

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

VOTES FOR WOMEN

WHY WOMEN SHOULD NOT HAVE THE VOTE

THE CHIEF VALID REASONS

by DENNIS HIRD, Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford.

I take it for granted that if women are once admitted to the same privilege of voting as men, they will, in the end, become members of Parliament. This result should be borne in mind when considering this serious question.

Clearly a woman should not have the vote because: -

1. A Woman is usually more Straightforward in Money Matters than a Man. - Now the first qualification for political business is diplomacy, so as to get the best of our opponents at any cost, otherwise there would be grave danger to our national greatness.

2. A Woman is Tempted to Idealize. - (She has been known even to idealize man, and swoon away into hero worship). Now the essence of a Parliamentary life is humdrum. The greatness of the British Empire rests on the gospel of the commonplace. Successful politicians as men of small, grubbing instincts, the extent of whose outlook is measured by half the length of their noses. This is the State's one foundation. If women introduce any ideals into public life, the sure foundations of our national greatness might crumble into patriotic dust.

3. Woman has More Moral Enthusiasm than Man. - Nothing could be more deadly than to introduce morality or enthusiasm into public life, for it might destroy party Government.

4. Successful Men Require a Toy. - There is no toy so charming and expensive as a well-dressed, unthinking woman. But if women are allowed the rights and duties of a free citizen, she might become the friend and comrade of man, and his toy would be lost.

5. Woman is a Sympathetic Animal. - She might refuse to murder people in war, or to starve children in slums. The results of such sympathy are terrible to contemplate. Nations might be robbed of the glories of war, and butchers would either be put out of work, or lose their pensions. Then what could we do with a nation of healthy children? We should have an alarming increase of health, intelligence, and happiness. The rich would miss their slaves, and there would be hardly any incentive to make fortunes - even the peers might die out.

6. Woman is a Home-Loving Creature. - If she had political power she might turn her attention to domestic reforms and seek the well-being of the home. Such homely details as these can never rank beside military glory and party

greatness. The earth would reel in its orbit, if politicians were uniformly to seek the good of the people. I can imagine nothing more frightful in public life, unless it were that members of Parliament were compelled to keep the promises made in their election speeches.

7. Woman is Lacking in the Criminal Instincts. - No education, no provocation, no misery has been able to produce a race of criminal women on a truly national scale of grandeur. If the motherly instincts to sacrifice for the good or the weak were once introduced into the official life of the nation, proud nations could no longer be built on misery and want. History would become as dull as a psalm sung by a wheezy gramophone.

8. Woman is a Good Speaker, and has the Gift of Oratory. - Now the House of Commons is as brilliant as a Burial board, and as full of wit as a Hanging Committee. If woman should introduce oratory, the dead statesmen in Westminster Abbey would rise in a body and occupy the Stranger's Gallery. This would revive all the old superstitions about ghosts. The House of Lords would become a branch of the Psychological research Society, which would divert their energies from statesmanship.

9. If Woman had the Vote, she might Remodel the Divorce Laws on the Basis of Justice. - This might tend to make men moral, and destroy our present form of Christian charity. It would be a serious blow to the Church, for it would show that the Bishops had been mistaken.

It is one of the glories of the British Empire that a Woman will do a Man's Work for Half His Pay. - Now in the case of payment of members, women members would work for less than the men, so that there would be a danger of more women being elected, to save the public purse, until, at last, men might be completely ousted from Parliament, and there would be no one left to obstruct public business. Besides, if woman took office, she would bring down the salaries of Ministers, and the surplus might be used to pay off the National Debt. This would be a grave disaster. No National Debt means no British Empire.

I earnestly implore all sincere believers in the sacredness of almighty officialdom to ponder these reasons. We have now a solid foundation of public morality that *might* is *right*. If for any moral or humanitarian reasons we call in question the right of the blessed few, no man can predict to what extent the forces of common sense and loving kindness may be let loose, The human race has become "great by free and abundant temptations"; man is "ennobled by suffering." Misery and murder are the laws, not only of mankind, but of the brutes. Any attempt to introduce an entirely new order of life should be resisted by all who have vested interests in weakness, squalor, and injustice. Perish the toiling masses, but preserve our national greatness, which, in all times, has been measured by the income tax and the pensions of the discerning few. Blessed are the powerful, so long as they are not women.

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Women who believe in the justice of obtaining FREEDOM FOR WOMEN should write to or call on the Hon. Sec.:—18, BUCKINGHAM STREET, STRAND, LONDON
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