

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW

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* * *

The Bristol and North Berks Meetings.

THESE two remarkable meetings are certainly an indication of the growing influence and success of the Anti-Suffrage League. They would not have been possible a little while ago. The strong latent opposition in the country

to the Woman Suffrage proposals wanted something to rouse it into action, to force it to declare itself. This something has been found in the sayings and doings of the militant Suffragists, and the feeling aroused is being organized and led by the Anti-Suffrage League. The result is striking. In Bristol 1,500 people, mainly women, the majority of whom had paid for their tickets, listened for nearly two hours to Anti-Suffrage speeches, took every point with enthusiasm, and sent up resolutions, hostile to the Suffrage, to the Prime Minister and to Mr. Balfour. The platform was crowded with prominent representatives of both political parties, of church and dissent, of philanthropy and business. 'Such a meeting, on a political question,' writes a Bristol correspondent, 'is unique in our city.'

What reply was given to this meeting? The night afterwards a gathering was held in the same hall, organized by one of the Suffrage societies. It was addressed by Lady Grove and Mrs. Ashworth Hallett. The speeches consisted—according to the reports—of one-fifth argument, and four-fifths silly, personal attacks on the League and its speakers. Lady Grove, for instance, said that the League had first called itself the Anti-Suffrage Society, but finding that its initials appropriately spelt A.S.S., had promptly changed its name. Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, in allusion to the fact that one of the speakers of the League was a novelist, said the 'Society itself was founded on fiction. They had just issued a newspaper, financed by a few men, and fiction was writ all over it. These "Antis" said that women should stop at home. That was another fiction (applause); they were always on the prowl!' Whereupon another speaker, Canon Talbot, asked whether the League had not been 'riddled to death' by the

attacks of Lady Grove and Mrs. Ashworth Hallett? The question was no doubt answered in the affirmative by a partisan meeting, and the speakers went home content. But the morning must have brought reflection. For Bristol showed no signs whatever of endorsing Canon Talbot. The two meetings were compared, greatly to the League's advantage, and the leading Bristol newspaper unkindly remarked that 'Bristol people may be pardoned if they fail to see any reason why the Anti-Suffrage League should consider itself "riddled to death." It is certainly good to hear all sides of this important question, but we want solid argument and not trivialities.' 'There is but one opinion,' writes a strong Bristol Liberal, 'as to the success of the League meeting. Nor is there any real difference of opinion on the subject of Saturday's meeting (the Suffragist). I am almost ashamed to read the report of such speeches, but we shall see that they are made good use of.'

Well! No need to be self-righteous! The League kept its temper, and the Suffragists lost theirs. It may be the other way next time. Meanwhile there can be no doubt that Anti-Suffrage has scored rather heavily in Bristol.

The North Berks meeting, held at Abingdon on January 28th, was no less significant. The Corn Exchange at Abingdon was crowded with an audience gathered not only from the town, but from the country districts round, 300 women coming in by special train. The committee which arranged the meeting represented both political parties, as did the speeches, from Lady Wantage, Professor Dicey, Mrs. Clarendon Hyde, the Bishop of Reading, and others. It is clear, indeed, as Mrs. Fawcett frankly and fairly admits in the opening number of 'The Englishwoman,' that the Woman Suffrage movement is now for the first time in

its history confronted with 'an organized and influential opposition,' led, as we should add, by women. That fact is one of some gravity. It lays new obligations upon the combatants engaged; it calls, let Lady Grove and Mrs. Ashworth Hallett take notice, for not less but more good feeling and good temper. For it is no longer a question of 'Women' with a big W, against a tyrannical minority and a dilatory House of Commons. It is a question of some women—how many we do not yet know—who desire the Parliamentary vote, as against a large number—we believe the great majority—of English women, who, after a discussion which has lasted forty years, are still resolutely convinced that the direct responsibilities of party and imperial politics should remain the responsibilities of men, and of men only; who believe, moreover, that all the still unrealized reforms, moral and social, in which women are interested, can be obtained by the steady use of those same agencies and methods which have already during the same period—and without the vote—transformed the whole legal and social position of their sex.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE advocates of Female Suffrage are fond of quoting the case of our Australian colonies as proof that women can and should possess the vote; and to some minds, no doubt, the argument is convincing enough. But the theory that what is suitable for the colonies is suitable for the mother country is a dangerous one, for it takes no note of the great difference in local conditions; it omits, likewise, to consider that legislative experiments can be tried in the colonies, without much harm resulting, which would have very serious results, if they would not be absolutely disastrous, in this country. And apart from this initial objection, few of the advocates of Female Suffrage in Great Britain have taken the trouble to ascertain what are the results of the extension of the franchise in Australia. Yet if they turned to 'State Experiments in New Zealand,' by Mr. W. Pember Reeves, the late Agent-General for that Dominion in London, they would find that, while he admits that it has made but little difference in many respects, he remarks that it has led to an increase of political cant. There is no more accurate

and acute judge of men in private life than an intelligent woman; but in political affairs, in which she is fresh and inexperienced, she is very apt to be deceived by the frothy demagogue, who plays upon her susceptibilities and obtains votes for his party accordingly.

IN view of the manner in which the militant advocates of Female Suffrage display their erudition by quoting any and every writer whose remarks, frequently torn from their context, can be distorted into approval of 'Votes for Women,' we venture to present them with a sentence from one of the clearest of English thinkers, whose works they have unaccountably overlooked: 'Nature's old Salic law,' said Professor Huxley in 'Emancipation, Black and White,' 'will never be repealed, and no change of Dynasty will be effected.' The status of women has advanced continuously since the early Middle Ages, though even now their position is a lowly one outside the Western European countries, and the lands populated by Western European people. But the improvement in their condition has been secured without the vote, and by methods the very antithesis of those which find favour at Clement's Inn; and most sensible women, who may be presumed to have the real interests of their sex at heart at least as much as the exponents of dog-whip argument, will be slow to abandon a path which has yielded such excellent results in the past for fresh methods which contrive both to outrage public decency and to injure the cause of real progress.

APART from Professor Dicey's article, with which we deal fully elsewhere, there is a lull in the Suffrage controversy in this month's periodicals. And it is noteworthy that such cases of Suffragist disturbances as have occurred have been accorded small notice in the cheaper Press, which is compelled to keep its finger very closely on the pulse of public opinion. It does not require any very great penetration to realize that the extraordinary scenes at the Albert Hall meeting changed the feelings of the average man from amused contempt to something more like active hostility. We are convinced that men have been generally more indulgent than women to these outbreaks, partly, perhaps, because they have taken them less seriously and often treated them as a passing extravagance; but the screaming sisterhood at the Albert Hall completed the work which the interrupters of Parliamentary debates had begun.

IT is to be hoped that these signs indicate the wane of the Suffragist movement; and that it has already waned in America seems proved, not only by Mrs. Humphry Ward's letters in the London 'Times,' but by the facts which the excellent little Boston paper, 'The Remonstrance,' is able to cite. 'When a propaganda,' it remarks, 'persistently and energetically pushed in more than half the States of the

Union has not achieved a single success worth mentioning in twelve years, may it not be truthfully said to be in process of defeat? The list of Suffrage successes which the Suffrage newspapers are so fond of quoting closes with 1896, when the women of Utah and Idaho were given the ballot. Since that date no State has granted full Suffrage to women; no State has given them municipal Suffrage; the only gains have been unimportant enactments in a few States, such as those which allow women to vote on the rare occasions when questions of expenditure or borrowing are submitted to the vote of taxpayers.' And our contemporary remarks with great point that it is at least an interesting coincidence that the active work of the Anti-Suffrage Associations in Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, and elsewhere began in 1895-6, just before the tide turned in the matter of Suffrage legislation. What had before been almost an open question was then turned against themselves by the tactics of the American Suffragists. It looks as though history would repeat itself in this case in Great Britain.

THIS month there has appeared the first number of a magazine called 'The Englishwoman,' intended to reach the cultured public and bring before it in a convincing and moderate form, the case for the enfranchisement of Women. It is well printed and brightly bound. The opening number contains an article by Mrs. Fawcett, in which, referring to the Anti-Suffrage League, she admits that 'for the first time in the forty-two years of the Women's Suffrage movement, its advocates have to face an organized and manifestly influential opposition. . . . The Anti-Suffragists are a power, notwithstanding their arguments.' Seeing that Mrs. Fawcett counsels those who think with her not to underestimate the strength of the opposition, it is, perhaps, hardly good tactics to dismiss that opposition in one contemptuous sentence which begs the whole question. Moreover, oddly enough, in what is perhaps the most striking contribution to the number—a short paper by Mr. Harold Cox, M.P.—the main arguments put forward by Mrs. Fawcett are shrewdly and rather scornfully answered by her chief coadjutor, and Mr. Cox strongly supports two of the chief contentions of Mrs. Fawcett's opponents, viz., that the vote can do nothing to raise wages, or directly improve the economic status of women, and that Woman Suffrage is not necessary to women for their protection against unjust laws.

THE controversy as to the success or failure of Women's Suffrage in the United States, to which reference has been made above, receives an illuminating addition in a telegram from the New York correspondent of the 'Daily Express.' A special report has been made for the National League for the Civic Education of Women, which conclusively proves that the arguments adduced

from America for the extension of the franchise to women in this country are, to say the least, fallacious. Women have possessed votes for forty years in Wyoming, for sixteen years in Utah and Idaho, and for thirteen years in Colorado; yet they are said to be indifferent to their civic duties, and to have done nothing for the uplifting of the sex which has not been accomplished in the States where Male Suffrage only obtains. In the first three States above mentioned, where Mormonism is an active political force, women are strong supporters of Mormonism at the polls—a result of the franchise which can hardly be construed to the credit of the voters, from whatever aspect they are regarded.

IN Colorado, and particularly in Denver, the report continues, where politics are notoriously corrupt, the political 'machine' has made scandalous use of Woman Suffrage. The Democratic party kept itself in power for six years because the police forced certain women to act as repeaters on election days, some women voting as often as half-a-dozen times. Nor did the female voters of Denver make any concerted effort to oppose this abuse, and at no time were the reformers able to make a woman's question of it. The overthrow of the political 'machine' came gradually, and the women hindered rather than helped its downfall. And while the vote was at first an attractive novelty, its effect soon wore off, and now it requires a question of immense importance, and one directly affecting women, to induce them to cast their ballots.

PERHAPS the chief incident in the month is the speech which Mr. Forbes-Robertson delivered at the Queen's Hall on February 1st. He accused the Anti-Suffragists of never having read their Mill. They might not unfairly retort that though he may know Mill he appears to be entirely ignorant both of Mill's great opponent, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, and of that veteran fighter, happily still with us, whose memories go back to the days of Mill and who upholds the great Comtist tradition of the position of woman. 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' was Stephen's answer to 'The Subjection of Women.' In 'Realities and Ideals' Mr. Frederic Harrison sums up for us the Positivist view of the proper share of woman in the social development. And it is no small share, which he assigns to her. Probably Mill himself, if he could revisit the glimpses of the moon, would admit that the evils which he enumerated are now so completely remedied that further agitation on the subject is a little out of place.

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NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES.

BIRMINGHAM.

THE Birmingham Branch is continuing its activity in various directions, among which may be specified:—

1. The renting (for the third month) of a shop in New Street, the most populous thoroughfare of the city, for the sale of the literature issued by the League, and for obtaining signatures to the petition forms. A paid lady secretary and a commissionaire are always in charge, and voluntary workers also render daily assistance.

2. A systematic scheme of house-to-house canvassing, embracing as far as possible all districts, in order to obtain signatures to the petition forms. Much success is also attending this branch of the work.

3. A meeting of sympathizers with the League (admission by ticket only) was held at the Midland Hotel on the afternoon of January 20th, when Mrs. Archibald Colquhoun delivered a most eloquent address, and the chair was taken by Mrs. Lakin-Smith, the chairman of the local committee. The result of this meeting has been to increase the number of voluntary workers, and also to strengthen the local finances.

PETERSFIELD.

ON Thursday, January 21st, a well-attended meeting was held in St. Peter's Hall, Petersfield.

Mrs. Nettleship presided, and in the course of some introductory remarks explained that for nearly forty years she had been intimately concerned in the Women's movement, and in reviewing the experience of those past years she had come deliberately to the conclusion that there was an irresistibly strong argument against the granting of political power to women.

Miss Mary Angela Dickens gave an exceedingly interesting and powerful exposition of the arguments and objects of the League.

It was resolved to form a Branch of the League for Petersfield and the district. Lady Emily Turnour was elected president, Mrs. Nettleship, vice-president, Mrs. Loftus Jones, hon. secretary, and Miss Amey, hon. treasurer.

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NORTH HANTS AND NEWBURY DISTRICT.

WITH the object of forming a local Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, a drawing-room meeting was held at Burley, Woolton Hill, on Monday afternoon, January 25th, upon the invitation of Mrs. J. P. Gadesden, who is strongly opposed to the extension of the Parliamentary Suffrage to women.

Mrs. Gadesden presided, and in a short speech introducing Miss Dickens, briefly reviewed the subject. The latter lady then addressed those present, urging that the granting of Parliamentary Suffrage to women would be inimical to the best interests of the nation and the home. At the conclusion a Branch of the League was formed, and a committee constituted to enrol members and carry on an Anti-Suffrage propaganda.

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PADDINGTON.

THE Paddington Branch is now at work in real earnest. Most of the streets are allotted to ladies for canvassing, and shortly it hopes to send up a large number of petition papers signed. The Branch has over 50 vice-presidents and members, and an executive committee of 17, and is most fortunate in having secured Lady Dimsdale for its president, with Mrs. Clarendon Hyde as its deputy president.

Arrangements are being made for an evening meeting at the end of February, and the Branch has received much encouragement and sympathy from all quarters.

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CRANBROOK.

A WELL-ATTENDED meeting, organized by Miss Neve, in connection with the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, was held at the Cranbrook Grammar School on Thursday afternoon, January 21st. Colonel Rowlandson presided and was supported by Mrs. Frederic Harrison, Miss Stuart (of London), Miss Neve, Rev. Canon Bell, Mr. W. S. Lee, and Dr. Joyce.

Miss Stuart, of London, moved the following resolution: 'That this meeting believes that the majority of women do not want the

vote and pledges itself to help ascertain their opinion and therein assist the Anti-Suffrage League.' In the course of an excellent address, she pointed out that out of ten and a half million adult women there was only about half a million who had expressed a desire for women's Suffrage. She emphatically contended that if votes were granted to women it would lead to class and sex antagonism.

Dr. Joyce seconded, and the resolution on being put was carried unanimously.

Mrs. Frederic Harrison, who was warmly applauded, then proposed: 'That this meeting disapproves of the action of the militant Suffragist as opposed to the liberty of speech and public meeting.'

Canon Bell seconded the resolution which was then put and carried unanimously.

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DULWICH.

A LARGELY attended meeting took place on January 26th, by invitation, at Miss Druce's, Dulwich Common, to inaugurate the formation of a Branch of the League. Major T. L. Ormiston, I.A., took the chair, and addresses were given by Mrs. Arthur Somervell and Miss Terrell. Mrs. Parish was elected president and Mrs. Teall, hon. secretary.

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EPSOM.

ON Wednesday, January 6th, a meeting was held at the Epsom Town Hall to inaugurate the Epsom division Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League. The meeting was very well attended by ladies from all parts of the constituency. Mr. R. T. Monier-Williams was in the chair. The chairman, after a few preliminary remarks, introduced the speaker, Mrs. Colquhoun.

Mrs. Colquhoun, in an admirable speech, touched upon the relation of women to the State, laying stress upon the necessity of preserving family life, and the headship of the father in the family, as being the unit round which every State has grown.

A vote of thanks, proposed by the chairman, and seconded by Miss Norah Peachey, was passed unanimously.

Subsequently an executive committee was constituted, Mrs. Cameron and Miss Norah Peachey being elected joint hon. secretaries, and Mr. R. T. Monier-Williams hon. treasurer.

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NORTH BERKS.

NEARLY a thousand women from various parts of North Berkshire took part in a demonstration at Abingdon on January 28th, against the franchise being extended to women. Lady Wantage presided, and said that the North Berkshire Branch of the National League had promoted a petition, to which there were already 2,500 signatures. She was well aware that their cause was not one calculated to inspire popular enthusiasm. There was a negative cause. The right which they claimed was to be left alone, and to maintain the present safeguards of women's position. Anti-Suffragists believed that in the extension of the franchise to women the evil would predominate. She ventured to claim for women protection from the Suffrage, believing that if it were forced upon them it

would tend to lower their influence, position, and prestige.

Professor Dicey, Oxford, moved a resolution approving the objects of the League, and said that they had to beware lest the Government and leaders of the Opposition should come to a deal on this subject. The resolution was carried with a few dissentients.

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BOURNEMOUTH.

Miss Mary Angela Dickens addressed a large and representative meeting at Bournemouth on Wednesday evening, January 27th, Lady Abinger presiding. It was decided to form a local Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, and a staff and committee were appointed. Some 'Suffragettes' were present, but did not respond to Miss Dickens's open invitation to ask any relevant questions. Afterwards several expressed themselves so influenced by Miss Dickens's speech as to join the Anti-Suffragists.

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KENNINGTON.

ON January 29th, the third meeting of this Branch was held at Montford Place, since it has now outgrown St. Mark's Hall, Kennington Oval. The large hall was crowded with a keenly interested gathering, the chair being most ably taken by Mr. F. J. Newman, who kept excellent order when Suffragists tried to upset the meeting. Miss Mary Angela Dickens gave an exceedingly clever, eloquent, logical address. Miss Stuart's address was convincing and humorous, while Miss Gertrude Macauley's patriotic songs, 'Rule Britannia,' and 'There's a Land,' helped to make the meeting both bright and entertaining, especially when the local taxi-chaffeurs and tramway men joined vociferously in the choruses.

Two days before the meeting three members of the Branch motored round London, wearing the imperial colours (adopted by the Kennington Branch), carrying a Union Jack, and distributing Anti-Suffrage literature all along the route.

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PENRITH.

A MEETING was held at Penrith on Monday night, January 11th, at which the principal speaker was Miss Bloomfield, London. There was a large attendance, and a feature of the meeting was the fire of questions to which Miss Bloomfield was subjected when questions were invited at the close of the evening. Mr. J. W. Hills, M.P. for Durham, presided.

The Hon. Nina Kay Shuttleworth presented a report upon the origin of the League and Miss Thomson read a report upon the inauguration of the local Branch.

Miss Cropper, Burneside, moved the first resolution, which was as follows:—'That this meeting desires to maintain the principle of representation of women on municipal and other bodies, concerning the domestic affairs of the country.'

Mrs. Brougham seconded. Miss Bloomfield then moved a resolution in favour of resisting the proposal to admit women to the Parliamentary franchise and to Parliament, speaking to the resolution at some length.

Mr. Thompson having seconded, the resolutions were put to the meeting. The first was carried unanimously, and the second by a large majority.

SOUTHAMPTON.

A MEETING was held at the Victoria Rooms, Southampton, on January 22nd. Mr. Arthur Day occupied the chair, and he was supported on the platform by Miss Mary Angela Dickens, Mrs. Arthur Day, Mrs. Sinkins, and Miss Wills.

Miss Dickens, who was warmly received, explained at length the objects of the League.

It was resolved to form a local Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, and Mrs. Durst, Miss McQuhae, Mrs. Sinkins, and Miss L. Wills were appointed to act as a committee. Mrs. Arthur Day was elected hon. secretary and treasurer.

CARLISLE.

ON Tuesday, January 12th, a meeting under the auspices of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League was held in the County Hall. Mr. Howard, of Greystoke Castle, presided.

Miss Kay Shuttleworth read the report, which stated that a Cumberland and Westmoreland Branch of the League, one of the first to be started, had been formed at Penrith, and that officials and a committee had been appointed to carry on the work undertaken. Meetings had been held in various parts of the county, and over 100 petition forms representing 2,500 signatures had been sent in by the Branch secretary to the central office in the last two months alone.

Mrs. Arthur Somervell, of London, delivered an address in support of the views of the League. Having dealt with various arguments in detail, she proposed: 'That this meeting views with pleasure the formation of a local Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, and pledges itself to use every legitimate means to support its object.'

Mr. Hills, M.P., seconded.

The motion was carried with about half a dozen dissentients.

EAST MARYLEBONE.

A drawing-room meeting of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League was held by Mrs. Barbara Baynton, at her flat in North Gate, Regent's Park, on Monday, January 25th. Mrs. Moberley Bell was in the chair, and the speakers were Mrs. Richard Harrison, Mrs. Arthur Somervell, Mr. Anthony Brown, and Mrs. Baynton. The meeting ended in the formation of a committee to work the East Marylebone Branch. As well as those in favour of the Anti-Suffrage, many supporters of the other side were present, and the speeches were listened to attentively, but by request there was no discussion.

EALING.

A MEETING was held by kind invitation of Mrs. Forbes, at Kirkconnel, Gunnersbury Avenue, Ealing, on the 13th January. A great many friends were unavoidably absent

owing to colds and the weather. Seven of the ladies present were formed into a committee.

Mrs. Forbes, proposed by Mrs. Prendergast Walsh, and seconded by Mrs. Beckett, was elected president. Mrs. Beckett, proposed by Mrs. Prendergast Walsh, and seconded by Mrs. Forbes, was elected hon. secretary.

Mrs. Forbes then addressed the meeting. She was very emphatic in asking for more workers, pointing out the importance of house-to-house visitation, in order to get signatures from every possible quarter. She also announced that as there was important work on hand amongst men, a Branch of the Men's League was being formed in Ealing.

NOTTINGHAM.

A MEETING was held in the Mechanics' Hall, on January 13th. Miss Mary Angela Dickens took the chair on a platform from which her grandfather, the author of 'David Copperfield,' spoke nearly half-a-century ago. Mr. Leo J. Maxse and Mrs. Morris, the secretary of the Handsworth Women's Liberal Association, were the speakers.

The Chairman mentioned that she had travelled from Southampton in order to preside over the meeting, and then explained the reasons that had brought the League into existence.

Mrs. Morris predicted a speedy triumph for the Anti-Suffragists. She reminded her adversaries that women had largely neglected to avail themselves of the opportunities to take part in municipal government, although it was in this direction that the greatest social service lay.

Mr. Maxse, in a characteristically witty speech, remarked that, as a mere man, and, therefore, as one unworthy to exist in this enlightened age, he ventured to congratulate the founders of the League on their patriotism, and he trusted that the League would be able to convince squeezable politicians of both parties that the women who had been lately evincing their aptitude for the vote in such an amazing fashion had only an infinitesimal fraction of the country behind them. One of the duties of the League would be to restore some sense of the political perspective; politicians must be convinced that the line of least resistance did not lie in conceding the vote to women.

EDINBURGH.

THE first public meeting of the recently formed Edinburgh Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League was held on January 21st in the Freemasons' Hall, George Street. There was a large attendance of ladies. Mr. Johnston, K.C., presided.

Mrs. Arthur Somervell said she opposed the extension of the Suffrage to women on the ground that it was not in the interests of the nation. The view of every Suffrage speaker she had heard was never a national point of view. The movement for the Suffrage was a profound national mistake. She emphasized the importance of the international aspect of the question, and contended that to give women the Suffrage in relation to international questions would be to falsify the basis of government. Government was immediately based upon physical force. She pointed out

that the woman of property for her rates and taxes had an excellent return in the protection given to her by men. The movement for the vote was hopelessly retrograde from the point of view of women.

About 70 committees in connection with the League are being formed throughout Edinburgh.

BRISTOL.

MEMBERS 1,130. On January 29th, just three months since this Branch was formed, more than fourteen hundred people were present at the Victoria Rooms, at a public meeting, where they listened with evident appreciation and delight to the eloquent speeches delivered by Mrs. Humphry Ward and Mrs. Massie.

The Chairman was Colonel Chester Masters, of Knowle Park.

Mrs. Humphry Ward, who met with a cordial reception, commenced her address by an allusion to her associations with Bristol and Clifton. She was pleased to come into contact with the energy that Bristol had been throwing into the Anti-Suffrage movement. She brought them the warm congratulations of the executive and pleas for still more activity, and as much more money as they could collect.

Mrs. Ward, after a lengthy and interesting speech, then moved the following resolution: 'That this meeting pledges itself, on national grounds, to resist the proposal to admit women to the Parliamentary franchise and to Parliament by every means in its power, while maintaining the principle that the work of women on municipal and other bodies concerned with the domestic and social affairs of the community is of great and increasing value.'

Mrs. Massie seconded the resolution, and stated that undoubtedly some women—many women—earnestly desired the vote, and it looked as if they would not be happy till they got it. Those of the Anti-Suffrage League did not believe in the curative property of that vote, that it would cure all the evils that feminine flesh was heir to. It would mean a danger to the Empire at large. The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. James Inskip proposed, and Mr. A. Longlands seconded, that copies of the resolution should be forwarded to the Premier and Mr. Balfour.

A BRISTOL correspondent sends the following interesting analysis of the composition of the platform at the above meeting. The analysis is intended to show the variety of the political and other interests represented:—

CHAIRMAN: COL. J. W. CHESTER MASTERS. Sat in the House for ten years as Conservative M.P.

MOVER OF SECOND RESOLUTION: MR. JAMES INSKIP, a pillar of the Low Church and Evangelical party; for many years an Alderman of the Town Council; a leading Conservative; the chief spokesman in Bristol West Division at the last Parliamentary election for Mr. Gibbs, the Conservative candidate, and now M.P. for that division.

ON THE PLATFORM WERE: MR. THOMAS BUTLER, J.P., who at the same election was the chairman, and MR. D. LAING, then and still the treasurer of the LIBERAL ASSOCIATION OF BRISTOL WEST, and MR. H. C. TRAPNELL, who at the chief meeting held in Clifton in support of the Liberal

candidate moved the vote of confidence, which was carried.

SECONDER OF SECOND RESOLUTION: MR. A. LANGLANDS, one of the vice-chairmen of the Liberal Association of Bristol West.

ON THE PLATFORM WAS: MR. GEO. SHAFFORD, who, it was supposed, would have moved or seconded one of the resolutions—a well-known Conservative. MR. JAMES BARKER is another active Conservative in Bristol West.

MOVER OF THIRD RESOLUTION: MR. LOUIS P. PRATT. A Nonconformist; a well-known leader in temperance and in other Christian work; a Liberal who is said to have been recently invited to stand as Liberal candidate for one of the Parliamentary divisions; a large employer of labour.

MR. JOSEPH HOLMAN, J.P., a prominent Liberal, had sent a letter of sympathy, regret, &c.

SECONDER OF THIRD RESOLUTION: MR. RICHARD A. FOX, J.P. A prominent Conservative; president last year of THE DOLPHIN SOCIETY, the Conservative branch of the two great Colston Societies (the Liberal one being THE ANCHOR), which collect and distribute large funds in charity, and hold the well-known political banquets at which so many leading statesmen have spoken. Mr. Fox was the chairman of the Conservative Association of Bristol East at the last election, and his speech fitly balanced the telegram read at the meeting from Mr. C. E. HOBHOUSE, the Liberal M.P. for Bristol East.

A letter of sympathy and regret was received from MR. A. B. PERKY, J.P., who last year was president of THE ANCHOR, the Liberal Colston Society, and who was that evening presiding over a meeting in Bristol, at which Sir William H. Davies, the Liberal M.P. for Bristol South, was speaking.

MOVER OF THE FOURTH RESOLUTION: LADY FRY, wife of Sir Edward Fry, lately one of the Lords Justices of the Court of Appeal; one of England's representatives at The Hague Conference, and whose eminent services in various ways need no reference here.

Neither Sir Edward nor Lady Fry is, we believe, prominently—or, indeed, at all—identified with either political party, but they are honoured by each, and bear a name which in Bristol ranks beside the greatest philanthropists of that ancient city.

SECONDER OF FOURTH RESOLUTION: MRS. W. E. BUDGETT. This lady also bears a name well known and greatly respected in Bristol.

Letters of Regret

Letters of regret were received from Lady Smyth, the widow of the late Sir Greville Smyth, of Ashton Court; and from Lady Weston, the widow of the late Sir J. D. Weston, formerly Liberal M.P. for one of the Bristol divisions; from Professor Butcher, M.P., and Mr. Leo Maxse; from Mr. Rowland Whitehead, M.P., and Mr. C. E. Hobhouse, M.P.; and from prominent Conservatives and Liberals in almost equal numbers.

Space does not allow of reference to all the holders of platform tickets—about 60—but although they, of course, attended only in their private or individual capacities, it was well known that the list included men and women identified with the philanthropic and public work of Bristol.

The Church of England was represented by Archdeacon Robeson, and Nonconformity by the Rev. G. H. Brown and Mr. W. H. Wicks.

University College, Bristol, was represented by Professor Ferrier. The medical and legal professions, and large employers of labour, were also represented. Indeed rarely, if ever before, has there been any public meeting in Bristol at which a political question has been considered under such unique circumstances.

HAMPSTEAD.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL ANTI-SUFFRAGE LEAGUE.—On Friday afternoon, January 22nd, by the kind invitation of Lady Harvey, a meeting to inaugurate a Hampstead Branch of the above League was held at 19, Maresfield Gardens.

Mr. G. Calderon, hon. secretary of the Men's League for opposing Woman Suffrage, presided.

Miss Hills, in proposing the following resolution: 'That in the opinion of this meeting, the time has now arrived for forming a Hampstead Branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League,' dealt with some arguments of the advocates for Suffrage.

Mr. Brown supported the resolution, and Miss Fothergill gave some details of the work of the League. In starting the Hampstead Branch they wanted active workers, and the great work of the moment was to get signatures to the petition which was to be presented to Parliament on March 20th.

At the conclusion the meeting was thrown open for questions, and ultimately the resolution was passed. Names of ladies who were willing to serve on the committee were taken, and Mrs. W. E. G. Solomon undertook the position of hon. secretary.

RAMSGATE.

THE Ramsgate and District Branch came into existence on Monday afternoon, February 1st, at a largely attended meeting at 'Southwood,' St. Lawrence.

The studio in which the meeting took place was filled with ladies, over whom the Mayoress presided, and after an address on the objects of the League and the reasons for opposing the Suffragists by Miss Dickens, Lady Rose Weigall proposed that the Ramsgate and District Branch of the League be formed. In doing so she said she had a little experience as a Guardian and that experience had made her perfectly convinced that if women wanted to do any good she must do it quietly.

Mr. Pugin seconded the proposal to form the Branch, which was carried.

REVIEWS.

I.—'WOMAN SUFFRAGE,' by Professor A. V. Dicey, 'Quarterly Review,' January, 1909.

PROFESSOR DICEY admits that certain principles or formulas dear to English Liberalism sanction, in words at least, the demand of votes for women. Yet examine a few of these so-called principles, and their true nature at once becomes apparent. For instance, the assertion that every person has a 'right' to a vote is easily seen to be an assumption of the point at issue. It belongs further to an obsolete school of thought; it is a remnant of a belief in 'innate rights,' and is part of an obsolete political creed which Mill himself repudiated.

That taxation involves representation was a serviceable war-cry during the War of Independence, but neither the American

leaders nor the English Whigs who echoed the maxim believed that it expressed an absolute truth. No English Whig meant to assert that every man in England who paid a tax ought to have a vote. They knew well enough the dangers of a reckless extension of the Suffrage.

The strongest practical argument in favour of Parliamentary franchise for women is that any considerable body of persons who are not represented in Parliament will probably find their interests neglected. In Mill's day the law with regard to women, and especially the property of married women, was one-sided and unjust. But the passing of the Married Women's Property Acts and the Guardianship of Infants Act (1886) did more than remove grievances; it showed that a Parliament of men, elected by male electors only, is ready to relieve the disabilities of women.

The Suffragists claim the Parliamentary franchise as the final step in the so-called emancipation of women. But women cannot be emancipated because they are born free, and will remain free whether they obtain the Parliamentary franchise or not. The continual improvement in the position of women lies in the extension of civil or private rights. The rights of an individual with regard to matters which primarily concern the State are public or political rights, duties, or functions to be exercised by the possessor with a view to the interest of the State, and therefore may, even according to Mill's doctrine, be limited or extended as may best conduce to the welfare of the community. Men of the highest public spirit have felt that while civil rights, i.e., personal freedom in the widest sense, are to every man of vital importance, the possession of political rights may be, if civil freedom is secured, of comparatively little importance.

Lastly, it is asserted that the possession of votes will increase the earnings of women. If this prediction means that a vote will raise the market value of a woman's work, it is false. Why in the name of common sense should a vote confer upon a woman a benefit which it has never conferred upon a man?

There are reasons which tell directly against the admission of women to the Parliamentary Suffrage. Woman Suffrage must lead to Adult Suffrage. The difficulties of bestowing political equality on women even in name under our present system could be easily surmounted under a scheme of Adult Suffrage. A huge constituency is, just because of its size, a bad electoral body, for the power and responsibility of each individual elector are diminished.

It is allowed that the civic virtues of women are at present inadequately developed. The most elementary prudence forbids us to entrust the guidance of the State in these times of peril to unskilled and inexperienced hands.

The most striking objection to Woman Suffrage is that a large body of women

protest against it; nor is there the least lack of public spirit in their protest. No serious reasoner will retort that a woman who does not desire the vote need not use it. Her objection is that the vote imposes on her a duty which may be an intolerable burden, and subjects her to the rule of a class—namely, women—which she deems incompetent to exercise sovereign power.

Lastly, physical force is the basis of law and sovereignty, as any one may observe for himself. Woman Suffrage, like every system which separates nominal sovereignty from the possession of irresistible power, involves the risk that the constitutional sovereign of the country may be rendered powerless by a class (the male electors) possessed of predominant physical force.

The American democracy conferred full political rights on the negroes of the South. The generous experiment has turned out a dubious success. The negro vote is a sham and a fraud. The political rights which have been accorded to the negroes have not given them political authority. We do not argue like some heated Suffragist that Englishwomen are in the position of ignorant negroes, but we say that experience shows the futility of giving to any class political rights in excess of genuine political power.

Distinctions of rights founded upon sex have often given rise to injustice, but they have this in their favour: they rest upon a difference not created by social conventions or human selfishness, but by the nature of things. It is necessary, though difficult, to put plain facts into plain language. The comparative weakness of women inevitably means loss of power. Not only are they weaker physically, and probably mentally, than men, but they are as a class burdened with duties of the utmost national importance and of an exhausting and absorbing nature from which men are free.

That the women to be admitted to the Parliamentary franchise will often be excellent persons we have no doubt; but nearly every man believes that women of pre-eminent goodness are often lacking in the virtues such as active courage, firmness of judgment, self-control, steadiness of conduct, and, above all, a sense of justice even in the heat of a party conflict, which are often to be found in Englishmen even of an ordinary type. Whoever asks for a vindication of this belief should study the deeds and words of the fighting Suffragists, and should note that the female leaders have for the most part never unreservedly condemned the hysterical insolence of their followers. The folly of a class which, knowing itself to be deficient in paramount physical strength, relies upon lawless violence for the attainment of its ends, excites derision. But it reminds a thoughtful observer of the anarchy which would be possible under any constitution that severed legal right from physical power, and left open the chance that a Government supported by a majority of the electorate consisting mainly of women

should come into conflict with the majority of male electors.

Women can do more than any man to check an agitation which they believe to be injurious; but our final appeal is and must be to the electors. We appeal to their common sense and common prudence. They must for once trust themselves rather than their leaders. England is surrounded by States which are armed nations, some of them governed on military principles. The necessary intricacy and entanglement of our foreign and colonial policy make it more than ever needful that the country should be guided by the cool head and the clear aim and the tenacious purpose which are to be found only in the strongest and most sagacious of men.

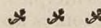
II.—'MIXED HERBS,' by M.E.S. (Sampson, Low & Co.)

THIS is a book which should attract many readers. The study entitled 'Mary Maitland' with which it opens, is a penetrating and delicate vignette-portrait of a woman's life. It recalls the method of Mark Rutherford in his gentler moods, and is, we feel, drawn from the life, the picture of a woman's soul. The other essays will be read with interest by all interested in the Woman's Suffrage question. The experience of a working woman who has had a hard fight for twenty years in the literary world, cannot be lightly set aside, nor her warnings disregarded. 'To have worked and earned a wage is surely also to have taken one's degree in the university of life, to have qualified for the expression of an opinion.'

That opinion is given with conviction and with quiet dignity.

'It is pathetic to see the reliance placed by the Suffragist woman on legislation as a means of making all things well with women. . . . She would be wise if she now applied herself to finding out what it is a woman is best suited for, and can do better than a man. *There* it is that she has before her a wide field for exploration and discovery. . . . She has everything to gain by accepting the complementary instead of the rivalry position in the world of home and market. And it would be well if she began an attempt to solve modern problems by some meditation on the pages of history.' We cordially recommend 'Mixed Herbs' to the readers of this Review.

E.B.H.



TREASURERS' APPEAL.

The League is in need of Funds to carry on its daily increasing work. We beg our friends to be generous. Five subscribers of £100 each are still needed before we can claim the promised £100 from Lord Airedale and Sir Hugh Bell.

LIST OF LEAFLETS.

2. Woman's Suffrage and After. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
3. Mrs. Ward's Speech. Price ½d. each.
4. Queen Victoria and Woman's Suffrage. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
5. Is Woman Suffrage Inevitable? Price 5s. per 1,000.
6. Nature's Reason against Woman Suffrage. Price 5s. per 1,000.
7. Shall Women Receive the Vote? Price 3s. per 1,000.
8. Woman's Suffrage and National Welfare. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
9. Is the Parliamentary Suffrage the best way? Price 10s. per 1,000.
10. Women of Great Britain. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
11. The Latest Phase of the Women's Suffrage Movement. Price 5s. per 1,000.
12. Why Women should not Vote. Price 3s. per 1,000.
13. Women's Position under Laws made by Man. Price 5s. per 1,000.
14. (1) The Franchise for Women of Property. Price 3s. per 1,000.
14. (2) Women and the Representation of Property. Price 3s. per 1,000.
15. (1) Woman's Suffrage and Women's Wages. Price 5s. per 1,000.
15. (2) Woman's Suffrage and Women's Wages. Price 3s. per 1,000.
15. (3) Votes and Wages. Price 5s. per 1,000.
16. Look Ahead. Price 4s. per 1,000.
17. Why the Women's Enfranchisement Bill (1908) is unfair to Women. Price 5s. per 1,000.
18. Married Women and the Factory Law. Price 5s. per 1,000.
19. A Suffrage Talk. Price 3s. per 1,000.
20. A Word to Working Women. Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
21. Votes for Women (from Mr. F. Harrison's book). Price 10s. per 1,000.
22. 'Votes for Women?' Price 2s. 6d. per 1,000.
23. Anti-Suffragist's Letter. Price 6s. per 1,000.
24. Reasons against Woman Suffrage. Price 4s. per 1,000.
26. Woman Suffrage and India. Price 2s. 6d. per 1000.

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PAMPHLETS.

- A. Freedom of Women. Mrs. Harrison. Price 6d.
- B. Woman or Suffragette. Marie Corelli. Price 3d.
- C. Positive Principles. Price 1d.
- D. Sociological Reasons. Price 1d.
- E. Case against Woman Suffrage. Price 1d.
- F. Woman in relation to the State. Price 6d.
- G. Mixed Herbs. M.E.S. Price 2s. net.

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