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# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

— An ADDRESS by —

Mr. ROWLAND E. PROTHERO, M.V.O.,

To a Re-union of the Women's  
Suffrage Societies, held at Bedford,  
on Thursday, March 14th, 1912.

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An ADDRESS by

Mr. ROWLAND E. PROTHERO, M.V.O.,

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I cannot profess to speak on behalf of any of the four Suffrage Societies that are present here to-day. I belong to one of them; but I do not know that this afternoon I shall even express the views of that Society. I speak for myself, as one who has been a convinced advocate of Women's Suffrage for a quarter of a century, and as one who believes that a great cause is won in the end, not by violence, but by its own inherent justice.

There are two points on which I must briefly touch because I am sure they are in all our minds, and the first is the window-breaking in London. Now I protest as strongly as any man can against those acts of violence. I realise that the government in any civilised community must punish such offences. But you must remember this—that you are missing the whole significance of these acts of violence if you think that a number of women of all ranks and conditions of life suddenly have turned hooligans, wantonly destroying private property. That is not the case. It was a deliberate act committed with a full knowledge of the punishment that awaited it. I do not believe—to speak of two offenders who are personally known to me—that a woman of the age and position of Mrs. Brackenbury, or a gifted musical genius like Miss Ethel Smyth, went out into the public streets, faced the anger of an indignant crowd, wrecked windows, braved the ordeal of a police court, and are now enduring the

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suffering and humiliation of their inevitable punishment, in a sudden fit of hysteria. No, the real meaning of it is that women who could act thus were stirred by some very deep sense of intolerable wrong, and were impelled by a passionate feeling of protest against what they regarded as injustice. That is one point. Let me, before passing away from it, add this. When a child breaks out in a rash, you set to work to discover the disease of which that rash is the symptom. We have got to do that this afternoon, and to treat the window-breaking as a rash, as a symptom of some disease, and see if we can find out its cause.

The second point is what I may call the present political aspect. We are told by the Lord Chancellor, I believe, that it would be a constitutional outrage to give women votes in this present Parliament. I myself cannot regard it as more a constitutional outrage or less a constitutional outrage to grant votes to women than to grant votes to all adult males who have got a six months' residential qualification. If either of the proposals outrage the constitution, they outrage it in precisely the same way, namely, that they have not been definitely before the constituencies. If there is any question whether one has been longer and more publicly before the constituencies than another, it is Women's Suffrage. If you think for a moment that a Women's Suffrage Bill passed its second reading in 1878, in 1889, 1898, 1908, 1909, 1910, and in 1911, you cannot say that the subject has not been before Parliament for years. Add to that these two significant facts. In 1892 Mr. Balfour said in the House of Commons that, when next a Reform Bill was brought forward, Parliament would have to deal, and to deal boldly, with the large problem of Women's Suffrage. In November, 1909, Mr. Asquith said that, if in the coming Parliament they were going to bring forward a Reform Bill, they would leave Women's Suffrage as an open question for Parliament to decide. So then I say that if it is justifiable to pass the one measure without consulting the constituencies, it is equally justifiable to pass the other. To dispense with the necessity of getting the sanction of the electors in the case of men, and to insist upon it in the case of women, would be only another instance of men's injustice.

Now as to the justice—because after all that is the whole point—is it a just cause? You probably all of you know

that if an adult male possesses either the ownership or the occupation or the lodger franchise, he is entitled to vote unless he is disqualified. And these disqualifications are made for perfectly clear and intelligible reasons. If a man is an alien, if he is an idiot, if he is a lunatic, or a criminal, or a pauper, or is taking money for the conduct of the election, he loses his right to vote. So jealous is the legislature of this sacred right of the male, that a lunatic in his lucid intervals is allowed to vote. But a woman may be British born, the owner of property, paying rates and taxes, sound in mind, and law-abiding, and yet she is disqualified because she is a woman. As Miss Walmsley has reminded us, that may be a misfortune, but it can hardly be thought a crime. That is the position at the present moment.

The Nineteenth Century made a vast number of changes, but there was no change so vast as that which it has made in the position of women. Their education, their occupations, their habits, their amusements, their interests, were—to use a word which is very loosely applied but here is strictly accurate—revolutionised. Women to-day compete in public examinations with men, and in after life compete with them in a large range of professional and industrial employments. They appear as speakers on public platforms and in lecture rooms; they take an active part, not only in local, but in imperial politics, at the request of male voters. Their work in both historical and scientific research is solid, and it is also accurate. They hold a prominent place in all the art and literature of the day, both grave and gay; they travel; they explore; they take part in all the field sports of the day. Is it surprising that their interest in political questions has grown or that their capacity for political discussion is strengthened? Is it surprising that a new spirit of independence has grown up, when women's lives are thus enlarged, widened, and deepened? What is surprising is, I think, that men should still persist in treating them as criminals or lunatics or idiots or paupers in matters of the Parliamentary vote.

To a certain extent men have recognised this great change in the position of women. They have recognised it in many ways. Women, for instance, may be qualified to vote for the election of Parish Councils, Urban and District Councils, County Councils, and Poor Law Guardians. They may not

only vote, but may themselves be candidates for some of these bodies; many have stood; many have been elected. Nearly one half of the taxation of this country is raised and administered by public bodies, which are elected by women's votes, and of which women may be members. On one of the largest spending Committees of our own County Council we have two women colleagues, and, if Miss Walmsley will allow me to say so, their opinions are heard with a deference which we do not always accord to those of some of our male colleagues. That being so, can anyone tell me why it is more unbecoming to the beauty of a woman's character that she should vote for a Member of Parliament than for a Poor Law Guardian? If there is anything more unbecoming, so much the worse for the Member of Parliament. Is there anything more degrading to a woman that she should go into a quiet corner of a polling booth, perhaps every three or four years, and put a cross on a piece of paper, than it would be to become a canvasser in all the heat and hurry of a political election? I cannot, I confess, see the logic of admitting that a woman is capable to discharge all the duties of citizenship in all local matters, and yet of denying her even the right of a male lunatic in his lucid moments in matters of imperial policy.

Many may think that I have only shown you so far a sentimental grievance; even if it were so, I am inclined to think that sentimental grievances are often the hardest to bear. The grievance is sentimental only if there is no conflict or opposition of interest; but a grievance becomes a practical and real one if there is that opposition of interest. Of course, when you come to this side of the question, men tell you that women's disabilities in one direction are counter-balanced by their privileges in another. To some extent, perhaps, that may be true; but over a large range of interests—for instance, the laws of marriage, of property, of divorce, the guardianship of children, education, the liquor traffic, the white slave traffic, the whole range of employments open to women—in all these points women's interests are not the same as men's; they are not identical, and may be and often are opposed. Where you have an opposition of interests you have a practical grievance, if one side has the vote and the other has not.

Push that point further, and you come to what I think is the core of the whole question. You are not talking only about.

a number of leisured, comparatively well-to-do, cultured women. You have also to deal with the working-women, who are in active competition with men for work and wages. It is quite true that, as to the first class, many of them have only come to politics as a fresh interest of life. But the women who are competing with the men are in a very different position. Politics have come to them, and come to them as a necessity of their existence. If you look back again for one moment at the 19th century, you will see that it was above all things an age of invention, that machinery invaded the cottage homes, took out of them their domestic industries, and swept thousands of women into the factories and the workshops. It did more than that. It discounted to a great extent strength and even acquired skill, so that a woman can now do work which 70 or 80 years ago required the strength of a man, years of training, and perhaps hereditary aptitude as well. That being so, you see that the area over which women are competing with men tends to increase, and how it is that they are already the keenest rivals of men for wages and employment.

I do not want to exaggerate this point. Of course it is said, and in a way truly said, that there are five millions of working-women in competition with men. There are degrees of competition, and different kinds of competition. No one, for instance, can honestly say that domestic servants are competing with men in the same way in which female mill hands and women employed in factories and workshops are competing. But at least I am on safe ground if I say that the number of women who are actually the rivals of men for work and wages in what I may call manual labour alone, is upwards of two millions. You must remember this—that when a large class of persons is restricted to a few channels of employment, you create an unnatural supply of labour in those free and open channels. And if there is an unnatural supply of labour, you also get an unnaturally low rate of wage. Let us see how that is brought about by the existing conditions of labour. There is a considerable number of employments which are closed to women and yet open to men. On the other hand, there is not a single women's employment that is not open to men. That, of course, you cannot alter. Men's labour is naturally protected against female competition, because men find a great range of employment, such as the manning of the Army and Navy, for which women are physically incapable.

But there are other employments, both professional and in the labour world, for which women are physically capable, which are artificially closed to them.

Another point is this. In a great many employments all the better paid posts are reserved for men, and thus men's labour is artificially protected at the cost of women. From many trades and professions for which women are physically capable they are to a certain extent excluded. It is true of the better paid posts in the education world; it is true in the weaving trade where only men can become mule spinners; it is true also of the tailoring where only men can become tailor-cutters. In other trades, what is not generally true of an industry as a whole is true of sections of it locally. For instance, at Bolton no woman can be a piecer or compete with men; at Salford they can be piecers, and do compete.

Again, many of the trade unions either endeavour to exclude women altogether, as was the case in the Scottish Typographical Union, or they try to shut them out from certain parts of the trade, as from the type-setting machines or the frame, and forbid them to touch a linotype. Or again, they produce the same exclusion by different methods. They refuse them apprenticeships, and throw every obstacle in the way of their acquiring technical training, and, because they cannot get technical training, they often exclude them altogether from the trade, or at all events from the better portions of it. An instance of such a case you have in the Bookbinders' Union.

Most of these are industrial restraints imposed by industrial associations upon women. As far as these industrial restraints are concerned, probably in process of time some of them will be cured by women becoming better organised in trade unions; but here again you come to this point. It is at all times difficult to organise a trade union; but to organise a union which has no Parliamentary vote at all, is practically so difficult as to be almost impossible. You deprive it of one of its chief weapons. If you look at the history of modern trade unionism, you will find that it has gathered its strength from the moment the men had votes. So it is with the women's trade union. It is no good to tell the women that they had better organise themselves, so long as you deny them the most powerful means of organising, and that is the Parliamentary vote.

But besides these industrial restrictions there are restraints imposed by Parliament. Seeing what are the conditions under which women compete with men, any interference by Parliament with women's labour may be of the most serious consequence, because—however philanthropic the motive—if you close one of these already restricted channels of employment, you force the women into one of the few open ones, and again you produce starvation wages because you produce an unnatural supply of labour.

In Parliament trade unions do not attempt to ask that men should be directly protected against women's labour. The attack is of a very different kind, and sometimes of course, it is quite honest and bona fide. It generally takes the form of excluding women from industries which they say are injurious to health or morals. For instance, Parliament not so very long ago passed an Act of Parliament that women should not work by night in workshops and factories. The result of that was that the whole of the trade was taken from women-compositors, and they were forced into the other already overcrowded channels of employment. Again, you have an attack upon the work of married women, and it seems to me that, if that is going to be carried so far as advocates like Mr. John Burns wish to carry it, it either will practically destroy the work of married women in the north, or, as is more likely, will lead to irregular relations, to a deficient birth-rate, or a rising death-rate among infants. Again, you have the attack upon the barmaid. Nobody says that that is the best of all trades for women, but to my mind there is at all events nothing more disgraceful about handling the drink than there is in swallowing it. Again, you have the attack upon women acrobats. Does Parliament suppose that the laws of gravity are different for men and for women? Then you have the attack upon the pitbrow women. There Parliament did stand up and set aside the recommendation of their Committee; but you remember perhaps the grounds upon which the proposal to exclude these women was moved. It was partly the overstrain of hard work; partly to protect them from the disgusting conversation of miners who are their own daily associates; partly to save them from the disgrace of going home to their children with dirty faces. These are all instances in which attempts have been made to restrict and limit the labour of women by Parliamentary interference.

The Government example as an employer is again another instance of the difficulties under which women compete with men. In Government employments trade unions, by pressure of voting power, enabled the men to get trade union rates of wages; but the women are just left, because they have no votes, to the mercy of their employer, and their wages range from one-half to one-third below those of men for precisely the same work, and in precisely the same industrial conditions. Look at the far-reaching industrial effect of that standard. If the Government employment fixes a certain standard of wages, every County Council, every public and private employer, is justified in giving these wages, and the example of the Government produces widespread effects through the whole field of labour.

It seems to me that if women are, because of certain physical weaknesses, to be separately legislated for, if they are in any special sense to be protected against injury from certain forms of work, the utmost and most scrupulous care should be taken that they are not handicapped in their competition with their men rivals. Here, assuredly, is a problem which is one of the most difficult and delicate that can be handled by any body of statesmen. How do we deal with it in a Parliament elected entirely by male voters? We impose upon female labour restrictions from which male labour is exempt—restrictions which are forced upon Parliament, and through Parliament upon women, by associations of the men who are rivals of women for wages and employment. I think that in the name of justice women may well protest against a system like that. It is a small detail. But it is impossible to imagine that a Parliament elected by women would have allowed the maternity benefit under the Insurance Act to be paid to the husband, and would have given to the woman the remedy of prosecuting the man, with whom she must continue to live, if he does not spend it properly. If we read of a case in the law courts where some person is too poor to pay for a counsel to assist her or him, we think that they are having a very unfair time of it. That is precisely the case of women. In Parliament they are in the position of having their case tried with no lawyer to state their case for them. And you must remember this—that these conditions are getting worse in proportion as the representation of labour and of trade unions becomes more powerful, and also in proportion

as Members of Parliament cease to be representatives in the old wide sense of the word, and become the salaried delegates of constituencies.

Do any of you think that these conditions are going to right themselves? Can any thinking man imagine that they are? You see what is going on in the labour world. Trade unions are endeavouring to regulate by the strictest rules the classes who are to be employed, the amount of work that is to be produced, the hours of work, and the reward of work. They are trying to bring the whole field of labour under the strictest rules of trade unionism. We have travelled a long way from the old days of individual freedom of contract and liberty of supply and demand. The whole world of labour is becoming fettered by an iron set of rules, imposed by men's trade unions. We are travelling far, and fast, away from the old condition of freedom. Is it not obvious that the first and most helpless victims of these industrial regulations will be the women, whose voices in their own defence men silence by depriving them of the vote?

Those are the points, very briefly touched upon, which seem to me to throw the burden of proving that women's suffrage is a bad thing on to the other side. I have established, as I think, a case for women, which requires some answer, and what answer do we get? If you look at the arguments which are most commonly used, you will be struck by their insincerity. I do not mean that there is any conscious insincerity; but there is that sort of unconscious insincerity which is at once the child and the accomplice of convention and prejudice.

Let us look at these arguments. In the first place, there is what is called the physical force argument. It is said that all Governments really rest upon physical force, and that because women have not that physical force, therefore they are incapable of government. What a cry of despair! Might is still right. I thought that for the last twenty centuries we had been trying to prove that intellectual and moral force was stronger than mere brute force. If the argument is sound, it seems to me that it means this: marriage was based upon capture by brute force; therefore no woman should be allowed to exercise any right of choice in selecting her companion for life. Another side of this physical force argument is this. Women cannot man the Army and Navy; therefore they ought



not to have a vote in deciding on peace or war. That might be a sound argument if we had the compulsory military service of France or of Germany; but the insincerity of it lies in this—that in Great Britain we deprive our defenders of the vote, and that 99 men out of 100 do precisely what women taxpayers and ratepayers do—pay somebody else to fight for them. Looking back over history, I think one of the greatest heroes in the Crimean War was Florence Nightingale.

Then they say that women are intellectually inferior to men. The insincerity lies in this: that there is never any examination into the intellectual capacity of the male voter. Are they sending round anybody to investigate the mental capacity of the million voters they are going to enfranchise by this next Bill? They say no woman has ever been a Shakespeare, a Milton, or a Raphael. How many Shakespeares, Miltons, and Raphaels have they got among the present electorate, or do they expect to net by its further expansion?

Another argument is that if women are brought into public life they will lose the beauty of their character, and be taken away from their proper duty at home. The insincerity of that lies in this: that no one believes that the average male voter spends a quarter of an hour a day in the study of political questions. Certainly no woman's occupations at home are more exacting upon her than are the professional duties of a man, which he discharges without much effort as well as his political duties. I admit that in many cases the first duty of a woman is her home duty; but, again, there is insincerity, for not all women are married, not all married women have children, not all children remain always children and not all husbands always come home.

Another argument repeatedly brought against women is that they do not want the vote. Have they ever taken the trouble to ask male voters who were to be enfranchised by any of the Reform Bills, whether they wanted the vote? Why then is it suggested that such a question as whether women want the vote should be referred to a referendum, when they do not suggest it in the case of male voters? Probably the truth of the matter is that a great number of women do want the vote, that a great number do not want it, and that a great number

are apathetic; but the insincerity of the argument lies in the fact that they have never asked and do not intend to ask the question of the male voter.

Another argument is that women have had the opportunity of taking part in local and municipal politics, but that they have not availed themselves of the opportunity; therefore they will not avail themselves of the opportunity in imperial politics. Again the insincerity lies here. Every man knows and every woman knows that our local politics are run on party lines. If you give a woman the vote, she could join a party, and could stand with some chance of success for local Councils; but at present what happens is that, though a woman may be the best candidate in all the neighbourhood for a local Council, she has to stand on independent lines at double the cost, with the party organisations against her all the way through.

I have dealt with some of the arguments against giving votes to women. But I have not yet touched on the greatest and most important argument of all. It is said that women are incapable of imperial politics, that they may be useful in local politics because the questions which are dealt with there are those with which they are or may be familiar, but that imperial politics are beyond their reach. That opinion is held with the utmost sincerity of conviction by a large number of men whom I most cordially respect. I agree at once that in an old world-wide empire like Great Britain, the experiences of other newer countries are not conclusive, and do not prove that here women can take the part which we, who are advocates of Women's Suffrage, hope that they can play. I say that experience of other countries is not quite conclusive; but, for what it is worth, I am going to read to you the Resolution passed by the two Houses of the Commonwealth of Australia in November, 1910, and sent to Mr. Asquith:—

“That this Senate is of opinion that the concession of the Suffrage to the women of Australia for the States of the Commonwealth Parliament has had a most beneficial result. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last federal election the women's vote in a majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such

questions to the exclusion of others of a wider significance. In matters of defence and imperial concern they have proved themselves as farseeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, although disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

Now, as far as it relates to many of the problems of Government, that Resolution, based on practical experience of votes for women, is conclusive. But we have an Empire, and those who oppose Women's Suffrage say that such a Resolution as that which I have read to you fails to cover that point, and that women are incapable of imperial rule. From my own experience, I hold absolutely the contrary opinion. I believe that any election agent in this country would tell you that for male electors the appeal to love of Empire is dead. I have been told, and told in public meetings, such things as this. When I have wanted to discuss the Empire, I have been told, "Tell us something about home." When I have said anything about the possible invasion of the country, I have been told, "Let the Germans come, we cannot be any the worse off." When I have even asked them to take up a question which affects the principal trade of an adjoining village, I have been told, "We do not grow onions here." The average male voter of this country is, I believe, dead to any interest in the Empire, because he has been taught to confine his interest in political movements to the amount of pecuniary and material benefit which they will confer on himself. On the other hand, women—if I may again quote from my own experience—have shown that they have the imagination to appreciate the greatness of the imperial ideal, the enthusiasm to welcome it, and the sense of duty and the life-long experience of self-sacrifice to uphold it. You ask what proof I have of that beyond my own experience? Look at the Navy League. It would never have been brought into its present state but for the enthusiasm of women. Look at the Empire League, and the Victoria League—both founded, organised, and supported by women. There is one other significant little fact which I may mention. When Lord Kitchener went to New Zealand, where women have the vote, and spoke on the question of Imperial Defence, it is mentioned in "The Times"—and "The Times" is not over-favourable to

the women's cause—that two-thirds of the audiences were invariably women. That is a fact in itself which refutes the gloomy phophecies of those who oppose votes for women.

It is said that giving votes to women might produce a revolution in India. I have never been in India, or qualified myself to write a book by three weeks' stay in that country. Still less do I claim to have any real knowledge of that country which can for a moment compare with the knowledge possessed by persons who hold the opposite view. But to my mind the great blot on the civilisation, and the great impediment to the progress of India is the position of women. They are driven, if they are going to exercise any influence at all, to adopt means which may be flattering to male vanity, but certainly do not contribute to exalt woman's character. If this great country shows by its example that it considers woman to be the equal of man in the power of administering a great Empire, I believe you are going to give an immense impulse to the removal of the greatest blot upon Indian civilisation and the greatest impediment to its progress.

I am certain that, in ordinary constituencies, the average woman is more intelligent than the average man. It stands to reason that it should be so. A boy and girl leave the elementary school at the same age, equally well or ill educated. If the boy goes to work of a monotonous kind under the direction of his employer, he does not advance intellectually. If they marry, it is to the woman that the training of life falls. She has to make sixpence go as far as a shilling, and to adapt the scale of living to the wants of a growing family. At 30 the woman is the better man of the two. Then, again, to my mind women have a greater sense of public duty, if they are entrusted with it, than men, and they discharge it more punctually and punctiliously. It would bring nothing but good to have the addition of a number of persons who will put duty before the miserable tyranny of party which at present ruins our political life. I attach no great importance to the immediate effect of giving women votes in the way of raising their wages. That is not the point. I think that giving women votes will, taking it generally, be something like bringing a fresh and invigorating breeze into the fetid, low-lying political atmosphere of our country. Men often say that the educational value of a vote is enormous.

That is the only excuse for giving it to all adult males. In the same breath men say that they owe everything in their characters and lives to their mothers. If then the vote has this great educational value, and if men are so dependent for their character upon their mothers, are you going, with any common sense or logic, to deny this valuable education to the women to whom you owe so infinite a debt?

There are many other points which occur to me that I might speak to you upon, but I have already occupied to a minute the time allotted to me. The only thing I would say in conclusion is this. I believe we may be wrong in many of our political theories. All of them may be wrong; but the one thing in which we are pretty sure to be right is, when we follow our instinctive sense of justice, and I venture to think that the women's cause is justice. Therefore I am perfectly convinced that, whether it succeeds *now* or not, it will eventually triumph.

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## Women's Vote and Men,

By Henry W. Nevinson.

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No one could wonder if the Suffragists now said little about the object of their contention. When a contest is hot and the danger mortal, it is not easy to meditate on the far-off land for which you are fighting. As old-fashioned Americans would say, you can't climb Pisgah with a Hotchkiss. Amid the dust and tumult of the conflict, one has to assume the promised land, or even to forget it. For the Suffragists the struggle has now become so intense, its phases change so fast from day to day, and such elements of abhorrence and indignation have been added, that the ultimate hope and result of it all cannot be much spoken of. In the midst of tactics and manœuvres, in defence and attack, in law courts and police courts, in prison cells, during the pain of hunger strikes, and under the abomination of stomach tubes forced against their will down their throats or nostrils, the women who are fighting for political rights in this country have hardly time to remember the full significance of their aim. They are obliged to take all that for granted, and to argue about it now seems a little irrelevant, a little uninteresting. The Vote to them has become a symbol, a summary of faith—something for which it would be glorious to die, something assured and indisputable that needs no demonstration. It is to them what the Cross was to the Christians.

In speaking of Suffragists, I am here thinking only of the "Militants." As is well known, there are many other excellent, long-established and recent Suffragist bodies, which spend a great deal of energy in dissociating themselves from the "militant"

societies. But for the moment the "Militants" are the only Suffragists who count, because they have realised the old saying in Mill's "Subjection of Women," that "the concessions of the privileged to the unprivileged are seldom brought about by any better method than the power of the unprivileged to extort them." Or again (if one may quote a still earlier advocate of their cause), they remember Mary Wollstonecraft's words, that "Prudence is ever the resort of weakness, and they rarely go as far as they may in any undertaking who are determined not to go beyond it on any account." And so, if victory is won, it will be the "Militants" who win it, not because they do this or that, but because they have no reservations. I do not mean that it will be theirs to receive the enemy's surrender and enjoy the fruits of victory. Quite the contrary. When the moment comes, the other Suffragists will smilingly enter the field over the wreckage of battle and assure us they always knew reasonable methods would prevail.

From women Suffragists engaged in such a conflict for political rights as now claims some attention even from the Liberal Government and its gaolers, we ought not to demand repeated statements of the advantages they expect for women from the franchise. They will tell us if we ask them, but all has now been said, and the pressure of immediate events is too acute for abstract arguments on what Mr. Asquith, speaking of his deceptive "pledge" to Suffragists, has called "a remote and speculative future." We men, however, who cannot be so deeply and personally involved in the struggle, and who, by reason of our sex, necessarily escape the worst ignominy of the mob and the most shameful outrage of Government torture—we have still the opportunity for calmer and more extended views.

#### Votes for Women Soon.

Assuming, as we may, that political rights will be given at all events to the tax-payers among women within the next few years, we are bound to consider how the change will affect ourselves as well as women. Most men in opposing women's suffrage dwell entirely on the harm it will do to women—the loss of womanliness and feminine influence, the overthrow of chivalry, and the reduction of "the strength that lies in woman's weakness." But these tender

and sentimental arguments are due, one must suppose, only to the natural unselfishness of the opponent's nature, just as the fear that women will not vote enough "Dreadnoughts" and will somehow shock our Indian Empire is due to the householder's habit of thinking in Continents. Being plain, practical people, we others are bound to consider ourselves as well as the women and the dangers to which they and the Seven Seas will be exposed. We must not allow any exaggerated or chivalrous consideration for womanhood to blind us to the question of our own interests, nor must we lose our sense of proportion in pity for dear, shrinking, and womanly qualities exposed to the storms of freedom. When we hear the male Anti-Suffragist talk like this, we naturally feel very brutal and inferior; we also feel much inclined to be sick; but let us restrain our feelings and look the probable future in the face, for it concerns ourselves.

#### What the Colonies Say.

In outward politics—in elections and legislation, probably we shall not be conscious of so much change from the women's vote as is either hoped or feared. The best experience we have to judge from is the case of Australia and New Zealand, where the people are of our own stock, living under similar laws, and confronted with much the same kind of problems, except that theirs are on a smaller scale. Mr. Pember Reeves has described the absolute calm with which the women's franchise was there received. A chapter upon the subject in his "State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand" shows that nearly all women use the vote, but there is no fuss or disorder, and very little effect on the balance of parties or the tone of public life. Priestcraft has not been strengthened, as some prophets feared; the functions of the State have not been unduly extended; and nothing has been done to impede progress. On all general subjects there has been hardly any distinction between the women's vote and the men's. In fact, when Mr. Pember Reeves's book was published (1902) the only legislative changes that could be definitely traced to the women's franchise were some restrictions on drink and the raising of "the age of consent" by three years.

Both are significant, for a husband's drunkenness and the seduction of girls specially concern women. It seems likely that

in this country, when women get the vote, we men may have stricter limitations placed on our drinking and debauchery. The abuses surviving from the Middle Ages are also probably more numerous here than in the Antipodes, while the political sense of our women will be all the keener after their present struggle for the vote. The women may insist upon legislation giving a wife the right to draw a share of her husband's wages, as in Germany, and introducing new provisions in the divorce laws, so as not to leave them an indecent farce for the rich and a useless mockery for the poor. I can even imagine them securing a law under which a mother might for the first time be declared at all events part-parent of her own legitimate child.

The effect of legislation of that kind would be to make it a little more difficult for us men to break all the vows and oaths we take in marriage; such as that promise "With all my worldly goods I thee endow," which I suppose is the commonest lie in the kingdom. As we have promised all our worldly goods, the law under women's franchise might perhaps induce us to give five shillings in the pound. It is possible also that laws in which women have a voice will make it more difficult for us to live by sweating women's work, more difficult to escape the allowance to a mother for our bastards, and more difficult to keep a wife with us in the workhouse against her will.

But, after all, laws are only made for evil-doers, or exceptional cases, and comparatively few of us haunt the workhouse, or have bastards, or debauch girls, or starve our wives, or take their children from them. If legislation were all that women's franchise would effect, it would be well worth fighting for certainly, and many of the ancient abuses to which women are subject for want of legal status would be removed, but I doubt if it would have aroused the present enthusiasm, profound as religion, and undeterred by martyrdom. My own belief is that, on the purely political side, the chief result of women's franchise as far as men are concerned will be a general elevation and increase of political interest. That result has been noticed already in Australasia, and during the recent by-elections in this country many electors have for the first time realised that there must be some value in a vote which women are ready to die for. My friend, Mr. Prevost

Battersby, writing in the *Morning Post*, regrets this tendency. He thinks the interest in politics is already excessive, and perhaps he feels an artist's horror of the subject. Like one of the old Greek poets, Mr. Battersby is "a follower of war and of the Muses." So am I, and yet I do not regret the stir, the questioning and the zeal by which the presence of the woman's vote will transform the stagnation of much in our political life. As for the languid indifferentist who sniffs at public interests while cloistered in the aloofness of his artistic treasury, certainly Mr. Battersby would never deplore his extinction. For Mr. Battersby knows as well as I know that only in countries where national feeling is high and the public conscience intensely sensitive can either wars or Muses be worth the following.

#### No Back-Stairs Influence.

But I will agree with him that the political interest, unless we extend the term past recognition, is not the main thing in life. All the great teachers have insisted that the main thing is the condition of the soul, and as we pass from politics into that region we may just notice one great change which will be equally wholesome both for the politics and the souls of us men. I mean the disappearance of feminine influence from the back stairs. Among the Anti-Suffragists there are two or three clever women who say they have enough political influence already. So they have, and a most poisonous influence it is; I do not mean necessarily in its results, but in its methods. They call it indirect, by which they mean what other people call back stairs, and we all know the social intrigue and assorted flattery through which it is exercised. When woman's influence openly enters the front door of politics with the vote, we men may gradually see ourselves deprived of those charming entertainments at which the hostess almost imperceptibly cajoles the judgment of hesitating editors or politicians. We may see ourselves deprived of many such flattering attentions, and we can only comfort our regret with the knowledge that the dose of poison in politics and in our own souls is being proportionately reduced.

Coming a point nearer to the centre of things, we may expect that women's franchise will sooner or later effect some change in

our own everyday manner to women. In all sorts of subtle ways the inferiority of women is now impressed on us from babyhood. The very fact that we are brought up by mothers and nursemaids has something to do with it; for, if only by long stress of habit, mothers and nursemaids are inclined to make most of the male, and it is a very uncommon nursery in which the son is not crowned king above his sisters. The position has the further sanction of what was once considered divine revelation. Writing, I think, with entire seriousness, Sir Thomas Browne says:

The whole World was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman. Man is the whole world and the breath of God: woman the rib and crooked piece of man.

No one now takes the story of Eden thus literally, but the unconscious impression of it has remained fixed in the habits and thoughts of our people, whose education was long almost limited to the Old Testament. Milton's line upon the first man and woman—"He for God only, she for God in him"—has for many women obscured all the beauty and power and freedom of the poet's works. And the idea at the root of it still survives, as we see by the storm whenever a woman dares to assert the separate existence of her soul by adopting some form of religion different from her husband's, or by consulting any other man upon the subject. In denouncing the Suffragettes, a well-known minister in London lately reached his climax of abuse with the word "Bipeds!" It was a relic of the Mosaic story of Creation still pervading religious thought.

#### On Chivalry.

But it is said that the evil effect of this doctrine of women's inferiority, decreed by heaven and inculcated by nursemaids, has long been mitigated by the usages of chivalry, and if women are granted political equality, the blessings they receive from chivalry will be lost. I recognise the beauty of the chivalrous ideal as much as anybody. The conception of the courtly knight killing dragons without fear, and honouring women without reproach, is always attractive, and it makes a far better training for Sunday schools than the older doctrine of woman as a spare rib. But when people begin to talk about the loss of chivalry owing to the vote, I

have the same sense of sickness as when they talk about the loss of womanliness and about woman's weakness being her strength. I much prefer to remember the definition given by a young curate in Whitechapel when he was taking a party of working people round the picture gallery. Coming to a picture representing a knight heavily clad in armour releasing a beautiful woman bound to a tree and not at all heavily clad in anything, he became conscious, perhaps, of the shock to the habitual decency of the poor, for he hurriedly exclaimed: "That, my friends, represents the glorious days of chivalry, when knights rode about the country rescuing fair damsels from other people's castles, and carrying them off to their own!"

Though rapidly conceived, it is the best definition of chivalry I know. I remember it with satisfaction whenever I see the men in the Tube spring up to offer their seats to pretty and well-dressed women, but remain profoundly occupied with the politics of their paper while a worn-out and draggled creature with a baby and a roll of butter sways from the straps against their knees. I see no reason why this chivalry should ever become extinct, vote or no vote. For there will always be plenty of well-bred men who can rise to that pitch of heroism and politeness, provided the vote does not have the effect of making all women hideous, which is against likelihood and the experience of our Colonies.

Chivalry would be safe even though Mr. Asquith, in a fit of repentance, proposed plural votes for women. What serious people mean by chivalry is, I suppose, the special courtesy and consideration due to all women as such, because they are in some respects physically weaker, in some respects more sensitive, and surrounded with the halo of danger and pain from actual or possible motherhood. We honour them for that, just as we like an old soldier for his medals and a young one for his uniform. But the idea that true chivalry will decline seems to spring from the notion that a vote will make women, not only equal to men, but the same. You might as well say that a poplar is the same as a church because it is equally high. All the old-fashioned attempts to prove that women are the same as men, and should have the vote for that reason, were beside the mark. It is just because they are different that the votes of men cannot represent them.

Chivalry has become a mawkish word, but the honourable idea

still lingering in it will remain; and so will good manners, and the natural attraction between men and women. It is a fine old saying that "the King's Government must be carried on." But Nature has a much more important thing to carry on than the King's Government, and we may be quite sure she will go through with it, not suffering the country to be depopulated because women obtain the right of walking to a polling station once in five years. For us men, I think the standard of manners towards women will even be raised, and our efforts to win approval will become more strenuous. Suffragists who carry sandwich boards and sell their paper in the streets tell me that already the manners of the working people towards them show a visible and audible improvement. The poor are always more sensitive and quicker to politeness than shop assistants, Liberal stewards, and others of the middle classes, because they are nearer to suffering and less trammelled by snobbery; but the improvement due to women's claim for equal rights will gradually spread upward. The complacent sense of natural and legalised superiority, so bad for us all, whether we are dukes or only men, will be shaken when the law and constitution refuse to recognise it. This alone will make us men more agreeable, besides increasing our chance of heaven, and in every class throughout the country a finer respect will be paid to every woman when she is no longer debarred from equal citizenship. For respect generally varies directly with power.

#### The Cult of the Ministering Angel.

The loss of our assumed superiority would, as I said, make us more agreeable. It would also, one hopes, save our characters from the invalid atmosphere of all that nursing, coddling, soothing, tending, and comforting, which we have regarded as the special function of women so long that their life is often a perpetually occupied hospital or madhouse. Dr. Johnson said a man should never put himself out to nurse, but that is exactly what almost all the male sex does. We live in a sanatorium with female attendants. We have whined, "A ministering angel thou!" till we have secured for ourselves a continuous supply of amateur nurses, much as we have made women moral by killing them physically or socially if they were not, and then maundering over

the charm of their purity. We shall have to give up some of our notions upon woman's self-sacrifice, self-abnegation, and self-devotion, in so far as they mean sacrifice, abnegation, and devotion for the benefit of our own precious selves. But consider how much we shall gain by deliverance from that languid and hospital air in which we rot at ease! Everything, like the vote, which breaks down our comfortable doctrines of women's subservience and dependence on our own well-being, tends to deliver us, as though into the open air of day. Let us deliver ourselves at all costs. How one sympathises with the man in James Stephens's poem of "Nora Criona"!

"I've looked him round, and looked him through,  
Know everything that he will do  
In such a case, and such a case:  
And when a frown comes on his face  
I docket it, and when a smile,  
I trace its sources in a while.

"He cannot do a thing but I  
Peep and find the reason why.  
For I love him, and seek  
Every evening in the week  
To peep behind his frowning eye  
With little query, little pry,  
And make him, if a woman can,  
Happier than any man."

. . . Yesterday he gripped her tight,  
And cut her throat—and serve her right.

Besides gaining a more agreeable temper than is there described, and freeing ourselves from the fractiousness of invalids and spoilt children, as we lose our legalised assumption of superiority, we men will also receive an added and peculiar zest in winning a woman's affection and trying to keep it. The difficulty must in most cases increase, but that alone will heighten the joy of triumph. As equal opportunities open to women (and the vote is a symbol of equal opportunities), fewer of them will be willing to marry "any one." The thing will be less of a "trade,"

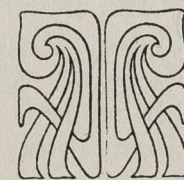


to use Miss Cicely Hamilton's word, and in the end it will be so much the better for "any one"—who is not very nicely treated now, as I think she has remarked. If women reach such a position that they will marry only the men they want, we shall have to put ourselves out to win them. Sex is powerful but insufficient, and there is nothing more amusing than to watch the average sensual man overwhelmed at finding his average sensual charm thrown away upon a woman who demands ever so much more than that. We shall have to develop other powers of pleasing, and for many of us that will imply a great effort—an effort which must be maintained even after marriage when the woman enjoys equal opportunities of slamming the front door if she can endure us no longer. But difficult as we may find the struggle, it will surely be very improving for the condition of our souls, which we have agreed is the main thing in life. Nor, indeed, as I suggested before, could we seek a more splendid triumph than to win and hold the affection of one whose demand for equality almost amounted to "antagonism."

• One of the Suffragists has told us that a working woman, speaking of her husband in a London back street, said the other day: "He's a saver, and he don't knock me about much, but somehow he never thinks as a woman counts." It is a fair summary of behaviour among the better kind of men. They work and practise thrift; they do not knock women about much, and perhaps they do not even join in the foul laughter of Members of Parliament over the anguish inflicted on women by the Government's "forcible feeding." But, blinded by long habit, they somehow never think that a woman counts. The woman's vote will help to remind them. For the vote is not only another assurance that the day has come when, in Napoleon's phrase, the career is open to the talent; it is above all things a symbol of personality. When women obtain it, we shall be obliged to recognise, as they are beginning to recognise now, that their happiness, like our own, lies, if anywhere, in the realisation of self, and not in self-suppression, self-abnegation, or any of the other dismal virtues we have imposed on them for our own comfort. The assertion of self, the fulfilment of function, is the final object of life. It may not bring happiness, but without it happiness is

impossible, and for women, as for men, the methods of exercising it are infinitely varied. A Winchester master, whom we will call the Worm that Turned, once wrote in his report: "This boy has no special aptitude, power, or qualification; will make an excellent parent." We see the fine satire of it when applied to a future father, but it is very much the view we hold of most women, though it does not in the least follow that a particular woman's true function is motherhood, any more than fatherhood may be a man's.

Self-realisation in place of self-suppression—that has been the moving principle of the last two or three generations both for men and especially for women. It is no new principle, being at least as old as Aristotle, but it has been kept in the background by rulers and preachers. I do not deny that its revival will effect great changes in our lives, but I am convinced that the changes will be for the health of our souls, as nearly all change is. What increase of happiness women themselves gain from the growing rights of personality falls outside my present subject. But how great that increase will be may to some extent be seen from the extraordinary happiness of the women who are now engaged in fighting for the Vote, which, as I said, is their symbol of personality. They are transformed; they are raised above themselves; in the midst of shame, mockery, violence, and Government torture they remain tranquil and full of joy. There is a well-known saying of Nietzsche that a good war justifies any cause. The Suffragettes are enjoying all the advantages of a good war now, but they have the further advantage of a far-reaching and profoundly significant cause which will need no justification when it is won.



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## Radicals and Reform.

It is a far cry from 1775 to 1912. That, however, is the distance we have to cover from the time when the demand for a popular franchise was first raised seriously in the House of Commons to the year when it comes up for what it is our business to see is its final settlement. The battle has been long drawn out. It has had its heroes and its martyrs. It is difficult to realise in these days that the fight for the vote in this country has sent men to the scaffold, to the hulks, to prison by the hundred. In 1831, whilst the issue of the Reform Bill was still in doubt, when the Liberals were playing their usual game of deceit, and trying to come to terms with the Tories and dish the Reformers, so great was the indignation of the people that the King dare not show himself in London, that over a million taxpayers had proclaimed a tax strike, whilst every preparation had been made for an armed rising, in which staid, solid men and women were participants. The Bill passed, thanks to the backing of the working class, who were assured that so soon as the reformed House met their claim to the vote would be at once considered. And what happened? In 1838, after six years of waiting, an amendment was moved to the Address in favour of securing a better representation of the people. Lord John Russell, the Liberal Prime Minister, not only opposed the proposal, but declared that franchise reform had reached finality, an opinion endorsed by Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the Tories, and the motion only found 22 supporters. Then followed the Chartist movement, which led to rioting, the shooting and bloodshed, and to further prosecutions and imprisonments galore at the hands of Liberal and Tory ministries alike. In 1866, when the Reform agitation had again assumed formidable proportions, and the Liberals had all but exhausted the support of the £10 householders, and a Bill of some kind could no longer be kept back, Mr. Gladstone brought in his measure for conferring the franchise on householders in towns paying a rental of not less than £6 a year. When explaining why he had fixed on six pounds, he naively remarked that to have fixed it at a lower rent would have given the working classes in the towns a majority of

the votes, and no responsible statesman could contemplate such a thing with equanimity. So rotten was the measure that even the Tories would not have it, and these, aided by a number of Liberals who thought it went too far, defeated the Government, and the Tories came in, with Disraeli as their leader, and passed the measure as a household suffrage one for the towns. It was not till 1884, when the Liberals needed the help of the colliers and farm labourers to give them a renewal of office, that the franchise was extended to the working people of the country districts. But they took good care to leave the plural voter alive in all his glory, and to so frame the Registration Laws as to keep tens of thousands of working men off the voters' roll every year. Such are the facts on which the Liberals base their claim to have "Given the working class the vote." Every scrap of reform has had to be wrung out of them at the point of the bayonet, and they have only yielded when it would have been dangerous to have longer resisted, and when the Tories were as ready as themselves to give way to the popular demands.

And now it looks as though the Liberals were again at their old game of keeping the promise to the eye and breaking it to the hope. The Government is under promise to introduce a Bill this session, 1912, the practical effect of which will be to abolish the plural voter and give manhood suffrage. But here again it is a case of needs must when the devil drives. Liberalism is again at the end of its tether unless some new power can be ranged to its aid. The plural voter is heavily against the Liberal, and, therefore, he has to go. But that is not all. When Home Rule for Ireland has become law the Party will be deprived of the support of the Irish vote, upon which it has been dependent for its very existence for nearly a quarter of a century. It is thus political necessity, not love of democracy, which is again turning the thoughts of the managers of the Liberal Party towards reform. For over a century we can trace this guardian of middle-class interests using the working class as a pawn in the game they were all the time playing for their own hand and to keep themselves in office.

That they have not changed is clearly evident from their attitude on the now all-important political question of the Enfranchisement of Women. The women of to-day are in worse case than were the working men of this time last century. Men were then shut out from the franchise, it is true, but not because they were men, but because they were poor. The woman, however, rich and poor alike, is barred the franchise solely because she is a woman. What are men going to do in the matter? Are they going to allow themselves to be bribed into deserting their wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters, or

are they going to stand by them? It is a test question for democracy. We all cry out the shame we feel at the way in which the middle classes sold the workers time and again in the Reform movement; but shall we not be even greater dastards if we accept a further instalment of reform for ourselves from which women are shut out? Let us not forget that the days of persecution are over for men so far as the franchise is concerned, and that women are now being persecuted just as our fathers were when fighting the same battle. From the very earliest days of the battle for political rights we find women taking a share of the burden. There were women's associations in the days of both the Radical and Chartist movements. Even when they knew they were being deliberately disqualified, in so many words, from becoming voters, and having what rights they had filched from them by so-called Reform Acts, they never wavered. With that self-abnegation which is so characteristic of the sex they not only consented to be so treated, but worked whole-heartedly to win votes for husband, father, and brother, believing that they in turn would use their power to see justice done to them. Hitherto their hope has been in vain. Now has come the time for men to be true to the trust which women have placed in them. The only question at issue in the present Reform Bill is whether or not women are to be included. The only agitation for reform of which the country knows anything is that carried on by women. But for them the country would be still as the grave on this question. It may suit the book of the party politicians to keep this question open, and thus leave a disturbing element in politics which will serve for some time longer to prevent that concentration on social questions which is so essential to success, but just because it would suit the book of these gentlemen, therefore should every workman be all the more anxious to get it settled and done with at once. Alike, therefore, on the grounds of justice and expediency, it is imperative that the working class should speak out with no uncertain sound and make it known that they will accept no Bill which does not include women on the same terms as men.

The Radicals during the agitation which culminated in the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 made no effort on behalf of bringing in the women, and, what is more remarkable still, the Chartists, in so many words, actually excluded them from the Charter. In both cases, however, the movements were largely bossed by the middle class. The Labour movement of to-day is not so, and it is for the worker to show that he understands the meaning of democracy by insisting upon the extension of the rights of citizenship on equal terms to women and men alike. Sooner or later it must come to that, and now is the opportune moment.

The Parliamentary history of the question is worth recalling. Prior to the Reform Bill of 1832 there was no statutory disability imposed upon women, and there is a good deal of evidence to show that in the earlier ages of the country, and particularly from the 14th to the 18th century, women exercised all the functions of citizenship on the same terms as men, just as a woman becomes Queen in the absence of a male in the direct line of succession. In the Reform Bill of 1832 the word "male" was introduced before persons, thus limiting the franchise to men only. In 1867, John Stuart Mill moved a clause to bring women into the Bill of that year, but was defeated, although Mr. Disraeli, the Premier, did not put on the Party Whips, but left the decision to the free and unfettered vote of the House. The word used in the Bill of that year was "persons," and an amendment to insert the word "male" was also defeated. It so happened that in 1851 Lord Brougham's Act had become law, and as it was clearly set down therein that the word "man" in an Act of Parliament should also include "woman," unless where otherwise stated, the opinion became general that women were included in the term "person." Some revising barristers, acting upon this belief, enrolled women on the voters roll, as many as 6,847 being so registered in Manchester and Salford alone. The matter was finally tested in the courts of law, when the decision went against the women. Voting, it was held, was a statutory right which had to be expressly conferred, and as women were not expressly mentioned in the new Act therefore, Lord Brougham notwithstanding, they were still pariahs.

In 1870, Jacob Bright brought in a one-clause measure to remove the electoral disabilities of women, and carried the second reading on 4th May by 124 votes to 91, but the Bill was wrecked in committee. Between that and 1884 the women's agitation proceeded apace. Petitions flowed in upon the House of Commons in favour of the vote, the number of signatures to these exceeding 3,000,000. Mr. William Woodall had charge of the amendment to the Reform Bill of that year, but Mr. Gladstone told the House emphatically that should the amendment admitting women be carried he would drop the Bill altogether. He also refused to follow Disraeli's example of 1867 and leave the question to be decided by the free and open vote of the House of Commons. This, of course, settled its fate, but so strong was the feeling of the House in favour of the women's claim that Mr. Woodall carried 135 members into the "Aye" lobby, to 271 who voted with the party. In 1886 the second reading of a Women's Enfranchisement Bill was once more carried as a private member's measure, and the prospects of its becoming law

were regarded as being hopeful, since the newly-elected Parliament contained a large majority of members pledged to support the measure, but the defeat of the Government on Home Rule led to another election ere the committee stage was reached. In 1892 a private member's day was got for the measure again, when Mr. Gladstone once more entered the lists against it. Mr. Balfour, on the other hand, gave it a handsome support. He concluded his speech in an almost prophetic vein, and his words are of special significance at the present moment.

"I think, from all I can hear," he said, "that this Bill is not likely to be successful on this occasion, but, depend upon it, if any further alteration of the franchise is brought forward as a practical measure, this question will again arise, menacing and ripe for solution, and it will not be possible for this House to set it aside as a mere speculative plan advocated by a body of faddists. Then you will have to deal with it in a complete fashion."

In 1909 a Bill again passed its second reading by a majority of 110, and again 1910 by 120, and this despite the strongest possible opposition on the floor of the House by Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George. Now has come the time so prophetically foreseen by Mr. Balfour when the franchise is again before Parliament for revision, and, sure enough, there also stands woman suffrage, "menacing and ripe for solution," and demanding to be dealt with in a "complete fashion."

Such, then, is the state of the case at present, and it is against this that women all over the land are in revolt. Some express their revolt on what are called constitutional lines, others by militant methods, but all alike are in revolt. As already stated, the Government has announced its intention to bring in a Manhood Suffrage Bill this year. As there is a division of opinion in the Cabinet on the question of woman suffrage, it has been decided to leave the woman question to be decided by an open vote of the House of Commons, members to be free to vote as they please without any pressure from the Party Whips. Strangely enough, this very concession, for which women are expected to be grateful, is but following the precedent set by Disraeli in 1867, when the Reform Bill of that year was before Parliament. Ministers were divided then as now, and, as was to be expected, those opposed to the change carried the majority of the House with them. This much-lauded concession, therefore, has not even the merit of being new. The human mind is so constituted that it shrinks from change, and in a case like the one under consideration, where man's hitherto unchallenged political supremacy is at stake, many members who would support the proposal were it

a Government question will take refuge behind the Prime Minister and those of his colleagues who are against the proposal and either abstain or vote against. Of that there can be no doubt. There is this further fact to be borne in mind. Certain sections of the House are particularly interested in certain reforms, such as Home Rule and Disestablishment. On a Government measure these will vote with the Government. But on an open question, especially where the Prime Minister is on the opposite side, the temptation for these to side with him so as not to cause him any embarrassment will be very great. This of itself will undoubtedly influence the votes of a number of waverers, and thus endanger the passing of the amendment. I am convinced myself that the real danger ahead of the Government lies in the amendment not being carried, but others may not see things in that light, and so, by supporting the Premier, defeat the very object they have in view. But, be this as it may, the only safe course for those desiring the women to be included is to insist upon the matter being made one of confidence in the Government. That, and that alone, would rally every supporter of the Government into the lobby on the right side, and thus settle once for all this long-outstanding and much-overdue measure of justice to women. Should it again be defeated, then the agitation will go on, but with the ranks of the militants much strengthened, and no one can view that prospect with equanimity.

Prime Ministers have ere now had to make themselves responsible for measures to which they were personally opposed. The leading historical case is that of Catholic Emancipation. Sir Robert Peel, after declaring that Emancipation would be an act, not of liberality, but of "national suicide," had himself within a few years to bring in the Bill for the removal of Catholic disabilities. In doing so he said: "I pretend to no new light on the subject of the Catholic claims. I retain the same opinion which I ever entertained in reference to that question. I see as clearly as ever the dangers which I have heretofore felt as connected with that subject, but I have no hesitation in saying that the pressure of present evils is so great and overwhelming that I am willing to encounter the risk of those contingent dangers rather than, in the existing situation of the country, to endure not only the continuance but the aggravation of the present system." Surely, with such a precedent, Mr. Asquith need not fear that his reputation would suffer from a similar course of action. No one can contemplate with any satisfaction the prospect of more years of fighting and imprisonment of women, to whom the vote is as dear as ever was Emancipation to the Catholic, and the scenes of the past are but the indications of much greater scenes in the immediate future if women are kept out

of the Bill. If the opponents of women suffrage in the Government are willing to accept the decision of a majority of the House of Commons, it would be equally easy to accept the will of a majority of their Cabinet colleagues. It would also be a more dignified course, and would remove from the path of the Government what is without question the biggest danger with which it is beset.

But if the Government refuses to follow the path which self-interest and the claims of the women so clearly mark out for them, that does not absolve the supporters of votes for women from their very obvious duty. The Government must get the Bill through before another appeal is made to the country. If a sufficient number of members who usually support the Government will make it clear at once that they will vote against the third reading of the measure and bring about its defeat unless women are included, then without doubt women will go in. The Annual Conference of the Labour Party has recommended some such course to its Parliamentary representatives, and with a similar declaration from a very few Radicals the day would be won.

The objections to women having the vote always strike me as puerile. Let us briefly examine them.

First, it is said that women do not want the vote. If that means that women have not yet taken to burning down towns as men did when they were fighting for the franchise, then I admit the statement. But, short of this, women have by every other means, constitutional and unconstitutional, given ample evidence of the falsity of the statement. It would be difficult to find half a dozen educated women in any town, and still more to find even a lesser number of women engaged in public work of any kind, or in the professions, or who are employed as wage earners, who are not strenuous supporters of their own political enfranchisement. Should the enemies of the measure triumph on this occasion, as they have done so often before, then the women of the country will give such evidence of their determination to be enfranchised as shall convince even the most sceptical.

Second, it is alleged that women have not had experience of public questions in the same way as men have, and therefore are not qualified to exercise the vote. In 1832, in 1866, and again, as I well remember, in 1884, an exactly identical argument was used against extending the franchise to working men. It is neither more nor less true in the one case than it was in the other. That, therefore, may be set aside.

Third, it is said that woman's proper place is the home, and that to drag her into the maelstrom of politics would endanger domestic peace, unfit the woman for her duties as

wife and mother, and lead to race deterioration. Unfortunately for those who take this line, none of these dreadful calamities have overtaken those countries, including, by the way, several States in America, as well as Australia and New Zealand, where women have the vote on the same terms as men, and there is no reason for supposing that what has not happened there with women of our own race would happen here. Besides, with women crowding into the professions, into mills, factories, and workshops in ever-increasing numbers, it is a little too late in the day to come forward with the plea that woman's place is the home. Are those who use this argument as a reason for withholding the vote from women prepared to pass a law prohibiting a woman from practising as a doctor or an accountant, or from being employed in the post office or behind the counter, or as chain makers, or in mills and factories? I trow not. Men will take the unholy profits which come from the sweated labour of women, and care nothing about the destruction of domestic life which it involves, but when it comes to be a question of the woman asking a vote to protect herself and her interests, then the sacredness of the despoiled and violated home is made to do duty in opposition. Since women must work, then women must vote.

Fourth, it is said women must not have the vote because there are over a million more women than men in the country, and, therefore, they could put the men under "petticoat government" any time they pleased. Strange how the arguments of reaction keep reappearing every time a move is made to widen the borders of freedom. "Give working men the vote," said the reactionaries of half a century ago, "and they, with their hobnailed boots, will trample out every vestige of culture, for do they not outnumber us by ten to one?" The assumption underlying this bogey is that women when enfranchised are going to vote as a sex. They, of course, will do nothing of the kind. The same reasons that divide men into hostile and opposing camps will operate equally in the case of women. This is the universal experience, and it would be well were the opponents of women suffrage to remember sometimes that Great Britain is not the first country to be asked to give the franchise to women. The removal of the sex disability would double the number of voters without materially altering the strength of parties. That also is the universal experience.

Fifth, it is said that women would be a reactionary force, and thus put back the clock of progress. What I have already said about number four would be sufficient answer to this even if it stood alone. But it does not stand alone. On this head we have some very positive, irrefutable evidence. It is not at

all likely, for example, that Mr. Austen Chamberlain and Mr. Reginald McKenna are opposing woman suffrage because women are going to be a reactionary force in politics! But what about Australia, where women are enfranchised? They have not proved reactionary there, else there would be no Labour Ministry in power. Or New Zealand, with its advanced social legislation; or Finland, where, under adult suffrage, thirty-eight Socialists were returned to the first Parliament, nineteen of them women. But the latest, and perhaps strongest, test is Los Angeles. The circumstances there were altogether unique, and such as to severely test the question now under consideration. The Socialist and Labour movement is strong in the city, and were running a full ticket for the Municipal Council. The two older parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, had buried the hatchet, and had joined together in running one ticket only to defeat, if possible, the Labour nominees. At the Primaries, a sort of preliminary trial of strength, the Socialist candidate polled 21,000 male voters, women not being then on the voters' roll. A Bill for the enfranchisement of women had passed the Houses of Parliament during the year, and, though it had not come into operation at the Primaries, it was known that it would do so before the election itself came off. The number of women voters, who were thus being brought on to the register for the first time, was 70,000 for the city alone. Between the Primaries and the election an event happened of the most startling character. Some time previously two Trade Union officials had been arrested on a charge of having blown up a newspaper office with dynamite, by which twenty-one persons had been killed. The Socialist candidate was one of the counsel for the defence. As the workers believed the two men to be innocent and their arrest a plot on the part of the employers election feeling ran very high, organised Labour on one side and organised Capital on the other. Two days before the poll the two accused confessed that they were guilty, and thus threw a bombshell into the Labour camp. Election day came, and it was found that, despite the debacle which the confession had caused among the Labour man's supporters, he polled 54,000 votes. As he had polled his last man at the preliminaries, and as no fresh men voters had been added to the list in the interval—and even if every man who voted for him in the first instance did so again in the second, a most unlikely thing—he must have polled at least 33,000 of the newly-enfranchised women. The men on the spot, who know all the facts, are convinced that an actual majority of the 70,000 women voters, undeterred by the scare which frightened some of their husbands and brothers, gave their first vote for Socialism and Labour. That, I think, pretty well disposes of the

reactionary bogey. The British woman is no more likely to be a stick-in-the-mud than her sisters have proved themselves wherever they have had the opportunity.

The sixth, and final, serious objection to women having the vote is that as women cannot be soldiers, therefore they should not be voters. To bring in a force, so the argument runs, to aid in deciding the policy of the State, but which cannot take a share in enforcing that policy by force of arms, is illogical and dangerous. The arm that wields the sword should also cast the ballot. This is a very insidious, but very dangerous argument, especially from the lips of a democrat. Its logical end is that only the soldier should have the vote. If it is wrong for the woman to decide a policy which may send men to their death on the field of battle, then it is equally so for the male who is not a soldier. If there be any value at all in this argument against woman suffrage, then clearly it does not go far enough. To have any value it should be applied equally to men, and the end of it would be conscription. If women do not go to war they have to undergo the labour of bearing the men who do, and, what is far worse than going to war, they have to stay at home and undergo the agony of suspense which a woman's heart feels when her loved ones are away facing danger. Besides, if the coming of woman into politics is going to be an influence against war, or policies likely to lead to war, then that is an additional reason for giving them the vote which, from a man's point of view at least, outweighs every other in favour of their immediate enfranchisement.

These, then, are the main reasons advanced against giving women the vote. Not one of them will bear a moment's serious investigation. They are either based on a mistaken notion of what the enfranchisement of women means, or are the outcome of that same spirit which led the bulk of the propertied class to oppose for so long the coming of the working class into the pale of citizenship. Either a woman is a human being, endowed with intelligence, or she is not. If she is, then by no process of reasoning can the withholding of the vote be justified. We welcome the help of women during the hurly-burly of an election campaign. Even the most bigotted anti-suffragist will seek the help of women as committee workers, as canvassers, and what not. We not only permit, but encourage women to help in the dirty work of politics, but, as Lord Hugh Cecil wittily observed, when it comes to the lady-like operation of marking a cross on a piece of paper we say "No, you mustn't do that, or you will be unsexed." Never was the absurdity of the objection more happily expressed. We expect woman when canvassing to have intelligence enough to advise working men how to use

their vote properly, and then it is proposed to turn round and calmly tell her that though she knows how a man should use his vote she herself cannot be trusted to use it properly! The thing is absurd.

But, apart altogether from any agitation there may be, there is another reason for regarding the enfranchisement of women as a question of greater urgency than ever before. During the past twenty years the domestic issues of politics have been completely revolutionised. The centre of interest is no longer political. It is not with reforms in the machinery of government that the thoughts of men are now occupied. With the enfranchisement of women the transfer of power from a propertied few to the non-propertied many will have become an accomplished fact. The advanced thought of the day is no longer concerned with the things which concerned our fathers. Democracy is now fully equipped politically, and is rallying its forces for a fresh advance along new lines. Hitherto the battle has been for the weapons wherewith the battle was to be waged. Now the weapons have been forged, and the question is the use to which they are to be put. The citadel which is now being attacked is the economic foundation on which society rests. Man has won political power, and is now using it to secure economic freedom. No one whose eyes are open doubts that the next twenty years will witness vast and revolutionary changes in the existing relationships between capital and labour. Socialism looms large on the industrial horizon. Measures such as Old Age Pensions, the Insurance Act, and the like, are but faint indications of measures still to come. Every relationship of life is being looked at from a new standpoint. Revolution is in the air. The womb of time is again pregnant, and no one can say with any certainty with what issue. That changes great and momentous are about to happen no one doubts. What, then, is to be woman's share in shaping the course of the future? Is she to have vast changes forced upon her without having been consulted? Enfranchised man can battle for or against these as his opinion directs, but voteless woman has to stand aside—a helpless onlooker. The obvious injustice of this must surely appeal to every man in whom there is any sense of fair play. The reforms of the past have not concerned the domestic hearth as will those of the future.

The reconstruction of society is not a task which can be safely entrusted to one sex alone. The woman is now a very potent factor in industry. Why should she have legislation affecting the conditions under which she earns her living thrust upon her willy nilly? Legislation affecting children and housing is being demanded with ever-increasing insistence; are these matters where we can afford to discard the

voice of the mother and the housewife? On the face of it the thing is ridiculous.

If it is freedom we seek, then there can be no freedom for man whilst woman is enslaved. Says Shelley:—

Can man be free if woman be a slave?

Never will peace and human nature meet  
Till free and equal man and woman greet  
Domestic peace; and ere this power can make  
In human hearts its calm and holy seat,  
This slavery must be broken.

I have made no attempt to argue the case for the enfranchisement of woman. The day for that is over. The question now is not: Should women have the vote? but rather When will women get the vote? And the reason for that is that she herself is demanding it. Not begging or praying for it as a boon to be given or withheld by men, but claiming it as a simple elementary right of which she refuses to be longer denied. From the throne to the factory, woman has proved her capacity. For her the "half angel, half idiot" method of being treated by men is at an end. Not a toy for man's amusement, but an equal to be respected. She has fought her way into the halls of learning; ranged the realms of science; entered the fields of industry, alike as employer and employed; and proved her fitness. And the gall of bitterness is now growing within her soul at the audacity of men who would seek to dictate to her what rights of citizenship she shall possess. And that because she is a woman. Therein lies the sting. Any reason but this might have been endurable, but to be condemned to political servitude for being a Woman! The shame of it! The great heart of love that broods over us in childhood, the breast that suckles us, all the tragedy and divinity of motherhood. To be condemned because of it! For very shame's sake let it be ended.

No! no! we cry, united by our sufferings' mighty length,  
Ye—ye have ruled for ages—now we will rule as well;  
No! no! we cry, triumphant in our right's resistless strength,  
We—we shall share your heaven—or ye shall share our hell.

That was what the voteless workman said through the pen of Ernest Jones; that is what the voteless woman is saying now. Who shall gainsay them?

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# The Emancipation of Womanhood.

(Extracts from an Address delivered at the High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham, on November 14th, 1909.)

No doubt many good people have wonderingly asked, "What has Christianity to do with the Women's Movement?" The truth is that the Higher Spirit of Humanity has stirred the hearts of pioneer women in our day and set them on fire with a zeal for justice and for a freer, ampler life.

I was speaking to a Socialist and a Catholic the other day on this subject. He was in favour of the thorough-going social and political emancipation of women, but he could not understand the modern movement. "It is beyond my comprehension," he said, "that they should have all this passion of reckless self-sacrifice for such a futile and impotent thing as the vote has turned out to be. There is something in the movement that is unaccountable and strange. When I try to fathom it I hear mystical talk about liberty, equality, comradeship, completer womanhood, and realisation of personality and so forth—but I can't get any clear understanding. It baffles and bewilders me." Then he added: "Yet there is—must be—something significant, however inexplicable, some spirit at work, some revival and uprising from the depths of Humanity to account for the things we witness. There must be some cause adequate to these effects. What is it? It can't be a freak or an accident, and yet I am utterly unable to see what it is and what it means."

I told him how there seemed to be a welling up of life that swept women away in its flood almost before they realised they were in



the current. Whence it came, whither it went, might be difficult to say—but at any rate here it was—a transforming and transfiguring faith that made stammering women eloquent, and the shy and the sensitive to speak with tongues, the modest and the shrinking to be violent, the cultured and refined who had been nursed in the lap of luxury to be comrades with wage-earning women and to share the same insults and wounds and imprisonments and bodily humiliations; titled ladies, university graduates, artists, authoresses, working housewives, and charwomen were made one in this movement and suffered a common crucifixion and torture even as patrician matrons and their slaves were made one in the early persecutions of Christianity. If this thing was of evil it simulated the enthusiasm of religion uncommonly well and certainly brought forth some of the fruits of the spirit: unearthly joys, endless heroisms, unyielding devotions, passionate loyalties, and all the agonies of martyrdom short of, but only a hair's-breadth short of, actual death—and probably deaths were in store for some of them in the near future.

### The Vote a Symbol.

Something of that kind I tried to say to my friend. It is what that splendid champion Mr. Nevinson has been saying in an article\* in the *English Review* of November, 1909: "The struggle has now become so intense, its phases change so fast from day to day, and such elements of abhorrence and indignation have been added, that the ultimate hope and result of it all cannot be much spoken of. In the midst of tactics and manœuvres, in defence and attack, in law courts and police courts, in prison cells, during the pain of hunger-strikes, and under the abomination of stomach-tubes forced against their will down their throats or nostrils, the women who are fighting for political rights in this country have hardly time to remember the full significance of their aim. They are obliged to take all that for granted, and to argue about it now seems a little irrelevant, a little uninteresting. The Vote to them has become a symbol, a summary of faith—something for which it would be glorious to die, something assured and indisputable that needs no demonstration. It is to them what the Cross was to the Christians."

This writer knows the movement from the inside and understands the situation. But words like these sound foolishly extravagant and almost insane to those men who would not sacrifice a cup of

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Price one penny.

coffee or a cigar for any principle whatever, or to those women whose thoughts cannot ascend higher than a Bridge-party.

I am not going to discuss the "symbol" nor the violence of the crusade. I have referred to these incidents simply as social phenomena, however indefensible, that reveal the resolute and invincible determination, the deep consuming passion, the amazing endurance that are behind the women's demands.

No one who has met the chief personalities that command and inspire the forces will ever believe that they can be suppressed. To think they can be diverted from their purpose by policemen or gaolers, or any repressive machinery of Government, is simply the folly of men who think that physical force can hold down a spiritual and a moral force that does not fear those that can kill the body but cannot break the spirit. States and Governments can no more suppress the soul of the movement than the Czar can suppress reform in Russia; than Nero or Marcus Aurelius could suppress Christianity in Rome. The spirit of these women is an ultimate and decisive committal of the soul. Their attitude is conclusive and irrevocable. If we do not mean to massacre them the sooner we recognise that they are bound to triumph the better. The spirit of the leaders is shared by the rank and file—that spirit is invulnerable to either our arguments or our assaults. It will defeat all opposition precisely because there is no opposition in the present age, no movement in the living world, with the same fire and daring of moral conviction behind it. In the estimate of these women all mere party wrangles, however important they seem to us, are but the irrelevant chatter of small men who cannot see that they are discussing things, as it were, behind locked doors, in the absence and enforced silence of the majority of the inhabitants of these isles.

### The Crisis Reached.

Let us, if we can, pass for a moment out of the dust of the actual arena of conflict and consider rather the meaning of the strife. It is an old strife that calls to mind names like those of John Stuart Mill and Mary Wollstonecraft; only in our day it has swiftly passed beyond the stage of discussion into the battlefield of defiant deeds. No *man*, however sympathetic, can quite share the intensity of the modern revolt of woman. But he can at any rate try to understand it. It seems to me that here we have the clear emergence of a newer and more heroic human energy. We often speak as though evolution and revolution were contradictory terms. But they are by no means necessarily so. There are occasions when revolution

belongs to the ordinary and normal course of evolution. Development reaches a crisis now and again from which further progress is possible only through a sudden convulsion. This catastrophe becomes then the necessary step in further development. Social growth may be, and often is, as revolutionary as the passing of a grub into a moth: it is like the chick breaking the shell that once preserved but now restrains it. To say this is not to preach violence or revolution in any bad sense. It is simply the recognition of the fact that progress may come to a momentary standstill because it cannot go on any further on the old lines; that a new departure has become imperatively necessary if health and vitality are to be maintained. I believe that the evolution of womanhood has been thus artificially checked by society for centuries, and that the limit of restraint and frustration has now been reached; that the older countries must therefore follow the younger colonies like Australia and New Zealand, and remove the stone-wall barrier that has been set up against the advancement of women.

Such breaks in evolution are never without preparation. The wings of the angel of the Revolution are formed, though folded in the chrysalis. The industrial conditions of the last century especially have made the emancipation of women as predestined as any human movement can be said to be. If we believe at all in an economic interpretation of history, if we believe at all that modern changes are coming about because these changes were implicit and inherent in preceding social conditions, then to that extent the Emancipation of Womanhood is simply the expression of something which has been pre-determined and fore-ordained, and which now appears in the fulness of time. What determined it? Very largely the fact that women have been compelled to earn their own living under a capitalistic system. They have been driven into factories: they have thus come in quite a new sense under the power of economic and industrial conditions. They have been educated to serve under this system: they are equipped for technical and intellectual ends.

### Handicaps.

But although in this way they are subjected to industrial conditions they are finding that they are hampered, handicapped, thwarted almost at every turn. In the open market the male, who is said sometimes to be the stronger body and the superior mind, is given additional and artificial advantages to any that he may naturally possess. For the same work, even for inferior work—as, for instance, in some cases of teachers in schools—he is

better paid. In other cases professions like law and the ministry of religion are made a male monopoly. The old chivalry, which at its best was perhaps rather a beautiful thing, has become a nauseating cant upon our lips. The genuine chivalry is that of men who to-day will fight to see that women are given more justice and fair play in a life already by nature fashioned for a special share of pain and suffering and vicarious sacrifice. And the highest chivalry is not that which condescendingly fights for them but that which will put national and civic weapons into their hands and give them that political experience and power which will enable them to fight for themselves—as indeed they must. They pass the same examinations in Oxford and Cambridge, often they beat the man in Tripos or in Schools, but male chivalry debars them from the degree they have earned. They come out products of what we call the Higher Education as well equipped as men, often better, only to find that many of the most lucrative posts and careers are closed to them. They are thwarted on every hand in the effort to serve society and to express their individualities. As children they were a secondary consideration to their brothers and their education less seriously thought of and less generously sacrificed for, and now, when in spite of all obstacles they are as well-educated as the best of men, it is only to find their opportunities narrow and circumscribed and hedged about with stupid man-made restrictions and prejudices. Only with great reluctance was the medical profession opened to them. The better-paid careers in the Civil Service are still shut against them. There are over 5,000,000 women workers, but the inspectorships open to women are few and out of all proportion to the number of women employed in schools and factories. Our prisons, with their thousands of unhappy women inmates, have but one woman inspector, and no women doctors, I believe.

The woman wage-worker is even more weighted in the race and struggle of life. It is of our chivalry forsooth that we permit her to be sweated and underpaid and drive her to go on the streets. The Post Office tender for uniforms and clothing stipulates for the magnificent sum of 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. an hour to be paid by the contractor. It is of our chivalry that she has to labour full time at the factory and then come home to resume the housework which is never finished. It is of our chivalry that we tax her and impose our laws upon her without consulting her or admitting her to any effective voice in the Government that taxes and legislates. This is *cant*, odious and cowardly cant, that makes a pitiless mock of shielding her only

to expose her to the fiercest brunt of the tempest and leave her shelterless in the face of the elements. Fine, brave, handsome chivalrous men we are indeed to ask why she rebels against our benign ruling of her fate! We have not one reasonable argument against the justice or urgency of the women's movement, except indeed Mrs. Humphry Ward's argument that when it comes to fisticuffs we can usually knock her down. There is no argument. As a campaign for political and economic rights it is quite unanswerable. As a case for the emancipation of a sex from industrial exploitation it is absolutely incontrovertible and needs no plea.

Yet I confess that what impresses me most is not what men can confer as a measure of tardy justice upon women, but what women can bring to men in their crusade for a better and purer humanity. It is not a matter merely of her rights but of our human needs. The Emancipation of Womanhood is the first and most necessary step to the emancipation of human society from evils which men are powerless to fight alone. It is not only that we should be giving a belated measure of justice to women by conceding rights which we cannot any longer safely withhold, but that we should be releasing a reservoir of moral and spiritual energy and a source of specialised experience and intelligence for the good of the human race. I am indeed concerned about woman's own demands, but I am also concerned about the requirements of human society.

### **The Labour of Married Women.**

Take the case of Married Women's Labour. I want to put myself in the pillory as a penitent, for until recently I believed it was a simple piece of philanthropy and a wise step in social reform to restrict the liberty of wage-earning mothers. That expectant mothers should be prevented from pursuing their work almost up to the birth of their child, and that they should not be allowed to return to the factory until after the lapse of four weeks or so, seemed merely a provision of humane common sense. The male politicians and legislators seemed to think so too. But if women could have had an effective voice in the matter we should not have been so foolish and short-sighted. The problem is not so simple as it looks. The alternative for many such wage-earning mothers is not work or nourished rest, but work or starvation. If it is bad for such women and for their babes that they should work too near the time of birth and return to work too soon afterwards, it is still worse that they should be underfed and suffer hunger. "Society," says

Lady McLaren, "realises only the discomfort that is seen, and when a woman, especially an expectant mother, is seen working in a factory grimy and unpleasing, it gives a shock to the whole male sex. Men are ever ready to forbid such outrages, and stop wage-earning. For the sake of its own tender feelings, Society wishes to hide away the miserable woman in her own home, where no money can be earned; and once there it forgets her. It is in this spirit that Parliament has said that before a child is born the employer can send a woman worker away at his discretion, and that she shall not be permitted to earn anything again till the child is four weeks old. Meanwhile the law imposes on no person whatever the duty of giving her food."

I mention this case because it has specially impressed me owing to my own blindness in the matter. Such a law seemed so wise and beneficent to me once: now it seems unspeakably foolish and cruel. For such a law to be of use, to be just, the woman ought to have some sure support either from some public authority or, where there is a wage-earning husband, by having a right to some share of his wages paid directly to herself. But our laws are man-made.

It is not merely that men are selfish and will not surrender their advantages for the sake of social well-being: it is that men do not know, do not understand, have not the experience or the insight necessary and are too self-confident to call in the women to prescribe or consult. Problems such as the one I have mentioned are often *primarily* women's problems and require women's sagacity and knowledge to solve them, but they are also social problems gravely affecting the future of the race.

### **"Come and Help Us."**

We need woman's moral spirit and insight in all our most urgent social questions. On all the great human issues, the voice of women would be the deliverance of the higher morality of the nation; it would be, spite of the fascination of pageantry, regalia and gay uniforms, a voice in the interests of peace against war. Not that they, as nurses, have been less brave, but that it is they who suffer most from privation at home without bands or banners or excitement, from loss of husbands abroad, and of the sons they have borne and suckled. In matters of social purity their power is almost our only hope; for that horrible cancer of vice is almost exclusively man-made. Their help for temperance reform would be, I believe, decisive; whereas now the brewer and his friends are victorious to the point of defiance and contempt. On subjects like

infant mortality, the care of the feeble, the imbecile and the unfit, medical inspection and feeding of school-children, education, Labour legislation generally, apart from all question of rights, we need women's suggestion and help and experience.

We live, let us thank God and rejoice we live, at the opening of a new era of social reform. That being so, I want the women to be in at it from the beginning. I do not want to see the politicians stir one step without the women's comradeship in the enterprise. It is not merely that all social reform legislation affects women as much as men, and often more, but that no such legislation can be wise and sound unless we have the advantage of the women's distinctive point of view right through from start to finish. From one point of view I do not care a pin whether women say they want or do not want to immerse themselves in politics. I would tell those women who wish to hold aloof that it is not a question of their personal liking or preference. It is a question of our common social necessity. We cannot get on without your assistance, and you must be brought in. The Country requires you, the Cause demands you, Humanity needs you, Duty calls you. Whether you like it or not we mean to put a moral constraint on you and to insist that you shall apply yourselves to those problems which are common human social problems that must be tackled and solved by men and women in joint comradeship and co-operation.

### The Poor Law Commission.

Consider the Report of the Poor Law Commission. Has it occurred to all the men here that that most remarkable work is almost exclusively the product of woman's practical genius for social reform? I suppose those of us who have made even the most superficial acquaintance with that document will agree that it is the most wonderful result of social investigation and clear thinking and statesmanlike sagacity that has appeared in all English history. I am not speaking only of the Minority Report, but of the Majority Report too. But it is well known that the chief directive genius behind the Majority Report was a woman—Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet; and the chief directive genius behind the Minority Report was also a woman, one of the most distinguished and noble figures in the whole field of social politics—Mrs. Sidney Webb. Think of the blind stupidity, the criminal waste of keeping women of that character practically outlawed from the national political life. Those reports will some day result in legislation.

It will be a wicked thing if women are to have no say in it, and no place in working its machinery.

### The New Conception of Marriage.

And what is the summing up of it all? Is it not this—an immense gain to the civic and the national consciousness through the elevation and development of woman's personality. For all this social activity and interest will react on the woman's character, lifting it out of its narrow and petty groove and giving it a range and a sweep that it has never had before. Woman has her own individual life to live even as a man has his. She will be the better wife and mother, as he will be the better husband and father, by having wide outlooks and an intimate and firm grip on that civic and national and human life in which their being lives. The day is passing, let us hope, when a man expects his wife to be a mere household ornament and convenience—or what Laetitia Dale was to Sir Willoughby Patterne, a presence that illumined him as a burning taper lights up consecrated plate. How odious to a true man would be the sense that his wife clings to him and does this rather than that, simply because she is economically dependent upon him and feels her very soul bought and sold. The essence of true marriage is an irrevocable self-committal on both sides not to crush but to develop the individuality of each and bring it to its perfect bloom and fruit. How horrible would be the thought that a woman consents to marry because it is, under present conditions, the most obvious way of securing a livelihood!

Would not every self-respecting man desire that women should have equal opportunities to acquire their own economic independence, so that they shall feel no inducements to marry except the natural and the honourable ones that ought always to prevail. How unutterably loathsome it is to know that there are thousands of women to-day driven by sheer economic necessity to sell themselves in the marriage-market—that they will marry anyone who will keep them; so that, in Miss Cicely Hamilton's phrase, Marriage has for many women become a *trade*. And how unspeakably horrible it must be for a man to feel, even to suspect, that he is being made use of in that way. Would he not really prefer that he had genuinely to please, to woo, if peradventure he might exult in winning the glory of a free and independent woman's genuine love unaided by any bribe of economic advantage?

Think what this deeper comradeship might mean to the future of the race, when women are no more the playthings and the toys of

men, no more absorbed in the punctilios of etiquette, the petty ambitions for social prestige, the little thin pleasures and affectations of a mentally starved life, the idle round of visitings and small talk and tea-drinkings, and the dilettante dabbling in literature and art as a mere drawing-room accomplishment. Think what it would mean not for her only but for men and for human society if she really counted, and had her full self-expression in life, what her influence would mean for her men friends, and for the children she is training and equipping in civic knowledge and virtue. Think of the changed atmosphere of the home-life when the woman's slavish subservience is no longer a fact, when the mother and the daughters, no less than the father and the sons, can approach all great public questions with equal knowledge and an equal responsibility, when the woman confronts her own career with courage, knowing that she is the mistress of her own destiny precisely because she is the servant of Humanity and not merely of men, the child of God and not the sport of Nature.

#### How Freedom will be Won.

If this day of emancipation is to come, as come it will and that right soon, it will come by the women's own daring efforts and self-reliant wills. Women may give up looking to political parties, or with much expectation to the aid of men. In the main men will give you only what you can wring out of them, and this when they see they cannot hold you down any longer. Your hope of salvation is in yourselves and the justice of your Cause, and the God of all Justice. You must make yourselves independent of parties and combine to make your subjection no longer possible. Only when men have realised that you are strong, determined, irresistible, yes, and desperate, will they accede to your claims. Until then they will play with you and put you off as they have done all through past years. So unite aggressively in your own interests and "trust no party, sect, or faction," remembering those words of John Stuart Mill: "The concessions of the privileged to the unprivileged are seldom brought about by any better method than the power of the unprivileged to extort them." You have a glorious Cause, you have perilous hazards in front, but also you have a certain victory. You are now in the dark hour, but eastward the sky is already trembling into dawn. Be of good courage, for the day is yours.

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# An Old Doctor's View

OF THE . . . .

# Women's Movement.

By **WILLIAM BOULTING, L.R.C.P. Lond.,**

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Late Assistant Physician Mount Vernon  
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## AN OLD DOCTOR'S VIEW OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT.

One often hears educated men ask with Carlyle: "Has the vote proved to be anything more than 'a Morrison's pill remedy'? Why this insensate passion of women for a worthless and, possibly, noxious nostrum?" And many generous-minded women still believe, with Miss Octavia Hill, that their sex can do far more good "by service rendered in out-of-the-way places than can possibly be achieved by the entry of women into the struggle for political life."\*

The clogging of political machinery through over-centralisation and those inevitable consequences of congestion of business, an augmented sovereignty of the Cabinet, whether Tory or Radical, and reduction of the private member, so-called, to relative insignificance, have temporarily discredited representative government. But the principles on which representation rests should prove, I hope, the justice, nay, the absolute necessity of giving women the Parliamentary vote.

There are three principles which, to my mind, lie at the very roots of the vote.

1. A President of the United States of America once went so far as to say that no nation can ever become so good and wise as to be fit to rule another nation. However that may be, it is certainly proved in history that no section of society may be safely entrusted with the welfare of the other sections of the community. Any class, so privileged, possesses neither that *direct* knowledge of the conditions that obtain among other classes, nor enough "sympathetic imagination" to grasp their aspirations, needs, disabilities, and sufferings. But history shows, also, that by representative government, *precisely in so far as it is truly representative*, after much preliminary discussion outside the Chamber, the just rights and just demands of the electorate do meet with some sort of fair play and do receive a considered answer. It is an argument for the

\* *Daily News*, March 5th, 1912.

judicious extension of the franchise to all sections of the community, and especially to women, who as wives, mothers, and also as workers have their own points of view and their own needs to urge, just because they are women and not men, and have requirements of their own which men can never adequately grasp and do justice to, any more than an oligarchy, even with the best intentions, can render real justice to the people.

2. So far as government has been truly and sufficiently representative, it has been a barrier against those disastrous upheavals of society which injustice invariably generates. The recent outburst of militancy in our streets should make clear to every thoughtful mind that, however severely it may be repressed, the forcible demand of women for the franchise is not in the least likely to cease. The determined and reiterated demand of British women for the same rights that British men won by means of the struggles of the seventeenth century, and those violent efforts which produced the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867, commenced as far back as 1791, when Mary Wollstonecraft published her "Vindication of the Rights of Women." Since the publication of J. S. Mill's "Subjection of Women" in 1867, seven Bills have passed their second reading in the House of Commons, of late years by enormous and ever-increasing majorities. These have always been burked, jockeyed, or evaded by the Cabinet in power. The demand that has thus received the assent of the majority of our representatives, seven times over, has been supported by the hugest demonstrations, meetings, and petitions ever known, and has been backed by the municipal councils of nearly all our great towns. Even should the majority of women be indifferent or opposed to the demand, it is the test of Liberalism to pay respect to the just claims of minorities. Such a movement can only cease when woman has established her right, in her turn, to "own herself" as a free citizen in a free community.

3. The State is all the stronger for a developed sense of social responsibility, and opportunity for its exercise in each of its members. Can it be anything but good for the nation when responsibility as a member of society and obligation to an organic whole are directly brought home to each citizen? The possession of the vote is at least a potential education in duty, which can hardly be achieved in any other way. For thereby the State ceases to be a mere outside mechanical control, and becomes an internal appeal for duties and rights; the State becomes, so to speak, self-conscious in each of its male members. And why should the State

be weakened by the denial of this high privilege to wife, mother, and woman worker? In my time I have observed deterioration of society in many ways; but I have also seen the sense of public obligation and social duty grow strong. A new and vigorous life has appeared; a growing sense of the debt to the State which each of its members owes to it has followed each extension of the franchise to men; a new conception of civic duty has arisen in the man who, if unenfranchised, would have thought but little and cared less about this moral obligation; this "vita nuova" is permeating society. Surely, then, it would be of no small advantage to women (nor less to the State) if they learned, by experience of citizenship, what it means and what are its duties?

Psychologists say that character is formed chiefly during the first seven years of life. Mothers, then, hold the future of the race in their hands. Would not mothers, if experienced in public responsibility, impress the plastic minds of their children with patriotism and the imperative call of civic duty? For they have a closer and subtler intimacy with their children than any father can have. Would not that insistent sense of bounden duty to be found in motherhood, fortified and definitely prepared by an active share in public duty, urge women as they have never been urged before to

"Keep the young generations in hail,  
And leave them no damaged house"?

How often we hear the platitude that the proper place for woman is the home. No one will dispute that the home is the sphere wherein the married woman and mother can exercise her best activities. But there are between five and six millions of women in England who are *compelled* to work in factories, &c., for a living. Their average weekly wage is variously stated. The Board of Trade Report on Earnings (1906) informs us that it is not much, if at all, above 7s. 6d.; whereas some economists put it as low as 6s. 4d., and estimate the average weekly wage of men at about 17s. Seven or eight shillings are not a wage on which any woman can do much more than starve. It is notorious that the low wages paid in many shops and industries drive a vast number of young women to augment their earnings by ministering to vice. She is the heroic woman who preserves her honour under such dire conditions. Yet, even so, the number of prostitutes is far below that of the men who take advantage of their destitution. And thirty years of experience as a doctor taught me that men are in the habit of hanging about certain shops, where the women assistants are



infamously ill-paid, at closing time, to pick and choose; while fallen women avow that their most profitable clients are middle-aged and elderly men, by no means always bachelors. For men no longer young are better off than their juniors, and consequently can afford the best fees.

In Australia and Norway the effect of the enfranchisement of women was to give men and women equal payment for equal amounts of work. The result would appear to be the employment of more men; whereby the women workers are enabled to take their proper place as wives and mothers and engage in home duties.

It is now recognised by economists that the wages paid by Government set, in a great measure, the rate of wages paid by private employers. Yet the Government sweats more women at a lower wage than does the private employer. The highest wage it gives the woman worker is only 8s. a week, the lowest 4s.; while it pays the male worker 23s. to 24s. Lord Haldane recently reduced the payment of women employed in basting and properly sewing army breeches, nearly four hours' work, from 3d. to 2½d. a pair; and he defended this "retrenchment" on the ground that the lower sum was the current wage in the neighbourhood for the same kind of work. Would he have dared to reduce an already wickedly insufficient payment had the workers been men and electors?

"When women go to work for them, the Government engage To give them lots of contract jobs at a low starvation wage; But, when it's men that they employ, they always add a note, The wages must be fair, *because the men have got the vote.*"

Again, I do not wish to minimise the faults of trade unions. They have been, and probably will be, many and grievous. But the improved condition of the working classes in my time is limited solely to those who have been able to form unions, while every unionist is convinced by experience that no unions could stand against the various contrivances of wealthy employers to smash them by means of trusts, political combination, legal dodges, and the various powerful means of wealth to that end were it not for the political pressure which unionists can exercise by means of the vote. The crushed women workers are powerless to combine and enforce a wage on which they can live, not to speak of achieving any dignity of womanhood; for they are deprived of the cogent argument which lies behind men's unions and sustains them, namely, the vote.

Just, then, as the family requires the co-operation of both man and woman, so does the State—that living organism, whose units are men and women—need the woman's, as well as the man's, guidance for the exercise of its proper functions. At present the woman's voice is not listened to, and, unable to exercise direct influence, she is forced to exert disguised and unworthy influence, and to resort to the wiles of sex for any purpose she may have in view. This is degrading both to man and woman, and nothing but great advantage can ensue from more honest and open methods. What an incalculable waste of power to the nation is due to the limitations imposed on more than half our population by reason of the accident of sex! What crippling in every way of healthy life! What women really desire and are really fitted for can only become manifest when they cease to be restrained by outworn convention, artificial ligature, and the forcible imposition of a questionable ideal. Unhappily, the slave, in time, accepts his slavery; and there are many women so accustomed to chains that they are unaware of captivity. The captive bird in a cage becomes content with its lot; but open the door, and will it not soar and sing?

I have heard it maintained by the unobservant and the unthinking (who are the great majority of mankind) that women are incapable of command, of keeping a secret, and of holding together. Whatever may be thought of the militant tactics of the W.S.P.U., that organisation has given the lie to these frivolous statements.

An equally absurd argument is that politics would draw women from their proper sphere. Does the drudgery of over 5,000,000 ill-paid women exercise them in their proper function? And the argument comes with peculiarly ill-grace from those who employ the ladies of Primrose Leagues and Liberal Associations to canvass electors, speak on platforms, and forward party tactics by every means in their power. Sixty years ago a book was published by a lady in which she gravely discussed whether it was lady-like to become a governess. We have advanced since then. The appearance of women on the platform to denounce the extension of the suffrage to their sex is a *reductio ad absurdum*; it is the harbinger of a further advance—to complete political freedom.

But, say our opponents, the chivalry of men will be destroyed and the ideal of womanliness will vanish. I think most men will admit, on reflection, that if "chivalry" implies, not compliments but spontaneous self-abnegation, they have received quite as much from women as they have ever bestowed on them. Deferential

manners towards "the sex" were most pronounced when woman was classed with wine for a toast, and when she was pursued by brutal sportsmen as a creature of the chase. But we have rounded "Seraglio Point," even if we have not yet doubled "Cape Turk." The possible decline of chivalry and disappearance of the ideal of femininity are deplored chiefly by the well-to-do man and his secluded womankind. It is one of the little ironies of life that the men who profess to worship woman as a dainty goddess in porcelain, placed on a pedestal, are content to employ young girls to empty their slops and do the meanest work of the household; not to speak of their indifference to the millions of women on the brink of starvation, and worse still, their support of the white-slave traffic. But many of them say the poor street-walker protects their own wives and sisters and daughters from peril! I had thought better of my sex. It were well for them were they forced to comply with a far higher standard in sexual matters.

I have heard complaints that women would demand the same moral standard from their husbands as men do from their wives. I have yet to learn that chastity means frigidity, and not self-restraint, or that male incontinence is necessary for health. I deny utterly, and the great bulk of the medical profession would support me, that continence is more injurious to the man than to the woman. The doctrine is a popular excuse for male debauchery, just as the doctrine that it was manly to drink deep was once an excuse for drunkenness. Even if it be true that, as a rule, men have their instincts aroused by a petticoat, and women only by some particular man, so much the greater credit to the man who learns to govern himself. It was not without a purpose that Giotto chose a male figure as "Chastity" in his great fresco painting at Assisi. How many ill-fed, ill-furnished, miserable little bastards have I come across through the evasion or malperformance of the duties of fatherhood by men who regarded dishonour in a woman or bastardy in a child as a disgrace, but who never gave a thought to their own honour or to the living consequences of their own conduct! How many women have I seen subjected to abdominal section from a species of venereal disease once considered to be comparatively innocuous, communicated to them by their husbands! How many women have I attended, barren from the husband's "irregularity" before marriage! How many bread-winners have I seen disabled by locomotor ataxy or confined to lunatic asylums for general paralysis of the insane, the results of "youthful indiscretions"! How many wives and children pay a life penalty for vice which was not their own!

One of the gravest allegations of "anti-feminists" is that women are, *on the average*, intellectually inferior to the average man.

Even if this were true, I should like to be instructed that intellectual power is indispensable to the vote, or even to good citizenship. Of recent years successive classes of men have been entrusted with the vote long before they showed their capacity for using it. It was not on account of the experience and intelligence of the agricultural labourer that he was enfranchised, nor because he made any great effort for the vote, as thousands of women have been doing during two generations. Those who, like myself, knew the labourer in the past, are aware of how improved political status has quickened his wits and strengthened his judgment, which, since the success of a community nowadays (when every ounce of brain exercised tells) depends on the intelligence of its units, is of advantage to the State and an argument applicable to the enfranchisement of women.

But the statement that the average woman is inferior to the average man in intellect is untrue. Her point of view may, indeed, be and often is different from his. More male *geniuses* may be born than female, and their quality may be superior. Yet the honour lists of our universities show that as far as mere *talent* is involved the "picked" woman holds her own with the "picked" man, and very often beats him. Women who are trained by education or in life show no less ability than do men, though their considered judgments are often a surprising novelty to men, and should stimulate them to reflect. The French *bourgeoise* often runs the shop as well as her home, and her capacity for business is universally acknowledged. Personally, I, as a whilom doctor, had a very large experience of all sorts and conditions of men and women, and, among the working classes, I usually found the "grey mare" to be the "better horse." The wife in these classes will be recognised by those who know them intimately to be, as a rule, quicker in the uptake, clearer headed, a better reasoner, and more open to ideas than is her "man." The causes are obvious; she is compelled by economic necessity to keep a vast number of things in mind, and to exercise much forethought concerning the home, while, for the support of the family, she has to supplement that balance of the husband's wage which he puts into her hands by working outside the house, often in homes where she comes into closer connection than he with those who belong to different stages of culture. Among the leisured and upper middle classes,

and among those that ape them, however, one finds the average woman vastly inferior to her husband. Superficially educated and ill-trained, even in accomplishments, her soul is flattened out like the Red Indian's forehead, her mind cramped like the Chinese woman's feet. And just as the Chinese women lately petitioned for the retention of the deforming ligature that was the mark of a false ideal and gave social distinction, so the *traditional* lady is usually desirous to preserve her very expensive parasitism and unnatural and worthless seclusion. A medical friend in high-class practice observed to me the other day, "These women live for Bridge and motors." Being essentially uneducated and unemployed they are the most truly ignorant, obtuse, and painfully parasitic members of their sex. But the *natural* capacity of the leisured woman is not small. Nor does she cease to be charming when she wakes up. Wm. Cory, the learned author of "Ionica," who was once a master at Eton, employed the leisure of his old age in teaching Greek to girls of the class who desired it. He did it for the love of teaching them, not for pay. "They are just as sweet as their mothers were," he remarked to me, "*and not half as stupid.*"

It is said that women are not so imperially minded as to be entrusted with the destinies of a great empire. Be it remembered that New Zealand, after women were enfranchised there, was the first daughter-State to offer us a Dreadnought. Our desire to tighten the bonds of empire is shown by our persistently refusing demands which make the free woman there to be classed with paupers, lunatics, and criminals in her disabilities if she takes up her abode here! What respect will the Australasian mother inspire in her children for the obstinate, stupid, prejudiced old Motherland? Did the women of England show a want of Imperial passion when they sent forth son after son, in the spirit of stern Spartan mothers, to get shot or die of fever in South Africa? English women and Boer women alike

"made them speak plain

The word *country*,"

as women always have done everywhere and at all times.

Women are not sufficiently instructed in affairs, it is said, to meddle with foreign policy. How much had the people, or even its chambers, to do with our understanding with France or Russia, with what is practically the partition of Persia or with the recent changes made in India? Who knew anything at all about the crisis with Germany last year? Nor will the British Houses of Parliament or the Minister for Foreign Affairs long be able to act without

hearing the voice of Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. And a feminine voice is now rendered capable of putting in a word from the two daughter States last named.

It is urged that female suffrage will have a bad effect on our rule in India. Have States in that country governed by women never been heard of? Did not our co-subjects there positively worship their Great White Queen? And did not a woman, who is acknowledged to have been one of the ablest rulers the world has ever known, govern the great neighbouring Chinese Empire in our own time? Our position in India is much more likely to be influenced by the conduct and intelligence of our "mem-sahibs" resident there. And, as Sir Sydney Olivier, the Governor of Jamaica, points out, prestige has little effect; the power of facts obtains. Bluff may serve for a season, but force is stronger than bluff, and justice stronger than all.

That women cannot become soldiers is a strange argument. Women *have* fought in the defence of country, and fought well; as, among many evidences, the history of the Italian Republics shows. But who wants the mothers of the race, that undergo greater peril in child-bed than any army in a campaign, to fight? It ill-becomes us Englishmen to urge this objection, for we usually rely not on ourselves, but on hirelings to shoulder arms. Compulsory military service will certainly not be agreed to by the democracy so long as we have a powerful Navy. And I am not informed that any State where compulsory military service obtains has *disfranchised* that vast number of its weakly men who are physically incapable of bearing arms.

One hears that women are too hysterical to have the vote. Now, hysteria is a disease marked by pronounced stigmata; and not all so-called hysterical outbursts are really hysterical. To deal first with true hysteria: "Chauffard and Saurier have shown that, if we compare the number of male with the number of female hysterical patients who enter a hospital for general medicine during the course of a year, we find the former by far surpasses the latter. We ourselves have already shown by statistical returns of the out-patients department that, in the lower classes of society, the number of hysterical men is much greater than that of hysterical women." I quote Drs. J. M. Charcot and Pierre Marie.\* This excess of male hysterics among the poor is probably due to their greater indulgence in alcohol and greater exposure to severe accident than women. But precisely the reverse is found among

\* Dict. of Psychol. Med., Ed. D. Hack. Tuke, 1892.

the higher classes of society. All medical men are agreed that this prevalence of hysteria among secluded women is chiefly caused by the want of due occupation.

But much is called hysteria that is not so. Women under severe mental or moral strain are apt to find relief in tears and convulsive movements, whereby nervous tension is relieved, and mental equilibrium is recovered quickly. The same tendency is recorded of Greek and Roman heroes by ancient writers, and it may be observed to-day in the quick-witted Italian (possessed, with the English, of the best brains in Europe, according to Professor Huxley), in the Frenchman, and, above all, in the Jew, perhaps the most intellectually endowed of all. We Anglo-Saxon males are apt, when opportunity offers, to seek relief in strong language; but the explosion, though gratifying, is only a partial relief. The inhibition of the physical expression of emotion is a moral gain, but one often purchased, when the emotion is prolonged and severe, by serious results to the mind and nervous system.

And it seems doubtful whether women are really more emotional than men. Certainly, Suffragist orators who appeal strongly to the emotions are chosen to address audiences composed largely of males, while audiences of women prefer more restrained appeals to their reason.

Whatever the mental and moral differentia of sex may be, it is absurd to speak of women as if they were identical in cast of thought and character. They differ among themselves just as much and no more than men differ among themselves: witness the variety of suffrage societies, expressing every kind of opinion, from Socialist to Tory. Women are, indeed, specialised to become the mothers and men to become the fathers of the race; and their co-operation is needed in the State, as in the home. For the trend in development is for the whole community to assume responsibility for the individual, and for the individual to bear his or her share of responsibility to the community. The days when wife and children were the private property of the father have nearly passed. The days of the rights and duties of the individual, even if she be "only a woman," are at hand. The success of the female-voter in increasing public spirit and in diminishing illegitimacy and vice and infantile mortality is manifest in all the countries that have made the concession, notably in Australasia. But we British lag behind, according to our wont, to the incalculable loss of effective power in our State, in our society, and in the home. For no one can

foretell what great things a man or a woman can do until he or she is free to do it. And, working side by side to noble ends for the community, what may not man and woman effect? We must break through that tense web, woven of antique prejudice wherein women victims are enmeshed in convention and fastened by false logic and facile assertion.

WILLIAM BOULTING.

March, 1912.

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## What Anti-Suffragist Men really think about Women.

Sir Almroth Wright and his Critics.

THE letter of Sir Almroth Wright in the *Times* of March 28th, the day of the Parliamentary discussion of the Conciliation Bill, has attained a kind of celebrity. It is said by shrewd observers (*e.g.*, *The Nation*), to have influenced the result of the debate. Viscount Helmsley, who supported the rejection of the Bill, described it as "extraordinarily able and interesting," and every allusion to it during the debate was received with cheers. The letter was reprinted by the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage and circulated to every member of the House of Commons and House of Lords and to "some members" of the National Union of Teachers. We may conjecture that the members of the National Union thus favoured were of the male sex, for the more diplomatic of the Anti-Suffrage leaders were not slow to perceive that the letter was not likely to commend itself to women even of Anti-Suffragist opinions. Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Miss Violet Markham hastened to disown the unsavoury imaginings of the letter, even while hinting that like the curate's egg it was "excellent in parts." Mrs. Moberley Bell, the Hon. Secretary of the League, commended it as "putting forward some of the points *we would like to make* in a masterful and

professional manner," but explained that the League has not circulated it "broad cast," but only in the manner described. In other words, the League is willing to give its help in circulating among those likely to be influenced by it, a debased and debasing libel on women under the cover of a great scientific reputation. But it appreciates the danger of allowing women in general to realise the kind of opinions about women which underlie much of the Anti-Suffragist propaganda.

No experienced Suffragist, and perhaps no experienced woman of the world, can doubt that if we could dig to the roots of the "instinct," which serves so many of our male opponents instead of argument, we should usually find sentiments less exaggerated and less tinged with personal malice than Sir Almroth Wright's, but not differing much from them in substance. In speaking to women individually and at meetings, men find it of course more politic as well as far pleasanter to base the refusal of political rights upon impersonal arguments such as "physical force" or vague non-committal phrases such as "Man is Man," etc., but it does not require a divining rod to detect the contemptuous estimate of the mental and moral calibre of women that lies beneath.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Sir Almroth Wright for his candour. We hope that his views and the endorsement they have received from the N.L.O.W.S. and others will become as widely known as possible and that the following summary of them may serve as a sort of moral emetic to those women whose minds have been cloyed with the sentimental conception of women of which Miss Violet Markham and Mrs. Humphrey Ward are the principal exponents.

Sir Almroth Wright begins by admitting that—

**"For men, the physiology and psychology of woman is full of difficulties,"**

and then proceeds to describe the cycle of women's life—the whole sex apparently, not only the Suffragist variety—as one of

periodic loss of mental balance deepening for a few years into loss of sanity.

"He (Man) is not a little mystified when he encounters in her (Woman) periodically recurring phases of hypersensitiveness, unreasonableness, and loss of the sense of proportion. He is frankly perplexed when confronted with a complete alteration of character in a woman who is child-bearing. When he is a witness of the 'tendency of woman to warp when nervously ill,' and of the terrible physical havoc which the pangs of a disappointed love may work, he is appalled. And it leaves on his mind an eerie feeling when he sees serious and long-continued mental disorders developing in connection with the approaching extinction of a woman's reproductive faculty. No man can close his eyes to these things; but he does not feel at liberty to speak of them.

"For the woman that God gave him is not his to give away.

"As for woman herself she makes very light of any of these mental upsettings. She perhaps smiles a little at them. The woman of the world will even gaily assure you that 'of course half the women in London have to be shut up when they come to the change of life. None the less these upsettings of her mental equilibrium are the things that a woman has most cause to fear; and no doctor can ever lose sight of the fact that the mind of woman is always threatened with danger from the reverberations of her physiological emergencies."

Mr. Stanley Leathes' dry comment on this is good:—

"The things he writes about are things which, as he justly says, we don't talk about, but apparently we write about them to the tune of three columns in the TIMES."

Sir Victor Horsley warns the public against assuming that the assertions made regarding the physical constitution of woman is true. Other critics remind us that man, too, is subject to physiological emergencies and reverberations.

"What of the innumerable women who are martyred every day, in ways innumerable and unspeakable, by the 'physiological emer-

gencies' of men? What of the hysteria and neurosis which spring directly and indirectly of that martyrdom? What of the innumerable disastrous marriages of the unfit." (Miss May Sinclair).

"Man," says Mr. Sidney Low in ironic vein, "not having physiological emergencies is, as everybody knows, always efficient, reasonable, well balanced; he never loses his sense of proportion, not even when he comes down to the office with a 'head' due to reverberations not wholly physiological; he may suffer (in fact he does suffer much more than the female species) from gout, rheumatism and liver complaint, but these maladies never interfere with his competence or his perfect mental equipoise, whether in public or in business."

Sir Almroth Wright next proceeds to describe the various types of militant Suffragists, all of whom apparently are spinsters, being recruited from

"The half-million of our excess female population, that half-million which had better long ago have gone out to mate with its complement of men beyond the sea."

The first three types are the (otherwise sane) advocates of physical violence; the over sexed; and the under sexed.

"First—let us put them first—come a class of women who hold, with minds otherwise unwarped, that they may whenever it is to their advantage, lawfully resort to physical violence. . . . There file past next a class of women who have all their life long been strangers to joy, women in whom instincts long suppressed have in the end broken into flame. These are the sexually embittered women in whom everything has turned into gall and bitterness of heart and hatred of men. Their legislative programme is licence for themselves or else restrictions for man. Next there file past the incomplete. One side of their nature had undergone atrophy, with the result that they have lost touch with their living fellow men and women. Their programme is to convert the whole world into an epicene institution in which man and woman shall everywhere work side by side at the self-same tasks and for the self-same pay."

Sir Almroth Wright here diverges from his classification in order to explain, in perhaps the most amazing passage of the whole letter, to the women of the third type why their wishes never can be realised.

"Even in animals—I say even, because in these at least one of the sexes has periods of complete quiescence—male and female cannot be safely worked side by side, except when they are incomplete. While in the human species safety can be obtained, it can be obtained only at the price of continual restraint. And even then woman, though she protests that she does not require it, and that she does not receive it, practically always does receive differential treatment at the hands of man. It would be well, I often think, that every woman should be clearly told—and the woman of the world will immediately understand—that when man sets his face against the proposal to bring in an epicene world he does so because he can do his best work only in surroundings where he is perfectly free from suggestion and from the onus which all differential treatment imposes. And I may add in connection with my own profession that when a medical man asks that he should not be the yoke-fellow of a medical woman he does so also because he would wish to keep up between men and women—even when they are doctors—some of the modesties and reticences upon which our civilisation has been built up. Now the medical woman is of course never on the side of modesty, or in favour of any reticences. Her desire for knowledge does not allow of these."

Sir Victor Horsley accuses Sir Almroth Wright of having in this paragraph insulted his profession and his sex. Few, if any, he thinks of his professional colleagues will have read it without disgust.

Regarding the shameful attack on medical women, Mrs. Alice Meynall says:

"Sir Almroth Wright avers that modesty is injured by consultation of a man doctor and a woman doctor. But what of the colloquy of a man doctor with a nurse? It is the nurse who has

the most intimate and the most painful knowledge of her male patients' diseases, and must discuss them with the male physician. And what of the woman patient who is, or was until this more decent time, obliged to give every privacy of her nature into the medical hands of a man? It is her modesty that has brought the woman doctor into office; but that is a modesty which Sir Almroth Wright ignores."

After this digression Sir Almroth Wright returns to his classification of types of militancy. His next type is that of the intellectual:

"The woman who is poisoned by her misplaced self-esteem, and who flies out at every man who does not pay homage to her intellect." "The programme of this type of woman is, as a preliminary, to compel man to admit her claim to be his intellectual equal, and, that done, to compel him to divide up everything with her to the last farthing, and so make her also his financial equal."

Following in the wake of these intellectually embittered women come "troops of girls just grown up," who have been educated in schools and colleges staffed by unmarried suffragists and have been taught by them to believe that women have in the past suffered indignities and wrong at the hands of men. The programme of these young college women is, so Sir Almroth Wright avers, to secure husbands who will slave for them, while they pursue an independent course, untrammelled by any regard for their husband's interests.

It is apparently this part of the letter that has won the meed of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's approval and has inspired her latest suggestion, viz., that of the exclusion from appointments at schools and colleges of women holding Suffragist opinions. She has not yet explained exactly how far she would carry the proposed boycott; whether, for example, if compelled to choose between a Suffragist teacher of brilliant qualifications and an Anti-suffragist of inferior ones, she would recommend the appointment of the latter. But as by her own admission the Suffragists among college-educated women are in the vast majority, it is obvious

that her plan must lead to this. Perhaps, though she relies on the pressure of their economic necessities being sufficient to induce the Suffragist candidates to recant or suppress their opinions and send qualifying half-crowns to N.L.O.W.S.

Having finished to his own satisfaction and that of the League, his classification of Suffragists, Sir Almroth Wright proceeds to expose some of the fallacies in their opinions. First comes a diatribe against the "fatuous dogma" that a woman ought to receive the same pay as a man for the same work. Sir Victor Horsley points out with regard to this, that the British Medical Association have been among the most tenacious in upholding this particular doctrine with regard to women. He might have added that the male members of the Association, who as he says outnumber the women by about 50 to 1, have excellent reasons of their own for being supporters of women's rights to this extent. It would suit their book very ill if their women colleagues were to claim the right owing to their smaller reserve of strength or greater liability to "physiological emergencies" to undercut them by accepting hospital posts and fees at a lower than the usual professional level.

Next comes an exposure of the "equally fatuous" marriage projects of the Suffragists, and a dark hint that if they persist in refusing to accept their proper position of subordination, men may find it more convenient in the future to dispense with the institution of matrimony altogether.

So far Sir Almroth Wright has certainly not been led into obscurity by observation of the usual reticences and delicacies. In the latter portions of his letter the flight of his thought is not always perfectly easy for the weaker-minded sex to follow. We gather that

"Woman in her relation to physical force, stands in quite a different position from man. Out of that different relation, there must of necessity shape itself a special code of ethics for women. And to violate that code must be for woman immorality."



We are not told what are the special points wherein the man's code of ethics differs from the woman's and he may do what would be for her immoral, but judging from the general level of Sir Almroth Wright's opinions, we can probably form a pretty fair guess at some of them.

As regards, however, the case of physical violence by woman against man and by man against woman, the code is evidently not different but reciprocal.

"Up to the present in the whole civilised world there has ruled a truce of God as between man and woman. That truce is based upon the solemn covenant that within the frontiers of civilisation (outside them of course the rule lapses) the weapon of physical force may not be applied by man against woman nor by woman against man. Under this covenant the reign of force which prevails in the world without comes to an end when a man enters his household. Under this covenant that half of the human race which most needs protection is raised up above the waves of violence. Within the terms of this compact everything man receives from woman is given as a free gift. Again, under this covenant a full half of the programme of Christianity has been realised; and a foundation has been laid upon which it may be possible to build higher, and perhaps finally in the ideal future to achieve the abolition of physical violence and war. And it is this solemn covenant, the covenant so faithfully kept by man, which has been violated by the militant Suffragist in the interest of her morbid, stupid, ugly, and dishonest programme."

Of this Mr. Stanley Leathes says:

"If it is suggested that man maintains a solemn compact with women to exempt her from violence, the suggestion is belied by the most notorious facts of daily life. Men are seldom beaten; women often are, and beaten by men."

He might have added that the law, as usually interpreted, regards wife-beating and even worse assaults upon women as venial and imposes the most trivial penalties. Readers of the Anti-suffragist journal TRUTH, could for many years study in its weekly LEGAL

PILLORY, long lists of inadequate sentences of this kind, and in a parallel column the proportionately heavy sentences imposed on offences against property,—snared rabbits, sleeping in hay-ricks, etc.\*

Having sufficiently considered the militant Suffragist, and with her "the thousands of her subscribers and supporters," and having crushed her morally as he hints that she deserves to be crushed physically under the Tarpeian rock of his criticism, Sir Almroth Wright turns

"To that section of women Suffragists—one is almost inclined to doubt whether it any longer exists—which is opposed to all violent measures, though it numbers in its ranks women who are stung to the quick by the thought that man, who will concede the vote to the lowest and most degraded of his own sex, withholds it from 'even the noblest woman in England.'"

He proceeds to reconcile "the noblest woman in England" to her disfranchisement by explaining to her "what a vote really gives.

"The Parliamentary vote is an instrument—and a quite astonishingly disappointing instrument it is—for obtaining legislation; that is, for directing that the agents of the State shall in certain defined circumstances bring into application the weapon of physical compulsion. Further, the vote is an instrument by which we give to this or that group of statesmen authority to supervise and keep in motion the whole machinery of compulsion."

It follows apparently that since a woman is prohibited by an unwritten law, one of the *ἀγροπτα κασφαλής Θεῶν νομίμια* from herself employing physical violence or compulsion she is

\*One case, which occurred in Liverpool two or three years ago, and so far as I know, attracted no public comment, may be given to illustrate the way in which violations of Sir Almroth Wright's "Truce of God" are sometimes regarded by juries of "good men and true." Three men set on a respectable working woman in a lonely road and successively outraged her. The jury brought it in a case of common assault. The judge told them with asperity "not to bring him such a silly verdict." If the prisoners were guilty at all, obviously it was a case of criminal assault. The foreman after a whispered consultation with the eleven other "good men," explained: "The fact is, my lord, the jury had no doubt that the prisoners are guilty of the graver offence, but we did not want them penalised."

also prohibited from commissioning others to use physical violence.

"When one realises that that same noblest woman of England would shrink from any personal exercise of violence, one would have thought that it would have come home to her that it is not precisely her job to commission a man forcibly to shut up a public house or to hang a murderer."

Even quite a common woman would undoubtedly shrink from killing a bullock. Should she therefore refrain from eating beef-steak or ordering it for her household, since she thereby implicitly orders the butcher to perform the job for her?

Finally, Sir Almroth Wright turns to the practical politician, who asks him,

"How can you get over the fact that no very conspicuous harm\* has resulted from woman suffrage in the countries which have adopted it? And can any firm reasons be rendered for the belief that the giving of votes to women in England would be any whit more harmful than in the Colonies?"

"A few words will supply the answer.

"The evils of woman suffrage lie, first, in the fact that to give the vote to women is to give it to voters who as a class are quite incompetent to adjudicate upon political issues; secondly, in the fact that women are a class of voters who cannot effectively back up their votes by force; and, thirdly, in the fact that it may seriously embroil man and woman."

Apparently, the answer to Sir Almroth Wright's supposed interlocutor lies in the third fact. In the Colonies, he says, the vote was given to woman on doctrinaire grounds or to gain electioneering advantages. It was not given in response to any insistent demand on the part of the women. There was no

\* The "no very conspicuous harm" is a euphemism to cover the painful fact that by the practically unanimous testimony of public men in the Colonies the results of Woman Suffrage has been good without any inter-mixture of harm. For the evidence of this, see the leaflets and pamphlets on the point supplied by the N.U.W.S.S., Parliament Chambers, Great Smith Street, Westminster.

question of revolt of woman against the oppression of man and hence in the result no embroiling of the sexes.

"Instead of seeing himself confronted by a section of embittered and hostile women voters which might at any time outvote him and help to turn an election, man there sees his women-folk voting practically everywhere in accordance with his directions and lending him a hand to outvote his political opponent."

In England, on the contrary, the vote if given will be given in response to a very violent feminist agitation and will be used

"for the better carrying out of her fight à outrance against the opposition and injustice of man."

In other words, the fact that the Englishwoman wants the vote is the crowning reason against giving it her. The letter concludes:—

"Peace will come again. It will come when woman ceases to believe and to teach all manner of evil of man despitefully. It will come when she ceases to impute to him as a crime her own natural disabilities, when she ceases to resent the fact that man cannot and does not wish to work side by side with her. And peace will return when every woman for whom there is no room in England seeks 'rest' beyond the sea, 'each in the house of her husband,' and when the woman who remains in England comes to recognise that she can without sacrifice of dignity give a willing subordination to the husband or father, who, when all is said and done, earns and lays up money for her."

Judging by most pictures of Colonial homes, it is not exactly "rest" that the wives find in them.

Miss May Sinclair says:—

"However much man may dislike to have woman working side by side with him, he has no objection whatever to have her working under him, so long as her work is cheap. What he lives in fear of is that any moment her work may become dear."

Perhaps the best comment on the whole letter is also Miss May Sinclair's:—

"It would seem as if almost any old argument were good enough for the man who reads the papers. First, you may appeal, directly, if you are crude, indirectly if you are at all subtle, to his grosser instincts, to his plentiful emotions, to the prejudices that rule him for the moment. This is the ancient *argumentum ad hominem*, and it never fails of its effect. Secondly, you may handle your case against a whole class, a whole sex, by ardent generalisation from a single instance, painful, intimate, domestic. Thirdly, you may even seem to prove your case by bringing forward all the instances that support it and suppressing all the rest."

From such a controversial method Woman Suffragists have nothing to fear, for it produces its own reaction. We hope we have not heard the last of Sir Almroth Wright in the role of *enfant terrible* of the Anti-Suffrage movement.

Eleanor F. Rathbone

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## COLONIAL STATESMEN AND VOTES FOR WOMEN

Opponents of Women's Suffrage protest against the use of any arguments in its favour which are based upon the experience of Australia and New Zealand. Several years ago, their line was to sneer at these great self-governing colonies as lacking in political sagacity. But this line of argument was soon found to be imprudent, and to-day the safer standpoint is adopted of saying that the mother country, as a Sovereign Imperial State, is totally different from the colonies, whose politics, as being merely parochial, can afford no guidance to us.

### A Cowardly Principle.

Says Lord Curzon: "No precedent exists for giving women, as a class, an active share in the government of a great country or empire, and it is not for Great Britain, whose stake is the greatest, and in whose case the results of failure would be the most tremendous, to make the experiment."

Surely our national honour has sunk very low when a man of Lord Curzon's eminence thus cynically proclaims that our great country dare not make a great experiment unless France or Germany has proved it to be a success. It was not in this spirit that our history as a world-power was made, and if this is to be our attitude for the future, we must frankly confess ourselves a second-rate power.

### The Colonial Parallel.

Lord Curzon seeks for a precedent. There is no precedent perfect in all respects, for Suffragists must admit that there is a certain distinction between the United Kingdom and the colonies. The lessons of Australian and New Zealand politics, therefore, must not be pressed further than they legitimately go. But there are many exceedingly important respects in which the conditions are so similar that comparison is both reasonable and necessary. Domestic and social relations are in all essentials the same here as they are at the antipodes, and herein it is legitimate to quote the experience of those who have seen Women's Suffrage in operation.

Recognising the importance of these considerations, the Women's Freedom League addressed certain questions to the Colonial Representatives deputed to attend the Imperial Conference of 1911 and the Coronation Ceremonies of King George V. and Queen Mary. These questions are based upon the statements contained in Lord Curzon's curious *Fifteen Reasons against Woman's Suffrage*. The answers received, taken together with other evidence based upon official records, constitute, as will be seen, a complete refutation of Lord Curzon's statements and prophecies, so far as they relate to the internal or social effects of women's enfranchisement. The questions asked are as follows.

### QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO THE COLONIAL REPRESENTATIVES AT THE CONFERENCE IN 1911.

1. Do you believe in the principle of Women's Suffrage?
2. Do you consider that the Enfranchisement of the Women of Great Britain would tend to weaken this nation in the estimation

of Foreign Powers, or in any way be detrimental to our Empire, at home or in our Colonies?

3. Has the Woman's Vote in Australia and New Zealand had any effect on the community other than for good?

4. Do you consider that the women of Australia and New Zealand have deteriorated morally, mentally, or physically, or have in any way forfeited the respect of men, since they became voters?

#### Colonial Statesmen and The Principle of Women's Suffrage.

Lord Curzon said at a great meeting on May 18th, 1909, that his fifteen arguments are "sound, valid and incontrovertible."

Now Lord Curzon, as the old Oxford rhyme says, is "a most superior person," and he is somewhat addicted to laying down the law. It is the more interesting, therefore, to note that SIR SYDNEY OLIVIER, K.C. M.G., Governor of Jamaica, and official representative of the West Indian Colonies at the Conference, takes a very different view. "I think," he says, "that the political enfranchisement of women would tend to a truer formulation of the spirit and will of the nation; and as I believe the nation to be alive and progressive, I cannot conceive that such truer expression would be detrimental to this country or the colonies."

Sir Sydney Olivier does not come from a country where women vote. True, but neither does Lord Curzon!

On the other hand, the HONORABLE JOHN MURRAY, of VICTORIA, specifically asserts his belief in Women's Suffrage, and the women of Victoria were enfranchised in 1908! Still more significant is the emphatic statement of the HONORABLE ANDREW FISHER, Premier of the COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA:—"In reply to your letter of the 20th April, Mr. Fisher desires me to inform you that he has been an advocate of Women's Suffrage all his life, and **having seen it in operation in Australia, he is delighted with the results.** That it has been beneficial to the Commonwealth of Australia<sup>1</sup> he has no doubt."

Very striking, too, is the testimony of the HONORABLE A. A. KIRKPATRICK, of SOUTH AUSTRALIA. After expressing his belief in the principle, he proceeds, in answer to Question 4:—

"Certainly not. The reform is so secure in Australia that I doubt very much whether one single candidate could secure his return to either House of Parliament in Commonwealth or State if he proposed to repeal it."

These are but a few of many who accept without reservation the fundamental principle of Women's Suffrage. Lord Curzon's dogmatic assertions seem to find no single echo in the views of these practical statesmen of undeniable experience and high imperial status.

#### Resolution of the Australian Senate.

This consideration of the general results of the reform in Australia cannot conclude better than with the resolution passed unanimously in the Australian Senate on November 17th, 1910:—

"That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the Suffrage to the Women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments, on the same terms as men, has had the

<sup>1</sup> Women were enfranchised in Australia as follows:—South Australia, 1893; West Australia, 1899; New South Wales, 1902; Tasmania, 1903; Queensland, 1905; Victoria, 1908. For the Commonwealth as a whole the vote was granted to women in 1902.

most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of Elections, and at the last Federal Elections the Women's vote in the majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of Defence and Imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying Representative Government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

This resolution was cabled to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It would be rather interesting to know how many people, how many members of Parliament even, ever heard of it, and yet it constitutes an official answer, overwhelming in its specific statements, to all the anti-suffragist contentions, except those which are based on the Imperial distinction. Not satisfied to speak through the lips of individual statesmen like those we have quoted—like Sir Alfred Deakin, Ex-Premier of Australia; Mr. Best, Vice-President of the Executive Council; Mr. Waddell, Colonial Secretary of New South Wales (formerly an opponent!); Mr. Peake, Attorney-General of South Australia; the Bishop of Tasmania; Sir John Cockburn; the Hon. W. Pember Reeves—Australia has actually adopted the unusual step of sending an emphatic official statement to the British Parliament.

#### The Alleged Deterioration of Womanhood.

It is necessary, however, to proceed from generalities to the special points raised by Lord Curzon. "Political activity," he says, "will tend to take away woman from her proper sphere and highest duty, which is maternity." In other words, he would have answered Question 4 with an emphatic affirmative. Strangely enough the specific facts are overwhelmingly against him. The Hon. John Murray, in his answer to this question, says:—

"It has certainly not had a deteriorating effect in any way, but has greatly enlarged their knowledge in political questions, without impairing their capacity or lessening their interest in home work."

The HON. E. L. BATCHELOR replies briefly, "Certainly not," and the answers quoted above from MR. FISHER and MR. KIRKPATRICK are similarly emphatic in this connection. "Emphatically 'No!'" says Senator G. P. Pearce, who, though the youngest of the Commonwealth Ministers in London for the Conference, is the creator of the Australian Army and Navy.

In corroboration is the hard logic of official figures. Writing in *The Times*, of November 19th, 1909, Lady Stout, wife of the Ex-Premier, now Lord Chief Justice of New Zealand, stated that "New Zealand could show the highest marriage rate of any European or English-speaking country except Hungary; a higher birth-rate except Italy, the Netherlands, and two Australian states (the birth-rate has been steadily increasing since 1899<sup>1</sup>); the lowest illegitimate rate except England, Ireland, and the Netherlands; the lowest infant mortality in the

<sup>1</sup> Women gained votes in New Zealand in 1893. The birth-rate figures are:—New Zealand, 18.07 per 1,000; England and Wales, 12.13 per 1000.

world." New Zealand is, of course, a young country, for which fact a certain allowance should be made, but the figures are a conclusive refutation of Lord Curzon's "incontrovertible" objection.

Besides, Lord Curzon knows that a decline in the marriage rate or the birth-rate is due, in an advanced civilization, to a hundred converging causes, among which the possession of the vote could, even theoretically, exercise only an infinitesimal effect; in practice it is found that the moment women are enfranchised they devote themselves to the amelioration of the conditions under which children are born and nurtured. In corroboration of this view are the figures given in article "Population," by Sir Athelstane Baines, President of the Royal Statistical Society (1909-1910), in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (eleventh edition, 1911.) In the years 1874-1883, the death-rate of infants under one year in New Zealand was 117 per 1000 births; in 1895-1904, it sank to 79—the lowest in the world. For England, the corresponding figures are respectively 149 and 150.

The least lesson suffragists may draw, is that the enfranchisement of women in New Zealand has not rendered women less interested in their home duties. New Zealand is not, it is true, a Sovereign Imperial State, but this, as Lord Curzon must agree, is not a differentiating factor as regards the rate of infant mortality. It is abundantly clear that enfranchisement has not made the New Zealand women worse mothers.

#### Men will Cease to be Chivalrous!

But, says Lord Curzon, "women, if placed by the vote on an absolute equality with man, would forfeit much of that respect which the chivalry of man has voluntarily conceded to her, and which has hitherto been her chief protection." All decent men in the country will indignantly deny this preposterous prophecy. The male inhabitants of these islands are not on the whole very different from those of Australia and New Zealand, and in those countries all the evidence such as is supplied by the answers above quoted is an emphatic repudiation in the light of history of Lord Curzon's insulting suggestion. We have put the question to Colonial statesmen of the highest distinction—to men like Sir John Cockburn and the Hon. W. Pember Reeves, and to women who have lived and worked in Australia and New Zealand: their unanimous answer is an indignant denial. More significant, perhaps, than this testimony, is the fact that when women were enfranchised in New Zealand it was at once decided that on polling day the public houses should be closed. "Rowdiness," says Mrs. K. A. Sheppard (President of the New Zealand Council of Women), "has become unknown." This was chivalry in a very practical form. Not only have women suffered no discourtesy at the polls, but the tone of elections has improved all round.

#### Women will not Use their Vote.

Not content with this singularly infelicitous forecast, Lord Curzon plunges undeterred into the rash statement that women would probably not use their vote if they had it. If he really believed this, surely he should accept it in mitigation of his positive grounds for apprehension. Once again, however, figures are against him. The first election in New Zealand at which women voted, was held only two months after Richard Seddon's Government passed the Bill. In the short interval 78 per cent. of the eligible women had registered, and of this total no less than 85 per cent. voted. Previously only 60 per cent. of the male voters had gone to the poll. Since women gave a new stimulus towards the exercise of this national duty this

percentage has increased to 78 per cent. (1905). A further proof of women's readiness to vote is shown by the fact that in 1908, 99.76 of the adult women had registered, as against 99.54 adult men.

#### The Imperial Question.

So far then as the "incontrovertible arguments" concern internal matters, the relation between men and women, between women and children, the experience of New Zealand and Australia is a complete answer. And as we have contended, in these very respects, there is the greatest similarity between the home country and the colonies. It remains to consider whether the enfranchisement of women would be bad for this country in its Imperial relations. "The presence," says Lord Curzon, "of a large female factor in the constituencies returning a British Government to power, would tend to weaken Great Britain in the estimation of foreign powers." It will be remembered that this is the exact wording used in Question 2, addressed to the Colonial Representatives by the Women's Freedom League. On this we may quote first the significant answer of SIR SYDNEY OLIVIER, who, as Governor of an outlying portion of the Empire, must take a special interest in the point. He says:—

"I don't know: and I don't think the consideration is either relevant or important. Nations and persons are as strong as they are, not as they are thought to be: a false prestige is infinitely more harmful and dangerous than an unfounded discredit. Other people's errors do not matter to you except in so far as they may give you the advantage over them of a firmer stand in reality."

To the same question the HONORABLE ROBERT WATSON, Colonial Secretary for Newfoundland, gives a definite negative, as also the Honorable John Murray and the Honorable A. A. Kirkpatrick. No single representative shares with Lord Curzon this apprehension as to our Imperial prestige.

Moreover, what is the actual basis of the apprehension? Are we to understand (1) that we shall really be less powerful? or merely (2) that foreign Governments will think we are? If the former is the true meaning, how is this loss of power to come about? Will our soldiers and sailors fight less courageously or with less skill because women are voters? The suggestion is manifestly absurd. Then it must be that the influence of women will be directed towards a general reduction of armaments. In this matter, the obvious fact is that among women there are the same differences of opinion as between men: in the Liberal and Labour camps, the Peace party has always been strong, and the women of this party will vote with them: with the Conservative party will go the Conservative women, headed by that most conscientiously Imperial body, the Primrose League. There is no shadow of reason for supposing that one party will gain at the expense of the other. To imagine that women will be less ardent in defence of their homes and their children, or that men will be the less patriotic because women vote, is an unworthy and even a ludicrous aspersion upon the national character.

It would seem, then, that foreign countries will make the mistake of under-estimating our strength. Surely Lord Curzon would welcome such an error on the part of other nations—unless indeed he would imply that we maintain our supremacy at present by a game of bluff. If these are the alternatives, suffragists may well be content to leave the noble Lord impaled upon that horn of the dilemma which he may select.

### The Imperial Spirit in the Colonies.

Supporting, moreover, the views of the statesmen we have quoted, and emphasizing the logical absurdity of the "Imperial argument," are, as usual, the facts of colonial history since women have had the vote. We at home have not forgotten how Australia and New Zealand sprang to our support in the South African War, not one whit behind the colonies with exclusively male electorates. Still less have we forgotten how New Zealand was the first to come forward with the offer of a "Dreadnought" when the question of our naval supremacy was raised in an acute form.

In this connection, a very remarkable speech was delivered by the Hon. W. Pember Reeves,<sup>1</sup> at a dinner given in May, 1911, by the Men's League for Women's Suffrage in honour of Miss Vida Goldstein, leader of the Suffrage movement in Australia. Mr. Reeves then stated that the period during which women have voted in New Zealand coincides precisely with the growth of a feminine Imperial spirit in that country. This spirit is not merely an emotional outbreak such as the anti-suffragist loves to forecast, but a serious recognition of participation in a great and glorious responsibility. It may be answered that Richard Seddon and his colleagues were responsible for this movement. No doubt, but the point is that women have been voters all the time and the movement has advanced none the less on that account. More than this, there has been adopted in New Zealand the principle of compulsory military training. It will be remembered, too, that many proposals for specific Imperial organization were brought before the Conference by the New Zealand representatives, all of them answerable to and elected by men and women. In time of war women could—let us not forget the Crimea and Florence Nightingale!—perform incalculable service in this department of ambulance and commissariat. That the Colonial women voters are prepared to do this service is a historic fact: does Lord Curzon imagine, or would he dare to imply, that the women voters of the United Kingdom would fall behind their Colonial sisters in this respect? That women dislike war in itself—just as all sane men do—is a fact; but if war comes, British women will be prepared to do and to suffer with men for their common safety and honour.

### Recent Legislation in Australia and New Zealand.

Finally, the anti-suffragist manifesto says, "The vote is not required for the removal of hardships or disabilities from which woman is now known to suffer. Where any such exist, they can equally well be removed or alleviated by a legislature elected by men." At this point our opponents become merely fatuous. Any kind of government could remedy anybody's grievances if it chose: King John might have said the same to his Barons, or Lord Curzon to the members of Convocation in the University of Oxford. The plain historical fact, however, is that hardships and disabilities receive attention much more quickly and more effectively when their victims are voters. Male legislation has done much for women: no one contends that men, as a body, are deliberately unjust to women. But the legislature necessarily attends first to voters, and in removing hardships and disabilities it is obviously the stronger if it has the support at the polls of those whom it seeks to benefit.

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Agent-General for New Zealand, and Director of the London School of Economics in the University of London.

This plain lesson of history is emphatically corroborated by the recent history of Australia and New Zealand. We have seen that the Australian Premier, the Honorable Andrew Fisher, "has no doubt that Women's Suffrage has been beneficial to the Commonwealth of Australia." Evidence from New Zealand is equally emphatic. In fact, to Question 3, the Women's Freedom League has not received a single negative answer. Mr. G. W. Russel, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Canterbury College, Christchurch, N.Z., said in July, 1907, "I trace nearly the whole of the progressive legislation of the country during the last fifteen years to this source" (Women's Suffrage). "I need not enumerate the outstanding measures, but will refer to three. They are: (1) Liquor legislation in the direct control of the people; (2) the Old Age Pensions scheme; (3) the rapid development of education. . . . The women's vote has been at the back of all three. With regard to the liquor legislation, I may add that, while I am not a member of the Prohibition Party, I fully sympathise with State control and cheerfully recognise that, as the result of our legislation the liquor trade has been enormously improved . . . . Regarding the evils that were freely predicted . . . . such as dissension in families, 'Blue Stockingism,' neglect of home, &c., I can confidently say the prophets were wrong in every single item of their catalogue."

The HONORABLE GEORGE FOULDS, Minister of Education and Public Health (1907), said: "Without being revolutionary, their influence has been on the side of progress and clean government."

Such statements could be multiplied *ad infinitum*. But it will probably be of more service to give a list of a few of the legislative reforms in Australia and New Zealand since women had the vote, and due at least in some measure to their influence.

#### A. Australia.

- (1). Improvement of laws dealing with gambling and drinking (*e.g.*, betting prohibited under the age of 21).
- (2). Minimum wage for women as well as men.
- (3). Raising the age of consent.
- (4). Regulation of hours of labour for wage-earning children.
- (5). Prohibition of smoking under 16 years.
- (6). Protection of children from indecent literature, and the suppression of indecent advertisements.
- (7). An Affiliation Act, extending the remedies against fathers of illegitimate children by making it necessary for them to contribute £10 towards the expenses connected with the mother's confinement.
- (8). A children's court established.
- (9). Appointment of women as inspectors of Government institutions.
- (10). Prohibition of opium trade.
- (11). Penalties for trading in prostitution.

#### B. New Zealand.

- (1). *a.* Testator's Family Maintenance Act, by which the Supreme Court may cancel any will which does not make suitable provision for husband, wife, or family.  
*b.* The Succession Act compels the fair distribution of property between wife (or husband) and family.
- (2). Conditions of divorce made equal for both sexes.
- (3). Elaborate Old Age Pensions Act.
- (4). Asylums for inebriates established.
- (5). Infant Life Protection Act, preventing baby farming.
- (6). Adoption of children legally regulated.

- (7). Opium Prohibition Act.
- (8). Labour registration offices controlled.
- (9). Juvenile Smoking Suppression Act.
- (10). The Maternity Homes Act, by which an expectant mother receives an allowance and aid from a midwife, or else a fortnight in a maternity home.
- (11). A University Act gives women absolute equality with men in the awarding of scholarships and degrees. No language can describe the idiotic position of Oxford and Cambridge which admit women to all their Public Examinations and yet deny them degrees!
- (12). An act permitting women to practice as barristers. Mrs. Fawcett is a Doctor of Laws, Miss Pankhurst a Bachelor of Laws: neither is allowed to practice here.
- (13). The father of an illegitimate child (expected) can be prevented from leaving the country. The same applies to a deserting husband.
- (14). Women's Slander Act, by which women are able to get compensation for slander, without proving damage to reputation.
- (15). The Maintenance Act empowers a woman to sue for maintenance while living with her husband.
- (16). The Factory Acts provide equal pay for equal work for men and women, and women receive a minimum wage of 25s. per week. Hence men do not suffer from the unfair competition of cheap women's labour.

These lists do not purport to be exhaustive; nor are the laws the work of women only. The contention is, and this is affirmed by innumerable Australian and New Zealand statesmen, that in all these matters—in fact in the general tendency of recent legislation—the interests of women have been unmistakably a motive force. Some of these problems have already been solved more or less by the men legislators of this country: some of the solutions in the Colonies are, perhaps, provisional, inadequate or even upon wrong lines. But the essential fact is that since women were enfranchised, Australia and New Zealand have seriously grappled with the difficulties which confront every civilized community, and not least the United Kingdom. We, too, have to face problems affecting the welfare of women and children of the poor and needy, of those who are mentally, morally and physically unsound. If these problems remain unsettled no schemes of Imperial Defence or finance, no Favoured Nation Clause or Preferential Tariff can save us from decay. Towards the ventilation and solution of social evils British women voters will address themselves without the shadow of a doubt, just as women have done in Australia and New Zealand. At the lowest their possession of the vote will compel the ordinary member of Parliament—especially now that he receives a salary from the public treasury which is replenished by taxation of both sexes,—to divide his attention equally between the men and the women of his constituency.

In 1907, Sir JOSEPH WARD, K.C.M.G., said, "Woman Suffrage exists in New Zealand because it dawned upon the minds of thinking men that they were daily wasting an almost unlimited supply of mental and moral force." With these facts before them, how can the electors of the United Kingdom—HOW DARE THEY, as custodians of the greatest Empire the world has seen, refuse to admit into the national councils the insight, the practical knowledge, and the splendid enthusiasm of women, which have wrought so well for our dependencies beyond the seas?

8

# PREJUDICES OLD AND NEW

BY

## EUNICE G. MURRAY



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## PREJUDICES OLD AND NEW

*"For was there ever anything predicted, that savoured any way of newnesse or renewing, but the same endured many a storme of gaine-saying or oppossition."*

Translations of the English Bible, 1611

**I**T is prejudice, not reason, that has delayed the emancipation of woman. Every step forward has been won in spite of prejudice. It was prejudice that excluded girls from good schools and universities, and considered that any kind of education would do for them. It was prejudice which closed the learned professions to woman. It was prejudice which prevented them going forth to work as they willed, along side of man. It was prejudice that declared that woman must not enter a hansom without a man to accompany her. It was prejudice that prevented her going to a public swimming bath, or even bathing in the sea. In the Letters of a Spinster Aunt, the authoress gives us an amusing account of how, when in the year 1858, or thereabouts, she and some friends went bathing, so outraged was public opinion that the youths from the village surrounded the tent in which the ladies were dressing, and stoned the occupants. The result being until that



prejudice was overcome, the bathers had to receive police protection. It was prejudice that decreed that woman must not mount a bicycle, or ride a horse cross saddle. It was prejudice that pronounced it unwomanly for a woman to vote in Municipal Elections, or to sit on any public bodies. It was prejudice that cried out when Florence Nightingale proposed to go to the Crimea to nurse the sick and dying. It was prejudice made men and women scornfully question, "What kind of woman was this who would actually follow men to the seat of war?" A long and strenuous fight has been waged against prejudice, and many a victory has been won, but the battle is still raging, and the complete triumph is not yet. It is prejudice which still hampers woman in the choice of a profession and still decrees which she may enter and which she may not. It is prejudice, not reason, that stands between woman and the Parliamentary Vote, and until these last prejudices have been swept aside, the battle must continue.

Woman's emancipation then, as far as it goes, has been won in spite of prejudice, by the generous conduct of some men, and the stern determination of a few women. If we study the Women's history for the last fifty years, we find that what made their ultimate victory certain, was the unbarring of the University doors to them in 1869. Many prejudices had to give way before women were admitted to the Universities; once there it is only a question of time till she wins for herself and her sex complete equality with

men. Once a person can read and reason, liberty and freedom follow in due course, and the sex disqualification must give way before education. Most people's instinct is to combat new ideas, so when women first asked for a broad education, and for the right to enter the University, public opinion was entirely against their aspirations. Many arguments were produced to demonstrate that to educate women would be an irreparable disaster. With education they would lose the feminine charms of docility, modesty, and delicacy. Their brains were not made to grapple with the problems of theology, mathematics, science or arts, declared men, and more than one man asserted that were women allowed to compete with men in examinations their brains would give way under the strain. Mr J. Bennant in his "Strictures of Female Education," lays down the rule that women must not enter upon studies which require intense application. He says: "The delicacy of the everlasting pea, which so happily unites elegance with sweetness, would be easily oppressed. The tender plant which is refreshed with gentle gales would be entirely overwhelmed by a whirlwind." And again, women are not formed for political eminence or literary refinement. The softness of their nature, the delicacy of their frame, the timidity of their disposition, and the modesty of their sex, absolutely disqualified them for such difficulties and exertions.

While men argued in this fashion, the timorous women of those days opposed education for other reasons. They feared that an educated woman would be displeasing to

man, and that, alack and alas, if she could write M.A., B.A., or M.D. after her name, she would never get a husband! In a pamphlet dated 1832 we learn that "We must always look up to men, and always let them think they know best." In Mrs Sanford's "Woman in her Social and Domestic Character," she tells us "That female assertions should always be strictly subordinate." She evidently admires the clinging, soft woman, destitute of opinions, for she also informs us "Nothing is so likely to conciliate the affection of the other sex as a feeling that women look to them for guidance and support." Miss Young, in a letter of advice to "Young females," "begs them to remember that to express an opinion in the presence of men is displeasing to them, and that the young lady who wishes to attract attention and get a husband must listen attentively to what a gentleman tells her, and never must she contradict him." Not only might learning prove a barrier to matrimony, but the learned woman must hide her talents, or else she would be little likely to retain the affection of her husband. According to Mrs Ellis "It is unquestionably the inalienable right of all men, whether ill or well, rich or poor, wise or foolish, to be treated with deference, and made much of in their own houses. The life of woman appears to have been created solely to minister; that of man to be ministered unto. In the case of a highly gifted woman, even where there is equal or a superior degree of talent possessed by her husband, nothing can be more injudicious or more fatal to her happiness than an

exhibition even of the least disposition to presume upon such gifts. Let her husband be once subjected to a feeling of jealousy of her importance, which, without the strictest watchfulness, will be liable to arise, and her peace of mind and her free agency are alike destroyed for the remainder of her life."

But even in these days we had robuster views of women and their capacity. In 1842 Edwin Lee translated from French Aimé Martin's "Education of Mothers of Families," a book dedicated to the Duchess of Kent. Although he cannot picture woman entering the arena of politics, and though he is careful always to keep her in a subordinate position, nevertheless he recognises the enormous influence she has in training the young, and in order to train them properly she herself must be well educated. He tells us that "twenty volumes would not suffice to collect all the examples of children who owed their high position to their mothers." And again, he says, "What can a prince or a king learn from a woman?" "That which St Louis learnt from Blanche, Louis XII. from Marie de Cleves, Henry IV. from Jeanne d'Albert."

Gradually in the minds of men and women different ideals were springing up; men were realising that the uneducated woman made but a poor mother and an indifferent companion as wife. In 1867 Charles Anthony published "The Social and Political Dependence of Woman," a book in which he boldly espouses her cause. "Nothing," he says, "is ludicrous in the idea of the

enfranchisement of women—in their political equality—except its novelty; and if it provokes laughter and ridicule, it only incurs the same penalty as every new idea opposed to preconceived notions—New ideas radically different from existing opinions are generally treated as absurd, and often for no other reason than their newness.”

In the meantime a few women were labouring to break down the prejudices which hemmed them in, and were imploring to be allowed to learn and think for themselves. A small number entered boldly into the affairs of the world; such women as Mary Somerville, the mathematician and astronomer, Harriet Martineau, George Eliot, Mrs Gaskell, the Brontes, and Mrs Browning, inspired and encouraged those who strove to win education for their sex. Women of ability, determination, and energy were growing up and insisting with no uncertain voice upon their right to obtain a liberal education. Here and there we find a man sufficiently generous to stand by her and fight her battles. First and foremost amongst these champions was John Stuart Mill; his hand was ever extended to help women in her struggle for emancipation, whether it was social, political, or educational liberty which she craved. No single book has done more for her cause than his “Subjection of Women.” In it he sets forth her claims more ably than any previous writer, and to this day his book is deservedly popular.

In 1869 Miss Jex Blake sought to obtain a medical degree in Edinburgh University. The opposition to this

was as great as the militant suffragette experiences in 1913. Yet in the year 1913 a memorial tablet to Dr Sophia Jex Blake was erected in St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh. But in 1869 Miss Jex Blake was told that to study anatomy was impossible for a lady, and even to discuss the question was indelicate. The vulgar declared she wished merely to enter the university in order to carry on flirtations and intrigues with the students, and above all, to get a husband. In spite of the storm, Miss Jex Blake unflinchingly stood her ground, and fought her battle practically alone for her sex and her profession. At last, after many trials and insults, women were allowed to enter the medical profession. Close upon this struggle came a demand that the Universities should be thrown open to women. In 1869 the College which is now Girton was started at Hitchin, in a house prepared to accommodate six students. In 1873 it was removed to Girton, and now there is accommodation there for over 150 students. Newnham was the next college started, and it, under Miss Clough, and Girton, under Miss Emily Davies, from the first made rapid progress. In regard to Oxford and Cambridge we have yet another male prejudice not yet broken down, for, though women there pass the same examinations as men, they have no degrees conferred upon them by these universities. In this respect they stand alone, for as soon as the other universities in England, Scotland and Ireland admitted women within their doors they rewarded them with the same degrees as given to men.

It was women like Miss Buss, Miss Beale, Miss Davies, Miss Clough, Miss Lumsden and Miss Dove who did much to slay the giant prejudice of ignorance. It was they who insisted upon the necessity of the higher education of women. It was they, the pioneers of the new movement, who faced the scorn that was freely heaped upon them and were brave and wise enough to realise that ridicule cannot kill a just cause. They were as well accustomed to the cry of the Anti as the suffragette is that "Woman's Place is the Home," and that the purity of her character would be injured were she to mix herself up in the affairs of the world. All honour to these brave women, the chosen few, who held aloft the banner, who claimed the right of education for themselves as well as their brothers! They effectually demonstrated to the world that if girls and women had the same chances given them as boys and men the results would be the same. To these pioneers of education we, the women of to-day, owe a deep debt of gratitude. The women who founded schools such as Cheltenham and St Leonards, and who fought for the admission of women to the universities, were the forerunners of the suffrage movement. And we must bear in mind the fact that these women were all believers and supporters of Woman Suffrage. From the beginning they recognised that their cause and the Suffrage went hand in hand.

The object of education was to enable men and women to become good citizens; citizenship culminates in the Vote. It was prejudice that forbade women to speak

in public places. Even as late as 1889, when the first meeting of the Women's Co-operative Guild was held in Edinburgh, Mrs Acland "deprecatd any speaking on platforms or thrusting themselves on the management committee by women." To-day this particular Guild has a membership of 29,928. Women of course sit on its committees, and are elected to the quarterly meetings of the Wholesale Society. The Guild to-day is actively concerned in the demand for the political enfranchisement of women.

The year 1869 was in many ways a memorable one for women; in that year many prejudices were laid aside and overcome. That was the year the municipal franchise was restored to women. The opposition was intense but futile. Ruination was predicted, not only for the women who would be bold enough to use the vote, but ruination was to fall upon the towns in which women voted. Women voted, and no direful consequences followed. To-day the Anti-suffragist is loud in extolling the beneficial results that have accrued from women's interference in municipal affairs. Custom has shown the prognosticators of evil that it was a bogey which they feared. Mrs Humphrey Ward, opponent to Woman Suffrage, is for ever declaiming that it is woman's duty to interest herself in municipal affairs, and that that is a province well within her sphere.

It was prejudice that arrogated to the male the right of playing games, fishing, shooting, skating, and curling,

while the girl had to sit at home and look after the baby or sew her seam. A writer in the early years of last century deplors the fact "that girls are desirous of playing games with their brothers." He warns us that "It is unbecoming for girls to play and run about and to be too robust." "Girls must remember it is a beauty in their sex to be graceful, drooping, and easily fatigued." Even good health in a woman was deprecated as unwomanly, as we see when we remember the long list of fainting heroines in the novels of the early Victorian period. Most of these particular prejudices are dead, but they crop up in other guises, and when we listen to the dismal forebodings of the present Anti-suffragist, we think of his predecessors and smile. But courage; each prejudice in turn has been attacked, overcome, slain and buried, and already the grave is being prepared for the Anti-suffragist of to-day; soon he too will be buried and forgotten. What Sydney Smith wrote over fifty years ago is true to-day. "There is not one single source of human happiness against which there have not been uttered the most lugubrious predictions—turnpike roads, navigable canals, inoculation, hops, tobacco, the Reformation, the Revolution. There is always a set of worthy and moderately gifted men who bawl out death and ruin upon every valuable change which the varying aspect of human affairs absolutely and imperiously requires. It would be extremely useful to make a collection of the hatred and abuse that all these changes have experienced which are now admitted to be marked improvements in our condi-

tion. Such a history might make folly a little more modest and suspicious of its own decisions."

What is the modern prejudice? Women must not have the Parliamentary Vote. The State insists that women shall pay taxes, but forbids them any say as to how these taxes shall be spent. She is asked to obey laws, but is not allowed to elect the men who frame the laws. Again, she hears all the old stock arguments: Woman's place is the Home—Women could not understand the great and weighty questions which are discussed in the House of Commons. The home belongs equally to man and woman, and legislation is encroaching year by year on all that affects the home so woman, as well as man, must have some say in the making of those laws which affect the home. As for the other assertions, I maintain there is not a single Bill discussed in Parliament to-day upon which woman is not as fully qualified to express an opinion as any man. What are the Bills? Welsh Disestablishment. I take it more women are interested in Church matters than men, and they are keenly interested in Church management and have most pronounced views upon this question. Home Rule for Ireland—does not the very term Home Rule denote women's interest in it? Have we not Leagues formed of women who are to do all in their power to oppose Home Rule, have we not associations of women formed pledged to do all in their power to make Home Rule an accomplished fact?

The Insurance Bill that has just been passed—does

that not affect every wage-earning woman in the land? Does it not affect every working man's wife? If women don't understand that Bill they ought to. Divorce Laws, and laws dealing with the guardianship of children, and the laws of inheritance,—are these outside the scope of woman's apprehension? The Mentally Deficient Bill,—are not women interested in it? The Temperance Bill the Housing Bill, the Criminal Amendment Act, the Bill to protect and safeguard women from the social evil,—are not women interested and well qualified to judge upon these matters?

The Education Bill, the Bill having to do with the feeding of children—with pure milk—with shorter hours in the factory,—are not every one of these questions upon which she should be consulted? Is it not of the utmost importance to women whether Tariff Reform or Free Trade wins the day? Every woman, whether she be a wage-earner or not, is a dispenser of money, her knowledge of the purchasing power of money is first hand, and of the utmost value to the community.

Yes, it is prejudice, not reason, that stands between women and the Vote, and that was recognised in 1867 by the *London Review*, which said "We may be assured that if ever there was such a thing as a sound prejudice, the prejudice against a franchise for women in England is a sound one."

But the prejudice is being steadily broken down. In every country we hear of victories gained, and the victory

of one country affects us all, and cheers us on our way. In the early days of the Woman Suffrage controversy, so absurd did it seem that few could refrain from mentioning the subject except in derision. "It is a terrible fancy—that of Papa arguing his daughters out of the Yellow ranks (Liberal) into the Blue (Conservative), or giving his wife a choice between independence and pin money. As we have said, it is really impossible to treat this subject with much gravity." So wrote the *Standard*. And from the *Times*, backward then as now, we have the following:—"It is not easy to speak with perfect gravity of a scheme which, perpetuating the disenfranchisement of married ladies, who are not orphans, admits to the polling-booth a mixed multitude of widows and those whom for want of a more respectable term, we must needs call "old maids."

But those days have passed, and even the most prejudiced, old-fashioned and unprogressive people have realised that Women Suffrage is coming; the solution of that question cannot much longer be delayed. Two parties in our own country have put it on their official programme, the Labour Party and the Unionist Party in Ireland under Sir Edward Carson. The battle has been long drawn out between reason and prejudice, but the end is in sight; reason is to score one more victory, and the goal will be reached when the sex disqualification will be removed, and men and women will stand together politically free.

Anon. in catalogue.

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## LIBERAL CANT.

*"The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful...he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right...."*

*"But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. Rise up, ye women that be at ease."*

Isaiah xxxii.

PROF. L. T. HOBHOUSE, in his book on Liberalism, defines Liberalism in this way:—

"It appears at first as a criticism, sometimes even as a distinctive and revolutionary criticism. Its negative aspect is for centuries foremost. Its business seems to be not so much to build up as to pull down, to remove obstacles which block human progress rather than to point the positive goal of endeavour or fashion the fabric of civilization....It finds humanity oppressed, and would set it free. It finds a people groaning under arbitrary rule, a nation in bondage to a conquering race, industrial enterprise obstructed by social privileges, or crippled by taxation, and it offers relief. Everywhere it is removing superincumbent weights, knocking off fetters, clearing away obstructions."

Brave words, but what do they mean?

When women inform the Liberal Government, in no uncertain voice, that they are oppressed and would be set free, the Liberal Government refuses to listen to their cry.

When the Liberal Government finds women groaning under arbitrary rule, a sex in bondage, do they hasten to offer liberty to that sex?

When women enter the industrial market, they find their path beset by sex privileges; in the higher professions they are refused admittance. To sex, not talent, the reward is given. In all trades they are overworked and underpaid, they are taxed for what they do not receive. What relief does Liberalism grant? It turns a deaf ear to the wrongs of women.

WILLIAM BISHOP,  
PRINTER  
MARKET STREET,  
EDINBURGH.

When they talk of removing weights, knocking off fetters, clearing away obstructions, what do they mean? They impose fetters, they create obstructions, they stifle liberty, they fain would close and bar the door in woman's face. The Liberal of to-day has falsified Liberal ideals, he has brought discredit on his party, he has dragged his principles through the mire. Instead of Liberty he has opened the prison doors to those who crave for liberty, he has sought to repress, to bully, to starve into submission those who cried for justice, who believed the Liberal's own catch words "that taxation without representation is tyranny."

The men who prate about Liberalism are both deaf and blind. What do they say about civil liberty: "If there is one law for the Governments and another for its subjects, one for noble and another for common, one for rich and another for poor, the law does not guarantee liberty for all. Liberty in this respect implies equality. Hence the demand of Liberalism for such a procedure as will ensure the impartial application of law. . . . Hence the abolition of privileges of class. . . ."

Liberals in general may be concerned about the abolition of some class privileges, but I do not notice one word raised from them in protest against sex privileges. Again they are indignant at one law for rich and another for poor. We are indignant at one judgment given to men and another to women.

Take the case of Mr. Jim Larkin, described by the Attorney-General of Ireland as a dangerous criminal, and convicted of sedition. What was his sentence? Seven months in the first division, the jury recommending him to mercy. No notice was taken of this recommendation, but because the Government suffer heavily at two by-elections—losing one and 1,150 votes at another—and because they fear they may lose two more, Mr. Jim Larkin the dangerous criminal is set free. Compare this treatment with that accorded to Mrs. Pankhurst. She was sentenced for conspiracy to three years' penal servitude. She also was recommended to mercy by her jury; but the Government had none, because she was a woman, and because her Union—unlike Mr. Larkin's—was voteless; she could not bring the Liberal Government to its knees.

For Liberalism to demand an impartial application of the law is a farce. If it did, would it allow Sir Edward Carson to speak treason, to arm and drill his followers? Would it permit the Bishop of Derry to preach from the text "He that hath not a sword let him sell his coat and buy one"? Would it allow Mr. George Lansbury to be arrested and imprisoned on an absurd charge, and only liberate him under the Cat-and-Mouse Act? Would true Liberalism allow women to be tortured in prison? Would it tolerate women being sent to prison merely for asking the right of

free speech? For daring to carry a petition signed by men belonging to every constituency in the country to the Prime Minister of a so-called Democratic Government. Liberalism to-day stands discredited in the eyes of the world. It stands for injustice, oppression, and tyranny. It stands for sex privileges. It upholds its Judges and Magistrates when they impose unfair, arbitrary punishments on that half of the community who are defenceless, and who are unable to retaliate on their oppressors by withholding votes.

True we are told\* "that restrictions of sex are in every aspect parallel to restrictions of class. . . . The open road for women is one application, and a very big one, of 'the open road for talent,' and to secure them both is the essence of Liberalism." Liberalism takes a curious method to secure these. It turns a deaf ear to the cry of the constitutional Suffragist, it opens the prison door to the demand of the militant Suffragette.

Again we are told by Hobhouse: "If any one class is dumb, the result is that the Government is to that extent uninformed. It is not merely that the interests of that class may suffer, but that—even with the best will—mistakes may be made in handling it, because it cannot speak for itself. Officious spokesmen will pretend to represent its views, and will obtain, perhaps, undue authority merely because there is no way of bringing them to book. . . . The ballot alone effectively liberates the quiet citizen from the tyranny of the shouter and the wire-puller." Then why not give women the ballot? Why not let women express the views of their own sex? Why leave them to the mercy of ignorant prejudiced men, not necessarily unkind or unsympathetic men, but men who—by the fact of their sex—are unable to understand woman and her needs?

It is high time the Liberal Government refrained from the impertinence of forcing legislation upon woman, upon imposing their narrow and restricted outlook on her.

Here is one more quotation from the same author:—

"Liberalism is the belief that society can safely be founded on the self-directing power of personality, that it is only on this foundation that a true community can be built. The rule of liberty is the opening of the door to the appeal of reason—Liberty then becomes not so much a right of the individual as a necessity of society."

If reason and justice have anything in common with Liberalism,

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\* Prof L. G. Hobhouse.



it is good news for the Suffragist, who so far has experienced only unreasonableness, and has found injustice the outstanding feature of Liberalism when applied to her sex.

Now from a general consideration of Liberalism, let us cull some extracts from the individual Liberal.

The following words were used by MR. BIRRELL, Chief Secretary, for Ireland, at the Colston Hall, Bristol, on November 13th, 1913: "Allow me to make an observation or two upon the trial, imprisonment, and the very happy release of Mr. Larkin. 'Happy release,' I said, 'because I think Justice required it.' I say 'Let justice be done though the skies fall.'" (*Manchester Guardian*.)

Did Mr. Birrell act in this high and conscientious manner? Did he defy consequences and let justice triumph when last year a woman applied to him, as Secretary of Ireland, to interfere against the unjust law which allowed her children to be snatched from her because she wished them brought up in a different faith from that of her husband? No; Mr. Birrell said the law recognized one parent only, and that was the father, and he must let the law take its course.

Mr. Birrell assures us that Mr. Larkin's release had nothing to do with the loss of the Reading election, or the lowering of the poll at Linlithgow. He said: "We did not in any way seek to interfere with these elections, nor did we release Mr. Larkin till the moment came, when, on my honour and my conscience, I can say I thought the time he had served was fully enough on the evidence on which he was found guilty." If this is a specimen of Mr. Birrell's honour, then let us deal rather with the plain, unvarnished statements of the ordinary statesman. If Mr. Larkin was a dangerous criminal, assuredly he should have served his time; if not, he should never have been in prison, and it would have enhanced Mr. Birrell's reputation as an honest man had he considered this before the result of Reading and Linlithgow was known—not after.

On the same day Miss ASQUITH, presumably voicing her father's views—in opening a bazaar—tells us that votes for the by-election were lost, not because of Home Rule, but because of the universal indignation felt at Mr. Larkin's imprisonment.

(*Daily Telegraph*.)

Another fine sentiment is that of the PRIME MINISTER, who declares, in an impassioned speech, "That to-day the voice of democracy reigns triumphant throughout the land." Has Mr. Asquith studied the meaning of the word "democracy?" Had he done so, he would certainly know that democracy was far from triumphant when not a woman's voice was heard throughout the land. Shirking,

boycotting, suppression, imprisonment, delay, and torture are not democratic methods. Let the Prime Minister practice democracy before he undertakes to preach it.

On another occasion the Prime Minister says:—

"As regards the Bill itself, we carefully devised, after full consideration, and with the utmost sympathy for apprehensions and doubts which we did not ourselves share—safeguards of an ample kind for the protection of the minority in Ireland against oppressive legislation or administration directed against either their religion or their liberties. The Irish legislature which it will bring into existence, even if it had the disposition, which we do not believe it would have, could not have the power to be guilty of acts of oppression against the minority." (*The Times*.)

Very careful not to wound the susceptibilities of the minority, when they have votes, but careful is Mr. Asquith to inform women that if votes are granted to women it will only be when he is convinced the majority of women desire them.

Speaking at Ladybank Mr. Asquith says:—

"However much our taste, and even our common sense, is tempted to take offence at some of these extravagant manifestations, it is nevertheless our duty, as I have said over and over again, to take account of and deal respectfully with the deep-seated and genuine sentiment of the minority in Ireland, fed as it is from sources historical, racial, religious, social and economic."

Another heartfelt expression of sympathy with the voting minority!

SIR EDWARD GREY at Berwick, in October, declares "that he is longing for the enfranchisement of women." Yet he retains office in a Government whose chief has given it his relentless opposition, who has substituted autocracy for democracy, who has placed his veto on the Bills that shall become law, not allowed the mandate of the House of Commons to prevail.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in inaugurating his Land Campaign, has given us something to think about. He says: "We cannot trust human beings in any class with sweeping powers of that character without there being abuse, wrongs, oppression, and injustice." Just so, Mr. George; substitute for the word "class" the word "sex," and we heartily agree with you.

In October, 1911, Mr. Lloyd George, in answer to a deputation of the Men's Political Union, said: "He would like to see the women of the country have the vote, for the reason that the Insurance Bill would have an infinitely better chance of passing into

law if they had the franchise, as that measure affected them so much more intimately than the men of the country." Yet a month later Mr. George boasted that "he would torpedo the Conciliation Bill." This he proceeded to do. Not content with this achievement, in October, 1913, he informs a deputation of women at Swindon that the Conciliation Bill was wrecked by the militants. Surely this statement bears a ring of mock humility that one would scarcely expect from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Why give the militants the credit of his action of the previous year? If in 1911 he torpedoed the Bill, the militants, by breaking windows in 1912 could not have affected its fate. Mr. George had already done his work, he had held out a false promise of fellowship to the women, he had loyally and unswervingly supported his chief by killing an obnoxious women's Bill.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, in 1912, after the troubles in the Welsh mines, when the men had offered a stubborn resistance to law and order, and after blood had been shed, called out the troops and when people complained he justified his doing so in these words:

"When men have the vote and rebel, the only course open to us is to employ force. To the voteless man rioting is the only weapon he has, but when he has the vote he must obey laws which he can alter, or else bear the consequences." (*Yorkshire Post*.)

Women have no votes. Is not rioting as legitimate a weapon for them as for men? But Mr. Churchill displays no sympathy when they rebel and break laws. He calls it "foolish conduct," and deplores these "unwomanly scenes."

Again Mr. Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, speaking about Ulster, tells us that "Sir Edward Carson cannot be allowed to interpose a bully's vote more arbitrary than the veto of the Crown." Was Mr. Winston Churchill's voice raised in indignant protest when the Prime Minister interposed his bully's veto against justice to women?

In speaking to an audience of men at Dundee Mr. Churchill says:—

"I do not agree with those who say that we should not parley with men who threaten violence and illegality. There is rarely violence without some cause. Liberalism is successful because it does not treat the symptoms, but always seeks the cause. When the cause is abated, the violence and other ugly symptoms will disappear. We do not like their methods, but we understand that in Ulster they are full of apprehension." (*Morning Post*.)

Well done, Mr. Churchill, there is rarely violence without cause, and when the militant Suffragette commits a deed of violence remember there is a cause behind her action. But compare the

First Lord of the Admiralty's speech to men with one to women, also at Dundee:—

"This form of weak disorder was a disease which the women of England must drive out of their political system before they could make any advance."

This disease can only be cured by granting justice to women. The "ugly symptoms" will disappear when Liberals deal with the cause.

The former LORD ADVOCATE, now Lord Strathclyde, makes, perhaps, the most extraordinary statement of all. He declares "that the Liberal party had the courage of its convictions, and was not afraid to live up to its convictions."

Does not the Liberal Government pretend to believe that taxation and representation go hand in hand? Does it not tell us that it stands for progress and liberty? Yet they allow the Prime Minister to sweep aside all their convictions where women are concerned. Not afraid to live up to their convictions! Then we are forced to the conclusion that, as far as women are concerned, their convictions are conditioned by prejudice and obstinacy. They are not afraid to torture women, but they are afraid to lay a finger on Sir Edward Carson, or let the law take its course against Tom Mann or Jim Larkin. Their convictions are enormously strengthened when backed by an electorate that can retain them in office or turn them out.

The HOME SECRETARY, Mr. McKENNA, in a recent speech, said that the Parliament Act was passed "to enable the representatives of the people to have the last word in legislation." Fine phrases! Why then did the Prime Minister, Mr. McKenna, and other members of the Cabinet not allow the representatives of the people to have the "last word" when Women's Suffrage Bills had a majority in the House of Commons?

For three years running the majority in favour of "Votes for Women" was the overwhelming one of 179, 110, and 167. Yet Mr. Asquith did not allow the people's representatives to have the "last word" in regard to that piece of legislation!

PROF. HOBHOUSE has said that "nothing has been more encouraging to the Liberalism of Western Europe in recent years than the signs of political waking in the East." Excellent! It reminds us of Mr. Asquith's telegram at the time of the Young Turks' uprising, when women had thrown aside the veil and were out in the streets clamouring for justice along with their brothers. It was at that moment that Mr. Asquith sent a telegram to the young men and young women of Turkey, assuring them he and his

colleagues were watching with sympathetic attention their struggle for political liberty. Some of those in Britain thought he would have been better employed had he turned his "sympathetic attention" to the struggles British women were making for political liberty, especially as at that very time several of the members of the Women's Freedom League were in Holloway for daring to knock at the Prime Minister's door to remind him that they, too, were demanding political liberty! But it is always easier to offer sympathy at a distance than extend the hand of fellowship at one's door.

One last quotation from *The Westminster Gazette* :—

"A Liberal Government is naturally desirous of giving all possible latitude to genuine expressions of opinion, however formally incorrect their expressions may be; and it certainly will not follow the example which has been set by its opponents in times past in thinking coercion to be a remedy for any honest discontent."

Yet *The Westminster Gazette* heartily endorses the Government in the harsh, vindictive sentences it inflicts on women; it would gladly coerce women into submission.

Such are a few of the hypocritical utterances of the exponents of Liberalism. Out of their own mouths we convict them, and the Liberalism which they preach, but do not practise.

It is no less true to-day than in the days of the prophet that the churl will claim to be liberal, while he deceives the poor with lying words, even "when the needy speaketh right." Let the Liberal cast aside hypocrisy, desist from cant, and face the fact that only "by devising liberal things shall the liberal stand."

*These lofty souls have telescopic eyes,  
Which see the smallest speck of distant pain,  
While at their feet a world of agonies,  
Unseen, unheard, unheeded, writhes in vain.*



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## F. W. Pethick Lawrence.

A Biographical Sketch that appeared in "Votes for Women," May 17th, 1912, during the Conspiracy Trial at the Old Bailey.

Now that the Founder and Editor of *Votes for Women* has been called by a strange working out of the law of destiny from his office chair at Clement's Inn to the dock at the Old Bailey, now that another has grasped the editorial pen that he has been obliged to lay down, it is right and fitting that a larger public than heretofore shall be taken into the secret of what Mr. Pethick Lawrence has given and done for the Woman's Movement.

Not empty-handed did he enter into it. The following brief summary of the outstanding events of his life suffices to show that he brought with him a brilliant record of achievement, and quietly laid aside the fulfilment of his personal career for the sake of a great regenerating struggle for human liberty fraught with supreme issues for the human race.

Born in 1871, Fred Lawrence went to Eton in 1885, and in 1889 won the "Tomline," the chief mathematical prize of the school, over the heads of boys two years his senior. In January, 1891, he became "Captain of the Oppidans," and was thus placed in a position of authority over more than nine hundred boys.

Proceeding to Cambridge University in October of the same year, he won a scholarship at Trinity College, and devoted himself to the special study of mathematics, obtaining First Class Honours as Fourth Wrangler in 1894. He spent the next year at Natural Science, obtaining a First Class in the Natural Science Tripos in 1895, thus achieving a "Double First." Meanwhile he took considerable interest in the "Union"—the Cambridge University Debating Society—and was elected successively Secretary, Vice-President, and President, his immediate predecessor in office being Mr. Phillip Whitwell Wilson (P.W.W. of the *Daily News*), who in his turn had succeeded Mr. C. F. G. Masterman, the present Under-Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. Lawrence was also a keen billiard player, and represented his University in the Annual Billiard Match, winning with his partner the four-handed match for Cambridge. In 1896 he competed for the "Smith" Prize, the principal mathematical prize in the University, and secured second prize for an Essay on the Factorisation of Numbers. He also devoted his energies to the study of Political Economy, and carried out a special investigation on the rates of wages in different towns. His Essay on this subject, since published as a book, "Local Variations in Wages," won for him the chief University Prize for Political Economy, the "Adam Smith" Prize. In 1897 Mr. Lawrence was given one of the coveted Fellowships of Trinity College in recognition of his work in Mathematics and Political Economy. He also contributed several papers on the Theory of Numbers to mathematical journals.

The next fourteen months were occupied with a tour round the world. Mr. Lawrence visited different parts of India, where many of his College friends who held positions in the Indian Civil Service were stationed. He also went to Ceylon, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, and the United States. On his return to England he decided to take up his residence at Mansfield House (the well-known University Settlement in Canning Town) and devote himself to the study of conditions amongst the working people of London.

For two years he took an active part in the life of the Settlement in every field. Having been called to the Bar in 1899, he sometimes sat as "poor man's lawyer" to give legal advice to all who applied for it. He also assisted the Settlement work by financial help, particularly in the building of a Boys' Club and of a Women's Hospital. He presented to the Men's Club his own billiard table, and instituted an annual competition amongst the members.

In 1900 he was selected the Unionist candidate for North Lambeth, but after a full study of the South African problem and a visit to that country, he found himself in opposition to the views of the Unionist Party, and retired from the candidature.

In the same year he was appointed as Professor at Manchester College, Oxford, and lectured there during the year on social questions. He also contributed an Essay on Housing to a book entitled "The Heart of the Empire," put together by a number of Cambridge men. In that Essay he sketched out the policy of town planning, a policy which has since received official recognition and support.

In 1901 he became engaged to Emmeline Pethick, one of the two founders of the West London Central Guild and President of the Espérance Working Girls' Club, and in October of the same year they were married, the ceremony being carried out in the Canning Town Public Hall. The wedding party was noteworthy, because it included, in addition to the members of the families concerned, not only Mr. Lloyd George and several political friends,

but also members of the Canning Town Clubs and of the Espérance Girls' Club and a party of fifty old ladies from the St. Marylebone Workhouse, who had been personal friends of Mrs. Lawrence for several years. Shortly after the marriage Mr. Lawrence adopted his wife's maiden name in addition to his own, and was known henceforth as Mr. Pethick Lawrence. He identified himself very closely with all his wife's social interests, and took an active part in the organisation of a co-operative dressmaking business, which paid a minimum wage of 15s. a week with an eight hours day. He also built as a gift to his wife a holiday cottage for children close to his country home, and gave great financial assistance in securing the freehold of a seaside holiday hostel for working people, which accommodates sixty visitors at a time.

In 1901 Mr. Pethick Lawrence obtained a controlling interest in a London evening paper, *The Echo*, and a little later became the Editor himself. The paper was run on advanced lines, and excluded the betting news from its columns. At the end of four years he found that, though he had nearly doubled the circulation and had been able to reduce the annual loss of the paper which he had found on taking it over, the loss was still considerable, and publication could not be continued. By company law the whole property of the paper passed in liquidation from the shareholders to the debenture holders, to the exclusion of the interests of the creditors and all the members of the staff. But Mr. Pethick Lawrence at once decided to meet out of his own private purse all the claims of the creditors in full, to the amount of several thousands of pounds, and to pay himself to every member of the staff a sum equivalent to two or three times the normal notice, in view of the enforced termination of the contract.

Several constituencies in the Liberal interest had in the meantime been offered to him, but these Mr. Lawrence had not felt able to accept. After winding up *The Echo*, Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence paid a visit to South Africa, where they found many friends. While there they heard of the imprisonment of Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney, and the story of how they had asked a question at Sir Edward Grey's meeting in Manchester. On their return to England in 1906 they took an early opportunity of meeting Mrs. Pankhurst, and from that time forward they both identified themselves with the campaign of the recently-formed Women's Social and Political Union. When his wife, the treasurer of the Union, was imprisoned for the first time in October of the same year, Mr. Pethick Lawrence stepped into the breach, strengthened the financial position of the organisation, and developed plans for focussing national attention upon the facts of the case. In November, 1908, he acted as counsel for Mrs. Baines, and in the preliminary proceedings relating to the appearance of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Gladstone as witnesses, he was opposed by the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General. It is interesting

to note that the *Daily Telegraph*, which gave a short summary of the Attorney-General's speech, reported Mr. Lawrence's speech nearly verbatim. Among many other special schemes of his own, he organised the Women's Social and Political Union Literature Department, now the Woman's Press, which was founded in January, 1907. In 1907 he and his wife founded the weekly organ of the W.S.P.U., *Votes for Women*. For the first fifteen months of the existence of the paper Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence financed it and bore all the loss themselves. After having established its circulation and its reputation as an advertising medium, they handed it over to the W.S.P.U., but continued the editorship up to the day of their arrest on March 5th, 1912.

But Mr. Pethick Lawrence's name will live in the grateful remembrance of men and women, not because of his immense services rendered to the organisation of the W.S.P.U., nor for the ceaseless and untiring work done in his headquarters office in Clement's Inn; it will live by reason of the position of isolation that he has been content to accept and occupy for many years as the necessary condition of his loyalty to a Cause indifferently championed, when not strenuously opposed or absent-mindedly betrayed, by all the political parties and organisations of men. The absolute integrity and the moral strength which cannot be assailed either by beguilement or ridicule, or boycott, or threat, or persecution—that will be remembered long after the actual political issues of the conflict have taken their due place in the vista of the past.

Capacity to stand alone depends not only upon the strength and sincerity of conviction, but upon the possession of an iron will and the power of relentless determination. And these characteristics are part of Mr. Lawrence's moral inheritance. Though a Londoner born and bred, and intensely proud of the fact (for he loves his city as a mountaineer loves his mountains), Mr. Lawrence comes of a Cornish stock. His grandfather and his forbears were children of the Cornish soil. Everyone who knows the folk of Cornwall recognises in them two main strains of racial type. In the first are to be found characteristics of the Southern and Eastern races. The sun of Spain and Phœnicia which warmed the blood of their ancestors seems to glow still in the veins of these men and women, dark of eye and swarthy of skin. They are of imaginative mind and ardent temperament; passionate lovers and haters; warm-hearted in their personal relationships, and easily led through generous emotions. Not so the other type. In that county are to be found faces hewn, as it were, out of its granite foundations. They belong to a fair, blue-eyed stock, unemotional, of indomitable temper and relentless will. They seem to impersonate the rock-bound coast against which the waves of the wild Atlantic spend their violence in vain. It is to this stock that Frederick Lawrence belongs.

On the North coast of Cornwall his people lived, toilers for

generations, till, in the early years of the nineteenth century, his grandfather made his way to London, and, beginning at the bottom of the ladder, worked his way to success, and became, like Dick Whittington, Lord Mayor of his adopted city. Two of the sons of this sturdy pioneer entered Parliament as representatives of the City of London, and each of them in his turn filled the office of Lord Mayor. A third son became Parliamentary representative of one of the divisions of Cornwall, and his sole surviving grandson, Frederick William Lawrence, when he threw himself into the political movement for winning equal status and citizenship for men and women, started forth upon an enterprise fraught with even greater difficulties than those which confronted his grandfather, the country-born youth thrown upon his own resources in a great city. And he has brought the same racial characteristic of relentless determination to the accomplishment of the task. *Per ardua stabilis* ("Steadfast through difficulties")—he has been true to his family motto.

Uncompromising honesty and rugged strength are stamped upon Mr. Lawrence's physique and personality, and are apparent to all who are brought into touch with him. Very few, however, even amongst those who know him in daily life, realise the depth of his human sympathy or the gentleness of his heart. Amongst those who understand this side of his nature are children, servants, simple country folk, and a handful of his intellectual equals who are devoid of the self-consciousness so easily affronted by a certain downrightness of manner disconcerting to people accustomed to speak and hear smooth things.

Conscious unity with the entire sentient creation is part of his religion. He sees life as one and indivisible in all its forms, and every pulsating creature is his fellow, who shares with him the burden of suffering and of sacrificial service. This sense of fellowship is of the spirit, not of the emotions, and manifests itself not outwardly, but inwardly by his mental attitude, which places him on a level with all living things. With children he is accepted as an equal and a mate—and that is his own attitude towards them. He never thinks of talking down to them, and when he plays their games he does it as a child who enjoys the fun in exactly the same way as they do. He accords to their opinions and tastes precisely the same respect as he would accord to those of grown people. In a word, he is as real as they are, and therefore he is an actual personality to them of whom they take account.

To the human personality, whether he meets it in the child or in the man or in the woman, in the "savant" or in the unlearned, he yields reverence and respect. He is imbued with the sense of human dignity and human equality, and on the elemental ground of humanity he regards each human soul as his peer, irrespective of all social and intellectual diversities. Reality and simplicity are the fundamental condition of his every relationship, and the so-called "chivalry" which is too often half snobbery, half

patronage, is utterly alien to his nature. Weakness and dependence as such make no appeal to him. He does not need them as a stimulus to his endeavour or as an effect in contrasts, to minister to his sense of self-importance.

Strength calleth unto strength, deep unto deep, and Man unto his Mate. That Mr. Pethick Lawrence should stand in the dock with his wife as a Leader of a Movement for the establishment of the human equality of men and women is the perfect and complete expression of the faith to which they together bear public witness, the faith which hails the coming of a better day, when men and women shall be one in purpose and one in service to the general good.

It is only natural in a world of so much make-believe that the very simplicity of such a personality should be a stumbling-block to many. The sophisticated and the self-diffident shrink from his uncompromising truthfulness, and instinctively fight shy of it. He is impersonal as the rocks and the trees, and that in itself is a challenge to persons of importance.

He will never know the sweets of personal popularity, and would not appreciate them if he did. He lives to obey a law which is the law of his being, and to accomplish a purpose to which he knows himself called, and thus he has passed already in spirit into the world of universal life of which he is parcel and part. No powers of the world can crush his will or weaken his spirit or subvert him from his aim. It is of such elemental stuff that reformers are made.

## Mr. Pethick Lawrence's Address to the Jury.

May 20th, 1912.

[The following speech was delivered by Mr. Pethick Lawrence at the Old Bailey on Monday, May 20th, 1912, in opening his defence in the case of Rex v. Emmeline Pankhurst, Frederick Pethick Lawrence, Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, and Christabel Pankhurst. It will be remembered that the charge technically preferred against the defendants was one of conspiracy and incitement to commit damage upon the glass windows of shopkeepers in the City of Westminster and other parts of London. The real issue before the court, as will be seen from Mr. Lawrence's speech, was the right of the unenfranchised to employ, upon the total failure of peaceful methods, methods of militancy involving defiance of the law.]

May it please your lordship. Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard at considerable length the case which the prosecution has made out against myself and against my co-defendants here in the dock on a charge of conspiracy and incitement to break windows. The case that I have to put before you is that neither the conspiracy nor the incitement is ours; but that the conspiracy is a conspiracy of the Cabinet which is responsible for the government of this country; and that the incitement is the incitement of the Ministers of the Crown—of Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Hobhouse, and of the other Ministers, including the Attorney-General, who has taken this case against us. And I say that if these honourable gentlemen had shown that they were prepared to listen to reason and to argument, these events which you have so patiently listened to during these days would never have taken place.

Speaking for myself, I loathe the idea of any such thing as the deliberate breaking of shop windows. It is a thing which to me is essentially ugly and repugnant. But I know that these women who have taken that course have been driven, by the inexorable logic of facts, to do what they did. And I for one am not going

to condemn them for their action. In order to enable you to understand how I propose to conduct my defence, I want to tell you that I intend—not at very great length—to put before you certain facts in this opening speech of mine which will enable you to understand the situation as it has occurred. I shall then call before you a number of witnesses—men and women of honour and distinction—who will give you facts relating to these affairs, and after you have heard those witnesses I shall deal shortly with the facts they have given, and I shall show you that it is not the co-defendants who are here before you, but that it is with others that the real blame lies for this state of things.

Now, gentlemen, I want you to get out of your heads all the facts about the window smashing, all the facts about the career of the Women's Social and Political Union which you have learned from the Press of the country. You must remember that you must not take the facts as you read them in the newspapers, which are fond, shall we say, of a little embellishment here and a little omission there, in their desire to present a good picture for their readers, rather than to be strictly accurate and to give everything in its full perspective and proportion. You have seen the two women who are here in the dock with me. You have been told in your newspapers that the women in this movement are hysterical and excited, and that they do not know what they are doing. You have seen the two women who are here with me, and I think it must have come to you, perhaps as a surprise, the calmness and deliberateness and the self-possession which those two women have shown. You have not had before you the others concerning whom we are charged with regard to this conspiracy; but you have heard some of the speeches that they made in the dock when they were before the judge at the Newington Sessions. And however much you may disagree with the political sentiments which these women are said to have uttered, I think you will acknowledge that theirs were not the speeches of people hysterical, inflamed, and excited. If you have ever listened to political speeches—and I take it that all of you have—you will know that men very often lose control of themselves in a rhetorical outburst, especially when they are taking part in a revolutionary campaign. But I think you will admit that the speeches which have been read to you, and which the witnesses have admitted were the speeches made by the women on these occasions, do not show any sign of hysterical or excited behaviour or point of view. We had in the box one witness who spoke of a particular woman—I think it was Miss Wylie—who had broken his shop window, and he said that she seemed to be a woman whom he would have thought to be the very last person to take such a course; and the only conclusion he could come to on the first consideration of her action, was that she had gone mad. But he had seen that this was a mistaken judgment. Her action certainly produced a shock on his mind, and he could find no adequate cause to explain the situation.

Now what I want to put to you and to convince you of is that you are dealing here with something outside the ordinary affairs of life; you are dealing with something outside your ordinary experience. You are accustomed to deal with the ordinary affairs of men and women—of commerce—the affairs of the shop, with the affairs of the business concerns of the world. Here we are concerned, in this agitation and in this trial, with something which is beyond and outside the ordinary affairs of life. We are dealing, and you are dealing here with people whose life is devoted to an ideal; and whether you agree with them or whether you disagree with them, you are faced with the fact that they have calmly and thoughtfully and deliberately come to a certain conclusion, that a certain course of action is right—though it may or may not commend itself to you, and may or may not commend itself to other people, which is calmly and deliberately thought out, and which is the result of a solemn and grave determination at which they have arrived.

#### Who are the Defendants?

Now I want to say to you a few words about the lives of the defendants who are here in this dock.

Mrs. Pankhurst is the widow of Dr. Pankhurst, a great lawyer, who was a comrade of John Stuart Mill, and who worked with him for many years in the early days of the fight for the emancipation of women. Mrs. Pankhurst has been the mother of four children—one son and three daughters—and when she had brought them up and given them their education, she took part in public work in Manchester, where she was for some years a Guardian of the Poor.

My wife, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, before she came into this movement, had spent many years of her life in work among women and girls of the poorer class. She worked in connection with the West London Mission, and there some of the most arduous, some of the most serious, and some of the most painful work which it is possible for a human being to have to do, fell to her lot. It was part of her work to look after those members of her sex who through misfortune or other terrible calamity had sunk into a position in which they were outcasts from society. Many of those women, with whom she came into contact, she was able to bring up from those depths into which they had fallen and to make them responsible citizens, and to give them a life that was worth living in after years. She and her friend, Miss Mary Neal, were also instrumental in starting a large club for working girls—the Espérance Club—a club which some of you may have heard of, that has been the means of restoring to the people of this country the old folk songs and games which seemed to be leaving Merrie England. The members of that Club, of which she and Miss Neal have been the leaders, have been all over the countryside, all

through the towns, bringing back to the people the life and gaiety of the old days.

Now as to myself, as the Attorney-General has already told you, I am a member of the Bar, and he has told you that I, therefore, ought to be especially opposed to anything in the nature of illegal action. I will go farther than that and say that I am by very nature and temperament a believer in law and order, that I dislike anything which is disorderly, and that I am deeply sensible of the necessity, in a great community, of the preservation of law and order in all the ordinary conduct of life. I do not propose to say to you very much about my previous life, but I should like to say that after my work as a student at Eton and at Cambridge, I set myself to the investigation of the wages of men and women in different parts of the country, and the comparison of these wages, and it was upon that investigation that I obtained my Fellowship at Trinity College. After I left the University, I spent three years in a University Settlement at Canning Town, and it was there that I learned of the tragedy that comes to many people in this country owing to their poverty and to their inability, under the present conditions of life, to free themselves from that tragedy. After that I had a controlling interest in—I was practically the proprietor of—one of the London evening newspapers, and when that paper came to an end—I say this to you with some diffidence, because I hate speaking about myself—I did not consider that my obligations were limited by the ordinary legal obligations of creditors of that paper; and the staff of that paper and the creditors received from me personally a considerable sum in consideration of the debts which I felt were morally due to them, even though my legal obligations did not go so far. I say that to you because I want to explain to you that my own view of the duties and responsibilities of a citizen go far beyond the mere legal obligations that the law lays down. And I want to remind you that there have been men like John Hampden, who, finding a political situation arise which seemed to them to transcend all the ordinary dealings of life, were prepared first of all to come into conflict with the law through tax resistance, and then to go farther than that, as you will remember John Hampden did; and failing to establish his point in a court of law, there was nothing left for him but to take up arms. And so he won for the people of this country—it was largely through his sacrifice—the liberties which we possess at the present day.

#### Forty Years of Patience.

The Attorney-General, in opening this case, said that we could not altogether keep politics out of our discussion. That has proved to be so, because in a great many of the speeches that have been read to you, a great deal of political matter has inevitably been introduced. Therefore, although it is my desire to deal as briefly as possible with the political circumstances which have led

up to the events with regard to which this trial is being conducted, I feel that I cannot pass over altogether in silence the state of affairs which the Attorney-General has put before you. I feel that it is necessary to represent correctly the facts of the case and the situation which has arisen. The Attorney-General was not entirely correct in his statement. He said he thought the Women's Social and Political Union was founded in the year 1907 or thereabouts. As a matter of fact, the Women's Social and Political Union was founded in 1903. That, of course, was many years after the struggle for the emancipation of women had begun. Dr. Pankhurst, husband as I have told you of Mrs. Pankhurst, and John Stuart Mill, and Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, who is at the present time a member of the Committee of the Women's Social and Political Union, were engaged for a number of years—for forty years prior to that date—in working along the ordinary lines for Women's Suffrage. Great meetings were held, monster petitions were sent to Parliament, and the large majority of the Members of Parliament were pledged to support Women's Suffrage.

Now I want you to notice that that all failed to achieve its object because politicians behaved treacherously. The story of more recent events bears out this fact. We are plain men and women who expect honest dealing in everyday life, and for the most part we get it, but when we come to politicians and members of Parliament, we find they fail us. We find the way they treat political questions is by methods of trickery and chicanery. And it is because these ordinary methods of business life are not successful when it comes to the realm of politics, that we have this situation. There was a large majority in the House of Commons to carry Women's Suffrage in the days when Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister, yet he broke his word, and induced his followers to go back on their pledges, and to be false to the promises which they had made. Following upon that, whenever the question of Women's Suffrage was mentioned in the House of Commons it was greeted by methods of humbug, and by ribald jests from Members of Parliament.

#### Trickery and Humbug.

Now I have told you that the Women's Social and Political Union was founded in 1903, and for two years following that date the ordinary methods of constitutional agitation were pursued. Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter, Miss Christabel Pankhurst, who is mentioned together with us in this indictment, but who has not joined us here in the dock—these two women for two years devoted themselves to all the ordinary methods of propaganda. But they found they were not making progress, because they were up against this:—they were marching on the swampy ground of trickery and humbug. And so it was that, towards the close of 1905, Miss Christabel Pankhurst and Miss Annie Kenney went to a meeting of one of the great Liberal leaders—Sir Edward Grey—



at a time when the Liberal Government—this Liberal Government which is now in office—was just on the verge of coming into power. These two women went to that meeting with the intention of finding out the true facts. They knew that Liberal statesmen had been in the habit of making promises and indulging in wide generalities, and they knew that nothing had ever come of them. At the close of Sir Edward Grey's meeting they rose to put a simple question—what was the Liberal Government going to do with regard to the demand of women to be enfranchised? They put it at the proper time, at the close of the meeting, and in the proper way. But instead of receiving an answer to that question, these two women were flung out of the hall. They were thrown out with great violence, and held a demonstration in the street, and they were arrested and sent to prison.

That was how what is called militancy began, and I dwell upon that for two reasons. First of all I want to show you that it was due to the trickery and humbug of the Government that anything more than ordinary methods were adopted. I also want to draw attention to it for this reason. You have frequently heard the word militancy used. You may have thought, unless I had given you this story, that militancy meant some violent outbreak or stone-throwing. This has not always been the sort of method adopted. Militancy simply means that you take some step that is disagreeable to somebody else, and incidentally it will be proved in this case that it was exceedingly disagreeable to the people taking part in it themselves.

During the course of this six or seven years, since that historic meeting in October, 1905, one of the methods of militancy has been that to which you have had frequent allusion made in the course of this trial; there have been meetings at which the speeches of Cabinet Ministers have been interrupted by interjections on the part of women. Part of the evidence you have had before you was brought, I think, in order to show the nature of the work of this Women's Social and Political Union, and reference was made to one occasion when Mr. Asquith was very largely interrupted and was unable to obtain a hearing owing to the words which were spoken at his meeting by women who came to know why he took up his present attitude on Votes for Women. Now that has been, during all these six years, one of the methods of what is called militancy. They are methods which men politicians have used for a very long time. You have had Liberals going down and deliberately going down, in order to interrupt Conservative meetings. There is no doubt whatever about that. You have had Liberal newspapers—we have not in this country what is exactly an official Press, but we have what is tantamount to an official Press—you have had these papers glorying in what they call "the voice," which constantly interrupted and interfered with the progress of the speeches of their opponents. But when women, at infinite cost to themselves, have been present, and have suffered in many cases severe injury—a man on one occasion had his leg

broken, and many other severe injuries have resulted—when women have been there you have had a man like Mr. Lloyd George taunting these women and making a statement, which he knew to be absolutely false, that that "was a very nice way of earning a living, wasn't it?" to come there and interrupt him when he wanted to make a great speech. Now I say that that has been a very serious incitement. Supposing, gentlemen, that you had felt that you had some great public duty to perform, and, at great personal sacrifice, you had attended some public meeting—supposing you had gone to the *Titanic* inquiry, where you had some important evidence to give, and supposing you had gone there at considerable personal inconvenience. If, as the result of the evidence you had given, you had been mauled about, had your clothes torn, had bruises inflicted upon you, and then, on the top of that, some gentleman said to you that "that was a very nice way of earning your living, wasn't it?" would you not be incited by such an outrageous statement of that kind? Would it not make your blood run hot, and would it not make you angry, and would not that affect you in your feelings upon the question? I put it to you, gentlemen, that for Mr. Lloyd George, after he had had the facts before him—for the facts have been sent to him; he has been shown the balance sheet; he has been given categorical information that such statements are absolutely false—for him to make that statement to the women is an incitement which you must realise is very serious. As you know, he made it again the other night. He is a man who is in receipt of money for his professional services. I don't say there is anything wrong in that—I do not think there is—but I think that for a man who is in receipt of a large sum for his professional and political services to taunt women, who do not receive money, with their being hired for certain work when they are doing it voluntarily and without any form of payment whatever, in order to take a course which, however unpleasant to themselves, they feel to be their duty, I say that is an incitement of a very serious kind.

#### Methods of the W.S.P.U.

I want to return to the first act of militancy at Sir Edward Grey's meeting to which I have just referred. My wife and I heard shortly after that of this new society which was formed, and we determined to see who were the people responsible for it, and what was the nature of the work they were doing. When we had come into contact with them we realised that they were right, that, though their methods were different from the methods which we had been accustomed to, they were the only ones that were likely to succeed where others had failed, and we determined to throw in our lot with them.

Now, gentlemen, that was a very serious step, and when I come to my speech at the close of the evidence I propose to say to you a few words as to why that very grave and very serious step was taken

by us. I want to pass on now. I am confining myself to the facts of the situation, and I want to tell you this; this Women's Social and Political Union, of which you have heard so much, and of the militant side of whose policy you have heard so much, has carried on a political and educational work far greater than any political agitation that has been carried on, at any rate, in recent years, and I don't think that I am overstating it when I say that it has a larger political and educational side than that of any political movement in the history of this country. We had a witness in the box—Inspector Powell—who admitted that in the course of his thirty years' experience he had never known an agitation carried on so long and so widely as that of the Women's Social and Political Union. I might tell you that in the course of the six years of its existence it has held over a hundred meetings a week—you have it in evidence before you that it has held a hundred to three hundred meetings every week in different parts of the country—so that in the whole six years it has held something like 100,000 different meetings in different parts of the country. These meetings have been held in the largest halls in London, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, and in parts of Scotland and Wales. The great Albert Hall—I think the largest hall in the country—has been filled thirteen times with women taking part in this constitutional agitation; the Queen's Hall hundreds of times, and at the London Pavilion and other places a great number of meetings have been held. In the course of the year 1911 a letter was sent to the Prime Minister, in which he was shown that during that particular year this organisation alone had held more meetings—several times more meetings—than all the other political societies throughout the country, and had done several times the amount of political work. When the question came up in the House of Commons in the year 1908 or 1909, I forget which, Mr. Gladstone, now Lord Gladstone, said that it was not sufficient for women to hold meetings indoors; they ought to show by meetings held out of doors that they could agitate in the same way as men. Largely in consequence of that statement it was arranged to hold a great demonstration in Hyde Park. I do not propose to tell you at great length about that. I propose to read to you what the *Times* said, and the *Times* has not, as you know, any great bias in favour\* of Woman Suffrage. The *Times* correspondent wrote:—

The organisers of the demonstration had counted on the attendance of 250,000. That expectation was certainly fulfilled. Probably it was doubled, and it would be difficult to contradict anyone who asserted confidently that it was trebled. Like the distance and numbers of the stars, the facts were beyond the threshold of perception.

#### Result of Peaceable Methods.

That was one great outdoor demonstration held by this Union to show the demand of women for the vote. What was the result

\*The jury were of course aware that the *Times* is strongly anti-suffrage.

of a great demonstration of that kind? After it had been held the leaders of the movement wrote to Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, and asked him to receive them in deputation in order to lay certain facts before him. Mr. Asquith, in his reply, not only opposed Women's Suffrage, but treated the request with contumely; he refused, absolutely and totally, to receive any deputation representing this society. And that is the kind of method—absolute contumely when it has not been trickery and chicanery—with which the constitutional and the normal and proper demand of the women has been met. The women who were engaged in that conflict were forced to compare his attitude to them with his attitude to the request which came from the men in Woolwich. The men, who were anxious about a question of Government labour at Woolwich, said they wanted Mr. Asquith to receive a deputation on a certain night. Mr. Asquith said he had another engagement—he was going out to dinner—and that he could not receive them. The men said they were coming whether he could receive them or not, and they were going to wait until he did receive them. His answer to them was that he had changed his mind, and that he would make it convenient to see them after all. When he was dealing with the women, in spite of the fact that they came as representatives of this enormous and unparalleled demonstration, he treated them with contumely. When they came out in order to see him they were arrested for obstruction, and sent to prison for considerable terms.

That, for many years, was one of the militant methods—as they were called—of the Union. The three principal methods were an anti-Government policy at by-elections—of that I do not propose to speak to you, as it does not affect this case; going to meetings of Cabinet Ministers in order to place their views before the Ministers; and these deputations, or, as they were euphoniously called by the newspapers, “raids.” I want to emphasise to you that these militant methods meant nothing illegal. There was nothing illegal whatever about this policy at by-elections, and there was nothing illegal in going to meetings to put questions, or even to interject remarks to Cabinet Ministers. Yet they came in for quite as much censure and hostility as those other methods which brought women into contact with the law.

#### The Conciliation Bill.

I want to show you now how women who took part in this stone-throwing in November and March last were incited to do so, not only by the speeches of Cabinet Ministers, but by the contumely, by the trickery, and by the falsity of politicians, and the falsity of leading members of the Liberal Government in dealing with their case. The demand the women had always made was that the Government, which nowadays, and under our present methods of the conduct of Parliament, is responsible for legislation—should bring in a Bill to give women the vote.

They had demanded that that Bill should remove the sex barrier. They had demanded, where a woman was qualified on precisely the same lines as a man, that just because she was a woman she should not be shut out from having a vote, and they asked the Government to bring in a Bill for that purpose. It was only when the Government had failed to do so for all these years, and had failed to make any promise that they would do so, that these militant methods were adopted. In the year 1910 it was represented that the Government could not very well give way to this militant claim, even though it was backed up by these enormous peaceful demonstrations, and it was suggested that if some means could be found of saving the face of the Government probably some Bill for Women's Suffrage could be got through. I do not want to make any false impression. I cannot suggest to you that that was said by prominent members of the Liberal Government, but I do say that it was said to the women who were conducting this fight. It was suggested that if some Bill could be devised which could be introduced by a private member, the Government would probably see their way to allow that Bill to become law. That was the origin of what was known as the Conciliation Bill. It was a Bill to conciliate the different sections in the House of Commons upon which Liberals and Labour men, Irish and Conservative, could all agree, and it was a Bill framed so as to give the vote to women householders—that is to say, the women who paid the rates and taxes—and it would enfranchise about a million women throughout the country. That Bill was brought into the House of Commons, and the Women's Social and Political Union, although it did not entirely agree with the terms of the Bill, said: "If this is going to conciliate the different sections, we are not going to raise any objection to the progress of that measure; but we will take that as an instalment, at any rate, towards our precise requirements, from which it does not differ very widely, and we will give our support to that." In 1910 there was little business before the House of Commons, because of the number of events taking place which cut up a great deal of the work the House of Commons had planned to do. But in spite of that fact, Mr. Lloyd George threw his whole influence against the passage of that Bill, and, although he did not succeed in preventing its being carried through one of its stages, called the Second Reading, he did bring it about that the Government refused any time for the passage of this Bill into law. Towards the end of that Parliament, at the end of the year 1910, the women wanted to know how they stood.

#### "Black Friday."

Mr. Asquith made a statement in the House of Commons dealing with a great number of other subjects, but he made no reference at all to this question of Women's Suffrage, and as the result of that, the women said, "We must have another deputation; we

must find out where we stand. We must go to Mr. Asquith," and they went. Some of the most distinguished women in the country went on that deputation. Mrs. Garrett Anderson, who had been chosen Mayor of her native city—one of the first women Mayors in this country—Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, one of the leading scientists in the world, went to interview the Prime Minister to find out what really were his intentions. Had a deputation of men, half as influential as this deputation of women, gone to see the Prime Minister on what to them was a vital and important question, that deputation would undoubtedly have been received. Instead of that, on this occasion the Prime Minister refused to see the deputation, and owing to his action, and owing to the action of the Home Secretary, that deputation was met by a great body of police.

Now, they had decided that if he would not see them, they would not go quietly away, because that would have been to admit failure and that, whenever a Prime Minister chose, he could treat them with contempt. So they resolved to stand their ground. It was not stone-throwing or damaging property. The women thought they had a right to see the Prime Minister. What was the result? Several hundreds of the women—I lay very great stress upon this—came into conflict with the police and crowd for the space of several hours. They were not only jostled and hustled and knocked about, as you may say is natural when women meet a crowd, but many of them were very seriously injured. They were subjected to indignities and insults which, in the opinion of several hundred of them, could not have been merely accidental, but were deliberately given. That was what was called "Black Friday." The women came out unarmed; I think that you had it actually in evidence that they had special instructions to leave umbrellas behind, lest, perchance, they might take any step which afterwards they might regret. They came out in a perfectly peaceful manner, absolutely unarmed, without stones or hammers; and as a result hundreds of these women were injured, many of them were severely injured, and one woman died as the consequence of the injuries she received. Other women were for months laid up, some for twelve months, as a consequence of what took place on that day. I say emphatically that that was one of the reasons why, when it came to the necessity of making some protest later, the women were determined that they would not subject themselves again to treatment of that kind, and that though they might be breaking the law in doing damage to private property, they were not prepared to face again what they had passed through on that awful day in 1910.

Now, I want to return to the political story I was just telling you. The Conciliation Bill was reintroduced in the following year, and there was not only in London, but throughout the whole of the country, great evidence of the support which that Bill had. Every Women's Suffrage society supported it, and nearly every great Municipal Council—I think this is very important—in all parts of

the provinces sent a resolution up to the Cabinet pressing them to carry this Bill. Cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and many others—the County Councils in these cities sent up asking the Government to allow this Bill to be carried into law. The women organised what I believed to be the greatest political peaceful procession that this country has ever seen. The procession marched from the Embankment to the Albert Hall. The Albert Hall was taken by the Women's Social and Political Union, and on that occasion every single seat and every portion of standing room was filled, and an overflow meeting was held in another hall.

This was organised by this organisation alone. Other Suffrage organisations took other halls and filled them to overflowing. You heard witnesses for the prosecution admit that that procession took over an hour and a half to pass a given point. I think they would have been more accurate if they had said, as some of our witnesses will tell you, that it took a period of something like three hours to pass. The demonstration was such as had never been seen in this country before, and what was the result? The Prime Minister gave a certain promise. I am not going to give you details, but I am going to give it to you broadly. He said that they had no time to deal with the question in 1911, but that full facilities would be given in 1912, and that that promise would be kept in the spirit as well as in the letter. Now, I am going to tell you how politicians regard the spirit of a promise. Before I tell you that, I want to say that the women accepted that pledge as a *bonâ-fide* pledge. They thought that these men who made them that promise would keep the promise. They stopped what were known as militant methods; the Women's Social and Political Union stopped that. They ceased their anti-Government policy at elections; they did not go to Cabinet Ministers' meetings to create difficulties; they did not go up in deputation to the House of Commons.

#### Proposed Reform Bill.

That went on right away until November last year. Now we come to the facts that are brought before you in the course of these proceedings. Just before that demonstration took place in November to which your attention has so often been directed Mr. Asquith made a certain statement. He made it, as is well known, with the connivance, and to some extent at the instigation, of Mr. Lloyd George. The statement was that a Reform Bill would be introduced in the House of Commons. It was known as a Bill to give Manhood Suffrage; and he said that so far as women were concerned, the case might be met by an amendment including women in the Bill. Mr. Lloyd George said that that was a splendid opportunity for women, and that they ought to be satisfied with it.

Now, it is necessary for me to put to the Court very shortly why that proposal was not acceptable to the women. The women had

been told on more than one occasion that they could only win the vote by combining their friends in the different parties in the House of Commons. There were some Liberals who were in favour of Women's Suffrage, and some Liberals who were against it. There were some Conservatives in favour of it, and some against it. The Liberal supporters of Women's Suffrage are not enough to make a majority alone. But the Liberal supporters and the Conservative supporters together are enough to form a majority in the House of Commons, with the inclusion of the Labour Members, who are all in favour of it, and those Irish Members who are in favour of it. So, you see, the Conciliation Bill was a Bill to gather the support from all parties. But this Manhood Suffrage Bill was a Bill which was entirely opposed to the whole convictions of Conservatives, who do not want a Manhood Suffrage Bill; and therefore an amendment to such a Bill as that, which would give votes to a large number of women as well as to a large number of men, would only get support from that portion of the House which is both Liberal and in favour of Women's Suffrage. Therefore the amendment in favour of including women would undoubtedly have been defeated. You see that this so-called opportunity of getting Women's Suffrage in the form of an amendment to the Manhood Suffrage Bill was entirely illusory, because it broke up the compromise—it broke up the principal means by which it was going to be carried by getting some support from one party and some from another, and between them making a majority sufficient to carry it. The proposal was sure of the support only of a section of the Liberal Party, and was, therefore, absolutely certain of defeat. Not only was it without hope of success, but the apparent advantage of having two strings to the Women's Suffrage movement was equally illusory. It was really a case of having two birds in the bush instead of one in the hand.

That the Conciliation Bill was ruined by this proposal can be demonstrably proved. The minds of politicians would be so fixed upon this large scheme of getting Manhood Suffrage that it would be impossible to carry a preliminary little Bill like the Conciliation Bill. That is the view which was taken by the *Times* newspaper, which, commenting on the situation, said:—

Women's Suffrage is not a party question. It cuts across the regular party lines. But the Government propose to bring in a Reform Bill which will be an out-and-out party measure. If they include Women's Suffrage in that Bill it might command the whole force at the back of the Government; but they are not going to do that. They are going to let it be included as an amendment if the House chooses to have it. In order to secure its adoption as a non-party principle the amendment would require to be supported by the Opposition, which would be expecting them to treat a party measure as a non-party one. It would fall between two stools: the Conservative supporters would be alienated, and no pressure would be put upon the Ministerial side to make up for them. If, on the other hand, the matter is left, as the National Union suggested as an alternative, to be dealt with in the form of a Conciliation Bill, it will not have the smallest chance of consideration. The way will be blocked by the Reform Bill.

### "Torpedoed!"

So that you see, in the opinion of the *Times*, the Government, which had given a promise that it said it would keep in the spirit as well as in the letter, was deliberately breaking that promise and substituting something which was purely illusory. But our view of this question does not rest absolutely upon our own words. No less a person than Mr. Lloyd George himself openly said a few days afterwards that this new measure had "torpedoed" the Conciliation Bill. When you think that these women had, for the space of four or five months, proved their absolute faith in what they thought was the integrity of the Government—they had abandoned their political attack upon the Government because they had a pledge upon which they thought they could rely—for Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith frankly to torpedo the whole base upon which the women were relying, was, I think you must admit, incitement of a very serious kind. It was not merely an incitement, it was a conspiracy to upset the understanding which had existed, and it was a conspiracy in which the leading Members of the Government had taken part. In consequence of that action, the women members of the Women's Social and Political Union thought that a further protest was necessary. They determined that it was necessary to make their position perfectly clear, and that could only be done by a great demonstration of hostility to the Government. You have seen what happened when they went out on a demonstration of the previous kind in the previous November. I have told you how they found themselves knocked about, injured, and insulted. Some of them said that this time "we will not do the same thing." My wife, who was the leader of that demonstration, did not throw any stone. She was arrested, coming into conflict with the police. But a certain number of the other women who went out on that day said: "We will not be buffeted about and insulted again. Rather than that, we will break windows and be arrested and go to prison for doing so." So some of the women who went on that occasion took stones and hammers with them, and broke windows.

### The Referendum.

Following upon that, there was considerable discussion as to the political situation with regard to Women's Suffrage. A suggestion was put forward in one of the leading Liberal papers—one of the quasi-official papers—and the suggestion had such prominence in the paper that no one who knew politics could doubt that it was in fact a proposal of one of the Members of the Government. The suggestion was that this question of Women's Suffrage should be dealt with by means of a Referendum. The question of a Referendum is, however, a large one, and I will not trouble you with that at any length except to say that, whether a Referendum on a question

of politics be good or bad, at least what is good on one set of questions is good on another set; what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If a Referendum is to be adopted on Women's Suffrage, it ought to be adopted on Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment. When Mr. Lloyd George went to the Albert Hall and made a great speech upon Women's Suffrage, members of the Women's Social and Political Union went there to ask him what was the attitude of the Government to this great question. Mr. Lloyd George's answer to that was that he personally "took a certain line, and that he was not speaking on behalf of the Government at all; women must find that out from Mr. Asquith." In regard to how the amendment was to be carried to the Manhood Suffrage Bill, he returned an absolutely evasive answer. What I have told you just now was proved by a process of political arithmetic, but he did not attempt to quote any figures or show any facts to refute that line of argument. He told the women that Mr. Asquith could give them an answer, so they went to Mr. Asquith to ask him to see them, as this new question had arisen. He treated them with the same contempt, with the same contumely, with which he has always treated the members of this Union. He refused to see the lady who had written. He refused to discuss the matter, and refused to see any new situation which demanded his attention.

While he was taking that course, another Cabinet Minister, Mr. Hobhouse, was making that speech which you have heard, and to which such insistent reference has been made. I do not want to go through his speech again, but I want to put it to you that when you realise that the women have carried out consistently an agitation of the kind I have described, doesn't it strike you as rather extraordinary that a Cabinet Minister should dare to get up and to say that there is nothing in all these demonstrations, nothing in all this agitation and political organisation; that the only thing which really counted in winning the vote for men was when men went to Nottingham Castle and burned it to the ground? Doesn't it strike you as an extraordinary statement for a Cabinet Minister to make? "There has been no such sentimental uprising as accounted for Nottingham Castle!" Women have not done what men did; they have not burnt a castle to the ground, and I see no reason for giving them the vote. Do you not think that, in view of that extraordinary statement, the events which took place, from the point of view of women who took part in them, showed considerable self-restraint? They had been taunted by a Cabinet Minister that they had not burnt a castle to the ground. They went out and broke windows, and did no damage that was likely to hurt anyone.

That is all I propose to say at this stage. Now I will call witnesses who will give important evidence. Among the witnesses I propose to call are many men and women who are well known to you. They include Father Adderley, who is a leading clergy-

man in Birmingham; Sir Edward Busk; the Rev. Dr. Cobb, of St. Ethelburga's; Mrs. Morgan Dockrell, President of the Women Teachers' Union; Lady Lamb; Miss Eva Moore; Sir John Rolleston, M.P.; Mr. D. A. Thomas, the well-known Welsh colliery owner; and a number of other men and women.

*After calling witness for the defence, Mr. Pethick Lawrence resumed as follows:—*

Gentlemen of the jury: It will be your duty at the close of the hearing of this case to give your verdict upon what you have heard. I ask you to show by that verdict that you understand that this is a political fight; I ask you to show by your verdict your appreciation of the political position in which we are placed. Now, gentlemen, the prosecution in their evidence with regard to my relationship to this trial, have put forward several grounds in order to implicate me. They have shown my connection with this organisation of the Women's Social and Political Union. They have shown that I had an office in the offices of the Union; they have shown that I have spoken at meetings; and they have shown that I have taken part in the work of the Union. So far as that is concerned I cannot see that that makes me guilty, or that you will think that it makes me guilty in any way in the case. The witnesses for the prosecution and the Attorney-General himself have admitted that this Women's Social and Political Union has carried on a great constitutional work—work of meetings and work of political propaganda, requiring great funds and requiring in connection with it the support of a great newspaper. All that is perfectly honourable, and I think they have failed to show in any way anything dishonourable or underhand connected with the organisation.

In the second place, they have brought, as part of their case against me, that I went in November and again in March to bail the women who were arrested for the part they had played. It seems to me that this is the first time it has ever been claimed that anyone who goes to bail those who have been arrested is in any way implicated by that action. They would say, no doubt, that I knew beforehand that the women were likely to be arrested. I admit that, but I put it to you that not only I knew beforehand but the police knew beforehand that the women were going to make a protest which would probably lead to arrest and imprisonment. The police knew it beforehand, and they put it to me that if anyone were arrested on that day would I come to bail them out? It seems to me that there is nothing dishonourable about offering to perform that function, and there is nothing which implicates me in the facts which are under your notice. Then, in the third place, they have put in against me a number of speeches which I have made. Before I deal with those speeches, I want to say a word about the method

in which these speeches have been reported by some of the witnesses for the prosecution.

#### The Police Reporters.

It is a very difficult thing to report speeches accurately. It is a very important thing, when you are dealing with the actual words which people have spoken, to get the precise words, and not some different form of words. I put it to you that the great majority of the witnesses for the prosecution have failed to give in evidence that they did report the actual words used. Many of them came to the meeting and did not take down shorthand notes, but afterwards put down what they believed or remembered. I need not go into that at any great length, because his lordship has ruled that these particular statements put down from memory were not relevant evidence in the case. But I do think it necessary to say a word to you about the witness Hall. You remember that the witness Hall came into the box and swore that he was a verbatim reporter, and put in a number of statements which he professed to have taken down in shorthand concerning some eight or ten meetings which had been addressed by myself or others of those who are in the dock; and though this man denied that he had selected sentences, and even words out of sentences, in order to make up his report, yet, in the course of his report there was a political speech made by Miss Christabel Pankhurst, which, according to his report, made absolute nonsense. I was able to show what the probable sense was, and I put it to him, having interpolated a great many words and sentences in his report, that that was probably the thing she actually said, and he admitted that that was quite likely to be what she said. A more flagrant case still was his report of a speech by Mr. Mansell-Moullin, the surgeon. This was how the witness Hall reported a part of that speech:

Now, what are you going to do? We must go forward with the fight, even if we have to use violence.

I put it to the witness, you will remember, what Mr. Mansell-Moullin really said, and he admitted that what Mr. Mansell-Moullin said was this:—

The question is, What are you to do? How are you to nail such shufflers and wrigglers, how are you to nail them to their pledges? Someone in the audience says, Wait and see. It will be too late then. You want to nail them now, and the only thing is to keep straight on for your principle—the one that was laid down at the start. Keep perfectly straight for the principle "*as it is, or may be granted to men.*" I know what it means, and I am afraid you all know as well as I do. I know the hundreds who have been imprisoned; I know the brutal treatment that so many of you have received at the hands of the police and of prison officials, if not by the direct orders of the Home Secretary, at least with his active connivance; I know that some of you have been maimed for life; I know that some have died—died as directly of the violence they have received as if they had been put up against a wall and shot; I know all this, and so do you, but there is nothing for it but to go on. Your cause is a sacred one. It

is the cause of justice and liberty and civilisation. It is the finest and the noblest cause the world has ever known, and it is one that must and will succeed.

Now, gentlemen, I do protest most strongly against a man being sent to report a speech and reporting it like this:—

We must go forward with the fight, even if we have to use violence, when what I have read to you is what was actually said, and nothing of the kind that he gave was ever said. And I put it to you in the first place that every single report that this witness has given is absolutely and totally incorrect. And I think you will all agree that it is a very scandalous thing that men should profess to report meetings and should so absolutely distort the meaning of speeches in this way. I venture to lay it down that the man who undertakes reliability to report speeches should be either trained as a politician and understand the meaning of phrases that politicians use, in order that he may correctly gather what they mean, or he should be a thoroughly qualified stenographer who puts down every word that is said. Fortunately, in this case, I have a verbatim report of the speech, and I was able to put before you the correct version. But suppose we had not been able to employ our own stenographers; and suppose we had been hauled up for some statement which it was alleged we had made and we had been unable to prove that we had not made it. You will see that it is of the utmost importance that only a correct report should be given; in this case it was totally incorrect.

#### What is Militancy?

Now I want to say something to you on the question of militancy. I referred to it in my opening speech, but I am afraid that what I said then may not have been perfectly understood. Militancy has been used as a method of the Women's Social and Political Union long before any question of stone-throwing ever arose. Women have been arrested in the course of this agitation while going on a perfectly peaceful deputation to the House of Commons. While acting thus constitutionally, they have been arrested and sent to prison for considerable terms. Mrs. Pankhurst herself was going to the House of Commons with a petition in her hand, and for seeking admission, and for that alone, she was arrested and sent to prison for several weeks. My wife has been dealt with in the same way. Several hundreds of women, for merely going in procession to the House of Commons and asking to be admitted, sometimes in quite small numbers, have been arrested and sent to prison for long terms. The technical reason for which they were sent to prison was obstruction of the police in the performance of their duty. To use the word militancy does not mean stone-throwing by any means, necessarily. That is borne out by what Mrs. Morgan Dockrell said when she explained that the letter which she received from Mrs. Pankhurst, which spoke of a militant

protest, did not convey to her mind any idea of stone-throwing, even though it spoke of the possibility of arrest as the result of her action. Then I want to read to you from the file the report of what one member of a demonstration—Cissy Wilcox—said at her trial, when she spoke of what happened on "Black Friday":—

On November 18th, 1910, when I went in a perfectly peaceful way to the House of Commons to present a petition to Mr. Asquith, I was obstructed by the police. One policeman took hold of my head and forced it back as far as it would go. Another got hold of my arms and twisted them. I was kicked until I became unconscious, and had to be removed to the police station on an ambulance. My feet and ankles were bruised, and one wound was still open, certified by a doctor who saw me six weeks afterwards. The police have generally been kind and considerate, and I have come to the conclusion that they must have had orders to maltreat us on that occasion. Mr. Churchill refused to have an inquiry afterwards, as he evidently did not wish the blame to fall upon the right shoulders. I broke these windows simply as a protest, and as one who has no constitutional defence open to her.

#### The Real Menace to Property.

She is giving there the reason why she threw stones on the occasion in November, 1911. The Attorney-General put this to you, that if you failed to bring in a verdict of guilty against us, if a stop was not put to this form of agitation, if we were not punished, and punished severely—I don't know that he said punished severely; I want to be quite fair to him—that there would be nothing to prevent anyone who had a grievance from thinking that the right way to deal with it was to go and break windows. Gentlemen, that is not correct. The fact is that the demand for the Franchise differs fundamentally from the ordinary grievances of daily life. Let me say a word or two by way of illustration. Supposing you have some trouble with a tradesman; supposing your butcher supplies you with some bad meat; supposing someone cheats you in a business transaction; supposing your landlord behaves improperly to you in some way—you don't go and break the windows of the person who has dealt with you improperly; you don't do anything of the kind. There is a fundamental and essential difference between such a case as that and the demand for the franchise, and the grievance of these from whom it is withheld. If your butcher sends you bad meat, you go to him and say, "I won't have it," and if he persists in sending you bad meat, you have your remedy: you tell him that in future you will deal elsewhere. Everyone has that power over his tradesman. If a customer cheats the tradesman he can refuse to supply him with any more goods. If your landlord does not do what in your lease he covenants to do, you can go to law against him, and at the expiry of the lease you can leave the premises and go elsewhere. But the case is entirely different when you come to a case between the citizens of the country and the Government. If people have votes they can turn out the Government. If they have not got votes

they are deprived of the ordinary means of redress which one has in ordinary everyday life of bringing pressure to bear upon those against whom they have a grievance. And that is why, as a matter of fact—whether it be right or whether it be wrong—we people who are fighting for the franchise have adopted methods which under ordinary circumstances would be absolutely unjustifiable. Mr. Lloyd George, as you have heard, on this difference, said the following words:—

I lay down this proposition—democracy has never been a menace to property. I will tell you what has been a menace to property. When power was withheld from the democracy, when they had no voice in the Government, when they were oppressed, and when they had no means of securing redress except by violence—then property has many times been swept away.

That is what Mr. Lloyd George said. He perfectly clearly distinguishes between the agitation for franchise reform and all agitations relating to ordinary everyday grievances.

Further, history teaches you that in the demand for the franchise people have gone far beyond the methods used in all the ordinary dealings of life. They have gone far beyond what the women have done on this occasion. Take the South African War. That was a fight to obtain the franchise for a comparatively small number of people in South Africa. That question involved war between two Governments; it involved the loss of the lives of thousands of innocent people on both sides; it involved the expenditure of millions of pounds of national prosperity. Take the case of the Bristol Riots. In that case a hundred thousand pounds' worth of property was destroyed in one night. Take the case of Ireland. There, in many cases, the actual execution of violence has been the one means by which the Home Rulers on the one hand and the Orangemen on the other have sought to make their positions strong.

#### Woman Suffrage and the Race.

In addition to this, there is this peculiarity in the demand for the franchise as compared with individual grievances. To these women who have broken windows, the situation in their opinion must be very grave indeed, and I think you will see that these women would never have acted so contrary to their peaceful and peace-loving ordinary attitude towards life unless they had felt the matter was of the utmost gravity indeed. Now I am not going to give you a lecture on Women's Suffrage—that is the last thing that I would do here—but I do want to convince you that the women who have taken part in this struggle, and Mrs. Pankhurst, my wife, and I, do not feel that it is a mere question of academic interest only. It is a question which, in our opinion, is fundamental, not only for women, but for the whole race. My training as a political economist has taught me that serious evils, such as the sweating of women—and you know that there are women who

are earning 5s., 6s., and 7s. per week for eleven or twelve hours' work a day, and who have to keep a whole family on this pittance—that this is intimately bound up with this question of the franchise. Then there is the White Slave traffic—young girls, 14 and 15 years of age, of respectable families—they might even be your own daughters—trapped and taken away to some foreign country to be treated in the most abominable way in which human beings can be treated. These questions do not receive from the House of Commons as much attention as they would if women had the vote; and I would like to deal with one question by way of example at a little greater length. That is a question which, I think, appeals to all of you. It is the question of child life.

Now you know that in this country an enormous number of little children die in the first year of their life—as many as 110 out of every 1,000 born—roughly speaking about 1,000,000 children are born every year, and over 100,000 of that number die in the first year of their life—and doctors tell us that very few are born in such a condition that they could not live if properly cared for. Doctors tell you that this appalling death-rate is almost entirely due to causes which are preventable. Now we who know the importance of strengthening our population, we who know the need of rearing strong men and women, must view with very grave apprehension this preventable loss of so many of the children of our country. Not only so, but the same causes which kill off that 100,000 children weaken and impair the 900,000 who survive. That is not a question which we can treat lightly or without the fullest concern. But, you will ask, has it got anything to do with the question of women's franchise? I say most emphatically—yes. For if you will look at those countries where women have already won the vote—Australia, New Zealand—you will find that the infantile death-rate, instead of being 110 per 1,000, is only 62 and 67 respectively; while in Canada, where women have not got the vote, it is as high as 132 per 1,000. But you will say, perhaps, even so, it will be an accident. Perhaps you will say that Australia is a very healthy country, and that is the reason why their infantile death-rate is so low. But I will convince you that that is not the reason, for in 1893 the death-rate in South Australia was one of the highest in the whole civilised world. In that year, in that State—a small State compared with ours in point of population—1,245 infants died in the first year of their life. The next year the women got the vote. They at once looked into the matter and pressed forward a great quantity of legislation. I shall not enumerate in detail the very rapid strides that were at once made. But in 1909—with a much larger population than before—the number of infants who died in the first year of their life was only 616, so that through the efforts made by the women, more than half of the children that were born, and who would presumably have died, have been saved. Instead of 1,245 dying in a year, only 616 died, and that of a larger population.



### The Price of Life.

The question of infantile mortality is a thing which we men naturally feel very strongly. But you must remember this, that women feel this question much more strongly than we men do. They pay the price of life, and when you have to pay for a thing you place a far higher value upon it. If you buy a very expensive picture, or some splendid thing for your house, and pay for it out of money that you have earned, and if someone else destroys it, you feel more strongly about it than you would feel if you had not paid for it. It is the women who have to pay the price of these little children. We take precautions to prevent loss of life in dangerous trades, but what trade is more dangerous than theirs? There was very severe loss of life in the South African War, both from wounds and disease; yet every year over 5,000 die in, or as a result of, childbirth—in giving birth to the new generation. Is it not natural, therefore, that they should feel more keenly than you or I can do the absolute necessity of getting a voice in the framing of the laws which will save the lives of the little children?

Let me give you one or two illustrations so that you may understand their feeling to some extent. Supposing you are passing a house in which is a little child. Through the windows you hear its piteous cries. You know it is seriously ill, and you know that if you can only get at it you can save its life. You knock at the door. It is opened by some contented and portly old gentleman. He says: "What do you want? What are you knocking for? You can't get in here." You say: "There is a little child inside whose life is in danger, and I want to save it." He says: "Go away; I am too busy; you can't come in here." You say: "I must get in; it is imperative that I should get in." He won't let you in; he stands in the way. Suppose you argue with him for forty *minutes*, you think you have argued long enough. The wail of the child is in your ears. You call on the neighbours to help you, and you force your way in. Suppose the neighbours are all asleep—do you think you would be doing anything very terrible if you broke one or two of their windows to waken them up? Don't you think you would be doing something quite justifiable?

That is the individual case. But there is a broader case. Take the case of the *Titanic* that we have all been reading and thinking a great deal about in recent times. You know that over a thousand lives were lost in that disaster. I do not wish to anticipate the findings of the investigation that is going on into the matter, but I think we must all recognise that there was a great deal of negligence and carelessness on the part of someone, and if people could have been wakened up to the seriousness of the need for precautions beforehand, a great many of these lives could have been saved. Some people had been trying to hammer into the heads of the Government departments the necessity for saner regulations. We may not have heard of it, but it was going on. It was not dealt with in the Press because it was not of sufficient interest. Probably we would not

have read it had we seen it in the papers. But supposing that some public-spirited people had said: "We are very much concerned about these regulations. If they are not attended to there will some day be a terrible accident." Supposing they went to the Board of Trade and broke a few windows to rouse the officials to the urgency of the matter. Don't you think that would have been better than doing nothing and allowing these 1,500 people to lose their lives on the *Titanic*?

Let me put it in another way. There was another ship close by. She had a wireless installation, but the operator was asleep. If she had received a message the lives of the people on the *Titanic* would have been saved. Supposing someone had wakened up that operator and that in doing so it had been necessary to break a few windows, don't you think it would have been worth while? I think you would. Now what you have to deal with in this case is not a single circumstance. It is not even a case of saving one thousand lives. It is a case of saving a thousand lives this week and next week and every week of every year. That is why the women are waging this fight. That is what has driven them to do illegal things. They think it is worth while to take steps which under ordinary circumstances they would never dream of taking, and they do it in order to waken people up, to draw people's attention to what is urgently necessary.

### Precedents for Militancy.

Women say that all the resources of civilisation at the present time are controlled by men, and they say that if they had power to look into these things as they have done in South Australia they could save the lives of thousands of little children, and that is why they have gone to the lengths they have already gone. They feel it is absolutely necessary to take that course. Some of my speeches have been put before you by the prosecution, but I do not think if you look carefully at the speeches I have made, and which have been put before you, that you will find a single case of incitement in any of them. I do not think any of the speeches I have made are in the form of incitement to women to take part in any violence. I do not think it is my place to incite women to do violent actions. As a man and voter, possessing the franchise, it is not my place to do violent actions, but if you say I am not to speak in approval of what women have done, that I am not to speak on a public platform, that I am not to tell them that the method they are adopting to win the vote is the method that has been adopted in history, then you are asking me either not to think at all or to speak with my tongue in my cheek, and not to tell them the whole truth, because in history, when it has been a question of franchise reform, men have always resorted to methods of this kind in order to win their way. It is not what I say, it is what many of the statesmen of the past have said, and what the states-

men of to-day are saying upon this question of franchise. Read what Mr. W. E. Gladstone said: "I am persuaded," he said, "that there is nothing so demoralising to a community as a passive acquiescence in unmerited oppression."

Sir Edward Carson said the other day with regard to the position in Ireland: "There is a point at which resentment became so acute that they were entitled to assert any method to prevent their liberty of discussion being taken away"; and he told Mr. Asquith that before he entered on a campaign of that kind in which the vital issues involved were the severance of his country and his (the speaker's) own he had better count the cost. Mr. John Bright, in a passage I have read, said he was prepared to lead a hundred thousand people to Parliament Square in order to enforce his demand. Mr. Bright, as you know, was actually a Quaker. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, who is the leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons, went so far as to write in the *Daily Chronicle* of February 14th these words:—

If the State has forfeited, in the mind of labour, its reputation for impartiality, then labour in the conflict will isolate law and order as the passive resister does.

Some of them go even further than that. Mr. F. E. Smith said he utterly declined to be bound in his resistance to the progression of those who had been guilty of those constitutional outrages within the strait waistcoat of constitutional resistance. He also said:—

Violence is always deplorable. So is bloodshed. Yet violence and bloodshed in Ulster would be an incomparably smaller misfortune than cowardly acquiescence in a revolution which, if consummated, would assuredly plunge the whole country in civil war.

Lord Selborne, in writing in the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, said:—

I do not think that men of our race are likely to part with their liberty or their property without fighting for them, with rifles in their hands if need be.

Now, gentlemen, in view of these speeches, which are the speeches of some of the most highly-placed men in the past and in the present, I put it to you that nothing I have said in standing by the women or taking part in this agitation can make me guilty of this crime.

#### The Paper—"Votes for Women."

Then the prosecution no doubt rely considerably for their case on the paper, *Votes for Women*, of which, until the date of my arrest on March 5th, I was, with my wife, one of the editors. Now, with regard to this paper, there are just three distinct points that I want to put to you. In the first place, there are the unsigned articles in the paper. Of course, you have not had the paper before you—it would have been impossible, and I don't want to go through

it in any detail—but you must have noticed that of the unsigned articles, practically all "The Outlook," which week by week has set out the political situation, I do not think a single word has been in evidence by the prosecution. "The Outlook" comes at the beginning. This is the pronouncement of the editors on the situation, and it is the part for which the editors are, more than any other, responsible. Not a word of it has been put in by the prosecution as being any incitement on this question. Then there are the signed articles. Some of them have been put in, and the reports of speeches, and also of invitations to take part in the protests. With regard to the signed articles, I maintain it is the duty of a newspaper to give to its contributors a free hand, in order to state their view of the position of affairs. With regard to the reports, the business of the newspaper is to give a faithful and accurate report—many do not do so, I know, but that is their business—and we have set before ourselves to give a faithful and accurate report of the meetings; and proof that we have succeeded—at any rate so far as this case is concerned—is that witness after witness has gone into the box and has sworn to being at the meetings and reading the report, and has testified that it is an essentially accurate and faithful report.

#### The Man's Share.

Finally, with regard to the invitation to take part in the protests, I say that when I and my wife started this paper four or five years ago, we devoted it to this woman's cause, and devoted it in particular to the Women's Social and Political Union; and when the Women's Social and Political Union has found it necessary to make protests in order to demonstrate their refusal to accept the political situation, so far as *Votes for Women* is concerned, I have never hesitated to open our columns to their rescue. You see, my position is this: I am a man, and I cannot take part in this women's agitation myself, because I am a man; but I intend, I have intended, and I intend, to stand by the women who are fighting in this agitation. Knowing what methods have succeeded in history, I am not going to say that these methods have been a mistake. I say that because I think in the first place it is not merely that it is a women's battle, it is not merely a battle for women—I think it is a battle for the good of the people of this country, a battle waged by one half of the community whose deeds are valuable to the other part of the country and should not be excluded. And when I see other men standing out against this agitation, then I am more determined to stand in with it; and I feel this further, that but for some of those men who have stood in with this agitation there might be a danger of this agitation becoming a sex war. I think a battle of women against men is an ugly thing—a thing to be deplored, and I say it is because of the men who have shared in the battle that a sex war has been prevented.

I say that children are dying because women's points of view are not understood, and I say: "How long are women to have no say in the government of the country?" I say: "How much longer is it to go on?" You cannot say to the women: "You are not to go out to throw stones. You should have gone out and had your bodies broken, your persons assaulted, had yourselves arrested for doing nothing at all." I say to you that you and I as men who have not got to face these things have no right to say that to the women. I take my stand with one of the greatest statesmen that this country has ever had, and I do not think the Attorney-General, who is prosecuting us in this case, will deny the statement that one of the greatest men was Mr. Gladstone. I will read what Mr. Gladstone said:—

"Do you think, sir, that under these circumstances it is the duty of Ministers, or of anybody else, to go to the people of this country, when they have the formidable obstacles in their front that they have now, and say to them: 'Love order and hate violence'? It is certainly one's duty to advise people to love order and hate violence, but am I to say nothing else? Am I to make no appeals to them? Am I never to remind them of the dignity and force that attach to the well-considered resolution of a great nation? Are we to cast aside all the natural, legitimate, and powerful weapons of our warfare? I would go all lengths to exclude violence, and on that ground I object to the speech of the Marquess of Salisbury. But while I eschew violence, I cannot, I will not, adopt that effeminate method of speech which is to hide from the people of this country the cheering fact that they may derive some encouragement from the recollection of former struggles, from the recollection of the great qualities of their forefathers, and from the consciousness that they possess that still. Sir, I am sorry to say that if no consideration had ever been addressed in political crises to the people in this country except to remember to hate violence and love order and exercise patience, THE LIBERTIES OF THIS COUNTRY WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN OBTAINED."

[At the close of the trial the jury returned a verdict of Guilty with the following rider:—

"The jurymen unanimously desire to express the hope that, taking into consideration the undoubtedly pure motives which underlie the agitation that has led to this trouble, you will be pleased to exercise the utmost clemency and leniency."

Notwithstanding this moral acquittal of the defendants on the part of a body of men essentially representative of the public, Lord Coleridge pronounced sentence of nine months in the second division, with the addition of a heavy fine disguised as an order to pay the cost of the prosecution.]

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## THE "CONCILIATION" BILL

### An Explanation and Defence

By H. N. BRAILSFORD

FORTY years of quiet argument more than sufficed to establish the theoretic basis of Woman Suffrage. Behind the arguments was the rush and pressure of economic facts. Women had left the home, five millions and more of them, to become wage-earners in shop and factory, while the State in its turn, perpetually intervening in the most intimate concerns of a woman's life, be she mother or industrial worker, has itself created the best of all cases for her citizenship. Five years of gallant and devoted agitation have given the question an immediate urgency. The debate of last July was a faithful register of the position which it now holds. The Government granted what no other Government has ever given before—two entire days for a comprehensive debate. The Conciliation Committee had to face obstacles which none of its predecessors encountered. Its Bill is a working solution, a practical compromise, framed to become law, and with no other object. It asked for no academic support. It lost on the one hand Liberal supporters who demand adult suffrage in one cataclysmal measure, and on the other Unionist supporters who fear that its Bill may eventually pave the way for that vast change. It was assailed as none of its predecessors had ever been by two of the most powerful Suffragist Ministers in the House, who directed all their ascendancy and eloquence to the end of defeating its Bill on the Second Reading division. The anti-Suffrage movement is at last alert and well organised, more especially on the Unionist side. In spite of all, the Conciliation Bill rallied a larger number of supporters than any previous Woman Suffrage measure, and was carried by a majority (110) greater than the Government has itself obtained for its own principal measures.

### A Note on History.

To understand the fortunes of the "Conciliation" Bill it is necessary to retrace the history of Woman Suffrage in the last Parliament. The record is in the main that of a conscious attempt by a group of Liberal Members to force the question on to party lines. The old Bill, which first passed its Second Reading in 1870, was once more introduced in 1908 by Mr. Stanger. The division showed the immense majority of 179 for Woman Suffrage, though the total of the "ayes" (271) was smaller than that which the "Conciliation" Bill has since obtained (299). Meanwhile the various parties in the House had ceased to act together, and the Liberals had formed a separate party committee. Their proposal was that when the expected Reform Bill should be introduced towards the end of the life of the late Parliament, an attempt should be made upon party lines to graft Woman Suffrage upon it by means of an amendment. This strategy could succeed only if the Suffragists in the Ministerial ranks were united on the amendment in question, and only if these Ministerial Suffragists were able from their own numbers alone to command a majority of the whole House. In the following session an experiment was attempted which served to show how hazardous, even in a House dominated by the Liberal Party, this strategy must be. An Adult Suffrage Bill was introduced by Mr. Geoffrey Howard, once more on the understanding that it should not be carried beyond the Second Reading. The majority fell to 33; more significant still, the number of "ayes" dropped to a bare 157. Mr. Lloyd George was the only Member of the Cabinet who voted for this Bill. On the other hand, the Unionist Whips officially told against it. The opposition, none the less, included many Liberals, and even some Liberal Suffragists like Mr. Birrell. The lesson of that experiment was clear. A solution on party lines is the ideal method of dividing the Suffragist forces. Liberals cannot be united as a party in favour of Adult Suffrage, but Unionists can be united against it. It had no adequate backing even in the last Parliament, despite the fact that the Ministerial forces outnumbered the Unionists by 502 to 168. There is no possibility that it could obtain a majority in the present Parliament with its more even balance of 397 to 273. In a list published by the People's Suffrage Federation the number of pledged adherents of Adult Suffrage is given as 120. Nor is it only in the House of Commons that the adherents of Adult Suffrage are in a minority. It is a proposal which raises the maximum of opposition while it rallies the minimum of support. It affronts the opinions of professed Conservatives. Nor is the man in the street converted to it. The experience of the women who have worked during these years of propaganda at canvassing and street-corner speaking is that the plain man is ready to enfranchise "women who pay rates and taxes." He is prepared to give some women the vote, but he dreads a measure which would place political power in the hands of a majority of women. It is no part of democratic theory to override or ignore public

opinion, and for a measure which would add at one blow from eleven to thirteen millions of women to the electorate, public opinion is not prepared. English politics do not move on these revolutionary lines. It took half a century for our fathers to advance from the middle-class Reform Act of 1832 to the relatively democratic Reform Act of 1884. If men are enfranchised so slowly, what precedent is there for the sudden liberation of the whole body of women? Without the bold support of a strong and united Government the miracle is unthinkable, and for that we may wait a generation. Parties may be driven to extreme solutions in advance of public opinion by the authority of a great leader, the zeal of a united staff, and the pressure and coercion of party discipline. But the Liberal leader is hostile, the staff divided, and of the party machinery no use can be made. To wait for Adult Suffrage is to refuse the enfranchisement of women.

The Conciliation Committee was founded in the belief that the time had come to insist upon a prompt solution of this woman's question. For forty years there has been a majority in the House of Commons for the enfranchisement of women. Common honesty requires that Parliament shall give effect to its expressed convictions. No man who respects courage and perseverance can, without self-reproach, allow women to make the sacrifices which this long agitation has demanded, only to be insulted by repeated admissions of the justice of this reform and repeated refusals to give it effect. It was obvious that success could be achieved only by the united efforts of Suffragists in all political parties. The Committee is composed of a large and representative group of private Members of Parliament,\* and there was little difficulty in finding a basis of agreement which united them all. Their several points of view were not irreconcilable. The Unionists demanded of any solution that it should be moderate and definite. The admission of women to the franchise is an immense innovation, both social and political. They asked for a cautious advance, and in this stipulation there can be no doubt that they reflect the typical English attitude. The Liberals (and with them most of the Irish and Labour Members) were chiefly concerned to insist

\* The Conciliation Committee is composed as follows :—

*Chairman* : The Earl of Lytton.

*Liberal Members of Parliament* : Percy Alden, Sir T. Barclay, G. T. Bentham, Thomas Burt, Noel Buxton, H. G. Chancellor, Sir F. Channing, A. Cameron Corbett, Sir Wm. Crossley, Sir W. Howell Davies, J. A. Dawes, Ellis G. Griffith, Sir D. Brynmor Jones, J. McCallum, C. A. McCurdy, Sir Chas. McLaren, Walter S. McLaren, M. Muspratt, Walter F. Roch, A. H. Scott, Sir A. Spicer, G. Toulmin, Sir George White, J. H. Whitehouse, Aneurin Williams.

*Unionist Members of Parliament* : G. A. Arbuthnot, H. T. Barrie, Sir Wm. Bull, Captain Craig, H. S. Foster, C. S. Goldman, E. A. Goulding, J. S. Harmood-Banner, F. Leverton Harris, J. Henniker Heaton, Lord Lewisham, H. Mallaby Deeley, W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, Basil Peto, Sir J. S. Randles, J. F. Remnant, Sir John Rolleston.

*Nationalist Members of Parliament* : Sir T. G. Esmonde, T. M. Kettle, J. C. Lardner, Dr. Lynch, Hugh A. Law, J. P. Nannetti.

*Labour Members of Parliament* : J. Keir Hardie, John Hodge, J. B. O'Grady, F. W. Jowett, D. J. Shackleton, Philip Snowden.

*Hon. Sec.* : H. N. Brailsford, 32, Well Walk, N.W.

that if a limited number of women were admitted to the franchise, they must not be so selected as to give an undue advantage to the propertied class. They had dreaded that this result would have followed from the old Bill (last introduced by Mr. Stanger), which opened to women all the qualifications at present enjoyed by men. They pointed out that it might have been abused to increase plural and "faggot" voting. Plural voting would have been introduced through the ownership vote, and the University graduate's vote. The lodger vote is also said to be subject to abuse. Lastly, Mr. Stanger's Bill would have allowed a husband and wife to be qualified as joint occupiers only if the house which they occupied was of the value of at least £20 (*i.e.*, £10 for each occupier). In other words (it was argued), almost every wife of the middle and upper classes might have been enfranchised, but virtually no wives of the working class.

Fortunately a precedent exists which is open to none of these objections. Since 1869 women have enjoyed the vote for municipal purposes. The terms on which they possess it have never been a subject of party controversy. Neither party has ever brought in a Bill to reform it. Throughout these forty-two years, though Liberals have once altered and repeatedly sought to alter the Parliamentary Franchise, the Municipal Franchise has remained untouched and uncriticised. Here, clearly, was the basis of agreement and the line of least resistance. The Municipal Franchise includes no ownership, or lodger, or graduate qualifications. It gives no advantage to wealth. Its basis is not property but occupation. With the omission of these categories of voters most of the possibilities of plural voting disappear. A woman may own land in a dozen constituencies at once, and would, if ownership were a qualification, acquire a vote for each of the twelve. But she cannot "occupy" more than one dwelling-house. It may, in some rare cases, happen that she occupies both a house and an office, shop, or other "tenement." But the law allows her a vote only for one of these where they are both situated in the same borough or county division. The only possibility of plural voting which remains is where a woman occupies a house in one electoral area and a shop or office in another. A woman may live in Southport and conduct a business in Liverpool. But such cases are so exceedingly rare that it is quite unnecessary to burden the Bill by providing against them.

The first clause of our Bill runs as follows:—

Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.

Its effect may be briefly summarised. It will enfranchise two categories of voters:—

(1) The householder, who will account for about 95 per cent. of the whole of the new electorate. She will get a vote if she inhabits any house or part of a house,

be it even a single room, and however low its value, provided she has full control over it.

(2) The occupier of premises valued at £10 per annum. This will bring in the small shopkeeper, or the typist who has an office of her own. It also enables women living together in a house to rank as joint occupiers, provided the house is worth £10 for each occupier.

These two categories of voters are the women occupiers who at present figure on the register for Town and County Council elections on the English and Welsh basis.\* Their numbers are known. In England and Wales, according to the official returns, there are 870,000 women municipal voters. Adding an estimate for the Scottish and Irish women, the total of the women occupiers in the three kingdoms will be not less than one million, while it cannot exceed a million-and-a-quarter. Our Bill, in short, will add one woman to each group of seven men who at present possess the vote. It satisfies both the axioms from which we started. It is moderate, and it confers no special advantage upon the propertied classes.

### The Status of Married Women.

The main difficulty in devising any Bill to enfranchise women is to provide for the case of married women. The Municipal Franchise is in this particular a grotesque chaos. Married women may vote in Scotland, Ireland, and London. Elsewhere in England and Wales they are disqualified for voting, despite the fact that a recent Act made them eligible to serve on Town or County Councils. It was necessary, therefore, in our Bill to stipulate formally that marriage shall not disqualify a woman, if she is in her own right a householder or occupier. In the vast majority of cases the husband, in whose name the house is rented, will be the householder. But there are cases where the wife owns the house, and others in which she is the real breadwinner. Then, too, there are men who are frequently absent from home and are rarely able to exercise the vote—officers on foreign service, Anglo-Indians, commercial travellers, sailors, and fishermen. It has sometimes been proposed that sailors and fishermen should be enabled to record their vote by some specially devised machinery. They could if they chose arrange that their houses should be rented in their wife's name, a plan which would make her the "householder," and under our Bill confer the vote upon her. The clause dealing with married women runs as follows:—

For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided

\* The Scotch and Irish municipal register is wider, and includes owners who are not occupiers and also lodgers. In two minute particulars our Bill departs from the English municipal basis. (1) It includes under householders service voters, a very small class. (2) In England an office or shop qualifies for a vote, however low its value. In Scotland and Ireland there is a £10 qualification. In practice the point may be ignored, for under modern conditions there are hardly any shops or offices that can be obtained for a lower rental than £10 per annum. It was necessary to introduce this slight anomaly in order to reach a uniform basis for the three kingdoms.

that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same property.

The purpose of the proviso in this clause will be readily understood. We had to meet the criticisms directed against the old Franchise Bill. The chief difficulty was that raised by the Joint Occupation Franchise. In Leaflet No. 1 issued by the People's Suffrage Federation this is described as "the franchise which is most dangerous to labour." In Leaflet No. 3 the point is thus put:—

A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women. All men living in houses of a clear yearly rental of £20 could give their wives votes. Only in London and other highly-rented districts are working-class rents above £20. No agricultural labourer's wife could get a vote.

The Conciliation Committee was unanimously determined to draft no Bill which could be accused of creating an artificial party preponderance among women voters. Here clearly was a fear generally entertained by Liberals which had to be dissipated, if our Bill was to obtain their support. The Unionist members of the Committee at once assented to the proviso in Clause II. which disposes of it. Since a husband and wife may not both be registered in respect of the same premises, the Joint Occupation Franchise cannot be used to make this preponderance of propertied votes.

### Faggot Voting.

The debate on the Second Reading showed that although we had omitted all the qualifications to which the democratic critics of the old Suffrage Bill objected, we had still left a loophole for attack. The Joint Occupation Franchise ("the most dangerous to labour") was gone. The ownership vote was gone ("everybody knows the ownership vote is a property vote."—Leaflet No. 3). The lodgers had been omitted ("A very large majority under this franchise would be well-to-do women."—Leaflet No. 3). Even the University graduates had been left out. We had left only the occupiers and the householders. Of the occupiers generally Leaflet No. 3 remarks: "The large majority in this class would be working women"; and of householders the same authority (Leaflet No. 1) has said: "The majority of the householder voters are poor." We had, in short, met all the criticisms against the old limited Bill, and met them in a way that involved considerable party sacrifices from Unionists. The People's Suffrage Federation, the only body of men and women who are actively working for Adult Suffrage, was satisfied that its objections had been met, and very candidly issued a whip in favour of our Bill. It was left to Mr. Winston Churchill, a recent adherent of Adult Suffrage, who had never before voted or spoken in its favour, to discover new objections to our Bill. He had authorised me to state that he "welcomed the formation of our Committee, and would favour a solution on non-party lines," but he held, as the event showed,

that this attitude was consistent with an uncompromising opposition to the Bill which our Committee was formed to promote. It is more usual for a critic who bases his objection to a Bill on some point of detail to stipulate on the Second Reading that his support is conditional on the removal of the blemish. Now the blemish which Mr. Churchill has detected may be removed by the alteration of a few words. His case was this:—

It is not merely an undemocratic Bill; it is worse. It is an anti-democratic Bill. It gives an entirely unfair representation to property as against persons. . . . I want the House to consider the effect of this on plural voting. At present a man may exercise the franchise several times, but he has to do it in different constituencies. But under this Bill, as I read it, he would be able to exercise his vote once or twice or three times in the same constituency if he were a wealthy man. If he had an office and residence in the same constituency he has only one vote now, but if this Bill passed he could vote for his office himself and he could give his wife a vote for his residence. . . . If he owned a house and a stable, another separate building, then under this democratic Bill he could give one vote to his wife in respect of the house and take the other himself in respect of the stable. I am told it is quite open to question whether it would not be possible for a wealthy man with a large family or retinue of dependents to multiply faggot votes by letting to them any property of the value of £10 within his own residence.

These possibilities were not new to us. All of them had been considered by the Conciliation Committee. It decided, after seeking the advice of an experienced revising barrister, that these are theoretic bogeys. Men do not at present on any considerable scale manufacture "faggot" votes for their male "retinues"; why should they do it for their female dependents? Nor was there any evidence to show that in Scotland, Ireland, and London, where it might be done at present, men confer "faggot" municipal votes upon their wives. If Mr. Churchill really feared these dangers a very simple remedy was open to him. He might have suggested the omission of the £10 occupation voters from the Bill. They are probably not more than 5 per cent. of the total number who would be enfranchised by it, and their omission would not seriously weaken the Bill. Such an amendment would have been in order. But it is not necessary to have recourse to a remedy so drastic. The Conciliation Committee has already drafted an amendment which deals with Mr. Churchill's cases. The original text of the Bill laid it down that a husband and wife shall not both be registered in respect of the same property. By forbidding their registration *in the same constituency*, we make it impossible for a man to endow his wife with any qualification which he cannot use himself—his office, or stable, or what not. With this amendment the safeguards against plural and faggot voting are complete.

To sum up, the Bill, with this amendment, now reads as follows:—

- 1.—Every woman possessed of a household qualification, or of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of The Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.
- 2.—For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be

disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be registered as voters in the same Parliamentary Borough or County Division.

This Bill is not an arbitrary or a "fancy" franchise. It is the municipal franchise in which both parties have for forty years acquiesced. Our critics invite us to follow Colonial precedents by adopting Adult Suffrage. We have found a precedent at home. Women have won a footing in municipal politics. The natural course is to build on that foundation.

### Household Suffrage.

The Parliamentary Franchise is an intricate chaos, and in order to show how the Conciliation Committee arrived at the present Bill, it has been necessary to wade through a mass of repugnant detail. But it is not enough to prove that a Bill is negatively free from the objections which either party may bring against it. It must have some positive merit. The aim of our Bill is, of course, to remove the insulting disqualification of sex. When it becomes law no woman will be disqualified from the exercise of a citizen's rights simply because she is a woman. But beyond that justification which might be urged even in support of a Suffrage Bill which was capricious and undemocratic, we must be able to show that our plan accords with some reasoned and generally accepted view of the franchise. The Prime Minister said that he was able to discern "no intelligible principle" in the Bill. Its principle lies on the surface. It is an attempt to make household suffrage a reality. Our existing franchise system is a mass of anomalies which history has accumulated. But the core and substance of it is simplicity itself. The one vital and important element in it is household suffrage which the country owes to the great Reform Act of 1867, which Disraeli carried with the help of a composite majority of Conservatives and Radicals. It conferred the vote in towns upon every head of a house who is a male "person," however poor his dwelling may be. Extended as it has been first by the Reform Act of 1884 and then by the "latchkey" decision, it now recognises as a voter any man who is the settled occupier of any part of a dwelling-house in town or country over which he has full control. But as John Stuart Mill pointed out, when the Reform Bill of 1867 was before the House of Commons, any system of household suffrage is partial which is confined to men. Its principle is clear and democratic. Every household is in a real sense a unit, which has, be it rich or poor, a concern in government and an interest in furthering good and checking bad legislation. The vote is naturally conferred upon the head of the house, who is responsible for the rates and taxes directly imposed upon it. But there are households whose head is a woman. She may be a widow with children, a wife with an invalid or absent husband, or a single woman who bears her own burdens as a bread-winner and a taxpayer without the help of

husband or father. Of these women householders there are in the three kingdoms about one million who satisfy all the tests which the law imposes on men. Our Bill confers upon householders who already bear the burdens and fulfil the obligations of their status the rights and privileges which it ought to carry with it. There could be no more equitable or intelligible principle.

It has been oddly said of these women householders that they are a "dependent" class who do not possess "the same strength and backing to resist undue influence as the wife of a working man would have" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant, August 11th).

Our Bill is first assailed on the ground that it would give a vote to "every lady of property throughout the country." When we reply that it gives no vote to owners of property as such, and go on to prove that it will enfranchise a majority of working women, we are told that these working women are too "dependent" to be trusted with votes. The theory is apparently that no woman has backbone enough to vote honestly unless she has a husband behind her. But to add to the confusion, Mr. Lloyd George went on to describe the condition of the working-class wife whom he is more particularly anxious to enfranchise—the woman living in a "squalid, miserable, impoverished home with its hungry and ragged children," receiving from "a husband given to excessive drinking . . . the miserable remnant of his salary." "No Woman Suffrage Bill," he declared, "which did not give the potent weapon of the vote to such a woman would ever obtain his support."

There is here some confusion of thought. It is legitimate to hold up the miserable wife of the slums as an object for pity, for care, and for remedial legislation. But if our object is to find a peculiarly independent class, we should do well to look elsewhere. To whom is she to look for "the strength and backing to resist undue influence"? To her drunken husband? The plain common sense of this matter is quite otherwise. So far from being a peculiarly "dependent" class, these women householders are the self-dependent women. They are the women who have learned to face the world alone, to meet their burdens unaided, and to bear the full responsibility for the households of which they are the heads. Poor they may be—most women are relatively poor in a world where women's labour is systematically underpaid. But they are at least their own mistresses, and the votes they gave would be determined by their own experience of life. These women who have had to struggle alone and to think for themselves are the class to whom one would naturally look to represent the distinctive woman's point of view on all social and industrial questions. On the merits of Adult Suffrage the Conciliation Committee as such has no opinion. It contains both adherents and opponents of this reform. I personally will use no argument which might seem to deny to any woman "the potent weapon of the vote." But this is common ground between opponents and supporters of Adult Suffrage, that women who are householders and

ratepayers can prefer a claim to the vote which is more direct, more obvious, and more certain to meet with the assent of public opinion than that which any other class of women can put forward.

### Is the Bill Democratic?

The working women whom this Bill would enfranchise are not, it is said, "representative of their class" (Mr. Lloyd George, at Bodnant). There is no excuse for conjecture on this point. Exact knowledge is available. We contend, on the contrary, that the women occupiers are a miniature of the whole community, and fairly represent every class. The data in regard to London are known to every social student. In Booth's classical book, "Life and Labour in London" (vol. iv., page 391, second series) may be found the figures which show in detail the classes to which the women occupiers of London belong. There were, when this patient house-to-house canvass was taken, some 186,982 women occupiers in London. Of these nearly half were housewives, mostly of the working class. Rather more than half (94,940) were women who did other than domestic work. It is worth while to set out the more numerous categories of these:—

Charwomen, office-keepers, laundresses	...	30,334
Dressmakers and milliners	... ..	14,361
Shirt and blouse-makers, seamstresses	... ..	6,525
Waitresses, matrons, etc.	... ..	5,595
Tailoresses	... ..	4,443
Lodging and coffee-house keepers	... ..	4,226
Medical women, nurses, midwives	... ..	3,971
Teachers	... ..	2,198

These are the most numerous classes. Below 2,000 come lesser groups of artificial flower-makers, milk-sellers, bookbinders, etc., down to the 144 literary workers and the 140 Civil Servants. All of these possess the municipal vote already, and all of them would be qualified under this Bill. A fairer representation of the mass of working women could hardly be found. The educated women, doctors, nurses, and teachers are included in their due proportion. The poorer manual workers are the immense majority. The former will be enabled to give to the State the service of their trained intelligence. The latter will win the protection of the vote.

It is not possible to obtain exact figures as to the social standing of the women occupiers who are housewives only. But Miss Clara Collet, an expert statistician and the Senior Inspector for Women's Industries, writing in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* (September, 1908) estimated, on the basis of Booth's figures, that about 70,000 of the 90,000 keep no servant. Taking together the women engaged in work outside the home and the housewives who employ no servant, Booth's figures show that 89 per cent. of the women occupiers of London are working women.

There is other evidence available. The Independent Labour

Party conducted an inquiry some five years ago and found that in fifty towns or parts of towns where it had active branches, 82 per cent. of the registered women occupiers belong to the working class, a term which was defined to mean "those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, or who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning children."

Even more impressive were the results of an inquiry conducted in 1904 in northern towns by three women's organisations, which can be suspected of no bias in favour of property—the Lancashire and Cheshire Women Textile and Other Workers' Representation Committee, the Manchester and Salford Women's Trade and Labour Council, and the Women's Co-operative Guild. In Nelson two deputed inquirers, both of them Socialists, found that the proportion of working women voters on the register is 93 per cent. In Bolton, where there are over 5,000 women municipal voters, a very elaborate inquiry conducted in all the wards by Mr. Gerrey, the Liberal agent, gave a percentage of over 90. Wards in Leeds, Darwen, Kirkby Lonsdale, Barnsley, Horsforth, and Cambridge were also canvassed, with this conclusion, that "the average proportion of working women out of the total of women voters examined in all these places is 91 per cent."

Even in Kirkby Lonsdale, "a residential and shop-keeping town in which there is no special industry and where, if anywhere, one would expect the rich women to predominate," Miss Llewelyn Davies, a leading advocate of Adult Suffrage, could discover only "eight rich women and forty-nine trades and working women." A Cambridge ward showed "eighty-six working women occupiers and twenty-one upper and middle class." The joint report issued by these three organisations concluded as follows:—

Even in places where the professional and middle-class interest is strong, the working women's vote . . . will easily outweigh the propertied classes. On the other hand, in those great areas devoted to the Textile industries, the women's franchise will be almost entirely in the hands of the workers. This should cause no surprise, as it is only an illustration of the undeniable fact that in England there are more poor women than rich ones.

These careful statistical inquiries made by the leaders of working women's organisations are a sufficient answer to Mr. Churchill's casual verdict that a Bill which will enfranchise between 82 per cent. and 91 per cent. of working women is undemocratic, and even anti-democratic.

### Mothers and Wives.

There remains only one possible meaning which might with any plausibility be attached to the charge that this electorate of women is not "representative." It will include comparatively few married women. "The basic principle of this Bill," declared Mr. Churchill, "is to deny votes to mothers and wives—that is to say, to deny votes to those who are upon the whole the best of their sex." There is here a double misconception. The Bill does not deny votes to married women. It bestows them upon all married



women who are householders and in the technical sense occupiers. If a wife satisfies the conditions imposed on a man, and if she has on her shoulders the responsibility before the law for the burdens of a household, she will be enabled to exercise the vote. Nor can it be said of a wife that under normal conditions she is wronged in quite the same crude way as a widow or single woman is wronged by the refusal of a vote. The vote is not a reward for excellence or virtue. It is a means of protection. Now the single woman, earning her own living, goes at present quite unrepresented. There is no one who can, however imperfectly, speak for her, and sometimes the men of her class or trade or occupation, so far from voicing her interests, are her rivals and competitors. Men doctors, for example, or men printers (as the recent strike suggests), would not use their votes to remedy any grievance of women doctors or women printers which legislation might touch. Their attitude towards the women of their own occupation is, speaking generally, one of antagonism and jealousy. These women then have certain interests which are totally unrepresented. It is otherwise with married women living under normally happy conditions. Their interests are in the main identical with those of their husbands on all the chief issues of legislation and taxation. This argument may easily be pressed too far. Every wife has her own personality, her own angle of vision, and in some measure her own distinct interests. But in so far as her chief interests are those of the household and the family, they are not unrepresented at present. But it would be a serious objection to our Bill if it left the special standpoint of the married woman unrepresented. She has her own problems—questions connected with her status before the law, with divorce, with the custody of children, and above all with the education and rearing of children. But the widow will come to the poll with all the wife's experience behind her, and of the women qualified under our Bill a large proportion will be widows and mothers. The widow will not have forgotten (to take Mr. Lloyd George's illustration) what she suffered from the drunken husband who gave her only the "miserable remnants" of his wages. Freed from his brutal presence, indeed, it is probable that her vote will be more truly her own than it could ever have been while she was actually a wife. But it is needless to labour the point. Will anyone assert that an electorate which includes a million women, whatever be their status, would fail to insist that more attention shall be paid to the needs of married women than is paid to them by governments responsible only to men? No woman elector, for example, married or single, widow or wife, would tolerate the harshness of the Midwives' Bill for which the present Government is responsible. The prospects and interests of every woman, married or single, will be forwarded and not injured by our Bill. This insistence on the special case of married women has come solely from men, and chiefly from men like Mr. Churchill, who have never by vote or by speech sacrificed an hour of their leisure to forward the cause of women's enfranchisement.

From the Women's Suffrage Societies, which include a large proportion of married women, not a word of protest has reached us. They have all, both militant and non-militant, party and non-party, supported our Bill. It is significant that we can cite the support of the only organisation which has a right to speak for married women of the working class—the Women's Co-operative Guild. It accepts our compromise while maintaining its ultimate demand for Adult Suffrage.

But why, it will be asked, did the Conciliation Committee so draft its Bill as to exclude the mass of married women? The answer lies in the conditions of our problem. We had to satisfy Suffragists of all schools and parties; on no other terms could we have obtained a majority. I was allowed, while we were preparing our Bill, to examine the pledges and answers to questions collected by the Suffrage societies during the General Election. They revealed the greatest divergence of opinion on this very point. The 120 Liberal and Labour Members who are pledged to Adult Suffrage would, of course, have preferred to enfranchise all married women. On the other hand I counted about forty Unionist and twenty Liberal Members who stated that they were prepared to enfranchise "widows and spinsters only." Our solution is a compromise. It recognises the principle that marriage ought not to disqualify, but in practice it admits only a limited number of married women to the vote. Adult Suffrage is confessedly unable to command a majority in this Parliament. Is there any middle course? A proposal has been put forward by Mr. Denman, based on an earlier Bill introduced by Mr. Dickinson. It is that the wives of all male householders should be qualified by virtue of their husband's qualification. There are about seven millions of qualified male householders. Of these presumably between five and six millions are married. We proposed to enfranchise a million women, and this even Mr. Churchill, with all his ardour for large solutions, described as "an enormous addition to the franchise." Is it probable that Conservatives, who frankly prefer a cautious and moderate measure, will accept an addition of six or seven millions? The probability is not increased when one learns that the group of Radicals which is promoting this suggestion expressly declares that it does not propose to consult Conservatives, or to seek their co-operation. A scrutiny of the division on our Bill offers a fair test of the probable fate of such a measure. Most, if not all, the Unionist Suffragists (I write after careful inquiry) would vote against it. Not all the Liberal Suffragists would vote for it. Defeat is inevitable.\*

\* The division on the second reading of our Bill gave this result, excluding the tellers:—

	FOR.	AGAINST.	
Liberals ... ..	161	60	
Unionists ... ..	87	113	
Labour ... ..	31	2	
Nationalists ... ..	20	14	
Total ... ..	299	189	Majority 110

As the title of our Bill stands, an amendment to extend its scope by admitting the wives of all householders would be out of order. But Mr. Snowden, in the course of the debate on behalf of the Committee, offered to re-commit the Bill in respect of its title, an offer which will be renewed when Parliament reassembles in November. If the Prime Minister will grant the further facilities which the Conciliation Committee seeks, the title can be altered and this amendment may be moved. Our object in giving the Bill a restricted title was to limit the time which might be spent in debate. We were suitors for time. The Government had refused even the week which we thought adequate, and our opponents had threatened obstruction. But if the Government will grant the time necessary for the consideration of the "whole question," the sense of the House can be taken on this proposal. It is not a proposal which a non-party committee can itself put forward. It would divide the Conciliation Committee, as it would divide Suffragists generally. For my part I do not believe that it could be carried, but the experiment is one which may fairly be tried. The event would show, I believe, that the Bill which we drafted after a careful study of all the available data, is the largest measure of Woman Suffrage for which a majority could be obtained in this House. It is a frank compromise, and it has succeeded in rallying sincere Suffragists of all schools to its support. There is another school of Suffragists—the school in whose eyes the chief defect of any Suffrage Bill is that it has a majority behind it.

The position of those who are determined to block our Bill from a "democratic" standpoint, I take to be this. Women have asked for a small boon. Like Alexander the Great, Mr. Lloyd George declares that what may be good enough for women to receive is not good enough for him to give. The lowest number of women which he will consent to enfranchise is apparently seven millions. Unluckily he is not at present in a position to give. There are other questions which interest him more. His proposal is that women should ignore the efforts of those who are prepared to help them now, in the hope of receiving from him at some date unspecified a Bill for which there is in the Commons no majority, and for which in the Lords there would be still fewer supporters. On other questions Mr. George will compromise. He will spend half a year in seeking some arrangement of the constitutional controversy with the Unionist leaders. It is only where women's interests are at stake that he insists on an unbending party attitude. It would be a sorry task to make light of the daring

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Of the Liberals who voted against our Bill, only seven have ever voted for a suffrage Bill before, while another seven have in some way at some time pledged themselves to woman suffrage or adult suffrage. The remaining 46 are anti-suffragist. These 14, with the two Labour opponents, would probably vote for such a Bill as Mr. Denman proposes. If we transfer these to the "Ayes" and the Unionists to the "Noes," the result would be: For, 228; Against, 260; Majority against, 32. But even this estimate is too favourable. There are probably about 20 of the Liberal supporters of the Conciliation Bill who would not support a wider measure.

of a man who proposes to embark on so high and chivalrous an adventure. But what does he risk? He compared this question to that of Home Rule, and asked the women to put their faith in the Liberal Party with as great a patience as Irishmen have shown. Mr. Gladstone staked on Home Rule the fortunes of Liberalism, made it a government question, faced a rift in his Cabinet and a schism in his party, and went gallantly into the wilderness for his convictions. Mr. Lloyd George will not do that. Liberalism is to monopolise the credit, while it refuses the risks. It is to veto a non-party settlement, while it declines to use its resources as a governing party to impose a settlement on party lines.

### The Future of the Bill.

Enough has been said to explain the origin and to defend the scope of our Bill. Nothing stands in its way save the Veto of the Cabinet. It can show every mark of popular favour which a democratic Government might require. The great organised bodies of women unanimously support it regardless of party or class. In impressive processions and in vast mass meetings women have demonstrated in its favour. While every party question slumbers, they have proved their zeal and their determination by a ceaseless propaganda. Public bodies like the Town Council of Glasgow and the Dublin Corporation have petitioned that it may pass into law. Above all, the representatives of the people, by a majority greater than is held to be necessary to carry the largest constitutional changes, have given it the stamp of their approval. It cannot be said that the question is not yet ripe. The Prime Minister himself, on the eve of the General Election, undertook that the Parliament then to be elected "should be given an opportunity of expressing its views." It has expressed its views. Are they to have effect? No one can pretend that the vote in our favour was academic.\* Our two most formidable opponents, Mr. George, and notably Mr. Churchill, challenged the House from the Government benches to vote for the Second Reading only if it wished that the Bill should "be passed into law this session," "wanted it as it is," and "wanted it now," were "prepared to send it to the House of Lords," and "to fight the House of Lords if they reject it." We are entitled to conclude that the House of Commons wants all these things, and to demand that "the will of the people shall prevail."

No material obstacle stands in the way. This is an idle session

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\* The Prime Minister has laid stress on the fact that many of our supporters declined to back Mr. Shackleton's motion to send the Bill to a Grand Committee. But this implied no lack of sincerity or zeal. Unionists have always opposed the use of Grand Committees for important or controversial Bills. Several of them have publicly protested against this interpretation of their vote. Three of them made the best speeches delivered on our side, a fourth is a member of the Conciliation Committee, and a fifth was speaking five days later from our platform in Hyde Park.

—a period of truce. Not one of the pending party controversies can be touched. No elector, however anxious he may be to see Home Rule, or Welsh Disestablishment, or Education or Licensing dealt with, could complain, if time which cannot be used to further his own questions were given to the women. Both parties have agreed to make a vacuum. What occasion more suitable could there be for the consideration of a non-party issue? A unique opportunity has presented itself, which may not for a generation recur. Time there is to spare. A week will suffice for the further stages of our Bill. When once the truce is broken, and the normal course of party politics is resumed, every measure which has behind it the pressure of some disciplined body of male electors will claim and receive pre-eminence. Mr. Lloyd George has already announced that nothing must be done to satisfy the claims of women—claims which Parliament has recognised by vote upon vote over a period of forty years—until the Welsh Church has been disestablished. Mr. Redmond has an urgent claim to press. The Labour Party demands instant attention for the situation which the Osborne Judgment has created. If the opportunity which this year has brought with it is allowed to go by, if it ends in an academic and fruitless Second Reading, women will feel that a great chance has been used only to insult their hopes. If the moment is lost, men indeed may return to their party questions, but women will be left to meditate on the still unsolved problem of how best a voteless class may impress the handful of men who control the time of the House. A spectacle more repugnant to the whole spirit of representative Government it would be difficult to conceive. Parliament admits the wrong of which women complain. A remedy is devised by Members of all parties, meeting as the Constitutional Conference itself meets, in an atmosphere of peace and a spirit of good will. The remedy is accepted by Parliament in an overwhelming vote. It votes, but because certain Ministers dissent, it is apparently prepared to allow its vote to count for no more in the counsels of the nation than a resolution passed by a students' union. Yet the question is perhaps the gravest which any modern society can face. It touches every moral and social issue of our time. It has stirred the best women of our generation to an incessant and self-forgetful toil. They have braved for it the ridicule of the streets, defied custom, and faced in their hundreds the degradations of prison. It is difficult to believe that a body of men who have the power, the time and desire to right this grievance, can fail to be moved by the spectacle of such devotion to make the effort that will give their will effect.

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## In Defence of the Conciliation Bill.

BY PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P.

The Government have promised to give facilities in the Session of 1912 for the passing of a Woman Suffrage Bill through the House of Commons. This means that if a majority of the members of the House of Commons so desire, a Woman Suffrage Bill can pass through all its stages in that House next year.

For forty years this question has commanded a majority of professed sympathisers in the House of Commons. Seven times a Woman Suffrage Bill has passed its Second Reading, and during all these years no Woman Suffrage Bill has been defeated.

Even the Prime Minister, who is not himself a supporter of Woman Suffrage, has been forced to admit that it is a discredit to representative government that the House of Commons should repeatedly declare its desire to enfranchise women without any practical result following. The time has come for Parliament to put its oft-expressed belief in Woman Suffrage into an Act.

This question was before the country at the last election. Previous to that election the Prime Minister had declared that he would give full facilities for the passing into law of a Woman Suffrage Bill if he still retained office. Knowing that the question would come up in the new Parliament for a definite decision, a large majority of members pledged themselves to vote for a Bill to give Votes to Women.

It is not my intention in this pamphlet to argue the question of the right of women to the franchise. We have got past that. Parliament is in favour of Votes for Women; the country approves the proposal. Every challenge which the opponents of Woman's Suffrage have thrown down to its supporters has been taken up.

The country has shown its support of the demand for Votes for Women in every possible way. No reform ever given by Parliament has produced such overwhelming evidence of popular approval as this. The country has shown its approval by petitions from Women and by petitions from Men; it has shown it by voting for Parliamentary candidates who support Woman Suffrage; it has shown it through its local authorities, over a hundred of the principal City, Town, and District Councils having this year petitioned Parliament to pass the Woman's Franchise Bill.

The Women too have shown in every possible way that

they want the vote. They have established active organisations in every part of the country; they have held more meetings in the last few years than any other movement has done; they have had processions, larger and more impressive than have been seen by this generation for any other cause.

Votes for Women is to have its chance next Session. In the words of Sir Edward Grey: "The whole question is now in a new situation, in which it is open for those who are in favour of it to devote the interval which must elapse before this year and next to so combining their efforts as to make the best use of what is a real opportunity in which effective progress may be made." This pamphlet is written with the object of helping to combine those who believe in some form of Woman Suffrage in an effective effort to get a Suffrage Bill passed within the next twelve months.

So long as Woman Suffrage was an academic question the precise form of the Bill did not matter very much. Those who favoured the principle could vote for the Second Reading of a Bill, though they might not approve the form in which it proposed to give Votes to Women.

But when the question became so pressing that it was clear something would have to be done it became necessary to consider details. That is always the most difficult stage in the progress of any reform. It is always difficult to get men to agree upon details. It is especially difficult in the matter of a Woman Suffrage Bill, owing to the anomalies and eccentricities of the male franchise laws.

The Women Suffragists have always been agreed as to the form of their demand for the vote. They have, with absolute unanimity, always demanded the Vote for Women "on the same terms as it is or may be given to men." This form of demand shows much wisdom. It avoids all questions of detail so far as the women are concerned. It concentrates on the one supreme aspect of the Women Suffrage question, namely, the removal of the Sex Disability.

The Woman Suffrage question has really nothing to do with the particular qualifications which shall confer the right to vote, except one, and that is Sex. A woman may possess one or all the qualifications which entitle a man to be a voter now, except Sex. But she cannot get the vote because she is not a male. That is the difference between men and women so far as voting for Parliament is concerned.

The principle for which women are fighting is not whether the franchise should be based upon property, upon tenancy, upon education, upon residence, or upon adult age only. At present women have nothing to do with these questions. A woman may possess any one of these qualifications, but she

cannot vote because she is a woman. The Woman Suffrage question is therefore first and foremost, and wholly for the time being, a question of the exclusion of certain persons, in all other respects fulfilling the legal requirements for a voter, because of their sex.

That is the crux of the Woman Suffrage agitation. It is the removal of the disqualification which sex alone imposes. It is the removal of the implied insult to womankind that their sex alone disqualifies them from exercising the rights of citizenship which the most ignorant and degraded of the male sex can possess.

When the sex barrier has been broken down, when it is admitted in law that sex itself is not a disqualification, then the whole principle for which the women are fighting is conceded, even if but a thousand women are enfranchised. Whatever other qualification might be laid down for the vote, if sex did not disqualify the women's fight is won.

This is the woman's point of view, and it is the right point of view for them to take. Politicians, however, look at the question from the point of view of party interests. All honest supporters of Woman Suffrage agree on one thing, namely, that it is not right to refuse the vote to women because of their sex. But the moment you get beyond that common ground you find differences of opinion among politicians who are agreed about the injustice of a sex disability.

To give the vote to women on the same terms as men have it to-day would entitle women property owners, women graduates, women lodgers, women joint occupiers, as well as women householders to vote. It would give plural votes to women of plural property, and in other ways confer the vote on women in a way that the Radical does not approve.

Hence, when it came to giving votes to women on the same terms as men now have them, there arose much opposition from certain Radicals on the ground that it would enfranchise "property women," and lead to an enormous increase in the Tory vote. These fears were greatly exaggerated, and no attempt has ever been made to support them by facts. To give the vote to women on the same terms as men would increase the number of property voters, but it would increase the number of non-property voters to a four times greater extent.

However, with the object of finding out what sort of a Woman's Franchise Bill would be likely to command the greatest measure of support, there was formed last year a Committee of Members of Parliament from all parties in the House—Liberal, Unionist, Labour, and Nationalist. This is the Conciliation Committee.

It is no easy matter to find a common ground for men who

hold diverse views upon nearly all political questions, and particularly upon the basis of a franchise law. The question of Woman Suffrage divides parties like a flash of crooked lightning. Some men, and I believe they are at present the great majority of the supporters of Woman Suffrage, would give the vote to women who are householders and pay rates and taxes. Others would create a new-fangled franchise and give votes to women because they have husbands. Others talk as if they are prepared at one step to go "the whole hog" and give the vote to all the twelve million women over 21 years of age.

It was, as I have said, a difficult thing to get men of such diverse views to agree upon a compromise. But the Conciliation Committee succeeded in doing that. In 1910 it introduced a Bill into the House of Commons which was accepted by the Liberal, Labour, Unionist and Nationalist members of the Committee, and which after a great debate, occupying two days, was passed on Second Reading in the House of Commons by 299 votes to 190.

That Bill was introduced by Mr. D. J. Shackleton, then Labour M.P. for Clitheroe. It was opposed in the debate and in the division lobby by Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill, on the grounds that it did not altogether remove the objections as to the increase of property votes, and also that it did not permit of amendment which would make it wider in its scope. That Bill went no further than the Second Reading.

Profiting by the experience of the debate on that Bill, the Conciliation Committee re-drafted the Bill so as to make it more acceptable to some professed supporters of Woman Suffrage who could not vote for it in its original form. The amended Bill removed the possibility of the creation of faggot votes by joint occupancy votes, and it also made it impossible for a man and his wife to vote in the same constituency.

This new Bill was discussed in the House of Commons on the 5th of May this year, and on a division being taken the motion to reject the Bill was defeated by 255 votes to 88, the Bill being afterwards read a second time without opposition. As the purpose of this tract is to get the people who read it to clearly understand the Bill and what it really will do in the way of giving Votes to Women, and as it is very short, I will give it here in full.

#### THE CONCILIATION BILL FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

##### A BILL TO CONFER THE PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE ON WOMEN.

1. Every woman possessed of a household qualification within the meaning of the Representation of the People Act (1884) shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the County or Borough in which the qualifying premises are situated.

2. For the purpose of this Act a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage from being registered as a voter, provided that a husband

and wife shall not both be registered as voters in the same Parliamentary Borough or County Division.

That is the Bill, and that is the Bill which will be brought forward again next Session, and which will be debated through all its stages.

The Bill as it now stands proposes to give votes to women who are occupiers and to no others. It does not give a vote to a woman because she is the owner of property, or to women who are joint occupiers of premises of a high rental value, nor does it give the vote to University graduates as such.

It will give the vote to women who pay rates, and to no others. It takes the municipal register as the basis, roughly speaking, and gives the Parliamentary vote to the women who now have it for Town, County, and District Councils.

The Bill gives the vote to women who are the heads of households. That is what the Occupation Franchise does for men. If it is right and fair to give the vote to a man because he is a householder, it must be right and fair to give the vote to women who are in the same position and who have the same responsibilities.

The Bill removes the disqualification of marriage. If a married woman has the house in her name she can vote. This will be a boon to thousands of women, who now have all the responsibility of the head of a household owing to the long absences of the husband on account of his work. The Bill will thus give Household Representation. It will give a vote to the head of every house, whether the head be a man or a woman. At present there is no representation for the hundreds of thousands of homes where the head is a woman.

The number of women who will get the vote under this Bill is estimated to be about one million.

The promoters of the Bill do not claim that it is a perfect Bill, and that it is not possible to raise any objection to it. The Bill may be criticised from many points of view. It can be said that it is only a very moderate extension of the franchise; that it will only give the vote to about one woman in twelve over 21 years of age; it maybe pointed out that it does not include the great bulk of married women; and some people have raised the objection that it is only a "widows' and spinsters'" Bill.

These criticisms are mainly true, but they really are altogether beside the point. This Conciliation Bill is a compromise. It proposes such an extension of the franchise to women as it is believed will gain the largest amount of support both in Parliament and in the country.

The great and pressing thing to do is to remove the Sex Disability, and this Bill will do it in the most practical way. When the disability of sex has been abolished, the women will take sides in politics and they will join with the men in support-

ing or opposing, as they think fit, any proposals for the further alteration of the franchise laws.

This Conciliation Bill is not anti-democratic. If it is passed it will not hinder any reform of the franchise laws which the country may desire to have carried out by Parliament. But if this Bill is passed it will, by enfranchising women, have made it certain that in any future extension of the franchise to men the claims of women will not be ignored.

The Bill has had to reconcile two extreme sections of the supporters of the principle of Woman Suffrage. It has had to conciliate the Radical who will not vote for an increase of power to the propertied classes, and it has had to conciliate the moderate Liberal and the Unionist who want to move with great caution. It satisfies both, and at the same time it does nothing to prevent future movement just as rapidly as the democratic sense of the country shall desire.

It will not give property any advantage. The women who will get the vote by this Bill belong to all classes, and each class of the enfranchised women will be in proportion to the number of such class in the whole community. Any person will know this to be the case if he thinks for a moment. The vast majority of women householders everywhere are women of the working classes.

If facts and figures to prove that point were needed they could be supplied by the bushel. A few months ago the Conciliation Committee took a census of the women householders in Dundee, Bangor and Carnarvon. These places were selected in order to prove to the Cabinet Ministers who sit for these constituencies that the Bill was not a measure for giving "votes to ladies." Every care was taken to make the enquiry at once impartial and thorough. It was supervised in each town by non-party committees of leading citizens, who checked the figures and signed the reports. The Dundee Committee included an ex-Provost, a Professor, two leading Ministers, two Trade Union leaders, and several City Councillors. In Bangor and Carnarvon the two Mayors gave their help, and the Committees also received assistance from several of the overseers, who have an expert knowledge of registration.

The main object was to ascertain as exactly as possible the social position of the women householders.

The final result in Dundee was as follows:—

	Number.	Percentage.
I. Women of independent means ...	288	7.5
II. Professional or business women...	129	3.4
III. Weekly wage earners ...	1,690	43.8
IV. Working-class housewives ...	1,759	45.3
	<u>3,866</u>	<u>100</u>

The first two classes together give the middle-class element—10.9 per cent. The two latter classes are the working-class element—89.1 per cent.

The method adopted of discriminating between the working-class housewife and the woman of independent means was by a room test. It was found that the housing conditions of the women householders were as follows:—

Inhabiting one or two rooms ...	2,177
Inhabiting three or four rooms ...	1,178
Inhabiting five rooms ...	183
Inhabiting six or more rooms ...	328
	<u>3,866</u>

The class test adopted in Bangor and Carnarvon was the employment of a domestic servant. Women engaged in no paid work were classed as of independent means, if they kept one or more servants, and by the same criterion the business or professional women were distinguished from the wage earners. The results were as follows:—

	Bangor.	Car-narvon.	Joint Per-centage.
I. Women of independent means ...	36	63	13
II. Professional or business women	61	29	12
III. Wage earners ...	163	174	45
IV. Working-class housewives ...	144	79	30
	<u>404</u>	<u>345</u>	<u>100</u>

The middle-class element, taking Bangor and Carnarvon together, is 25 per cent.; the working class element 75 per cent. The result of these elaborate canvasses is in short to confirm the conclusions based on previous enquiries. On an average out of ten women enfranchised by the Bill, eight will belong to the working-class.

The Bill is not a Bill to give "votes to ladies." It is a Bill to give votes mainly to the widows and mothers of the working classes, and to spinsters who have to work to support themselves.

The objection is urged that under this Bill it will still be possible to manufacture property votes. It is said that a man who has a residence in more than one Parliamentary division will put one of them in the name of his wife. This may be done, but it is not likely that it will be done to any extent, because men of property are not very ready to hand over their possessions even to their wives. But it can only be done where the wife is the actual occupier and pays the rates. But even assuming that was done, it could not possibly be done to such an extent as to

materially alter the proportions of the women voters in each class.

The fear which some advanced Radicals and Labour men express about the effect upon progress of the extension of the vote to women on the lines of anything short of Adult Suffrage, is altogether misplaced. The obstacle to the progress which they want to see will not be the women who will get the vote under this Bill, but the men who already have the vote.

There are over seven millions of men voters on the register at present. At least five millions of these belong to the wage-earning classes. If these voters were united in one political party they could carry everything as they desired. But they are not united. They are about equally divided politically. The power which property has in politics now is not derived from the strength of its own votes, but from the support given to it by the non-propertied classes.

If every one of the million women who would get the vote under the Conciliation Bill belonged to the propertied class instead of four-fifths of them belonging to the poor, they could not give property any greater power as a class than it has to-day. There would still be some two millions more electors belonging to the working classes. The Conciliation Bill will increase the voting strength of the working classes by at least 800,000 votes.

A Bill which proposed to give the vote to women now on a wider basis than the Conciliation Bill could not pass the House of Commons. There are three ways, roughly, of conferring the vote on women. First as proposed by the Conciliation Bill, second by giving the vote to all women householders and to all married women living with their husbands, and third by a full measure of Adult Suffrage, giving the vote to every man and woman over the age of 21.

The second plan may be dismissed as a halfway house at which it is not worth while to halt. A Parliament which was willing to give the vote to six millions of married women would not stop short of full Adult Suffrage. The difference between the two proposals would be so immaterial as to make the withholding of the full concession absurd.

The two alternatives therefore are:—the Conciliation Bill and Adult Suffrage. The question, therefore, for the person who believes in Adult Suffrage is this? Is it possible to get this Parliament to pass a measure of Adult Suffrage? I think it can be shown conclusively that such a measure could not pass in the present Parliament.

The question of the extension of the franchise to men stands in a different category from that of the removal of the Sex Disability. Men have no such grievance as women have.

There is no insuperable difficulty in the way of any man getting a vote who wants one. The franchise laws are full of anomalies, but the right of every man to a vote is conceded if he fulfils certain not very onerous conditions. It is not so with a woman. It is the disability of sex which puts the woman's demand for the vote in a place apart from the question of the reform and extension of the male franchise.

Until the women by their agitation aroused interest in the question of franchise reform there was no demand in the country for Adult Suffrage. There is really no demand to-day. Many attempts have been made to exploit the interest in Woman Suffrage to the advantage of Adult Suffrage, but each has failed. There are no public meetings, no sustained campaigns, no demonstrations, no processions, no enthusiasm, no going to prison for Adult Suffrage.

There are a great many people who support Adult Suffrage. The Labour and Socialist parties favour it, and pass resolutions upon it in their Conferences. But the support is academic. It is not felt to be a burning question. And the simple and sufficient explanation is that the men who have no votes do not feel any strong resentment at the fact, because they are potential voters and expect to qualify by and by.

In the House of Commons there is not sufficient support for Adult Suffrage to carry such a Bill. That is the hard and indisputable fact of the situation. Speaking on the occasion of the Second Reading of a private member's Adult Suffrage Bill on March 19th, 1909, the Prime Minister said that while the Government were in favour of a reform of the existing franchise on the lines of the abolition of plural voting, the disappearance of the artificial distinction between lodgers and occupiers, the shortening of the period of qualification, and the simplification of the machinery of registration, such a reform ought to come from the Government of the day, and as they were divided on the question of Woman Suffrage they could not father an Adult Suffrage Bill.

There is a Parliamentary Council of the People's Suffrage League—an Adult Suffrage Society—which claims to have 117 M.P.'s. on its list. But in April of this year this Council sent out an influentially signed appeal to members of Parliament asking for signatures to a Memorial in favour of Adult Suffrage. More than two months later it was announced in the press that, up to that date, only about 100 M.P.'s. had signed this Memorial. From this it is clear that little more than one-seventh of the Members of Parliament take any interest in the question of Adult Suffrage.

The only occasion in recent years when an Adult Suffrage Bill has been voted upon in the House of Commons was in

March, 1909. That was in a Parliament where the combined Liberal and Labour parties—both supposed to be democratic—numbered 425, yet only 157 members could be got to vote for Adult Suffrage, even after the promoters of the Bill had declared that they did not mean to carry the Bill beyond a Second Reading. In the present Parliament there are 113 fewer Liberal members, so the support for an Adult Suffrage Bill would be of infinitesimal dimensions.

An analysis of the voting on the Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill on the 5th of May last will show that a wider measure has no chance of passing the present House of Commons. The following figures show how the majority for the Bill and the minority against it were made up:—

<i>Voting for the Bill.</i>	<i>Pairing for the Bill.</i>	<i>Totals.</i>
145 Liberals.	25 Liberals.	170 Liberals.
53 Unionists.	25 Unionists.	78 Unionists.
31 Nationalists.	— Nationalists.	31 Nationalists.
26 Labour.	5 Labour.	31 Labour.
—	—	—
255	55	310
<b>Grand Total</b>		

<i>Voting against the Bill.</i>	<i>Pairing against the Bill.</i>	<i>Totals.</i>
36 Liberals.	12 Liberals.	48 Liberals.
43 Unionists.	43 Unionists.	86 Unionists.
9 Nationalists.	— Nationalists.	9 Nationalists.
— Labour.	— Labour.	— Labour.
—	—	—
88	55	143
<b>Grand Total</b>		

Of the 170 Liberals who supported the Bill a good number are opposed to Adult Suffrage, and will only vote for the enfranchisement of women occupiers. Every one of the 78 Unionist members would vote against Adult Suffrage. A large proportion of the absent Nationalist members are opposed to woman suffrage. The Unionists in this Parliament outnumber the Liberals, and as nearly a hundred Liberal votes would go against an Adult Suffrage Bill it follows, as a simple sum in arithmetic, that such a Bill would be overwhelmingly defeated by a combination of Liberals and Nationalists added to the full strength of the Unionist vote.

These facts show that the only way to get Woman Suffrage in this Parliament, or in any Parliament which is likely to be elected in the near future, is on the lines of a compromise which will unite the largest number of members of all parties who favour the removal of the sex disability. The Conciliation Bill is the only way.

The Woman's demand cannot wait. The sex disability must be removed. The women by their magnificent fight have earned the right to have a settlement of their grievance. If Parliament will do this in the next session on the lines of the Conciliation

Bill, it will in no way hinder the House of Commons from making what changes in the franchise laws it may desire in the promised Government measure which is to come in a later session.

The hope of the anti-suffragists is that they may be able in the Committee stage of the Bill to stir up sufficient differences among the professed supporters of woman suffrage to wreck the Bill. That is the danger which has to be averted. The real friends of the women must combine to resist all specious and plausible attempts to widen the measure; because the success of such efforts will be to destroy the Bill.

The declared opponents of Woman Suffrage will come to the help of those who profess to see the measure made "more democratic." These opponents will support every amendment which aims at giving the Bill a wider scope. They make no secret of their intention to do that. They will do that with the object of making the Bill of such a character that no Unionist or moderate Liberal can support it.

The Member of Parliament who really does believe in the enfranchisement of women, who wants to see the sex barrier removed, will be doing the cause a serious injury if he supports impossible demands for extending the Bill when these can only have the effect of making its passage into law impossible.

In politics we have to take what we can get—we cannot have what we would like. A Parliamentary Bill is always a compromise. The great difficulty about this Woman Franchise question is that no Government will take it up and make it a party question. If a Government with a majority behind it were to take up this question then it could force any Bill through. But the Conciliation Bill must rely for its support on the honest convictions and the practical commonsense of the members of the House of Commons.

The Conciliation Bill is not what many of us would like to see if we could get just what we would wish. But it will fully and completely do the one great thing—it will admit woman into the Parliamentary franchise, and by doing that raise the status and dignity of the whole sex.

Every Woman Suffrage society in the United Kingdom supports the Bill. The members of these societies differ widely in their general political views, but Conservative woman and Socialist woman are united in postponing their differences on the wide question of general franchise reform until the one necessary preliminary—the removal of the sex disqualification—has been settled.

The Session of 1912 must see this Bill passed through all its stages. To do that will need cohesion, determination, and



toleration among the friends of the cause. The women must work as even they have never worked before. They must concentrate on the Bill. It must be explained until everybody understands what it is and why it is.

In every constituency it must be the special business of the Women's organisation to educate the local Member of Parliament on the Bill. He must be shown that the Bill is just, that it is right, that it is practical, that it is fair, that it is democratic, that it should be considered apart from the general question of franchise and electoral reform. He must be shown that the Bill satisfies the women who have been agitating for the vote, and that it is the Bill which has behind it the largest possible measure of support. He must be warned against the tactics of the enemy who will come in the clothing of the generous friend that he may wreck the measure.

No agitation in modern times has been conducted with such ability, energy, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice as has this demand for the enfranchisement of women. The women have shown the men an example which it might be to their advantage to follow. By the right which belongs to those who have fought bravely and won gloriously the women claim the vote *now*. Without losing the respect of honest people, the House of Commons cannot any longer refuse to give effect to its oft-expressed belief in the justice of the women's claim.

The passing of the Conciliation Bill and the enfranchisement of women householders will not bring a revolutionary change in politics; but it will be the sign and symbol of the fact that women are not despised and outcast because of their sex. It will, though only a million women be enfranchised, give to women as a whole a new interest in public questions, and it will force politicians to give attention to the interests of women. Nothing but good can come to the nation from having the influence upon its political life of the experience, the instinct, the sympathy, and the intelligence of women.

The men can help the women to get this Bill. Being themselves in the enjoyment of the political liberties which the struggles of their forefathers won for them, they ought to be proud to aid the women to gain their political freedom. Let the men give their help generously to aid the women's cause. If this is done the Sex Disability will be removed in the next Session of Parliament and women can then take their places in the political arena, and with heads erect and hearts aglow can join with the men, as comrades and equals, in solving the great problems of human destiny.

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## “WHY I WENT TO PRISON.”

(An Address delivered by Mr. VICTOR D. DUVAL

at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on

November 1st, 1910.)

MR. RUTTER—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

I am here to-night to tell you something of what led up to the City Temple protest, and to explain to you why certain members of the Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement went there and took part in it.

In the first place I should like to tell you that there was no intention on the part either of myself or of any of my colleagues to do violence to the body of Mr. Lloyd George. We went to the City Temple, some eight or nine of us, in order to put this question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer: “Will the Government give full facilities for the further stages of the Representation of the People Bill (1910) in order that it may pass into law this coming session?” If we had been able to

gain admittance to the City Temple we should have put that question from inside, but as we were shut out no one need be surprised that we took the opportunity of taking Mr. Lloyd George unawares, because he has not hesitated on more than one occasion to take women unawares who have been asking for the vote. We know that he has trifled with this question; we know that he has actually stood on women's platforms and declared that he was a staunch supporter of their cause, and that in the end he voted against the Bill.

We in the Men's Political Union give a man one chance, but we do not give him two or three. Mr. Lloyd George has had his chance and we are not going to give him another.

We waited at the City Temple until the motor car came up—and of course we had two or three men at each corner watching all the exits, and not only the exits but the approaches to the City Temple, which was very much more important on this occasion. I noticed one door that had a very poor light outside, and I thought that was just the kind of door that a man like Mr. Lloyd George would make his entry by, and so I waited near it.

As soon as the car stopped, a young man (who I afterwards learnt was one of Mr. Lloyd George's sons) got down from his place beside the chauffeur, from inside the car came another son, and then Mrs. Lloyd George—Mr. Lloyd George came last. He had his cap over his eyes, and coat collar turned up, and went towards one of the entrance doors, passing me on the way. I have very good eyesight and having met the Right Hon. gentleman on more than one occasion, was easily able to recognise him. I said to him, "Mr. Lloyd George, will the Government give facilities for the Conciliation Bill this coming session?" He did not reply. "Well," I said, "we must have an answer. We have got several members of the Men's Political Union here to-night, and we are not going away until we have got an answer to our question." He took no notice and tried to escape me by darting through the crowd on our left. I managed to catch hold of him by the two flaps of his coat, held him tight, and then said, "Mr. Lloyd George, you are a traitor. You are a traitor to the women's cause, and, what is more you are a hypocrite." "You are a hypocrite because you are continually telling the women that the curtailing of the Veto of the Lords is necessary, and at the same time you are assisting your colleague, Mr. Asquith, to veto the will of the men sitting in the House of Commons, elected by the men of the country."

The language I used in speaking to Mr. Lloyd George was absolutely justifiable and was not threatening in any way.

Immediately after a police officer took hold of me and gave me a severe shaking.—As a rule policemen are very polite, but on this occasion they handled me rather roughly, although I can quite understand that, because there were a good many people about and it was very difficult for them to get at me—I was taken away to Snow Hill Police Station and I heard a friend on my left, Mr. George Jacobs, say, "Don't be rough, don't hurt him, leave him alone." Of course, I cannot say whether he struck the policeman. I understand that the policeman was 6ft. 2in. at least, so I hardly think my friend, who certainly looks a very mild-mannered man, would have had the temerity to make an assault on a police officer six feet high.

**We were charged,** Mr. Jacobs with assaulting the police, and I with threatening and using provoking language with intent to disturb the public peace, and the next day were brought up at the Guildhall. Probably all of you have read what took place there, but you have not read exactly what did take place. You have read the versions given by the various newspapers, and I am told they were not very good versions. When Mr. Vickery, the gentleman who appeared for the Commissioner of the Police, made his statements, I noticed that the Magistrate at first was not very inclined to listen to him. Later on, **as is known,** Mr. Vickery made a very long statement about the danger there was for public men being molested in that way, and Mr. Vickery said "Duval is well known as a professional agitator."

His remark sounded very much like an echo of Mr. Lloyd George, because Mr. Lloyd George on more than one occasion has referred to members of our Union as "hirelings." When I spoke afterwards in the Court, I said to the Magistrate, "I should like to place it on record that I have never received a penny from any Suffrage Society, neither have I received a penny from the Liberal Party when I used to work for them."

We do not mind people blurting out when in anger we are hirelings, but if we allow falsehoods to be repeated in cold blood—people might think they were true. I should like to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that not only myself, but all the members of the Men's Political Union give a great deal of their time to the Suffrage cause and not any of them have ever received a single penny for their services and all have contributed loyally to our funds. I am perfectly certain that the statement was handed to Mr. Vickery by Mr. Lloyd George, because I have evidence to show that Mr. Lloyd George had been in communication with the Commissioner of Police. I wrote Mr. George a letter on paper with the Men's Political Union heading. I did that, because I thought it would be rather a good thing for Mr. Lloyd George to see that we were not just outside men, working without any authority or

responsibility, but that we were members of a Union which had offices and an organisation. I wrote as follows:

SIR,

You are probably aware that I have to appear at the Guildhall on Monday next at 3 p.m., to answer to a charge of having used threatening language with intent to cause a disturbance of the public peace on the occasion of your visit to the City Temple on Monday last. As your evidence is essential, will you kindly let me know whether you will attend as witness.

I had a reply to that letter to this effect from his Secretary—Mr. Hawtrey:—

In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I am desired by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that he regrets that he has been compelled to leave London to-day, having some long-standing engagements to fulfil, which will involve the continuance of his absence next Monday.

I took that answer to mean that Mr. Lloyd George felt he ought to be present, but that owing to his long-standing engagements he was prevented. I could quite understand that, and so I asked the Magistrate very soon after the Court opened whether he would grant a further adjournment. Well, you know, he would not, and Mr. Vickery, representing the Home Office—or the Commissioner of Police; it is the same thing—**produced** my letter very triumphantly, waving the same in the air as much as to say, "Look, see the paper it is written on!"

That letter was marked "Private," and therefore Mr. Lloyd George ought not to have brought it up at all; but even if he did bring it up, that is all the more reason why he should have put in an appearance and given evidence in Court.

As you know, the Magistrate fined me 40s. or seven days. I afterwards learnt that my friend also was fined a similar amount. We in the Men's Political Union consider that it is not advisable that we should pay money in fines—we want all the money we can get to fight the cause of women—so I decided to go to prison.

I went to prison and my experiences in prison—well, they were all that could be desired from the point of view of a seeker after information. I am very pleased I have been; I have

discovered a great deal, and I marvel at the courage displayed in the past by women who have not only gone to prison for seven days, like my colleague, Mr. George Jacobs—but many of these heroines for weeks and months, and not only once, but over and over again. When I discovered the way in which prisoners are treated in prison, I thought to myself, "Now, and only now, do I completely realise all that women have really suffered." To think of women political offenders having to wear prison clothes is in itself a deplorable thing, and when we remember that all these women who went to prison, either had to eat the prison food or had to refuse it and go on the Hunger Strike, I certainly think that the small amount of work or the small amount of sacrifice that my friend and I have made is not to be compared with the tremendous sacrifices made by the members of the Women's Social and Political Union and of the Women's Freedom League.

When I was brought to Pentonville, I was kept for three hours in a long room, waiting for my turn to come to be questioned as to the colour of my eyes, my height, my name, where I lived, whether I was married or single. All these various questions were put to me and I answered them to the best of my ability. I had to wait three hours in a cubicle about four feet square, very stuffy and cold, and when my turn came, I went through the examination. A warder then conducted me to an ante-room, where an official sat at a table; his business was to empty one's pockets. I gave up my money, my watch and chain, and all my other belongings, and then I was told, in a very polite way, to undo my waistcoat and remove my shoes.

"Does that mean," I said to the reception officer, "that I am to put on prison garb?" He said, "Yes, certainly," I said, "I am a political prisoner, and am not going to wear prison clothing." He said, "You will have to. We know nothing about political prisoners. You come here for seven days in the Second Division for having disturbed the public peace and used provocative language. Nothing was said on the charge sheet about your being a political offender and we do not make any difference in your case."

I said, "I do not intend to put on any prison clothing." "Well," he said, "you can keep on your clothes until to-morrow, when you can see the Governor."

My friend, Mr. Jacobs, was told the same thing, and soon after we were taken to the cells. I was put in a cell, the door was shut, and presently a warder came in and asked me if I wanted supper. "What is the supper?" "Brown bread and porridge." I said, "No, thank you, I won't have any this evening." Then

he left me, I got into bed, and after lying awake for two or three hours went to sleep.

The next morning I was called at six o'clock; I did not hear the bell, though I had to for the remaining days. Having been called, I dressed myself, rolled up my mattress, my blankets and my sheets, lifted up the plank and stood it by the side of the wall. About seven o'clock, soon after I had finished my work, the warder paid me another visit. He said, "Outside tins, here is the breakfast." I said, "What is the breakfast?" It was the same piece of brown bread and a tin can containing a fluid called by the warder "tea." I told him that I would not have any, that it was not what I was in the habit of taking and that I would wait for the reply from the Home Office. He went away and brought the Governor, who told me that I must eat or otherwise I should be ill.

I said, "I have not gone very long without food up to the present and can survive a little longer." I insisted upon having the food I wanted and wearing my own clothes, and told him I should be obliged if he would hurry up the Home Office and get a reply to the communication which he had sent to them. The Governor came round again at lunch time, just as the warder was bringing in the same piece of bread and another tin containing a fluid very much thicker, called by courtesy "soup." It was dreadful-looking stuff, and I told the Governor that I really could not take it. He then said there might be trouble if I continued to act in this way. He also told me the doctor had informed him that it was a serious matter for a young man—he did not say growing, but he probably thought it—not to take his food and he advised me to take it, otherwise in after life I might suffer from the effects. I told him I was prepared to take the risk, and with that he left me. He came again with a Visiting Magistrate. (This was all on the same day; I had quite a number of visitors.) The Visiting Magistrate did not utter a word, but looked very sad, and the Governor did the speaking. He said, "You are all right, aren't you, Duval? You are just waiting to know about the clothes and the food?" I said, "Yes, I am all right; but I should like a little more fresh air." He went, and I was afterwards taken out for an hour and allowed to walk round the prison courtyard. When I returned the Governor was already waiting for me with the Chief Warder. The Governor said to me, "I have just received a reply from the Home Office which I will read to you." He thereupon produced a big blue paper and read it to me. I don't remember the exact words, but the substance of it was this: The Secretary of State does not consider that either Duval or Jacobs are entitled to special treatment, but under the circumstances, and taking into consideration the fact that the

Magistrate dealt leniently with them, the Secretary of State will be pleased to allow them to wear their own clothes and to buy their own food.

This establishes on a firm and unshakeable basis, that in future there will be a precedent to go upon when women **political prisoners** are concerned.

On the Wednesday I was able to have eggs, hot milk and bread and butter. Everything tasted of prison, but at any rate, it was better than the other fare. I should mention this rather important point. When the Governor told me that I could have what food I wanted, he said, "Now the trouble is this, that I have nobody here to go and fetch it." "I said, "That is very sad. Do you mean to tell me that though you have instructions from the Home Office to treat me in a certain way, you have no machinery for administering those instructions? If that is the case it is very ridiculous; if women had the vote they would soon alter that." Well, he did not argue the matter with me, but he managed to find a warder, a very decent fellow, who waited on me and treated me very civilly. I had the same warder to fetch me my meals right until the end of the time.

With regard to books, I asked for books almost as soon as I got there, and the schoolmaster brought me the Bible, the prayer-book, a hymn-book "The Narrow Way," and the "Healthy Home and How to Keep It." I studied the "Healthy Home and How to Keep It," and found that it said fresh air was absolutely necessary in a healthy home. I thought to myself, this evidently does not apply to my present home. I put these books on one side and told the school-master that I had studied those years ago, at least three of them, that the "Narrow Way" did not interest me in the least, and I had read all that I wanted of "The Healthy Home." I asked for a book that would interest me, and he brought me "Carlyle's "French Revolution." After reading that, I ordered Shakespeare, and having read as much as I wanted of that, I asked for another book and got "John Bright's Speeches." I was very interested in John Bright's speeches, because I found that John Bright was fearless, always had the courage of his convictions and very frequently stood up in the House of Commons and attacked the Leaders of the Party of which he was a member. We have very few men in the House of Commons to-day who feel sufficiently about this question of Woman Suffrage to stand up and attack their leaders. The books I secured were very useful to me, and they helped to pass by many a weary hour. When you are in prison every hour seems a day. I think those who have been in prison will bear me out when I say that

the most dreadful time is that after lunch has been brought, and you have to sit from soon after 12 o'clock until you go out at three for an hour's exercise, and then you come in at four (perhaps you go out to exercise at two and come in at three) and do not see any more daylight for the rest of that day. It is a terrible thing for an active person to sit in a cell for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four. I think it is very likely that if we persist it will be possible to get a few more hours' exercise added to that. Even if you are a political offender, surely four hours a day would not be too much to grant. I complained continually about being shut up in the cell, and on the Thursday I was given half an hour in the morning as well, and on Friday they gave me half an hour in the morning and 1½ hours in the afternoon. I think if one goes on protesting and demanding better conditions it is possible to get them.

If I were Governor, I would give longer exercise even to the morally turpid. In other words—hygiene everywhere inside as well as outside of prison.

The officials at Pentonville were non-plussed when they found somebody who stood up and questioned their orders. They had been in the habit of having poor fellows, cowed and abject, with nothing in the world, most of them having no fixed abode outside prison, prepared to do anything and everything asked of them. They are in the habit of dealing with men like that and when they find somebody who comes forward and is prepared to stand his ground they are taken completely by surprise. In fact, they were so surprised that they thought we were unusual beings. One warder said to me, "Is your friend in the next cell balmy?" and I am perfectly sure that one of the warders said a similar thing to my friend about me. They are so used to men obeying them in prison that of course they do not quite understand when somebody is not prepared to do what they want.

I was told that I could go to Chapel if I wished, and take the little wooden stool from my cell to sit upon. I went three times, and although permission was given me to sit alone away from the other prisoners, I decided to take my seat amongst them. One prisoner on my left told me that he had about seven years to do, and was doing the first two in Pentonville Gaol. He asked me what I was in for, whether it was for forgery. He evidently thought that I was too well dressed to steal a loaf of bread and that I had committed a more gentlemanly crime. I told him that it was Votes for Women, and I am very pleased to say that he seemed to understand my position. I went to Chapel twice after that, and on

the third day the Chaplain took a text out of St. Peter, and he told the congregation that St. Peter was asking somebody about how many times they should forgive their brother, and I think our Lord said, "You must forgive him not seven times, but seventy times seven." Well, I thought what hypocrisy it was for a clergyman to get up in that Chapel and talk to those poor people and tell them about forgiving their brother seventy times seven times. I don't suppose that if these men had done anything wrong they were forgiven even once. More forgiveness, please, and oh! for another Elizabeth Fry. The sermons that are preached in prison Chapels are very inappropriate. They do not help the prisoners. Chapels seem so out of place. They do not help the prisoners at all, and seem all to be delivered in that authoritative style which is going to crush them lower than ever. One warder told me that he once tried to speak kindly to a prisoner. He was brought before the Governor and he was told that if he did not mend his ways he would be given marching orders; he had no right to talk kindly to prisoners; he was there to do his duty, and speaking kindly to prisoners was not included in that at all. He said, "That is how the prison is run." I think he had been in the prison for ten or twelve years, so that he knew something about it, and he told me that men come out on the Saturday and go back on the Monday night. Does that not clearly show that our prison system is bad? Is it not proof that we need women to come in and help us in framing better prison laws in our country? I think it does. There are many things in the prisons that ought to be altered; there are many laws that obtain to-day, which, carried out in our various prisons, tend not to make less criminals but more. In fact, I told my friend Mr. Jacobs one day, although we had been forbidden to speak (there were a good many officials round and I wanted them to hear), this place might well be called a manufactory of criminals.

I came out on Saturday morning, and I must say I was very glad that I had been to prison and had seen for myself exactly what was there. I am glad I have been to prison, because it will shew the Government that there are some men who are prepared to share the women's hardships. I may tell you this, that there are in the Men's Political Union twenty men ready to go to prison tomorrow. Men have votes, and if they use them in the interests of Woman Suffrage, if they use the power they possess by means of the vote to turn the Government out and to force a new Government to do that which is right, going to prison would not be necessary either for women or men.

It is possible to do this through the vote. If only there were some good men, some honest men, some real men

supporters of this cause in the Liberal Party, if there were a sufficient number of them, they could go to the Prime Minister and they could force him to give the necessary facilities for the final stages of the Conciliation Bill. I am glad that women have declared that they will not wait. Why should they wait? Now is the time, and I am perfectly certain that if only every one of us works during the next fortnight in every possible way by sending letters to the representative of our constituency, trying to see him if possible, because personal calls are very much better than letter writing; writing to the newspapers, and if any of you have influence with papers use that influence, there may still be a remote hope for the passing of the Conciliation Bill. I have had a good many letters of congratulation upon my action, my friend Mr. Jacobs has had a number too; some of these letters have come from men. Well, let those men do more than congratulate, let them do something themselves. It is very easy to applaud, and it is not very difficult to do something for this movement. I hope that men will come forward as they have never done before. I hope they will join the Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement, which is growing, and whose membership is increasing daily. I hope, if they have not got the time to give their services, they will give money, because money, as Mrs. Pethick Lawrence once pointed out, is the sinews of war. It is the sinews of war and we must have it. We are carrying on a campaign all over the country. We have got a flourishing branch in Manchester, a flourishing branch in Birmingham, a branch in Reading, another one in Leicester, one in Edinburgh, and branches are in the course of being started in Glasgow and Dundee and in other parts of the United Kingdom. It is amazing the way in which this Union has grown, and it is simply because we started with a few men who were whole-hearted. Half-hearted people we do not want. We want people who are heart and soul in this cause, who are prepared to make sacrifices. We don't want men merely to tell us, like some of our Liberal friends do, that they believe in it and there is an end of the matter. I hope some of them are here to-night and they will take this to heart. I am as keen a Liberal as ever I was. I am as keenly interested in social reform as Mr. Lloyd George or any other member of the Cabinet can be, and although the members of our Union may be small men in their way, we are fit for the battle and have a noble and unselfish cause.

When I left the Liberal Party I was told by my colleagues that it would not make much difference, that my services, though very good, were not so great that my leaving the party would upset matters in any way. But I think I have been able to bring about a division in the Liberal ranks. At least 80 per cent. of the Men's Political Union are ex-members of that party. Four secretaries of Young Liberal branches have joined the Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement; all good speakers

and all good writers. We have also got men who have worked in the Liberal Party, some of them for 30 years, and, in fact, there is a gentleman here to-night, who sits in the front row, who has worked for them, until their indifferent attitude was known on the Suffrage question, for nearly 40 years. It is not easy for men to leave their party, but if only they are prepared to put principle before party and to fight for measures and not for persons, there will not be very much difficulty in their sending in their resignations and standing on the women's platform. I have said over and over again that very little has been done by men up to the present, the women have borne the brunt of the battle and they have shewn us the way to do things. Our imprisonment would never have taken place if the women in their hundreds had not gone before.

Well, now that I have been to Pentonville prison I shall be able to speak from actual experience of prison life, about the way in which women of England have been treated by a Liberal Government. I am ashamed of the men who call themselves Liberals; I am ashamed of them because they have insulted Women—they have dragged the flag of Liberalism in the gutter and have trampled upon it. We are told that we who have left the Liberal party are traitors. I have had that flung at me many times, even at the recent Walthamstow by-election, We are not traitors. The men who remain in the Liberal party and allow their leaders to behave as they do in regard to a question of this sort are the traitors. Politicians like Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill, who will have to render an account of their stewardship before long, will find they have made a great mistake. If these ministers have any worthy ambition to become greater men, they will find that they have done an evil thing in treating the women's question as they have, because they have alienated the support of thousands of men who would otherwise have given it to them. After the City Temple affair I had a letter from a member of the Liberal Christian League, who said that although he was a member of the Christian League and was inside the hall when the protest was made, he deplored the way in which Mr. Lloyd George had spoken about women and had acted in voting against their measure. So that it is perfectly plain to see that the Liberal Government is losing ground. But there is yet time for true Liberals to repudiate the Government's conduct. Let Mr. Asquith remove his Veto on the conciliation Bill and allow the expressed will of the Commons to prevail, and then I am certain that the Liberal party will be all the better for it. But if, on the other hand he remains obstinate, and continues to fly in the face of the Constitution, as Miss Pankhurst has rightly put it, then I predict, although it is dangerous to prophesy, that the Liberal Party will be rent in twain, that in a few years they will be no longer a party, but will be beaten and crushed out of existence. That will be no great calamity if the Liberal party is composed of men like the present members of the Cabinet who flout and deny women's demand for immediate enfranchisement, and I hope

that a better party will be built up on the wreckage. But there is yet time, and I appeal to Liberals to get into touch with their leaders, to urge upon them the necessity for immediate action, and by so doing they will be rendering a great service to British women of every class and to the nation as a whole.



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## AN APPEAL TO MEN.

By VICTOR D. DUVAL.

**T**HE year 1910 is drawing to a close, and the women of our country are patiently waiting, with the prospect of an early settlement of a question which is long overdue. After forty years of strenuous endeavour women have reached the stage of their long journey when the goal of political enfranchisement is within sight. It is too true that men, with a few exceptions, have contributed very little to this great Cause, otherwise women would to-day be enjoying the fruits of their labours. Taking into consideration the fact that fourteen Woman Suffrage Bills have been introduced into Parliament since 1870, six of which passed their second reading, it is difficult to realise that men could be so selfish as to refuse for so long a period to do

justice to one-half of the community. The reason of this indifferent attitude of men to woman's needs is undoubtedly the outcome of misunderstanding, for it would be difficult to conceive of Englishmen, renowned throughout the world's history for their love of fair play, deliberately setting their minds against the freedom of their sisters. We know very well that men have sacrificed their liberty and perilled their lives in pursuit of voting rights. In the last century this was the case again and again, and yet in spite of this fact, men are to be found at the present time doing their utmost to prevent one million women from exercising the right of citizenship. Is it small wonder women have become impatient of this treatment?

Those who criticise the Suffragists for adopting forcible tactics, and say their Cause has been put back owing to these acts of violence, would do well to search their own hearts and find what assistance they have given to enable women to attain their object in a peaceful manner. It is easy for those who enjoy the privilege of deciding what laws shall govern them, to dictate to a disfranchised sex. If men who possess the parliamentary vote to-day, had had to fight for it as their forefathers did, then perhaps they would understand the spirit which moves women to strong and determined action.

Few men are opposed to the principle of Woman's Suffrage, in fact, some thousands have enrolled themselves members of a League, known as the Men's League for Women's Suffrage with the object of securing the Parliamentary Franchise for Women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men. This League has been

in existence for four years and has done a great deal of educational work. Then there is the Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement which has a large and ever increasing membership. The latter Society is more advanced than the Men's League, and although its object is precisely the same, the methods are quite different. Whereas, any man who approves of the object can become a member of the Men's League, he is required to sign a much more definite pledge in order to be accepted as a member of the Men's Political Union. Firstly, the policy of this Union is action, entirely independent of all political parties; secondly, opposition to whatever government is in power, until such time as the franchise is granted; thirdly, participation in parliamentary elections in opposition to the government candidate, and independently of all other candidates; and lastly, vigorous agitation and the education of public opinion by all the usual methods, such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence, and deputations to public representatives.

Whilst fully appreciating the splendid services rendered to the movement by the Men's League, experience has proved conclusively that the more effective method of bringing pressure to bear upon an obstinate government is to oppose that government in every possible way. The Women's Social and Political Union realised this at the outset of their campaign, and it is because they adopted this plan that they have made themselves such formidable opponents.

Had they allied themselves with any political party, their question would have been swamped by other issues.



It is, therefore, clearly to be seen, if a man is really anxious to help the Cause and to be of practical value to it, then he must sever his connection with party, sink all other questions and stand on the woman's platform. In this way, and in this way only, can he claim to be an whole-hearted supporter.

The members of the Men's Political Union have done this, and there is not the slightest doubt the Liberals lost a number of seats at the last general election because of the hostile votes cast by men, who were angry with the policy of the government towards the suffragettes. Again, when women have been shut out of Liberal meetings, members of the Men's Political Union have gone in to represent the excluded women.

In the first instance, questions were put by these men to cabinet ministers at the proper time, to wit, at the close of the meeting, but continued refusals of ministers to answer made it necessary for protests to be made during the speeches, with the result that the interrupters were "flung out ruthlessly," the stewards no doubt following the advice given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on a former occasion when women were questioning him. Protests of this kind were made at Bedford, Rochester, Reading, Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle, Bletchley, Limehouse, Shoreditch, Haggerston, Battersea, Paddington, and other places, and in every instance men were knocked about in the most brutal way; frequently, these men have risked their lives only to be charged by Mr. Lloyd-George with being hirelings; yet they have not been deterred by the insults and coarse jests which have been hurled at them, and why should they be? Have not the courageous

women, who have been in the fighting line of this great battle, been subjected to far worse treatment than this? Have they not been flung out of meetings with great violence? Yes, and flung into prison and treated as common felons. Their bodies have been outraged by order of a Liberal government, and these things have happened in the 20th century, in England, the land of freedom!

Unless the men of England wake up very soon and stand by their women in their hour of need, they will no longer be able to boast of their love of liberty and justice.

Now is the time for "deeds, not words."

When a new government came into office in January, the Women's Social and Political Union called a truce. They were informed that there was every likelihood of a Bill being introduced which would satisfy all parties in the House of Commons. That Bill, the Representation of the People Bill, 1910, a conciliation bill in every sense of the word, has been introduced, and notwithstanding the opposition of three of the most influential men in the Cabinet, passed its second reading by a majority of 110, a bigger majority, be it noted, than was given either for the Budget or the Veto Resolution.

Further facilities for the committee stage and the third reading have been asked for, but Mr. Asquith has up to the present refused to grant the necessary time. The Prime Minister, however, has changed his mind before, and there is no reason at all why he should not reconsider his decision.

Parliament reassembles on November 15th and it is hoped that a satisfactory answer will be given to the

question which will be put in regard to the facility for the final stages of the Bill.

Now, it is the duty of every man in the country, be he Liberal, Conservative, Socialist or Independent to use whatever influence he has in urging the government to pass the Bill this coming season.

Help can be given in this direction in many ways. Every man must write to the parliamentary representative for his own constituency. Men who have friends in the House of Commons must go there and interview them. Letters must be sent to the press, daily, weekly, local and general, and every man must get at least one other to do what he himself is doing. If this is done Mr. Asquith dare not hold out any longer and by the end of 1910 the Votes for Women Bill should be on the Statute Book.

At the same time it is absolutely necessary that men should join the Men's Political Union, Offices, 13, Buckingham Street, Strand, London. Should satisfactory assurances from the Prime Minister not be forthcoming, and it is always as well to be prepared for such a possibility, then men must be ready to stand by the women in whatever they do. There will be no excuse for the government, they will have had every opportunity of doing the right thing, and if they choose to do otherwise then they are no longer worthy of the respect of any man, much less his support.

During the whole agitation of the last five years women have shown wonderful restraint; all the suffering has been borne by themselves, they have injured no one.

**“During every month of the year 1909, women were in prison for demanding the Vote.**

**The total number of arrests during the year was 294, and the total number of imprisonments 163. The hunger strike was carried out in 110 cases, and in 36 of these, the barbarity of forcible feeding was practised by the government.**

**The aggregate sentences served during the year by members of the W.S.P.U., was over eight years, bringing the total since the commencement of the agitation to nearly 28 years in all!”**

Therefore, if the government deliberately fly into the face of the constitution and oppose the wishes of the elected representatives of the people, their act will be a criminal one, inasmuch as it will be a direct challenge to the women of England to adopt other methods, which may have serious results.

In conclusion, it is well for men, both inside and outside Parliament, to bear in mind that women to-day are in deadly earnest. They have sounded the death knell of women's subjection, and there will be no turning back. They will go on at all costs, and since their Cause is a just one all men should be ready, aye, eager, to see justice done; and to that end should aid by word and deed, the heroic efforts of British women, to whom all Englishmen should say: “stand fast and let your tyrants see that fortitude is victory.”

**N.B.—SINCE THE WRITING OF THIS PAMPHLET, WE ARE CREDIBLY IN-**

FORMED THAT THE MEN'S LEAGUE  
FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE HAVE ALSO  
DECIDED TO ADOPT AN ANTI-GOVERN-  
MENT POLICY—WE ARE GLAD TO  
LEARN THIS.

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BY

MRS. PEMBER REEVES.

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