

Women's Franchise.

No. 25.

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to her children at her death. When one of her children, over age, recently died, without leaving a will, she found that the husband she had been obliged to divorce was entitled to this child's share of her father's money and to everything belonging to the child. It is obvious that law is one thing and justice quite another.

AT a recent meeting of the Pontypool Board of Guardians a resolution was passed asking that women of means should be legally obliged to contribute towards the support of their parents. It was reported that a provision to that effect had been made in a Bill recently before Parliament, but the Lord Chancellor had decided against it. The point, however, was going to be brought up in another Bill. Mrs. Mitchell of Llanfrechna Grange, protested against women being legally compelled to obey laws which they have no hand in making, remarking that—"You want women to pay and to do everything else, and yet you entirely refuse to give them the vote."

If all women in responsible positions would follow Mrs. Mitchell's spirited example, their action would considerably help and strengthen the hands of the Women's Suffrage party.

Notice to Contributors and Subscribers.

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

'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE,'
EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING OFFICE,
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Notes.

THE usual crop of complaints are forthcoming against the proposed employment of women at the London Tube stations. We are told that they are driving men out of work, lowering wages, and so on. It does not seem to occur to these malcontents that women are as much entitled to live as are men. It is impossible for the lower middle-class, or working man, to support his daughters; they cannot all marry, they must therefore go out into the world and earn their livelihood, whether they wish to do so or not. By what right do men define their sphere? The fault, if any, lies with the men in crowding into occupations which are more fitly left in the hands of women, while avoiding others which require exertion and physical strength. Do men think they present an edifying spectacle when they meander up and down a shop, stand behind counters measuring laces and ribbons, and in other occupations which are obviously better left in women's hands? We have only to walk along a crowded street to see how the women are physically improving and the men are deteriorating. This competition with women for employments which require but little strength or education, and the avoidance of others of a more strenuous nature, will in time prove disastrous for the physical, moral, and intellectual welfare of the nation.

THE members of the Legal profession are constantly telling us that the laws are more indulgent on a number of points to women than to men. Even Blackstone declared that woman was a "great favourite" of the law of England. These gentlemen carefully refrain from commenting upon the flagrant injustice of the laws which most vitally affect women's happiness. Women are placed at a disadvantage at almost every point by the laws of inheritance and the laws of intestacy; the married mother is only the legal parent after her husband's death, while the unmarried mother is regarded by the law as the sole parent of a child born out of marriage; the divorce laws are notoriously unjust. A letter recently appeared in one of the papers from a woman who stated that her income is derived from her late father's estate, the capital of which goes

IN presenting the Intermediate and Leaving Certificates at the Boroughmuir Higher Grade School at Edinburgh recently, Lady Steel took the opportunity of pointing out to the students that up till now the boys and girls before her were considered equal in education, culture, and attainments, but that later there would be a cleavage. One class would be considered fit to have a say in the affairs of the Empire, and would be looked upon as citizens, because they were men; the other class would be ranked with idiots and criminals, unworthy a vote, because they were women. She maintained that this was not only an intolerable insult to womanhood, but a disgrace to manhood and the nation. Turning specially to the boys, Lady Steel said she believed that there was too much chivalry and generosity in their natures to be able to really enter into the full enjoyment of their citizenship, knowing that their comrades of all these years were not to share their privileges. Her remarks were received with applause.

THE New York State Federation of Women's Clubs has realized the urgent need for the Suffrage if better laws are to be obtained for women, and at their last meeting the question was officially discussed for the first time. This fact alone shows the giant strides the cause is making in America. A few years ago nothing would have induced club women to take up the question, they would have considered it "unwomanly"; but now we read that "the whole army of club women have been marching towards the Suffrage camp, and will soon march boldly under our banner."

IN a leading article on Women's Suffrage, which appeared in *The Daily Chronicle* recently, the writer, in referring to Mrs. Fawcett's "able and temperate letter" in *The Times* on this subject, takes exception to certain remarks in it. He asks for evidence of the "sweeping statement" that "an enormous proportion of women are converted already." We should have thought that the evidence to hand was enough to convince any one. The floor of the House of Commons might be carpeted with the petitions which women have presented for the Parliamentary Franchise. The largest petition ever presented was on this subject. In the year 1897, 1,205 petitions for Women's Suffrage were presented, 800 more than for any

other Bill before the House that Session. The writer of the article referred to implied that only the cultured professional women desire it. Does he know of the petition presented by Mr. T. C. Taylor in 1901, signed by 29,300 women textile workers in Lancashire, or that presented the following year by Mr. George Whiteley from 33,184 women textile workers in Yorkshire, and another in the same year presented by Mr. Bromley Davenport from 4,300 women textile workers in Cheshire, and again in 1903, when Mr. John Burns presented a petition signed by 8,600 tailoresses in the West Riding of York? We are indebted for the figures above quoted to a pamphlet entitled 'Leading Facts of the Movement,' published by The National Social and Political Union.

THE demand that the Franchise should be extended to women on the same terms on which it is granted to men, is also adversely criticized in a *Daily Chronicle's* leading article. We are told that "this would mean enfranchisement of women on a very limited scale. It would give the vote to the well-to-do spinster, and to the widow occupying a house in her own name." This argument is a favourite one with Adult Suffragists, and strikes us as an unworthy attempt to introduce a class element into the question. It has been shown that of the women who may now vote in municipal elections, 82.5 belong to the working class. In Bolton there were last year 5,334 women voters, and out of that number 4,752 were working women; while in Division 3 of the borough of St. Pancras, the working women voters numbered 3,342 out of the total number of 5,251 women.

ON Wednesday, December 11th, a unique event in the history of the Ashton-under-Lyne Women's Liberal Association took place, when an "At Home" was held to celebrate the "coming of age" of the Association, which was formed twenty-one years ago. The Town Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, about 1,000 people, chiefly women and members, being present. Midway in the evening a meeting was held presided over by the President, Miss Bertha Mason, who laid stress on the fact (in her review of the twenty-one years of work by the Association) that at the beginning of their career the members of the Association had realized that it was the height of absurdity for women to band themselves together to promote Liberal principles without at the same time making strenuous efforts to secure their own Parliamentary enfranchisement. Believing this, the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women and the removal of all their legal disabilities as citizens had been made an avowed object of their programme.

For this object they had patiently and consistently worked during the whole of their existence. Their belief in the righteousness and justice of their claims had only increased and intensified as the years rolled by. For this object they stood to-day, and with a long record of loyalty to the Liberal party and self-sacrificing work on its behalf, they once again called upon the Government now in power to respond without delay to their demand for the vote.

She appealed to those present to urge the Government to be true to its own traditions—by once again showing "its trust in the people," this time in the *women* portion of the people—by giving an assurance that before the Parliament was dissolved the Parliamentary franchise would be conceded to women. Miss Mason concluded her address by moving the following resolution: "That the Ashton-under-Lyne Women's Liberal Association, being strongly of opinion that the time has come for the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to all duly qualified women, calls upon the Government to give an assurance to the Liberal women of Great Britain and Ireland, who have so long and faithfully worked for the Liberal party, that they do not intend to indefinitely postpone the question of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women, by letting them know, that before this democratic Parliament is dissolved their demand for the vote will be conceded."

Copies of this resolution were ordered to be sent to the Prime Minister, the members of the Government, and their local member.

The Suffrage in Other Lands.

In GERMANY there is distinct progress to record. The International Women's Congress which met in Berlin in 1904 and the Suffrage Congress recently held at Frankfort mark important steps forward, and have stimulated activity throughout the country. In a sense, of course, Germany is still only a geographical term, for many important matters, *e.g.*, education and factory legislation, are controlled by the separate states, which, in spite of the vanishing of many tiny principalities, still number twenty-five. And in these very various treatment is meted out to women. In some they have a measure of municipal suffrage, and are eligible for membership of boards dealing with the poor law, &c., in others they have no rights or privileges, nor are they permitted to serve the State. The strangest of these anomalies were perhaps to be found in the different character of the laws regulating associations and the right of meeting in the different States. In some women might found associations and attend political meetings, in others, notably Prussia and Bavaria, they were forbidden by law to do either. For many years German women have been agitating for the repeal of these antiquated and insulting regulations, demanding that the Reichstag should pass an Association law to be valid throughout Germany, and abolish all the separate and vexatious regulations of the individual States. At last the long-desired goal seems in sight, for the new Association law has been drawn up and will shortly be introduced in the Reichstag. Its preamble is an interesting document. It enumerates some of the anomalies of the existing arrangement, and goes on to state that the present Bill will abolish all distinctions imposed by the separate States "in accordance with the desire expressed by large sections of the population, and in particular by the women themselves. During the last few decades women have participated in far larger numbers in public affairs, and their activity is on the increase, not only in commerce, trade, and industry, but also in the domain of public life. Women are now employed in many public positions, which formerly were almost exclusively filled by men. This applies especially to the care of the poor and orphans, factory inspection, and the post and telegraph services. As a result of this increased activity, involving in many cases independence and responsibility, women are more often called to perform public duties. It would therefore no longer be appropriate nor fair to maintain the legal restrictions, which prevent women from consulting their interests and wishes on the domain of public life, by founding associations and attending meetings.....Women who are dependent for a livelihood on their own earnings have political as well as economic interests, and must be able to treat of these by means of associations and meetings."

The italics are ours. That in Germany, of all countries, a law should be framed to meet the wishes of women rather than the views of men concerning them, shows a remarkable change in public opinion. In this respect surely England has something to learn from the country which a few years ago was supposed to acknowledge no woman but the *Hausfrau*. This law, if passed, will remove the special restrictions which prevent women from taking part in politics.

With a view to this change the German Suffrage Society is being reorganized on a national basis. Each State is to have its own society, to form part of the General German Union of Suffrage Associations. At present those States in which associations are prohibited by law have to work through Suffrage committees.

At the Prussian Socialist Congress which met at Berlin in November, an appeal from the Socialist women of Berlin was received, demanding (1) That in the impending struggle for equal, direct, universal and secret suffrage in Prussia, the eligibility and voting rights of women should be considered. (2) That women should have a vote for all municipal elections and the right to be themselves elected.

A. ZIMMERN.

A Pioneer.

TOWARDS the middle and close of the eighteenth century there lived and died in England a pioneer—perhaps the pioneer—of the movement for the emancipation of women, Mary Wollstonecraft, wife of Godwin the philosopher, and mother of Mary the poet Shelley's wife. In these days women were steeped in a false and artificial sentimentality, fostered and encouraged by the fashion of the day. The ideal woman then was a weak, dependent, clinging creature. Men wrote diatribes against any thoughts of feminine individuality. Women themselves seemed content to accept the rôle supposed to be theirs, and to adopt the part of petted spoiled children with no ideas or views of their own.

The whole age, however, was one of transition, and even the feminine mind did not escape the influence of the thoughts that were beginning to take root in the minds of men: thoughts of freedom and revolt from old and debasing conditions of slavery to class prejudice and custom; thoughts and ideas which ultimately resulted in the Revolution of 1792.

In the early days of Mary Wollstonecraft's life it meant vastly more for a woman to think and to live independently than we can have any conception of now. To be a woman at that time, and to live according to the orthodox prevailing idea, meant to be little more than a veritable slave to folly and fashion. But to dare to think and act for herself as she felt was right, was for a woman to incur the scorn and contempt of both sexes. Inspired, however, by the righteousness of her cause, Mary Wollstonecraft was brave enough and foreseeing enough to fight for her own independence, and by her example and teaching she was all unconsciously, perhaps, sowing the seeds of independence and individuality for the women of to-day. Mary Wollstonecraft's ideas were far in advance of her times. Women only now begin to realize the necessity and advantage of working for some of the many reforms of which she was such a strong advocate. Her awakening to the broader issues of life was largely due, no doubt, to the writings of Rousseau and his revolutionary followers, but she was stimulated into action by revolt against the conditions of her own home life. One of a family of many brothers and sisters, none of whom equalled her in strength of character or depth of purpose, Mary Wollstonecraft had to fight for her own hand from the very first. Her father, a headstrong, dissolute man, tyrannized over his family as only such a character is capable of doing. Her mother, though under the despotic control of her husband, in turn domineered over and sought to suppress and control her children. In such an unhappy household Mary early realized the injustice of existing conditions, for women especially, and recognizing clearly and logically that, though only a woman, she herself was far superior in intellect and intelligence to the world of her surroundings, she took the matter into her own hands, and launched forth on a career that was to form an epoch in the history of womanhood—a career of independence and freedom. Through many hardships and trials she worked on, undaunted by failure or by the strong opposition she encountered and the bitter animosity she aroused. She was secure in the knowledge that right was on her side. The study of the life and character of Mary Wollstonecraft is one of the most interesting and stimulating of problems. For the women who to-day are striving to obtain the very reforms she advocated and anticipated for them so long ago it is especially interesting. It is not the purpose of this article to enter into discussion as to the wisdom, or otherwise, of Mary Wollstonecraft's attitude to the many problems that confronted her in her active and strenuous life. Though we may differ from her on many points, we cannot but admire and profit by her strength of purpose, by her sincerity, and by the truly noble and generous nature that forgave much and sacrificed self for the good of others in a way that has been rarely equalled. The consciousness of her power and strength enabled her to see clearly and definitely that there is no fixed rule of conduct or thought necessary for the distinction of the sexes—that as human beings the standard of morality, of good or evil, if right for one sex must be right for the other—that where it is considered best for one sex to be educated intellectually, it must

be best for the other. She proved in a marked way in her own life that, though intellectually as well fitted for intelligent, strenuous work and independence of thinking as men, she could still be a woman, in the most beautiful and ennobling way.

Her book, 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women,' is the only work by which she is known at the present day, although she was well known as a writer in her lifetime. 'The Rights of Women' is interesting and full of vivacity and energy. In it she voices many of the reforms that women have since carried out, and some of which—notably the political and moral enfranchisement of women—they are still working for to-day. Her writing is marked by a convincing earnestness of purpose that makes it interesting to read. Her literary style is, perhaps, open to criticism, and she writes of many things that are no longer typical of the times; but when we consider that in those days matters were not minced nor manners too refined, there is little to take exception to.

In reading of Mary Wollstonecraft's life, and in reading also her 'Rights of Women,' one is struck by her extreme honesty and sincerity—qualities which are rare in these days, when people are busy discussing and rhapsodizing over foolish fads and fancies that have no truth nor *raison d'être* at the back of them, but which, all the same, seem to be gradually depriving society of the faculty of discerning honesty and sincerity in anything that is of real value in life.

There was little or no inconsistency between Mary Wollstonecraft's own life and the ideas she thought to instil in others by her writings. Although her writings are not distinguished by any particular style or scholarship, yet on reading the 'Rights of Women' one feels that here is something vital, something alive and true, in fact something that makes for righteousness. It is for that quality that she still is for us to-day a living influence.

ADMIRER.

The Call of the Suffragette.

WHAT will you do for women?

This is our party call;

But all the answer we get

Is, "Hustle them out of the hall."

What will you do for women?

We ask when the Commons meet;

But all the Bobby is told to do

Is "Hustle 'em out of the street."

What will you do for women?

Our cry is of no avail;

The favourite answer of magistrates

Is "Hustle them into jail."

What will you do for women?

We shout, with a flag unfurled;

And we quite expect the next reply

Will be "Hustle them out of the world."

M. T. B.

GUARANTEE FUND TO 'WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.'

£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
Already acknowledged	69 7 0	Brought forward	73 13 0
Babb, Mr. J. Staines	1 1 0	Ponting, Miss A. Mary	0 2 0
Burton, Miss I. A. d'A.	1 0 0	Powell, Mrs. W. M.	0 5 0
Caspari, Mr. M.	1 0 0	Regan, Miss C.	1 0 0
Frankland, Mrs. L. H.	0 5 0	Rowe, Mrs. Frances E.	0 10 0
Jameson, Miss W. G.	0 15 0	Schmahl, Mme. J. E.	0 9 6
Tenner, Miss	0 5 0	Wilks, Dr. Elizabeth	1 0 0
Carried forward	£73 13 0	Total	£77 0 0

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

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

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

President: MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

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

Telegrams: "VOICELESS, LONDON."

Treasurer: MISS BERTHA MASON.

Parliamentary and Organising Secretary: MISS EDITH PALLISER.

Telephone: 1960 VICTORIA.

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

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1907.

Chairman—MR. WALTER S. B. McLAREN.

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

MR. A. CAMERON CORBETT, M.P.
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MRS. BROADLEY REID
HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL
MRS. PHILIP SNOWDEN

LADY STRACHEY
And the Hon. Officers,
ex officio.

Current Topics.

We much regret that we have been obliged to curtail some of the accounts of the meetings of Branch Societies sent in this week. An unusually large number have come to hand, which points to a great increase of activity and interest in the women's movement, and the desirability of a prompt insertion of them all in the current issue has rendered this action necessary.

We trust our correspondents will accept this explanation.

The following announcements, being of importance are repeated from last week's issue:—

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.—The next Quarterly Council Meeting of the Union will take place in London on Wednesday, January 29th. A reception will be held on the evening of the same day in the Grand and Victoria Halls of the Criterion Restaurant. The subject chosen for all speakers is "Why I believe in Women's Suffrage." Mr. H. G. Wells has already promised to speak. Tickets, including refreshments, price 3s. 6d., can be obtained at the offices of the Union, 25, Victoria Street (5th floor).

The urgent necessity for more speakers is so borne in upon the minds of all who are responsible for our propaganda that the Executive Committee is urging that classes should be formed for training speakers by all Branch Societies, and has authorized the use of their own office for the purpose when not required for office work.

At the suggestion of their Chairman the Executive Committee of the National Union strongly advises all Branch Societies that at the conclusion of every public meeting or drawing-room meeting a petition to Parliament should be signed by the Chairman of the meeting so that there may be some permanent record of all the meetings that are held and thus give Parliament some idea of the strength of the work being done.

The new Annual Report for 1907 is now ready and may be obtained from the Secretary at the office, price 1d.

Mid-Devon By-Election.

"THINGS are going to be very lively here" was the comment of a prominent politician of Newton Abbot to me, when discussing the coming campaign. I was shown two stones on his mantelpiece—"A memento of the last election," he said, "for we sometimes exceed the bounds of enthusiasm here in Newton." Miss Hardcastle and I arrived on Friday, and on Saturday morning began our preparations for the campaign, which we were informed on good authority would be a long one, lasting probably six weeks.

There was a scarcity of rooms "to let," and the pouring rain and wind was not very helpful in the work of hunting for Committee Rooms. Headquarters were, however, found at 70b, Queen Street, a main thoroughfare leading from the station through the centre of the town. This room we hope to open on Monday, possibly before the Liberal and Conservative Committee Rooms put up their posters.

In the afternoon I had interviews with both candidates of the Liberal and Conservative clubs respectively. Captain Morrison-Bell replied in full to the questions submitted to him. Mr. Buxton was just starting off to address a meeting at Bovey Tracy, and is sending me his replies in writing. Both candidates are in favour of Women's Suffrage, but until their election addresses are issued we cannot tell what degree of support they will give. The candidates have not yet been formally adopted. One elector asked me if we had come down to ask for women to have votes, and on my replying in the affirmative remarked, "Well, I can't think why you haven't been given the vote long ago."

Arrangements are being made for meetings to be held after Christmas, and I appeal to all who can help us, either by speaking at meetings or at the Committee Rooms with clerical work, to come to Newton Abbot. We can promise plenty of work, and work of a very pleasing and educative kind. There is nothing which stimulates zeal and kindles enthusiasm more than an election. In an election one meets the electors—the arbiters of our fate—face to face, when their interest is roused in political questions, and moreover when they are most fully conscious of their own importance, and, therefore, of the value of the franchise. Under no more favourable circumstances can your appeal be made. The Suffrage Societies have been told to appeal to Caesar—therefore I would earnestly urge all who have the success of our cause at heart to come to Newton Abbot and help us. Those who cannot give personal service can give contributions towards the expenses of the campaign.

Elections are costly, and we must rely largely on volunteers. We trust the call for volunteers in this campaign will meet with a generous response. People at Newton Abbot are anxious to hear our views on Women's Suffrage and in answer to their request Mrs. Stanbury is addressing open air meetings on Thursday and Friday.

Please address all communications to me at 70b, Queen Street, Newton Abbot, Devon.

EDITH PALLISER.

Branch Societies.

MISSING since Manchester Council Meeting on 25th October last, a red pole, 10 ft. long, with a hook near one end, belonging to a banner. Will anyone, to whom the pole may have been sent by mistake, communicate with Mrs. George Foster, Grove Lodge, Monkbridge Road, Headingley, Leeds.

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—A Drawing-room was held by kind invitation of Mrs. Ed. Pearce, at her residence, Solihull, on December 10th. About twenty-five ladies attended. Mrs. Osler gave an address dealing specially with the present economic position of women. At the close of the meeting, eleven ladies gave their names as members of a local committee, and Miss Pearce consented to act as Hon. Secretary.

BOURNEMOUTH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—The Bournemouth Branch held an animated social gathering on the afternoon of December 10th. After tea and chat an informal meeting took place. Speeches were made by various members, discussion and questions followed interspersed by

songs and some capital recitations. A silver collection was taken which covered all expenses. It is hoped to hold one such social every month during the winter season. A speaker's club has also been formed in connexion with this branch, and promises to be very popular.

BUCKS. WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—In connexion with the Bucks Branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies a meeting of ladies was held on Thursday, December 5th, at the Guildhall, High Wycombe, under the presidency of Miss F. J. Dove, M.A., chairman of the committee.

The principal business of the meeting was the reading of an interesting paper by Mr. Hakluyt Egerton on the subject "What makes Woman Suffrage reasonable?"

At the close of the paper a discussion followed, in which Miss Dove, Miss Reid, Mrs. Peachell, Miss Robinson, Mrs. D. Davis, and Mrs. Boutwood took part. Miss Dove drew the attention of her hearers to the fact that there were cases in history where women who were left behind when the men went to the wars did an enormous amount of work, including political responsibility.

At the close a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Egerton, on the motion of Miss Dove, who afterwards entertained the ladies who attended the meeting to tea at Wycombe Abbey.

HELTHENHAM WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—The Annual Meeting took place on December 7th, in the small drawing-room of the Town Hall, and was very well attended—Mr. J. B. Ransford presided. The annual report was presented by the Hon. Secretary, Miss Theodora Mills, followed by those of the Hon. Treasurer and President, Mrs. Frances Swiney. Both were considered very satisfactory. The adoption of the reports was moved by Mrs. Florence Earengy, seconded by Mrs. McIlquham, and carried. The re-election of officers and committee, with the election of Miss Lilian How as Literature Superintendent, was proposed by Mrs. Mills, seconded by Dr. Earengy, and carried.

Mrs. Swiney then gave the presidential address, congratulating all present on having helped to make "Votes for Women" a subject of practical politics.

At the close of her interesting remarks, Mrs. McIlquham rose and in a few heartfelt words expressed to Mrs. Swiney the Society's recognition of her eleven years' services as President, at the same time offering for her acceptance a revolving bookcase, which it was hoped would be of practical use in her work and would also remind her of her friends.

Mrs. Swiney having acknowledged this quite unexpected gift, the Chairman called upon the chief speaker, Mrs. A. C. Osler of Birmingham, who moved the following resolution: "That this meeting urges His Majesty's Government to bring in a bill for the enfranchisement of women during their present term of office." This was seconded by Councillor W. E. Earengy, LL.D. and carried unanimously. Copies were ordered to be sent to Cabinet Ministers.

Votes of thanks to Chairman and speakers brought a capital meeting to a close. Mrs. McIlquham, in supporting the same remarked: "The real reason Liberals are so angry with the Suffragettes is that they had never reckoned on women becoming exasperated and rising in revolt—there is a point at which service degenerates into servility."

DARLINGTON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—Under the auspices of the Darlington and District Women's Suffrage Society an invitation meeting was held in the Parochial Hall, Victoria Road, Darlington, on Friday, November 29th, from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. There was a good attendance, and Miss Lucas, president of the Darlington Women's Liberal Association, presided. Among those who took part in the proceedings were Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Philip Snowden, Mrs. Coates Hansen, Mr. H. Pike Pease, M.P., Mr. G. G. Armstrong (Editor of *The Northern Echo*), and Miss Swanson.

Mr. Pease expressed the opinion that the action of the Suffragettes in breaking up meetings of Cabinet Members and others provoked the reprisals that had been made. It was useless altogether, for it did no one any good, and put back the cause. In the discussion which followed, Mrs. J. A. Foster and

Mrs. Denham took part. A cordial vote of thanks was accorded to the speakers at the close of the meeting.

LEEDS WOMEN SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—On Thursday, December 12th, a successful drawing-room meeting, presided over by Mrs. Carrish, was held by the kind invitation of Mrs. D. D. Marshall, at her residence, Parkhurst, Far Headingley. Miss Maud Illingworth, in an able address, traced the women's movement from its commencement, and showed how sex disability had first been introduced into the question of the franchise. She also pointed out the inequalities of the laws relating to morality, intestacy, guardianship of children, &c.

LONDON SOCIETY.—WANDSWORTH CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION.—DEBATE ON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.—A "non-committal discussion" on Votes for Women formed the chief item of the programme of a social gathering of Conservatives in the Wandsworth Town Hall on December 10th. Though the entertainment was entirely got up by members of the Conservative party, the local Women's Suffrage Committee was accorded the privilege of inviting an opener on the Suffrage side (and also, incidentally, of finding a woman speaker for the opposition). Mrs. Pember Reeves, in whose hands the Suffrage cause would be safe against any attack, opened the debate by remarking that she had herself voted twice in New Zealand. She considered that woman's right to a vote lay in the fact that she was a human being. Men who denied women taxpayers the right to vote had the onus of proving the logic of their position. Women were different from men, and could never be satisfactorily represented by men. Mrs. Cassidy, member of the Board of Guardians for Battersea; who, after much pressure, had been induced to take the opposition, said she thought the agitation against man-made law ridiculous, so long as women cheerfully used man-driven trains, man-built houses, and man-mined coal. The womanhood of England was clearly not behind the Suffragist movement. She herself was satisfied that women could do more by persuasion and indirect methods than by forcing concessions from men. Mrs. Reeves, who had ten minutes to reply, said that it was dangerous for any one to take part in an election without the personal responsibility of voting. After Mrs. Cassidy's reply, Sir Henry Kimber, M.P. for Wandsworth, said that the debate he had just heard would be a good pattern for the House of Commons itself. Women, he thought, had a stronger sense of what was just and right than men, and he had long been a convinced supporter of votes for women taxpayers.

The debate was followed by music, and the whole formed a quite novel entertainment for Wandsworth people. So great was the success of the evening, and so deep the interest aroused in the all-important subject, that Suffragists would do well to see if they cannot bring about similar discussions in other localities.

NORTH KENSINGTON AND PADDINGTON COMMITTEES.—The organizers of the North Kensington and Paddington meeting of December 5th have pleasure in reporting that on December 12th a drawing-room meeting took place at 14, Warwick Crescent by kind permission of Miss Green.

This "social" meeting was intended to follow up the public meeting of December 5th, and introduce some of those who had become interested on the former occasion to the local suffrage workers.

Undaunted by the pouring rain, about ninety people attended. Refreshments, speeches, and conversation were interspersed with a charming musical programme.

Miss Clementina Black made the opening speech, in which she treated the question of Women's Suffrage from the industrial aspect, and Mr. Malcolm Mitchell and Mr. N. L. George roused the audience to enthusiasm by their earnestness and depth of thought.

A resolution, "That in the opinion of this meeting, the Parliamentary Franchise should be given to women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men," was passed unanimously, and another, "That the resolution should be forthwith sent to the Member of Parliament for the district, Mr. Chiozza Money," was, for some reason, passed with even greater enthusiasm.

As a material result, many promised to subscribe to *Women's Franchise*, others bought tickets for the Men's League meeting on December 17th, ten new members were enrolled, and several offers of work were received. Mr. Mitchell enlisted five or six new members for the Men's League.

The success of this meeting proves that there is no need for strenuous Suffragists to despise social gatherings, and we are organizing two other drawing-room meetings for those ticket-holders who were disappointed of hearing the speeches on December 5th, at the Paddington Baths Hall meeting.

WEST MIDDLESEX BRANCH.—On Monday, December 2nd, an afternoon At Home, given by Mrs. Hodges, 36, Sunnyside Road, Ealing, was addressed on the subject of Women's Suffrage by Miss Jenner, Fulham Local Hon. Sec. of the Central Society. An informal discussion followed, in which several of the ladies present took part.

LUDLOW.—A very successful meeting was held in the Congregational schoolroom, Ludlow, on Tuesday, December 3rd, the Rev. W. J. Ashford presiding. Miss E. M. Gardner, B.A., of Birmingham, gave an address, at once lucid, forceful, and timely. The speaker gave a brief sketch of the history of the movement, explained how matters stand at the present, and then proceeded, with great eloquence, to state the grounds and urge the claims of women to enfranchisement. There was some discussion, but no new objections, and Miss Gardner made excellent use of the opportunity which the discussion gave. Ludlow is one of the quaint old towns where changes of any kind are not well received, but Miss Gardner's address will do much to reconcile its peaceful inhabitants to the inevitable.

SOUTHAMPTON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—A meeting of the Kell Literary Society was held on Thursday, December 5th, when Miss Jenner, of London, gave an excellent address. The President, the Rev. T. R. Skemp, presided, and introduced the speaker, who, in the course of a long and most interesting address, dealt very fully with the whole question of women's enfranchisement, and the opening to women of opportunities of public service. "As to results," concluded Miss Jenner, "I will mention one fact only, and that is that since the women of New Zealand and the Australian colonies have been enfranchised, many laws have been passed for the benefit of the condition of women and children which were sorely needed, and that the women of New South Wales accomplished, within four years of their becoming voters, reforms for which the women of Victoria (the one and only Australian colony where the women are still voteless) had worked in vain for fifteen years."

The meeting was thrown open for discussion. A hearty vote of thanks to Miss Jenner was proposed by Mrs. Stevens and seconded by Miss Spencer. Mrs. Welch, the Secretary of the Southampton Women's Suffrage Society, invited those present who were interested in the subject and were not already members of a Women's Suffrage Society to join the local one.

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY.—A public meeting of the above Society was held at the Masonic Rooms, Leamington, on Wednesday afternoon, December 4th, Mrs. Dykes, Hon. Treasurer of the Society, presided. The Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russell gave a most able and interesting address, which was listened to with great appreciation.

She proposed the following resolution, which was seconded by Miss Dormer Harris and carried unanimously. It has since been forwarded to the Prime Minister and to the member for the united boroughs. "That this meeting urges the Government to take up the question of Woman's Suffrage and to introduce a measure for the Enfranchisement of Women on the same terms as men."

Is Representative Government a Mistake?

The silly season of 1907 should be past. "Paterfamilias," "A Matron," "An old-fashioned Man" have had their day once more and for a year have ceased to be. But in their brief season they flourished and they won respect, for they brought

grist to the mill of the great dailies. I am resolved that I, too, though late, will join the band.

Paragraphs of a certain type have appeared lately with some frequency in *The Daily Post* and *The Morning Prattler*. The following is a fair specimen. "Mr. A., Conservative Separist Member for B., yesterday addressed his constituents in the Town Hall of C. As he was announcing that he might say without vanity that the government of his party had done remarkably well, a lady rose at the back of the hall, and enquired how soon a bill embodying the principle of "Votes for Women" would be introduced. She was at once approached by six stewards who, exercising considerable courage and address, succeeded with the efficient assistance of three constables of the X division in removing her from the room. After her withdrawal, kicking, screaming, struggling, bawling, bellowing, and shrieking shrill shrieks, the speaker resumed his address, and observed that the unfeminine conduct of this lady proved to even the most cordial well-wishers of the ladies that her sex is totally unfit to exercise the rights of the franchise. (Loud and prolonged applause)

In pained surprise I read the following in my *Weekly Wire* of a few days ago. "There were several unpleasant scenes between judge and counsel at D. yesterday... During the cross-examination of a witness, Judge E—, K.C., made a comment on an answer, and Mr. F., plaintiff's counsel, protested that his honour, who had intervened many times, ought not to have said such a thing.

His Honour (warmly): If you say that, I will ask you to desist from practising before me, Sir.

Mr. F.: Well, your Honour—
His Honour: Don't speak to me so, it is very rude.
Mr. F. continuing: Well, your Honour, it is for the jury to decide.

His Honour: It is not for the jury to decide whether you are respectful to me.

Mr. F.: Well, I don't comment on it.
His Honour: Nor do I, Sir.

At another period Mr. F. pleaded that it was very hard lines to be continually interrupted, whereupon the following dialogue took place:—

Mr. F.: It is hard lines.
His Honour: It is not hard lines.
Mr. F.: It is hard lines.
His Honour: It is not hard lines.
Mr. F.: It is hard lines if I am not allowed to conduct my case.

Still another protest came subsequently from Mr. F., whereupon his Honour heatedly remarked, "Don't look at me or make statements as you do," &c., &c., with grand finale from the Judge, "You are very impudent."

I ponder as I read, for masculine logic is irrefutable. If the moderately obstreperous conduct of one lady should disfranchise her sex, the more obstreperous conduct of two gentlemen should disfranchise theirs. But doubtless there is a flaw somewhere, for this is a democratic age, an autocracy is unthinkable. There *must* be some voters left!

A. HELEN WARD.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

January Meetings.

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

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

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Women's Freedom League (late W.S.F.A.).

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

Telephone: 15143 CENTRAL.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Hon. Treasurer: MRS. DESPARD. | Hon. Organising Secretary: MRS. BILLINGTON-GREIG. | Hon. Secretary: MRS. HOW MARTYN, B.Sc. |
| MRS. COATES HANSEN | MRS. DRYSDALE | MRS. SANDERSON |
| MISS HODGSON | MRS. ELLEN MITCHELL | MRS. BELL |
| MISS IRENE MILLER | MRS. WINTON-EVANS | MRS. HOLMES |
| MISS FITZHERBERT | MRS. JOSEPH CLAYTON | MISS MANSSELL |

Notes.

THE DAILY NEWS.—The splendid leading article on "the Women's Vote" which appeared in the *Daily News* on December 11th, consoles us for the rather tiresome little sermons on conduct that have been preached to us lately by that admirable journal. We are the better pleased because we know that the average politician gets up his subject for the day by swallowing the leading article of his pet paper at one gulp every morning. When we think of this fact, and of the enormous circulation of the *Daily News*, we realize that the editor has done us a really good turn for once. If the Liberal Press is to get ahead of the Liberal politicians in this way, the latter will surely have to revise their programme and consider the "expediency" of bringing it a little more into harmony with the spirit of the age. A few articles like this would render sensational methods unnecessary. No more Holloway Gaol; no more gibes and insults; no more muddy tramps; no more mounted police; out with the thimbles, polish up the knitting needles!—Alas, we are dreaming of the future.—"One swallow does not make a summer."

THE NEW LIBERAL DOCTRINE.—At Mr. Harcourt's meeting on December 12th a man asked him: "Are you in favour of taxation without representation?" We read that this remark provoked much disorder, and that the man was ejected to the tune of "Let the hills resound." It is not quite clear whether the hills were called upon to resound to the Liberal doctrine of taxation without representation or to the voice of a man so "effeminate" as to demand justice for women; but the incident reminds us that the question "Are you in favour of taxation without representation" was asked in the neighbourhood of Lavender Hill not long ago, "and echo answered, 'Yes'!"

THOSE "LORDS."—Mr. Harcourt having got rid of his enemies the women and the effeminate man, stopped the concert just as the musical enjoyment was at its height and proceeded to deal with the painful and shocking subject of an unrepresentative house. This sudden and unsuspected calamity which has so lately fallen like a thunderbolt upon this otherwise Liberal England must be dealt with before any other measure whatsoever could have the faintest chance of becoming the law of the land. "The only thing the House of Lords saved them from was the passage of Liberal measures." (Laughter.) It is well that the rank and file Liberals are light-hearted enough to laugh at this tragic state of things, but it is no laughing matter to have a lot of coroneted parasites on society passing Tory measures such as the one last Session giving women the right to sit on County and Borough Councils. They will be giving us the Parliamentary vote next, then where will the Liberals be?

ADAM'S RIB.—During the trial of a labourer at Preston last week, it transpired that he had been ill-treating his wife. A witness remarked: "It was only his own flesh and blood he was kicking. He has more right than any one else to kick his own wife." The magistrate evidently thought so too, as the man was sent to prison for assaulting the constable. Advocates of the doctrine that a woman who has a man's strong arm to lean upon requires no further protection might meditate upon this case. Our police-court protesters might turn their attention to Preston.

No Vote—No Tax.

TAXATION is a necessary accompaniment of all organized government. But there is a right and a wrong way of levying taxes. If the inhabitants of a country are represented in the governing chamber, taxation is under their control, and can be regulated by them. In such circumstances taxation is justifiable, and in agreement with the principles of liberty. If taxes are levied upon unrepresented people it becomes evil, unjustifiable, and unprincipled. This has been recognized for centuries. Wat Tyler's rebellion against the Poll Tax, Hampden's denunciation and resistance of Ship Money, have left their mark upon English history and character. British women have inherited the spirit engendered by these struggles for liberty, and recognize that the taxes levied upon them while they are voteless come under the head of illegal and tyrannical exactions. It is clear to them that the principles of representative government are violated when they are forced to pay taxes over the disposal of which they have no control.

Isolated women have taken practical steps to protest against the tyranny involved by the taxation of voteless women, but only recently have efforts been made to organize widespread opposition. The Women's Freedom League is attempting to develop this constitutional movement of protest in the early part of 1908, and appeals to all women who are able to do so to take active part in this campaign of resistance to unjustifiable taxation, and to urge their friends to do the same. Women who pay any direct taxes, such as Income Tax, Property Tax, Inhabited House Duty (payable on all houses rented at 20l. or more per year), can protest in this effective way, and thus impress upon the Government that taxation and representation must go together equally, whether women or men are concerned.

The procedure is as follows:—

1. When a paper demanding any of the above taxes is received, write across it, "I cannot conscientiously consent to taxation without representation."

[Signature].....

or words to the same effect. Treat all demands in the same way.

2. Letters, giving the full reasons for the step taken, should be sent to the local papers at once.
3. Communicate with the Hon. Secretary Women's Freedom League, 18, Buckingham Street, Strand, who will arrange for a public meeting of protest to be held after the sale, or, if the resister dislikes publicity, this can be omitted; but write in each case, so that full advantage can be taken of it.
4. The tax collector will order some of the resister's goods to be taken. These can be (a) Taken quietly away, or, (b) Doors may be locked and a siege begun. In either case a or b, when the goods are ultimately seized, the owner can, if she so desires, arrange for a friend to buy in the goods at the sale.
5. After the sale write again to the local papers, commenting on any details of the particular case which are of interest, and announcing the intention to continue this form of protest until women have obtained the rights and privileges of citizenship, as well as its duties and burdens.

The expense involved in making this form of protest is not very great; but women who cannot afford even this small extra expense, and yet are willing to protest, are asked to write to the

Hon. Secretary, who has received offers of financial help from some women for this purpose.

The Women's Freedom League is confident that numbers of women will come forward to take their share in this protest against legislative tyranny. We appeal to all such women to recognize the duty to themselves and to other women with which they are faced and in the interests of principle, of justice, and of right government, to resist to the uttermost the violation of the principle that those who pay taxes are entitled to representation.

"The Lowest Depths."

LAST Sunday I was passing through a poor street in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane. It was a remarkably quiet street—no children, no drunken people, no carts, or cabs. Suddenly I looked down into a bare cellar and saw a sight which rivetted me to the spot, and held me spellbound. It was the kitchen of a common lodging house, and in it were congregated a company of all sorts and conditions of men. I peered through the broken window and saw their faces in the gas light—hard, world-worn specimens of humanity, but, so far as I could see, with no trace of the criminal about them. They were gathered round a table huddled close together, companions in adversity, hard hit in the cruel battle of life. The room seemed to be utterly devoid of comfort, and far worse than many a stable.

I turned away and walked on, but presently returned to the spot, and to my surprise heard the sound of men's voices up-raised in sacred song. Some religious people were holding a service in the lodging house, and trying to lift the poor fellows' thoughts to higher things. Well, that was right and good, from their standpoint; but oh! it seemed so pathetic to hear those out-cast brothers singing about heaven and things to come. Instead of mansions in the sky they want decent homes here on earth away from that bare cellar. They want to know the meaning of "Home, sweet Home"! Some of them, perhaps, were worthless loafers who dreaded nothing so much as an honest day's work; but not all—surely not all. Oh! why should some men in this great rich city of London have no home but a dark dismal cellar while others loaf in idleness and luxury in their West End mansions, waited on hand and foot by obsequious lackeys, and living the life of drones in the great industrial hive?

Another picture rises before my eyes, and this time the victims of poverty are women and children. I recently visited some slums in Bethnal Green, and there found a poor woman whose husband brought her 12s. a week to live upon. Out of this she had to pay 7s. 6d. rent, and maintain herself, her husband, and five children! She added to this miserable income by going out to "do a bit of washing" sometimes.

The woman was in the prime of life, cheerful and uncomplaining, though she had a sick child in her arms. She did not know much more than the men in the lodging-house about "Home, sweet Home!" I am myself thoroughly familiar with slums, my life work lies in the midst of them, and I do desire the vote that we women may help to put men (and women) in Parliament who will sweep away these slums and common lodging-houses. I want to see my disinherited brothers and sisters righted, and men are so slow, so very slow in mending matters. They waste their time over Game Laws, South African Wars, and the like, while the people around them are starving. If we were enfranchised, we should do much better. We, therefore, demand the vote—and we mean to have it!

KATE CORDING,

Christmas Literature.

The Literature Secretary suggests to those members who are usually weak-minded enough to send Christmas cards to their friends, that they shall this year send copies of *Women's Franchise* instead. It is to be admitted that this paper is not so pretty as the usual Christmas card, but it is more instructive, and it will, we hear, next week, contain a good cartoon. Suitable Suffrage picture post-cards designed by members of the Artists' League may also be obtained at this office.

The Suffragist's "What's What."

Ballot-Box.—A receptacle for pieces of paper marked with a cross. It possesses the interesting (and hitherto unexplained) property of unsexing every female approaching it.

Police Force.—An institution of which the British public is justly proud. It combines the advantages of a guardian of law and order with those of a Post Office Street Directory. In the intervals of grappling with the pickpocket and the motor-bus it protects members of the House of Commons from the pressing attentions of the female in search of a vote.

Sympathizer.—A person who will do anything for the object with which he sympathizes except vote for it. See Cabinet Minister and Member of Parliament.

Member of Parliament.—A representative of the male portion of the nation. See Sympathizer.

Cabinet Minister.—See Sympathizer and Member of Parliament. Only more so.

Chivalry.—An institution that had its rise in the days when women commanded armies and sat in the nation's councils.

Anti-Suffragist.—See Dog in the Manger.

Holloway.—A Sanatorium in North London where persons of advanced political opinions are received for periods varying (usually) from seven to thirty-one days. Board, lodging and medical attendance free. Those wishing to avail themselves of the advantages of the institution should apply to Mr. Horace Smith or Mr. Curtis Bennet, Westminster Police Court, S.W.

Male Sex.—See Hereditary Aristocracy.

Hereditary Aristocracy.—Persons possessing solely by the accident of birth privileges denied by law to others. See Male Sex.

Dinner.—A meal eaten by the British Husband. It is of the nature of a Gargantuan feast, lasting the greater part of the twenty-four hours. This estimate is arrived at, not by personal consumption on the part of the compiler of this manual, but by taking into consideration the fact that the entire existence of the British wife is consecrated to the preparation and removal of the orgy—so much so that she is unable to spare time to record a vote. See also, Arguments against Removal of Sex Disability.

Arguments against Removal of Sex Disability.—"Go 'ome and cook the dinner."

Women's Suffrage.—A subject that must not be discussed in the presence of ladies.

Chancellor of the Exchequer.—A person in receipt of a salary of 5,000*l.* per annum, paid to him out of taxation levied upon women as well as men. Presumably acquainted with the fact. See Liberal Principles.

Liberal Principles.—No Taxation without Representation.

Women's Rights.—No information obtainable.

CICELY HAMILTON.

The Treasury.

THE Treasury is not yet empty, but needs, as usual, to be replenished. May we remind members that a few weeks ago a promise of 20*l.* was made on condition that four others were forthcoming. Two of the required 20*l.* have been received, but the treasurer is anxious that the other three shall be in her hands before Christmas. She earnestly appeals to the good friends of the League, either to send the money, if they are fortunate enough to be able to afford it or to collect it from their friends and forward it as a joint gift.

To prevent misunderstanding, however, she must explain that she is willing and delighted to receive any amounts, however small, at any time, knowing full well that it is as good or better for the League to receive 1*l.* from twenty women, or 10*s.* from forty women, as 20*l.* from one woman. Members of this League have votes, therefore must not avoid taxation.

Scottish Notes.

By the time these notes appear in print the Scottish movement will be provided with headquarters in Glasgow. The Scottish Council announces this fact with great pleasure, knowing that its hopes for the organization of the work in Scotland are beginning to be realized. An appeal is made for furniture for the new offices, which we wish to make as bright and attractive as possible. Desks, chairs, forms, cupboards, pictures, crockery, a typewriter, and other necessities must be obtained, and if they are provided by friends the funds will be considerably relieved, though it is not suggested by any means that members and sympathizers should confine themselves solely to this method of assistance. It is not necessary that such gifts should be new, and it is hoped that Scottish Suffragists will spare from their own homes a sufficient number of articles to furnish the home of the movement.

Among last week's meetings Miss Munro spoke at Dundee, Dunfermline (for the British Women's Temperance Association), and Crossgates, Miss Wilkie spoke at Montrose, Miss Menzies in Edinburgh, and I spoke at Uddington, Glasgow University, and at two other meetings. The discussion with the students at Gilmore Hill was very lively. All the speakers had to face a running fire of interruptions, sometimes witty and always good-natured, if not otherwise remarkable. There will probably be some little harvest of good as a result.

Dundee has again been to the front. Not content with developing the best group of hecklers in Scotland, this branch has triumphed in the Town Council. A fortnight ago, as a result of our members' activity during the municipal elections, the Lord Provost's Committee unanimously passed a resolution calling upon the Government to enfranchise women. When this resolution was brought before the full Council, a deputation of twelve women Suffragists was received, short speeches were made by Miss Husband and Miss Helen Wilkie, and the resolution was carried with one dissident. Other branches, both English and Scottish, should immediately follow the example of Dundee.

There has been a spurt of newspaper correspondence in the same city, and in this our women have carried off the honours in spite of profuse editorial notes against their arguments. Miss Clunas and Miss Brand have waged their weapons well. Such spirited writing as theirs must have a great educational effect upon their townspeople. But the greater use of newspaper columns is not confined to Dundee, the Edinburgh and Glasgow press has lately had regular attention from the women who are organized to obtain political liberty.

I am sorry to hear that several of our Scottish workers have followed the example of Mrs. Martyn and overworked themselves. Mrs. Saunderson has been quite unable to fulfil her engagements for the last fortnight, and I now hear with regret that Miss Wilkie has had to remain in Montrose since her meeting there last Saturday. I am only echoing the wish of every member of our League when I hope for the quick and complete recovery of these two stalwart workers for the cause.

The Cake and Candy Sale held by the Glasgow Western Branch on Saturday was a great success. When I, with two other members of the Scottish Council, arrived at the hall about six o'clock, we found large quantities of the goods were already sold and fresh customers were regularly dropping in. Mrs. Gemmil opened the proceedings, and Miss Munro and I spoke later in the evening.

The monthly meeting of the Scottish Council was held on Saturday afternoon. The attendance was less than usual, but a great deal of business was done, and amongst other things, arrangements were put in hand for certain militant work, and for the organization of new branches in Uddington, Lochgelly, Forfar, Montrose, for preparatory work in other districts, and for visits to Aberdeen and Kilmarnock.

The week's engagements include three meetings in Kilmarnock, one in Bearsden, one in Leith, and one in Edinburgh. TERESA BILLINGTON-GREIG.

Working Women and Compensation.

At a meeting of the Edinburgh branch of the W.F.L. held last night in Shepherd's Hall, delegates from the Trades Council were present to explain the position of women with regard to the working out of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Under the Act, persons over 21 years of age are entitled to claim for total disablement, half wages, while minors can claim full wages up to 10*s.* per week. Few working women at any time receive the handsome wage of 20*s.* a week, hence, half wages to them often means semi-starvation.

A case in point was stated. A poor woman, working a punching machine in the printing works, had an accident to her hand, which totally incapacitates her for life. Her wages were 11*s.* a week. Her age is 21 years, 8 months, hence she can claim only 5*s.* 6*d.* a week. Had she been nine months younger, she, being then a minor, could have claimed 10*s.* a week.

The League considered this one of those cases proving the gross injustice to which women are subjected under man-made laws, and the question was raised and discussed with a view to making an appeal to the Sheriff on her behalf. Her friends mean to plead that the spirit of the Act implies a minimum allowance of 10*s.* a week, but the case is weak, as the words certainly are clear—half wages, but as no amendment of law can be applied for until a case has been decided against the idea, they mean to make this a test case and then agitate to get this flaw in the Act remedied.

A. B. J.

Please Note.

THAT the Suffragist Sale of Work will be held on March 27th, 28th, and 29th. That a large hall will be taken for the purpose. That the Croydon Branch is holding weekly working parties, thereby setting an example to all other branches.

That though names of future Passive Resisters to income, house and land taxes are coming in, more are needed to make the protest effective.

That the usual Thursday Social Meeting at 18, Buckingham Street, will not be held in Christmas week.

That all communications intended for these columns in Christmas week must reach this office not later than Friday, as the paper is to be published one day earlier than usual.

That we hear from Amsterdam that the Suffrage Society was much pleased with the "Suffrage Song," by Charles H. Green, published in these columns on December 5th, and the music to it was asked for. We were obliged to reply that there was no music. Composers, please take the hint! We have suggested to our friends in Amsterdam, that they shall search for a composer, and that whichever nation has the honour of getting the music first shall forward it to the other. Free-born Britons! Do not let us be beaten by Amsterdam.

That the Treasurer begs to remind members that demonstrations which will be held in the New Year will be expensive.

PROGRAMME OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

From December 19th to January 4th.

			P. M.
Thurs.	Middlesbrough Town Hall	Mrs. Despard	8
	Social Meeting, 18, Buckingham Street	Mrs. Tweedie	3.30-6
	Central Branch "At Home"		8
Sat. Jan. 4	Public Meeting, Essex Hall	Mrs. Despard Mrs. Billington-Greig Miss Irene Miller	8

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

Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

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

Telephone: 8953 CENTRAL.

Notes and Comments.

WE are not able this week to say more regarding our Queen's Hall meeting than that it has been a complete success in every way. A full report will appear next week. We, however, take this opportunity of expressing our high appreciation of the help rendered by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, by its chief branch the Central Society, by the Women's Freedom League and its branches, and by the National Women's Social and Political Union and its branches. We have also to thank Miss L. Davies of the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Borough of Wandsworth Conservative and Unionist Association and the Liberal Associations of South St. Pancras and North Islington for help rendered in the sale of tickets and circulation of leaflets. Finally we are indebted to an immense number of individuals who have done yeoman service towards making the crowded meeting such a success.

We have received from Mlle. Theresa Lubinska, correspondent of the Polish Women's Union for Equality of Rights, whose headquarters are at Warsaw, a very warm greeting. This greeting is to the League in general, and more particularly in respect of last night's meeting in the Queen's Hall. We print the communication below as it has a very special interest, indicating as it does the international character of the movement for the abolition of sex privilege in respect of citizenship.

According to our promise of last week we publish, also *in extenso*, the official statement issued by the Women's Freedom League as to its policy of public protest in the Law Courts. A society composed of men who are all actually or potentially electors, and who, if accused, are tried before a jury of their peers, cannot easily express an opinion as to the abstract propriety of such a protest on the part of women who enjoy neither privilege. As to its ultimate effect, who is bold enough to prognosticate? We are glad to learn that the magistrates before whom the protests were made treated the protestors with courtesy, and we once more condemn the fatuously incorrect reports which were circulated by the irresponsible press. In truth it is a strange thing that many of the journals which are most prone to enlarge on other people's lack of patriotism should manifest their own respect for the British public by providing it with false information in respect of a matter affecting the status of all British women and the British constitution itself. Whatever may be thought of the propriety or of the prudence of any particular policy, no one can have anything but contempt for prominent newspapers which seek to enliven their columns by sensational perversions of facts regarding a serious political movement.

We have heard a rumour that the women employed in certain departments of the Government service have been officially forbidden to join Suffrage Societies. Such a prohibition—we can scarcely believe that it has been issued—were an interference with individual liberty which it would be somewhat difficult to justify.

Woman's Freedom.

CHATS ABOUT PERSONS AND BOOKS.

No. 1.—Mrs. Aphra Behn and her Works.

[To most people nowadays the name of Aphra Behn conveys nothing more intelligible than certain vague associations of licence and impropriety.—E. A. BAKER.]

BEFORE we come to the subject of our discussion it may not be amiss to offer a few remarks on the conditions prevailing in the seventeenth century, a period of rapid growth in the

freedom of the people. The time was tumultuous. The firm mind and iron hand of Cromwell had shaken the old notions of passive obedience and the reign of kings. The people also were to have their share, and that a great one, in the making of the laws. But although the Puritan movement was a blessing to England, its narrow bigotry, looking with suspicion on the most innocent pleasures of the people and severely putting down all art and amusements, was bound to bring a reaction the moment the strong government of Cromwell ceased to exist. From the staid and solemn religious observances under which masses of the more joyful portion of the population chafed during the Protectorate they went to the opposite extreme when the Merry Monarch Charles II. ascended the throne, and "licence and impropriety," to give it the most mild term, reigned supreme. Taking the word "morality" in its broadest sense, even under Cromwell the notions of propriety of some of the writers were exceedingly crude. We recall with amazement that the immortal Milton himself should have rejoiced that his bitter attack on a Leyden professor caused that man's death, although it must be mentioned also that the Leyden professor before he died expressed his pleasure that his angry retorts had hastened Milton's blindness.

Education in the seventeenth century in England was at a very low ebb in regard to the bulk of the people, and Macaulay says that the English women of that generation were decidedly worse educated than they had been at any other time since the revival of learning, adding that high-bred ladies wrote and spelt in a way of which a charity girl of the present day would feel ashamed. He mentions the incident of seeing a Bible at The Hague which had been given to William and Mary at their Coronation, on the fly-leaf of which appeared, in Mary's own handwriting, "This book was given to the King and I at our Crowning."

It is a well-confirmed axiom that the moral condition of a nation can be no higher than that of its women, and with a licentious Court, where vice and gambling were rife, with a theatre where the King and nobles met their favourites and strumpets without shame, it is not to be wondered that the language of plays and of novels was of a character we have no conception of at the present day unless we go back to the originals.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, have proved to us that the Puritan spirit has left its noble mark on English life, and although the anti-Puritan reactionary period of Charles II. let vice stalk in all its boldness, deep down in the heart of the nation both men and women were good.

In justice to Mrs. Behn, or Astrea as she was affectionately called in her day, we are obliged to make these preliminary remarks, for her works, or what is known of them—for the originals are extremely rare—partake of the spirit of the age in which she lived. She wrote histories, novels, poems, plays, and a number of ephemeral essays. Some of these are distinguished by merit—great merit, perhaps—yet much therein is of a most indelicate nature, like the writings of her male rivals.

Aphra Johnson was born on the 10th July, 1640, at Wye, in Kent. There is a doubt if she was the daughter of a barber or nobleman. Either would be honoured by having such a daughter. When still a child she accompanied her father, Mr. John Johnson, who was appointed Governor of Suriname, which then belonged to England. He died on the voyage out, but Aphra reached this West Indian station and remained there till about the age of eighteen; later, that possession was handed over to the Dutch, to whom it now belongs.

(To be continued.)

In reply to "Quousque Tandem."

WOMEN AND THE LAW COURTS.

[From Mrs. How Martyn.]

WOMEN are not permitted to share in the making of laws, but they are forced to obey them. The men of the nation alone are the law-makers. By the exercise of the Parliamentary Vote they make the laws by which women as well as men are governed. This is a grave wrong, which results in constant miscarriages of justice, and is contrary to the principles of equity upon which British law is supposed to be based.

It is the boast of our politicians that Britain is not governed by force but by the consent of the people, but this is not true. Men only have the power to refuse or to establish laws. The consent of women to the laws they have to obey is not asked; they are compelled to abide by laws made for them or to suffer punishment measured and meted out by men.

When any body of people is shut out from the power of law-making and forced to obey laws made by others, the first principles of freedom are outraged. Such a body of people is in a condition of legal slavery, and is governed by force. Taxation without representation is admittedly evil, but legislation without representation is much worse, for taxation only touches the pocket of the people, while general legislation hedges round every part of the individual and social life.

Protests must be made, and must continue to be made against this denial of self-government to one half of the nation. Until women share in making laws they ought also to protest against trial by law, and punishment according to law. No court of law responsible only to men and administering laws which only men have made can try and punish women without infringing the elementary right of liberty and the principles of justice. Women should be tried by their peers—that is, their equals—and they can never be the equals of men voters until they also are voters, so that by the principle laid down in Magna Charta the laws made by men have no authority over women. This does not mean that women object to law, and approve of lawlessness, but that they cannot submit to laws forced upon them by men, against which they have no right of appeal, and in making which they have no voice.

Even under present conditions, when the laws are flagrantly unjust to women and are administered with a scandalous want of fairness, women are more law-abiding than men. But they cannot longer see without protest the unrighteous exercise of legal power backed by brute force upon the voteless half of the nation. Laws made by men for women can never be just. Until women are voters and law-makers as men are, no court of law in the land is justified in trying women, and every such trial is a flagrant breach of the basis principle of government which declares that the consent of the people—men and women—is necessary to make any law binding upon the inhabitants of the country.

Until women are voters, law is but the will of men. It is not human justice.

Women's Freedom League, 18, Buckingham Street, Strand, Hon. Sec., Mrs. How Martyn, B.Sc.

Correspondence.

[The Men's League is essentially a non-party organization, in which all shades of political opinion are represented. For this reason we feel bound to state that the League is not responsible for the opinions of correspondents who may seem to associate its policy with hostility towards any one of the existing political parties.]

DEAR SIR,—While not being in entire agreement with your remarks on Mr. Raphael's candidature, I think you have shown conclusively that Mr. Raphael cannot be classed as an ordinary pledged private member. But to my mind the chief value of your comment is this—that it is perfectly useless for Suffragists to inflict a blow on the present Government unless that blow is unquestionably and obviously due to the Suffragists. There is no

doubt at all that a great deal of the by-election work of the N.W.S.P.U. has failed in its object simply because it has been impossible to prove the effect it has produced. To inflict punishment on an unworthy person is merely the satisfaction of a desire for vengeance, unless it is done with the object of causing him to amend his ways, and this cannot occur unless he knows by whom and for what he has been punished.

Yours faithfully,
C. O. WEATHERLY.

DEAR SIR,—I entirely fail to understand why you have not taken some definite line with regard to the policy adopted by a sister society with regard to the breaking up of public meetings. Though I recognize freely the enthusiasm which prompts it, though I can well understand how irritating it must be to women to hear the very principles on which they demand the vote asserted by Liberal orators, who yet refuse, or are unable to apply them to the women's cause, yet I regret profoundly the policy of interrupting important speeches. Questions at the proper time, such as were set to Mr. Corrie Grant, are admirable, but determined "breaking-up" is bad for two reasons.

In the first place, it has called to Suffrage meetings the attention of a class of noisy young men, who have no real interest in the question, but are never so happy as when engaged in making a row. Such young gentlemen are extremely difficult to expel—especially for women stewards!—and can easily upset the most reasonable meeting, as in the case of recent meetings at Reading and Birmingham. Suffrage meetings have become in the eyes of these future legislators—and, worse still, in the eyes of sober people—merely an arena for rowdiness.

Secondly, it is becoming more and more impossible for women Suffragists to support their demands for justice by urging that the advent of women into our national politics will exercise a beneficial effect upon the whole system. We believe that this will be the case; but under present circumstances the mention of such a probability not unnaturally produces a burst of Homeric laughter.

These are the main objections. But there are others. One is, that those women who have been selected for the interruption work have not been sufficiently dignified in their protest. Their behaviour has damaged the cause enormously. A calm protest is a very different thing from loud denunciation and futile exhibitions of physical force, such as the more vulgar press delights to reproduce and exaggerate. Another minor objection is that nearly every speaker nowadays is compelled to use half his time and energy in talking "tactics" and "methods" while the serious arguments have to take a back seat.

Finally, this prominent policy—pursued only by a small section—is naturally attributed to every Suffragist. The propagandist work of three societies is being seriously injured by the policy of one. I do not feel at all sure that the ladies of that one society have sufficiently considered this point. However convinced they may be of the rightness of the policy, it is scarcely in the best interests of the cause that the work of three societies should be endangered by the self-adopted attitude of one.

I enclose my card.

Głosowanie Powszechne Jest Dopiero Wówczas Gdy I Kobiety Głosują!

DEAR SIR,—A true enthusiasm is awakened by the honest splendid work of the League. I shall have the immense pleasure to referate for our members the doings of the League, on December 17th, just at the time the League will attend to the meeting at Queen's Hall. Our hearty wishes we send you—to-day on a card, on the 17th in a telegram. We should be most thankful if you were kind enough to send us some of your leaflets that we could read to our members—and use of your enthusiastic strength as a wakening song.

Yours truly,
THERESA LUBINSKA.

Warsaw.

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