

The Common Cause

The Organ of the National Union of
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
 Societies.

Registered as a Newspaper.

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Notes and Comments.

The Friends' League and Mr. Pease.

The Friends' League for Women's Suffrage asked Mr. Pease to receive a deputation which was anxious to lay before him, as a member of the Society of Friends, some aspects of the question of the enfranchisement of women which are closely connected with the principles of that body. The letter sent to him reminded him that:

Since the foundation of our Society by George Fox, Friends have borne witness to the truth that women as well as men are called by God to the service of humanity, called to preach the Gospel, to serve the Society in meetings for discipline, to care for the poor, to educate the young, to initiate prison reform, to abolish slavery, and to share in all the innumerable efforts to improve the condition of the masses outside our Society.

Women Friends have not shrunk from the responsibilities laid upon them. In the days of persecution they shared imprisonment, floggings, and even martyrdom, along with the men.

Throughout more than 250 years there is universal testimony that this co-operation of men and women has brought a threefold blessing—in the development of their own characters, in the fruitfulness of the work accomplished, and in the united happiness of their homes.

We believe that this unique experience of the Society of which you and we are fellow members affords valuable evidence that the granting of full responsibility in the field of citizenship will be followed by the same good results which have attended it in our branch of the Christian Church.

Mr. Pease, however, replied that he believed he had had put before him every argument in favour of the extension of the franchise to women, and that it was only after long and anxious consideration that he formed the views on the subject to which he had already given expression. He considered, therefore, that it would be a waste of the deputation's time and of his own for him to receive them. To the ordinary person it seems strange that any man can possibly be at once a member of the Society of Friends, a fundamental principle of which is the equality of men and women, and an Anti-Suffragist. But the human mind is a peculiar instrument, and its power of entertaining incompatible opinions simultaneously has been frequently observed, especially amongst politicians.

The Dangers of Flannelette.

Mr. Joynson Hicks, one of those persistent questioners who frequently succeed in getting attention paid to matters that might otherwise be disregarded, has often urged upon the Home Secretary the dangers of flannelette. Quite recently he drew attention to the fact that flannelette sold under various descriptions that imply at least a comparative incombustibility, "blaze with the utmost freedom on the application of an ordinary

match." He wished to know whether, having regard to the danger of these misleading descriptions, steps would be taken either by legislation or otherwise to forbid the sale of these stuffs. Mr. McKenna, we are glad to note, has asked for suggestions "as to the prescription of practicable standards," with a view to legislation. Flannelette is at all times perilously inflammable, but its dangers are vastly increased by a label that leads the buyer to suppose, erroneously, that it is not dangerous at all. To the lay mind it seems that a prosecution ought to be possible in the case of persons who sell material under a false label. A certain firm was prosecuted not long ago for selling as linen material that was not linen. Proceedings in a law court, even if unsuccessful, would inevitably hasten the advent of these suggestions which Mr. McKenna is awaiting.

Municipal Corporations and the Franchise Bill.

A deputation from the Law Committee of the Municipal Corporations' Association waited upon Mr. Pease, and are understood to have laid before him certain objections to the Franchise Bill. It appears that they strongly deprecated the making of supplemental monthly lists of electors, and submitted that the register would be made undecipherable and unworkable in consequence of thousands of alterations during the year. Can it be possible—it almost looks as though it were—that the Association of Municipal Corporations is unacquainted with that useful contrivance, a card-index? Boxes of cards containing sections of the alphabet are much more easily consulted than volumes made up of large printed pages—and, we should suppose, not at all more expensive.

The admission, made by the deputation, that if the register were kept up-to-date every month there would be thousands of alterations every year, indicates pretty plainly how many electors lose their votes annually under the present arrangements.

The Blanket Trade.

From a paragraph in the *Manchester Guardian*, it appears that the supply of blankets in London was inadequate for the fulfilment of an order from the Queen of Greece for twenty thousand to be sent to refugees at Salonika. Moreover, the Yorkshire manufacturers are said to be fully occupied by foreign orders which will take some months to complete, and only ten thousand blankets could be got. The busy condition of the blanket trade is probably an index of general prosperity, and, therefore, auspicious. Yet there are plenty of households in Great Britain from which blankets are still entirely absent.

Bachelor of Dental Surgery.

Last week in Manchester the conferring of degrees was marked by a novel feature. For the first time in England a degree of Bachelor in Dentistry was taken by a woman, Miss Mary Latache. In an interview published by the *Daily Citizen* Miss Latache said that she had been led to study dentistry by her acquaintance with a woman dentist in Liverpool. She took the degree of Licentiate of Dental Surgery in July, and is at present practising at the Manchester Dental Hospital. She proposes, eventually, to take up private practice, and will doubtless find a large *clientèle* among women and children. With children especially a woman should be valuable as a dentist, and the increased attention given nowadays to the care of the teeth in childhood is greatly enlarging that branch of dentistry.

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CORRESPONDENTS ARE REQUESTED TO NOTE THAT THE LATEST TIME FOR RECEIVING NEWS, NOTICES AND REPORTS FOR THE WEEK'S ISSUE IS THE FIRST POST ON TUESDAY. News should be sent in as long beforehand as possible.

ALL BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS to be addressed to The Manager, THE COMMON CAUSE, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, W.C.

ADVERTISEMENTS must reach the Office (2, Robert Street) not later than first post on Wednesday.

NOTICE.—This paper is obtainable at newsagents and bookstalls by mid-day on Friday. If any difficulty is found in obtaining it locally, communication should be made to The Manager, THE COMMON CAUSE, 2, Robert Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

The Liberal Party and Women's Suffrage.

The Last Chance.

The next six weeks after Parliament reassembles on December 30th will form a momentous chapter in our political history. The House of Commons will have to decide four questions, each of them involving principles for which men and women have in former times fought and died,—the principles of national self-government, religious equality, and political representation.

Of the four Bills which, in the view of Liberals, embody these principles, one affects the population of Ireland, one affects the population of Wales, and the other two affect the working classes and the female half of the population throughout the country.

It is a foregone conclusion that the demands of the Irish, the Welsh and the Labour Party will be conceded. What about the women? The time has come when their demand must be either conceded or refused. Postponement will no longer serve. A Women's Suffrage Measure must pass the House of Commons this Session if it is to become law in the life of this Parliament at all.

For 45 years the women have waited and worked. In 1884, Mrs. Fawcett, and those who were working with her then, thought that the goal was in sight, but Mr. Gladstone threatened to withdraw the Reform Bill of that year if the House insisted on including women in it, as they would "overweight the ship." The women were thrown overboard then in order that the working men might get their votes in safety. The working men of to-day are going to repay the debt their forefathers owe. They are going to insist that no new Franchise Bill shall go through without women in it.

But will the Bill go through with women in it? That depends on the action of the Liberal Party. In 1884 the women were kept out of the Bill by a Liberal Prime Minister and by the votes of over 100 Liberal Members who broke their promises at his bidding. In 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, Women's Suffrage Measures which passed their Second Reading in the House of Commons by ever-increasing majorities were by a Liberal Government denied time for the necessary further stages. There is little doubt that in 1910 and 1911, when there was ample time for full discussion, and when the question could have been decided apart from any entanglement with the interests of Home Rule, some measure of Women's Suffrage could have been carried. In 1910, Sir Edward Grey bade us "concentrate on 1911." We did, and we have been concentrating on to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, ever since. In 1912 the Conciliation Bill was defeated by the vote of the Irish Party, made hostile to Women's Suffrage for the first time owing to fears for the safety of the Home Rule Bill, sedulously fostered by Liberal Anti-Suffragists. Another contributory cause of its defeat was the fact that 25 Members broke their pledges at the instigation of a group of Liberal Members, who set the example themselves. They gave as their excuse the recent window-

The Pioneer Players.

Two of the plays performed recently by the Pioneer Players dealt especially with the economic position of women. One, Mrs. Lyttelton's, "The Thumbscrew," represented the horrors of industrial competition among the unorganized and underpaid; the other, Mr. H. M. Harwood's, "Honour Thy Father," was the story of a girl who lived by prostitution in order to support a worthless father. Mr. Harwood has a play arranged for performance in a London theatre before long, and those who saw "Honour Thy Father" are looking forward to further work by its author. It will be interesting to see whether this too shows that tendency to dwell upon women in their industrial and social relations rather than in their love affairs which marks so many new dramatic and literary productions.

About Windows.

It will be generally admitted that windows need to be cleaned with some frequency; and, perhaps, most people will agree that the construction of them should be such as to allow of their being cleaned easily. Yet how rare it is to find any window that can be dealt with from a safe position. In this country hinged windows almost universally open outwards, although it is obvious, upon a moment's reflection, that if they opened inwards they could be safely cleaned on both sides by a woman standing within the room. Some windows, again, are sunk so deep into a stone framework that no contrivance will enable the outer part to be cleaned from within. As for sash windows, there are probably not now a dozen in all London arranged upon the sensible plan that prevailed a century and a half to two centuries ago. In these old windows the "beading" that holds in the window-frame on the right hand was neither nailed nor glued, but was fixed by a thumbscrew, the removal of which permitted the beading to be taken away and the whole window lifted inward, so that it could be cleaned with ease and without danger. Why has this excellent plan been abandoned? Why do the hinged windows open outwards? Why are those other windows so framed as to render their exteriors inaccessible except to a man seated in a rope loop? Can it possibly be because men plan the houses, and do not understand the processes of keeping them in order afterwards?

A Hostel for Working Girls.

An excellent scheme has been laid before the public in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* signed by several well-known ladies and the Rural Dean of Bermondsey. They propose that two or three tenement houses should be taken and let out in furnished and unfurnished rooms at rents varying from 2s. to 4s. per week. There will be a working housekeeper on the premises who will, if necessary, cook a mid-day meal, and will look after any lodger who may be ill. Each tenant will be responsible for her own room and for any other cooking that she may desire. A dining-room and a sitting-room in which the girls can receive their friends will be provided. Best of all: "Restrictions will be few, as the girls for whom it is intended are accustomed to independence." It is upon the rock of unnecessarily abundant regulation that abodes not only for working girls, but for educated women, have many a time come to grief. Rules, whether about the details of a house or the government of a country, are seldom thoroughly acceptable when people who have to obey them are left entirely unconsulted. It is expected that the weekly payments of the girls will cover rent, rates and taxes, but the preliminary expenses of alterations, furnishing, etc., in order to accommodate about forty girls are estimated at about £500, and help is asked towards raising this sum. Donations should be sent to Miss Bates, Manydown Park, Basingstoke, from whom further information may be obtained.

Girls in Tea-Shops.

An effort is being made and is reported in *The Daily Citizen* to organise the girls who serve in cafés and tea shops. A representative of the National Union of Café Workers is reported as making the just observation that employers seem to have based their rates upon those prevalent where "tips" are customary, whereas of course, in most of the places where waitresses are employed the watchword is "No Gratuities." Wages of from 8s. to 12s. 6d. per week with deductions for breakages leave a very inadequate sum for living expenses, after a young woman has paid for the washing of the aprons, caps, collars and cuffs which are expected to be always spotless and well-laundered. Some friend of the Union might make a calculation of the number of yards walked by waitresses in various establishments per diem, and of the number of stairs mounted and descended in an ill-arranged place. Who can wonder that waitresses are sometimes fractious, uncivil and inattentive?

breaking tactics of the Militants; though it was difficult to see why the action of one body of women who did not want the Bill to pass should absolve Members from their promises to another body of women who did want the Bill to pass.

This is a sad record for Liberals to read—for those Liberals, at least, who think that Liberal principles are human principles, and not meant to apply to one sex alone.

But there are signs that this time the tale will be different. Liberals in the House of Commons are organising support for the Women's Suffrage Amendments to the Reform Bill in a way that has never been attempted before. Our friends in the Government are giving their minds to the question and preparing to champion our cause in earnest. Thirty Liberal Members voted against the Government in support of the Women's Suffrage Amendment to the Home Rule Bill.

Everyone knows that this is the last chance in the lifetime of this Government for securing the passage of a Woman's Suffrage measure. It must be passed in the same Session as Home Rule if it is to get the benefit of the Parliament Act and be carried into law despite the House of Lords. It is evident that even the Women's Liberal Federation, which has believed and hoped and continued to work for the Liberal Party all these years, is at the end of its patience now, and will reconsider its position and programme if its hopes are disappointed once again. And no one who understands the political situation can shut his or her eyes to the fact that the responsibility for the fate of the Amendments to the Franchise Bill will rest with the Liberal Party. As was shown in our Leader last week, the success or defeat of the Amendments depends on the Irish vote, and the Irish vote depends on what Mr. Redmond considers best in the interests of Home Rule. Liberal Suffragists must see to it that Mr. Redmond is persuaded that if any danger to Home Rule is involved, it lies in the defeat rather than in the passage of the Women's Suffrage Amendments.

"The Household Book," 1847.

It is in the everyday trifles of the past that we can best see its life; and, unfortunately, these very trifles are the things least likely to be preserved. Witness the tinder-box, once in every man's pocket, but now just because it lacked intrinsic value, hardly to be bought at any price. Old letters, invoices, account books, cookery books, scorned when they are twenty years old, grow interesting at the age of fifty, illuminating at that of a hundred, invaluable at that of three centuries. Thus, "The Household Book of Practical Receipts, in the Arts, Manufactures and Trades, including Medicine, Pharmacy and Domestic Economy," which was published in the year 1847, is for us full of information which its compilers were not conscious of putting into it. Its contents, as might be expected from the title page, are miscellaneous in the extreme, and evidently culled from many different sources. They are thrown together with an apparent artlessness that has its own charm, and that is heightened by the accidental disappearance of half the index. Opening the volume at hazard, the reader is confronted by the following succession of headings: "A Cure for Toothache"; "Broiled Fowl"; "Glyphography, or Engraved Drawing (Palmer's Patent)"; "Gibelotte of Rabbits"; "Painting in Enamel"; "Colourings for Confectionery"; "Spitting of Blood"; "Dutch Sealing Wax."

Even a partial perusal of the 1,580 items reveals ways of life curiously remote in some respects from our own. The large part occupied in the domestic economy of our grandparents by drinks is, for example, brought home very forcibly to a reader of this miscellany. There are directions for making "An Excellent Family Wine" (of black, red and white currants, cherries and raspberries), for bottling, branding, cellaring, decanting, mixing, colouring, fining, racking, improving, flavouring and perfuming wine; for checking inordinate fermentation in it, for remedying "ropiness" and mustiness, and for imparting "sparkling, creaming and briskness," which may be effected, it appears, by "adding to each bottle a few grains of white lump sugar or sugar-candy," and then standing the bottles on their heads, whereby "any sediment that forms falls into the necks, when the corks are partially withdrawn, and the sediment is immediately expelled by the power of the gas." Wild conjectures arise as to whether our ancestresses really tampered in this way with our ancestors' cellars, and what, if so, our ancestors said. Then there are instructions for the manufacture of punch and gin punch; rum shrub and currant shrub; syllabub and Staffordshire syllabub—both much more intoxicating than their innocent name would suggest; bishop, made of warm wine, lemon and spice; purl, a compound of beer, spirit and ginger; two prescriptions for mead, and one each for extremely strong liqueurs, called, respectively, ratafia and

noyau. Where is the household nowadays, whose mistress dreams of preparing, or knows how to prepare, any of these beverages?

Clearly, we are, domestically speaking, less of a drinking folk than we were in and about 1847; clearly, also, we are more of a washing folk, for what do we find under the head of "Ablutions"? "It has not yet become the custom in this country, probably from the varying nature of the climate, to indulge in the wholesome practice of frequent bathing, so common in the East." It is not suggested that frequent bathing is even possible, but every lady is advised to sponge herself with water, and is assured not only that she will find herself invigorated and refreshed, but that the practice has also another advantage, "it tends to preserve the delicate softness of the skin, while it has imparted to it all the bloom and beauty of health." Another article, after giving instructions how best to wash the hands and how to make paste and pomade for applying to them, concludes with a note, that "gloves should always be worn on exposure to the atmosphere, and are graceful at all times for a lady in the house, except at meals." Yet, since our grandmothers cannot well have worn gloves while engaged in compounding the endless pomades, pomatums, hair oils, domestic medicines (alarmingly drastic, many of them) and complicated cookeries, as to which they are here instructed, the gloved portion of their days cannot, after all, have been great.

The cookery directions are generally sensible and practical; but the lavish use of labour, of eggs and butter, points backward to a period in which butter cost often less than a shilling a pound, and eggs seldom more than a penny a piece, while the time of women was rated no less cheaply. Almost on every page the low value of the domesticated woman's time may be inferred from the number of hours which it is proposed that she should fritter away in petty home industries. Exceedingly significant, for instance, is the following direction for making "rose pearls"; "Beat the petals of the red rose in an iron mortar for some hours, until they form a thick paste, which is to be rolled into beads and dried. They are very hard, susceptible of a fine polish, and retain all the fragrance of the flower." Can any modern young woman be imagined patient enough, or leisured enough to spend hours in the slow manufacture of a rose-pearl necklace—unless, indeed, she saw her way to selling it afterwards at a high price? The lady of 1847, on the other hand, would not have grudged the labour, but would have recoiled in horror from the idea of making money by it. Thus do the points of view of one century come imperceptibly to reverse those of another, and the maker of pills, pomatum, "rose pearls," and boxes adorned with transferred prints, is replaced by the typist, the secretary, the hospital almoner, or the member of a Care Committee.

Actresses' Franchise League.

The fourth Birthday Party of the Actresses' Franchise League, which was celebrated at the Criterion Restaurant on the 13th inst., was a great success. A delightful programme was provided by the Play Department, including a 'cello solo by Miss May Mukle; Chinese recitations by Miss Victoria Drummond; musical selections by the Langley Mukle String Quartette; humorous recitations by Mr. Percy French; sketches at the piano by Dr. Houston Collisson; and recitations by Miss Eva Moore, accompanied at the piano by Miss Eva Lonsdale.

The following memorial, signed by Mrs. Forbes Robertson and Miss Adeline Bourne, has been sent by the Executive Committee of the Actresses' Franchise League to the Speaker and members of the Government:—

"While adding to the gaiety of the nation, the actresses have themselves been suffering from great wrongs arising out of sex-disability.

"The broad, expansive view of life which the actresses' calling engenders has revealed to them a state of society in Great Britain, which they, as patriotic women, can no longer support. Debarred by sex-disability from the exercise of the Franchise to right those wrongs, repudiated by the Government of the day, unprotected by Party Machinery, the actresses, representing a very large and important faction of working women, now appeal to the highest tribunal in the land, the House of Commons, and ask to be allowed to stand before the Bar of the House to lay before the Commons at first hand, their reasons for claiming equality with man in the State. They call upon the House, now omnipotent through the passing of the Parliament Act, to exercise its will in defence of half humanity still disenfranchised and to pass a Resolution whereby the Actresses may come to the House of the People with a direct and patriotic message from the Women of the People."

Some New Books.

THE CONSERVATION OF WOMANHOOD AND CHILDHOOD. By Theodore Roosevelt. (Funk and Wagnalls. 3s.)

Mr. Roosevelt's speech, which aroused a great deal of interest in America, is now published in a pretty green-and-gold booklet, with a neat outer case of cardboard. To English readers its value is naturally much smaller, because this country has already accepted the principle that such matters as the sanitation of factories, tenement houses, etc., the protection of workers from injury to health, and their compensation if injured, are the business of the law. How much still remains to do in the United States appears clearly in several passages of this book, for example:—

Children as young as five and six years work all winter in oyster and shrimp canneries on the Gulf Coast, in Florida and elsewhere. Thousands of them work all summer in Maryland and Delaware vegetable gardens and canneries, and all winter in Southern packing-houses.

The speaker went on to report the case of a fourteen-year-old girl, who had been working for four years in a textile mill in Tennessee, and tried to commit suicide by drinking carbolic acid; and of the fact, brought out by the subsequent inquiry, that there existed

a suicide pact among the textile mill girls, whose life was such that they felt that death was preferable to the slavery in which they lived and toiled. . . . Surely, there should be laws which will enable society to interfere in such cases, to protect the poor child from the employer who exploits her young life, and from the unnatural parent who sells her life for exploitation.

But, although Great Britain—a community far older in industrial development—has the particular laws for which the ex-President was pleading, the condition of children within this kingdom may still be cruelly laborious, as anyone may see who cares to spend one-and-ninety upon the report just published of the Committee which inquired into the conditions of the linen and other making-up trades in the north of Ireland. (Cd. 6509.)

FOLK TALES OF BREFFNY. By B. Hunt. (Macmillan. 3s. 6d. net.)

A collection of the lore of the people taken down for the most part from the lips of an old man, the depository of "more and better learning" than that of the scholars, is assuredly a valuable addition to a country's literature, so it can be predicted that this small volume is certain of a hearty welcome from a growing public interested in the beliefs and superstitions, the art and the literature of the people.

"Breffny," one is glad to find, is no mere realm of fancy, but a real domain in the Emerald Isle, being the counties of Cavan and Leitrim, originally part of Connaught; and the folk tales recounted of this district deal with the inner side of the lives of the peasants and their transactions with "the Good People" who were responsible for many events otherwise inexplicable. There is much dramatic force in these simple tales, and much of the beauty of poetry; but, above all, the philosophy of the people is plainly discernible beneath the story. Where all is delightful preference is difficult, but perhaps one might wish with justice single out the story of "The Cow of a Widow of Breffny" for special notice.

THE ADVANCE OF WOMAN. By Jane Johnstone Christie. (Lippincott. 6s. net.)

When an author pushes the point of an argument too far, or too unconditionally, the reader is apt rather to react than to be convinced. Miss Christie, in her anxiety to show that the ascendancy of men is not for the general good, has so wholly overlooked not only certain secondary advantages, but also all the virtues sometimes observable in men, as to arouse an impulse to reprisals. She does not see, as Mrs. Gilman does, how valuable an education it was for the less altruistic half of humanity to be constrained to care for and work for wife and children; nor does she mention the immense benefit that accrued to the race at one stage by that prolongation of childhood which could never have been achieved if mothers had not been fed and guarded by fathers.

It is wiser and juster to behold the developments of human relation as stages of advance—each in its season right rather than wrong; each eventually out-grown and a cause, during its

transition, of injustice and suffering. Looked at thus, we can see why and how the supremacy of men was useful, and for that very reason we can also see that its day of usefulness is now over, and that those who help to cast it behind are good citizens. These are matters not to be learned from Miss Christie's volume, in which men appear throughout as voluntary oppressors, trembling at and denouncing the victims of their tyranny.

Many women reading her pages will remember the generous words and acts of men known to them, the gentleness of some husbands, the tenderness of some fathers, the genuine chivalry (not that of the picked-up handkerchief and the opened door) of fellow-workers in public or professional work; and will be inclined to think the whole book false on account of its apparent injustice in these matters. This will be a pity, for there is much in it to arouse the thoughts of women who are but beginning to consider their own position.

A CARAVAN COMEDY. By "S."
LADY BATTERBY AND MRS. MACBEAN. By "S."
AN ORGANISER'S TRIALS. By "S." (Published by author; Fordel, Glenfarg.)

These three playlets are meant for performance at Suffrage meetings, and two of them being dialogues passing in a modern room between women in ordinary dress, would be very easy to prepare, and would be effective before gatherings of people comparatively unfamiliar with the movement. Telephone calls on the stage are always diverting to rustic audiences. The accent and the canniness of Mrs. MacBean would also unquestionably "carry" in northern districts; but to southern ears her speech would be difficult to follow, and the expression "dae," meaning "do," might lead to complete misunderstanding.

The CARAVAN COMEDY is more ambitious. An open-air scene and a visible caravan in the background are required, and the cast includes three men, three women, and two children. The idea of a trio of husbands setting themselves up in a caravan in order to convince their wives that they could do perfectly well without them has obvious possibilities; and the practical evidence of a shirt starched stiff as a board throughout, and of a mutton chop burned to a cinder, tell their story to every beholder. "A Caravan Comedy" would make quite a pleasant little performance, and is entirely free from any nagging anti-man tone.

THE VINEYARD (December). (Fifield, 6d. net.)

This number of the *Vineyard* has caught and imprisoned so deftly between its covers the spirit of Christmas-tide that in turning over its leaves the reader will be apt to become an enthusiast for the revival of all the forgotten Feast-days in the calendar. But not only is interest aroused in the customs attending the Winter Festival in our own land, but those which have grown up round Yule Tide in other countries—in Germany, in Breton, in Sweden—are set down in such delightful vein that sympathy with the rejoicings of the folk of all nations cannot fail to be evoked. Among the articles of interest may be mentioned "The Yule Log," by Anatole le Braz (translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos), "The Sightseer," by Maude Egerton King, and "The Mother of the Son of Mark Marashi: A True Story from the Balkans," by M. Edith Durham, who has lately become known to a large public as War Correspondent to the *Daily Chronicle*.

The *Christian Commonwealth* has issued an excellent Christmas number, full of interest, both as regards articles and illustrations. As an "organ of the progressive movement," this periodical habitually deals with the interests of both men and women; therefore, Women's Suffrage and other questions of special import to women find a place in its weekly columns. The Christmas number is no exception to the rule, and we can recommend its perusal with confidence.

In the 1912 issue of the *Perth Christmas Courier* there is a portrait and sketch of Mrs. Scott-Murray, President of the Perth Branch of the N.U.W.S.S. A deserved tribute is paid therein to one of our most earnest workers. "The President is heart and soul in her work," says the writer, "and she has communicated her enthusiasm to her associates, with the result that the Society is a living force in the political life of Perth."

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The Cloud of Witnesses.

By FLORA ANNIE STEEL

(PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN WRITERS' SUFFRAGE LEAGUE).

"I sent for you because I'm dying" he said, and his whispering voice had a hard ring of resentment in it—"dying, my God! and it isn't finished." He turned his head restlessly on the pillow, and his hot fever-bright eyes sought out the tall shrouded easel in the shadows of the studio; for they had put him there instead of in the little poky bedroom off it, when, ten days before, he had been brought back as dead from a motor smash.

"I'd like to look at it again," he whispered faintly. "Move into that bar of light, there's a good chap!"

It was late evening, and the last beams of the sun flooded through the open western door.

I wheeled the easel forward, and drew the dust cloth from the picture it held. Then I sat down on the foot of the bed, and looked at it with critical eyes; for I also am a painter.

It was quite unfinished—indeed in a way it was only just begun—but it was fine; of that there could be no doubt. From every point, except, perhaps, that of taste, it was fine; far the best thing technically he had ever done; and it was unfinished!

The restless head turned on the pillow again. "What rot they talk," came the thin whisper again, "about an all-wise Creator! I tell you it ought to be finished, and I—I—"

The voice died away into silence, but the hot eyes were back on the picture.

"I meant to ask you—" he whispered after a time—"but you can't—I'm the only one—and I'm dying—oh! curse it, I'm dying." A spasm of sheer anger seemed to take his last strength. "Leave it there, old chap," he continued, and his voice was barely audible—"I'll look at it—last thing."

He lay so still, I rose and bent over him listening, lest he was dead. Then suddenly he opened his eyes, looked into mine and sat up abruptly. "My God!" he said sharply, and his voice was strong, "I won't be done out of my rights. I'll come back if I can—and finish it."

They were his last words. He died, as he said he would die, with his eyes on the unfinished picture.

I took a long look at this ere I left. It was, certainly, extraordinarily clever, extraordinarily suggestive, extraordinarily typical of the life which had gone—whither?

A reckless, good-tempered, sensuous life, shrouding, at times almost to extinction, the spiritual soul of the true artist. But it must have been there. Without it how could he have caught the purity of virginhood in the girl's face? Yet the face of the man held in it more than a hint of the satyr. For it was a well-worn subject—the Conquest of Love. A subject over which humanity can weep or snigger, as the fancy takes it.

Yes! It was a thousand pities it was not finished—it might have made his name for all time.

All time! The phrase struck me, why I know not, as banal, and I caught myself wondering how large a portion of Eternity time might contain?

It was a Saturday afternoon, so, after I had arranged with the nurse—a good woman who dyed her hair from a sense of duty because she thought her patients would not like a grey head—for all necessities, I carried out my intention of going out of town to spend the week-end in the country. I had found out an inn far away from the haunts of men where I could be at my ease. Why it laid itself out to give "good accommodation to man and beast" it was hard to say: for neither seemed to come along the forest way which led to the quaint thatched old building. It was far too big for its present purpose; there were endless rows of stabling, a huge square where hounds had evidently once been kept, and a creaking sign of the "Goat and Compasses" swung from a formidable-looking gallows outside. There must have been many rooms in it, but I never saw but two. The great, dark, oak-panelled hall where I dined and breakfasted, and the great, dark, oak-panelled room, above, where I slept. This gave on the creaking sign with its curious forgotten origin of "God encompasseth us." The memory of this meaning came to mind that Saturday night as I got into the big four-poster, and it brought with it a distinct feeling of protection, not for myself only, but for that still figure lying alone in the far-away studio before an unfinished picture.

That is to say, if it were still unfinished. He had said he would come back, if he could, and finish it. This idle thought, devoid of reality, even in the thinking, came as a half-dream betwixt waking and sleeping; and I rose the next morning, forgetful of it absolutely.

It was a perfect day, and, taking my lunch with me, I prepared to pass it in the woods; or rather the forest, for the inn stood on the edge of a Royal demesne. It was wonderful country. Overhead wide, spreading oaks, underneath your feet rolling ground, rising into long sweeps of tall bracken broken with tufted heather, sinking to mossy dells where the film-fern sheltered under miniature granite rocks over which ran a tiny silver trickle of water. Every now and again the forest land ended abruptly in a few green fields, a hamlet of scattered cottages, a church spire. And once, as I rounded one of the higher sweeps, I saw below me in the dell an old manor house set in shady trees.

Sleeping in the sunshine it looked utterly peaceful, the peacefulness which comes from remoteness, which comes from the absence of prying eyes.

I made my way through the bracken, and found a road, disused, moss-grown. It led me to a wide entrance gate; but it was locked by a rusty padlock, and the lodge inside appeared to be tenantless. I looked through the elaborate scroll-work of the gate, following with my eyes an avenue—also disused, moss-grown—until it was lost in a sharp turn amongst high trees.

And here I realised that whoever had planted the place, must have been a lover of vegetation, and somewhat of a botanist. Many of the conifers were new to me, and even my slight knowledge recognised rarities amid the flowering shrubs. The grass on either side of the avenue had not been cut, and was set high, and thick, and white, with great corn-daisies. In the distance, half-hidden by a huge tulip tree, a glimpse of yew hedges festooned with scarlet flame-creepers could be seen, and, above the tall battlemented greenery, a stack of grey chimneys told of a house.

But no smoke rose from it. The place was evidently deserted, and with a regretful feeling that this should be so, I was about to follow the road further, when I noticed that the chain of the padlock had, from sheer corrosion of rust, parted at the staple. The next minute I was inside the gate, eager to satisfy a sudden curiosity which had arisen in me.

It was not such a large place as I had deemed it; indeed the house was quite a small one, but what remained behind the high yew hedges of the garden convinced me that my conjecture was right. Someone who had loved the silent company of flowers had lived here. For they grew in profusion still, though irregularly, at haphazard; and with such astonishing independence of character! For instance, a tuft of common sweet-william seemed oppressed, overborne by weeds, while close beside it, the great white bells of a galtonia flourished exceedingly. Paths and beds had long since been lost in each other, but as I pushed my way through the tangle, I could follow the outline of both by the belts of corn-daisies and the thickets of garden flowers. And these latter grew and blossomed, as I had never seen them grow before. I wondered at this until I realised that, though prodigal in blossom, they were few in variety. Many ordinary inhabitants of ordinary gardens were conspicuously by their absence. In unsuitable soil they had evidently died out; those that remained did so of free will, because they liked it. And, shut in by those high yew hedges which prisoned the sunshine and defied the wind, the latter were chiefly plants which in less sheltered positions would have been but half-hardy.

What would not some high and mighty Scotch gardeners, for instance, with tongues glib over ten-syllabled names, have given to be able to grow such a Romneya? I thought, as I sat down on a stone bench that was barely visible among the corn-daisies, just opposite the most extraordinarily beautiful bush of that shy grower. Its grey-green, sharp-cut leaves rose in tufted shoots against the clear blue sky, each crowned by one of those surpassingly lovely white blossoms that some-

how take the mind straight to Paradise. The wide pearl-white crinkly petals, the great halo of pure gold anthers surrounding the chaste chalice of the pistil, reminding one instantly of angels' wings, of deathless crowns. And then the scent as of a hundred million violets!

A sight worth seeing; a sight that ought to be seen; a sight that should not be hidden away from every eye! The thought brought a faint wonder why the flowers were so fine; a sort of regret that the Romneya should be denied its just meed of admiration. But Life was hard and unsympathetic to all—it denied so much. So I remembered my dead friend lying in the studio before his unfinished picture; that might have brought him fame; and remembered it with almost a passionate regret. He had missed so much. As I sat thinking of him the fancy took me that I would gather a bunch of Romneyas to lay on his coffin when I returned. In their way they would be a perfect tribute. And no owner, if there were one, would grudge the gift, of that I felt sure.

But as, rising, I laid my hands on a flower I heard a courteous voice beside me:

"I fear those blossoms will not last at all. It would be better to take another kind, I think."

I turned, to see a middle-aged man in a blue workman's suit, who looked, nevertheless, too superior to be a gardener.

"I beg your pardon," I said, "I didn't know there was anybody belonging to them—and—and I was picking them for a dead friend."

The man smiled, a quaint soft smile.

"I am sorry for your loss," he replied, "if it is a loss? But I was not claiming the flowers—I was only suggesting others more suitable."

"It is very kind of you—" I began when he interrupted me. "There are some lilies down in the wood yonder—at least there used to be; but it is so long since I have been in the garden that they may have got tired—"

"Of blossoming unseen?" I suggested.

He looked at me almost startled. "Unseen? What a curious idea!" And then he laughed again. "I was forgetting that you lived in three dimensions. The flowers don't, you know. That makes an immense difference."

"It must," I replied cynically; but the solid acquiescence of his face nettled me. "You don't really mean what you say," I began, "the fourth dimension—"

"Must give a cloud of witnesses," he interrupted brightly. "It is odd, isn't it? what an amount of esoteric wisdom there is in some of those old phrases; wisdom that the world passes by. And yet I remember thinking that the flowers looked as if they had countless eyes upon them, as if they had endless sympathy with their beautiful silent, contented lives." He bent down a shoot of the Romneya as he spoke and considered its serene beauty gravely. "When I used to look after it years ago," he continued, "I used to do all sorts of things for it, yet it didn't grow as it does now. One does so many things in the world that would be better left undone. But our standard changes in the fourth dimension. It gives a different perspective you see!" His eyes smiled into mine with gentle raillery as he added, "Come! let us find the lily."

As we passed through a shady walk woodwards, he was silent, and I followed him silently also. The sunlight filtered through the leaves and made dancing shadows that dazzled the eyes; there was a drowsiness, a dreaminess in the air, and I almost started to find myself standing beside the tiniest pool of water, set round with moss and ferns. There was a break in the trees here, and the sunshine lay warm on large green leaves and one single, half-open bud of a huge water-lily.

"I am glad there is one," said my companion. "It will be full blown by to-morrow." And then he laughed gently as he bent to pick it. "I always used to think it such a quaint environment for a sacred lotus—half a paraffin cask—for that is all it is—just a half-cask sunk in the ground! But one learns proportion when one can see all round things. There," he added, again with the soft bright smile, as he handed me the lily, "that will suit your poor dead friend better than the Romneya."

It came upon me with a flash, that it was infinitely more suitable; in a way almost pathetically suitable; for the foreground of that unfinished picture was to have been a lotus lake, beside whose borders the virginal priestess was worshipping when Love clutched at her heart.

I stood looking, for quite an appreciable moment or two, at the sacred jewel the pale petal enclosed, feeling startled at the coincidence, and amazed at the exceeding beauty of this flower till then apparently unseen by any eye; then I spoke:

"It is curiously appropriate," I began, turning to my companion; but he was not there.

Once more I felt startled; but there was a thicket of hibiscus just behind us, whose quaintly mutable flowers were passing from their maiden-morning whiteness to their rosy evening blush, which might easily have hidden his departing figure; so I thought no more about it, judging him, from his manners, to be somewhat of an eccentric. As I made my way back to the garden between the yew hedges, however, I was conscious of a curious companionship. Other eyes beside mine seemed to be looking at the flowers.

And that night, as I looked out at the creaking old sign of the "Goat and Compasses" from my bedroom window ere turning out the light, I felt the same sensation, as if a cloud of witnesses were close at hand. And, once again, ere I passed into dreams, I thought of my dead friend, of the lotus lake, and wondered vaguely whether the picture was still unfinished? So, with the confused remembrance that one lotus at any rate lay perfect—not in a paraffin cask, but in my wash-hand basin—sleep came to me.

As I stood, next morning, watching my bag being put on to the top of a hay-cart that was to drop it at the cross-roads, whence a carrier would take it on to the far-distant station, I questioned the inn-keeper's wife as to the old manor-house I had seen.

"'Twill be Passovers," she said briskly. "'A belonged to Squire Strangways—a good name for 'e, sir, seeing he was a bit queer-like. But 'e's gone an' the 'xecutors can't find no tenant. So the garden 'e took such stock on is all gone to nawt, there bein' no one to see to the pore thing."

I thought of the wild luxuriance of the Romneya and disagreed with her silently.

The studio looked as I had left it, half-shadow, half-light, when I entered it in the afternoon to lay the lotus lily on the coffin of my dead friend.

There was a great bar of sunshine that streamed in from the open western door. The easel still stood facing the bed which had been replaced by trestles, but the dust cloth had been thrown over the picture.

I do not think it was even a vague curiosity which stirred me, for death has come too often into the life of a middle-aged man for him to cherish even the remotest illusion as to its absolute finality, but I stepped forward mechanically, and raised the cloth.

The sunlight showed an absolutely empty canvas; there was not one speck of paint upon it.

I have often asked myself what had happened. Had someone taken a fancy to the half-finished picture, removed it, and replaced it by a canvas of the same size and shape? This was conceivable. Men had been in and out of the studio with none to spy upon them.

Or, had someone whose standard had changed, someone with the wider knowledge and truer perspective of the fourth dimension, come back to undo work that had been better left undone?

Children's Gardens.

It is pleasant to learn that a band of women have succeeded in inaugurating and bringing to success the most useful experiment of converting some London waste places into gardens for city children. Among this energetic group of workers may be mentioned the Duchess of Leeds, the Duchess of Somerset, Emily Lady Amptill, the Countess Hoyos, Lady (Eldon) Gorst, the Hon. Mrs. Evelyn Cecil, the Countess Cawdor, the Countess of Cromer, the Countess of Ilchester, Lady Phillimore, Lady Helen Graham, Lady Markham, the Hon. Mrs. Victor Russell, Mrs. Leverton Harris and Mrs. Lyons. The movement started in the spring of 1911 by the leasing of a vacant building plot in Sutherland Avenue, where 82 boys and girls were taught to transform a dreary waste into productive market gardens. A second garden was started in St. Quintin's Avenue, North Kensington, and a third close to St. Pancras Station. The experiment has been so successful that not only have the young gardeners been able to take home lettuces, radishes and beets as fruits of their toil, but school teachers have been enabled to take classes to these plots for "nature study." An omnibus drive through almost any district of London will reveal the fact that there are many other such waste places, which under genial influences might also be transformed next summer into places of pleasantness for the children, gay and fragrant with blossom, fit recreation-grounds for childhood's hours.

The Modern Heroine.

A Novelist's Quandary.

I came upon Miss Danby, the well-known authoress, and was surprised to find that brilliant, resourceful soul in unprecedented depression. And yet, Miss Danby, above all other women, seemed to have turned the jog-trot of human daily life into a continuous triumphal procession. She was dressed, as usual, in white—white being the synthesis of all colours, she would explain, and, therefore, symbolic of life. Her cottage was as exquisitely harmonious in its simplicity as of old, and her name more than ever commanded a position and price in the literary world. Still, here was Miss Danby, sitting limp in dejection, like some white cloud, ready to dissolve into nothingness.

"I am representing the new periodical, *Now*, I explained, and have come to beg the favour of an interview with yourself on 'Women's Position in Modern Fiction.' As you will gather from our title, our aim is to express the most up-to-date opinions on literature, art, science and politics. Yours would be a most valuable contribution."

Miss Danby smiled bitterly. "It is as well you called at once," she replied, "if you want to know something of the work of modern writers of fiction, because I should think the novelist will be an extinct species by the end of a twelvemonth if things go on as at present."

"Is the British Public as dead as that?" I murmured. "As a journalist, I, of course, know something of the ways and tastes of the great beast whom we are engaged to feed; still, our circle have always conceded a love of fiction and romance as its positive quality."

"The British Public is not always at fault," she snapped, "the British Public is not as bad as the Press would have us believe. The trouble at present is the social cleavage, the impending sex war, the general unsettlement, and the entire impossibility of pleasing anybody—editor, public, or oneself."

I stood aghast. The great Miss Danby talking in this way, like some new-comer to the Press on a month's trial.

"What is the matter, Miss Danby?"

"The matter? Why, just glance at the impossible position of a writer of fiction of to-day," she continued. "Here we are besieged by applications for stories and sketches of varying length that 'shall have a love interest,' that 'shall end happily,' 'no mud or blood,' and that shall at the same time have a modern setting. How can this be done with a heroine drawn from modern life? Editors forget that heroines are not what they used to be, and that it is not so easy to make them settle down and live happily ever after. Indeed, it is hard work to persuade a modern heroine to allow a man to fall in love with her at all, much more to make her become a prey to the glamour herself."

"Of course, there would be no difficulty if editors would forgo the modern setting; if they would allow us to make the scene of our labours only as far back as the early Victorian age. Just think what you could do for a heroine then, and compare the opportunities of the modern setting, for, obviously, the author must be true to nature, must always present a microcosm of life."

She tapped her foot with impatience.

"In the early Victorian age, for instance, your heroine was usually young and shy, and almost any of the ordinary social events afforded the hero his opportunity. Say, that the hero of that period enters a ball-room; instantly your heroine is interested in him, although she may have the good sense not to show it, and your hero, broad-shouldered, blue-eyed, golden-haired, can step with assurance to the lady of his choice with a placid conviction of his ultimate success."

"But look what it means now. Take the modern girl, the girl who is bright and intelligent, who is capable of making witty replies, or of doing the romantic act—the kind of woman, in short, that is suitable for a modern heroine. The author is compelled to choose such a type, whose life history will give a true picture of the society of the day. So, you depict such a heroine, you allow her to have full swing, to say the practical word at Committee Meetings, the brilliant epigram at Learned Gatherings; you make her the centre of attraction, the soul of Causes, the leader of Movements. In a word, you do your best for the heroine, and she repays you by moving like real flesh and blood across your pages. But the difficulty is to introduce the romance, to give the hero his fair opportunity, to evolve the love interest and happy ending that both the Editor and British Public demand."

"Bring your hero, for instance, into one of these Meetings. The heroine is probably busily chatting with a group of individuals, men and women. She may be discussing educational propositions, Garden Suburbs, Arts and Crafts Movements, or, most likely of all, Woman's Suffrage. The point is, she has her own ideas."

"Your hero may be an M.A., or an M.P., a Cambridge Blue or an Oxford Don, an Indian Civil Servant or an Arctic Explorer, but there will be no downcast eyes on his entry, no mute appeal to his majestic physical strength. The thought inevitably occurs to the most reputable of heroes, 'Why, she is not even interested in ME!'"

"Under these circumstances, you can understand how a hero may round on the author of his being, may become sullen and refuse to commence to make love at all. You can realise what a problem the evolution of the love tale is under such circumstances, with a jibbing hero and a brilliant heroine totally unaware of his 'intentions.'"

"But people do marry, even in these restive times?"

"It is not a question of marriage," she answered. "It is a question of the love-interest no longer being the absorbing and only one in the heroine's life. It is a question of the hero's disgust at not entirely filling the circle of his loved one's life, at the curtailment of his complacency, and at the interference with his sole right to administer public affairs. It is the difficulty arising from the hero's hatred of his rival, the Suffrage Movement."

"So, if you ask me to discourse on the position of the modern story writer, I can only answer that the occupation will soon be no more."

And Miss Danby relapsed again into a white cloud on a sofa.

"But what do you suggest? What can be done?"

"What I suggest? The obvious and only possible solution, *Give the living woman the vote at once*, so that new social arrangements can evolve, so that a new order may be commenced with a new relationship between men and women."

"This would offer an author a fair opportunity with modern heroes and heroines, would save the noble art of fiction from wreckage and the British Public from boredom from the lack of current romance."

I felt Miss Danby had gripped the situation and bowed myself outside.

L.

Women and Welsh Disestablishment.

Certain women Anglicans are calling attention to the fact that the present crisis in the history of the Church affords a unique opportunity for improving the status of Churchwomen in Wales. Clause 13 of the Bill for Disestablishing the Welsh Church provides that the "Laity" are to have a share in the future government of the Church in that principality. No interpretation of the word "Laity" however is given, and the question has arisen whether, for the purpose of electing to, and being eligible for Church Synods, women are to be understood as being included in the term or not. An amendment to the same clause, which provides a scheme for bringing together the new Representative Church Body, will be moved by Mr. Murray Macdonald, and this expressly stipulates that all representatives shall be laymen, and confines the power of women to voting only. Since the control of the finances of the Church, to which women are so largely benefactors, will be in the hands of the Representative Body, the incorporation of any such limiting phrase in the Bill is open to objection.

The Anglican Church admittedly lags behind other churches in the position it accords to women, and it is felt that the present opportunity for bringing the Church in Wales more into line with modern thought in this matter should not be lost.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick.

Recognition was made of twenty-five years of public service devoted to the nursing profession by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick by a dinner at the Hotel Cecil, presided over by Mrs. Walter Spencer. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was the founder of the International Council of Nurses, and is President of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland and Hon. Editor of the *British Journal of Nurses*. She organised the first nursing exhibition in London in 1896, was President of the Society of Women Journalists, 1910-11, and a member of the Legislation Committee and Public Health Committee of the National Union of Women Workers.

Foreign News.

The United States.

We learn from the *Woman's Journal* that the victory in Michigan is by no means a certain one. It appears that Detroit, the only large town, gave a considerable vote against suffrage, and that the saloon keepers there went into court to try to defeat it. What has happened seems so puzzling for persons in other countries to understand that it is best to quote Mrs. Stone Blackwell's own words. She says in her editorial: "The vicious interests in Michigan rest under pregnant suspicion of having conspired to count out the suffrage amendment. On the official count it has been pronounced lost by the slender majority of 594 votes." The *Saginaw News* said on November 23rd: "There is a conspiracy to defeat Woman Suffrage. The returns on the constitutional amendment have been juggled, and there is no longer any doubt that it is being done for a sinister purpose. It is now eighteen days since the election, and the returns from two counties, Wayne and St. Clair, are not reported. Wayne went heavily against suffrage, and the general belief that the figures from that county are being delayed to ascertain how many votes are needed to kill the amendment seems to be well sustained. It is preposterous that Wayne, or any other county, should not have reported its vote long before this, and the failure to do so under the circumstances looks suspicious to say the least. Where there is power to withhold election returns for nearly three weeks after election, and to suppress entirely this count from three precincts, there is also power to falsify returns."

The *Detroit Free Press* says: "Certain unusual features of this election naturally attract attention and arouse suspicion in some minds. The vote cast is enormous for a constitutional amendment, apparently far ahead of any total ever reached in Michigan in a referendum." Common gossip apparently asserted that the vote was not very large. "Possibly the common gossip is altogether erroneous, and the voters did vote on the subject. But the special ballots certainly were left in the booths in some instances, for reputable citizens declare that they saw several of them lying about, and if this happened frequently there is a possibility that a large number were gathered up and marked in a bunch by interested persons, being thereafter deposited in the boxes to appear as genuine in case of a recount."

I quote at length, because it is almost impossible for persons accustomed to the procedure of the English polling-station to understand how it is possible to leave voting papers about, to be marked by unauthorised persons, how the counting of votes can be delayed for three weeks, and how it is possible to announce the result of an election before all the returns are to hand. The one thing clear is that foul play is possible, and has taken place. The Suffragists have petitioned for a recount, and their request has been granted, and "it is hoped that the monumental crime of stealing a State and defeating the will of nearly 200,000 voters may yet be stopped. If not, it will bring its own Nemesis to those who have devised it, for the victory of justice will be the bigger and more emphatic for the delay."

The first jury of women in Kansas was recently empanelled. The case submitted to them was one on which a male jury a year ago was unable to agree. After three hours' consideration this jury reported its decision, which awarded \$1,200 damages to the plaintiff in a case dealing with the title to some land. The judge's comment was: "No jury ever showed truer appreciation of its responsibilities." That of one of the jurywomen was: "It should be a cure for forming opinions and snap judgments. I believe any woman who has felt the tremendous responsibility of the jury-box will afterwards in other matters be inclined to withhold judgment until all the evidence is in."

The Suffrage Convention in Philadelphia was the largest ever held in the United States. Mrs. Ida Husted Harper says in *Jus Suffragii*: "For six days reports and pictures have occupied the front pages of the newspapers of this city of several million people. The Sunday afternoon meeting in the Metropolitan Opera House was attended by 4,000 people, and as many more were trying to get in. Finally, thirty or forty speakers were sent outside by Dr. Shaw, and six street meetings were continued till dark." At the second Mass Meeting at the Opera House, the chief speakers were Bishop Darlington, Mrs. Catt, and the Baroness von Suttner.

Dr. Shaw was re-elected President and Miss Jane Addams first Vice-President. Immediately after the end of the Convention the Pennsylvania Convention was begun. A great campaign is at once to be initiated in this State.

It is good to read of the successful work of our sisters on the other side, and to be told that "in all, the six campaigns which have been carried on during the past year there has not been one

act that was not strictly legal and constitutional, or that could be adversely criticised." . . . "In every State the Suffragists have the full respect of everybody, even their enemies. It is not likely that any other kind of campaign will be made here."

In Parliament.

A DESIRABLE RESIDENCE IN BRISTOL.—On Tuesday, December 17th, Mr. O'Grady called the Home Secretary's attention to the existence of a building in Bristol, which is "stored with highly inflammable material," while behind it stands an inhabited court from which the residents would have no means of escape in case of fire. Mr. McKenna replied that he had received a complaint about the storage of turpentine, but that he had no power to take any action, and doubted whether the local authority had any. The local authority, however, could at least ascertain whether the means of escape were adequate. The Home Secretary's answer seems to indicate a serious gap in the law. Until it is filled up, however, it should not pass the wit of man to devise some method of peaceable agitation that should focus the public opinion of Bristol upon the turpentine stores in such a manner as would probably put an end to the present highly dangerous position.

BELFAST OUTWORKERS.—Mr. McKenna gave a very satisfactory reply to Mr. Devlin as to the recommendations of the recent report upon the linen and other trades in Belfast. The paragraphs recommending that work sent through agents should be stamped with the rate of pay by the firm before being sent out, and that shopkeepers should not be employed as agents lie beyond the present scope of the law, but a circular is being issued to employers calling their attention to these proposals, and to the provisions of the law in respect to lists of outworkers and to work being taken home at the end of the day by persons employed in factories. The extension to homeworkers of the provisions of the Truck Act will be made whenever legislation about truck is undertaken. The Irish Government has been consulted about securing the enforcement of the Factory Act in the matter of outworkers' lists, and its attention has been drawn to the need that the Employment of Children Act should be strictly enforced.

WITNESSES KEPT WAITING.—Mr. Touche asked the Home Secretary about his enquiry into the case of Mr. Horner (mentioned in last week's COMMON CAUSE). Mr. McKenna replied that he was making enquiry, but that, though he could bring the matter to the notice of the authorities of the Central Criminal Court, he had no power to control their arrangements.

THE SESSION AND THE BILL.—On Wednesday the Prime Minister made important statements as to the length of the Session and the progress of the Franchise Bill. Asked by Mr. Bonar Law to communicate to the House when the Session would end, he replied that he did not want to lay himself open to an accusation of a breach of faith, but he hoped that it would end "comparatively early in the month of February." Mr. Law then enquired whether it was proposed to complete the Franchise Bill by taking one day for it. How otherwise was it possible to get the business finished? Mr. Asquith hoped to give adequate time to the Committee and Report stages and to the third reading of the Franchise Bill, and said he would submit proposals "when we resume after the adjournment." Lord Robert Cecil asked whether the Home Rule Bill and Welsh Disestablishment Bill would be taken first, and the Franchise Bill after their completion. Mr. Asquith's answer was, on the whole, reassuring. He did not like to commit himself, but, "as far as I can at present forecast," thought the Committee stage of the Franchise Bill would be begun before the completion of the Welsh Church Bill. "I must be understood," he continued, "to be speaking with very great reserve, but I think we shall take the Committee stage of the Franchise Bill somewhere about the 20th of January."

CELLULOID AND ITS DANGERS.—Mr. Rowlands, on Thursday, December 19th, asked when the Report of the Departmental Committee enquiry into the precautions necessary in the use of celluloid might be expected. Mr. McKenna reminded him that the Committee began to sit on the 25th of October, and could assign no date at which its work was likely to be completed.

ADJOURNMENT.—On Friday, December 20th, Parliament was adjourned until Monday, the 30th. Thus the prayer of Scotch members for permission to remain in their own land over New Year's Day has not been granted; and New Year's Eve will be spent in the House of Commons. Women can only hope that business may be despatched there with the utmost possible celerity, so that there may be adequate time for all the stages of the Franchise Bill.

Notes from Headquarters.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.
 Hon. Secretaries: MISS I. B. O'MALLEY (Literature), MISS K. D. COURTNEY, MISS EDITH PALLISER (Parliamentary), MISS CATHERINE MARSHALL (Secretary), MISS EMILY M. LEAP (Press).
 Hon. Treasurer: MRS. AUERBACH.
 Secretary: MISS GERALDINE COOKE.
 Offices: Parliament Chambers, 14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

New Societies.

RAWENSTALL, RYDE, I. of W.

List of Societies.

The Quarterly List of Societies will appear in the first week in January. We have given up the custom of issuing the list alternately alphabetically and grouped in Federations, as the latter arrangement seemed less convenient for reference. We have been asked to give some indication of the Federation to which the Societies belong, and to meet this wish an initial Federation letter will be placed before each Society, and, by reference to the key, the Federation can readily be identified.

If any of our members wish for extra copies of the paper containing the list, we shall be pleased to supply them. We wish our members a happy Christmas, and a New Year which shall bring fulfilment of hope.

Literature Department.

The new leaflets: "How are we to get Women's Suffrage included in the Franchise Bill?" and "The Labour Party and the Reform Bill" are now ready. They each cost 6d. per 100. The first will be useful in all constituencies, the second chiefly in Labour constituencies.

The new National Union letter blocks are now ready, and are much more attractive than the old ones. They have the Unicorn design (as used on our pamphlets "Physical Force and Democracy" and "How Women Use the Vote") on the cover. The paper is cream laid with a corner in the colours. These letter-blocks cost 9d. each. It would be a great convenience if members who write for Suffrage Calendars would in every case say distinctly which calendar they prefer. The calendars stocked by the National Union are as follows:—

Calendar published by the Edinburgh Society (size 10 inches by 7.) Bugler Girl in the colours on the outside. Quotations and names of Great Women for each month (to hang on wall, 1s.).

Calendars published by the London Society (size 6 inches square). Cover: either plain green with date 1913, or brown with portrait of Mrs. Fawcett. Quotations for each month (to hang on wall), 3d.).

Calendar published by the Nottingham Society (6 inches by 4). Picture by Mrs. Merritt and three quotations, (3d.).
 Calendar published by the Artists' Suffrage League. Picture (same as Christmas card last year) and leaves to tear off, (4½d.).

Calendar published by Women Writers' League. Picture and poem by Lawrence Housman, (2d.).

It is hoped that all these calendars will be ordered in quantities for the New Year, and also the excellent Suffrage Diary, published by the Eastern Counties' Federation, price (1s. 2d.).

I. B. O'MALLEY.

Parliamentary.

It is important that all speakers, organisers, secretaries, and Press secretaries should watch closely the developments in the political situation during the next few weeks. The Home Rule Bill, the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, the Trades Union Bill, and the Franchise Bill are each of them liable to be affected by the fate of any of the others. The *Manchester Guardian* is the best daily paper for political news in connection with Women's Suffrage. The *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle* are also good now. There is, unfortunately, no Conservative paper which gives good Suffrage news except the *Standard*, which ought of course to be seen regularly by all suffragist workers on account of its *Woman's Platform*. The *Daily Citizen* was at first a disappointment, but has begun to improve.

All Suffragists who want to help the Cause during the coming crisis should study the facts and arguments set forth in the leader on "The Irish Party and Women's Suffrage" in last week's COMMON CAUSE, and should have all details about the

AGNES GARDINER,

Court Dressmaker

(FROM REED & GARDINER)

Exclusive and Original Models.

Young Ladies' Court Gowns from 15 Gns.

Evening Gowns from 7 Gns.

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The wonderful and even absorbency of SOUTHALLS' Towels distinguishes them from all others, and they are truly antiseptic, most perfectly shaped, and extra thick.

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have the improved ends which give easiest attachment and greatest security. They are most economical to buy because they last longest.

Sold by all Drapers, Ladies' Outfitters and Chemists, in silver packets, containing 1 doz. 12 1/2 and 2/2. Southalls' Compressed Towels, full size, in tiny silver boxes. Size A, price 1d. Size B, 1 1/2d. Size C, 2d. Size D, 2 1/2d.

CAUTION—Do not ask for "Sanitary Towels," ask specially for SOUTHALLS'



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BEXHILL-ON-SEA. YORK PRIVATE and RESIDENTIAL HOTEL.

De La Warr Parade—opposite Sea and Kursaal.
 WELL-APPOINTED, COMFORTABLE, HOME-LIKE, EXCELLENT CUISINE.
 Write for Tariff.
 Personal Supervision—MR. and MRS. BARTENS.

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By so doing you help
 "THE COMMON CAUSE"
 more than you think.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS. All Readers are earnestly urged to give preference to OUR ADVERTISERS.

"THINKING WOMEN

READ

The Standard"

THIS phrase has become a truism. Why? Order The Standard for a week, or a day, and you will see. It is because The Standard's daily news pages include one headed:

"WOMAN'S PLATFORM."

which every Thinking Woman in the land, and very many thinking men, want to see and to study every day. "WOMAN'S PLATFORM" has ended what was called the "Press Boycott" of the serious interests of thinking women—not their ribbons and ornaments, but their thoughts, aims, claims, views, hopes, deeds, and WORK.

The Standard,

104, SHOE LANE, LONDON, E.C.

Women's Suffrage Amendments to the Reform Bill at their fingers' ends. These can be obtained from the "Points for Deputations" issued in the summer to all secretaries and organisers. Arguments in favour of the Dickinson Amendment should be given as much currency in the Press as possible. It is the most difficult amendment to understand, but the most likely to pass if properly understood.

According to the latest information, the Franchise Bill will go into Committee about the middle of January; a closure timetable will be drawn up, and the Women's Suffrage Amendments will be subject to the guillotine—i.e., there will be a time-limit on their discussion. They will probably be taken in close succession, possibly all on the same day.

C. E. MARSHALL,
 (Hon. Parliamentary Sec. pro tem.)

"Common Cause" Competition.

The National Union enjoins upon all its Societies the duty of promoting the circulation of its organ, THE COMMON CAUSE, which is of unique value to our movement, both as a means of spreading accurate knowledge and information concerning the political situation and as a paper that aims at educating and influencing public opinion. THE COMMON CAUSE deals with every aspect of the Women's Suffrage question, and just in so far as it gets more and more into the hands of the public and its circulation increases, by just so much will our prospects of success be strengthened and increased. The Executive Committee of the National Union proposes, therefore, to organize a competition, with a view to stimulating and encouraging Societies which are helping in the promotion of this object. Dates and rules will be announced later.

Contributions to the General Fund.

Already acknowledged since November 1st, 1912 ... £ s. d.
 Received December 14th to 21st— ... 273 13 9

Subscriptions.

Miss J. M. Oswald ...	0	2	0
Miss Julia Kennedy ...	0	2	0
Mrs. Wm. Stead, jun. ...	0	2	6
Mrs. Herbert Reeves ...	0	2	6
Miss G. E. Swithinbank ...	0	2	6
Mrs. Arthur Pelham ...	0	5	0

Donations.

Mrs. Knowlson ...	0	5	0
Mrs. Percy Thompson (three instalments) ...	60	0	0
Miss Horsnail (a Christmas gift) ...	1	1	0

Affiliation Fees.

Melrose W.S.S. ...	0	6	9
Truro W.S.S. ...	1	10	0
St. Andrews W.S.S. ...	0	9	3
Haddington W.S.S. ...	0	12	0
Southport W.S.S. ...	1	11	0
Beaulieu W.S.S. ...	0	5	0
Brecon and District W.S.S. ...	0	5	6
Farmers' District W.S.S. ...	0	12	6

£343 8 3

"La Femme Seule."

A new play by M. Brieux was produced, under the above title, in Paris last Sunday afternoon. It represents the difficulties of a young woman in her endeavours to earn her own living, first upon the staff of a feminist newspaper and afterwards in a factory. In both cases the fact of her being a woman proves to be an insuperable stumbling block. In England, of course, such a picture would be rather exceptional than typical. Womanhood is not in this country an insuperable obstacle; it is only a hindrance, which makes a woman's path harder than a man's, and serves as an excuse for underpaying her.

Women's Tax Resistance League.

Two drawing-room meetings were given last week. One by Miss Manuelle, 103, Cadogan Gardens, S.W., on December 17th, when the speakers were Mr. Cameron Grant, Mrs. Louis Fagan, Mr. Cholmeley, and the Rev. Hugh Chapman. The following evening at 25, Wimpole Street, W., Dr. Octavia Lewin presided, and was hostess. Mrs. Cecil Chapman spoke very strongly in favour of Tax Resistance, and gave an account of her own protest of the previous week. Mrs. Ayres Purdie and Mr. Mark Willis also spoke with special reference to the taxation of married women.

News from the Societies and Federations.

London Society.

BERMONDSEY.—A small but enthusiastic meeting of the Railway Women's Guild was addressed by Miss Goddard on December 4th.

CANNING TOWN.—Through the kindness of the Rev. and Mrs. Clifford on December 16th, at the Barking Road Tabernacle, Canning Town, Miss Maude Royden addressed over 1,100 working women on the subject of the White Slave Traffic. The audience listened with great interest to Miss Royden's deeply impressive address.

EALING.—Miss Helen Ward having been invited to open a debate on Women's Suffrage on December 16th in the South Ealing Local Parliament, the President and Secretary of the Ealing Branch, with Miss Ward, proceeded to Westwood House on that evening.

HITCHIN, STEVENAGE AND DISTRICT Society arranged the following meetings:—On November 13th, a meeting at Welwyn Rectory to explain the "Friends of Women's Suffrage" Scheme, when several present offered their services.

ISLINGTON (SOUTH).—The Highbury Branch of the B.W.T.A. held a meeting on December 11th at 3 p.m., when Mrs. Garrett Jones, of the London Society for Women's Suffrage, gave a rousing address on "Woman's Opportunity."

KINGSTON AND SUBURBION.—The 6th Annual Meeting of this Branch was held on December 2nd at Caverleigh, Suburton, by invitation of the President, Mrs. Horner.

LAMBETH (NORTH).—The Jubilee Sale held on November 25th realised £8 10s. profit, and the proceeds are to be devoted to the Bazaar.

NORTHWOOD.—The Committee of this Branch held a successful At Home in the Church Hall on Saturday afternoon, December 7th. Over 100 acceptances to invitations were received.

PADDINGTON.—On December 9th, Miss Helen Ward addressed a meeting of the Soap Assistants' Union at the Labour Exchange, Edgware Road, Miss Pryor in the Chair. The audience, which included a large proportion of men, was heartily in favour, and a keen and intelligent discussion took place.

ROTHERITHE.—The Empire Club held a Suffrage meeting on December 3rd. Speaker, Miss M. Goddard. Great interest was shown, and offers of help in local work were received.

SHADWELL.—Miss I. O. Ford spoke at a meeting for men on Saturday evening, December 14th, at Paddy's Goose, High Street, E. The men seemed much impressed, and after the meeting there were many requests for cards to send to the Member for St. George's in the East to urge him to vote for the inclusion of women in the Reform Bill.

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TWICKENHAM.—On December 9th, Miss Helen Ward addressed the Women's Liberal Association by invitation, at the Twickenham Free Library, and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to her.

WALSORTH.—On December 10th, at Browning Hall, Miss Cicely D. Corbett, M.A., addressed the "Women's Own" meeting, when Mrs. Morgan presided over a large gathering.

WANDSWORTH.—On November 27th a highly successful "Women's Own" meeting, numbering about 300, took place at Queen's Mission Hall, and was addressed by Miss Emily Hill.

The Federations.

Eastern Counties.

EAST AND WEST CAMPS. have continued their meetings with vigour, and with good results. Meetings have been held at Ickleton, where Mrs. Ramsey and Mr. Mirrieles spoke, and a large number became "Friends." At Soham the Court House was filled to hear Mr. Ratchford and Mrs. Peck, who were supported by Miss Colson and Mr. Mirrieles.

listening with attention to addresses from Miss Mein, of Newcastle, and Mrs. Rackham. At Duxford, at a meeting in the Schools, Miss Mein and Mrs. Rackham spoke on the value of women's suffrage from the men's point of view.

NORWICH.—On November 27th the Norwich Society gave an "At Home" at the School of Music, when the Rev. Canon Hay Aitken took the Chair. The speaker, the Rev. C. Hunsloff, specially urged the Church to take her share in this work.

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performance at Hexham, and whist drives at Jarrow, Walker and Wallsend. The number of new members gained since the last Federation Committee meeting in October was estimated at about 400. It was reported that Miss Sheard was now in charge of the Office at Gateshead under the Election Fighting Fund.

SHILDON.—On November 27th Mr. Robin Gray, the Conservative Candidate for Bishop Auckland, received a deputation from the Shildon Society. In answer to questions put to him by the Secretary he replied that he had not made a study of the question of Women's Suffrage, though he thought he would be in favour of it at present, until he had given the question more consideration.

SHOTLEY BRIDGE AND CONSETT.—On November 16th a large and very successful meeting was held at Hamsterley Hall by permission of Eleanor Viscountess Grey and Miss Surtees. The speaker was Miss Sterling, who gave a most interesting and able address.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES.—Miss Beaver, one of the organisers of the N.U.W.S.S., has been with us here at Stockfield for nearly a week, holding both public and drawing-room meetings in the district.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES.—A most successful meeting was held in the Temperance Hall on November 26th, Mr. J. Hyslop Bell, J.P., was in the chair. Mrs. Rackham, the chief speaker of the evening, in an interesting address moved the Resolution that Alderman J. Samuel, M.P., should all in his power to include women in the Reform Bill.

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BURNHAM.—A successful Public Meeting was held in the Lifeboat Pavilion on November 15th, when the Society had the good fortune to welcome Miss Helen Fraser as speaker.

we hope to obtain a very good one from amongst his constituents.

CHELTENHAM.—On December 3rd, a Debate between our President, Mrs. Swiney and Miss Gladys Pott took place. Tickets of almost equally divided place. Tickets of the two Societies, and the Hall, which was barricaded down the middle, was packed in each half.

STREET.—Our Annual Meeting was held on November 18th at the Crispin Hall. Dr. Dodge, Mayor of Glastonbury, presided, and the chief speaker was Miss Fraser.

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to go on deputation to Sir Compton Rickett, M.P. for the inclusion of Women in the Reform Bill, to be forwarded to the House of Commons. At Glastonbury, the Secretary of the L.L.P. and Trade Council said there would be no doubt that their Committee would go on deputation to Sir Compton Rickett, especially as it is likely that a Labour Candidate may come forward for the Glastonbury Division.

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dance, despite bad weather, and the happy tone of the meeting called forth special comment from the Chairman, who deserves our particular gratitude for the admirable manner in which, at very short notice, he undertook, for the first time the conduct of a Suffrage meeting.

Manchester and District.

FARNWORTH.—The annual general meeting was held at the Moor Hall on December 11th, presided over by Mr. Charles Young, chairman of the District Council. In spite of the fact that it was one of the wettest evenings of this rainy year, there was fair attendance.

The International Suffrage Shop £900 Fund.

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes 'The International Suffrage Shop bags to acknowledge the following contributions to the £900 Fund:-' and a list of donors and amounts.

Inaugural Meeting at Hetton-le-Hole.

On December 11th a public meeting was held at Hetton-le-Hole. The speakers were Miss Dring, Miss Sheard, and Mr. Mirrieles. This was the first Suffrage meeting ever held in the village (a mining village with about 13,000 inhabitants), and the Miners' Hall was well filled, there being about 900 people present.

A "Give and Take" Tea.

By kind permission of Mrs. Robertson, 43, Kersland Terrace, the newly-formed Partick Committee of the above Society held a "give-and-take" tea on December 14th. Mrs. Robertson, of Limavady, in opening the tea, said she remembered how much askance people (in 1880) looked on anyone who advocated the vote for women.

Debate at Epsom.

A Debate was held recently at Mount Hill, Epsom, by permission of Major and Mrs. Torrance. The Vicar presided, and the Rev. Llewellyn Smith, opened the Debate. He was opposed by Mrs. Gladstone, the Rev. Llewellyn Smith asked for the Solomons.

New Society at Ryde.

Following the meeting, held in Ryde, Isle of Wight, in September by the invitation of Mrs. Stanton Coit, a Society has been formed, which has applied for affiliation with the National Union. The first members' meeting was held on December 11th, when the committee and officers were elected and work planned.

In Aid of the Hollow-Ware Workers.

We have received the following further donation in aid of the Hollow-Ware Workers:— s. d. South Salford Suffrage Association .. 14 0.

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(MILLINERY EXPERT)

Has a unique collection of

Real Lace Articles

Cushions, D'Oyleys, Neckwear, Etc.

at Exceedingly Low Prices.

A Speciality in Motor Bonnets.

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Close to Tube.

NEW YEAR PRESENTS.

Alexander & Co.

16, Brook Street, London, W. TELEPHONE 5355 MAYFAIR.

ARE NOW BOOKING ORDERS for NEW YEAR, FLOWERS, BASKETS, PLANTS, &c., &c., as PRESENTS FOR FRIENDS.

Order at once to save DISAPPOINTMENT.

Artistic New Year Presents.

ENGLISH Hand Made LACE

made by the cottagers of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. Our Laces were awarded the Gold Medal at the Festival of Empire and Imperial Exhibition, Crystal Palace, 1911.

DAINTY HANDKIE. No. 910. 2/9 each. Buy some of this hand-made Pillow Lace, it lasts many times longer than any machine-made variety, and imparts quite an air of distinction to the possessor, at the same time supporting the village lace-makers, bringing them many little comforts otherwise unobtainable on an agricultural man's wage. Write for the absorbing & descriptive Home Industry, this contains over 100 striking examples of the lace-maker's art, and is sent free to any part of the world.

16th Century COLLAR. 4/3 3in. deep. Lace for every purpose can be obtained, and within reach of the most modest purse. Every sale, however small, is a support to the industry. Collars, Fronts, Mistrans, Jabots, Yokes, Fichus, Handkerchiefs, Stockings, Camisoles, Chemise Sets, Tea-Cloths, Table Centres, D'Oyleys, Mats, Medallions, Quaker and Peter Pan Sets, etc., from 1/6, 2/6, 5/-, up to 21/- each.

No. 112. Price 7/6d. per yd.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents are requested to send their names and addresses, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. The Editor is not responsible for any statement made in the correspondence column. Correspondents are requested to write on ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY.

"WHAT MILITANTS WANT."

In the issue of COMMON CAUSE for December 13th, the militants seem to me to be quite misrepresented. "They desire that an amended Reform Bill shall not pass," and "any concerted outbreak of militancy that may occur between this time and the introduction of the Bill will be actually designed to damage its chances," are each, I believe, quite untrue. In the *Suffragette* I find, in an article signed by Miss Pankhurst: "The W.S.P.U. is militant with the object of creating a situation from which the Government, and the electors will find themselves compelled to escape by granting votes to women." Also these sentences: "The word 'male' is to be deleted from the Manhood Suffrage Bill, but none of the amendments giving women the vote will be carried, since ample provision has been made to defeat each one of them in turn. Every day that passes brings its proof that the essential condition of success is to make and to hold the Government responsible for giving women the vote."

I hold no opinion as to which tactics are right, as it seems to me an exceedingly difficult matter on which to hold a definite opinion. I am not, therefore, wishing to endorse Miss Pankhurst's tactics, but simply to point out that her words do not confirm the words of THE COMMON CAUSE in speaking of the policy of the W.S.P.U., which is, of course, Miss Pankhurst's policy. M. W. P.

[On the very day that the note of which our correspondent complains appeared, the following words were published in *The Suffragette*:—"By depending upon unofficial amendments and worthless pledges, instead of fighting for a Government measure, by trusting to the official Labour Party, instead of relying upon themselves, the non-militants are achieving no useful purpose. They are simply delaying the inevitable resort to militancy until dangerously late." The latest number of the same paper—the organ of the Women's Social and Political Union—dated December 27th, contains a paragraph in the same strain:—"The events of the past year have made us realise more fully than ever that a Government measure is essential to the enactment of women's enfranchisement. The W.S.P.U. has, after a strenuous fight, compelled the Prime Minister to make some concession to the demand for a Government measure. This concession or 'pledge' is worthless in itself, but it is valuable as an indication that the Government are amenable to pressure." Both these extracts are from articles signed by Miss Christabel Pankhurst. Surely the words in italics do mean that the person writing them regards the Bill as an obstacle to the enfranchisement of women. Any person who follows the public speeches made at "militant" meetings must be aware that the demand for the withdrawal of the Franchise Bill is repeated again and again. Moreover, on the day that the note was written an Irish Suffrage worker was lamenting to the Editor of *The Common Cause* that no sort of demonstration in favour of the Bill could be hoped for from the militants in that country, because they said plainly that they desired its withdrawal.—Ed. C. C.]

THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

Will you kindly permit me to address a few words of appeal to your readers on the subject of the Municipal Elections, which will take place next month. Those Elections, as I understand, will be held in the following boroughs:—Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Londonderry, Drogheda, Sligo, Wexford and Clonmel, also in more than eighty of our towns; and it is a matter of extreme importance that a fair proportion of well-qualified women should take their share in the municipal work of the coming years. There are a large number of fields in which the help of such women is urgently needed—more especially in everything relating to the health and well-being of our children, and there are already 44 such women performing valuable work of this kind in England and Wales, 2 in Scotland, and, including our Urban Districts, 7 in Ireland.

Now, what is most especially needed at the present moment is that, in as many of these districts as practicable, capable, experienced women should offer themselves as candidates; but they cannot be expected to face the worry and turmoil of a possibly contested election, unless they are promised the cordial support of an influential body of the electors, male as well as female. And I would fain make an earnest appeal to the leading men of all Parties in their respective districts to come forward and guarantee the successful return of any such women as may unselfishly offer themselves as candidates. By so doing they will make some amends for the cruel slight inflicted upon us women by so many of our Parliamentary representatives, in refusing us the small measure of enfranchisement, which either the Conciliation Bill, or Mr. Snowden's Amendment to the Government of Ireland Bill, if carried, might possibly have conferred upon us.

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- Rochdale—Assembly Rooms, Water Street—Smoking Concert and Meeting for Men—Councillor Margaret Ashton, Mrs. Chew 7.30
- JANUARY 7. Bath—St. Mary's Church House—Mr. Baillie Weaver, Performance of Mrs. Baillie Weaver's play 4.30
- King's Sutton—New Schools—Meeting—Miss Haverfield, Miss Dora Mason 7.0
- JANUARY 9. Birmingham—Water Orton Railway Women's Guild—Mrs. Ring 2.30
- JANUARY 13. Windermere—Waverley Temperance Hotel—Miss Helen Fraser 3.0
- JANUARY 14. Ambleside—Assembly Rooms—Chair, Mr. Hubert Coutts, J.P., Miss Helen Fraser 8.0
- SCOTLAND.
- JANUARY 10. Edinburgh—40, Shandwick Place—At Home—Chair: Mrs. Melville 4.30
- JANUARY 17. Lauriston Hall—Dramatic Entertainment, "Just to Get Married." 8.15

Meeting at Leamington.

A successful joint meeting of the National Union, Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, and the Church and Men's Leagues, was held at the Town Hall, Leamington, on December 12th. Lady Willoughby de Broke was in the Chair. A resolution in favour of the inclusion in the Reform Bill of some measure of women's suffrage, proposed by Miss C. Macmillan and seconded by Mr. Baillie Weaver, was carried with three dissentients. Apologies were read from Lord Henry Bentinck, M.P., and Mr. D. M. Mason, M.P. Several new members joined.

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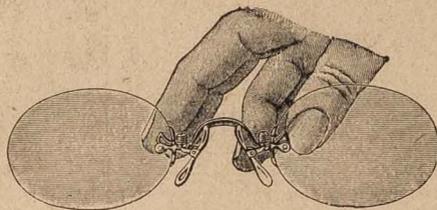
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