it might be assumed that women were the best judges of that; and there had recently been presented to the Prime Minister a memorial in support of the Bill signed by women and headed by the names of Florence Nightingale, Harriet Martineau, Miss Carpenter, and several ladies of

title. He now came to the pedestal or pinnacle argument, which was that women stood in too high a position to be subjected to the dirt and mire of politics; but everything in this world had its baser side, including religion, literature, and art, and we did not attempt to exclude women from them on that account. Those who used this pinnacle argument were members of aristocratic families, and belonged to that privileged order in which women stood on high social pinnacles; but he did not come there to advocate the claims of women who stood upon any pinnacle or pedestal whatever, he came to plead the cause of those who, less powerfully armed by nature, less favoured by law, had to do the rough work of the world in the face of obstacles more formidable than ever beset the path of men. He did not underrate the importance of adding 14 or 16 per cent to the constituency, but what he regarded as serious was the neglect of this demand for enfranchisement, because Parliament could not legislate successfully for a community with so large a portion of which it had no relation. If the Bill passed no demand for a dissolution would come from women, who would know that from that time the questions in which they were concerned would assume a different aspect, because they would have votes at the next election. The present government in its first Session enabled women to vote at municipal elections; an eminent member observed to him at the time "That vote means the other," and the public had made up their minds that it did. Last Session women were enabled to vote for members of School Boards, and to be members of them, too, as they were in several places. As women could not be elected by large communities without being known to them, and as they had been encouraged to present themselves to constituencies, it appeared to be impossible for a Government which had gone so far to justify itself in preventing women from voting once in four or five years at parliamentary elections. Last year, the Government being neutral on this question, the House passed the second reading of the Bill by a large majority, and then there came over the scene a remarkable change, which he never could understand; but there was a panic, and in a state of panic men always saw that which did not exist. There was set to work machinery which more than once he had seen employed to upset just decisions; and on that occasion this result was achieved. He cared very little about the party aspects of this Bill; but if, as was alleged, the political power of women would be Conservative, it was a question for the grave consideration of the Government whether they would make it more Conservative by promoting its closer alliance with the Conservative party. Last year the Home Secretary did not conceal, but rather attempted to avow, that if he had been left

unfettered he would have voted for it; the Solicitor-General voted for the Bill, and had spoken warmly in its favour before his constituency; the Solicitor-General for Ireland voted for it; and the Secretary of the Poor Law Board was a supporter of it; the Secretary to the Admiralty voted for Mr. Mill's resolution in favour of the enfranchisement of women. There were other members of the Government who had never availed themselves of any opportunity of voting against the Bill. The Attorney-General had not done so; the Vice-President of the Council, who had admitted women to the membership of school boards, would hardly be likely to do so; the Under Secretary at the Home Office and the Secretary to the Treasury had not voted against it; and without inferring that all these were in favour of the Bill, he must conclude that there was something favourably suspicious in the fact that they had not voted against it. The great principle of the Liberal party was that taxation and representation should go together; and with so many members of the Government favourable to the Bill and others not hostile to it, it would not be a very unlikely thing that they should on this occasion leave this an open question, and allow the House to dispose of it free from their influence. ("Hear, hear," from Mr. Gladstone.) He rejoiced that the Prime Minister would co-operate with them so far as to allow the House to dispose of the question according to its own view. Parliament had made the home the political unit, do not let it maintain disabilities in those homes bereft of the father, and where the support to be derived from the presence of men was not to be found. (Cheers.) The hon. member concluded by moving that the Bill be read a second time.

✓ Mr. EASTWICK, in seconding the motion, said that, as he had had no opportunity of speaking in the debate on this question last year, although his name was then as now on the back of the Bill, he naturally felt desirous of stating the grounds on which he supported the Bill, and had placed his name in a somewhat prominent position with regard to it. He was the more anxious to speak because he differed in some respects from the views of the hon. member who had just spoken. However his health just then was not such as to encourage him to address the House, and he should not have done so had he not taken a real interest in the Bill, and did he not feel it to be an imperative duty to do all in his power to support it. He must begin by saying that he was surprised at the extreme and even dangerous importance which some attached to the enfranchisement, not of women, but of the comparatively few women who possessed the qualifications which entitled men to vote, and whose claims had not been voluntarily surrendered by marriage.

Our common law looked upon husband and wife as one, and we might, therefore, set aside all married women, even those who enjoyed the income of property settled on themselves without the intervention of trustees. If we did so, and also eliminated all women except unmarried householders and lodgers qualified as males were required to be, and took the remainder only, the number of female voters placed on the list, according to the best information he could obtain, would not equal one-fifth of the number of voters added by the last Reform Bill. The peril of this addition, if there were any, was still further diminished by the fact that women were not turbulent, corrupt, and revolutionary like men, and that any changes their influence might introduce would be of the mildest and most beneficent character. He was astonished, therefore, when he heard the right hon. gentleman, on whose motion the Bill was thrown out last Session, speak of it as a measure which ought not to be carried without an appeal to the country, and a dissolution of Parliament. If the passing of this Bill were to involve a dissolution, we might as well have one about the encroachments on the Thames Embankment. The enfranchisement of some myriads of women would no more affect the nation at large than those encroachments, and if they chose to call that enfranchisement an encroachment it was at all events a beneficial one, while those others were mischievous. Another futile objection which he had heard in the last year's debate was that women could not be admitted to the suffrage without conceding to them also a seat in Parliament. It was a sufficient answer to that objection that the clergy possessed the suffrage but could not sit in Parliament, and had never agitated for the privilege. A more absurd objection still was that the enfranchisement of a small minority of women would alter the character of the whole sex, who would invade the occupations, habits, and lines of thought which formed the peculiar domain of man, and sweeping like a torrent, as it were, *per fas atque nefas* obliterate the boundaries which Nature herself had set up between the sexes. Were it not for the extreme respect in which he held a candid opponent, he should catch himself inwardly exclaiming,—

The force of folly could no further go.

If we wished to know what change admission to the suffrage would make in women, we could not do better than consider what it made in men. He did not deny the advantage of enfranchisement, but he did not believe that it consisted in an immediate change of character. Was any man, he asked, the wiser, the merrier, the better, the worse (he would not say till the Ballot Bill passed, perhaps not even then, the richer, the poorer), for obtaining the right to vote? He should be curious

to hear any one explain the physiological or psychological changes which he had detected in himself after he had obtained the suffrage. Thousands were indifferent about the possession and use of their privilege as voters, and many women would be as indifferent, though more conscientious, perhaps, than many men, when they did vote. But it was unnecessary to argue that the electoral suffrage would make no change for the worse in woman's character, because there was a practical demonstration of the fact in that the municipal suffrage had been given to women, and the educational, without in the slightest degree detracting from the feminine softness of women, or disturbing their rôle in life's great drama as wives and mothers. Women meddled neither more nor less in politics than they did in the days of Margaret of Anjou, of Queen Elizabeth, or of those contests when a beautiful duchess canvassed for Charles James Fox. Some few high spirits entered the political arena then, as they might do now, but the vast majority contented themselves with elevating and depressing their eyebrows, as the Roman ladies did their thumbs, for or against the combatants; and so, he thought, things would remain. He dismissed the thought that any very portentous changes, political or social, would be effected by carrying the measure; but then the question arose, if the measure were likely to be so inoperative, why press it at all? The answer was that it completed the representation of property and of intelligence. The intelligent views of women were no more to be disregarded than those of men; and, as it was our constitutional theory that property ought to be represented, there was no reason why it should not be represented when it was in the hands of women who discharged the duties connected with it, and were, therefore, entitled to its privileges. In the next place, it was only just that women should have such a political *status* as to enable them to obtain an equal share of educational endowment and other social advantages which were at present denied them. The hon. member for Sheffield last year spoke of many women as being but "fair savages;" the reason was that the unfair savages, men, took the lion's share of education; and the same unfairness prevailed in other matters, and he agreed with Mr. Mill, when he said "all that education and civilisation are doing to efface the influences on character of the law of force, and replace them by those of justice, remains merely on the surface as long as the citadel of the enemy, (that is the unjust treatment of women) is not attacked." Lastly it appeared to him that to imply the inferiority of women by withholding from them the suffrage was detrimental to their character, whether that inferiority were or were not wholly and absolutely true; and an illustration of this was to be found in the results of the policy of the Spaniards towards the Indians in

America. He had lately read in the work of a distinguished French traveller, a passage which seemed to him to bear on this point. It was this, "The special code and ordinances sent out by the council of the Indies unintentionally, perhaps, but effectually, favoured the spread and perpetuation of the popular prejudices as to the real inferiority of the Indians, by speaking of them and providing for them as minors in all civil matters. Habituated for so long a period to contempt and pity, they have come to regard themselves as inferior beings, and their self-respect can never be restored, except through a series of efforts as prolonged as those which have humbled them have been continuous." For these reasons he supported this Bill, but he also thought there was a special reason why this country should be the first to adopt the enfranchisement of women. That reason was the immense influence which the example of England must exert upon the 200 millions of Asiatics in India, among whom, with a few brilliant exceptions, woman had been degraded to a state little better than slavery. How could we expect that Indian women would be emancipated from the imprisonment of the zenanah or be admitted to the full privileges of education, so long as we continued to proclaim the inferiority of women in this country? If for no other reason, he should support this measure as a blow dealt at the slavery of women in the East, and as a reply to the besotted demand of the Chinese Government that schools for female education should be dissolved. (Cheers.)

Mr. BOUVERIE apologised for intruding himself as an opponent of the measure, and said he abstained from giving notice of opposition almost up to the last hour in the hope that some other member would come to the front. He was unwilling to put himself forward in a matter which interested a great number of his countrymen and countrywomen, but the House would do him the justice to admit that he had always had the courage of his opinions—a merit not always conspicuous in ministers or members. He had always given his vote in favour of the extension of the franchise, and though he criticised the Bill of 1866, his suggestions were accepted by the Government. (Hear, hear.) But his hon. friend raised a question of a different kind by the Bill he had introduced, and argued as if it were a mere complement to the measure he had himself passed two years ago, contending that, in logic, the House of Commons was bound to confer the parliamentary suffrage on women, because it had entrusted them with the municipal franchise. For his own part he believed that extension was made inadvertently and almost by surprise—(hear); but however that might be, he for one would be no party to any further extension of that measure. He must remind the House that the experi-

ence we had had of the measure on which his honourable friend based his argument was not of a very satisfactory kind. One of the points he insisted upon last year in his opposition to the present measure was that mixing up women in contested elections would be to contaminate the sex. (Hear.) On that occasion he also urged upon the House that if we conferred the Parliamentary franchise on women we should not be able to protect those who were unwilling to take part in politics. They would be driven to the poll whether they liked it or not, their lives would be made a burden to them during a contested election, and there was no woman who would not be assailed, bothered, annoyed, and persecuted to give her vote. (Cheers.) Therefore, unless the great bulk of our countrywomen asked for the franchise,—which they did not,—the House ought not to impose such a *damnosa hereditas* upon them. The struggles of parties in political life stood on a very different footing from the minor affairs referred to by his hon. friend. About a month ago there was a discussion in the Manchester Town Council as to whether that body should petition in favour of this Bill, and a majority agreed to do so. He would read, however, the statements made by two gentlemen who took part in this debate. Mr. Alderman Murray said:—"With regard to the question before them, though he supported it last year, he felt bound to vote for the amendment on this occasion, and he would tell them why. At the last municipal election it was his duty to preside at one of the booths in Ardwick, and he must say that more unseemly sights took place on that occasion than he ever witnessed at any previous election, either municipal or Parliamentary. Women in a state of semi-drunkenness were hustled into publichouses by men in the same state, and he made up his mind then that before the Parliamentary franchise was extended to women they ought to have the ballot." (Hear, hear.) Well, he had always voted for the ballot, but how could the ballot prevent scenes of that kind? Again, Mr. Alderman Lamb was reported to have said that,—"He would ask whether any gentleman present would like to see his wife, daughter, or sister taking part in the disgraceful scenes which were witnessed at the last municipal election. (Hear, hear.) Staggering women, supported by staggering men—not their husbands—were seen going up to vote, both sexes boisterous and obscene in their language." He thought, therefore, that the experience of the measure which gave the municipal franchise to women did not suggest the expediency of extending the principle. But he based his opposition to the present Bill on a much wider ground. No more serious question could be raised in Parliament than this. It was so serious, indeed, that he was astonished to hear his right hon. friend

intimating that it was considered an open question for members of the Government. His hon. friend, by his proposal, raised in a practical shape a question which had been often raised before by philosophers in their closets—viz., "Why are half the human race excluded from political privileges?" No, this was not a new question, albeit it was a very portentous one; but his hon. friend, in attempting to solve that question, was in reality disturbing the whole foundations of society and obliterating the distinction of sex, and the functions of the sexes in society which have always existed in every civilised community. (Hear, hear.) The issue now raised by his hon. friend originated in a country which was fertile in strange notions and ideas, the United States of America, and which was often extolled by his hon. friend and those who acted with him as furnishing an example of everything wise and expedient in political life. Now, what had our practical kinsmen on the other side of the Atlantic done in reference to this question? Why, they had repudiated the notion of woman suffrage, and the American women themselves had also repudiated it. The New York correspondent of a daily newspaper in this country said:—"I am afraid it must be confessed that the woman suffrage movement in the United States is pretty well 'played out.' It has become unmistakably evident of late that the women of the country do not want the suffrage." The same correspondent, after quoting the letter of a lady who exposed the unbusinesslike way in which women managed their societies in America, said:—"I agree with this lady that it is not surprising that under this state of things the sensible women of the country have become disgusted with the agitators and with their agitation, and have exercised the influence which they have with their brothers and husbands to knock the whole thing on the head as soon as possible. In Illinois, the other day, 1,400 women of a single town petitioned not to be allowed to vote; in Massachusetts an amendment to the Constitution, allowing women to vote, has been rejected in the Legislature by a large majority at the request, as it appears, of the women themselves; in Minnesota a Women's Suffrage Bill, which had passed the Legislature, has been vetoed by the Governor, who says that he is satisfied the women of the State would be more annoyed than gratified by the suffrage; and in Utah, where the women have the suffrage, they refuse to go to the polls."

Mr. HUNT asked whether it was proposed there to give the vote to married as well as to single women.

Mr. BOUVERIE believed it was. His hon. friend's Bill would tend to obliterate the practical distinctions which the experience, the wisdom, and the habits of mankind in all ages had established. It had been said that the Bill was a very small affair,

and that the House need not go much further; but if we conceded electoral power to women, how could we refuse them a share in legislative, judicial, and administrative power? (Hear.) This was a state of things which this House ought seriously to contemplate if it intended to pass the Bill. His hon. friend, no doubt would be prepared to go that length, but he felt sure such a view was not entertained by a great bulk of the women of England. His hon. friend assumed to speak in the name of all the women of England, but, in fact, he spoke in the name of only a very few of them. (Cheers.) The great bulk of the women of England had an instinctive horror of this measure, for they were aware of the evil which would ultimately ensue to their sex if they entered into rough competition with men in all the pursuits of life. Women were physically weaker than men. They were protected by the habits and ideas of society generally from oppression. There was scarcely any man above 40 years old who was not identified in his happiness and interests in life with one woman or with more than one woman. (Laughter.) The happiness and interests of wife and daughters were far dearer to the head of a family than his own. (Hear.) His interests and theirs were entirely wrapped up together; and he maintained that this was the real protection of women against oppression and injury, and not the electoral power which his hon. friend proposed to confer on them. To his mind, his hon. friend struck at the very foundation of society—namely, the family. (Hear, hear.) Was the head of the family the man or the woman? Was the head of the family to be the master of the family or was he not? Was it nature's intention, and was it our Maker's intention, that when society was founded on the family the man should be at the head of the family and should rule? Strange notions were spread abroad at the present day by those whose views his hon. friend advocated in that House. The existing state of things was to come to an end. He was not speaking without book, but would quote some passages of not inordinate length to show that the persons who with great ability promoted the views advocated by his hon. friend aimed their blows at the existing state of society and at marriage in particular. (Hear.) These were socialistic views, and he was glad to say they were not entertained by the great bulk of our countrymen and countrywomen. They were, however, entertained by philosophers and fanatics in ancient times, and they had been much written about during the last half century, so that there was a large literature on the subject by many writers, and especially by French writers. He dared say his hon. friend had not studied much of the literature on this subject. He, on the contrary, had; and he knew that the logical results of what his hon. friend advocated were the

socialistic views of those who asserted that the existing foundations of society were altogether wrong, and that the laws of property and marriage ought to be entirely revised, they being at present an abuse of the rights and privileges of mankind. Marriage was represented by these writers as a state of intolerable bondage and slavery. He would quote a passage from a work by Mr. John Stuart Mill, a gentleman who was called by some a great philosopher, although in his judgment he was rather a crude sophist than a philosopher. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) In his essay "On the Subjection of Women" Mr. Mill said:—"The wife is the actual bond-servant of her husband, no less, so far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called. She vows a life-long obedience to him at the altar, and is held to it all through her life by law." That was the complaint. In another passage Mr. Mill said:—"I am far from pretending that wives are in general no better treated than slaves; but no slave is a slave to the same lengths and in so full a sense of the word as a wife is." Again, Mr. Mill said:—"If married life were all that it might be expected to be, looking to the laws alone, society would be a hell upon earth." (Laughter.) And again:—"The law of servitude in marriage is a monstrous contradiction to all the principles of the modern world, and to all the experience through which those principles have been slowly and painfully worked out. It is the sole case, now that negro slavery has been abolished, in which a human being in the plenitude of every faculty is delivered up to the tender mercies of another human being, in the hope, forsooth, that this other will use the power solely for the good of the person subjected to it. Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves except the mistress of every house." Was that a just representation of married life, and the relations between husband and wife among the great bulk of our countrymen and countrywomen? (Hear, hear.) Mr. Mill was not even original in these views. In the year 1825 this subject was handled by Mr. W. Thompson, a gentleman of the same school of opinion as Mr. Owen, the Socialist, who gradually drifted into extraordinary notions, and held that there ought to be no morality, no laws, no property, and no marriage. (Laughter.) Among Mr. Owen's chief apostles was this Mr. Thompson, who wrote a book, entitled, "An appeal of one-half the Human Race against the Pretensions of the other Half." In this work he said:—"Even under the present arrangements of society, founded as they all are on the basis of individual competition, nothing could be more easy than to put the rights of women, political and civil, on a perfect equality with those of men. It is only to abolish all prohibitory and exclusive laws statute, or

what are called "common," the remnants of the barbarous customs of our ignorant ancestors, particularly the horrible and odious inequality and indissolubility of that disgrace of civilisation the present marriage code." Again he said:—"Woman is, then, compelled in marriage by the possession of superior strength on the part of men, by the want of knowledge, skill, and wealth, by the positive cruel, partial, and cowardly enactments of law, by the terrors of superstition, by the mockery of a pretended vow of obedience, and, to crown all, and as the result of all, by the force of an unrelenting, unreasoning, unfeeling, public opinion, to be the literal unequivocal slave of the man who may be styled her husband. . . . A domestic, a civil, a political slave, in the plain, unsophisticated sense of the word, in no metaphorical sense, is every married woman." It would thus be seen not only that Mr. Mill was a sophist in regard to this matter, but that he had not the advantage of being an original sophist. (Laughter.) Such were the views on which were founded the operations of those persons outside the House who asked for an extension of the franchise to women owners of property. Another of the modern philosophers, Mr. M. D. Conway, said in a work entitled "The Earthward Pilgrimage":—"That which is now called morality directly and deliberately stunts or even ruins the faculty of man, and on principle. This will appear to those who consider its standards of nobility, commercial success, Sabbath keeping expediency; but beside the grave at Bournemouth" (the writer was here referring to the grave of Mary Woolstonecraft, one of the originators of this school). "I revert only to that point upon which our hereditary monastic morality is most stern and uncompromising—marriage. Nothing but superstition ever sacrifices human beings to institutions. The origin of the marriage superstition is pagan. . . . Like every other superstition, it is suicidal. Permitting the *minimum* of freedom in its regulation and duration, marriage finds the young already dreading it. . . . Formosa now excites sympathy, she will presently gain respect. When finally she shall deserve respect, when she also shows she can be faithful as lover and mother, the lock and bolt system will break down. Society will before long be glad enough to assimilate contracts between man and woman to contracts between partners in business." He thought he had shown to the House by these extracts that there was a school who ardently supported the member for Manchester's measure, but who aimed their shot higher than he, and made an attack upon the very foundations of society. (Hear, hear.) There was a book far more esteemed by our countrywomen, if not by our countrymen, than the writings of

Mr. Mill, and it said:—"Her desire shall be to her husband, and he shall rule over her." (Cheers.) Now they were told that all this was to come to an end, and that women were to engage in men's pursuits—to be politicians, to become members of that House, and to take part in the administration of the country. His hon. friend the member for Cork (Mr. Maguire) had just written an entertaining book, in which he contemplated what would occur 30 years hence, and described a House of Commons, most of the members of which were women, the whips being two remarkably engaging and captivating young ladies. (Much laughter.) This was a condition of affairs to which he for one strongly objected, for he maintained that the pride and glory of woman were her modesty and her purity. (Hear, hear.) Women could not be brought into contact with the rough occupations of men without defiling their modesty and purity. He did not know whether his hon. friend the member for Manchester was a classical scholar, and had read the *Sixth Satire of Juvenal* respecting the state to which society was reduced in Rome after the women there had been struggling for what they called their emancipation. He did not, of course, say that a similar state of things could be brought about in a civilised country in the present day, but still the tendency of human nature would be the same as it was in the time of Juvenal, and he believed that the great English divine of 200 years ago was right when he said that "fear and blushing were the girdles of innocence." If the weaker part of the human race were to enter into the active occupations of men they would be sure to go to the wall. Some of the greatest French writers had complained that in their country the family had almost disappeared from the lower strata of society, and were we prepared to exchange our domestic morality for that which existed in France? He would take the liberty of reading part of a letter which had been placed in his hands since he entered the House, and which was written by an accomplished and educated lady. She wrote to him as follows:—"I find that you purpose moving the rejection of the Women's Suffrage Bill when it comes on for the second reading to-morrow. As the upholders of this Bill have had their hands strengthened by the voices of a small number of very demonstrative women, it seems scarcely right that not a voice should be raised to aid you in urging the rejection of the measure. I consider myself to be in exactly the position which enables me to express opinions which may be regarded as a fair exponent of the feelings of my countrywomen on the subject. I am middle-aged, unmarried, and live in my own house, and under the new *régime* should be entitled to a borough and a county vote. I have a keen appreciation of politics, and am intensely

interested in everything connected with the well-being of society, but I am strongly opposed to the extension of the franchise to women, not because I think they are not wise enough to use the privileges aright, but because they have other and more genial duties. I feel myself able to give an opinion on this subject, having an immense circle of acquaintances, including no inconsiderable number of single ladies, not one of whom has ever expressed the least desire to be endowed with the boon which Jacob Bright and its other advocates would have one to suppose was the blessing above all others to be desired. As a rule, unmarried Englishwomen are perfectly satisfied with the position and privileges which the Legislature confers. The noisy few will ever be heard above the quiet many, while the latter would almost rather be burdened with the weight and responsibilities of the franchise than make an effort to protest that they do not desire it." That letter, he believed, succinctly expressed the ideas of the great bulk of our educated countrywomen. (Hear, hear.) He clung to the conviction he expressed last year, that if this so-called boon was given it would prove a curse to them, and, therefore, he entreated the House to support him in negating the motion of his hon. friend. (Cheers.) In conclusion the right hon. gentleman moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

✓ Mr. SCOURFIELD cordially supported the amendment, but would not detain the House long, as all the ground had been travelled over by his right hon. friend. He was firmly convinced that the great mass of the women of this country did not desire to have this so-called privilege conferred upon them. This measure would put in the thin end of the wedge, to use the ordinary phrase, although he never heard of anyone endeavouring to put in the thick end of the wedge. (A laugh.) The House had no right to force upon women a privilege which only a very limited number of their sex asked for. As a means of testing whether the women of England really wished for the power of voting, he would suggest—and commend the suggestion to the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—that every person signing a petition in favour of the extension of the franchise to women should be instructed to accompany the signature with a photographic portrait, and that Mr. Darwin or Professor Owen, who could distinguish the sex of animals from very trifling signs, should be retained to decide from an examination of the pictures as to the sex of the person represented, for he could not help suspecting that many of the signatories were not women, but men in women's clothing. (Laughter.)

✓ Mr. GLADSTONE: Both the mover of the second reading of the Bill and the mover of the amendment having referred to the position of the Government on this question, I desire very

briefly to explain to the House what that position really is. The Government abstain from taking any part whatever as a Government in this discussion—not upon the mere ground that their mind and time are overcharged with public business, but upon the more comprehensive and positive ground, that it is neither desirable nor advantageous that the Government should make a rule of interfering—as a Government—with every discussion at its earliest stages; and for this plain reason—that we wish in this country to have legislation founded on mature and on free consideration. That mature consideration of subjects is much impeded by considerations of party which it is hardly possible to keep out of subjects of this sort, after, by the adoption of one view or another, they have become the property of the executive government. With a view to that free consideration, it seems to me far more desirable, while we need not shrink as individuals from expressing our opinions, that we should leave to members of our own party to take an independent course on this question—not because it is an unimportant question, but because our intervention as a body is premature and inexpedient. Now sir, I am not prepared to vote with my hon. friend in favour of this Bill; and I may state the reasons which disincline me to take that course. But I must congratulate my hon. friend on the ability with which he has stated his case. The presence of the hon. member here—I might even say the tones of his voice—agreeably remind me of the absence of his distinguished relative. I will not say that it consoles me for the loss we sustain, but at least if my right hon. friend and late colleague cannot be with us, I rejoice that the name of his family is so worthily represented. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, my main reason for declining to vote for this Bill is that, although I do not think our present law is perfect, I am unwilling to adopt, by the second reading of the Bill, the principle of a measure for its amendment until I have some better prospect as to the satisfactory nature of the particular amendment about to be proposed than I perceive at the present moment. Proceeding to state my view of the case, in the first place I would set aside altogether the question whether the adoption of such a measure as this is likely to act in any given sense upon the fortunes of one political party or another. (Hear, hear.) It would be what I may call a sin against first principles to permit ourselves to be influenced either one way or the other by any feeling we might entertain on such a point, and therefore into that part of the subject I will not, for one moment, undertake to inquire. When I look at the particular proposals of my hon. friend I am encountered by the particular reasoning on which the opposition has been based. The mover and seconder of the amendment opposed the Bill on the specific

ground that they are opposed to these revolutionary changes in the relative positions of men and women. These they do not allege to be included in this Bill, but of which they say, and I admit with some semblance of truth, that the Bill savours more or less. I entirely agree with my right hon. friend the member for Kilmarnock in his opposition to these revolutionary changes. But I must speak of Mr. Mill in terms of much greater and warmer respect than the right hon. gentleman has used. The Bill itself is somewhat remarkable in one point of view, namely, in its avoidance of any statement of reasons for the change it contemplated. My hon. friend has dispensed with the preamble altogether, as if he were unwilling to commit himself to any limited purpose. With regard to the specific objections to the measure, I was well pleased with a portion of the speech of the hon. member who seconded the amendment. He based his objection on the direct operation of the measure as it stands, and I have no assurance from my hon. friend (Mr. Jacob Bright) of any disposition to modify the measure in committee in that important respect. The hon. member placed his objection in a great degree on its demanding the personal attendance of women, and involving them in the general proceedings of elections. That appears to me to be an objection of the greatest force. It may be that when we adopt the principle of secret voting we may ensure that tranquility of elections which has been achieved in other countries. I remember to have been in Berlin on the day of a general election, and to have been totally unable from any sign or note whatever in the streets to discover the fact that the election was going on. We are told that the same tranquility prevails on the day of election in Australia; and whether that state of things arises from the simple adoption of secret voting or not, I hope we shall labour to attain tranquility in election procedure. All the pomp and glory of elections in this country, which I am old enough to recollect, has now disappeared. I must say there was in it something of a national character. (Hear, hear.) But while we have got rid of all that was attractive, we retain much that is dangerous and demoralising. Speaking generally, however, I am inclined to say that the personal attendance and intervention of women in election proceedings, even apart from any suspicion of the wider objects of many of the promoters of the present movement, would be a practical evil not only of the gravest, but even of an intolerable character. I am not quite sure that my hon. friend, in excluding married women, has adopted a perfectly consistent course. It is quite clear that married women, if they possessed the qualification, ought not to be omitted from any privilege conferred upon single women. The question with regard to the recognition of women's rights—I use

the expression very largely without intending to express any opinion upon it—is, after all, a question of degree. The ancient law recognised the rights of women in the parish; I apprehend they could both vote and act in the parish. The modern rule has extended the right to the municipality, so far as the right of voting is concerned, and I hope our municipal elections will receive some reform with regard to order and tranquility; or else we must admit that the intervention of women under circumstances like those just described by my right hon. friend is a matter of regret. With respect to school boards, I own I believe that my right hon. friend the Vice-President of the Council was right in the course he took last year, and that we have done wisely, on the whole, in giving both the franchise and the right of sitting on the school board to women. Then comes a question with regard to Parliament, and we have to ask ourselves whether we shall or shall not go farther. Now, I do go so far as to admit that my hon. friend has a presumptive case for some change in the law, although, for my part, I will go no further until I know more of the nature of the change to be effected. With reference to the nature of that change, I am sorry my hon. friend has not noticed the subject of the representation of the property of women at elections by their actual exercise of the franchise, provided it is not done by means of personal intervention and attendance. I will not give any positive opinion on that subject, but I have never heard any conclusive reason why we should not borrow a hint from the law now existing in Italy, under which a woman is allowed to exercise the franchise if she is possessed of a qualification, subject to the condition that she shall only exercise it through a deputy, some friend or relative, especially chosen for the purpose. That may be found on examination to be a good or a bad plan, but it is one worthy of discussion. I admit, at any rate, that as far as I am able to judge, there is more presumptive ground for change in the law than some of the opponents of the measure are disposed to own. I think my right hon. friend the member for Kilmarnock perhaps fell into an error on this subject, which is very common in our discussions, I mean the error of making the social rules and considerations which govern and determine the constitution of the upper class of society, the rules and considerations which should apply to the whole. (Hear, hear.) It is very easy to deal with this case as regards the upper class. I am disposed without giving a positive opinion, to say that, so far as grievance is concerned, so far as practical mischief to be removed is concerned, with regard to the higher circle, to those who are familiarly called the “upper ten thousand,” there is no case at all for entertaining a measure of this kind. There is not even a presumptive case. But when

we look at the whole of society the case is different. In the first place, we are encountered by a great social fact. My right hon. friend rests upon the old law of the human race—the law under which to the woman falls the domestic portion of duty, the care of the household, and to the man the procuring of subsistence. But that great and world-wide and world-old fact is one which the return of every census shows us to be undergoing a somewhat serious modification. The number of absolutely self-dependent women is increasing from year to year, especially in the great towns of the country. My right hon. friend speaks truly, when he says that the head of the family is the person naturally charged with the interest of his unmarried daughters: but when we go downwards in society we find that, almost as a matter of necessity, at any rate as a matter of practice, it now very frequently happens, especially in this vast metropolis, that cases arise where, when the girl approaches womanhood, it becomes almost a necessity for the father, under the limited conditions of his existence and his habitation, irrespective of the lot of marriage, which is the normal or ordinary condition of woman, to say to his daughter that she must begin to think for herself, and set about providing for her subsistence. If it be true that there is a progressive increase in the number of self-dependent women, that is a very serious fact; because these women are assuming the burdens which belong to men; and I agree with the hon. member for Manchester that when they are called upon to assume those burdens, and to undertake the responsibility of providing for their own subsistence, they approach the task under greater difficulties than attach to their more powerful competitors. Now, sir, I cannot help thinking that, for some reason or other, there are various important particulars in which women obtain much less than justice under social arrangements. It is to me a matter of astonishment to observe in London the distribution of employments as between men and women. I scarcely ever see in the hands of a woman an employment that ought more naturally to be in the hands of a man—(hear, hear),—but I constantly see in the hands of a man employment which might be more beneficially and economically in the hands of a woman. I may be told that there is no direct connection between this and the parliamentary franchise, and I admit it; but at the same time I am by no means sure that these inequalities may not have an indirect connection with a state of law in which the balance is generally cast too much against women, and too much in favour of men. There is one instance which has been quoted, and I am not sure there is not something in it—I mean the case of farms. (Hear, hear.) The not unnatural disposition of landlords is to see farms in the hands of those who, sympathising—as the

English tenant is ordinarily and honourably disposed to do—with his landlord, can give effect to that sympathy by voting at the poll, and I believe to some extent in the competition for that particular employment women suffer in a very definite manner in consequence of their want of qualification to vote. I go somewhat further than this, and say that so far as I am able to form an opinion of the general tone and colour of our law in these matters, where the peculiar relation of men and women are concerned, that law does less than justice to women. (Hear, hear.) The right hon. gentleman has said truly that some enthusiasts or fanatics are set on modifying or subverting the law of marriage. I confess I am one of those who think that we struck a serious blow at the law of marriage when we passed the Divorce Act; but I have never yet been able to satisfy my mind as to the reasons why, in framing and passing that act, we chose to introduce a new and gross inequality against women and in favour of men. (Hear, hear.) The subject which I am now on the verge of is rather painful, and not necessary to enter upon in detail, but I may say that in the whole of this chapter of legislation, especially where the irregular relations of men and women and the consequences of those irregular relations are concerned, the English law does women much less than justice, and great mischief, misery, and scandal result from that state of things in many of the occurrences and events of life. (Cheers.) I may be told that it is not to be supposed that women would in any circumstances, if in a majority, exercise a preponderating influence in public concerns. They will not and they cannot. But the question whether it is possible to devise a method of enabling them to exercise a sensible influence, without undertaking personal functions and without exposing themselves to personal obligations, inconsistent with the fundamental particulars of their condition as women, is a question which, in my opinion, is very worthy of consideration. Although, therefore, I am unable to give a vote for a Bill with respect to which there is no promise of its modification, if we cannot adopt it in its present form, yet I am not sorry to think that some activity of thought in these busy days of ours is directing itself to the subject of the relations which actually prevail between men and women; and if it should be found possible to arrange a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power, the man who shall attain that object, and who shall see his purpose carried onward to its consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of other laws bearing upon the condition and welfare of women, will, in my opinion, be a real benefactor to his country. (Cheers.)

Lord JOHN MANNERS said he had not hitherto voted on this

measure, because, while on the one hand unable to discover any logical reasons against it, he had on the other been restrained by that which was popularly called sentiment, but which was an element that ought not to be shut out from view in considering questions of this kind. And he was prepared to admit that if there were any proof on the present occasion that the majority or any reasonable proportion of the women who would be affected by the Bill were hostile to the measure he should be glad to allow sentiment rather than reason to prevail, and withhold his support from the Bill; but on reference to the parliamentary papers he found that up to that morning no single petition had been presented against the measure, while a considerable number had been presented in its favour. Therefore, he was bound to ask what were the practical arguments against the measure, and having listened to the speeches of the mover and seconder of the amendment, and of the Prime Minister, he was unable to perceive that there were any arguments possessing validity against the second reading of the Bill. (Hear, hear.) The right hon. gentleman the member for Kilmarnock took exception to the speech of the hon. member who moved the second reading of the Bill on the ground that it was too narrow. He (Lord J. Manners) confessed that if he were to find fault with the speech it would be in precisely the opposite direction, but the right hon. gentleman himself could not be accused of narrowing the issue, for his speech was directed to almost every subject under the sun except the Bill the House was now called upon to discuss. (Hear, hear.) He told the House with perfect truth that he had studied every branch of the subject, and produced most voluminous evidence that his statement was correct, with the single exception that he had not studied the Bill itself. He dilated upon the laws of marriage and of property, the state of affairs in America, and the writings of every philosophical writer on the question from Payne Knight to Mill, denouncing the theories of the latter; but he did not say one word to show that the female ratepayers of this country ought not to have the suffrage accorded to them. (Hear, hear.) He could not tell from the speech of the right hon. gentleman at the head of the Government whether he was in favour or against the measure. (Cheers.) He thought, however, he might venture to say that, whatever might be the opinions of the right hon. gentleman now, he would before long be numbered among the supporters of the measure. (Cheers and laughter.) The principal objection which the right hon. gentleman appeared to take to this measure was that it had no preamble, but he did not know that in these days that was a serious objection. (Hear, hear.) He had himself passed a

measure, while in office, that had no preamble. Then the right hon. gentleman had objected that there was nothing in this Bill to prevent the personal attendance of the female voters at the poll; but that objection, if valid, might be equally urged against women voting at municipal elections and elections for the school boards and local boards of health. The right hon. gentleman had suggested that by going to Italy we might borrow a mode by which we could surmount this difficulty; but he would suggest that the difficulty would be removed without travelling so far by resorting to the plan already in use in respect to the elections for the universities, where voters were permitted to record their votes by deputy. But, whether it were advisable to adopt that plan or not, the subject was one pre-eminently for the decision of the House, when they got into committee. (Hear, hear.) What he contended was that if the principle of enfranchising women ratepayers was sound in relation to other elections it was equally sound in relation to the election of members of Parliament. Did his right hon. friend, the member for Kilmarnock, mean to contend that women had no interest in the subjects brought before that House? Were they not interested, for example, in the subject of education, or were they not interested and did their interests not deserve to be represented in the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill—a measure which had so long been the shuttlecock of the two Houses of Parliament? (Hear, hear.) His right hon. friend appeared to say by his argument that women might be permitted to vote for such inferior bodies as Poor Law Guardians, Boards of Education, and Municipal Councils, but that they had no right to share in the election of so august a being as a member of the House of Commons. Now, he (Lord J. Manners) was prepared at all times to vindicate, if necessary, the rights and privileges of that house, but to assert that female ratepayers were not worthy to form a part of the constituencies of members of parliament was an arrogation of personal dignity and superiority which he was by no means able to support. Under all those circumstances, he confessed he was unable to see any reason why the female ratepayers should be any longer excluded from the exercise of the franchise at parliamentary elections—(hear, hear)—and he should therefore give his support to the second reading of the Bill.

✓ Mr. BERESFORD HOPE thought that the right hon. gentleman the member for Kilmarnock in opposing the Bill gave the House an elaborate, but a very truthful, *exposé* of the policy of women's rights, in his bill of indictment against the strong-minded phalanx, for whom he personally had a great respect and no little fear. It was only the previous morning that he had received a speech from a lady belonging to that body, in

which he was charged with comparing certain noble women to dancing dogs. He had a high respect for the virtues and the capacity of women, and he therefore looked upon a woman's tongue, sharpened by debates and journalism, as a very formidable weapon, and one that was highly dangerous to encounter. The speech of the Prime Minister was satisfactory to him in one point, for it showed that, however much his right hon. friend's opinions might have changed with respect to other parts of the marriage law, his opinions in relation to the subject of divorce were exactly what they were 14 years ago. He (Mr. Beresford Hope) also fought by his side, as well as his noble friend who had just spoken, in opposition to the Divorce Act of 1857. Recollecting those days he listened with much interest for the arguments which his noble friend should adduce. In supporting the measure of the hon. member for Manchester, he was bound to traverse the able reasoning of the right hon. gentleman the member for Kilmarnock, but he did nothing of the kind. He simply contended that because women were allowed to exercise the franchise at municipal and school board elections, they should be allowed to vote for members of that House. This was assertion and not argument until the identity of the two cases was shown, and when that was done his noble friend must in consistency range himself with the supporters of the ballot. He was astonished to hear his noble friend allege as any argument that no women had petitioned against the Bill. These words should have come from any mouth but his, for it was equally true that they had never petitioned against the Divorce Bill, although it was well known that the women of England were righteously opposed to the passing of that measure. He (Mr. Hope) honoured the women for not having done so, because that innate modesty which was the great attribute of the sex prevented them putting themselves forward on such occasions. Their not petitioning was indeed an argument against the change, for it proved that women shrank from thrusting themselves forward into the noisy turmoil of politics. No doubt women had sometimes petitioned Parliament—they had even crowded that table with petitions on a certain question which should have been the very last to attract their attention. So far from that fact being a reason for conferring this franchise upon women, as showing that they took a deep interest in the proceedings of the House, he thought that the disgusting appearance of the petitions to which he alluded greatly strengthened the arguments of those who were conscientiously opposed to the principle contended for by the advocates of the present measure. He was opposed to the Bill, because he wished to protect women from being forced forward into the hurly-burly of party politics, and

obliged to take part in all the disagreeable accompaniments of electioneering contests and their consequences. The right hon. gentleman, the First Minister of the Crown, referring to the upper ten thousand, said that they had not an appreciable shadow of grievance to complain of in this respect, whilst he observed that the class of self-dependent women was increasing very rapidly, and seemed to regard this fact as a reason for the change. The right hon. gentleman indeed stated that he would not vote for the Bill of the hon. member for Manchester, but his sibylline tones left the impression that there was such doubt lurking in his mind that in another session he would be found in the ranks of those who were in favour of women's suffrage. The fact of the class of self-dependent women increasing so much was in his mind a reason for withholding the franchise from them. There were a few women who obtained a great influence in society by their genius and their capacity for work, and he honoured them for it. They had, however, as much power already in their way as the exercise of a vote for members of that House could give them; but the great majority of the self-dependent class were persons who by many sacrifices and ceaseless industry just succeeded in realising competence sufficient with great thrift to support them in a moderate and quiet way. The extension of the franchise to such women would not only disturb the peaceful character of their lives, but might seriously endanger that competence by forcing them into the arena of political excitement where they would be exposed to the animosities, the bickerings, and the resentments which are so unhappily inherent in the rough work of electioneering. Taking then this self-dependent class as they really were and not as philosophers painted them, he thought that Parliament would do them a great wrong by exposing them to the temptations inseparable from the franchise whether those who possessed it took an active part in politics, or refused to exercise the franchise which had been conferred on them. All who were familiar with contests knew that it was often as troublesome not to vote as to give a vote; and yet Parliament was asked to put the helpless female lodgers, seamstresses, and such persons, in this dilemma. The very nature of women called for sympathy and protection, and for the highest and most chivalrous treatment on the part of the men, but, instead of this being accorded for the future, it was now proposed to thrust them into a position which they were by their sex, by their condition in life, and by their previous training totally unqualified to grapple with. It would be said that the proposal was only to enfranchise unmarried women, but he was not a believer in such illogical finality. If this Bill were passed did his right hon. friend behind him (Mr. Russell Gurney) believe that the distinction contemplated

in it between married and unmarried women would long continue to be upheld? And, without going so far, why should not those ladies who were temporarily independent be invested with these privileges? There was, for instance, he would not mention any names, a lady who had recently been remarkable for an act of great daring, and who had subsequently escaped in consequence of admirable management, would it not be right that she should be invested with these privileges for some eight years or so? The lady in question was one whose ability had been proved and her innocence decided in the face of the world. If this Bill should pass, and the number of emancipated women were found to produce no appreciable change in the quality of the representation in the House, then he would say that they had made a great disturbance to gain something very small indeed; but, on the other hand, if it were found to cause any serious alteration in the character of the representation, then, with all due respect to all the new constituencies, he believed that the alteration would be shown in the deterioration and not in the improvement of the quality of Parliament. On this head he desired to speak plainly. It was not a question whether the male or the female intellect were the superior one. He simply said that they were different, and that the difference made man more capable of direct government and woman more fitted for private influence. There were in the world women of a manlike-mind—a Mrs. Somerville or a Miss Martineau, and there were now and then men of feminine softness; but he reasoned from the generality and not from marked exceptions. Reason predominated in the man, emotion and sympathy in the woman, and if the female vote made any noticeable difference in the character of our constituencies, the risk would be that they would have in the House an excess of the emotional and sentimental element over the logical and reasoning faculty. Though emotion and sentiment were admirable qualities in their way, he maintained distinctly that reason ought to govern emotion, and not emotion govern reason. If, indeed, our existing constituencies were exclusively composed of bachelors and widowers, it might be argued that the reason was not sufficiently tempered by sentiment. But with the large bulk which they contain of family men, he felt quite satisfied that the womanly nature had quite as much play in making up the national mind as could be healthfully desired. The character of the legislation of a woman-chosen Parliament would be the increased importance which would be given to questions of a *quasi* social or philanthropic character (viewed with regard to the supposed interests, or the partisan bias of special classes, rather than to broader considerations of the public weal) in excess of the great constitu-

tional and international issues which the legislature was empanelled to try. We should have more wars for an idea, or hasty alliances with scheming neighbours, more class cries, permissive legislation, domestic perplexities, and sentimental grievances. Our legislation would develop hysterical and spasmodic features, partaking more of the French and American system than reproducing the tradition of the English Parliament. On these grounds he should vote against the second reading of the Bill.

✓ Dr. LYON PLAYFAIR said that the House would observe that the opponents of the Bill had brought forward no objections to the questions of right and wrong involved in it, but had treated it simply as a matter of convenience and expediency. They were told that there would be a considerable innovation in the social habits of the people if this Bill passed into law, and to that view the right hon. gentleman the member for Kilmarnock had given powerful expression. Last session the objection received support from the First Minister of the Crown, when he described it as uprooting the landmarks of society. He was glad to find that that argument was not now repeated by the right hon. gentleman, although it had to a certain extent been re-echoed by the right hon. gentleman the member for Kilmarnock. When he had heard that expression fall from a Liberal Minister with regard to a Liberal measure he felt certain that the right hon. gentleman would be on their side before long ("hear" and laughter), for there was a fine extinct Tory roll about the phrase. (Cheers and laughter.) The phrase used to be brought forward to accompany the doctrine of the divine right of kings; it was urged against the negro emancipation, and had served as stage thunder on similar occasions from time immemorial whenever there was a question of extending suffrage among the people. The whole argument of the supporters of the Bill was contained in one sentence—that the law imposed upon women the burdens of citizenship, and that if sex was no reason for preventing the imposition of those burdens, so also sex should be no justification for withholding from them the rights which attached to citizenship. (Hear, hear.) The fact was that one-sixth to one-seventh of the tax-payers, being females, were not represented in that House. No person had said in the House that the average woman was not able by her intellect to carry out the smallest function of political duty—the voting for a member of Parliament. While they actually did give this privilege to the most ignorant and debased men, and refused it to the most cultivated and virtuous women, the only reason that could be urged against the enfranchisement of women was their sex. The argument employed by his right hon. friend the member for Kilmarnock amounted to this—that women had no

business to interfere in politics. But his definition of politics was the meanest and lowest view that could be taken, and referred not to the science of government, which was the true meaning of the word, but to the struggle of parties for power. Politics, properly understood, meant the government of the people in equal and fair relations to each other, with a view to their happiness and to the security of their property and persons. Why should one-half the human race be cut off from such a noble study? His right hon. friend had expressed his opinion that the concession of the municipal franchise was a mistake, and had instanced one or two cases in which votes were given in an unhappy state of intoxication. But all that showed was that there were degraded men as there were degraded women, and no doubt there would always be degraded female electors as there were degraded male electors. If his argument were worth anything it only implied disfranchisement of the unworthy of both sexes. (Cheers.) If his right hon. friend, in accounting for the interest which women took in the School Boards by the fact that the voting was secret, had promised this measure his support after the Bill for secret voting had been carried, his position would at least have been logical. It had been urged that women already possessed a vast amount of political influence. There could be no doubt that that was true, as they had lately witnessed in relation to a matter which was very repugnant to their feelings. His own opinions on that subject were well-known, so he was not likely to be misunderstood; but there could be no doubt that the women on this subject had exercised so much influence, whether rightly or wrongly, as to endanger the seats of many members of that House who did not take their view. If the opinion of these women was right the Act ought not to have been passed without greater regard being paid to their interests and feelings—if they were wrong the responsibility of rejecting the Acts ought to be shared by those who induced its rejection. Ultimately it was still the fault of those who, by excluding women from politics, had allowed them to act in a natural feeling of sympathy for the fallen of their sex, and not to subjugate their feelings to the exigencies of public polity. (Hear, hear.) But then the objection is made that women are not educated for politics. Quite true this, and whose fault is it? The same objection was brought forward at the late extension of suffrage to men; but experience has shown that actual responsibility was a wonderfully rapid educational power. The want of political education among women was the fault of the House in not having already given them the franchise—the greatest political educator at command. The old argument that the exercise of the franchise carried to its legitimate conclusion would result in the presence in the House

of representative women did not alarm him. If the Bill passed, the men would still number six to every single woman on the register, and although he was not sure that even now any law existed for disqualifying women from seats in the House, he was prepared to oppose any measure conferring such power, not on the ground of mental but physical incapability. The hon. member for Cambridge University and those who supported him acted on the traditional idea of women being subject to men, the old "rib" theory. It had been said by the hon. member for Pembroke, in the true "rib," spirit of the question, that the avocation of women was a high one—to make life endurable; the hon. member for the University of Cambridge had more elegantly put it that the avocation of women was to guide, to influence, to moderate, to regulate, and to suffer—not to govern. But convert his verbs into nouns, and why were guidance, influence, moderation, and endurance to be regarded as qualities opposed to government? The Prime Minister had said that to justify the denial of the franchise to any person it was necessary to prove personal unfitness or public danger. That was a perfectly sound political axiom; and judged by it the Bill should pass, especially as it was on all hands admitted that women exhibited a higher moral tone than men, which increased their aptitude, while their quiescence of character did not involve political danger. The right hon. member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Bouverie) had read them passages from the writings of eccentric authors of socialistic proclivities, as evidence that the suffrage should not be extended to women. He might as well have adduced the ravings of Red Republicans and Communists as an argument for refusing the suffrage to men. He also had alluded to the opinions of a distinguished constituent of himself (Dr. Playfair) John Stuart Mill. He read passages from his writings, and implied that these were calculated to dispute the sanctity of marriage. These passages, however, had no such bearing. They simply referred to the theory of subjection implied by the law, when it dealt such unequal justice to the two sexes. At Avignon there is the grave of an Englishwoman, on whose tomb there is a beautiful tribute to her high excellencies. She was the wife who had adorned the life of John Stuart Mill, and any one who had read these touching words would have known the veneration which that philosopher had for woman, and would blush to accuse him of desiring to destroy the sanctity of marriage. (Cheers.)

✓ Mr. JAMES, although dissenting from the supporters of the Bill, could not discuss the question in the spirit in which it had been dealt with by the Prime Minister, or dwell on the trivial point of the absence of a preamble. Although the matter should not be treated technically, it was clear that every married

woman who might choose to be rated would be entitled under the Bill to a vote as well as the unmarried; but there were more important considerations than this. The natural consequence of granting the franchise was that all women were eligible to sit in the House of Commons, and they could, of course, claim their right to be represented in the House of Peers, to act as jurors, and even to sit on the episcopal bench. (Hear, hear.) Under these circumstances it was sufficient if the opponents of this Bill established that there was no precedent in the past or practice in the present to justify its passing; and having done this they had a right to stand on the defensive and say, "On what grounds should this Bill pass?" The speech of the Prime Minister upon the measure had given the greatest dissatisfaction, and some had heard it with sadness. To introduce the question of the ballot into such a grave matter as this was almost an insult to those who supported the ballot. (Hear, hear.) He assured the Prime Minister, with all respect, that he would get little support for the ballot if the moment it became law this measure would be regarded as unobjectionable by him. On hearing such arguments as those the Prime Minister had used for the Bill, and finding in the end that he would vote against it, he was disposed, with all respect, to remind him that while we were told Fame had no present, it was equally true that popularity had no future. (Cheers.) Supporters of the Bill on the other side of the House advocated it on the ground that property should be represented whether held by a woman or a man. But those who used that argument had overlooked the causes which had led to the possession of property being regarded as a qualification for the franchise. The possession of property had been made a qualification because it was held to indicate capacity and fitness in the holder. If the property itself were the thing to be represented, why should not minors vote? It had been formally resolved elsewhere, in language he did not accurately remember, that every person governed should take part in the Government, and the hon. member for Edinburgh University had said that those who bore the burdens should enjoy the rights. What did this convey? Universal suffrage and something more, for children and minors bore the burdens of the State. Mr. Mill, however, had rested his argument solely on the fitness and capacity of the person for whom he was speaking; but although it might be true that women in some mental qualities were stronger than men—in learning languages, for instance—in political matters they were decidedly not so. (Hear.) The sympathetic element in the mental constitution of women absolutely blinded them to all logic. (Hear, hear.) It might be that it was a gain to men that they were not judged day by day by those

who could strictly hold the balance. Of course there were exceptions to this rule, just as there were exceptions to the rule that men generally were superior to women in physical strength. On the question of fitness to govern, he asked whether it was not true that in all matters connected with the army, the navy, and matters commercial, diplomatic, and legal, women would have to judge on the basis of information obtained second-hand, and not from practical experience? It might be answered that all these things would come, but before they could come not only the whole character of our social life, but the very nature and passions of mankind, would have to be changed. What father would send his daughter, at the age of 19, into the world to fit her for a political life, saying, "I know dangers will await her, but the hon. member for Manchester says she has a political function to fulfil, and I must send her forth to fit her for its fulfilment?" There were other arguments based on matters about which men felt more strongly than they could express, but on the question of the practical effect such a measure would have upon constituencies he remarked that the measure was objectionable, not so much because of the influence it would give to women as to the undue influence it would give to men. The ballot was about to be adopted to prevent the exercise of undue influence over men; but if this Bill passed how enormous would be the power of the priest in one country and the clergyman in the other, to say nothing of the influence of the well-selected canvasser. Surely it could not be expected that women, if endowed with the franchise, would give an unbiassed vote, the result of political convictions? There was one other argument of which much had been made by those who lectured on the subject—namely, that our Sovereign was a woman. Possibly it would be useless to suggest that the possession of negative political qualities was regarded as a virtue in the Sovereign of these realms; but there was another answer to this argument which might have more weight. It was well known that Her Majesty had been fully prepared for her high office by wise statesmen, and that she was an Englishwoman with a full knowledge of the English character; but when it pleased her to take beneath her roof one of her own age, a stranger and a foreigner, and one who had little knowledge and experience of the English people, Her Majesty chose to receive the guidance and direction, the council and assistance, of that foreigner simply because she was a woman and he was a man. (Hear, hear.) The few itinerant, restless ladies—(cheers)—who passed from town to town giving utterance to the oft-repeated sentiments of Lady A. and Miss B. alleged that the women of England were on their side, but although he had read the periodical

advocating their views he had never found that in any of the meetings any lady rose and endorsed the views expressed by the lecturers. Their auditors, occupying their true position, preserved silence, and because of their courteous attention the advocates of women's suffrage assumed they endorsed the lecturer's views. There were other arguments which might be used against this measure—arguments which carried one back to one's first instructress, arguments which received strength in the minds of those who had felt the sympathy and support of a pure woman's love, and he could not doubt that there were many in the House who, in consideration of these arguments, would long resist any attempt to upset what nature had ordained and custom had ratified as the natural place for woman in the State. (Loud cheers.)

✓ Mr. W. HUNT, having complimented the hon. and learned gentleman on the force and eloquence which characterised his argument, said:—I do not, however, think the argument irrefutable. From the speech of one of the chief supporters of the amendment he must have thought that this Bill was of the same kind as that withdrawn at Massachusetts, and which did not receive popular support in Utah, because the arguments he used were such as might be brought against a Bill proposing to revolutionise in this country the relations between the sexes. But the Bill proposes nothing of the kind. What it does propose is, that any woman who is placed in the position which gives a man a vote should be entitled to exercise the franchise. It does not propose to divide the vote in the case of a man and wife, and therefore all the arguments of my right hon. friend appear to me to be entirely out of place. Then he used what may be called "the hobgoblin argument." He said this was the first step towards socialism. If I thought that would be the effect of this measure, I should be very loth to give it my support. I confess I have always thought the female part of the population showed great reverence for law and order, and was more deeply imbued with religious feelings than the rest of the community—(hear, hear)—and I believe there could be no more certain means of checking the growth of socialism than by giving greater power to women. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Bouverie) says he does not wish the female character to be contaminated by possessing and exercising the suffrage. According to that argument we have done great injustice to those whom, in the years 1867 and 1868, we thrust into the suffrage. It seems we have been contaminating them. But to pass to the speech of the hon. and learned gentleman who has just sat down. I understand he accepts the position of the hon. member for Cambridge, and says that if the female part of the community bear the same

burdens as the male, and also pay rates, there is no reason—unless they are personally unfit—why they should not have a vote. He accepts the conditions, adding that the female is personally unfit. And here, I think, he takes too low a view of the female intellect. In the latter part of his speech, where he speaks of maternal love, and of love of another kind, he seemed to forget that he might attribute other qualities than those of the heart to women. He says they are led away by their sympathies and are incapable of calmly exercising their reason, and that the female mind can rarely follow a logical argument. But if we were to go into the question who is able to follow a logical argument—"hear, hear," and laughter),—I fear we should have to bring in Bills of disfranchisement. (Cheers.) A great many of those whose opinions we in this House represent could not, I am afraid, put their opinions in a logical shape, and few, I apprehend, follow a logical argument when we go to the hustings. (Hear, hear.) He says that on political subjects it is notorious that women are not capable of forming independent judgments. I want to know is this not because they have not been entrusted with political power. (Hear.) We know that in some countries so low is the opinion of the female sex they are shut up with their families, while in other countries, and I fear in some parts of our own, they are treated as beasts of burden. The habits of mind of women, as in the case of men, must depend on their training; and I believe no greater means of education could be conceived than entrusting them with political power. My hon. and learned friend says they are unacquainted with subjects such as the army and navy, and other subjects upon which women in this country are supposed to have no opinions. But what did the right hon. member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Bouverie) say? That they were very usefully employed in hospitals and working charities, and that that was their proper work. But is not this House concerned in a great many social questions on which the opinions of women might be most usefully brought to bear? Such questions as the proper management of hospitals, and kindred subjects, might be thus dealt with most profitably. Some questions have come before this House, notably of late years, in regard to which it would be impossible for men to understand the feelings of the other sex. There is the question which was alluded to by the hon. member for Cambridge—the question of the Contagious Diseases Act. Who could say that men are capable of entering into the feelings of women on this question? It has been said that women were going about in an itinerant manner agitating on this subject. But I say, in any case, they have a right to their opinions. But why do they go about? It is because they have no legiti-

mate mode—(cheers)—of giving effect to their opinions, and, therefore, they are compelled to resort to itineracy as the only means open to them. (Renewed cheers). Supposing that this Bill were passed, and that female ratepayers were allowed to give their votes for the election of members of Parliament, I believe that that itinerant agitation would subside. But with regard to another question which has been before the House—that of altering the marriage law—is not that a question in which women are entitled to take an active part? Is the opinion of women of no value upon that? During the present and in other sessions this House has passed a Bill containing an alteration of the marriage law which I believe to be repugnant to 99 out of every 100 women in the country. And I ask again, is not this a question upon which they have a right to be heard. Can we assume to ourselves the right to alter the whole state of the marriage law, while more than half the population of the country are regarded as having no voice in the matter? I have never before recorded my vote in favour of this measure, and lately I have not voted at all upon the question, because when changes occur in one's opinions one does not like to commit oneself to such changes on a sudden, or without mature deliberation; but having considered the matter calmly, I have come to the conclusion that it is no longer right to refuse to accede to the principles contained in this Bill. (Hear.) It is not often that measures coming from that quarter of the House receive my support, but this particular measure commended itself to my reason. I believe that the feeling against granting the franchise to women is the result of old prejudice and not of reason, and therefore I shall with great pleasure support the second reading of this Bill. (Cheers.)

Mr. NEWDEGATE said: Sir, in common with many other members of the House, I have been gratified by hearing the able and eloquent speech of the hon. and learned member for Taunton. I rejoiced in it the more on account of the manliness with which the hon. and learned member, whilst acknowledging the ties of party, lamented the want of force in the speech of the right hon. gentleman, the First Minister of the Crown. But if hon. members on the Government side of the House, who acknowledge the bonds of party, have some reason to complain that their leader did not repeat emphatically the sentiments to which he gave expression last session in these words:—"I must say that I cannot recognise a necessity or desire for this measure, which would justify such an unsettling, not to say uprooting, of the old landmarks of society;" if, I repeat, hon. gentlemen opposite, while acknowledging party obligations, lament that those words were not repeated or the equivalent of these strong words by their leader, what must be

the feelings of hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, who in like manner acknowledge the obligations of party? Had not they much more reason to be dissatisfied, when they heard the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer of a Ministry who professed Conservative opinions, adopting this ultra-radical measure? (Loud cheers.) I regret extremely that the House was not fuller, when my right hon. friend, as I hope he will allow me to call him, the member for Kilmarnock, spoke in opposition to this Bill. That right hon. gentleman is true to all the best traditions of his party. He is an old Whig and something more; and he remembers that at the close of the last century and at the commencement of the present century, during the long war, the Whig party became involved by their acceptance of the Encyclopædist opinions, which were then prevalent in France; and he remembers their long and just exclusion from office, and that, at last, they wisely receded from those dangerous opinions, as did that great Sovereign, Frederick of Prussia. Acquainted, therefore, as he is with the history and the traditions of his party, the right hon. gentleman is, perhaps, one of the most competent as well as safest witnesses, who can warn this House against the consequences of accepting this dangerous measure, for I fully agreed with the right honourable gentleman, the Prime Minister, in what he said last session when he declared that it tends to the uprooting of all the relations of society. (Hear, hear.) The least that can be said is this—that if such a law were to be enacted, it would be established without reference to, if not in defiance of, the natural relations of society. I wish hon. members had been here in greater numbers to have heard the speech of the right hon. gentleman, the member for Kilmarnock; and I would express a hope, that a speech, which is no less worthy of perusal than it was worth hearing, may reach the country through the usual channels of communication. It appears to me, that the division which is about to be taken on this Bill, will establish a clear distinction between those who are sound constitutional and those who are unsound and unconstitutional reformers; between those who would effect changes in the constituencies, and therefore, in the constitution of this House and in the course of our legislation, consistent with the great traditions of the country, traditions are reflected across the Atlantic, in the United States, and those, who, disgusted with the popular privileges, to the concession of which they have been forced, now seek to degrade this assembly, which has been elected by household suffrage. I do not say this lightly—I say it because I know that this measure has been promoted out of doors by those who look upon the state of this country with disgust, and are prepared to adopt any measure to force a change. Indeed, where could be found

an expression of more intense disgust than is conveyed in the description given of England by Dr. Manning, when he deliberately described this country as the "sentinagentium," the cesspool of nations? Such is the expression which Dr. Manning thought fit, in 1864, to publish in a sermon. I shall look with suspicion upon every vote given in favour of this Bill by those who are known to be Dr. Manning's followers, because I am convinced that such votes will be actuated not by the desire for any wholesome reform, but that they will be given consistently with the policy of the Ultramontane, the Jesuit party, who hold really free institutions to be so antagonistic to their objects and those of the Papacy, that any measure is justifiable for the purpose of uprooting them. This, sir, is the feeling in the United States with respect to this class of politicians. I was conversing with an American gentleman, and I asked him "are you prepared in the United States to adopt this proposal for female suffrage, which is now agitating this country?" "No," he replied; "I was a strong advocate for the enfranchisement of the coloured population; but as to this agitation for women's rights which would shake the very foundations of society, by disregarding the natural relations between the sexes—no!" said he, and he spoke, sir, very plainly, "we are not such fools as to do that." (Hear, hear.) The fact is, that the whole history of this measure and the whole process of reasoning upon which it is founded are unworthy of and degrading to this House. What has the right hon. gentleman the member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Ward Hunt) said, in answer to the formidable arguments of the hon. and learned member for Taunton? The hon. and learned member for Taunton stated that the female population of this country have not been trained in those higher sciences which are necessary to direct the legislation of this House; that they have not been trained in diplomacy; that they have not been trained in law; that they have not been trained in political economy. The right hon. gentleman replies to this by saying, that there are some small municipal questions—questions, perhaps, touching family business for example; at most small municipal questions upon which women would be qualified to vote; and, therefore, the right hon. gentleman, setting at naught the united opinion of the majority of the people of England—for I am certain that the majority of the English people are opposed to this measure—setting at naught too the deliberate verdict of the men of the United States, would confuse and confound the constituencies of this country by introducing an element, which has been adopted nowhere unless in Italy. The right hon. gentleman is not, that I am aware of, an advocate of the ballot. And I am not

aware either that he is an advocate for voting by delegation. Why, sir, in the United States they have the ballot, and yet the people of the United States have the common sense to resist this proposal. In Italy they have a different system of election. The people vote there by delegation, upon the same system that is adopted in Prussia; and I ask the right hon. gentleman whether that is the principle which he would introduce into the electoral system of this country? If not, the objection of the United States is unanswered. I am unwilling to detain the House, but it does appear to me that the arguments which have been advanced in support of this measure are utterly futile. What was the argument used by the hon. member for Penrhyn (Mr. Eastwick)? He said that because the Spaniards in South America oppressed the Indians, therefore the women of England ought to be enfranchised! Now I would put it to the common sense of the House, is there any analogy between the position of the Indians in South America, and that of women in England? Then the hon. gentleman attempted this further argument in favour of this measure: he would have the House of Commons enfranchise the women of England—why? Because he thinks it would set a good example in Turkey and in China! I have listened to the somewhat chemical analysis of the hon. gentleman, the member for the University of Edinburgh: he seemed to me to adopt this kind of argument, that whereas there are the same chemical elements to be found in the composition of men and women, therefore it is plainly just that women should be enfranchised. There may be some differences. I could not help imagining he might have continued, in the physical construction of men and women, and then he would have told us that through some Darwinian process of development these differences would eventually be obliterated. (Hear, and laughter.) I will content myself with again thanking the right hon. gentleman, the member for Kilmarnock, for having so plainly traced the evil source of the mischievous principles from which this measure has sprung, and for having, as he has often done before, effectively defended the dignity of the House, for such I trust will now be the result, from being betrayed into the extreme folly of adopting this gross exaggeration.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT briefly replied. He stated that Arles Dufoure, who was then in London, was of opinion that the best remedy for the unstable condition of things in France, was to give women votes, and said that the one able speech made to-day against the Bill, that of the hon. and learned member for Taunton, could be demolished with the greatest possible ease, if the rules of the House permitted him to produce some women (who were then listening to the debate) at the bar to state their own case.

The House divided :—	
For the second reading	151
Against	220
Majority against the Bill	69
The Bill was therefore lost.	

DIVISION LIST.

Order for Second Reading read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"— Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months:"—(*Mr. Bouverie*.)—Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—The House divided; Ayes 151, Noes 220.

AYES.

Amphlett, Richard P.	Fawcett, Henry
Anderson, George	Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Anstruther, Sir Robert	Fletcher, Isaac
Bagwell, John	Fordyce, William Dingwall
Bateson, Sir Thomas	Forester, Rt. Hon. General
Bazley, Sir Thomas	Forster, Charles Walsall
Beach, W. W. Bramston, Hants N.	Fortescue, Hon. Dudley F., Andover
Beaumont, Somerset A., Wakefield	Fowler, Robert N., Penryn
Beresford, Lieut.-Col. Marcus	Gavin, Major
Birley, Hugh	Gilpin, Charles, Northampton
Booth, Sir Robert Gore	Goldney, Gabriel
Browne, George Ekins, Mayo	Goldsmid, Sir Francis, Reading
Callan, Philip	Gourley, Edward T.
Cameron, Donald	Graham, William
Campbell, Henry	Grant, Colonel Hon. James
Carter, Mr. Alderman	Gray, Lieut.-Col., Bolton
Cawley, Charles E.	Gray, Sir John, Kilkenny
Chadwick, David	Grieve, Jas Johnstone, Greenock
Charley, William Thomas	Grosvenor, Hon. Norman, Chester
Cholmeley, Captain, Grantham	Grosvenor, Capt. R. W., Westmin.
Clifford, Charles Cavendish	Gurney, Rt. Hon. Russell
Corry, Rt. Hon. Henry T. Lowry	Hadfield, George
Cowen, Joseph	Hambro, Charles
Cubitt, George	Hardy, John, Warwick, S.
DalGLISH, Robert	Harris, John Dove
Damer, Captain Dawson	Henderson, John
Davie, Sir H. R. Ferguson, Hadd.	Herbert, Hon. Auberon E. W., Not.
Dawson, Robert Peel	Herbert, Henry A., Kerry
Dickinson, Sebastian S.	Hermon, Edward
Dickson, Major Alex. G., Dover	Heron, Denis Caulfield
Digby, Kenelm Thomas	Hesketh, Sir Thomas George
Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth	Hill, Alexander Staveley
Dimsdale, Robert	Hoare, Sir H. Ainslie, Chelsea
Disraeli, Rt. Hon. Benjamin	Hodgkinson, Grosvenor
Dixon, George, Birmingham	Hughes, Thomas, Frome
Dodds, Joseph	Hunt, Rt. Hon. George Ward
Downing, M'Carthy	Illingworth, Alfred
Eaton, Henry William	Jenkinson, Sir George S.
Elliott, George	Johnston, William, Belfast
Ewing, H. Ewing Crum, Paisley	Jones, John
Ewing, Archibald Orr, Dumbarton	King, Hon. P. Jn. Locke

Kinnaird, Hon. Arthur Fitzgerald	Reed, Charles, Hackney
Knight, Frederick Winn	Richard, Henry, Merthyr Tydfil
Lancaster, John	Robertson, David
Langton, W. Gore	Round, James
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid	Rylands, Peter
Lea, Thomas, Kidderminster	Salt, Thomas
Lewis, Harvey, Marylebone	Samuelson, Bernhard, Banbury
Liddell, Hon. Henry George	Sandon, Viscount
Lloyd, Sir Thos. Davies	Sartoris, Edward John
Lopes, Sir Massey, Devon, S.	Scott, Lord Henry J. M. D.
Lowther, James, York	Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir Henry J.
Lush, Dr.	Shaw, William, Bandon
Lusk, Andrew	Shaw, Richard, Burnley
Macfie, Robert Andrew	Sherriff, Alexander Clunes
M'Lagan, Peter	Simon, Mr. Serjeant
M'Laren, Duncan	Sinclair, Sir John G. Tollemache
Maguire, John Francis	Smith, John Benjamin, Stockport
Maitland, Sir Alex. C. R. Gibson	Smith, Eustace, Tynemouth
Manners, Rt. Hon. Lord J., Leic. N.	Smith, Wm. Henry, Westminster
Mellor, Thomas W.	Stacpoole, William
Melly, George	Stansfeld, Rt. Hon. James
Miller, John	Straight, Douglas
Mitchell, Thomas Alexander	Sykes, Col. Wm. Hen., Aberdeen
Morgan, Geo. Osborne, Denbigh	Talbot, Chris. R. M., Glamorgan c.
Morrison, Walter	Taylor, Peter Alfred, Leicester
Mundella, Anthony John	Torrens, W. T. M'Cullagh, Finsbury
Muntz, Philip Henry	Trevelyan, George Otto
Noel, Hon. Gerard James	Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. Pelham
Ogilvy, Sir John	Wedderburn, Sir David
Palk, Sir Lawrence	West, Henry Wyndham
Peel, John, Tamworth	Wheelhouse, William S. J.
Playfair, Lyon	White, James, Brighton
Potter, Thomas Bayley, Rochdale	Whitworth, Thomas
Powell, Walter	Wingfield, Sir Charles
Rathbone, William	

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

NOES.

Acland, Thomas Dyke	Bentinck, G. Cavendish, Whit'ven
Adair, Hugh Edward	Benyon, Richard
Adam, William Patrick	Bingham, Lord
Adderley, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles	Blennerhasset, Sir Rowland
Agar-Ellis, Hon. Leopold G. F.	Bourke, Hon. Robert
Allen, Major, Somerset, E.	Bowring, Edgar A.
Amcotts, Colonel W. Cracroft	Brand, Rt. Hon. Hen., Camb. Co.
Annesley, Hon. Colonel Hugh	Brassey, Thomas, Hastings
Anson, Hon. Augustus H. A.	Bright, Richard, Somers. E.
Arbuthnot, Major George	Brinckman, Captain
Arkwright, Richard, Leominster	Bristowe, Samuel Boteler
Armitstead, George	Broadley, William H. Harrison
Aytoun, Roger Sinclair	Brooks, William Cunliffe
Backhouse, Edmund	Bruce, Lord Charles, Wilts, N.
Bagge, Sir William	Bruce, Rt. Hon. H. Austin, Renfr.
Baines, Edward	Bruce, Sir H. Hervey, Coleraine
Baker, Richard B. Wingfield	Bruen, Henry
Barclay, Alexander Charles	Burrell, Sir Percy
Baring, Thomas	Cartwright, Fairfax, Northamp.
Barington, Viscount	Cartwright, William C., Oxfords.
Bartelot, Colonel	Cave, Rt. Hon. S., New Shoreham
Beach, Sir Michael Hicks, Glos. E.	Cavendish, Lord F. C., York, W. R.
Beaumont, H. F., West Riding, S.	Cavendish, Lord G., Derbyshire, N.
Beaumont, W. B., Northum. S.	Cecil, Lord Eustace H. B. G.

Chambers, Montague, Devonport
 Chaplin, Henry
 Cholmeley, Sir Montague, Linc. N.
 Clay, James
 Clive, Col. Hon. G. Windsor
 Cogan, Rt. Hon. Wm. Henry Ford
 Cole, Col. Hon. Henry Arthur
 Conolly, Thomas
 Cowper, Hon. Henry F., Herts
 Craufurd, Edw. Henry J., Ayr
 Crawford, Rob. Wygram, London
 Crichton, Viscount
 Croft, Sir Herbert G. D.
 Cross, Richard Assheton
 Dalway, Marriott Robert
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dease, Edmund
 Dent, John Dent
 Dowse, Richard
 Duff, Robert William, Banffshire
 Duncombe, Hon. Colonel
 Dundas, Frederick
 Dyott, Colonel Richard
 Egerton, Hon. Alg. Fulke, Lanc. S.
 Egerton, Sir Phil. Grey, Chesh. W.
 Elcho, Lord
 Elphinstone, Sir James D. H.
 Enfield, Viscount
 Ennis, John James
 Esmonde, Sir John
 Eykyn, Roger
 Fellowes, Edward
 Fitzwilliam, Hon. C. W. W., Malt.
 Forde, Colonel
 Foster, Wm. Henry, Bridgenorth
 Fothergill, Richard
 Galway, Viscount
 Gladstone, Wm. Henry, Whitby
 Glyn, Hon. George Grenfell
 Goldsmid, Julian, Rochester
 Gore, J. Ralph Ormsby, Salop N.
 Gore, Wm. Rd. Ormsby, Leitrim
 Gower, Hon. E. F. Leveson, Bodm.
 Greene, Edward
 Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Geo., Morpeth
 Grove, Thomas Fraser
 Guest, Arthur E., Poole
 Hamilton, Lord Claud, Tyrone
 Hamilton, Ion Trant, Dublin Co.
 Hamilton, Marquis of, Donegal
 Hamilton, Lord Geo., Middx.
 Hardy, Rt. Hn. Gathorne, Oxf. U.
 Hardy, John Stewart, Rye
 Hartington, Marquis of
 Headlam, Rt. Hon. Thos. Emerson
 Henley, Rt. Hon. J. W., Oxfordsh.
 Henley, Lord, Northampton
 Hervey, Lord Augustus H. C.
 Heygate, Sir Fred. W., Lond. Co.
 Hildyard, T. Blackborne Thoroton
 Hodgson, Kirkman, D., Bristol
 Holland, Samuel
 Holms, John
 Hope, Alex. J. B. Beresford

Horsman, Rt. Hon. Edward
 Howard, Hon. Chas. W. G., Cumb.
 Hughes, W. Bulkely, Carnarvon
 Hutton, John
 James, Henry
 Johnston, Andrew, Essex, S.
 Kavanagh, Arthur MacM.
 Kay, Shuttleworth, Ughtred Jas
 Kekewich, Samuel Trehawke
 Kingscote, Colonel
 Knatchbull-Hugessen, Edw. H.
 Laird, John
 Lawrence, Sir James C., Lambeth
 Lawrence, William, London
 Learmouth, Alexander
 Leatham, Edward Aldam
 Leeman, George
 Lefevre, George John Shaw
 Legh, William, J., Chesh. E.
 Lennox, Lord Geo. Gordon, Lym.
 Lewis, John D., Devonport
 Lindsay, Hon. Col. Chas., Abing.
 Loch, George, Wick
 Locke, John, Southwark
 Lowther, William, Westm'd
 Lyttelton, Hon. Charles George
 Mackintosh, Eneas William
 M'Arthur, William
 M'Clure, Thomas
 M'Mahon, Patrick, New Ross
 Marling, Samuel Stephens
 Mathews, Henry
 Maxwell, Wellwood Herries
 Milles, Hon. Geo. W., Kent, E.
 Mills, Charles Henry, Kent, W.
 Mitford, William Townley
 Monk, Charles James
 Morgan, C. Octavius, Monmouth
 Mowbray, Rt. Hon. John Robert
 Newdegate, Charles Newdigate
 Newport, Viscount
 Newry, Viscount
 Nichol, James Dyce
 Norwood, Charles Morgan
 O'Brien, Sir Patrick
 O'Conor, Denis Maurice, Sligo Co.
 O'Conor, Don, The, Roscommon
 Onslow, Guilford
 O'Reilly, Miles Wm., Longford
 Palmer, John Hinde, Lincoln
 Palmer, Sir Roundell, Richmond
 Parker, Lt.-Col. Windsor, Suff. W.
 Patten, Rt. Hon. Colonel Wilson
 Pease, Joseph Whitwell
 Peel, Arthur Wellesley, Warwick
 Pell, Albert
 Percy, Earl
 Phillips, R. Needham
 Phipps, Charles Paul
 Pim, Jonathan
 Portman, Hon. W. Hen. B.
 Potter, Edmund, Carlisle
 Raikes, Henry Cecil
 Ridley, Mathew White

Rothschild, Nath. M. de, Aylesb.
 Royston, Viscount
 Russell, Arthur, Tavistock
 Sackville, Sackville G. Stopford
 Salomons, Sir David
 Samuda, Joseph D'Aguilar
 Seeley, Charles, Lincoln
 Seeley, Charles, Nottingham
 Seymour, Alfred
 Smith, Abel, Herts.
 Smith, Samuel George, Aylesbury
 Somerset, Lord Henry R. C.
 Stapleton, John
 Stone, William Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Henry
 Stuart, Colonel
 Sturt, Henry Gerard, Dorsetshire
 Sykes, Christopher, York, E. R.
 Talbot, John Gilbot, Kent W.
 Thynne, Lord Henry Fred.
 Tipping, William
 Tite, Sir William

Tollemache, John, Cheshire W.
 Tollemache, Hon. Fred. J., Granth.
 Tracy, Hon. Charles R. D. Hanbury
 Turner, Charles, Lancashire S. W.
 Turnor, Edmund, Lincoln S.
 Verner, Edw. Wingfield, Lisburn
 Verney, Sir Harry
 Walpole, Hon. Fred., Norf. N.
 Walsh, Hon. Arthur
 Walter, John
 Waterhouse, Samuel
 Waters, George
 Weguelin, Thomas M.
 Welby, William Earle
 Whalley, George Hammond
 Wharton, John Lloyd
 Whitbread, Samuel
 Whitwell, John
 Williams, Chas. H., Barnstaple
 Williamson, Sir Hedworth
 Wilmot, Henry
 Yarmouth, Earl of

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

PAIRS.

FOR.	AGAINST.
Stevenson, J. C.	Bölekow, H. W. F.
Heygate, W. U.	Johnston, Andrew
Brown, A. H.	Fowler, W.
Morley, S.	Cardwell, Rt. Hon. E.
Brise, Colonel Ruggles	Dowdeswell, W. E.
Laslett, W.	Pemberton, E. L.

Sir John D. Coleridge was accidentally shut out from voting for the Bill.

To the Editor of the Times.

Sir,—Will you permit me to state through your columns that I voted to-day against Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill "to remove the electoral disabilities of women," under a misapprehension? I went to the House with the intention of voting in its favour; but having been prevented from hearing the debate, and erroneously believing from what I heard in the excitement of the division that the Bill would give votes to married women generally, irrespective of their being ratepayers or holders of property. I went into the lobby against it. My opinion is in favour of giving the suffrage to female ratepayers and holders of property, and I now find that the Bill would have done nothing more.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

May 3.

EDWARD BAINES.

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EXTRACTS

FROM

MR MILL'S SUBJECTION OF WOMEN.

WITH PERMISSION OF MESSRS LONGMAN & CO.

PUBLISHED FOR THE
London National Society for Women's Suffrage,
BY
MESSRS TRÜBNER & CO.,
6 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

THE object of this work, from which the following extracts are made, is to shew that the legal subordination of one sex to the other is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.

EXTRACTS

FROM

MR MILL'S SUBJECTION OF WOMEN.

The generality of a practice is in some cases a strong presumption that it is, or at all events once was, conducive to laudable ends. This is the case, when the practice was first adopted, or afterwards kept up, as a means to such ends, and was grounded on experience of the mode in which they could be most effectually attained. If the authority of men over women, when first established, had been the result of a conscientious comparison between different modes of constituting the government of society; if, after trying various other modes of social organization—the government of women over men, equality between the two, and such mixed and divided modes of government as might be invented—it had been decided, on the testimony of experience, that the mode in which women are wholly under the rule of men, having no share at all in public concerns, and each in private being under the legal obligation of obedience to the man with whom she has associated her destiny, was the arrangement most conducive to the happiness and well being of both; its general adoption might then be fairly thought to be some evidence that, at the time when it was adopted, it was the best: though even then the considerations which recommended it may, like so many other primeval social facts of the greatest importance, have subsequently, in the course of ages, ceased to exist. But the state of the case is in every respect the reverse of this. In the first place, the opinion in favour of the present system, which entirely subordinates the weaker sex to the stronger, rests upon theory only; for there never has been trial made of any other; so that experience, in the

sense in which it is vulgarly opposed to theory, cannot be pretended to have pronounced any verdict. And in the second place, the adoption of this system of inequality never was the result of deliberation, or forethought, or any social ideas, or any notion whatever of what conduced to the benefit of humanity or the good order of society. It arose simply from the fact that from the very earliest twilight of human society, every woman (owing to the value attached to her by men, combined with her inferiority in muscular strength) was found in a state of bondage to some man. Laws and systems of polity always begin by recognising the relations they find already existing between individuals. They convert what was a mere physical fact into a legal right, give it the sanction of society, and principally aim at the substitution of public and organized means of asserting and protecting these rights, instead of the irregular and lawless conflict of physical strength. Those who had already been compelled to obedience became in this manner legally bound to it. Slavery, from being a mere affair of force between the master and the slave, became regularized and a matter of compact among the masters, who, binding themselves to one another for common protection, guaranteed by their collective strength the private possessions of each, including his slaves. In early times, the great majority of the male sex were slaves, as well as the whole of the female. And many ages elapsed, some of them ages of high cultivation, before any thinker was bold enough to question the rightfulness, and the absolute social necessity, either of the one slavery or of the other. By degrees such thinkers did arise: and (the general progress of society assisting) the slavery of the male sex has, in all the countries of Christian Europe at least (though, in one of them, only within the last few years) been at length abolished, and that of the female sex has been gradually changed into a milder form of dependence. But this dependence, as it exists at present, is not an original institution, taking a fresh start from considerations of justice and social expediency—it is the primitive state of slavery lasting on, through successive mitigations and modifications occasioned by the same causes which have softened the general manners, and brought all human relations more under the control of justice and the influence of humanity. It has not lost the taint of its brutal origin. No presumption in its favour, therefore, can be drawn from the fact of its existence. The only such presumption which it could be supposed to have, must be grounded on its having lasted till now, when so many other things which came down from the same odious source have been done away with. And this, indeed, is what makes it strange to

ordinary ears, to hear it asserted that the inequality of rights between men and women has no other source than the law of the strongest.

That this statement should have the effect of a paradox, is in some respects creditable to the progress of civilization, and the improvement of the moral sentiments of mankind. We now live—that is to say, one or two of the most advanced nations of the world now live—in a state in which the law of the strongest seems to be entirely abandoned as the regulating principle of the world's affairs: nobody professes it, and, as regards most of the relations between human beings, nobody is permitted to practise it. When any one succeeds in doing so, it is under cover of some pretext which gives him the semblance of having some general social interest on his side. This being the ostensible state of things, people flatter themselves that the rule of mere force is ended; that the law of the strongest cannot be the reason of existence of anything which has remained in full operation down to the present time. However any of our present institutions may have begun, it can only, they think, have been preserved to this period of advanced civilization by a well-grounded feeling of its adaptation to human nature, and conduciveness to the general good. They do not understand the great vitality and durability of institutions which place right on the side of might; how intensely they are clung to; how the good as well as the bad propensities and sentiments of those who have power in their hands, become identified with retaining it; how slowly these bad institutions give way, one at a time, the weakest first, beginning with those which are least interwoven with the daily habits of life; and how very rarely those who have obtained legal power because they first had physical, have ever lost their hold of it until the physical power had passed over to the other side. Such shifting of the physical force not having taken place in the case of women; this fact, combined with all the peculiar and characteristic features of the particular case, made it certain from the first that this branch of the system of right founded on might, though softened in its most atrocious features at an earlier period than several of the others, would be the very last to disappear. It was inevitable that this one case of a social relation grounded on force, would survive through generations of institutions grounded on equal justice, an almost solitary exception to the general character of their laws and customs; but which, so long as it does not proclaim its own origin, and as discussion has not brought out its true character, is not felt to jar with modern civilization, any more than domestic slavery among

the Greeks jarred with their notion of themselves as a free people. . . .

It will be said, the rule of men over women differs from all others in not being a rule of force : it is accepted voluntarily ; women make no complaint, and are consenting parties to it. In the first place, a great number of women do not accept it. Ever since there have been women able to make their sentiments known by their writings (the only mode of publicity which society permits to them), an increasing number of them have recorded protests against their present social condition : and recently many thousands of them, headed by the most eminent women known to the public, have petitioned Parliament for their admission to the Parliamentary Suffrage. The claim of women to be educated as solidly, and in the same branches of knowledge, as men, is urged with growing intensity, and with a great prospect of success ; while the demand for their admission into professions and occupations hitherto closed against them, becomes every year more urgent. Though there are not in this country, as there are in the United States, periodical Conventions and an organized party to agitate for the Rights of Women, there is a numerous and active Society organized and managed by women, for the more limited object of obtaining the political franchise. Nor is it only in our own country and in America that women are beginning to protest, more or less collectively, against the disabilities under which they labour. France, and Italy, and Switzerland, and Russia now afford examples of the same thing. How many more women there are who silently cherish similar aspirations, no one can possibly know ; but there are abundant tokens how many *would* cherish them, were they not so strenuously taught to repress them as contrary to the proprieties of their sex. It must be remembered, also, that no enslaved class ever asked for complete liberty at once. . . .

The course of history, and the tendencies of progressive human society, afford not only no presumption in favour of this system of inequality of rights, but a strong one against it. So far as the whole course of human improvement up to this time, the whole stream of modern tendencies, warrants any inference on the subject, it is, that this relic of the past is discordant with the future, and must necessarily disappear.

For, what is the peculiar character of the modern world—the difference which chiefly distinguishes modern institutions, modern social ideas, modern life itself, from those of times long past ? It is, that human beings are no longer born to their place in life, and chained down by an inexorable bond to the place they are born to, but are free to employ their faculties, and such favourable chances

as offer, to achieve the lot which may appear to them most desirable. Human society of old was constituted on a very different principle. All were born to a fixed social position, and were mostly kept in it by law, or interdicted from any means by which they could emerge from it. As some men are born white and others black, so some were born slaves and others freemen and citizens ; some were born patricians, others plebeians ; some were born feudal nobles, others commoners and *roturiers*. A slave or serf could never make himself free, nor, except by the will of his master, become so. . . .

At present, in the more improved countries, the disabilities of women are the only case, save one, in which laws and institutions take persons at their birth, and ordain that they shall never in all their lives be allowed to compete for certain things. The one exception is that of royalty. Persons still are born to the throne ; no one, not of the reigning family, can ever occupy it, and no one even of that family can, by any means but the course of hereditary succession, attain it. All other dignities and social advantages are open to the whole male sex : many indeed are only attainable by wealth, but wealth may be striven for by any one, and is actually obtained by many men of the very humblest origin. The difficulties to the majority, are indeed insuperable without the aid of fortunate accidents ; but no male human being is under any legal ban : neither law nor opinion superadd artificial obstacles to the natural ones. Royalty is excepted : but in this case every one feels it to be an exception—an anomaly in the modern world, in marked opposition to its customs and principles, and to be justified only by extraordinary special expedencies, which, though individuals and nations differ in estimating their weight, unquestionably do in fact exist. But in this exceptional case, in which a high social function is, for important reasons, bestowed on birth instead of being put up to competition, all free nations contrive to adhere in substance to the principle from which they nominally derogate ; for they circumscribe this high function by conditions avowedly intended to prevent the person to whom it ostensibly belongs from really performing it ; while the person by whom it is performed, the responsible minister, does obtain the post by a competition from which no full-grown citizen of the male sex is legally excluded. The disabilities, therefore, to which women are subject from the mere fact of their birth, are the solitary examples of the kind in modern legislation. In no instance except this, which comprehends half the human race, are the higher social functions closed against any one by a fatality of birth which no exertions, and no change of circumstances, can overcome ; for even religious

disabilities (besides that in England and in Europe they have practically almost ceased to exist) do not close any career to the disqualified person in case of conversion.

The social subordination of women thus stands out an isolated fact in modern social institutions; a solitary breach of what has become their fundamental law; a single relic of an old world of thought and practice exploded in everything else, but retained in the one thing of most universal interest; as if a gigantic dolmen, or a vast temple of Jupiter Olympius, occupied the site of St. Paul's and received daily worship, while the surrounding Christian churches were only resorted to on fasts and festivals. This entire discrepancy between one social fact and all those which accompany it, and the radical opposition between its nature and the progressive movement which is the boast of the modern world, and which has successively swept away everything else of an analogous character, surely affords, to a conscientious observer of human tendencies, serious matter for reflection. It raises a *primâ facie* presumption on the unfavourable side, far outweighing any which custom and usage could in such circumstances create on the favourable; and should at least suffice to make this, like the choice between republicanism and royalty, a balanced question.

The least that can be demanded is, that the question should not be considered as prejudged by existing fact and existing opinion, but open to discussion on its merits, as a question of justice and expediency: the decision on this, as on any of the other social arrangements of mankind, depending on what an enlightened estimate of tendencies and consequences may show to be most advantageous to humanity in general, without distinction of sex. And the discussion must be a real discussion, descending to foundations, and not resting satisfied with vague and general assertions. It will not do, for instance, to assert in general terms, that the experience of mankind has pronounced in favour of the existing system. Experience cannot possibly have decided between two courses, so long as there has only been experience of one. If it be said that the doctrine of the equality of the sexes rests only on theory, it must be remembered that the contrary doctrine also has only theory to rest upon. All that is proved in its favour by direct experience, is that mankind have been able to exist under it, and to attain the degree of improvement and prosperity which we now see; but whether that prosperity has been attained sooner, or is now greater, than it would have been under the other system, experience does not say. On the other hand, experience does say, that every step in improvement has been so invariably accompanied by a step made in raising the social posi-

tion of women, that historians and philosophers have been led to adopt their elevation or debasement as on the whole the surest test and most correct measure of the civilization of a people or an age. Through all the progressive period of human history, the condition of women has been approaching nearer to equality with men. This does not of itself prove that the assimilation must go on to complete equality; but it assuredly affords some presumption that such is the case.

Neither does it avail anything to say that the *nature* of the two sexes adapts them to their present functions and position, and renders these appropriate to them. Standing on the ground of common sense and the constitution of the human mind, I deny that any one knows, or can know, the nature of the two sexes, as long as they have only been seen in their present relation to one another. If men had ever been found in society without women, or women without men, or if there had been a society of men and women in which the women were not under the control of the men, something might have been positively known about the mental and moral differences which may be inherent in the nature of each. What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. It may be asserted without scruple, that no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted from its natural proportions by their relation with their masters; for, if conquered and slave races have been, in some respects, more forcibly repressed, whatever in them has not been crushed down by an iron heel has generally been let alone, and if left with any liberty of development, it has developed itself according to its own laws; but in the case of women, a hot-house and stove cultivation has always been carried on of some of the capabilities of their nature, for the benefit and pleasure of their masters. Then, because certain products of the general vital force sprout luxuriantly and reach a great development in this heated atmosphere and under this active nurture and watering, while other shoots from the same root, which are left outside in the wintry air, with ice purposely heaped all round them, have a stunted growth, and some are burnt off with fire and disappear; men, with that inability to recognise their own work which distinguishes the unanalytic mind, indolently believe that the tree grows of itself in the way they have made it grow, and that it would die if one half of it were not kept in a vapour bath and the other half in the snow.

One thing we may be certain of—that what is contrary to women's nature to do, they never will be made to do by simply

giving their nature free play. The anxiety of mankind to interfere in behalf of nature, for fear lest nature should not succeed in effecting its purpose, is an altogether unnecessary solicitude. What women by nature cannot do, it is quite superfluous to forbid them from doing. What they can do, but not so well as the men who are their competitors, competition suffices to exclude them from ; since nobody asks for protective duties and bounties in favour of women ; it is only asked that the present bounties and protective duties in favour of men should be recalled. If women have a greater natural inclination for some things than for others, there is no need of laws or social inculcation to make the majority of them do the former in preference to the latter. Whatever women's services are most wanted for, the free play of competition will hold out the strongest inducements to them to undertake. And, as the words imply, they are most wanted for the things for which they are most fit ; by the apportionment of which to them, the collective faculties of the two sexes can be applied on the whole with the greatest sum of valuable result. . . .

It will perhaps be sufficient if I confine myself, in the details of my argument, to functions of a public nature : since, if I am successful as to those, it probably will be readily granted that women should be admissible to all other occupations to which it is at all material whether they are admitted or not. And here let me begin by marking out one function, broadly distinguished from all others, their right to which is entirely independent of any question which can be raised concerning their faculties. I mean the suffrage, both parliamentary and municipal. The right to share in the choice of those who are to exercise a public trust, is altogether a distinct thing from that of competing for the trust itself. If no one could vote for a member of parliament who was not fit to be a candidate, the government would be a narrow oligarchy indeed. To have a voice in choosing those by whom one is to be governed, is a means of self-protection due to every one, though he were to remain for ever excluded from the function of governing : and that women are considered fit to have such a choice, may be presumed from the fact, that the law already gives it to women in the most important of all cases to themselves : for the choice of the man who is to govern a woman to the end of life, is always supposed to be voluntarily made by herself. In the case of election to public trusts, it is the business of constitutional law to surround the right of suffrage with all needful securities and limitations ; but whatever securities are sufficient in the case of the male sex, no others need be required in the case of women. Under whatever conditions, and within whatever limits, men are

admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting women under the same. The majority of the women of any class are not likely to differ in political opinion from the majority of the men of the same class, unless the question be one in which the interests of women, as such, are in some way involved ; and if they are so, women require the suffrage, as their guarantee of just and equal consideration. This ought to be obvious even to those who coincide in no other of the doctrines for which I contend. Even if every woman were a wife, and if every wife ought to be a slave, all the more would these slaves stand in need of legal protection : and we know what legal protection the slaves have, where the laws are made by their masters.

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The concessions of the privileged to the unprivileged are so seldom brought about by any better motive than the power of the unprivileged to extort them, that any arguments against the prerogative of sex are likely to be little attended to by the generality, as long as they are able to say to themselves that women do not complain of it. That fact certainly enables men to retain the unjust privilege some time longer ; but does not render it less unjust. Exactly the same thing may be said of the women in the harem of an Oriental : they do not complain of not being allowed the freedom of European women. They think our women insufferably bold and unfeminine. How rarely it is that even men complain of the general order of society ; and how much rarer still would such complaint be, if they did not know of any different order existing anywhere else. Women do not complain of the general lot of women ; or rather they do, for plaintive elegies on it are very common in the writings of women, and were still more so as long as the lamentations could not be suspected of having any practical object. Their complaints are like the complaints which men make of the general unsatisfactoriness of human life ; they are not meant to imply blame, or to plead for any change. But though women do not complain of the power of husbands, each complains of her own husband, or of the husbands of her friends. It is the same in all other cases of servitude, at least in the commencement of the emancipatory movement. The serfs did not at first complain of the power of their lords, but only of their tyranny. The Commons began by claiming a few municipal privileges ; they next asked an exemption for themselves from being taxed without their own consent ; but they would at that time have thought it a great presumption to claim any share in the king's sovereign authority. The case of women is now the only case in which to rebel against established rules is still looked upon with the same eyes as was formerly a

subject's claim to the right of rebelling against his king. A woman who joins in any movement which her husband disapproves, makes herself a martyr, without even being able to be an apostle, for the husband can legally put a stop to her apostleship. Women cannot be expected to devote themselves to the emancipation of women, until men in considerable number are prepared to join with them in the undertaking.

He who would rightly appreciate the worth of personal independence as an element of happiness, should consider the value he himself puts upon it as an ingredient of his own. There is no subject on which there is a greater habitual difference of judgment between a man judging for himself, and the same man judging for other people. When he hears others complaining that they are not allowed freedom of action—that their own will has not sufficient influence in the regulation of their affairs—his inclination is, to ask, what are their grievances? what positive damage they sustain? and in what respect they consider their affairs to be mismanaged? and if they fail to make out, in answer to these questions, what appears to him a sufficient case, he turns a deaf ear, and regards their complaint as the fanciful querulousness of people whom nothing reasonable will satisfy. But he has a quite different standard of judgment when he is deciding for himself. Then the most unexceptionable administration of his interests by a tutor set over him, does not satisfy his feelings: his personal exclusion from the deciding authority appears itself the greatest grievance of all, rendering it superfluous even to enter into the question of mismanagement. It is the same with nations. What citizen of a free country would listen to any offers of good and skilful administration, in return for the abdication of freedom? Even if he could believe that good and skilful administration can exist among a people ruled by a will not their own, would not the consciousness of working out their own destiny under their own moral responsibility be a compensation to his feelings for great rudeness and imperfection in the details of public affairs? Let him rest assured that whatever he feels on this point, women feel in a fully equal degree. Whatever has been said or written, from the time of Herodotus to the present, of the ennobling influence of free government—the nerve and spring which it gives to all the faculties, the larger and higher objects which it presents to the intellect and feelings, the more unselfish public spirit, and calmer and broader views of duty, that it engenders, and the generally loftier platform on which it elevates the individual as a moral, spiritual, and social being—is every particle as true of women as of men. Are these

things no important part of individual happiness? Let any man call to mind what he himself felt on emerging from boyhood—from the tutelage and control of even loved and affectionate elders—and entering upon the responsibilities of manhood. Was it not like the physical effect of taking off a heavy weight, or releasing him from obstructive, even if not otherwise painful, bonds? Did he not feel twice as much alive, twice as much a human being, as before? And does he imagine that women have none of these feelings? But it is a striking fact, that the satisfactions and mortifications of personal pride, though all in all to most men when the case is their own, have less allowance made for them in the case of other people, and are less listened to as a ground or a justification of conduct, than any other natural human feelings; perhaps because men compliment them in their own case with the names of so many other qualities, that they are seldom conscious how mighty an influence these feelings exercise in their own lives. No less large and powerful is their part, we may assure ourselves, in the lives and feelings of women. Women are schooled into suppressing them in their most natural and most healthy direction, but the internal principle remains, in a different outward form. An active and energetic mind, if denied liberty, will seek for power: refused the command of itself, it will assert its personality by attempting to control others. To allow to any human beings no existence of their own but what depends on others, is giving far too high a premium on bending others to their purposes. Where liberty cannot be hoped for, and power can, power becomes the grand object of human desire; those to whom others will not leave the undisturbed management of their own affairs, will compensate themselves, if they can, by meddling for their own purposes with the affairs of others. Hence also women's passion for personal beauty, and dress and display; and all the evils that flow from it, in the way of mischievous luxury and social immorality. The love of power and the love of liberty are in eternal antagonism. Where there is least liberty, the passion for power is the most ardent and unscrupulous. The desire of power over others can only cease to be a depraving agency among mankind, when each of them individually is able to do without it: which can only be where respect for liberty in the personal concerns of each is an established principle.

But it is not only through the sentiment of personal dignity, that the free direction of and disposal of their own faculties is a source of individual happiness, and to be fettered and restricted in it, a source of unhappiness, to human beings, and not least to women. There is nothing, after disease, indigence, and guilt, so

fatal to the pleasureable enjoyment of life as the want of a worthy outlet for the active faculties. Women who have the cares of a family, and while they have the cares of a family, have this outlet, and it generally suffices for them: but what of the greatly increasing number of women, who have had no opportunity of exercising the vocation which they are mocked by telling them is their proper one? What of the women whose children have been lost to them by death or distance, or have grown up, married, and formed homes of their own? There are abundant examples of men who, after a life engrossed by business, retire with a competency to the enjoyment, as they hope, of rest, but to whom, as they are unable to acquire new interests and excitements that can replace the old, the change to a life of inactivity brings ennui, melancholy, and premature death. Yet no one thinks of the parallel case of so many worthy and devoted women, who, having paid what they are told is their debt to society—having brought up a family blamelessly to manhood and womanhood—having kept a house as long as they had a house needing to be kept—are deserted by the sole occupation for which they have fitted themselves; and remain with undiminished activity but with no employment for it, unless perhaps a daughter or daughter-in-law is willing to abdicate in their favour the discharge of the same functions in her younger household. Surely a hard lot for the old age of those who have worthily discharged, as long as it was given to them to discharge, what the world accounts their only social duty. Of such women, and of those others to whom this duty has not been committed at all—many of whom pine through life with the consciousness of thwarted vocations, and activities which are suffered to expand—the only resources, speaking generally, are religion and charity. But their religion, though it may be one of feeling, and of ceremonial observance, cannot be a religion of action, unless in the form of charity. For charity many of them are by nature admirably fitted; but to practise it usefully, or even without doing mischief, requires the education, the manifold preparation, the knowledge and the thinking powers, of a skilful administrator. There are few of the administrative functions of government for which a person would not be fit, who is fit to bestow charity usefully. In this as in other cases (pre-eminently in that of the education of children), the duties permitted to women cannot be performed properly, without their being trained for duties which, to the great loss of society, are not permitted to them. And here let me notice the singular way in which the question of women's disabilities is frequently presented to view, by those who find it easier to draw a ludicrous picture of what they do not like, than to

answer the arguments for it. When it is suggested that women's executive capacities and prudent counsels might sometimes be found valuable in affairs of state, these lovers of fun hold up to the ridicule of the world, as sitting in parliament or in the cabinet, girls in their teens, or young wives of two or three and twenty, transported bodily, exactly as they are, from the drawing-room to the House of Commons. They forget that males are not usually selected at this early age for a seat in Parliament, or for responsible political functions. Common sense would tell them that if such trusts were confided to women, it would be to such as having no special vocation for married life, or preferring another employment of their faculties (as many women even now prefer to marriage some of the few honourable occupations within their reach), have spent the best years of their youth in attempting to qualify themselves for the pursuits in which they desire to engage; or still more frequently perhaps, widows or wives of forty or fifty, by whom the knowledge of life and faculty of government which they have acquired in their families, could by the aid of appropriate studies be made available on a less contracted scale. There is no country of Europe in which the ablest men have not frequently experienced, and keenly appreciated, the value of the advice and help of clever and experienced women of the world, in the attainment both of private and of public objects; and there are important matters of public administration to which few men are equally competent with such women; among others, the detailed control of expenditure. But what we are now discussing is not the need which society has of the services of women in public business, but the dull and hopeless life to which it so often condemns them, by forbidding them to exercise the practical abilities which many of them are conscious of, in any wider field than one which to some of them never was, and to others is no longer, open. If there is anything vitally important to the happiness of human beings, it is that they should relish their habitual pursuit. This requisite of an enjoyable life is very imperfectly granted, or altogether denied, to a large part of mankind; and by its absence many a life is a failure, which is provided, in appearance, with every requisite of success. But if circumstances which society is not yet skilful enough to overcome, render such failures often for the present inevitable, society need not itself inflict them. The injudiciousness of parents, a youth's own inexperience, or the absence of external opportunities for the congenial vocation, and their presence for an uncongenial, condemn numbers of men to pass their lives in doing one thing reluctantly and ill, when there are other things which they could have done well and happily.

But on women this sentence is imposed by actual law, and by customs equivalent to law. What, in unenlightened societies, colour, race, religion, or in the case of a conquered country, nationality, are to some men, sex is to all women; a peremptory exclusion from almost all honourable occupations, but either such as cannot be fulfilled by others, or such as those others do not think worthy of their acceptance. Sufferings arising from causes of this nature usually meet with so little sympathy, that few persons are aware of the great amount of unhappiness even now produced by the feeling of a wasted life. The case will be even more frequent, as increased cultivation creates a greater and greater disproportion between the ideas and faculties of women, and the scope which society allows to their activity.

When we consider the positive evil caused to the disqualified half of the human race by their disqualification—first in the loss of the most inspiring and elevating kind of personal enjoyment, and next in the weariness, disappointment, and profound dissatisfaction with life, which are so often the substitute for it; one feels that among all the lessons which men require for carrying on the struggle against the inevitable imperfections of their lot on earth, there is no lesson which they more need, than not to add to the evils which nature inflicts, by their jealous and prejudiced restrictions on one another. Their vain fears only substitute other and worse evils for those which they are idly apprehensive of: while every restraint on the freedom of conduct of any of their human fellow creatures, (otherwise than by making them responsible for any evil actually caused by it), dries up *pro tanto* the principal fountain of human happiness, and leaves the species less rich, to an inappreciable degree, in all that makes life valuable to the individual human being.

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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEO. WARD HUNT, M.P.,

ON

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

"I HAVE never before recorded my vote in favour of this measure, and lately I have not voted at all upon the question, because when changes occur in one's opinions one does not like to commit oneself to such changes on a sudden, or without mature deliberation; but having considered the matter calmly, I have come to the conclusion that it is no longer right to refuse to accede to the principles contained in this Bill. (Hear.) It is not often that measures coming from that quarter of the House receive my support, but this particular measure commended itself to my reason. I believe that the feeling against granting the franchise to women is the result of old prejudice and not of reason, and therefore I shall with great pleasure support the second reading of this Bill."---*Speech in the House of Commons, May 3, 1871.*

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THE RIGHT HON.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, M.P.,

ON

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

WHAT he contended was that if the principle of enfranchising women ratepayers was sound in relation to other elections it was equally sound in relation to the election of members of Parliament. Did his right hon. and, the member for Kilmarnock, mean to contend that men had no interest in the subjects brought before that House? Were they not interested, for example, in the subject of education, or were they not interested and did their interests not deserve to be represented in the Deceased Wife's Stead Bill—a measure which had so long been the shuttlecock of the two Houses of Parliament? His right hon. and appeared to say by his argument that women might be permitted to vote for such inferior bodies as Poor Law Guardians, Boards of Education, and Municipal Councils, that they had no right to share in the election of so great a being as a member of the House of Commons. Now, (Lord J. Manners) was prepared at all times to vindicate, if necessary, the rights and privileges of that House, but to assert that female ratepayers were not worthy to form a part of the constituencies of members of Parliament was an arrogation of personal dignity and superiority which he was by no means able to support. Under all those circumstances, he confessed he was unable to see any reason why the female ratepayers should be any longer excluded from the exercise of the franchise at Parliamentary elections, and he should therefore give his support to the second reading of the Bill." *Speech in the House of Commons, May 3, 1871.*

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FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,
NOVEMBER 8th, 1871.

MANCHESTER:
ALEXANDER IRELAND & CO., PRINTERS.
1871.

MR. WILFRID WATSON, BART., M.P.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

There was another bill brought forward by Mr. Jacob Bright. That was a bill for the enfranchisement of women. I voted for the bill with all my heart. There are a great many objections brought to it—very plausible ones, though I don't think they are very sound. I believe in freedom. I think I have told you the story of that South American man and slave owner who was a great Liberal, and turned up his creed in the sentence, "All men are born to except niggers." The creed of the opponents of women's suffrage appears to be "Everybody should be as well as men." Now I am in favour of women being as well as men. I agree with Mr. Mill that the arguments that are brought forward are purely what are called objectional. "Well," "Really," "Why," "Did you ever," "I tell me women don't want it." Well, nobody is going to compel them to vote: It is a "Permissive Bill." If they perform all the duties connected with property the same as men, we should not deprive them of a vote; let them use their right. You know Miss Burdett Coutts in Carlisle. I built a church here. Carlisle, you know, is celebrated over the world for the number of churches it holds. I don't know how many it is per annum, but I believe, if you look at the present rate, in the course of a century you will have as many churches as drink-shops. Now, Miss Burdett Coutts, I suppose, pays her own rates for property. I have no doubt, large landed property, and pays rates upon it; and, according to the British constitution, she is to be taxed by Benjamin Disraeli, rate-paying, in the same way as all political voters. Now, she pays rates, but cannot vote because she is a woman. But she has, we will suppose, a wretched fellow, drunk half his time—who lives in a cottage, and, according to Mr. Disraeli, he is to be taxed because he pays rates; he is put upon the rate book and votes at next election. If any man says the law which excludes Miss Coutts and permits a drunken vagabond to have a vote is just, I shall not argue the question further with him."—Speech at Carlisle, January 18, 1871.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
1870—71.

WITH the year that has just expired, the movement for the removal of the electoral disabilities imposed upon women may be said to have entered on a new phase—that of steady progress on sure ground, uninterrupted by the vicissitudes and uncertainties which attended its course during the previous years, and which have served to clear the ground and mark out its present definite position.

Before entering on any agitation for the reform of the Representation of the People Act of 1867 in the direction of the enfranchisement of all persons possessed of the statutory qualification for a vote, it was necessary first to ascertain positively whether the Act itself did not confer votes upon them, and whether fresh legislation was needed. The work for the year 1868, was therefore devoted exclusively to the determination of this question, which was finally settled by the decision against the claims of women in the Court of Common Pleas.

The year 1869 was signalised by the grant of the municipal franchise to women, which was generally regarded by both friends and enemies as a concession of the principle of women's suffrage in public elections, that must sooner or later be followed by the Parliamentary vote. In the year 1870 the question was for the first time submitted to the House of Com-

mons under the changed conditions induced by the grant of the municipal vote. It might reasonably have been expected that the House would consistently carry out to its completion the principle which it had deliberately admitted, and in the first instance, when left unbiassed by the action of the Government, it showed itself prepared to do so. But the Bill which, in the absence of Government pressure, passed the second reading in the House of Commons by a considerable majority, was, on the application of the Government whip, rejected on the motion for going into committee.

In the same session a franchise of almost equal importance to the municipal vote was given to women under the Elementary Education Act of 1870—by which women were admitted to the right of voting and of being elected for seats at School Boards. It is gratifying to observe that some of the largest constituencies in the kingdom immediately elected women among their representatives on the School Boards, and that the ladies who have been selected for this important office have, as a rule, discharged their duties in such a manner as fully to justify the action of the Government and the choice of their constituents.

On the 13th February, 1871, the Women's Disabilities Bill, which was identical in terms with that of the previous session, was introduced in the House of Commons. On the back of the Bill were the names of Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. E. B. Eastwick and Dr. Lyon Playfair.

On the 3rd of May Mr. Jacob Bright, in a speech of great ability, moved the second reading of the Bill. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eastwick, and supported by Lord John Manners, Dr. Lyon Playfair and Mr. Ward Hunt. The opposition was maintained by Mr. Bouverie, Mr. Scourfield, Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Newdegate and Mr. James. Mr. Gladstone after congratulating the mover of the Bill on the ability with which he had stated his case said he should state the reasons which disinclined him to vote for it in terms of great moderation. He did not think the present law perfect

but he was unwilling to adopt the principle of a measure for its amendment without some better prospect as to the satisfactory nature of the proposed amendment than he at present perceived. Speaking generally he was inclined to say that the personal attendance and intervention of women in election proceedings would be a practical evil of an intolerable character. The question in regard to women's rights was a question of degree. The ancient law recognised the rights of women in the parish. The modern rule has extended the rule to the municipality. With respect to School Boards he thought the Legislature had done wisely in giving both the franchise and the right of sitting at School Boards to women. Then came a question with regard to Parliament, and we had to ask ourselves whether we should or should not go further. He admitted that there was a presumptive case for a change in the law. He never heard any conclusive reason why we should not borrow a hint from the law now existing in Italy under which a woman is allowed to exercise the franchise if she is possessed of the qualification, subject to the condition that she shall only exercise it through a deputy. As far as he was able to judge there was more presumptive ground for a change in the law than some of the opponents of the measure are disposed to own. There are various important particulars under which women obtain much less than justice under social arrangements. He might be told that there was no direct connection between this and the Parliamentary franchise, and he admitted it, but at the same time he was by no means sure that these inequalities might not have an indirect connection with a state of the law in which the balance is generally cast too much against women and too much in favour of men. In the competition for farms women suffer in a very definite manner in consequence of their want of a qualification to vote. So far as he was able to form an opinion of the general tone and colour of our law, in matters where the peculiar relations of men and women are concerned, that law does less than justice to women. In the whole chapter of legislation where the

irregular relations of men and women and the consequences of those irregular relations are concerned the English law does women much less than justice, and great mischief, misery and scandal result from that state of things in many occurrences and events of life. If it should be found possible to arrange a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power, the man who should attain that object, and should see his purpose carried onward to its consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of other laws bearing upon the condition and welfare of women, would be a real benefactor to his country.

Although he would not vote for the Bill in respect to which there was no promise of modification if it could not be adopted in its present form, Mr. Gladstone did not, as in 1870, vote against it, but left the House before the division took place.

On the question being put, there appeared

For the second reading	151
Against.....	220
Majority against the Bill.....	69

The bill was therefore lost.

Your Committee desire here to record their grateful appreciation of the manner in which the promoters and supporters of the measure presented their case. They acknowledge their sense of the valuable and generous support rendered to the cause by the occupants of the front Opposition bench; and they rejoice that the principle of the enfranchisement of women has been accepted in its integrity by leading statesmen on both sides of the House of Commons.

The analysis of the division list shows that the Bill was supported by ninety-six Liberals and fifty-five Conservatives, including three members of the late cabinet, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Corry, and Mr. Ward Hunt. Forty-two out of the one hundred and fifty-one who voted for the Bill were new supporters. Of these last, twenty were Liberals and twenty-two Conserva-

tives. Seventeen members who voted against the Bill in 1870, voted for it last session. Five others who voted against Mr. Mill in 1867 voted with Mr. Bright in 1871. Therefore out of the forty-two new adherents twenty-two were former opponents. Against this we have to set the defection of three members who voted for the Bill in 1870 and against it in 1871.

The majority which threw out the Bill contained one hundred and eighteen Liberals and one hundred and two Conservatives.

The five great towns which return each three members to Parliament give undivided support to this Bill. There is no other political or social question which secures the unanimous vote of the representatives of these great towns. Twelve out of their fifteen votes were recorded in its favour on the third of May last—the one accidentally adverse vote has been explained to have been given under a mistake, and two others were neutral.

Manchester and Glasgow gave their full complement of three votes each for the Bill. Birmingham, Leeds, and Liverpool gave two votes each in its favour. Twenty-two constituencies gave their full vote of two each for the Bill, namely

Bolton	Finsbury	Sheffield
Brighton	South Hants	Shrewsbury
Carmarthen co.	Leicester	Wenlock
Chelsea	Oldham	Wexford co.
Coventry	Penryn & Falmouth	Weymouth
Derby	Preston	Westminster
East Essex	Salford	Worcester
Edinburgh		

Sixty-one constituencies have given their full vote of one each for the measure :—

Aberdeen East	Ashton-under-Lyne	Berwickshire
Aberdeen West	Ayrshire South	Bridport
Aberdeen city	Banbury	Burnley
Andover	Bandon	Caithness

Calne	Elgin and Nairn	Leith
Cardigan co.	Ennis	Linlithgow
Cardigan dist.	Fife	Malmesbury
Carlow	Frome	Marlborough
Chippenham	Gateshead	Newport, Isle of
Clonmel	Gravesend	Wight
Cockermouth	Greenock	Paisley
Denbigh dist.	Haddington dist.	Perth
Devizes	Haverfordwest	Portarlington
Dewsbury	Hawick	Rochdale
Downpatrick	Helston	South Shields
Dumbarton	Hertford	Stirling
Dundalk	Horsham	Stockton
Drogheda	Invernesshire	Swansea
Edinburghshire	Kidderminster	Tynemouth
Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Univer- sities	Kilkenny Knaresborough	Wakefield Warrington

Thirty-eight constituencies have given each one vote to the Bill—their other vote being neutral on the last division :—

Bradford	North Leicestershire	Stoke-on-Trent
Buckinghamshire	Limerick	Stroud
Cork county	Macclesfield	Sunderland
Cork	Maidstone	East Surrey
East Cornwall	Marylebone	West Surrey
West Cumberland	Newcastle-under- Lyme	East Sussex
Denbigh	Lyme	Tamworth
East Devon	Plymouth	Tipperary
Glamorgan	Rutland	Tiverton
Halifax	West Somerset	South Warwickshire
North Hants	Southampton	Waterford
Mid Kent	East Staffordshire	Wigan
Kerry	Stafford	Winchester

Thirty-four constituencies gave one vote for and one against the Bill, being thirty-four votes on each side.

Belfast	Ipswich	Nottingham
Bristol	South Leicester	Queen's co.
Carlisle	Londonderry co.	Reading
Chester	Mayo	Sligo
South Devon	Merthyr Tydvil	Southwark
Dundee	Newark	Stockport
North Durham	Newcastle-upon- Tyne	Tyrone
Durham city	Tyne	North Wilts
West Essex	North Northampton	Wolverhampton
Exeter	Northampton	East Worcester
Grantham	South Northumber- land	West Worcester
Hackney	land	York

We see that eighty-five constituencies give full and clear votes for the Bill, and forty-one clear though not full votes for it—so that one hundred and twenty-six constituencies are now clearly ranged on the side of the Bill—against one hundred in 1870. The total number of members now in the House of Commons who have voted or paired in favour of women's suffrage is two hundred and two.

Counting tellers and pairs in the division of May 5, there were for the Bill, one hundred and fifty-nine, against two hundred and twenty-eight, absent two hundred and seventy-one. Of English members there were, for the Bill one hundred and two, against, one hundred and sixty-six, absent, one hundred and ninety-seven. Welsh : For, six, against, seven, absent, seventeen. Scotch : For, twenty-five, against, thirteen, absent, twenty-two. Irish : For, eighteen, against, thirty-four, absent, fifty-three. Of Lancashire members there were for the Bill fifteen, against, five, absent, thirteen. Only one member for a Lancashire borough voted against the Bill. The five members for Manchester and Salford voted for it, as did two of the members for Liverpool. Three out of the thirteen absentees voted for the Bill on former occasions, therefore eighteen out of thirty-

three, an absolute majority of Lancashire members, have voted in favour of the enfranchisement of women.

During the session of 1871 there were presented to the House of Commons 622 petitions, signed by 186,976 persons, in favour of the Women's Disabilities Bill. Of these 75 were from public meetings or municipal councils under their corporate seal. The Town Councils of Edinburgh, Stirling, Manchester, Salford, Burnley, Northampton, and Newcastle-on-Tyne petitioned in favour of the Bill. The petitions from the various wards in Manchester were signed by 31,065 persons and the Salford petitions by 4,268. The petitions sent through the efforts of friends of the Manchester Committee were 120 in number, signed by 45,251 persons. A complete list of all petitions for women's suffrage presented to the House of Commons during the session of 1871, is appended to the present Report. Some have been presented to the House of Lords, but of these a full list has not been obtained.

Public meetings in support of the Women's Disabilities Bill at which your committee have been invited to take part, have been held at Rawtenstall, Eccles, and Wigan. Reports of these meetings, and of the large number of others which have originated in connection with other branches of the society will be found in the *Women's Suffrage Journal*.

In the month of April, invitations to a conference in London in support of the Bill were issued by the secretaries of the London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester, Birmingham, and Bristol committees. The conference met on April 28, at the Langham Hotel, under the presidency of Walter Morrison, Esq., M.P. A memorial to Mr. Gladstone, asking the support of the Government to the Bill, was adopted and signed by the chairman on behalf of the Conference. A similar memorial to Mr. Disraeli was also adopted.

The memorial to Mr. Gladstone, of which the following is a copy, was signed by upwards of 2,300 women from 187 different places in the United Kingdom, and these signatures were all sent in a very few days.

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, M.P.,
FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.

The Memorial of the undersigned Members of the Executive Committees of the various branches of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, and others interested in the removal of the Electoral Disabilities of Women—

SHEWETH—

That the exclusion of women, otherwise legally qualified, from voting in the election of Members of Parliament, is injurious to those excluded, contrary to the principle of just representation, and to that of the laws now in force regulating the election of municipal, parochial, and all other representative governments.

That in former times, as is proved by returns to writs now in existence, women took part in the election of Members of Parliament; that in none of the old laws regulating the qualification of electors is there any mention of the exclusion of women from the right of voting; that the only statute which in terms limits the exercise of the franchise which it confers, to male persons, is the Reform Act of 1832, and that no judicial decision had abrogated or annulled the presumptive right of women to the suffrage, until the Court of Common Pleas in 1868, disallowed the appeal of five thousand women householders who had claimed under the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1867, to be placed on the roll of parliamentary electors for the City of Manchester.

That from time immemorial, up to the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, women ratepayers had rights equal and similar to those of men in matters pertaining to local government and expenditure. That women can vote in all parochial matters, can take part in vestry meetings, called for various purposes, such as the election of church-

wardens, waywardens, appointment of overseers, and formerly the levying of church rates. They can serve as churchwardens and overseers, and vote in the election of guardians. In none of these ancient voting customs, and in no Act of Parliament prior to 1835, was the sex of the ratepayers taken into account as either a qualification or a di-qualification for the right of voting in local affairs. Nor was the precedent introduced by the Municipal Corporations Act followed in subsequent legislation, for the Public Health Act of 1848, and other statutes providing for local government carefully guard the electoral privileges of the whole body of ratepayers.

That on the foregoing considerations Her Majesty's Government gave its assent in 1869 to the proposal to restore to women ratepayers in corporate districts the rights of which they had been deprived by the Act of 1835, and in consequence of the passing of the Municipal Franchise Act of 1869 large numbers of women were added to the burgess rolls in various districts. In Bath, there were 1,308; in Bolton, 1,534; in Bristol, 2,477; in Chester, 1,048; in Coventry, 1,022; in Derby, 1,270; in Leicester, 1,621; in Manchester, 9,013; in Rochdale, 1,018; in Salford, 2,829; in York, 1,101; and a proportionate number in other places.

That as a direct consequence of the extension of the municipal franchise to women, they obtained the right of voting in the election of Members of School Boards in corporate districts, through those provisions of the Elementary Education Act which confer the franchise in such elections in boroughs, on all persons whose names are on the burgess roll.

That the Elementary Education Act further recognises the right of women to take part in the government of the country, by admitting them to seats at School Boards. That these legislative councils have power to interfere with personal rights, to impose pecuniary penalties, and to deal with questions of the deepest social and political importance in a manner which has hitherto been beyond the scope of any local legislature, and for these important functions women have been deliberately

made eligible for Parliament, and actually chosen by great constituencies in free and popular election.

That the recognition by the Legislature of the fitness of women for the responsible office of Member of a School Board renders anomalous the maintenance of the disability which excludes them from voting in the election of Members of Parliament.

That the Legislature in preserving and restoring the ancient rights of women in local government, and in conferring on them the new franchise created by the Education Act, has pursued a course in regard to the civil and political status of women of which the removal of the only remaining electoral disability is the natural and consistent conclusion.

That the interests of women suffer greatly from the operation of this disability inasmuch as the denial of representative government to women makes it possible to maintain laws depriving them of property, educational and personal rights which could not be withheld from any section of the community which had the protection of the suffrage.

Your Memorialists, therefore, pray that you, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, will give your support to the Bill now before the House of Commons, entitled, "A Bill to Remove the Electoral Disabilities of Women."

The success of this conference suggests the desirability of organising another on a more extended scale, next year. A national demonstration bringing together representatives of the movement from all parts of the kingdom, and converging the forces of the various sections of the society in the metropolis during the Session of Parliament, could not fail to have weight in pressing it on the attention of the Legislature—while at the same time the friends and representatives of the different Committees would be strengthened and encouraged in their work by mutual acquaintance and sympathy.

Your Committee have issued invitations to the several committees inviting their co-operation in the endeavour to establish

a central point of union for the various branches of the society, and have received from most of them assurances of approbation, and promises of support in carrying the proposal into effect.

In order that the working of the municipal franchise for women might be observed, your committee again appealed to the courtesy of the Town Clerks, for returns shewing the number of women on the burgess rolls and the number who availed themselves of their right to vote on the 1st November last. They have to thank these gentlemen for the valuable information they have kindly supplied. The returns hitherto received are tabulated and appended to the present report.

Feeling the need of increased pecuniary support, to enable them to discharge their heavy liabilities and to carry on their operations, your Committee projected the holding of a bazaar in the hope of raising the sum of £500. They received much promise of support, and many valuable contributions, but a few friends of the movement, being desirous to relieve the Committee from the labour and responsibility of the undertaking, and of setting free their energies for more direct work, generously came forward to guarantee the amount.

The Committee desire here to express their cordial thanks to Mrs. J. P. Thomasson—who undertook to collect the £500—and to the ladies and gentlemen who have kindly contributed to the special fund.

Your Committee earnestly press on the friends of the cause the need for increased pecuniary support. The bazaar fund will be exhausted by the end of the next financial year, if the expenditure should proceed at its present rate, while the exigencies of the agitation demand an increase rather than a decrease in its amount. The necessity can only be met by a large increase in the subscription list, and they ask every subscriber to endeavour to obtain, during the coming year, a fresh subscription of at least equal amount to his own.

The issue of the Women's Suffrage Journal has been continued with an increased amount of favour and support. But it is not yet self-supporting, and your Committee earnestly

request its friends and readers to endeavour to obtain new subscribers. As the charge is but one shilling and sixpence yearly, they hope that numbers will respond to this appeal.

On a review of the year that has gone by, your Committee have confidence in congratulating their friends on the steady advance of the cause. The number of votes against the Bill was, it is true, the same as last year. But the number of votes in its favour has increased from ninety-four to one hundred and fifty-one, and consequently the hostile majority has decreased from one hundred and twenty-six to sixty nine. Last year the Government was actively hostile, the Prime Minister spoke strongly and voted against the Bill, and the leaders of the Opposition were neutral. This year Mr. Gladstone seemed to approve the principle of the Bill, and did not vote against it, while Mr. Disraeli voted for it and two of his late colleagues spoke in its favour.

Under these circumstances your Committee have the greatest pleasure in requesting their parliamentary friends to take steps as early as possible in the forthcoming session for the re-introduction of the Women's Disabilities Bill. They have the utmost confidence that the ability, tact, and earnestness which, employed in the advocacy of a just principle, have secured for it an amount of parliamentary support seldom if ever obtained for any measure in so short a time, will continue to guide it to still more prosperous issues. On their part they venture to promise on behalf of the society they represent, the most strenuous and unceasing efforts to strengthen the hands of their leaders in the House of Commons and they earnestly appeal to the members of the Society, and to the public, for the means to enable them to redeem their pledge.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

1870-71.

Ashworth, Miss A. F. (Bazaar Fund)	£100	0	0
Ashworth, Miss L. S. (Bazaar Fund)	100	0	6
Acworth, Mrs.	0	10	0
Addison, Mrs.	0	2	0
Allan, Mr. W.	0	5	0
Anonymous	2	2	0
Ashworth, Miss L. S.	20	0	0
Austin, Miss E. A.	0	2	6
Barlow, Mr. James (Bazaar Fund)	1	1	0
Barmby, Rev. G.	0	1	0
Barmby, Mrs.	0	1	0
Barmby, Miss	0	1	0
Bastard, Mr. T. H.	2	0	0
Bazley, Sir Thomas, Bart., M.P.	5	0	0
Becker, Miss E.	0	2	6
Bell, Mrs. E. C.	1	18	6
Bent, Mr. George	1	0	0
Bibby, Miss Ellen	1	1	0
Binney, Mr. E. W., F.R.S.	1	0	0
Black, Rev. J.	0	10	0
Blackburn, Mrs.	50	0	0
Blackburn, Mrs. B.	0	2	6
Bleackley, Mrs.	0	2	6
Blumer, Mr. J. G.	0	5	0
Boucherett, Miss Jessie	5	0	0
Boult, Miss Lucy	0	5	0
Box, Mr. A. M.	0	2	0
Bradlaugh, Miss Alice	0	5	0
Bramley, Mr.	0	1	0
Bramley, Mrs.	0	1	0
Briggs, Miss M. T.	1	1	0
Bright, Mrs. Jacob	20	0	0
Brine, Mrs.	0	2	6
Brittain, Mr. W. D.	0	2	0
Brittain, Mrs. W. D.	0	2	0
Brown, Miss M. A.	0	2	6
Browne, Mrs. S. W.	5	10	0
Bryant, Mr. Wilberforce	1	1	0
Buckton, Mrs.	0	5	0
Butler, Mrs. Fitzgerald	0	10	0

Callender, Mr. W. R.	£1	1	0
Carey, Mr. F.	0	5	0
Chorlton, Mr. Thomas	1	11	6
Clark, Mrs. Helen Bright	1	1	0
Clemesha, Miss S. J.	0	2	6
Collinge, Miss E.	1	0	0
Cooke, Mr.	1	1	0
Coppock, Mrs.	0	10	0
Corney, Miss	0	5	0
Cowell Stepney, Mr. W. F.	1	1	0
Crippen, Rev. T. G.	0	2	6
Crook, Mr. J. (Bazaar Fund)	10	0	0
Crosland, Mr. J. (Bazaar Fund)	5	0	0
Dale, Mr. Thomas	1	1	0
Davies, Mrs. M.	0	2	6
Dawson, Mrs. H.	0	2	6
Captain A. A. D.	0	6	0
Dean, Mrs. J. G.	0	10	0
Dehersant, Mrs	0	10	0
Dewes, Rev. Alfred, B. D.	1	0	0
Dixon, Mrs.	0	10	0
Dolby, Mr...	1	0	0
Firth, Mr. Joseph (Bazaar Fund)	5	0	0
Fitzadam, Mr.	0	5	0
A Friend (Bazaar Fund)	0	10	0
A Friend (Bazaar Fund)	0	10	0
A Friend, per Miss E. Drury.. .. .	0	10	0
A Friend, per Miss Jolly.. .. .	0	10	0
A Friend	0	2	6
Fryer, Mr. Alfred	1	0	0
Gaddum, Mrs. H.	2	0	0
Gasquoine, Mr. T.	0	2	6
Gay, Mrs.	0	10	0
Gaunt, Mr. Jonas	0	1	0
Goldschmidt, Mr. P. (Bazaar Fund)	5	0	0
Goouch, Miss	0	5	0
Grece, Mrs.	0	10	6
Grece, Mr. Clair J.	0	10	0
Greenbank, Mr. T. K.	1	1	0
Gwynne, Mrs.	1	0	0
Hacking, Miss	1	0	0
Haddock, Mrs... .. .	0	5	0
Hall, Miss Rose	1	0	0
Hallam, Mrs.	0	1	6
Hampson, Mr... .. .	0	2	6
Hampson, Mrs.	0	2	6
Hanrott, Mrs. P. A.	2	0	0
Hardiman, Miss	0	2	6
Hardwick, Miss	0	2	6
Harcourt, Mr. A. Vernon	1	1	0
Hargreave, Miss Mary	0	2	0
Hargreaves, Mr. William (Bazaar Fund)	20	0	0
Hargreaves, Mrs. William	5	0	0
Harwood, Mr. Councillor	1	0	0

Haslam, Mr. W. (Bazaar Fund)	£1 0 0
Heywood, Mrs. Abel	1 0 0
Hill, Miss	0 2 0
Hill, Mr. James	0 5 0
Hindle, Mrs.	0 2 6
Hodges, Mr. J. H.	0 5 0
Hodgkinson, Mr. (Bazaar Fund)	1 0 0
Hodgson, Dr. W. B.	2 0 0
Holdsworth, Mr. (Bazaar Fund)	5 0 0
Holland, Mrs. C.	0 5 0
Hooper, Mr. W. B. (deceased)	0 5 0
Hopps, Rev. J. Page	0 2 6
Hume-Rothery, Mrs.	0 2 6
Humble, Miss	5 0 0
Ireland, Mr. Alexander	1 1 0
Jack, Miss	0 1 6
Jackson, Mrs.	0 2 0
Jesper, Miss	0 1 0
Kell, Rev. E.	0 2 6
Kennett, Mr. R. B.	5 0 0
Kennett, Mr. R. B. (for <i>Journal</i>)	10 0 0
Kenrick, Mrs.	0 1 6
King, Mrs. James (Bazaar Fund)	50 0 0
King, Mrs. James	2 0 0
Kitchener, Mr. F. E.	0 5 0
Kitchener, Mrs. F. E.	0 5 0
Lascaridi, Mr. P. T.	0 5 0
Layton, Mrs.	1 0 0
Leaf, Miss	0 10 0
Lee, Mr. Henry (Bazaar Fund)	20 0 0
Leech, Mrs.	0 5 0
Lewis, Mrs. J. D.	2 0 0
Lewis, Miss S. M.	0 5 0
Liddell, Hon. Mrs. Thomas	0 10 0
Lister, Mrs. James	1 1 0
Longstaff, Mr. G. B.	0 10 0
Lupton, Miss H.	0 5 0
Lytton, The Lady	0 10 0
M'Culloch, Mrs.	1 0 0
Marshall, Miss Theodore	0 10 0
Marshall, Mr. Stephen	0 10 0
March Phillipps, Miss L. F.	0 2 6
M'Kerrow, Rev. Dr.	1 0 0
Martin, Miss L.	0 1 0
Martindale, Mrs. (Bazaar Fund)	5 0 0
Martindale, Mrs.	1 0 0
Massey, Mrs.	0 5 0
Masson, Mrs.	0 5 0
Meeke, Mrs.	0 5 0
Miall, Miss S. F.	0 5 0
Micholls, Mr. S.	0 10 0
Milne, Mr. J. D.	1 0 0
Mitchell, Mr. J.	0 2 6

Moore, Mrs.	£0 5 0
Muir, Mrs.	1 0 0
Murray, Mrs.	0 11 0
Myers, Mr. F. W. H.	1 0 0
Mylne, Mrs.	0 5 0
Nicol, Mr. H.	2 2 0
Nicol, Miss Louisa	0 10 0
Nixon, Miss	0 3 0
O'Connor, Mrs. W. A.	0 5 0
Ogden, Mrs.	2 0 0
Ord, Mr.	1 0 0
Ord, Mrs.	1 0 0
Oxley, The Misses	0 5 0
Pankhurst, Dr.	1 1 0
Paterson, Mr.	0 2 6
Paterson, Miss	0 1 0
Paulton, Mr. A. W.	40 0 0
Peek, Mrs.	0 2 6
Peiser, Mr. J.	1 1 0
Pennington, Mrs.	30 0 0
Pochin, Mrs.	2 2 0
Pollard, Miss	0 2 6
Porter, Miss	0 5 0
Potter, Mr. T. B., M.P.	1 1 0
Praed, Miss E. L. M.	2 0 0
Price, Mr. William	1 0 6
Prideaux, Mrs.	0 2 0
Pung, Miss S. A.	0 10 0
Rae, Mr. W. F.	0 10 6
Ramsbottom, Miss	0 10 0
Rawlings, Miss	0 2 6
Rhoades, Mr. James	0 5 0
Richards, Mr. E. M.	1 0 0
Rigbye, Miss Harriette	10 0 0
Roberts, Mrs.	0 2 6
Robinson, Mrs.	0 2 6
Rogers, Mrs. Arundel	0 10 0
Royston, Mrs.	0 2 0
Rumney, Mr. Alderman	1 1 0
Ryley, Mrs.	1 0 0
Samelson, Dr. A.	1 1 0
Samuelson, Mr. H. B., M.P.	5 0 0
Sawyer, Mrs.	0 2 6
Scotland, a Lady in	1 0 0
Scott, Mrs.	0 5 0
Scott, Mr. John	1 1 0
Sellers, Mr. C.	0 2 6
Sharman, Mrs. N. Pearce	1 0 0
Shields, Mrs. W.	0 2 6
Shore, Miss A. S.	1 3 6
Skerry, Mrs.	1 0 6
Skinner, Miss	0 2 0

Slatter, Mrs.	£0 5 0
Smith, Mrs.	0 2 0
Smith, Miss	0 1 6
Smith, Mr. H. F.	0 5 0
Smith, Mr. Walter	0 5 0
Sparke, Mrs. F.	1 0 0
Spence, Mr. Peter	1 1 0
Spencer, Mrs.	0 1 0
Steinthal, Mr. H. M.	5 0 0
Steinthal, Rev. S. A.	5 0 0
Stephenson, Mrs.	0 10 0
Street, Rev. J. C.	0 5 0
Stuart, Mr. James	2 0 3
Sutcliffe, Mr. Reuben	0 5 0
Sutcliffe, Mrs. Reuben	0 5 0
Sutcliffe, Mrs. S. B.	0 5 0
Talbot, Mr. J. H., jun.	0 2 6
Taylor, Mrs. Thomas	1 1 0
Taylor, Miss Ursula	1 1 0
Thacker, Mrs.	1 0 0
Thomas, Mrs.	0 2 0
Thomas, Miss	0 5 0
Thomasson, Mr. J. P. (Bazaar Fund)	20 0 0
Thomasson, Mrs. J. P. (Bazaar Fund)	30 0 0
Thomasson, Mrs. J. P.	20 0 0
Thomasson, Mr. Thomas	100 0 0
Thomson, Miss Dora	1 0 0
Thorburn, Mrs. Jenny	0 2 6
Todd, Mrs.	1 0 0
Todd, Miss E. A.	0 10 0
Todd, Mrs.	0 2 0
Tootal, Miss	0 5 0
Travers, Miss	0 2 6
Trevelyan, Mr. A., J.P.	2 0 0
Tucker, Miss	0 1 0
Tully, Mr. Thomas	0 5 0
Wade, Miss	0 1 0
Watts, Mrs. Alfred	0 5 0
Webb, Mr. Alfred	0 5 0
Whitehead, Mrs.	1 0 0
Whitworth, Mr. B.	10 0 0
Whyte, Mr. A. C.	0 5 0
Williams, Mrs.	0 10 0
Wilson, Miss Alice	0 5 0
Wilson, Mr. C.	0 5 0
Winkworth, Mrs.	5 0 0
Winkworth, Mrs. (Bazaar Fund)	5 0 0
Wood, Mr. W. Thorold	5 0 0
Wood, Mrs. Francesca Maria d' Assiz	5 0 0
Yeadley Mr.	0 2 6

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1871

Name of Borough.	Total No. of Persons on Register.	No. of Women on Register.	Proportion of Women to Men on Register.	No. of Wards in Borough.	No. of Wards Contested Nov. 1, 1871.	Total No. of Persons who Voted.	No. of Women who Voted.	Proportion of Women to Men who Voted.
Aberavon	569	50	1 to 10.3	1	0	0	0	.....
Abingdon	797	98	1 to 7.1	1	1	520	39	1 to 12.3
Ashton-under-Lyne	5,304	710	1 to 6.4	4	3	.....	.....	.....
„ (3 contested wards)	3,525	455	1 to 6.7	.....	.....	2,563	393	1 to 5.5
Banbury	683	93	1 to 6.3	1	1	313	26	1 to 11
Barrow-in-Furness	2,307	130	1 to 16.7	1	1	1,393	65	1 to 20.4
Bath	6,149	1,408	1 to 3.3	7	2	.....	.....	.....
„ (2 contested wards)	2,653	524	1 to 4	.....	.....	1,599	269	1 to 4.9
Bedford	2,352	198	1 to 10.8	2	2	236	3	1 to 77.6
Berwick-upon-Tweed	1,191	206	1 to 4.7	3	1	.....	.....	.....
„ (contested ward)	330	60	1 to 4.5	.....	.....	266	31	1 to 7.5
Bewdley	415	21	1 to 18.7	1	1	274	5	1 to 53.8
Birmingham	57,990	5,936	1 to 8.7	13	3	.....	.....	.....
„ (3 contested wards)	14,609	1,588	1 to 8.2	.....	.....	6,676	693	1 to 8.6
Bodmin	590	94	1 to 5.2	1	1	441	46	1 to 8.5
Boston	2,517	490	1 to 4.1	2	0	0	0	.....
Bradford	25,699	3,436	1 to 6.4	8	7	.....	.....	.....
„ (7 contested wards)	22,201	3,076	1 to 6.2	.....	.....	12,702	1,827	1 to 5.9
Bristol	21,232	2,412	1 to 7.7	10	4	3,751	414	.....
„ (4 contested wards)	6,349	842	1 to 6.6	.....	.....	3,751	414	1 to 8
Bridgnorth	950	97	1 to 8.7	1	0	0	0	.....
Burnley	6,963	970	1 to 6.1	8	0	0	0	.....
Bury St. Edmunds	2,308	377	1 to 5.1	3	0	0	0	.....
Calne	309	56	1 to 4.5	1	0	0	0	.....
Carmarthen	1,676	317	1 to 4.2	2	1	.....	.....	.....
„ (1 contested ward)	883	167	1 to 4.2	.....	.....	505	74	1 to 5.8
Carnarvon	1,452	199	1 to 6.3	2	2	949	111	1 to 7.5
Chard	148	26	1 to 4.6	1	1	74	2	1 to 36
Chester	6,427	1,103	1 to 4.8	5	2	.....	.....	.....
„ (2 contested wards)	2,742	472	1 to 4.8	.....	.....	1,088	163	1 to 5.6
Chichester	1,238	236	1 to 4.2	2	2	775	117	1 to 5.6
Chipping Wycombe	683	50	1 to 12.6	1	0	0	0	.....
Clifton, Dartmouth,) Hardness.....)	650	104	1 to 5.2	1	1	361	37	1 to 8.7
Congleton	2,165	348	1 to 5.2	3	0	0	0	.....
Coventry	7,024	898	1 to 6.8	5	1	.....	.....	.....
„ (1 contested ward)	922	123	1 to 6.4	.....	.....	645	81	1 to 7
Denbigh	1,172	209	1 to 4.6	1	1	703	96	1 to 6.3
Derby	9,927	1,360	1 to 6.2	6	1*	.....	.....	.....
„ (1 contested ward)	1,467	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dewsbury	4,241	415	1 to 9.2	3	3	1,291	103	1 to 11.5
„ elec. Nov. 20, 1871	4,241	415	1 to 9.2	3	3	2,826	259	1 to 9.9
Dorchester	740	69	1 to 9.7	1	1	427	15	1 to 27.4
Dover	3,339	433	1 to 6.7	3	2	.....	.....	.....
„ (2 contested wards)	1,572	182	1 to 7.6	.....	.....	1,067	77	1 to 12.8
Dunstable	779	152	1 to 4.1	1	1	607	116	1 to 4.2
Durham	2,230	365	1 to 5.1	3	3	1,367	176	1 to 6.7
Evesham	723	79	1 to 8.1	1	0	0	0	.....
Falmouth	845	172	1 to 4	1	1	290	39	1 to 6.7
Flint	627	65	1 to 8.6	1	0	0	0	.....
Folkstone	1,864	327	1 to 4.7	3	2	.....	.....	.....
„ (2 contested wards)	1,622	316	1 to 4.1	.....	.....	818	94	1 to 7.7
Glastonbury	428	34	1 to 11.5	1	1	176	2	1 to 87
Godalming	357	44	1 to 7.1	1	1	101	2	1 to 49.5
Guildford	1,126	172	1 to 5.5	1	0	0	0	.....
Hastings	3,232	abt. 500	1 to 5.4	2	1	1,664	abt. 250	1 to 5.6
„ (1 contested ward)	1,664	abt. 250	1 to 5.6	.....	.....	570	abt. 100	1 to 4.7
Haverfordwest	965	129	1 to 6.4	1	0	0	0	.....
Hertford	799	100	1 to 6.9	1	0	0	0	.....
Kidderminster	3,396	362	1 to 8.3	2	2	2,553	232	1 to 10
Leominster	915	116	1 to 6.8	1	1	451	24	1 to 17.7
Lichfield	1,274	197	1 to 5.4	2	0	0	0	.....

*No real contest.

Name of Borough.	Total No. of Persons on Register.	No. of Women on Register.	Proportion of Women to Men on Register.	No. of Wards in Borough.	No. of Wards Contested Nov. 1, 1871.	Total No. of Persons who Voted.	No. of Women who Voted.	Proportion of Women to Men who Voted.
Lincoln	4,413	471	1 to 8.3	3	0	0	0	.....
Liskeard	733	83	1 to 8.8	1	1	445	46	1 to 8.6
Ludlow	757	83	1 to 8.1	1	1	481	30	1 to 15
Maidenhead	566	63	1 to 7.9	1	1	265	13	1 to 19.3
Maidstone	3,494	358	1 to 8.7	4	1	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	590	50	1 to 10.8	.....	.....	257	17	1 to 14.1
Maldon	889	78	1 to 10.3	1	0	0	0	.....
Manchester	62,204	8,855	1 to 6	15	8	.....	.....	.....
(8 contested wards)	37,405	5,231	1 to 6.1	.....	.....	19,044	2,666	1 to 6.1
Margate	1,934	471	1 to 3.1	4	0	0	0	.....
Marlborough	540	39	1 to 12.8	1	0	0	0	.....
Monmouth	876	133	1 to 5.5	1	1	0	0	.....
Morpeth	738	135	1 to 4.4	1	0	0	0	.....
Neath	1,318	118	1 to 10.1	1	3	3	0	.....
Newark	2,104	235	1 to 8	3	1	1,761	157	1 to 10.2
Northampton	5,991	393	1 to 14.2	3	.....	1,197	39	.....
(1 contested ward)	2807	186	1 to 14	.....	6	1197	39	1 to 35
Nottingham	15,542	2,031	1 to 6.6	7	0	.....	.....	.....
(6 contested wards)	14,033	1,849	1 to 6.5	0	0	5,544	604	1 to 8.1
Oldham	13,763	1,770	1 to 6.7	8	5	.....	.....	.....
(5 contested wards)	8,982	1,162	1 to 6.7	.....	.....	7,567	978	1 to 7
Oswestry	1,295	225	1 to 4.7	2	2	970	143	1 to 5.7
Pembroke	1,943	153	1 to 11.6	2	0	0	0	.....
Penryn	590	49	1 to 11	1	1	346	19	1 to 17.2
Penzance	1882	389	1 to 3.8	2	2	900	124	1 to 6.2
Pontefract	796	117	1 to 5.8	1	1	467	34	1 to 12.7
Pwllheli	466	0	.....	1	0	0	0	.....
Reigate	1,974	215	1 to 8.1	2	2	437	33	1 to 12.2
Richmond, Yorkshire	637	77	1 to 7.1	1	1	502	47	1 to 9.6
Rochdale	8,316	1,576	1 to 4.2	3	3	6,268	1,064	1 to 4.8
Romsey	234	31	1 to 6.5	1	1	130	9	1 to 13.4
Ruthin	600	130	1 to 3.6	1	1	360	51	1 to 6
Rye	578	49	1 to 13.4	1	1	491	28	1 to 16.5
St. Ives	1,094	70	1 to 14.6	1	0	0	0	.....
Salford	21,916	3,238	1 to 5.7	12	11	.....	.....	.....
(11 contested wards)	20,568	3,030	1 to 5.7	.....	.....	12,227	1,551	1 to 6.8
Scarborough	4,358	763	1 to 4.7	2	1	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	1,316	285	1 to 3.6	.....	.....	639	51	1 to 11.5
Stratford-on-Avon	642	102	1 to 5.2	1	0	0	0	.....
Tamworth	710	69	1 to 9.2	1	1	312	23	1 to 12.5
Tenterden	504	55	1 to 8.1	1	0	0	0	.....
Torrington, Great	627	147	1 to 3.2	1	1	550	135	1 to 3
Tenby	486	51	1 to 8.5	1	0	336	25	1 to 12.4
Totnes	647	120	1 to 4.3	1	1	351	39	1 to 8
Truro	1,579	253	1 to 5.2	2	1	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	657	84	1 to 6.8	.....	.....	389	19	1 to 19.4
Wallingford	415	40	1 to 9.3	1	1	21	0	1 to 9.3
Walsall	8569	650	1 to 12.1	3	0	.....	.....	.....
Welshpool	1,329	125	1 to 9.6	1	1	871	46	1 to 17.9
Winchester	1,932	291	1 to 5.6	3	1	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	954	180	1 to 4.3	.....	.....	301	1	1 to 300
Windsor (New)	1,289	193	1 to 5.6	2	2	796	55	1 to 13.4
Wisbech	1,593	279	1 to 4.7	2	2	972	134	1 to 6.2
Wolverhampton	10,600	abt 1000	1 to 9.6	8	0	0	0	.....
Wrexham	1,343	205	1 to 5.5	1	1	825	125	1 to 5.7

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1869, 1870, 1871.

Name of Borough.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1869.	No. of Women who Voted in 1869.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1870.	No. of Women who Voted in 1870.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1871.	No. of Women who Voted in 1871.
Abingdon	83	49	104	56	98	39
Banbury	83	*	94	28	93	26
Barrow-in-Furness	.....	.....	95	29	130	65
Bath (whole city)	1250	.....	1303	.....	1408	.....
(2 contested wards)	.....	111	.....	.....	.....	.....
(1 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	72	.....	.....
(2 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	524	269
Bedford	243	5	.....	.....	198	3
Berwick-upon-Tweed	173	*	171	.....	206	.....
(3 contested wards)	.....	.....	.....	70	.....	.....
(1 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	60	31
Bodmin	93	53	.....	.....	94	46
Bolton	1533	1112	1534	723	.....	.....
Bristol	2465	.....	2477	.....	2412	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	242	.....	.....	.....	.....
(5 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	530	.....	.....
(4 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	842	414
Carmarthen	234	.....	.....	.....	317	.....
(2 contested wards)	.....	107	.....	.....	.....	.....
(1 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	167	74
Carnarvon	.....	.....	200	.....	199	111
(1 contested ward)	.....	.....	.....	88	.....	.....
Chard	83	7	25	2	26	2
Chester	698	.....	1048	.....	1103	.....
(4 contested wards)	.....	150	.....	.....	.....	.....
(3 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	9	.....	.....
(2 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	472	163
Chichester	.....	.....	235	100	236	117
Clifton, Dartmouth, and Hardness	.....	.....	86	16	104	37
Coventry	799	*	1022	11	898	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	.....	.....	.....	123	81
Deal	147	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	21	152	.....	.....	.....
(1 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	6	.....	.....
Denbigh	84	*	188	106	209	96
Dorchester	74	*	75	3	69	15
Dover	352	.....	462	.....	433	.....
(2 contested wards)	.....	98	.....	.....	.....	.....
(3 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	168	.....	.....
(2 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	182	77
Durham	314	.....	346	.....	365	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	63	128	98	.....	.....
(3 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	365	176
Falmouth	61	9	134	60	172	39
Folkstone	.....	.....	315	.....	327	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	.....	80	28	.....	.....
(2 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	316	94
Grimsby	198	60	200	100	.....	.....
Glastonbury	.....	.....	45	14	34	2
Guildford	171	104	181	105	172	*
Hastings	.....	.....	468	.....	.....	.....
(1 contested ward)	.....	.....	.....	72	abt 500	.....
(1 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	.....	abt 250	abt 100
Haverfordwest	128	62	145	13	19	*
Hertford	89	59	112	29	106	*
Leicester	870	.....	1621	.....	.....	.....
(3 contested wards)	.....	265	.....	.....	.....	.....
(5 " " " " )	.....	.....	.....	603	.....	.....
Leominster	119	18	116	37	116	24
Liskeard	96	22	110	9	83	46

* No contest, or no real contest.

† No return.

Name of Borough.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1869.	No. of Women who Voted in 1869.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1870.	No. of Women who Voted in 1870.	No. of Women on Municipal Register in 1871.	No. of Women who Voted in 1871.
Lyme Regis	67	6	69	11	†	†
Ludlow	†	†	120	64	83	30
Maidenhead	51	14	46	12	63	13
Maidstone	314	..	364	..	355	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	33	..	3	50	17
Manchester	7187	..	9013	†	8855	..
" (9 contested wards)	3599	1869	..	..	..	..
" (8 contested wards) .....	..	..	..	..	5231	2666
Morpeth	129	81	112	107	135	*
Newark	233	..	229	..	235	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	49	..	..	..	..
" (2 " " ) .....	..	..	..	101	..	..
" (3 " " ) .....	..	..	..	..	..	157
Northampton	394	78	333	119	393	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	..	..	..	186	39
Penryn	49	16	54	9	49	19
Penzance	306	46	354	65	389	124
Pontefract	69	7	†	†	117	24
Richmond, Yorkshire	69	*	70	1	77	47
Rochdale	†	†	1018	688	1576	1064
Ruthin	135	30	142	75	130	51
Ryde, Isle of Wight	298	93	327	157	†	†
Rye	43	26	38	*	40	28
Salford	2769	..	2829	..	3238	..
" (5 contested wards) .....	..	1123	..	..	..	..
" (8 " " ) .....	..	..	..	728	..	..
" (11 " " ) .....	..	..	..	..	3030	1551
Scarborough	528	97	620	259	763	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	..	..	..	285	51
Totnes	†	..	114	*	120	39
Truro	268	64	†	†	253	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	..	..	..	8†	19
Welshpool	89	*	abt 50	abt 22	125	46
Winchester	231	..	†	†	291	..
" (1 contested ward) .....	..	7	..	..	..	..
" (1 " " ) .....	..	..	..	..	..	7
Wisbech	290	103	277	132	279	134

* No contest, or no real contest.

† No return.



MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

RULES.

I. The object of the Society is, to obtain for Women the right of voting for Members of Parliament on the same conditions as it is, or may be, granted to men.

II. Approval of the objects of the Society, and an annual subscription of any amount shall constitute membership.

III. The subscriptions are due on the first day of January for the current year.

IV. An Executive Committee shall be appointed at an Annual General Meeting, which committee shall have power to add to its number.

V. The committee, at its first meeting subsequent to the Annual Meeting, shall appoint a secretary and a treasurer.

VI. A General Meeting of the Society shall be held once a year to receive the report, the statement of accounts, to appoint the committee, and transact any other business which may arise.

VII. A Special General Meeting of the Society may be called at any time by the committee, and, at the written request of twenty-five Members, the Secretary shall call a Special Meeting. At such meeting no subjects shall be discussed but those mentioned in the notice summoning the members.

VIII. No General Meeting of the Society shall be called without eight days' public notice of such meeting.

IX. These rules shall not be altered except at a General Meeting; and no rule shall be altered at any meeting unless a month's notice of such proposed alteration has been given to the committee.

MANCHESTER NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S
SUFFRAGE.

Members of the Society and others are earnestly requested to aid the movement for procuring the passing of the Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women.

I. By collecting signatures to the petition, forms of which may be obtained from the Secretary.

II. By bringing the question under the notice of Members of Parliament, whenever they appear before their constituents.

III. Should notice of any motion, friendly or hostile, be given in the House of Commons—by writing letters asking the local Members to support the principle of Women's Suffrage.

IV. In case of an election, by calling on every candidate to declare whether he will, if returned, vote for the Bill to remove the electoral disabilities of women.

V. By trying to procure insertion of facts and arguments bearing on the question, in the local press.

VI. By communicating to the Secretary any information likely to be useful to the Society, and the names of such persons as may be disposed to assist the cause.

VII. Where there are three or four members in the same place, by uniting to form a local committee.

VIII. By endeavouring to increase the number of members.

IX. By extending the organisation of the Society through the medium of corresponding members or local committees. All persons willing to render such assistance are earnestly requested to communicate with the Secretary.

Further information will be willingly afforded to all who may desire it.

LYDIA E. BECKER, SECRETARY.

28, Jackson's Row, Albert Square, Manchester.

PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN SUFFRAGE
PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT DURING THE
SESSION OF 1871.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, March 30.

The Earl of MINTO presented a petition from a public meeting at Selkirk, in favour of the admission of women who are householders and ratepayers to the franchise.

The Earl of DERBY presented a petition from a public meeting of inhabitants of Rawtenstall, in favour of giving the franchise to women.

Monday, May 1.

Lord LYTTLETON presented a petition from Manchester, praying for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women.

Lord ROMILLY presented similar petitions from Colonel W. E. Evans and others; Bourton-on-the-Hill, Gloucestershire; Hendon, Middlesex; Woolastone, Gloucestershire; Ingatestone, Essex; and meetings at Marylebone and Hackney.

The Earl of DERBY presented a petition from Barton-on-Irwell, praying for admission of women to the franchise.

Tuesday, May 2.

The Earl of LICHFIELD presented a petition from inhabitants of Stretford, praying for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women.

Lord de TABLEY presented petitions to the same effect from inhabitants of Nantwich, and of Macclesfield.

Thursday, June 15.

The Bishop of EXETER presented a petition from inhabitants of Cheetham Hill, for the removal of the electoral disabilities of women.

[The above is not a complete list of petitions which have been presented to the House of Lords. As their lordships do not issue a special report of petitions presented to them, the same facilities do not exist for procuring full information as in the case of petitions to the House of Commons.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

In the following list of petitions those marked ¶ have the addresses of some or all of the petitioners affixed.

Those marked § are signed officially.

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Against.

Mar. 8 §Dundee, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of; William Hay, town-clerk ... Sir J. Ogilvy ... 1

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—In Favour.

Feb. 14 ¶Chelsea, Inhabitants of ... Sir Charles Dilke 2,240
 " 14 Greenwich, " ... Mr. Taylor... 66
 " 15 ¶Marylebone, " ... Mr. H. Lewis ... 2,286
 " 15 ¶Bradford, " ... Mr. Miall ... 319
 " 15 Batley Carr, " ... " ... 39
 " 15 §Windhill, Meeting at; Thos. Longfellow, Chairman ... " ... 1
 " 15 §Worksop, Meeting at; Edwin Priest, chairman... Mr. Wheelhouse.. 1
 " 15 §Buxton, Meeting at; T. J. Cooper, chairman ... 1
 " 15 §Heaton, Meeting at; George Brockway, chairman ... 1
 " 16 §Haworth, Meeting at; Joseph Heap, chairman ... Lord F. Cavendish 1
 " 16 §Idle, Meeting at; Joseph Rhodes, chairman " ... 1
 " 16 §Huddersfield, Meeting at; W. White, chairman... Mr. Leatham .. 1
 " 16 §Dewsbury, Meeting at; F. Gutteridge, chairman... Mr. Sergt. Simon 1
 " 16 ¶Patience Hodgkinson and others Mr. Chas. Turner 54
 " 17 ¶Manchester (Cheetham Ward), Inhabitants of ... Mr. Jacob Bright 4,195
 " 17 ¶Ambleside, " ... Mr. Lowther ... 76
 " 17 Monk Coniston, " ... Mr. F. Stanley ... 65
 " 20 ¶Salford, " ... Mr. Charley ... 345
 " 20 ¶Bury St. Edmunds, " ... Mr. Greene ... 42
 " 20 §Hebden, Meeting at; L. R. Patchett, chairman Mr. Stansfeld ... 1
 " 20 ¶Birkenhead, Inhabitants of ... Mr. Taylor ... 270
 " 21 ¶Tower Hamlets, " ... Mr. Ayrton ... 2,026
 " 21 §Longwood, Meeting at; name of chairman illegible Mr. H. Beaumont 1
 " 21 Manchester (St. Michael's Ward), Inhabitants of Mr. Birley... .. 2,000

Feb 21 §Rothesay, Meeting at; A. Mackirdy, chairman ... Mr. C. Dalrymple 1
 " 21 Westminster, Inhabitants of... Capt. Grosvenor.. 1,134
 " 21 ¶Grange & Patterdale, " ... Mr. Wyndham ... 36
 " 22 ¶Bradford, " ... Mr. W. Forster... 400
 " 22 §Bradford Moor, Meeting at; Wm. Willis Wood, chairman ... " ... 1
 " 22 §Bradford, Meeting at; Wm. Draper, chairman " ... 1
 " 22 §Greenock, Meeting at; James Morton, chairman Mr. Grieve ... 1
 " 22 ¶Scarborough, Inhabitants of... Sir H. Johnstone 185
 " 23 §Irvine, Meeting at; G. Paulin, chairman ... Mr. Craufurd ... 1
 " 23 Peterborough, Inhabitants of... Mr. Wells... .. 1,389
 " 23 ¶Stockport, " ... " ... 504
 " 24 Launceston, " ... Mr. Lopez ... 100
 " 24 §Wednesfield, Meeting at; J. Griffiths, chairman Mr. Villiers ... 1
 " 27 ¶Hastings, Inhabitants of... Mr. T. Brassey ... 171
 " 27 ¶Southampton, " ... Mr. Gurney ... 347
 " 27 §Lockerbie, Meeting at; Wm. Mackindoe, chairman ... Major Walker ... 1
 " 28 Manchester (Medlock-street Ward), Inhabitants of ... Mr. Birley ... 1,042
 " 28 ¶Manchester (Oxford-street), Inhabitants of ... " ... 202
 " 28 §Annan, Meeting at; W. Battey, chairman ... Mr. Jardine ... 1
 Mar. 1 §Helensburgh, Meeting at; Thos. Steven, provost, chairman ... Mr. Arch. Ewing 1
 " 2 ¶Manchester, Inhabitants of ... Sir T. Bazley ... 1,010
 " 2 ¶Manchester " ... " ... 663
 " 2 §Renfrew, Meeting at; Robert Gallacher, chairman Mr. P. Bouverie... 1
 " 2 ¶Oxfordshire, Inhabitants of ... Mr. W. Cartwright 175
 " 2 ¶Maidstone, " ... Sir J. Lubbock ... 41
 " 2 Helstone, " ... Mr. A. Young ... 180
 " 2 §Moffatt, Meeting at; Samuel Neil, chairman, and others ... Major Walker ... 4
 " 2 Maidenhead, Inhabitants of ... 127
 " 3 ¶Finsbury, " ... Mr. W. M. Torrens 2,038
 " 6 ¶Leeds, " ... Mr. Bains... .. 515
 " 6 §Cirencester, Meeting at; Henry Austin, chairman... Mr. Bathurst ... 1
 " 6 ¶Sunderland, Inhabitants of ... Mr. Candlish ... 105
 " 6 Jane M. Symon Admiral Erskine 1
 " 6 ¶Bury, Inhabitants of ... Mr. Philips ... 247
 " 7 ¶Marylebone, " ... Mr. T. Chambers 2,328
 " 7 §Frome, Meeting at; Joseph Chapman, chairman Mr. T. Hughes ... 1

Mar.	7	¶York,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Leeman ...	295
"	7	¶Southwark,	" ...	Mr. Locke... ..	1,854
"	7	Wigtown,	" ...	Lord Advocate... ..	125
"	7	§Wolverhampton,	Meeting at; John W. Barker, chairman	Mr. Villiers ...	1
"	8	¶Kilmarnock,	Householders of ...	Mr. Bouverie ..	17
"	8	¶Kilmarnock,	" ...	" ...	30
"	8	§Bridge of Allan,	Meeting at; H. Dove, chairman	Admiral Erskine	1
"	8	Knareborough,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Illingworth...	109
"	9	¶Manchester	(St. Michael's Ward), Inhabitants of	Mr. Jacob Bright	545
"	9	¶Manchester	(St. Michael's Ward), Inhabitants of ...	" ...	591
"	9	Leeds,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Carter ...	1,182
"	9	Salford,	" ...	Mr. Cawley ...	1,048
"	9	§Birmingham,	Meeting at; James Austin, chairman	Mr. Dixon ...	1
"	9	Sheffield,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Hadfield ...	510
"	9	Pinner,	" ...	Lord G. Hamilton	162
"	9	§Edinburgh,	Meeting at; D. M'Laren, chairman	Mr. Miller ...	1
"	9	¶Hackney,	Inhabitants of... ..	Mr. Reed ...	2,015
"	9	§Bath,	Meeting at; J. Hulbert, mayor, chairman...	Sir William Tite	1
"	9	¶Chelsea,	Inhabitants of	" ...	2,269
"	10	¶Manchester	(Medlock-street Ward), Inhabitants of	Mr. Birley ...	503
"	10	¶Salford,	Inhabitants of	Mr. Cawley ...	636
"	10	§Campbelltown,	Meeting at; D. Mcdougall, chairman	Mr. Craufurd ...	1
"	10	¶Stranraer,	Inhabitants of ...	Lord Advocate... ..	1,002
"	10	§Whithorn,	Meeting at; D. D. Robertson, chairman	Lord Advocate...	1
"	10	§Bristol,	Meeting at; F. W. Newman, chairman	Mr. Morley ...	1
"	13	¶Horncastle,	Inhabitants of ...	Colonel Amcotts	164
"	13	A. W. Nicholson and others	" ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	493
"	13	¶Margaret R. Hughes and others	" ...	" ...	173
"	13	¶Lichfield,	Inhabitants of ...	Colonel Dyott ...	348
"	13	¶Plymouth,	" ...	Mr. Edwards ...	46
"	13	§Greenock	(Members of the Town Council, Seal)	Mr. Grieve ...	1
"	13	Bury Saint Edmunds,	Inhabi- tants of... ..	Mr. Hardcastle ...	29
"	13	¶Finsbury,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Lusk ...	2,048
"	13	Westminster,	" ...	Mr. W. Smith ...	1,941
"	14	Stoneykirk,	" ...	Lord Garlies ...	49
"	14	Castle Douglas,	" ...	Mr. Maxwell ...	53
"	14	§Pontypool,	Meeting at; Thos. Thomas, D.D., Pre- sident	Mr. Richard ...	1

Mar.	14	§Tavistock,	Meeting at; R. Luxton, chairman	Mr. A. Russell ...	1
"	15	Manchester	(Medlock-street Ward), Inhabi- tants of	Mr. Birley ...	576
"	15	¶Manchester	(Medlock-street Ward) Inhabi- tants of	" ...	511
"	15	Annan,	Inhabitants of ...	Major Walker ...	85
"	15	¶Truro,	" ...	Sir F. Williams..	64
"	16	¶Edinburgh,	" ...	Mr. M'Laren ...	1,017
"	16	Sawrey,	" ...	Col. Wilson Patten	49
"	17	¶Mary Wayne and others...	" ...	Mr. Birley ...	519
"	17	¶Manchester,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	507
"	17	¶Salford,	" ...	Mr. Charley ...	626
"	17	¶Chelsea,	" ...	Sir C. Dilke ...	2,120
"	17	Shrewsbury,	" ...	Mr. Figgins ...	108
"	17	§Kirkcudbright,	Meeting at; James Sproat, chairman	Mr. Jardine ...	1
"	17	§Plymouth,	Meeting at; W. F. Collier, chairman...	Mr. Morrison ...	1
"	17	Moffatt,	Inhabitants of ...	Major Walker ...	114
"	17	¶Buxton,	" ...	" ...	116
"	20	Newton Saint Loe,	" ...	Mr. Allen ...	79
"	20	Thetford,	" ...	Sir William Bagge	79
"	20	¶Scarborough & Filey,	" ...	Mr. Dent ...	132
"	20	Harrow,	" ...	Viscount Enfield	120
"	20	Glenluce,	" ...	Lord Garlies ...	570
"	20	Portpatrick,	" ...	" ...	138
"	20	¶Greenwich,	" ...	Mr. Gladstone ...	979
"	20	¶Rugby,	" ...	Mr. Newdegate...	1,052
"	20	¶Lincoln,	" ...	Mr. Seeley ...	212
"	20	Dowlais,	" ...	Mr. C. Talbot ...	66
"	20	Lockerbie,	" ...	" ...	152
"	21	¶Manchester	(Collegiate Church Ward), Women Citizens of ...	Sir Thomas Bazley	14
"	21	¶Manchester	(New Cross Ward), Inhabitants of...	" ...	678
"	21	¶Manchester,	Inhabitants of ...	" ...	508
"	21	¶Manchester	(Medlock-street Ward), Inhabitants of	Mr. Birley ...	512
"	21	¶Saltford and Keynsham,	In- habitants of... ..	Mr. Richd. Bright	54
"	21	Corston,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. D. Dalrymple	136
"	21	Brighton,	" ...	Mr. White ...	1,200
"	22	¶Newark,	Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Hodgkinson .	244
"	23	¶Paisley,	Meeting at, D. Murray, provost, chairman	Mr. Crum-Ewing	1
"	23	¶Lambeth,	Inhabitants of ...	Sir J. Lawrence	2,021
"	23	¶City of London	" ...	Mr. Lawrence ...	2,008
"	23	Bodmin,	" ...	Mr. L. Gower ...	99
"	24	¶Ayr & neighbourhood,	" ...	Mr. Craufurd ...	183

Mar.	24	¶West Aberdeenshire, Women of	Mr. Fordyce	...	58
"	24	¶Hackney, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Holms	...	1,933
"	24	§Rawtenstall, Meeting at; John B. Whitehead, chairman	Mr. Holt	...	1
"	24	¶Elizabeth Garrett and others...	Mr. H. Lewis	...	2,422
"	24	¶W. F. Cowell Stepney and others	Mr. Taylor	...	192
"	24	§Bilston, Meeting at; J. Perry, chairman	Mr. Villiers	...	1
"	27	§Meeting signed by Robert Anstruther, chairman...	Sir R. Anstruther	...	1
"	27	¶Manchester, Inhabitants of	Mr. Jacob Bright	...	670
"	27	¶Manchester (Medlock-st. Ward), Women Citizens of	"	...	12
"	27	Burslem, Inhabitants of	Sir Ed. Bulwer...	...	52
"	27	¶Salford,	Mr. Cawley	...	542
"	27	¶Godalming,	Mr. Cubitt	...	77
"	27	¶Lewes,	Lord Pelham	...	263
"	28	¶Bolton,	Mr. Hick	...	1,313
"	28	Lymington	Lord G. Lennox.	...	45
"	28	§Cheltenham, Meeting at; T. Wright, M.D., chairman	Mr. H. Samuelson	...	1
"	28	§Saundersfoot, Meeting at; J. Beddoe, chairman...	Mr. Scourfield...	...	1
"	28	§Neyland, Meeting at; W. B. Caher, chairman	"	...	1
"	28	¶Pembroke and vicinity	"	...	230
"	28	Exeter, Meeting at; J. Bourn, chairman	Mr. Sol. General	...	1
"	30	Widford and other places, Inhabitants of	Mr. Cowper	...	65
"	30	¶Poole, Inhabitants of	Mr. Arthur Guest	...	50
"	30	Troodryhiewr, "	Mr. C. Talbot	...	54
"	30	Saint Columb, "	Sir J. Trelawny	...	23
"	30	Selkirk, Meeting at; John Murray, baronet, chairman	Mr. Trevelyan	...	1
"	31	Manchester, Inhabitants of	Mr. Birley...	...	1,006
"	31	§Kilmarnock, Meeting at; James M'Kie, chairman	Mr. P. Bouverie	...	1
"	31	¶John Lamlim and others	"	...	8
"	31	Finsbury, Inhabitants of	Mr. Lusk	...	2,066
April	3	¶Manchester (New Cross Ward),	Sir Thos. Bazley	...	513
"	3	§Dumbarton, Meeting at; M. Paul, provost, chairman	Mr. P. Bouverie	...	1
"	3	Dumbarton, Inhabitants of	"	...	8
"	3	§Haddingtonshire, Meeting in; G. Hope, Chairman	Lord Elcho	...	1
"	3	London, Inhabitants of	Mr. Goschen	...	2,041
"	3	¶Kirkcudbright, Inhabitants of.	Mr. Jardine	...	69
"	3	§Biggar, Meeting at; David M. Connor, M.A., L.L.B. chairman	Mr. J. Hamilton	...	1
"	3	Preston, Inhabitants of	Mr. Noel	...	9

April	4	Berwick-on-Tweed	Viscount Bury...	149
"	4	§Berwick, Meeting at; W. Steuart Chedburn, chairman	"	...	"	1
"	4	¶London, Inhabitants of	Mr. Crawford	...	1,775	
"	17	§Lochee, Meeting at; David Crook, chairman	Mr. Armitstead	...	1	
"	17	Burtonisland, Inhabitants of	Mr. Aytoun	...	48	
"	17	¶Stroud, Inhabitants of	Mr. Dickinson...	...	348	
"	17	Inverarie, "	Mr. Fordyce	...	45	
"	17	¶Worcester, "	Mr. Laslett	...	564	
"	17	§Linlithgow, Meeting at; A. Dawson, jun., chairman	Mr. Merry	...	1	
"	17	¶Edinburgh, Inhabitants of	Mr. Miller	...	1,421	
"	17	¶Leeds, Inhabitants of	Mr. Wheelhouse	...	2,433	
"	18	¶Lochee, "	Mr. Armitstead	...	323	
"	18	¶Manchester (Collegiate Church Ward)	Sir Thos. Bazley	...	1,011	
"	18	¶Manchester, St. George's Ward	"	...	528	
"	18	§Manchester, Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of	"	...	Seal.	
"	18	¶Manchester (St. George's Ward),	Mr. Birley...	...	516	
"	18	Manchester (All Saints Ward),	"	...	514	
"	18	Manchester	"	...	508	
"	18	¶Manchester (St. Clement's Ward), Female Inhabitants of	"	...	658	
"	18	¶Manchester (New Cross Ward), Inhabitants of	"	...	1,012	
"	18	¶Manchester, St. George's Ward	"	...	516	
"	18	Manchester,	"	...	513	
"	18	§Ardrossan, Meeting at; W. R. Murray, Chairman	Mr. Finnie	...	1	
"	18	¶Ashton-under-Lyne, Inhab. of	Mr. Mellor	...	73	
"	18	¶Ashton-under-Lyne, "	"	...	1,010	
"	18	Monmouthshire	Lord H. Somerset	...	447	
"	18	§Galashiels, Meeting at; Thos. Wood, chairman	Mr. Trevelyan...	...	1	
"	18	§Hawick, Meeting at; J. McEwen, M.A., chairman	"	...	1	
"	19	Watford, Inhabitants of	Mr. H. R. Brand	...	25	
"	19	Manchester, members of the Ardwick and Beswick Liberal Club...	Mr. Jacob Bright	...	40	
"	19	¶Manchester, Inhabitants of Collegiate Church Ward	"	...	515	
"	19	Manchester, Inhabitants of St. Clement's Ward	"	...	544	
"	19	Ruth Holme and others	Mr. Jacob Bright	...	530	
"	19	Ashton, Inhabitants of	"	...	109	
"	19	Newark, "	Mr. Bristowe	...	511	
"	19	¶Stirling, "	Mr. Campbell	...	509	
"	19	§Stirling, Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of	"	...	1	
"	19	§Stirling, Meeting at; George Christie, chairman	"	...	1	
"	19	¶Chelsea, Inhabitants of	Sir Charles Dilke	...	2,008	

April 19	Battle, &c., Inhabitants of	Mr. Dodson	46
" 19	Inch, "	Lord Garlies	171
" 19	Newton Stewart, Inhabitants of	"	50
" 19	Deal, Inhabitants of...	Mr. K. Hugessen	79
" 19	Coupar Angus, Meeting at; William Marshall, D.D., chairman	Mr. Parker	1
" 19	Selkirk, Inhabitants of	Mr. Trevelyan	196
" 19	Peterborough, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Whalley	792
" 20	Salford Municipal Corporation	Mr. Cawley	1
" 20	Salford, Inhabitants of	Mr. Cawley	513
" 20	Brighton, "	Mr. Fawcett	1,507
" 20	Blue Pits, "	Mr. Henry	57
" 20	Evesham, "	Mr. Lyttelton	16
" 20	Berwickshire, "	Mr. Robertson	60
" 20	Stockport, "	Mr. John Smith	381
" 20	Westminster, "	Mr. Wm. Smith	2,036
" 20	Henry Browne and others	Mr. Taylor	187
" 20	Deptford, Inhabitants of...	"	315
" 20	Saint Asaph, "	"	48
" 21	Alloa, Meeting at; Alexander Bryson, chairman...	Mr. Adam	1
" 21	Tiverton, Inhabitants of...	Major Allen	54
" 21	Keynsham, "	"	47
" 21	West Bromwich, "	Mr. Brogden	116
" 21	Glasgow, "	Mr. Dalglish	1,007
" 21	Kintore, "	Mr. Grant Duff	137
" 21	Burnley Municipal Corporation	Mr. Richd. Shaw	438
" 24	Melrose, Meeting at; Robert chairman	Marq. of Bowmont	1
" 24	Salford, Inhabitants of	Mr. Cawley	683
" 24	Eccles, Meeting at; J. M. Bailieff, chairman	Mr. W. Egerton	1
" 24	Laswalt, Inhabitants of	Lord Garlies	335
" 24	Rhyl, "	Lord R. Grosvenor	22
" 24	Dumfries, Meeting at; C. Hark- ness, provost, chair- man	Mr. Jardine	1
" 24	Louisa Corney and others	Mr. M'Arthur	16
" 24	Aberdeen, Women of	Colonel Sykes	1,090
" 24	Finsbury, Inhabitants of...	Mr. W. T. Torrens	2,050
" 24	Waltham Saint Lawrence	Mr. Walter	12
" 25	North and South Bersted	Colonel Barttelot	97
" 25	Southwark, Inhabitants of	Colonel Beresford	2,039
" 25	Manchester (New Cross), In- habitants of	Mr. Birley	530
" 25	Manchester (St. George's Ward), Inhabitants of	"	564
" 25	Helensburgh, Inhabitants of	Mr. A. Ewing	216
" 25	Emma Jane Daley and others	Mr. Dixon	2,086
" 25	Sarah Ann Daley and others	"	4,022
" 25	Bridge of Allan, Inhabitants of	Admiral Erskine	56
" 25	Perth, Inhabitants of	Mr. Kinnaird	249
" 25	Salisbury, "	Dr. Lush	183
" 25	Stoke-upon-Trent, Inhab. of	Mr. Melly	233
" 25	Falkirk, Inhabitants of	Mr. Merry	121

April 25	Edgbaston, Inhabitants of	Mr. Muntz	479
" 25	Burnley	Mr. R. Shaw	572
" 25	Merthyr Tydfil, Inhabitants of	Mr. C. Talbot	81
" 25	Kensington	Mr. Taylor	400
" 26	Burslem, Meeting at; John Mellor, chairman	Mr. Adderley	1
" 26	Kids Grove, Meeting at; Thomas Hickman, chairman	"	1
" 26	Dundee, Meeting at; David Cook, chairman	Mr. Armitstead	1
" 26	Canterbury, Inhabitants of	Capt. Brinckman	220
" 26	Rusholme, "	Mr. A. Egerton	320
" 26	Greenock, "	Mr. Grieve	254
" 26	Coventry, "	Mr. Hill	28
" 26	Dumfries, "	Mr. Jardine	662
" 26	Wilmslow, "	Mr. Legh	101
" 26	Lambeth, "	Mr. M'Arthur	2,149
" 26	Cardiff and Bonvilstone, In. of	Colonel Stuart	59
" 26	Stonehaven, Inhabitants of	Mr. Nicol	91
" 26	Blairgowrie, "	Mr. Parker	129
" 26	H. W. Beech and others	Baron L. Rothschild	698
" 26	Devonport, Inhabitants of	"	154
" 27	Clackmannanshire, "	Mr. Adam	105
" 27	Darlington, "	Mr. Backhouse	82
" 27	North Wootton, "	Sir Wm. Bagge	18
" 27	Forfar, "	Mr. Baxter	91
" 27	Manchester, "	Mr. Jacob Bright	510
" 27	Dublin, "	"	155
" 27	Rathmines, "	"	141
" 27	Street, "	"	93
" 27	Manchester, Members of the School Board	"	9
" 27	Kingstown, Inhabitants of	"	17
" 27	Bath, "	Mr. D. Dalrymple	116
" 27	Colonel W. E. Evans, junior, and others	Mr. Eastwick	410
" 27	Tranent, Inhabitants of	Lord Elcho	107
" 27	Glasgow, "	Mr. Graham	3,636
" 27	Biggar, "	Mr. J. Hamilton	219
" 27	Hackney, "	Mr. Holms	2,054
" 27	Liskeard, "	Mr. Horsman	26
" 27	Woolastone, "	Colonel Kingscote	7
" 27	Southwark, "	Mr. Locke	1,052
" 27	Calder Bridge, "	Mr. F. Stanley	13
" 27	Shrewsbury, "	Mr. Straight	77
" 27	West Kent, "	Mr. Taylor	281
" 27	Hawick, "	Mr. Trevelyan	372
" 27	Ipswich, Meeting at; Edward Grimwall, chairman	Mr. West	1
" 28	Manchester (Ardwick Ward),	Mr. Birley	513
" 28	Cirencester, Inhabitants of	Mr. Bathurst	227
" 28	Salford, "	Mr. Charley	589
" 28	Cupar, "	Mr. Ellice	150
" 28	Cupar, "	"	28
" 28	Hendon, "	Viscount Enfield	81
" 28	Bourton-on-the-Hill, Inhab. of	Mr. Holford	24

April	28	Dalkeith, Inhabitants of ...	Sir A. Maitland.	258
"	28	Bognor, "	Earl of March...	172
"	28	Hamilton, "	Mr. Merry ...	26
"	28	Edinburgh "	Mr. Miller ...	1,024
"	28	Tonbridge "	Mr. Mills ...	85
"	28	Cefn "	Major Morgan ...	81
"	28	Coupar Angus "	Mr. Parker ...	147
"	28	Gloucester, "	Mr. Wm. Price .	334
"	28	Tower Hamlets, "	Mr. Samuda ...	2,048
"	28	Thurso, "	Sir John Sinclair	68
"	28	Girvan, "	Sir D. Wedderburn	97
May	1	Broadway, "	Mr. Amphlett ...	5
"	1	Glasgow, "	Mr. Anderson ...	3,815
"	1	Derby, "	Mr. M. T. Bass .	16
"	1	Montrose, "	Mr. Baxter ...	155
"	1	Brechin, Meeting at; D. D. Black, chairman ...	Mr. Baxter ...	1
"	1	Manchester, Inhabitants of ...	Sir Thos. Bazley	387
"	1	Annie P. Lane and others ...	"	165
"	1	Manchester, Inhabitants of ...	"	97
"	1	Stretford, "	"	223
"	1	New Castletown, "	Mar. of Bowmont	127
"	1	Manchester (St. Luke's Ward),	Mr. Jacob Bright	601
"	1	Cheetham Hill, "	"	144
"	1	Wootton Bassett, "	"	60
"	1	Staleybridge, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Buckley ...	552
"	1	Irvine, "	Mr. Craufurd ...	83
"	1	North Berwick "	Sir H. F. Davie	101
"	1	Jedburgh, "	"	248
"	1	Dirleton and Prestonpans, In- habitants of ...	"	70
"	1	Haddington, "	"	103
"	1	Falmouth, "	Mr. Eastwick ...	185
"	1	Paisley, "	Mr. Crum-Ewing	153
"	1	Janet Murdie and others ...	Mr. A. Ewing .	7
"	1	Jane Mason and others ...	Mr. Fawcett ...	450
"	1	Andover, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. D. Fortescue	48
"	1	Edgeware and Little Stanmore, Inhabitants of ...	Lord G. Hamilton	134
"	1	Wishaw, "	Mr. J. Hamilton	193
"	1	Gateshead, "	Mr. Headlam ...	872
"	1	Dinas Maudebury, "	Mr. Holland ...	49
"	1	Cambridge, Fellows of Colleges and Graduates of the University of...	Mr. B. Hope ...	16
"	1	Croydon, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Locke King	55
"	1	Wigan, "	Mr. Lancaster...	558
"	1	Bridgewater, "	Mr. G. Langton	98
"	1	Portobello, "	Mr. Macfie ...	742
"	1	Portobello, "	"	2
"	1	Edinburgh, "	Mr. M'Laren ...	321
"	1	Edinburgh, "	"	529
"	1	Bannockburn "	"	32
"	1	Dundee, "	Sir John Ogilvy	439
"	1	Joseph Young and others ...	Mr. Otway ...	307
"	1	New Quay, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Richards ...	49

May	1	Galashiels, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Trevelyan...	82
"	1	Denbigh, "	Mr. Williams ...	29
"	1	Wigan, "	Mr. Wood ...	529
"	1	Northampton "	"	1,151
"	1	Hackney, Meeting at; On be- half of meeting Men- tia Taylor ...	"	1
"	2	Stow on the Wold, Inhabitants of ...	Sir M. H. Beech	25
"	2	Rutherglen, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. P. Bouverie	256
"	2	Manchester, (New Cross Ward)	Mr. Jacob Bright	540
"	2	Manchester, (Ardwick Ward),	"	282
"	2	Manchester, Women of ...	"	79
"	2	Elgin, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Grant Duff .	116
"	2	Ingatestone and other places ...	Mr. Eastwick ...	1,011
"	2	Woolwich, Plumstead, Charlton, and other places ...	Mr. W. E. Gladstone	3,039
"	2	Greenwich, Members of the Advanced Liberal Association ...	"	15
"	2	Westminster, Inhabitants of ...	Capt. Grosvenor	2,001
"	2	Rawtenstall, "	Mr. Holt ...	209
"	2	Taunton, "	Mr. James ...	24
"	2	Carlisle, "	Sir W. Lawson	91
"	2	Marylebone, Meeting at; F. Pen- nington, chairman .	Mr. H. Lewis ...	1
"	2	Henry Jerson and others ...	Mr. Lusk ...	1,124
"	2	Hatton Garden, Meeting at; James Lyne Hooper, chairman ...	"	1
"	2	Edinburgh, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. M'Laren ...	977
"	2	Edinburgh, "	Sir A. Maitland	119
"	2	Dalkeith, Meeting at; Fergus Ferguson, chairman	"	1
"	2	Bristol, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Morley ...	1,260
"	2	Stoke-upon-Trent, "	Mr. Roden ...	205
"	2	Blackheath and Greenwich ...	Sir D. Salomons	807
"	2	Aberdeen, Meeting at; William Leslie, Lord Provost, chairman ...	Colonel Sykes ...	1
"	2	Cowbridge, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. C. Talbot ...	50
"	2	Grantham, "	Mr. J. Tollemache	63
"	2	Bromborough "	"	55
"	2	Cambridge, Fellows of Colleges and Undergraduates of the University of	Mr. S. Walpole	58
"	3	Kilmarnock, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. P. Bouverie	231
"	3	Ironbridge, "	Dr. Brewer ...	10
"	3	London, Liverpool, Manchester, and other places ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	10
"	3	Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage, Members of the Ex- ecutive Committee of; S. Alfred Stein- thal, treasurer ...	"	8

May	3	¶Manchester, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Jacob Bright	230
"	3	¶Manchester, (St John's Ward),	"	550
"	3	¶Hereford, Inhabitants of ...	"	9
"	3	Ardwick, "	"	544
"	3	Manchester, (St. Luke's Ward),	"	519
"	3	¶Stalybridge, Inhabitants of ...	"	334
"	3	¶Bollington and others ...	Mr. Brooks ...	187
"	3	¶Leeds, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Carter ...	187
"	3	¶Worthing, "	Mr. S. Cave ...	15
"	3	¶Salford, "	Mr. Cawley ...	62
"	3	¶Preston, "	Mr. Chadwick ...	48
"	3	Ardrossan and Saltcoats ...	Mr. Craufurd ...	179
"	3	¶Bath, "	Mr. D. Dalrymple ...	1,047
"	3	¶Birmingham, "	Mr. Dixon ...	21
"	3	¶C. S. Bulcring and others, ...	Mr. Fawcett ...	142
"	3	Christchurch, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. H. Burke ...	72
"	3	¶Tavistock, "	Mr. A. Russell .	67
"	3	¶Retford, "	Mr. M'Laren ...	174
"	3	§Great Grimsby, Meeting at ; Harriet Fellowes, chairman... ..	Mr. M'Laren ...	1
"	3	Ravensthorpe, Meeting at ; R. Fanshawe, chairman	Viscount Milton	1
"	3	¶Bridport, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Mitchell ...	72
"	3	¶Bridport, "	"	284
"	3	¶Midhurst, "	Mr. Mitford ...	74
"	3	¶Plymouth, "	Mr. Morrison... ..	1,348
"	3	Dunkeld, "	Mr. Parker ...	65
"	3	¶Liverpool, "	Viscount Sandon	269
"	3	¶Dewsbury, "	Mr. Taylor ...	183
"	3	¶Metropolis, "	"	106
"	3	¶Balbriggan, "	"	5
"	3	¶Leicester, "	"	338
"	3	¶Metropolis, "	"	306
"	3	¶Chelsea, "	"	895
"	3	¶Windsor, "	"	763
"	3	¶Charlotte A. M. Burbury and others	"	349
"	3	¶Greenwich, Rosina Driver and others	"	376
"	3	¶J. E. Bruce and others ...	"	294
"	3	¶Elizabeth Blackwell, M.D. ...	"	337
"	3	§White Cross Street, Members of the Mothers' Meet- ing, Saint Luke's ; Mary Pike, conductor	"	1
"	3	¶Hastings, Inhabitants of ...	"	25
"	3	§Chichester, Meeting at; Thomas Innman, chairman .	"	1
"	3	¶King's Lynn, Women of ...	"	14
"	3	¶Hastings, Inhabitants of ...	"	22
"	3	Trowbridge. "	Mr. Brown ...	10
"	3	¶Barrhead, "	"	163
"	4	¶Exeter, "	Mr. Bowring ...	80
"	4	¶Marylebone, "	Mr. T. Chambers	2,182
"	4	¶Southsea, "	Sir J. Elphinstone	148

May	4	Calne, Inhabitants of ...	Lord E. Fitzmaurice	89
"	4	§Northampton, Meeting at ; Members of the Cor- poration of, William Shoosmith, town clerk... ..	Mr. Gilpin ...	1
"	4	§Woolwich, Meeting at ; Eliza Mary King, presi- dent... ..	Mr. W. E. Gladstone	1
"	4	¶Peebles, Inhabitants of ...	Sir G. Montgomery	44
"	4	¶Cheltenham, "	Mr. B. Samuelson	870
"	4	¶Shadwell, Limehouse, &c. ...	"	54
"	4	¶Sheffield, Inhabitants of ...	"	399
"	4	¶Dunoon, "	"	374
"	5	§Lincoln, Meeting at ; James Bell, chairman ...	Mr. Palmer ...	1
"	8	¶Leith, Inhabitants of... ..	Mr. Macfie ...	214
"	9	Manchester, "	Mr. Jacob Bright	52
"	9	§Newcastle-on-Tyne, Municipal Corporation of ...	Mr. Headlam ...	Seal.
"	9	¶Chichester, Inhabitants of ...	Lord G. Lennox	200
"	9	¶Lincoln, "	Mr. Palmer ...	862
"	9	¶Grantham, "	Mr. F. Tollemache	16
"	9	Framlingham, "	"	88
"	9	¶Wandsworth, "	"	84
"	9	§Framlingham, Meeting at ; Jas. Larner, chairman...	"	1
"	11	§South Shields, Inhabitants of...	Mr. Jacob Bright	30
"	15	§Greenwich, Meeting at ; W. Bennet, chairman .	Mr. W. E. Gladstone	1
"	16	Newcastle-under-Lyne ...	Mr. Allen ...	23
"	18	Wick, Inhabitants of ...	Mr. Loch ...	116
"	19	Nairn, "	Mr. Mackintosh .	61
June	9	§Newark-on-Trent, Meeting at ; Josiah Mellor, M.A., chairman	Mr. Bristowe ...	1
"	19	§Leeds, Meeting at; John Bairan, chairman	Mr. Baines ...	1

In addition to those enumerated above, there have been presented 162 petitions from 162 individual women householders.

Total number of Petitions 620—Signatures 186,890

*The petitions marked ¶ have the addresses of some or all of the petitioners affixed.
The Petitions marked § are signed officially.*

The following summary of petitions for Women's Suffrage, presented to the House of Commons during the session of 1871, is taken from the thirtieth Parliamentary report :—

	No. of Petitions signed Officially	Total No. of or under Seal.	Total No. of Petitions.	Total Signatures.
Women's Disabilities Bill—Against ..	1	1	1	1
" " " In favour	73	620	186,890	

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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

THIRD ANNUAL
MEETING IN EDINBURGH

IN

QUEEN STREET HALL,

ON 22D JANUARY 1872,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

THE EDINBURGH BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY
FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHN GREIG & SON.

MDCCCLXXII.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

MRS M'LAREN, Newington House, PRESIDENT.

MISS BURTON, Liberton Bank.
MISS CALDWELL, 2 Victoria Terrace, Portobello.
MISS CRAIG, 6 Carlton Street.
MISS A. CRAIG, 6 Carlton Street.
MRS CRUDELIUS, 7 Monteath Terrace.
MRS FERGUSON HOME of Bassendean.
MISS M. HUNTER, 5 Great Stuart Street.
MRS LOW, 30 Minto Street.
MRS M'QUEEN of Braxfield.
MRS NICHOL, Huntly Lodge.
MISS E. STEVENSON, 13 Randolph Crescent.
MISS WALKER, 7 Queen's Crescent.
MRS WIGHAM, 5 Gray Street.

MISS HUNTER, 5 Great Stuart Street, TREASURER.

MISS WIGHAM, 5 South Gray Street,
MISS AGNES M'LAREN, Newington House, } SECRETARIES.

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

THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

IN FAVOUR OF

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,

HELD IN

QUEEN STREET HALL, EDINBURGH,

JANUARY 22. 1872.

A PUBLIC MEETING was held in Queen Street Hall, on Monday, 22d January, in favour of conferring the Electoral Franchise on Women who are qualified as being owners or occupiers of lands or houses in their own right. On the platform were—Sir Robert Anstruther, Bart., M.P.; Mr Duncan M'Laren, M.P.; Mr John Miller, M.P.; Dr Lyon Playfair, M.P.; Professors Kelland, Masson, and Calderwood; Mr W. A. Brown, advocate; Mr M'Lennan, advocate; Bailie Marshall; Mr John Cox, Mr R. Cox, W.S., Mr Alexander Nicolson, Mr W. M'Crie, Mr David Pryde, Councillors Millar and Bladworth, Mr Stephen Wellstood, Mr James Clark, Mr Ord of Muirhouselaw; and a number of ladies, including Mrs M'Laren, Mrs Ord, Mrs Clark, Mrs M'Crie, Mrs Warren; Misses Taylour of Belmont, Wigham, Hunter, M'Laren, Burton, Kirkland, and Walker; Mrs Robertson and Miss Shepherd, Paisley, &c.

On the motion of PROFESSOR KELLAND, Sir Robert Anstruther was called to the chair.

The CHAIRMAN said it would require few words from him to convince the meeting that the subject they were met to discuss was one which demanded their serious attention. From the first time this subject was mooted in Parliament, he felt himself compelled by a sense of justice to give it his cordial support—(applause)—and for this simple reason, that it appeared to be just. He did not trouble himself with abstruse questions regarding what might follow the enfranchisement of women. He dealt with this question, as he was accustomed to deal with most other public questions, in a very simple fashion. He asked himself whether the thing proposed to be done

was just and right; and if he conceived it to be just and right, he voted for it, and left the consequences to take care of themselves. (Applause.) It appeared to him that it was singularly appropriate that a subject of this sort should be discussed in this city. Edinburgh had become famous for the education of women, and he might also say famous for the want of education of women. (Laughter.) Within the last year he had been delighted and surprised at the magnificent schemes which had been carried out for the endowment of the schools under the charge of the Merchant Company; and the chairman of that Company had been praised by all sections of the community in England and Scotland, and all the civilised world he might say. (A Voice—"Question.") It must be a great satisfaction to that gentleman, and those who acted with him, to know that their example had been held up as worthy to be followed by all educational reformers. There was another subject connected with the education of women—he referred to the failure of the lady medical students in Edinburgh to obtain satisfaction and justice at the hands of the University Court. It was not his province to enlarge on that question, but he did say that it was with surprise and regret that those who were interested in the University of Edinburgh had seen the authorities failing to implement what was considered to be their honourable promise to those students. (Applause and hisses.) He did not hesitate to say they had the sympathy of all those who were interested in the medical profession; and it would be very easy for him to demonstrate what, in his opinion, was the folly of those distinguished gentlemen. That would be foreign to his purpose. He would only say this, that when they found in a free country men behaving so unfairly to women, it was high time that they should be given more power to speak and act for themselves. (Cheers, and a hiss.) Sir Robert then proceeded to refer to the debate which took place in the House of Commons early last spring on the very interesting question which they were to discuss that evening. That was a debate, he said, of a very remarkable kind. Those who were interested in the enfranchisement of women might contrast it very favourably with the debate and division which took place on the subject the year before. Among the speeches there was, above all, that of the Prime Minister. It was not a very long speech, it was not a speech in which he declared his opinion in their favour; but, if he was not very much mistaken, it was a speech which caused them to see the beginning of the end of their great movement. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Before, however, alluding to that speech, he would refer to one or two others. The first speech hostile to their movement was made by Mr Bouverie, the member for Kilmarnock. It was a speech characterised by great want of taste, and one which, had there been time, might have been very easily answered. Mr Bouverie did not hesitate in that speech to bring very serious charges against some very distinguished people—against men who were not in the House to defend themselves. He said—"To his mind, his hon. friend (Mr Jacob Bright) struck at the very foundation of society—namely, the family. Was the head of the family the man or the woman? Was the head of the

family to be the master of the family, or was he not?" Then he went on to say that he would quote a passage from Mr Mill:—"If married life were all that it might be expected to be, looking to the laws alone, society would be a hell upon earth." And again—"The law of servitude in marriage is a monstrous contradiction to all the principles of the modern world. . . . There remain no legal slaves except the mistress of every house." Mr Mill didn't say there a word against the sanctity of marriage; what he objected to, and most reasonably, was the law under which woman was compelled to be the absolute slave of her husband. Upon that Mr Bouverie founded this very unwarrantable remark—"Such were the views on which were founded the operations of those persons outside the House who asked for an extension of the franchise to women owners of property." It would be impertinence on his (Sir Robert's) part to attempt to defend Mr Mill against such charges as these; and his whole married life gave a triumphant answer against any charges made against him by Mr Bouverie. And they with him would acquit all others interested in this movement of anything like the charges that Mr Bouverie would there desire to bring against them. Another speech was that of Mr James, the member for Taunton, who complained that if they gave the franchise to women, they would then be eligible to sit in the House of Commons, and, of course, to be representatives in the House of Peers, act on juries, and sit upon the Episcopal benches. It appeared to him that that was straining the matter a little too far. He never heard any desire on the part of any lady to become a bishop. He did not know that a bishop's was such an enviable position, although he had a seat in the House of Lords; nor had he heard, on their part, any claim or desire to be admitted members of the House of Commons. In principle it was perfectly true, if it were competent for women to sit on school-boards in London, comprising forty-nine members, it might be competent for them to sit in the House of Commons. It would enliven their debates and society very much. His answer to Mr James would be, that if it were objectionable that they should assert these claims, they could exclude them by statute. One of Mr James' statements was, that if women were endowed with the franchise they could not be expected to give an unbiassed vote, the result of their political convictions. There was no doubt that, if true, was a very serious charge; but it proved rather too much. If they refused to enfranchise women because they could not be expected to give an unbiassed vote, they ought to disfranchise all men who did not give such a vote. It was matter of notoriety that a large number of the enfranchised classes were not in a position to exercise an independent opinion of themselves; and they had no scruple to give them a vote. His firm belief was, that so far from not giving an unbiassed vote, they would, quite as much as any class of the constituency, desire that their votes should be used for the general and social welfare. (Laughter.) Mr James hoped that the House would not be led away by itinerant and restless ladies; but he seemed to forget that there had been itinerant and restless men

who had accomplished great things—there was hardly any reform effected in the country but had been accomplished by agitation. Mr James winded up by imploring the House not to attempt to upset what nature had ordained and custom had ratified as the natural place for women in the State. If nature had ordained it—he presumed he meant the God of nature—and custom had ratified it, possibly they should have nothing further to say; but he adduced no proof that God intended unequal laws passed by men as against women. (Applause.) In concluding, Sir Robert alluded to the speech of Mr Gladstone, which he said indicated the working of his mind. They knew very well that when that distinguished man took anything in hand he carried it through. They had seen him take one or two things in hand since he became Prime Minister of England. They had all succeeded; and he thought they might fairly hope that if Mr Gladstone would devote his mind candidly and honestly to the consideration of this question it would succeed also. “We have done wisely,” he said, “on the whole, in giving both the franchise and the right of sitting on the school board to women. Then comes a question with regard to Parliament, and we have to ask ourselves whether we shall or shall not go farther. Now I do go as far as to admit that my hon. friend has a presumptive case for some change in the law; although, for my part, I will go no farther until I know more of the nature of the change to be effected. . . . I admit there is more presumptive ground for change in the law than some of the opponents of the measure are disposed to own.” Then further on he said—“I cannot help thinking that, for some reason or other, there are various important particulars in which women obtain much less than justice under our social arrangements;” and “I am by no means sure that these inequalities may not have an indirect connection with a state of law in which the balance is generally cast too much against women, and too much in favour of men.” When they considered by whom these words were spoken, he thought they might, without presumption, take it that Mr Gladstone was turning his mind towards this matter seriously. In the closing sentence of his speech, Mr Gladstone said that although he could not vote for the bill of last year without some modification, yet he was not “sorry to think that some activity of thought in these busy days of ours is directing itself to the subject of the relations which actually prevail between men and women; and if it should be found possible to arrange a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power, the man who shall attain that object, and who shall see his purpose carried onward to its consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of other laws bearing upon the condition and welfare of women, will, in my opinion, be a real benefactor to his country.” As far as he (Sir Robert) could render Jacob Bright any assistance, he would be glad to do it, and hoped that those present, by their conduct and their resolutions, would give all the assistance in their power to aid him in passing his measure through the House of Commons. (Applause.) Apologies for absence had been received from Sir John Murray of Philiphaugh, Professor Caird, and the Rev. Dr Pulsford. A telegram has also been received

from Miss Robertson, who was to have been one of the speakers; and Professor Hodgson wrote:—“If I had any leisure and strength for public meetings not connected with my immediate duties, I would certainly be present at the meeting this evening. The more I think of the subject the more surprised I am that, all other legal qualifications for the suffrage being present, sex should be made a disqualification. Of course, the advocates of the present one-sided and unjust state of affairs will require women to shew reason why they should be admitted to the franchise; but I think as regards principle the advocates of the present system are bound to shew why women should be excluded. That the admission of women to the rights of voting would powerfully help to abolish what of male tyranny, injustice, and cruelty yet remain in our legislation and social intercourse, I am satisfied; and I have not yet heard or read of any valid argument against it. I trust that this meeting will greatly aid the movement. It is well that both the members for the burgh and the member for the university are warmly in its favour.” (Applause.)

Miss WIGHAM, one of the secretaries, then read the annual report of the Edinburgh Branch of the Society:—

“In presenting our Annual Report for the year 1871 to our friends and supporters, we would claim their continued and increased sympathy and help, in the hope that many more anniversaries will not come round before our efforts in this matter shall have arrived at their legitimate conclusion, being crowned with success. Reasonable objections to our claims cannot well be substantiated, and unreasoning prejudice is fast dying away before the advance of general intelligence.

“Our operations during the past year have been similar in character to those adopted during previous years, but we have to report an increase in amount of work done, and a proportional amount of successful result.

“The holding of public meetings has again been adopted to considerable extent. The series commenced with the great Annual Meeting in the Music Hall, on the 12th January 1870, presided over by our much honoured senior member, Mr Duncan M'Laren, and aided by the presence and advocacy of Mr John Stuart Mill, and many other influential friends of women's suffrage. This was followed, during the year, by sixty public meetings held in different parts of the country. These were generally presided over by the chief magistrate or some other influential citizen of the towns in which they were held: and from nearly all of these, petitions were voted and signed by the chairman in support of Mr Jacob Bright's Bill.

“We have to express our obligations to Mrs Fawcett for coming to Scotland, and delivering able and elegant lectures in St Andrews, Stirling, and Paisley; and we must again record our thanks to Miss Taylour, for her most industrious, gratuitous, and efficient advocacy of women's suffrage, while delivering upwards of fifty addresses in many

towns of Scotland. On nearly all of these occasions, the lecturer was accompanied by a member of our committee, who succeeded in organising allied committees to the number of twenty-four, to co-operate with our Association, and to promote the signing of petitions to parliament, and in other ways to give efficient aid in the future agitation.

"On the 13th of February 1871, Mr Jacob Bright's Women's Electoral Disabilities Bill was introduced into the House of Commons; besides his name, on the back of the Bill were also the names of Mr E. B. Eastwick and Dr Lyon Playfair. On the 3d of May, Mr Jacob Bright, in a powerful speech which called forth the warm commendation of the Premier, moved the second reading of the Bill. The motion was seconded by Mr Eastwick, and supported by Lord John Manners, Dr Lyon Playfair, and Mr Ward Hunt. The arguments used by these gentlemen, it would seem to us, must convince every candid mind of the justice of the cause they so ably and generously advocate; and for their advocacy we would record our heartfelt thanks.

"The opposition was conducted by Mr Bouverie, Mr Scourfield, Mr Beresford Hope, Mr Newdegate, and Mr James, and to the speeches of these gentlemen we may refer for all the objections that can possibly be raised against women's suffrage—not a very convincing array truly!

"Mr Gladstone spoke carefully yet candidly on the question, reviewed the arguments on both sides, admitted that the 'mover of the Bill had a presumptive case for some change;' 'that there was more presumptive ground for some change in the law than most of the opponents of the measure are disposed to own;' alluded to the fact that there is a progressive increase in the number of self-dependent women, and that they approach the task of providing for their own subsistence under greater difficulties than attach to their more powerful competitors; and that there are various important particulars in which women obtain much less than justice under social arrangements. He added, 'I am by no means certain that these inequalities may not have an indirect connection with the state of law in which the balance is generally cast too much against women, and too much in favour of men.' He touched on several points wherein the law does *less than justice* to women, and concluded by stating that he was not prepared to vote for the Bill in its present state. He added, 'I am not sorry to think that some activity of thought in these busy days of ours is directing itself to the subject of the relations which actually prevail between men and women; and if it should be found possible to arrange a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power, the man who shall attain that object, and who shall see his purpose carried onward to its consequences in a more just arrangement of the provisions of other laws bearing upon the condition and welfare of women will, in my opinion, be a real benefactor to his country.' Mr Gladstone did not (as in 1870) vote against the Bill!

"On the question being put, there appeared for the second reading, 151; against it, 209; majority against the Bill, 58.

"Although numerically we seem to have lost, the analyses of the division gives many encouraging circumstances, a few of which we quote, as they cannot fail to be of historical interest. The Bill was supported by 96 Liberals and 55 Conservatives, including four members of the late Government, Mr Disraeli, Mr Corry, Mr Ward Hunt, and Lord John Manners. Out of the 151 who voted for the Bill, 42 were new supporters; of these, 20 were Liberal and 22 Conservative. Seventeen members who voted against the Bill in 1870 voted for it last session. Five others who voted against Mr Mill's motion in 1867, voted with Mr Bright in 1871; so that out of the 42 new adherents, 22 were former opponents. Against this, we must notice the defection of three members who voted for the Bill in 1870, and against it in 1871. The majority which threw out the Bill contained 115 Liberals and 102 Conservatives. The five great towns which return each three members to Parliament, give undivided support to the Bill. There is no other political or social question which secures the unanimous support of the representatives of these large towns. Out of their 15 votes, 12 were recorded in its favour in May last, and one adverse vote was explained as having been given under a mistake, the other two were neutral. Of the constituencies, 22 gave their full vote of two each for the Bill; 61 gave it their full vote of one each; and 38 constituencies have given each one vote for the Bill, their other vote being neutral; so that 125 constituencies are now ranged on the side of the Bill against 100 in 1870.

"The total number of members now in the House of Commons who have voted or paired in favour of women's suffrage is 202. For the Bill, counting tellers and pairs, on 5th May, there were 159, against it, 228, and absent, 271; of the Scotch members, 25 voted for the Bill, 13 against it, and 22 were absent, the Scotch members having thus declared themselves as two to one in favour of women's suffrage. During the session of 1870, 622 petitions signed by 186,976 persons were presented to the House of Commons in favour of women's suffrage. Of these petitions, 286 were sent from Scotland, including 10 from the Town Councils of the most influential cities and burghs.

"We desire to express our sincere thanks to all the members who voted for the Bill, and especially to Mr Jacob Bright, for so ably and vigorously introducing and conducting the question. He has agreed again to bring in his Bill early next session, and we earnestly hope he will be supported from without even more largely than in past years, to shew a sense of gratitude to himself, as well as a strenuous determination to press for a successful issue to this year's struggle.

"The exercise of the municipal franchise by women in England is a useful illustration of the advantage of women voting at elections. To Scotland this act of justice has not yet been extended, but it is probable

the greater will include the less, and the claim for Parliamentary representation will include that for Municipal representation also.

"The important position which the question of women's suffrage has now assumed, has called for the organisation of a representative society in London to watch over the question. This Central National Society numbers among its members forty members of Parliament, and a long list of the most influential names. All local associations throughout the kingdom are invited to take part, by their representatives, in the deliberations of this society, whose special function it is to watch the action of Parliament, and summon on occasions of importance, the energy, strength, and co-operation of the provincial societies—thus forming at once a rallying point and watch-tower for the whole country.

"A very pointed argument in favour of women's suffrage exists in the fact, that more than two millions of women in the British islands are self-supporting, and this number is increasing from year to year. Many of these women conduct extensive business concerns, and many provide for the support of families and dependents. That these industrious, tax-paying citizens should be denied the right of direct representation is an injustice which surely cannot long be tolerated. We claim representation for all women who are householders or owners of land in their own right, because we cannot but see that injustice in legislation prevails towards non-represented classes, and that appeal to the Imperial Parliament is more respected from electors than from non-electors. We also claim the suffrage for women in order to their having just legislation in matters specially referring to them wherever the laws are partial and unjust. But not for themselves alone do women desire the franchise; they wish to have a constitutional opportunity of expressing their opinion in matters of which they are peculiarly qualified to know something: such as questions concerning the care of the poor—the reformation of criminals—the laws of health—concerning morality and education—and concerning war and peace.

"The Home Secretary, on being questioned recently by his constituents as to his views of women's suffrage, gave forth as one argument against it, "that women in Parliament might vote us into a war, knowing that they were themselves exempted from the danger of bearing arms." Could even the Home Secretary possibly utter this argument seriously? Because, personally, women are not expected to go forth to battle, have they not vital interests dearer than their own lives perilled by the declaration of war? Do not women feel even more keenly than men the terrible attendants of war—the waste of precious life—the multiplication of widows and orphans—the desolation of homes—the cramping of industrial resources—the national suffering; and they would reasonably wish to have some voice respecting these things—not to sit in Parliament and vote the country into a war—but seriously and intelligently to vote for such men being sent there as shall act for the general well-being of the nation, applying the principles of legislation

uniformly to all classes, and who shall, in the spirit of true patriotism, institute measures in accordance with that 'righteousness which alone exalteth a nation.'

Miss Wigham then read the names of committee, and added, "In reading over these names, there is one name omitted to which we would refer with feelings of touching interest. We allude to that of Miss Dick Lauder, whose sudden removal from among us has filled our hearts with sadness. We shall greatly miss her faithful, ready help, her unvarying gentleness, and her wise counsel; but, while feeling our loss, and deeply sympathising with her bereaved family, we bow before the Wisdom which has taken her from this sphere of service. It might have been more in accordance with our feelings that this meeting should not have been held to-night, but it would not be according to the mind of her who has left us, that duty should be postponed on account of feeling; and the sudden removal of workers from this life but calls to those who remain to fill up the ranks, and to be yet more zealous and faithful, for the time is short; we know not how short."

Mr ALEX. NICOLSON, advocate, seconded the adoption of the report. He said he looked upon this movement as one of the most important of the present time; and believed that when it attained practical success—the time for which was not far distant—it would lead to results, both as regarded social and political consequences, which, so far from being injurious, as some ignorant and prejudiced people thought, would, in his estimation, be beneficial both as regarded their influence on general politics and upon the relations of society. He believed the anticipations expressed in the report were well founded, and though they had met with some obstructions in the past, and might look forward to such before they attained success, they must look to it as a part of the ordinary process through which every salutary change in this country had to pass before it became law. This measure, to adjust the balance of political power, had been on the *tapis* for only four or five years. When it was first introduced to the House, only seventy members voted for it, and it had since gained to its side no less than two hundred members of the House of Commons. That fact in itself was a strong presumption that a measure which in so short a time had commended itself to so large a number of members was likely soon to be crowned by success, especially when they looked at the constitution of the majority, and considered the fact that twenty-five to thirteen of the Scotch members were in favour of the bill. This measure had drawn to its support men who were diametrically opposed to each other, not only in politics, but on almost all matters on which men thought. It was a certain augury of the success of this measure when they found that it drew into the lobby such men as Mr Mill and Mr Disraeli, Mr Jacob Bright and Mr Ward Hunt, Dr Lyon Playfair, and Lord John Manners, the latter of whom, he said, was the representative of everything that was sentimental and conservative.

(Applause.) He did not say that in disparagement of Lord John Manners; on the contrary, he entertained great esteem for his Lordship both as a man and a poet. Another augury of success was the speech made by Mr Gladstone, which shewed that after the Premier had overcome the difficulty of making up his mind—(laughter)—and had attained that point when he was satisfied that it was his duty, he would then, with all the earnestness and power of his magnificent nature—(renewed laughter)—declare that this measure must be carried, and that the whole weight of the Government would go in its support. (Applause.)

The CHAIRMAN put the motion to the meeting, and declared it carried.

X ✓ Mr MILLER, M.P., moved the following resolution:—"That the ownership or occupation of lands or houses being now the basis of representation, it is unjust in principle to make sex a ground of disqualification, thereby excluding a large number of intelligent persons well qualified to exercise the electoral franchise, who pay all the national taxes and local rates equally with men." To his mind this resolution brought pointedly before them the wrong to women by the existing state of the law, and if it was their opinion that such a wrong existed, it would be their duty to move so as to have the law amended as soon as they possibly could. The present state of the law appeared to him to have arisen from some eastern idea that women were inferior to men, or that exercising the right of voting in the election of members of Parliament is incompatible with their nature. This idea was one they could not admit, and he did not know how else they could account for the existing state of the law. The defect which some classes of women in this country previously had through want of education was being done away with, and he hoped this movement would go on until the sexes were on a footing of perfect equality; but even in their present state, women were not in any degree inferior to those who enjoyed the franchise. They knew that the right of women to vote had been conceded in 1869 in municipal elections in England, and that in such elections they had exercised their right with quite as much intelligence as men. In 1870 the same right was conceded in the English Education Bill, and not only that, but women have been elected as members of the School Boards, even of the School Board of our great metropolis. (Applause.) Parliament having gone so far in the right direction, it was difficult for him to understand why it stopped short of giving to them the Parliamentary franchise. He hoped sincerely this would soon be accomplished. Some people said that women did not wish to interfere in politics. Mr Jacob Bright's Bill would not enforce voting on the part of women householders, it would only confer the right, that right to be exercised as they may think fit; but he knew many women who would exercise their right, and quite as intelligently as men. It was also objected that women could not undergo the hustling and tumult of voting at general elections. In answer to this, he was happy to be able to say that they had no tumults at their

Edinburgh elections; but even in districts where such scenes took place, the ballot system, which will (it is all but certain) be in operation before the next general election, will admit of the most delicate lady recording her vote with the utmost comfort. He for one would rejoice to see women in possession of the Parliamentary franchise, as he felt confident that were their voice heard by our Legislators, it would vastly aid in making laws most important for their own sex and the social condition of the country. (Hear, hear.) Had women been allowed to vote for members of Parliament, they might never have had their statute-book polluted with such laws as had lately been passed, and the sooner these were wiped off the better. (Cheers and hisses.) He hoped that this meeting, and others to be held in the country, would not hesitate in adopting the resolution he had proposed. (Applause.)

✓ Miss TAYLOUR of Belmont, who was received with loud cheers, said—I beg to second the resolution which has now been submitted to this meeting. I do so with a feeling of solemnity, for I believe that the cause which we seek to advance by our meeting here this evening is one of grave and vital importance. The question at issue is not merely that of deciding the justice of admitting ratepaying women to a due share of the privileges as well as the burdens of householders; nor is it one narrowed down to the consideration of whether the one sex is mentally equal to the other; but it is in reality the great and important question of whether woman is a complete and responsible human being, having the correspondent inherent rights of such, or whether she is in truth but a mere chattel, created solely for man's service or pleasure, and consequently intended to be dependent upon his will and subject to his rule. This question involves the most momentous and weighty interests; it affects the welfare of the whole human race—(applause)—and we have come to a period in the world's history when it must be settled completely and conclusively. It is fortunate that the difficulty of its settlement bears no proportion to the magnitude of its importance. In truth there is no difficulty surrounding it that will not be easily swept away by those who have entered into the spirit of our Lord's command—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Emancipated from narrow prejudice and superstition, and enlightened by Christian love, reason will be quite able to guide to a just and wise arrangement of those matters of detail that selfishness or ignorance now so often persistently strive to distort and darken. Every one capable of forming an intelligent and candid opinion must surely allow that the capacities bestowed by nature upon any creature are given for development and use; also that such gifts can never be fully developed and used while they are repressed and dwarfed by restraint. Yet, so far as women are concerned, these very plain axioms have always been, and still are, more or less practically denied. This denial has not been the less real or less foolish because it can be traced back to the earliest ages of the world. Hoary antiquity may

becloud with its delusive mists, and appeal to a morbid veneration; but it can never change that which is eternally true. The root from which woman's subjection sprung may be easily traced. When sin entered the world there came in its train dangers and difficulties that required man—the physically stronger—to take the precedence that was indispensable in order to enable him to become the protector of woman—the physically weaker—but the taking of this precedence did not prove man's superiority to woman in any other attribute than that of mere muscular power. (Applause.) And as a balance to this superior strength, impartial nature has endowed woman with such peculiar attributes, as enable her to give to man adequate compensation for the protection that he accords. In the beginning man and woman were created equals, made in the same divine image. God blessed them unitedly, and gave them conjoint dominion over the world. The distinctive characteristic differences that marks the sexes were intended to complement each other, and blend in one harmonious and perfect unity, not to lead to the usurpation of power by the one over the other. But sin came and changed this natural order of things, by converting the precedence—necessarily taken by the protector—from a matter of expediency, into a sovereignty that increased with exercise, until mere physical power established a supremacy that has existed in a greater or less degree until now. Under this arbitrary rule woman has been more or less degraded to the position of a slave; been treated in many respects as a mere chattel, and she has rarely, if ever, been in a position fully to develop, and freely to use the powers with which her God has gifted her. Politically, men have taken upon themselves the right of legislating for women, without any direct reference to their feelings and opinions—without any direct acknowledgment of the truth that they are reasoning beings like themselves. So also socially. Men have arrogated to themselves in general the right to dictate to women what they should and should not be, and do, and learn; what is befitting for them, what unseemly, apparently quite unconscious that, in so doing, they treat them both unjustly and insultingly. If woman was intended thus to be under man's rule, it naturally follows that nature must have suited her gifts to the level of the designed position of inferiority. Either, then, she has the spirit and powers of an inferior, and will remain in the state of subjection natural to such, without need of restraint, and without feeling that state a hardship; or, on the other hand, she has not been given the spirit and lower powers of an inferior, in which case the laws, the rules that would force her into subordination, are both unnatural and cruelly tyrannical. A most emphatic protest is now being made against the old and world-wide form of falsehood that assumes the inferiority of woman; and the very fact of such a protest being made, proves forcibly and conclusively, that neither in spirit nor in capacity is she a mere servile appendage to man. Woman stands forth now before the world, and claims as her birth-right the freedom to which every human being has an inalienable title. She claims the right to belong to herself, as a self-contained individual existence—the right that every soul, stamped

with the divine image, has of striving to perfect itself by the free exercise of its own faculties: the right to refuse submission to the sovereign rule of a fellow-creature, weak and erring as herself: the right to perfect liberty in fulfilling her duties in the world in accordance with nature's teachings and her own convictions: in short, her right to live up to the full measure of her capacities, to reach up to the highest and most useful standard she can attain. In answer, some may say that we have—under existing circumstances—all these rights sufficiently acknowledged and respected. Those who would say so take a very narrow and imperfect view of life indeed, and proclaim their ignorance in regard to the workings of human nature. It is undoubtedly true that some women can and do live high and useful lives under existing circumstances. But if all this high and holy living was united to the untrammelled practical living that should be made possible to every aspiring human soul, what an added wealth of work would come to bless the world! What an amount of gladness would accrue to many hitherto circumscribed workers, who are mourning over sorrow that they are helpless to relieve; sorrows, some of which they believe to be in some measure caused or intensified by the repression that degrades woman to the position of a mere cipher, or to that of a restrained and enfeebled worker. It is worse than vain to expect women to work with strong hearts and unflagging energy in the alleviation of distress, in the reclamation of the outcast, and the protection of the weak, if they are not permitted to give effective expression to their opinions when laws are framed that regulate these matters—laws that often nullify or weaken their best-directed efforts. Reason alone—apart from all the lessons that experience can teach—shews us that it is not a matter of doubt, but one of certainty, that none of the great social problems of life now awaiting solution can ever be satisfactorily settled until women take their full share in the regulation and administration of human affairs. And just in proportion as the feminine differs from the masculine, is it necessary for legislation to be the result of the combined wisdom of both sexes. Nor should woman's thoughts and influence be confined to social matters, for as her interests are co-extensive with human interests, wherever they extend her voice should be heard. The widest political questions affect her well-being as much as that of man, and even in their adjustment she must have something wise and useful to say that is especially hers. In deliberations that involve the issues of life and death, direct female influence should carry its full weight. The burdens and horrors of war fall quite as heavily upon women as upon men—perhaps more so, for there are sufferings worse than death or physical pain, as thousands of desolate women can testify. It is desirable, therefore, that we should have the franchise—not only that we may, through its exercise, be enabled to bring our due influence to bear directly upon social politics, but also that we may be in a position to give constitutional expression to our opinions, power to our influence, when men are called upon to debate matters that refer to peace and war. We are entering upon a momentous and stirring era in the world's history—much that has

hitherto been venerated and set apart for respectful homage is about to be dethroned. The knell of departing Conservatism is being rung—(loud applause)—and while it sounds out loud and clear, thrones shake, and people clamour for what will prove a delusion and a mockery, unless it is founded upon the basis of immutable justice and truth. When the spirit of change is thus brooding everywhere over the land—when destructive forces are marshalling, and the overturn of many things is imminent—are women—one half of the human race—to take no recognised part in determining questions that will involve the entire reorganisation of society? Yes! And when change is threatening to lay its busy hand upon our own time-honoured Constitution, are the daughters of free Britain to have no voice in deciding alterations that will affect the welfare of their beloved land—no power to give constitutional and effective expression to the loyal devotion that burns within them? Women are patriots as well as men; we, equally with our brothers, are descendants of liberty-loving sires. Yes, Scotchmen, if you love liberty and justice, we, your sisters, love them too. The same blood that flows in your veins flows in ours—the blood of those who fought and bled in the defence of right. Think you that we are content to forego our share in the freedom that our ancestors so nobly gained? No, we are not. Like you, we have inherited their love of liberty, their spirit of patriotism. This love of liberty, this spirit of patriotism that we possess, has at last cast aside the apathy that has hidden it so long, and, quickening into life and vigour, is inspiring us to arise and seek a position more worthy of the daughters of those who won the liberties you so much prize. If reforms are to be based upon the great fundamental principles of truth and justice—upon which alone stable and righteous government can be founded—woman must no longer be considered a political nonentity—she must no longer be treated as a chattel, or classed politically with minors, paupers, criminals, or lunatics; but she must take her true, her normal position by man's side—the dignified position of one who is conjoint owner of human capacity and human responsibility. The whole world, heavy laden with sin and sorrow, is crying loudly for ministration. So long as its intense hunger for sympathy is unsatisfied, its mighty cry for help unanswered, there will be work enough to task to the utmost the ability and the energy of every earnest man and woman in it. No estimate can ever be formed of how much the world has been impoverished by the folly that has ignored and repressed the highest powers of half the human race. Sometimes the foolish remark is made that the success of this movement for advancing the position of women will result in the turning of the world upside down. I once heard an excellent reply made to this by a gentleman, who said that, in his opinion, the world had been upside down all this time; and that he looked to the restoration of woman to her proper place of conjoint authority over it as the means by which it will be set right side up again. I believe there is a precious germ of truth enfolded in this reply. Since man and woman share the same humanity—are equally entrusted with the same awful talent of individual responsibility—

are called to live after the same divine example, and are joint-heirs of the same eternal destiny—should they not be guided in their lives by the self-same principles; and does not this involve equal freedom of action for both? This freedom has never yet been fully accorded to woman. Drawn down to the standard fixed by man, she has been restrained and subjected to his rule, until slavery has done its work by degrading her more or less too generally into a state of apathetic indifference, or selfish and enervating frivolity. Here and there in the past is seen the vision of some noble woman rising above the circumstances that surrounded her—bright exceptions, demonstrating what many might have been, if restraining pressure had been withdrawn. Prophetic, too, of coming days—when woman, stirred by high resolve, would, with the aid of good and earnest men, shake off the bondage that has fettered and degraded her sex so long, and advance with solemn step and thoughtful brow to resume her proper place by man's side. Those days have come. Even now is woman rising from the apathy and ignorance of past ages, and as she makes her first step forward, she meets an obstacle that bars her progress. This barrier is formed by the political disabilities that shut her up to the endurance of unjust laws, that brand her unlawfully with the insulting stamp of inferiority, and that weaken and restrain her efforts in every direction. We come to you, our brothers, and we ask you to remove this obstacle from our path. And we believe you will, for we have faith in your manhood, in your love of justice. Perhaps there is not one man present who would deliberately allow low and selfish considerations to lead him to withhold either political or social justice from women, but probably there are many amongst you who have hitherto held back from helping us to gain our enfranchisement, because you have permitted the fanciful veil of poetic imagery to hide from your view the realities of life. I beseech of you, brothers, to cast this veil aside, and look at the sad truths it conceals. Look seriously at the painful fact that tens of thousands of unprotected women are struggling to escape from the cold grasp of cruel poverty. Crushed beneath a sad weight of deprivation, they almost hopelessly seek or wait for the work that comes not. These struggling, suffering women are the sisters of our countrymen, and some of you now before me may yet have daughters amongst them. I solemnly charge you to ponder this sad—this unnatural state of things; and when you trace, as you easily may—how much of this misery results from the political and social injustice to which women are subjected, I feel confident that you will come with generous haste to aid us in the advancement of the righteous reform we seek. Emancipation from prejudice and superstition will be followed, too, by the recognition of the truth, that the womanliness that is worthy of admiration will not, as some absurdly dread, disappear or be injured by the concession of political justice; for as an Act of Parliament did not confer the distinctive attributes of womanhood, neither can one destroy them. Nature, which gave woman her peculiar gifts, will maintain them—nay more, she will assert her power by developing them more and more in pro-

portion as full and perfect liberty is attained, for undue restraint and subjection is as injurious to the development of true womanhood as to that of manhood. We are told that "whatever day makes man a slave takes half his worth away," and so is it also with woman. In like manner as enfranchisement benefits man, so will it benefit her also. Freedom, not subjection, is the root of virtue in the one sex as well as in the other. Weak dependence upon the will of others is not womanliness, any more than the self-asserting power of mere brute force is manliness. It is true, too, that the parasite, however much it may please the eye by its graceful twinings, is no sign of good to the noble tree; it often causes the decay that it so certainly hastens. In view of the true solemnity of human life, and the undoubted duty that lies upon woman to take her full share of work and responsibility in regard to all that concerns it, what are the paltry, petty objections worth that are brought forward to interpose between her and the due discharge of this duty? They are mere motes in the sunbeam, mere flecks of foam upon the ocean wave. There they dance, there they shimmer; but the all-pervading flood of light shines brightly over all, undimmed in lustre and in power; the sounding main sweeps grandly on, its mighty depths unconscious of the froth that crests its waves: so the bright enlightening outflow of truth, the overpowering might that accompanies just principle, will continue to endure, and despite all paltry obstructions, will carry the righteous reform sought for on to a triumphant issue. If any tell you that the cry for woman's restoration to her normal position in the world comes only from a "restless and discontented few" who would draw the many into degradation, believe them not—the cry comes from the very heart and soul of true and earnest womanhood. It is uttered by those who would struggle upwards to regain the high position from which they have been dethroned, and who—in their upward struggle—would bear, high above all vulgar strife, the spotless fame of pure and gentle womanhood. It is not degraded and masculinised woman that we would enthrone, but the woman that nature formed to be noble, tender, pure, and true; and we would make it possible, too, for all women to escape from degradation, and join in the endeavour to rise to her original place in God's creation. From the deepest, most solemn conviction of our hearts, then, has our earnestness in this arduous work been evolved; and those have never fathomed the depths of an earnest woman's nature, they know nothing of the inflexibility of her determination, nor the energy with which she can prosecute what she believes to be a duty, if they think we will relax our efforts until success has crowned them. Then, and then only, may we hope to see the lofty ideal of the poet realised—woman rising to the full height of her normal grandeur,—

"Till at last she set herself to man
Like perfect music unto noble words,
And so these twain upon the skirts of time
Sit side by side, full summ'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each, and reverencing each;

Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love.
Then comes the statlier Eden back to man,
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm,
Then springs the crowning race of humankind."

May these things be. (Loud cheers.) The resolution was also adopted.

Professor CALDERWOOD submitted the third resolution to the meeting—"That this meeting desires to thank Mr Jacob Bright for his advocacy of the electoral rights of women, and for the success which has attended his efforts to enlighten the public mind on the subject by means of the discussion raised by him in Parliament on the bill for removing the electoral disabilities of women, and respectfully requests him to introduce his bill early in the ensuing session." He was sure they were all deeply convinced of the important service done to the country by any member who carried a measure of practical reform through the House of Commons. Those who remembered the ability with which Mr Bright advocated this cause when he appeared in Edinburgh, and had observed the effective support he had given to the claim of the ladies, when introducing his measure to Parliament, would be satisfied that he was entitled to hearty thanks and strong encouragement in continuing his efforts. On the ground of justice, he did not think much needed to be said with reference to the case before them. They had been asked—Who is the head of the house? To this, however, they had a very ready answer—the person who pays the rent of the house—(hear, hear)—and the taxes, and supports all who live in the house. And if it so chanced, because of affliction, that the person who was thus the head of the house was a woman, he felt ashamed of the man who would deny her the rights as head of the house. (Hear, hear, and applause.) And if it chanced that the woman was an eldest sister, and supported the house, and not an eldest brother, so much the more would he honour that sister, and stand by her claim to be honoured in the midst of our country, where he hoped they would always value moral worth and true honest purpose in fulfilling all the obligations which Providence might lay upon them. (Applause.) If they passed from the claims of justice to the interests of their nation, he would like to know if any one, looking upon the influence women exercised in society, would say that members of Parliament would be in no respect the better of having some portion of their constituency peculiarly interested in those matters which especially concerned women. He could not understand how there should be opposition to such a measure as this, except it was upon the very natural, proper, and honourable feeling which would desire to shelter women from suffering and rudeness, from shamelessness and from scorn. They all honoured the feeling which would cast a sheltering hand over woman, and try to save her from exposure to any of those perils which men might be prepared to encounter. Acknowledging all this, if there stood before them a plain injustice through a person who held property and discharged all the duties connected therewith, not receiving the rights of

property, then he would say, let justice be done. Had the question never been raised by those who thus ought to have a vote, they might possibly have been content to let it go by, but they were now entering a time when legislation must deal more especially with social questions, and touch women's interests even more than it had done in the past, and therefore they had come to a time when it was a right thing that a woman should stand forward and claim on ordinary grounds of justice that she should exercise such influence in the nation as her property and place distinctly entitled her to according to other principles of the Constitution. Then it was said that if women received that right which they claimed, they would use the right to the franchise, proceeding on knowledge gathered at second hand. He should like to know where the man was that used his right to the franchise, and proceeded from knowledge that was not gathered from second hand. He wondered who attended meetings gathered together for considering the interests of the community, who had knowledge at first hand on questions connected, for instance, with the army and navy, and those matters with which the Legislature had to deal, and professed itself competent to judge. He thought there were not many who would make such a claim. He should ask how many members of Parliament proceeded in legislation from knowledge gathered at second hand. When they had to do with the rights of women, and all those things which touched personal and domestic well-being, did they pretend to profess that they proceeded upon knowledge gained at first hand? He thought it was at least a feasible thing that, before they legislated for women, they should ask women to tell what they wished to be done in their own interests. (Applause.) They would give them a fair opportunity of expressing their own wishes, and, at least so far as some of them were constitutionally on other grounds entitled to vote, let them vote, indicating the direction in which they wish legislation should proceed. If they asked what women were so much interested in, he asked, were there no legal questions most seriously involving the interests of women, whose husbands were to them anything but the protectors they ought to be, and who knew what it was to allow their wives to toil and then take the gain? Was it not true that the laws affecting women might affect women holding property which was their own by all law and justice, just as a man who made it claimed it simply upon the grounds of earning it; and if it were true, consequent upon our present relations, that year after year orphan children were sadly neglected, and were cast upon the care of the State, was it asking too much in the interests of sound and good government that women should also have something to say in reference to the education of those orphans, those dependents upon the State, whose training now determined the position that would afterwards be held by them as members of the nation. (Applause.) He thought they had only to consider what were the reasons which women had to speak out, only to bear in mind what was the nature of their claims, to be convinced that there should be some opportunity for giving voice to those wrongs which were now burning deep into the hearts of some, and finding no

utterance. He asked nothing in the way of discussing questions in regard to equality, but one question, and a great question, was this—Had women some knowledge in reference to their own wants that men had not? Was it true that the woman's sphere was home? And if it were true, could she not speak for home and all domestic claims as men could not? If so, she should be granted that right which she claimed by getting a free, formal, legitimate opportunity of expressing her desires, which would not only be in accordance with justice, but ultimately be a gain to the whole. (Applause.)

Mr W. A. BROWN, advocate, seconded the resolution, and in doing so he said that at one time he held very different views, and he appeared there that night in the humble attitude of penitence and conversion. (Laughter.) But while most cordially supporting the movement, he desired to explain the grounds on which his views rested. He did not recognise the political equality of the sexes as its foundation, and that for the best of all reasons, that he did not believe in that equality, or any other equality, in relation to the sexes. He said this in no disparaging sense; in some respects women were superior to men; all that he contended for was that equality could not be predicated in the constitution of the sexes. Nor did he think that anything of the nature of a State necessity had been made out requiring this claim to be conceded. On the occasion of the extension of the suffrage in 1868 there was a necessity which the State could not fail to recognise without serious injury to itself—he meant when a large section of the community for the first time received political power. He did not think that the cause they were met to promote stood in anything like that position; but that was not a matter to be regretted, for on that account it had a chance of receiving more close and dispassionate attention. He felt it to be open to him to say he thought it was holding the language of exaggeration to represent the continued withholding of this claim as a peril to the State. But on the other hand he had no doubt the cause was immovably fixed on principles of justice, and what was more, upon a clear view of what would eventually be for the public good; and, therefore, although he should not be disappointed if the cause progressed with but slow stages, he looked forward without apprehension to its ultimate and complete triumph. His reasons for supporting the movement were—(1.) That he could not withhold this claim without operating an injustice. Until the basis of parliamentary representation was changed in this country, he could not understand upon what principle a distinction could be maintained with the view of imposing disabilities between the property of women and the property of men. (2.) It was unjust and unwise not to concede it in view of the future history of the country, which would probably be called upon to a much greater extent than in the past to deal with questions, and with ever new and shifting aspects of the questions of women's rights. It was manifestly absurd that the ultimate solution of those questions in which women would certainly be gravely interested,

should depend on the voice and votes of men alone. (3.) A third reason was, that the influence and interference of women in political matters were proverbial, but while admitting that this influence was right, it should be provided that women should have political knowledge, and that could not be secured without political responsibility. Mr John Stuart Mill had pressed this argument with unanswerable force. (4.) He supported it because he believed that the co-operation of women with men on the political platform was an agency that was required to complete the moral education of the world. The world was growing older, and he doubted whether it was getting better, and they might well consider whether a great responsibility did not lie with them for having so long rejected the assistance which women had proved themselves so well able to render in the crusade they had to wage against vice, pauperism, intemperance, and crime. (Applause.) He concluded by proposing that the following addition be made to the motion:—"Resolve to present petitions to both Houses of Parliament, and memorials to the Prime Minister and Home Secretary in terms of the resolutions, and authorise the Chairman to sign the same in the name of the meeting."—Agreed to.

Mr DUNCAN M'LAREN, M.P., in moving a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said this should not be merely a formal vote of thanks, such as was passed to every Chairman, but one coming heartily from the meeting—(loud cheers)—for Sir Robert Anstruther had come at much inconvenience to himself in consequence of a recent accident, and had he not been devoted to this as he was to every other liberal question—(cheers)—he would have had ample grounds for declining to take part in this meeting.

The motion was carried by acclamation, and duly acknowledged by Sir Robert Anstruther.

INCOME.

Subscriptions and Donations,	£297 15 6
Collections at Meetings,	34 17 9
Interest from Bank,	0 5 3
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Due to Treasurer,	£332 18 6
	12 0 9½
	<hr/>
	£344 19 3½

EXPENDITURE.

Due to Treasurer from last year,	£5 18 10
Expenses of Sixty Public Meetings,	220 17 8½
Printing and Publications,	56 16 7
Expenses attendant in getting up Petitions,	36 11 7½
Postages,	20 10 6½
Committee Room,	4 4 0
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	£344 19 3½

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

Alexander, Mrs, Roseby, Cres., £0 5 0	Livingstone, Josiah, Minto St. £0 10 0
Ashworth, Miss, Bath, 10 0 0	Low, Mr, Minto Street, 0 5 0
Ashworth, Miss L. S., do. 10 0 0	Low, Mrs, do., 0 5 0
Balfour, J., Bridge of Allan, 0 10 0	Low, Mrs, 37 South Clerk St., 0 2 0
Blackie, Mrs, 24 Hill Street, 1 0 0	Lusk, Alderman A., London, 5 5 0
Brown, Hugh, Arthur Lodge, 0 5 0	Macfie, R. A., M.P., 1 0 0
Brown, Mrs, do. 0 1 0	Macleod, Mrs, Ben Rhydding, 1 0 0
Brown, Miss, do. 0 1 0	Mein, Mrs, Kelso, 0 5 0
Brown, Mrs, 39 George Square, 0 10 0	Meikle, Rev. Mr, Inverary, 0 3 6
Buchan, Countess Dowager, 4 0 0	Melrose, Mr, George Street, 0 10 0
Cadell, Mrs, Bellevue Cres., 0 5 0	Millar, John, 13 York Place, 1 1 0
Caldwell, Messrs, Waterloo Pl., 1 1 0	Millar, W. White, Regent Ter., 2 0 0
Caldwell, Miss, Portobello, 0 10 0	Miller, John, M.P., 5 0 0
Christie, Mrs, 11 Findhorn Pl., 0 2 6	Miller, Mr and Mrs W., London, 3 0 0
Clapperton, Miss, Drummd. Pl., 0 5 0	Mitchell, Joseph, Inverness, 1 0 0
Clark, Mrs, 10 Duncan Street, 0 5 0	M'Kinnell, Mrs, Dumfries, 1 0 0
Connell, Dr, Peebles, 0 5 0	M'Laren, Mrs, Newington Ho., 10 0 0
Cowan, James, Royal Terrace, 2 0 0	M'Laren, Miss, do., 4 0 0
Cox, R., W.S., Rutland Street, 0 10 0	M'Laren, Duncan, jun, do., 1 1 0
Cox, Mrs, Gorgie House, 0 5 0	M'Lagan, Peter, M.P., 5 0 0
Craig, Misses, Carlton Street, 9 0 0	M'Queen, Mrs, Lansdowne Cres. 6 10 0
Do. do., donation, 3 0 0	Mossman, Mr, Princes Street, 0 10 0
Crighton, Mr, Stockbridge, 0 2 6	Munro, Dr, Melrose, 1 1 0
Cross, John, Oxford, 1 0 0	Murray, Sir J., Bart., Selkirk, 0 10 0
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Dalmahoy, Mr, 9 Forres St., 0 10 0	Nichol, Mrs, Huntly Lodge, 15 0 0
Dick, Miss, Burntisland, 1 0 0	Oliphant, Mrs, Findhorn Pl., 0 10 0
Dove, Hector, Trinity, 0 10 0	Oliver, John, 22 Square, Kelso, 0 1 0
Elliott, Sir Walter, Wolflee, 1 0 0	Ord, Mr & Mrs, Muirhouselaw, 2 0 0
Fairbairn, James, 0 5 0	Peat, Admiral, 5 0 0
Forster, Mrs, Berwick, 0 5 0	Peters, Mrs, Dundas Street, 0 2 6
Forster, Miss, do., 0 5 0	Pudman, John, London, 0 10 0
Frazer, Miss, 1 Forres Street, 0 2 6	Randal, Mr, Bernard St., Leith, 0 1 0
Friend, by Miss Kirkland, 0 2 0	Renton, Mrs Leamington Ter., 2 0 0
Friend, per Mrs M'Laren, 100 0 0	Renton, Rev. Henry, Kelso, 1 0 0
Gellatly, Mr, 0 2 6	Richardson, Mr James, 0 10 0
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Gifford, Lord, 2 0 0	Robson, W., Palmerston Road, 1 1 0
Gordon, Mrs, Nairn, 0 5 0	Rose, Hugh, 3 Hillside Cres., 5 0 0
Gordon, Miss, Huntly Cot., 0 2 0	Russell, Sheriff, Jedburgh, 0 10 0
Greig, D., 3 Spittalfields Cr., 0 10 0	Scott, Miss, 100 George Street, 0 10 0
Hunter, Misses, Gt. Stuart St., 10 0 0	Stevenson, Miss E., Randolph Crescent, 12 0 0
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Hume, Mr, Register Street, 0 5 0	Wellstood, Mrs, 14 Duncan St., 0 5 0
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Kirkland, Miss E., Raeburn Pl., 0 6 0	Wilson, Mrs G., Hawick, 1 0 0
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Law, Mr, St Andrew Square, 0 10 0	Young, Captain, Dunoon, 1 0 0
Lillie, Mrs, 19 Minto Street, 0 5 0	