

MEN IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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VOTES FOR WOMEN

SPEECH

OF THE LATE

JOHN STUART MILL

AT THE

GREAT MEETING

IN FAVOUR OF

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE,

HELD IN THE

MUSIC HALL, EDINBURGH, JANUARY 12th, 1871

PRICE TWO PENCE

To be obtained from the Secretary,
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MR. JOHN STUART MILLⁱ (who was received with great enthusiasm, the audience rising and waving their hats and handkerchiefs) said : If there is a truth in politics which is fundamental—which is the basis of all free government—it is that when a part of the nation are the sole possessors of power, the interest of that part gets all the serious attention. This does not necessarily imply any active oppression. All that it implies is the natural tendency of the average man to feel what touches self of vastly greater importance than what directly touches only other people. This is the deep-seated and ineradicable reason why women will never be justly treated until they obtain the franchise. They suffer, assuredly, much injustice by the operation of law. But suppose this changed ; even then—even if there were no ground of complaint against the laws, there would be a break-down in their execution as long as men alone have a voice in choosing and in removing the officers of Government.

All our recent constitutional reforms, and the whole creed of reformers are grounded on the fact that the suffrage is needed for self-protection. All experience proves that if one part of the community is held in subjection by another part, it is not trusted with the ordinary means of self-defence, but is left dependent on the good-will and pleasure of those who are more privileged, the most vital interests of the subject-portion are certain to be, if not recklessly trampled upon, at least postponed to almost anything else.

The treatment of women is certainly no exception to the rule. They have neither equal laws, nor an equal administration of them. The laws treat them as they could not long be treated if they had the suffrage; and even if the laws were equal the administration of the law is not. Police magistrates and criminal judges cannot be exceptionally bad men; they are not chosen for their bad qualities ; they must be thought, by those who appoint them, to represent fairly, or better than fairly, the moral feelings of average men. Yet, what do we see? For an atrocious assault by a man upon a woman, especially if she has the misfortune to be his wife, he is either let off with an admonition, or he is solemnly told that he has committed a grave offence, for which he must be severely punished, and then he gets as many weeks or months of imprisonment as a man who has taken five pounds' worth of property gets years.

We are told that the good feelings of men are a sufficient protection to women. Those who say so can never, one would suppose, look into the police and law reports. If good feeling does not protect women against being beaten and kicked to death's door every day of their lives, and at last beaten and kicked to actual death by their special guardians and protectors, can we expect that it will secure them against injuries

less revolting to humanity ? Most men, it will be said, are incapable of committing such horrible brutality. Perhaps so ; but it seems they are quite capable of letting it be committed. If women who are maltreated by their husbands found a defender in every other man who knew of it, they might have some chance of protection without the weapon of the suffrage. But it is never so ; slaves did not find it so ; serfs did not find it so ; conquered nations do not find it so ; and neither do women. There are many men who would not consciously do them any wrong ; but there must be a great moral improvement in human nature before most men will exert themselves to prevent or to redress wrongs committed by others under the sanction of law. And of these two things—the suffrage for women, and a grand moral improvement in human nature—the suffrage, to my thinking, is likely to be the soonest obtained. (Cheers.) I could afford to stop here. I have made out an ample case. There is portion of the population, amounting in number to somewhat more than half, to whom the law and its administration do not fulfil their duty, do not afford even the bodily protection due to all—this half happening to be that which is not admitted to the suffrage. Their most important interests are neglected—I do not say from deliberate intention, but simply because their interest is not so near to the feelings of the ruling half as the ruling half's own interest. The remedy is plain ; put women in the position which will make their interest the rulers' own interest. Make it as important to politicians to redress the grievances of women as it is to redress those of any class which is largely represented in Parliament.

If nothing more than this could be said in support of their claim to the suffrage, no claim could be more fully made out. (Cheers.) And if the claim is just, so also is it strictly constitutional. One of the recognised doctrines of the British Constitution is that representation is co-extensive with direct taxation. The practice, of the Constitution, it is true, for a long time did not correspond with the theory ; but it has been made to conform to it at last, in cities and boroughs, provided the taxpayer is of the male sex ; but if a woman, she may be the largest taxpayer in the place, and the person of greatest practical ability besides ; no matter, she has no vote. This is something very like punishing her for being a woman. The conditions which in the eye of the law and of the Constitution confer a title to a voice in public affairs are all fulfilled by her, with the single exception of having been born a male. This one deficiency, which I humbly submit she cannot help—(laughter)—is visited on her by the privation of a right as important to her as to any man, and even more important, since those who are physically weakest require protection the most. This is not an injury only, but an indignity. I grant that those who uphold it are in general quite unconscious of its

being so ; but this comes from the inveterate habit of having one rule and measure for all that concerns women, and another for everything else.

Men are so much accustomed to think of women only as women, that they forget to think of them as human. (Hear, hear.) It is not only for their own sake that women ought to have the suffrage, but also for the sake of the public. It is for the interest of us all, both men and women, and of those who are to come after us. The reasons that may be given for this are many, but I may content myself with two. One, and the strongest, is what we sometimes hear unthinkingly urged as an argument on the other side—because women have so much power already. (Laughter.) It is true they have much power. They have the power which depends on personal influence over men. They have the power of cajolery—(laughter)—and often that of a petted favourite; power sadly inadequate to their own just and necessary protection against wrong, but sufficient at times to produce only too much effect upon the public conduct of the men with whom they are connected. But as this power, instead of being open and avowed, is indirect and unrecognised, no provision is made for its being rightly used. As it is conventionally assumed that women possess no power outside the domestic department, the power which they do and always will possess is exercised without the necessary knowledge, and without the proper responsibility.

It having been decreed that public matters are not a woman's business, her mind is carefully turned away from whatsoever would give her a knowledge of them, and she is taught to care nothing about them—that is, until some private interest or private likings or dislikings come in, when of course these private feelings have it all their own way, there being no public principles or convictions to control them. The power, therefore, which women now have in public affairs is power without knowledge. It is also power without responsibility. A man's wife is very often the real prompter either of what he does well and nobly, or of what he does foolishly or selfishly ; but as she gets no credit for the one, so she is not held accountable for the other ; if she is selfish, a very little art suffices to exempt her from censure though she succeeds in compassing her ends ; if she is simple and well meaning, she does not feel bound to inform herself, so as to have a reasonable opinion on what is solely the man's business, though all the while her ignorant prepossessions or her natural partialities may be acting as a most pernicious bias on what is supposed to be his better judgment. From this combination of absence of instruction and absence of responsibility, it comes to pass that, though women are acknowledged to have, as a rule, stronger conscientious feelings than men, it is but a very small

minority of women who have anything that deserves the name of a public conscience. How great an evil this is, there needs no argument to show. What is the greatest obstacle which the friends of political and social improvement have to struggle with—the drag which is constantly obstructing their efforts and disappointing their hopes? Is it not the weakness of the average citizens' political conscience? Is not this the special danger and failure to which popular institutions are exposed—that the elector does not sufficiently feel his obligations to the public, and either stays away from the poll, or goes there and votes on the prompting of some private interest? And how can we hope that he will learn to postpone private interests to public, while he has beside him, in the person of his closest intimate, one who has been trained to have no feeling whatever of his duties to the public, but who has the keenest feeling of his duties to his family, and who, even without intending it, cannot but sway his mind strongly in the direction of the only interests which she understands and appreciates? (Applause) It must be remembered, too, that this is a growing evil. Time was when the wife was very little a companion of her husband—their lives were apart; the associates of his leisure and of his recreations were other men. But now the home and its inhabitants are so much to a man, that no other influence can, as a rule, compete with theirs. The time, therefore, is come when, if we would have public virtue in our men, we must have it in our women. (Hear, hear and applause.) And how can a woman have a conscience about the public good, if she is told, and believes, that it is no business whatever of hers? Give women the same rights as men, and the same obligations will follow. Instead of hanging a dead weight on men's public conscience, their greater susceptibility of moral feeling will make their habitual influence a most valuable support to the honest performance of public duty. (Loud applause.) This, then, is one of the reasons why it is for the good of all that women should have an admitted right to take part in public affairs. Another is the vast amount of brain power and practical business talent which now runs to waste for want of an outlet into those great fields of public usefulness, in which no one, I suppose, will pretend that such qualities are not very much wanted. Few men, I suspect, are sufficiently aware of the great amount of administrative ability possessed by women; for want of considering that the essential qualities which lead to practical success are the same in what are called small things as in great.

It is my belief that, in all those parts of the business of life which depend on the vigilant superintendence and accurate estimation of details, women, when they have the necessary special knowledge, are better administrators than men. And I am now speaking, not of women as they might be—not as some improved mode of education would

make them—but of women as they now are, and of the capacities which they have already displayed. If an example is wanted of what women's powers of organisation can accomplish in public life, I appeal to one of the most striking facts of modern times, the Sanitary Commission in the late American War. The history of that Commission ought to be as well known all over the world as it is in America. From the beginning, and throughout, it was women's work. It was planned, organised, and worked by women. The Government was jealous of them at first, but the hopeless inferiority of its own arrangements made it soon glad to make over the first place to them. Not only had such work never been so well done, but nobody had ever supposed it possible that it could be so well done. I am aware that this argument would carry us much further than the suffrage : but I suppose it will be acknowledged that those who are themselves eminently capable of practical business, must be fit to take a share in the choosing of those to whom practical business is to be entrusted. The ability which is specially required for the exercise of the suffrage—that of selecting the persons most capable for the work that is to be done—is one of the qualifications for business in which women have always excelled. Great queens have in nothing shown themselves greater than in their choice of Ministers. When the ladies of the Sanitary Commission wanted men to help them, they knew the right men and how to use them; and they distinguished themselves not less by the work which they caused to be done, than by that which they did in their own persons (Applause.) These are some of the reasons which make it equally just and expedient that the suffrage should be extended to women. It must, at the same time, be borne in mind that, by admitting them to the suffrage, no other question is in the smallest degree prejudged.

Supposing it true, what some people are so fond of affirming, that women have nothing to complain of, and that the vast majority of them do not desire any change ; if so, giving them the suffrage can do nobody harm, and would afford them an opportunity of showing their perfect contentment with their present lot, in a manner beyond the reach of dispute. (Applause.)

If what we are told is true, that women ought to be, and always must and will be, in a state of domestic and social subordination to men, why, then, they require the suffrage so much the more, in order that the sovereignty of men over them may be exercised under the fitting responsibility. None need political protection so much as those who are in domestic dependence, since none are so much exposed to wrong. On every possible supposition, therefore, they have a claim to the suffrage. And we live at a period of human development, when the just claims of large numbers cannot be permanently resisted.

The whole movement of modern society, from the middle ages until now, greatly accelerated in the present century, points in the direction of the political enfranchisement of women. Their exclusion is a last remnant of the old bad State of society – the regimen of privileges and disabilities. All other monopolies are going or gone. The whole spirit of the times is against predetermining by law that one set of people shall be allowed by right of birth to have or to do what another set shall not, by any amount of exertion or superiority of ability, be allowed to attain. (Applause.) If nature has established an ineradicable and insuperable difference in the capacities and qualifications of the two sexes, nature can take care of itself. What nature has decided may safely be left to nature. But when we find people making themselves uneasy for fear that nature's purposes should be frustrated unless law comes to her assistance, we may be pretty certain that it is not nature they are so careful about, but law pretending to be nature. To all such pretences the growing improvement of mankind is making them more and more adverse.

I do not know how long a time it may require to get rid of women's disabilities. Great changes in the habits and opinions of mankind are always slow. But of one thing I am certain – that when once they have been got rid of – when their true aspect is no longer disguised by the varnish of custom and habit – they will appear in the retrospect so devoid of any rational foundation, and so contradictory to the principles by which society now professes to guide itself, that the difficulty which will be felt will be to conceive how they can ever have been defended, and by what possible arguments they can ever have been made to appear plausible. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

VACHER & SONS, Printers, Westminster.

ii John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) was the son of the philosopher and economist James Mill. He worked for his father in the East India Company for many years. 1865-8 he was Liberal MP for Westminster. In the 1830s he edited the Westminster Review. From 1830 till his death he wrote and worked for getting people to understand the necessity of a scientific approach when dealing with issues of social, political and economic change, while also not forgetting or ignoring the insights of poets and creative writers. His best known works are *System of Logic* (1843) a key text in the study of logic; *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) which took up the links between economic growth and the environment. it was thought of as 'worker's capitalism' or socialism. A utilitarianist he published *Utilitarianism* in 1861, a classic text on the welfare of all.

Liberty was important to Mill as seen in his *Essay on Liberty* (1859). He was therefore a strong supporter of women's emancipation and in 1869 published *The Subjection of Women* a classic statement of liberal feminism, published today with an essay by his wife Harriet Taylor Mill on the same theme.

What the Women Want

“Whatever do the women want?” we hear the scornful cry.
To you, O “Christian Commonwealth!” we women make reply.
We *want* a “Christian Commonwealth,” where just and equal laws
Shall make a needless mission ours, who plead the woman’s cause.

It is a wholesome lesson we were taught as girls at school
That our vaunted Constitution has a fundamental rule.
That whosoever hath no voice on voting or debate
Is free from obligation to contribute to the State.

When we women claim the Franchise, men have one answering note,
“By reason of your womanhood, we do refuse the vote.”
But when the tax collector calls, ’tis not enough to say,
“By reason of our womanhood we do refuse to pay.”

O wise and prudent Rulers ! we are women it is true,
But we are fellow citizens and fellow subjects too.
We have hearts and brains and voices, have we no right to say,
By what laws we will be governed – whose Sceptre we obey?

There are wrongs that must be righted – bitter woes that seek redress.
We can hear our sisters calling in their weakness and distress.
We need the power to lift them from their sad and evil plight.
’Tis for *this* we want the franchise – and we claim it as our right.

F. E. S.

Mr. William Woodall, M.P., ON Women's Suffrage.

I believe it has been established that of the landowners in England and Wales one-seventh are women, and these ladies have devolving upon them, as you know, the most important duties. Their opinion and choice is often in the selection of Parliamentary candidates. Upon them devolves patronage and other important functions in regard to the Church, and their influence is often sought and commonly acknowledged in regard to public affairs, but when the day of Polling comes these ladies have to stand on one side and see their own labourers who live in the boroughs—and shortly they will see the labourers who live in the agricultural districts—go up to record their votes yes, stand on one side as if the matter was something quite beyond their own concern. Nor need I remind you of the many cases in which there devolves upon widows—in some cases inherited by daughters—the conduct of extremely important commercial undertakings. In their case, although they have to exercise large and important responsibilities in the course of their duty, the same anomaly presents itself ; but while these may be few, we know that there are hundreds of thousands of women of the poorer classes who toil amid many hardships to fulfil their duties as householders, and who are accordingly interested—more interested perhaps than any other class of the community in wise laws and good government.—*Speech at St. James's Hall Meeting, July 5th, 1883.*

"Woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or Godlike, bond or free."

(Tennyson)

**The Case for
Women's Suffrage
And
Objections Answered**

by THOMAS JOHNSTON

Price ONE PENNY.

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The Case for Women's Suffrage

AND

Objections Answered,
by THOMAS JOHNSTONⁱ

Should Women Vote in Parliamentary Elections ? It is the live political issue of the day. On train, 'bus and boat, in my lady's drawing room and in the "Fox and Grapes" saloon, in factory, in mine, in literary societies, in the cotter's sheiling and at the street corner, the question of Woman's suffrage is undoubtedly the most frequently discussed political issue of the hour. And yet, despite all the discussion a vast amount of ignorance prevails ; ignorance regarding the civic position of women in other countries, ignorance as to the facts on which the claim for the Franchise is based, ignorance as to the results which will ultimately follow the inclusion of the female in the parliamentary Voter's Roll. It is the purpose of this pamphlet to state briefly the case for woman's suffrage and to answer the objections which are usually offered to it.

The Case for Women's Suffrage

The first, the strongest, reason why women should vote in Parliamentary elections is, Because they are Taxed, and because Taxation without Representation is Unjust. Women have Income Taxes to pay. Tea Taxes on figs, raisins, currants, sugar, houses and land. Of course, some women pay no Income Tax or Land Tax, or House Tax, but every woman in the land who drinks tea or uses sugar pays a tax to the Government. She has taxes imposed on her for the upkeep of the Army, for the Navy, for wars, and these taxes are imposed on her without her consent, and indeed, very often against her will. This is tyranny. It is more - it is legalised robbery.

One great Political Party (the Liberal Party) has long had inscribed on its banners and programmes the words "Taxation Without Representation is Tyranny." Yet women are to-day taxed against their wills, and they are given no voice in the spending of the money raised. It is unjust.

Class after class have emerged from this bondage. The barons at Runnymede forced their Magna Charta from the King, the middle classes forced their right to a participation in the government of the country and in the levying of taxes in the Great Reform Bill of 1832; in 1867, the householder (the artisan) was given the right to enter the Councils of the Nation, and in 1884 the agricultural labourer was granted the primal right of citizenship; but the women class - the women are still regarded by the State as in the category of paupers, lunatics, infants and criminals, they are still taxed and have no right to discuss the spending of the money so raised. They are not citizens : they are from the standpoint of citizenship still slaves.

Unequal Laws.

The second argument in favour of "Votes for Women" is the fact that the laws of Britain bear unequally on men and women. Man alone has made the laws, he has made them without considering the needs and requirements of women, he has made them in his own interest and he has manufactured thereby different codes of morality for the husband and the wife, the father and the mother, the brother and the sister, the bachelor and the spinster.

Under the Law of England to-day (there are modifications in Scots Law) a man can secure divorce on simply proving the sexual unfaithfulness of his wife. But the wife, in order to secure a divorce from her husband for this same unfaithfulness must in addition prove cruelty or desertion.

Think what this means to many an English woman!

The unmarried mother is considered by the law to be the sole parent of a child not born in wedlock, and the man has only a slight legal liability. Thus where there is any stigma or blame the woman bears it alone. But the law looks with a different eye on the legitimate children : the father is the legal parent and the mother only becomes a legal parent on the father's death.

Many a child mother, deserted by the (at least) equal participant in the responsibility for the "disgrace," becomes mentally deranged, and in a moment of hysteria either drowns the child or leaves it on a roadway or a stair to die. Here man-made law steps in with a charge of Infanticide and sentences the poor helpless woman to a long period of brutal imprisonment, while the real author of the crime, the coward who has deserted the woman, is allowed to go scot free. He is not even summoned to the court to share the public odium. Before the law he is guiltless, he has done no wrong.

Woman has to obey laws she has no hand in the making of, laws which bear very hardly upon her, and she is refused the only lever by which she can alter and remedy these evils - she is refused the Parliamentary Vote.

Women's Wages

Economic power follows political power. That is to say, any class which is underpaid and oppressed requires to have political power (in this case, the Vote) ere it has the remotest hope of becoming well-paid and free. If women had the Vote we should find Parliamentary candidates touting for their support, hearkening to their grievances,

bidding one against the other for the Women's Vote. As at an auction sale, the highest bidder, if his cheque be considered sound, gets the article, we should find candidates vie with one another in proposing schemes for the amelioration of the lot of the underpaid women. To-day the candidate leaves the women of the constituency out of account. All his promises and attentions are given to the men ; he only begs the women to come and canvas for him. His programme is of male reforms, he talks of the rights of man, and his "man" does not include woman.

Yet, is it not the case that women require reforms more urgently than do men? Their needs are greater, and no one promises them anything. Him that hath not is given nothing more, whilst for him that hath a little, of that little be only the power to put a cross on a ballot paper, is promised the kingdoms of the earth and heaven and every additional kosmos the imagination of the candidate can soar to.

Cruel as are the conditions, and small, pitifully small, as are the wages of most men, women's wages and conditions are worse. The average male worker's wage has been calculated to be about 18s., but the average woman worker's wage is only about 7s.

Cadbury and others have issued a carefully compiled book on "Women's Work and Wages," in which we find the following. -

GENERAL DRESSMAKING

Average Wages

		Under 18 Years.	Over 18 Years
General Dressmaking,	...	4s 9d.	11s. 6d.
Bodice Hands,	5s. 0d.	10s. 0d.
Hats, Caps, Bonnets,	---	12s. 0d.
Babies' Millinery,	...	----	10s. 0d.

These figures take no account of the frequent periods of no work and short time ; no account of holidays. They are simply the averages of the wages paid in these trades. Of course there are trades wherein the women workers are even worse off. The average wage paid to women over 18 at cartridge cutting is 8s. 6d ; bedstead-ornamenting, 9s ; carding hooks and eyes, 5s. 11d. ; and wrapping hairpins, 5s. 6d.

How can a woman over 18 years of age live on 5s. 6d per week? She cannot do it ; and too often in her despair she has recourse to that pitiable trade of the streets wherein, as has been said, "the newest

beginner is paid the highest wage."

And the conditions under which many women slave out their lives for a miserable pittance ! In stinking, rickety garrets, so near the slates as to freeze in winter and choke with heat in the summer, sewing themselves blind and bent ! No Factory Act gets near them, no laws of safeguard shield them. If women had the Parliamentary Vote they would have the handle to the only tool by which they can ever hope to improve the conditions under which they work and live.

Other Reasons

Women should have the vote :

Because no sex, or class, or race, can have its welfare properly and intelligently safeguarded unless it has a direct influence on the legislature.

Because the more important and lucrative positions in Society to-day affect women very closely and will never be satisfactorily dealt with if the women's view be not considered. What man feels the force of the evils of intemperance like the drunkard's wife, his sister, his mother? The Housing Question! who feels its urgency and importance like the woman who lives day and night in the house. The death rate of infants, the waste of child life, the evils attendant on the employment of married women in mills, factories, etc., unemployment, low wages, the care of the aged ; is not woman more fitted to deal with these than man?

Because woman is the educator of the child ; and what woman can properly educate and train a child if she herself be not properly educated? Education simply means a drawing out, and if women are cribbed, cabined and stunted in their mental growth, if they are bound and gagged by silly little conventions, if they are forbidden to widen their minds by speculation and discussion on the problems of life, if they are denied the rights of citizenship, if servility and not independence be asked of them, then can we expect other than that the child will be improperly trained and badly educated?

In Other Countries.

But, if women are still treated as infants in "free" progressive Britain, other nations have admitted the inherent justice of the women's claims and have conceded them the Franchise. In Democratic New Zealand, in Republican America, in Autocratic Russia women have been raised from servility to citizenship. In New Zealand the women were granted the Franchise in 1893 (and, mark this, in 1898 their influence largely helped to force an Old Age Pensions Bill through the Legislature). South Australia gave them the Franchise in 1894, and West Australia in

1899. The results were so satisfactory that in 1902 Sir Edmund Barton, the Federal Premier, brought in a Bill to give them the vote in all elections for the Federal Parliament. Since then Women's Franchise Bills have passed the New South Wales, the Tasmanian, the Queensland and the Victorian Parliaments, though, in the case of Victoria, it has not yet been given effect to in law. In some parts of the United States of America women have had the vote given them. In Wyoming they have had it for over 20 years. They also vote in the State Elections in Utah, Colorado and Idaho. In Oregon, a Women's Suffrage Bill passed both Houses of Legislature but was lost by a small majority on a popular vote, 48 per cent. of the male electors who recorded their votes being in favour of the Bill. In 1901 the New York Legislature passed a Limited Suffrage Bill giving all qualified women the right to vote in all propositions to raise money by Bond or Assessment. The same rights are granted women in Louisiana and Montana. It seems a very senseless condition of things this. Here it is acknowledged that a woman has a right to say whether or not a tax should be levied upon her. She is deemed qualified to express an opinion on the intricacies of finance, she, as a matter of justice, is allowed to say whether or not her money shall be or shall not be taken by the State for State purposes ; but she is neither considered fit, worthy nor qualified to help in moulding the laws she has to obey. Still the principle of women's right to vote is admitted, it is a sort of half-way house, it is better than the condition of things which obtain in this country. Again in Finland,ⁱⁱ under the iron heel of the Bureaucracy of Russia, women over 24 years of age have the Franchise and are entitled to sit in the House of Representatives.

Some Objections Answered.

When any measure of reform is proposed, there are always innumerable silly little objections raised to it. Every reform indeed has to run the gauntlet of three stock arguments, three chunks of nonsense that the innate conservatism of man keeps fresh and handy, and ready to shy at all things new: - "It is against the Bible." "It will not work." "The time is not ripe for it."

"It is against the Bible!" Well, if you only try hard enough you can make the Bible prove anything. The Bible was used as an argument against Wilberforce when he wanted to free the slaves ; but surely no one to-day will say that we ought to have chattel slavery because there are some passages in the Bible indicating that people once believed in it,

and surely everybody knows that the Bible was written hundreds of years ago, when environments were different, when ideas were different, when traditions were different when conceptions of ideal justice were different from what they are to-day. If it is right to free the slaves despite the Bible, it is right to free women despite the Bible.

"It will not work." A hoary old piece of nonsense this ! It did duty when railways were proposed, when Parliament itself was proposed. When every reform, civil, mechanical, every reform that has ever broadened lives or cheapened production was first proposed, there always arose the prophets, the seers and the wiseacres, the prediction mongers, the calculators, the explainers-away. They have proved everything a failure beforehand. Did they not prophecy that the Catholic Emancipation Bill would land us in Anarchy ; that the Telegraph was impossible, that the Atlantic Cable was a hallucination, that the Ballot Act would result in Revolution ? They did. But progress swept past them and proved their prophecies vain.

It so happens indeed that the opponents of Women's Suffrage are bereft of even this argument. (?) Women, as has been shown, have got the vote elsewhere, and are using it with credit to themselves and benefit to the States that have had the sense to give it to them. But even in Britain they have the vote to-day. They vote in Municipal, School Board, Parish Council and County Council Elections, and no evil effects have followed. As a matter of fact the principle of woman's right to vote was admitted by our Constitution up to the Great Reform Bill of 1832, when for the first time women were legally Disenfranchised.

The last stock argument is that the time is not ripe for it. The time is always ripe for justice, it is always ripe for doing that against which no conclusive reason can be offered and no satisfactory argument advanced. The question is not one of time (if it were, the time is long past) - the question is whether the proposal is just, is honest, is reasonable.

The "Unsex Argument."

There are people who say, and who say sincerely, that they believe it would "unsex" women if they exercised and intelligent interest in the laws by which they are governed and in the taxes they pay. But no biological change appears to take place when a woman votes at Municipal or School Board or County or Parish Council Elections. She votes, and still (the surprise of it!) remains a woman. In other countries we have mentioned - the other countries where women have the Franchise - no sex change appears to have taken place. Woman there still is woman - a more intelligent woman, a more womanly woman,

and less a coddled doll, but still woman. Her outlook on life may be broader, and she may have the hardihood to use the grey matter of her brain for purposes other than trimming gee-gaws and assorting feathers ; but surely the world is richer in consequence. Surely a more developed intelligence has not unsexed her. And (let us banish humbug!) we do not consider this unsex nonsense when we send the tax collector to the widow or raise the price of a mill girl's tea.

Woman's Place at Home.

"Woman's place ought to be at Home," says another, meaning thereby that her sole interest and business in life should be housewifery and maternity. Where woman ought to be is entirely beside the question. Her proper sphere *may* be in the Zenana, in Canada, in Commerce, in the Nunnery, or at the wash Tub and Cradle ; but the question we must face is, where *is* she to-day? We know that at the time of the last census 27 per cent. of the self-supporting population were women. In the Factories of Britain the number of women employed is almost double the number of men. There are in England and Wales alone 130,000 Women Trades Unionists. "Woman's place is at home"? Well! there are thousands of women who have to labour outside to provide the wherewithal to keep their won homes. There are thousands of women lodgers. There are thousands of married women who are forced to work in factories (as at Dundee), in forges (as at Cradley Heath), and in all sort of occupations all over the country, in order to supplement the meagre and insufficient wages paid to their husbands. There are thousands of women having no homes. And the economic conditions of our time are slowly, but none the less surely, driving the female in ever increasing numbers to typewriter or factory for a living. The father's and the brother's wages are in most cases insufficient to keep the daughter and the sister at home. The Home, as an institution, frequently depends for its very existence on the fruits of the labour of its female members.

But suppose every woman did manage to stay at home. Is not her work of as much value to the State - is not her labour in cleaning, tidying, food buying, cooking, and in the rearing of children of as much value to the States is the labour of men who bottle beer, wheel barrows, or raise prices of food by gambling on the Stock Exchange? Does she not bear a share of the taxation still ? Has she not to obey the laws still, and would she not be a better wife, a more attractive daughter, and a more capable mother if she were allowed to develop her intelligence and stimulate her faculties by exercising an interest in the affairs of the Sate of which she is, willy nilly, a unit ?

And lastly, why should I and my sex, simply and solely because we were born in such condition as induced the doctor to decree that we must in time wear trousers, arrogate ourselves the right to perform the thinking processes for the other half of the human race?

Women do not want the Vote.

This objection should rather be put : some women do not want the vote. Some slaves did not want freedom ; they had been kept in slavery so long that their stunted intelligence could not visualize anything else. Furthermore, any woman who does not want the vote need not use it ; she can stay away from the polling booth. There is no proposal to make voting compulsory. Women who do want the vote cannot wait till all their sisters are converted. All their sisters may never be converted and surely it is writ plain enough in all history that there was never any change or reform effected that had the combined assent of every one concerned. If women wait on unanimity they will never have the Franchise. But it has been calculated that over 1,250,000 women have asked for the vote. The deputation that waited on Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman on May, 1906, to petition for the vote numbered over 350 persons and represented some 259,000 women. The largest petition ever sent to Parliament was sent and signed by women over 20 years ago. It begged for the Franchise and was so bulky that it has to be wheeled into the House of Commons on a trolley. All sorts of women - Liberal, Co-operative, Primrose, Temperance, Textile Worker, and University - have, during the last 40 years, petitioned for the vote.

In other countries women seem to prize their votes. In New Zealand, according to the "Official Year Book" for 1902, the proportion of electors of each sex that voted was: - Males 78.44 ; Females 74.52. In England, at the first Municipal Elections, 14.415 or over 50 per cent. of the women entitled to vote went to the polls.

She is not "Intellectual" Enough.

Most opposition to Women's Enfranchisement lies behind this assumed intellectual superiority of man. But let us look at the facts Professor Meinert (quoted by Bebel in his book "Women") estimates the average male brain to be from 90 to 100 grammes heavier than the average female brain. But there are vast differences in the weight of the brains of male geniuses, so much so that it does not appear as of the brain weight has any relation to its capacity or energy. For instance, the brain of the Zoologist Cuvier outweighed the brain of the great scholar Hausmann by no less than 635 grammes, or over 6 times the difference between the average male and the average female brain. But taking the

size of the bodily frame into account, the brain of women is really larger than that of man ; and it is possible (as Bebel says) "that the mere cerebral mass is nor more a measure of mental strength than bodily size is a measure of bodily strength." The Ant and the Bee exceed the Sheep and the Cow in intelligence, an tall and powerful people as a rule are inferior to people of small and insignificant appearance. In the one case the natural energy has been expanded in developing the flesh and the bones, in the other it may have been expended in developing the activity of the mental faculties.

But woman is "intellectual" enough to be taxed ; she is intellectual enough to sit on the British throne, to be part discoverer of Radium, to write popular novels, to take First prize in International Law (despite the fact that the chivalrous benchers would not allow her to study in their library), to be schoolmistress, doctor of medicine, civil servant, canvasser at political elections (she may bring voters to the very door, but must not herself enter), and voter at Municipal, Parish Council, School Board, and County Council Elections. Surely she is capable of exercising equal "intellectuality" with the Worcester elector whose "intellectuality" consists in discovering the candidate who will give him the biggest mug of beer, or the thousands of electors who are classed as illiterates, being unable to read the English language on the ballot paper?

Unfitness for War.

It is sometimes argued that woman should not be allowed to vote because of her physical unfitness to be either soldier or policeman, and because the responsibilities of voting and legislating for war should only belong to those who in the last resort could bear arms.

But we do not confine the male Franchise to the physically fit. The male franchise is not given for alacrity in the "goose" step, or ability to see a target, or because of power to apprehend "drunks" or peer through a keyhole with the aid of a bull's-eye lantern. We get the vote because we are taxed and because we have to obey the laws of the country in which we live.

Again, no one would suggest that in time of war we should (say) rush to the universities and drag out the Professors to the fighting line. They would be worse than useless ; they would only hamper the other fighting men. They are unfit for war ; but like women they perform a useful social function, and unlike women they are given the vote.

The Adult Suffragists.

The last objection is usually made by people who do not object to giving women the Vote, but who say that the Vote should not be given on a property qualification. They say that *all* sane men and women over the age of 21 should be allowed to vote, and not only those who have a property qualification. They declare that if the Women's Enfranchisement Bill becomes law, only the richer women will be given the Franchise, and that these richer women will probably use their votes against the interests of the poorer women. They say that the poor woman has to obey the laws and has her food taxed even as the rich woman ; and that it is a palpable injustice to give the Vote only to the richer woman, who has less need of it. They declare that under the Women's Enfranchisement Bill the artisan's wife, the poor female lodger, and indeed the vast majority of women, with the exception of women rich enough to own property, will be disenfranchised still.

Well ! what are the facts ? It is undoubtedly true that the married woman who does not own property in her own name will still be disenfranchised, but short of wiping out the property qualification as the basis for the Franchise altogether there is no way to cure this ; and it is no argument against giving *some* people justice, to say that *all* people are not getting it. In fact, the men who raise this objection to the Women's Enfranchisement Bill *themselves hold the Vote on a property basis*; and we do not hear of them refusing their votes because there is still a large number of men whose property is insufficient to enable them to vote. The man who says he is for Adult Suffrage, and nothing short of it, takes precious good care to clutch tight his own vote. And why an Adult Suffragist who holds his own vote on a property basis whilst a portion of his own sex is disenfranchised, should object to a woman holding a vote under similar circumstances is one of these things that badly want explaining.

As a matter of fact the women who would come under the Women's Enfranchisement Bill would be mostly the women who vote in the Municipal Elections, widows, etc. (the poor in the vast majority). And in addition, the decision of the Court of Appeal ("the Latchkey Decision"), allowing the Franchise to men who have unrestricted access to a bare, unfurnished room at any time, no matter whether they pay £10 a year or not, would, if the Women's Enfranchisement Bill passed, qualify thousands of poor women lodgers. In London alone 100,000 men were enrolled by this decision. A thorough classification made by the I.L.P. in the town of Nelson (Bradley Ward), in Lancashire, showed that, even if the property qualification were the test, only 7 women out of 468

could be classed as working women. On the Bolton Municipal Register there are to-day 5234 women voters, and of these 4752 are working women—that is over 90 per cent. The fears of the Adult Suffragist are therefore groundless. Indeed, even were Adult Suffrage law tomorrow, woman would not have the Vote except special provision were made for her. She is not a person within the legal meaning of the word, and a special Act is and would be required to qualify her even for Adult Suffrage.

In Austria, the Government have proposed Universal Suffrage but the following from the *New Age*, of 20th December, 1906, will show that Adult Suffrage does not necessarily mean Woman's Suffrage :-

"The new 'Universal Suffrage' Law in Austria makes no provision for women's enfranchisement and so Vienna has its "votes for Women" agitation. 'Universal Suffrage' does not exist as long as women do not have the vote,' declared Dr. Adler, the Leader of the Austrian Social Democratic Party. 'We cannot call it universal suffrage when half the population is excluded, we fight for women's political representation with all our power.'"

FINALLY.

This tract pretends to do no more than briefly state the case for Woman's Suffrage, and answer the objections customarily made to it. It is written so that he and she who runs may read ; and as its purpose is simply to stimulate interest on the bare question of the votes, it takes no cognisance of any "advanced" views on the future relations of the sexes. But it should never be forgotten, especially by men who have aspirations to moral, social and intellectual progress, that the, what John Stuart Mill called, Subjection of Woman, and her abject economic and political dependence on man, must inevitably, by crushing the intellect and initiative of the mothers of the race, render futile and vain the progress, advancement and development of man.

ⁱ **Thomas Johnston CH** (1882 – 5 September 1965) was a prominent [Scottish socialist](#) and [politician](#) of the early 20th century, a member of the [Labour Party](#), a Member of Parliament (MP) and government minister – usually with [Cabinet](#) responsibility for [Scottish affairs](#). (wikipedia)

ⁱⁱ This is the spelling in the original, and was that used at the time.

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THE CITIZENSHIP OF WOMEN

A PLEA FOR WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE

BY MR. KEIR HARDIE, M.P.

It is not my purpose to write a learned dissertation or even an elaborate essay on the Woman question; this has been done by men and women well qualified for the task, and doubtless will be again. My present object is to re-state in plain and homely language the case for Woman Suffrage. To deal with the Woman question as a whole would involve a long inquiry into the causes responsible for the difference in status of the sexes, including women's economic position, the marriage laws, and our social policy. These are subjects interwoven with the position of women, but they are beyond the scope of my ability, and for the moment I leave them aside and confine myself to the one question of their political enfranchisement. I do so mainly because this is a question ripe for settlement by legislation. The other questions hinted at may be left to evolve their own solution as time and chance determine. None of them are within the ken of politics, nor should they be brought into the political arena until women are in a position to influence equally with men the creation of opinion upon them, and, where necessary, the legislation which may be required to assist in solving them. John Stuart Mill declared it to have been one of his earliest, as it remained one of his strongest, convictions, "that the principles which regulate the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by principles of perfect equality admitting no power or privilege on the one side nor disability on the other." I hold it to be true with those who say that the foundation upon which this equality is to be reared is the political enfranchisement of women.

In sentiment we have advanced somewhat since 1790, when a learned writer of the period explained that people who should not be included in the country franchise were those who "lie under natural incapacities, and therefore cannot exercise a sound discretion, or (who are) so much under the influence of others that they cannot have a will of their own in the choice of candidates. Of the former description are women, infants, idiots, lunatics, of the latter, persons receiving alms and revenue offices." We do not now speak of women as being in the same category as "idiots" and "lunatics," but for political purposes we treat them as they were.

No one seeks to deny the existence of differences between the sexes, differences subtle, deep-seated, and ineradicable. But these, being admitted, afford no justification for the usurpation by man of the right to say what duties and responsibilities woman

may be allowed to undertake, and what must be withheld from her because of her sex. Such a theory can only be upheld on the old tradition of the East that woman is one of the lower animals over whom lordly man was given dominion. The harem is the logical outcome of this belief. It is only by removing the disabilities and restraints imposed upon woman, and permitting her to enter freely into competition with man in every sphere of human activity, that her true position and function in the economy of life will ultimately be settled. We can at present form no conception of what woman is capable of being or doing. We have no data upon which to base any real conclusions. Nowhere is woman treated as the free and equal companion of man. Amongst coloured peoples living in a state of nature and in a tribal environment which has evolved itself, and wherein custom is the only law, the woman, though far from being the degraded creature which she has so often been pictured by superficial observers, is still her husband's drudge, and frequently a part of his wealth. In the military state of social evolution, or the age of chivalry as it has been dubbed by persons of a poetic temperament and a vivid imagination, woman is the weaker and more spiritualized sex, requiring to be protected by her lord, and almost worshipped as a superior creation. "Half angel, half idiot" aptly describes this conception of woman. This is but a perverted way of declaring her inferiority; the homage paid to her is much like that we should pay to a child; in no sense is it a recognition of equality; very often it is the exact opposite. In modern life we get back to the savage stage. Woman of the working class is again a drudge who does the menial work. Her husband works for, and is dependent for the opportunity to work, upon a master; his wife works for, and is dependent for her livelihood upon, a husband. That there are varying degrees of this feeling of subjection goes without saying, and I think, and I think it could be shown that the position of women, as most other things, has always been better, more near an equality with man, in Celtic than in non-Celtic races or tribes. Thus in Scotland a woman speaks of her husband as the "man," whilst in Staffordshire he is always spoken of as "the master."

The universality of this subjection of woman is assumed by many as an infallible testimony to the truth of the theory that woman must in some way be inferior to man. Were it not so, say these quidnuncs, there would be some exceptions to prove the contrary. They overlook the one obvious explanation which explains everything—Motherhood. In the early days of the race, the days of the huntsman and the warrior, when the spoils of war and the trophies of the chase were the only wealth of nations, child-bearing must have been a serious handicap to the woman: add to this the fact that war meant prisoners, and that from the very first, probably, even when men captured in warfare were killed as an incumbrance, women for reasons which will be understood without being stated, were spared by their captors and; coming down to later times, when men captives were made slaves and women-raiding became a favourite pastime, we can see explanation enough of the position which in process of time woman came to occupy, and from which she is only now slowly and toilsomely emerging. Already we see how the intensity of the struggle for political recognition is developing, in individual cases, those qualities of mind and brain which man has been wont to assume as being his special monopoly; and from these cases we may infer how richly endowed the field of human thought will become enriched by the product of the brains of men and women working together on terms of equality, and free from the debasing and sinister influences which subjection, in any form, imposes alike upon the subdued and the subduer. So true it is that one end of the chain which binds the slave is fastened round the life of his master, that the emancipation of women will also infallibly give freedom to the man.

Curious are the changes which a quarter of a century produces in the political horizon. Questions arise, no larger than a man's hand at first, and are driven by the force of agitation nearer the arena in which the political strife of the day is waged, and keep gathering size as they approach, until they obscure everything else. They are debated, wrangled over, and made leading issues at General Elections, and even whilst the strife which their coming has caused waxes hot, they begin to move away from sight without having been resolved. Disestablishment and Republicanism are questions which illustrate my meaning here. But so also does Woman Suffrage. In the days of the franchise agitations, the enfranchisement of woman, promoted by Mill and strenuously supported by Fawcett, Dr. Pankhurst, and other leaders of reform, promised to become a question of first political importance, but with the passing of the one and then the other of these friends of the movement, leaving no successors to carry on their tradition, it gradually passed into semi-obscurity. As it is again emerging and showing fresh vitality,* it may not be amiss to briefly record its history, particularly as it connects itself with the various Reform Bills.

In the Reform Act of 1832 the word "male" was interpolated before "persons." Never before and never since† has the phrase "male persons" appeared in any Statute of the Realm. By this Act, therefore, women were legally disfranchised for the first time in the history of the English constitution. In 1851 Lord Brougham's Act was passed, providing that the word "man" should always include "woman," except where otherwise stated. That seemed to clear the ground, and give women the same legal status as men. But, alas!

In 1867 the Representation of the People Act came before the House. John Stuart Mill's amendment, that it should be made expressly to include women, as defeated, but so also was the amendment that the phrase "male persons" of 1832 should be replaced. The word "man" was used instead. During the discussion the Hon. John Denman, Justice of the Common Pleas, asked the following question:—

"Why, instead of the words 'male person' of the Act of 1832, the word 'man' had not been substituted in the present Bill? In the fifth clause he found that after saying that every 'man' should be entitled to be registered, it proceeds to say, 'or a MALE PERSON in any University who has passed any senior middle examination.' In the light of Lord Brougham's Act, if the Court of Queen's Bench had to decide to-morrow on the construction of these clauses, they would be constrained to hold that they conferred the suffrage on female persons, as well as on males."

The Government did not answer this question, and passed the Bill as it stood. It was thought, therefore, that women were now entitled to vote, and in Manchester 5,347 women got on the register as voters. In Salford 1,500 (about) were registered, and large numbers in other places. Great uncertainty prevailed as to how to treat them, but most revising barristers threw them out. The Manchester women consolidated their claims, and appealed against the decision, and the case of *Chorlton v. Lings* was heard in 1868.

The case was tried in the Court of Common Pleas, with Mr. Coleridge, afterwards Lord Coleridge, and the late Dr. Pankhurst representing the women. It was argued that inasmuch as women had in the middle ages been recognized as voters by the State, and as that right had never been expressly taken away, therefore they had a *prima facie* right to vote. Further, it was contended that under Lord Brougham's Act referred to above, the Franchise Act of 1867 must apply to women, since the term used was "men," and not "male persons," as in the Act of 1832. Despite this pleading, the judges decided that women had no statutory right to be recognized as citizens, and that until that right was expressly conferred upon them by Act of Parliament, they must remain outside the pale of the franchise.

In 1884 Mr. Gladstone procured the rejection of the amendment to his County Franchise Bill, which would have enfranchised women, by threatening to abandon the Bill if the amendment was carried. In 1889 came the case of *Beresford Hope v. Lady Sandhurst*, in which it was decided that women are incapacitated from being elected members of a County Council. (...)

In Miss Hall's case, 1900, the right of a woman to become a law agent in Scotland was denied by the judges on the ground that "person" when it is a case of exercising a public function means "MALE PERSON." The judges relied on the case of *Chorlton v. Lings* as the ground of their decision. Now in view of these decisions, the situation is quite clear.

A woman, for the purpose of citizenship, has no legal existence in England, and has to be created before she can be enfranchised. To the uninitiated this may appear absurd and ridiculous, but it is the plain, unvarnished truth none the less. A woman may be a criminal, a queen, a tax and rate payer and owner of property, but she may not be a citizen of Great Britain and Ireland until a right to become such has been created by Act of Parliament. If only people would bear this fact in mind they would be saved from much error when considering her claims to the franchise.

During the past two sessions of Parliament a measure has been introduced, at the instigation of the Independent Labour Party, having this for its object. It is a Bill of one clause, which reads as follows:—

"In all Acts relating to the qualifications and registration of voters or persons entitled or claiming to be registered and to vote in the election of members of Parliament, wherever words occur which import the masculine gender the same shall be held to include women for all purposes connected with and having reference to the right to be registered as voters and to vote in such election, any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

There are those who see in this innocent-looking measure a sinister attempt to extend and strengthen the property qualification, and by enfranchising propertied women enable these to range themselves on the side of the reactionaries in opposing the enfranchisement of working-class women. Needless to add, as strong section of the Liberal Press adopts and enforces this mis-statement with all the ingenuity which a fertile and untrained imagination can lend to a bad cause. One would have thought the record of the Liberal party in connection with Woman Suffrage would have chastened the ardour of those organs of Liberalism which are opposing this Bill in the interests of "true female suffrage"; but the gift of perspective is rare in politics, and a strict desire for accuracy an inconvenient failing when there are party ends to serve. The late Mr. Gladstone, as already stated, threatened to abandon his Reform Bill in 1884 if the Women's Enfranchisement Amendment were carried. There have been three Conservative premiers who have publicly committed themselves, in speech at least (none of them have acted), to this reform, which has yet to find the first Liberal premier who will say a word in its favour.

Any one who takes the trouble to read the Bill quoted above will note that it does not oppose any franchise qualification, but asks that, whatever the qualification, women shall enjoy the franchise on the same basis as men. It is a Bill which only proposes to do one thing, and that is, to remove the sex disability which debar a woman, because she is a woman, from becoming a voter. If the qualification for men be a property one, it shall be the same for women, no more and no less; and if it be a manhood suffrage, it shall also be a womanhood. A woman may have the brain of a Bacon, the talent of a Shakespeare, the eloquence of a Demosthenes, and the wealth of a Croesus all combined, but being a woman she may not vote for a member of Parliament, and this Bill proposes to remove the disability which stands in the way of her becoming a citizen; to remove her from the sphere of "idiots, lunatics, and paupers," and to recognize that, woman though she be, she is a human being who may now become a citizen.

And now let us ascertain, if we can, what women would be enfranchised under the terms of the Bill quoted above.

There are four main heads under which the franchise qualifications fall to be grouped—(1) Owners of property; (2) Householders; (3) Lodgers; (4) Service. One set of opponents of the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill say it would be from classes one and three that the new citizens would be drawn, which, if true, would leave working-class women out in the cold. Few working women own property, and not many earn wages enough to pay the four shillings a week for unfurnished apartments, which is necessary to qualify for the lodger franchise. Rich men, they assert, would be able to put their wives and daughters on as voters and outvoters, which would tend to greatly increase an evil which is already of sufficient magnitude. Fortunately, we have already an index to guide us as to the extent to which this statement is true, even were the worst fears of our opponents to be realized. There are, roughly, 7,000,000 electors in Great Britain, of whom 220,000 are lodger voters. A very large proportion of these are workmen, and it is doubtful whether rich men's sons, qualifying from their father's property, account for more than 20,000 of the whole. Even were a like number of daughters to be put upon the voters' roll, they would not, save in those few constituencies where the property vote is overwhelming, and where, therefore, they could do no harm—save in these few cases, I say, they would not constitute an appreciable fraction of any constituency. As for the outvoters, we may surely anticipate, with some degree of assurance, that the coming Liberal Government will at least put an end to their existence, and so we need not worry ourselves about them one way or the other. In so far as the service franchise will give women the right to vote, those brought in will be working women, and we may pit these against the daughters of the rich. It will, I think, be concluded that the great bulk of those who will be enfranchised by the Bill will be householders, and here, I repeat, we have reliable data on which to base our conclusions. Women may not be elected to a town or burgh council, but they may vote in the election of such councils. Owing to difference of opinion in the ranks of the Independent Labour party over the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill, it was decided it make a serious effort to obtain from the municipal registers some guidance as to the class of women already registered as municipal voters, and who would be entitled to be placed upon the parliamentary list should the Bill become law. Accordingly, a circular was issued to every branch of the party, some 300 in all, containing the following instructions:—

“We address to your branch a very urgent request to ascertain from your local voting registers the following particulars:—

“1st—The total numbers of electors in the ward.

“2nd—number of women voters.

“3rd—number of women voters of the working class.

“4th—Number of women voters not of the working class.

“It is impossible to lay down a strict definition of the term ‘working class,’ but for this purpose it will be sufficient to regard as ‘working class women’ those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, to who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning children.”

The returns to hand are not very complete, but they comprise fifty towns or parts of towns, and show the following results:—

Total electors on the municipal registers	372,321
Total women voters	59,920
Working women voters as defined above	49,410
Non-working women voters	10,510

Percentage of working women voters, **82.5**

As will be seen at a glance, the proportion of women voters on the registers tested for the purpose of the above return—and these were not in any way selected, but were included because they were in the ward or parish within which the branch was

situated—is equal to one-sixth of the whole. Assuming, as we may fairly do, that the same proportion obtains for the country as a whole, it would give us 1,250,000 women voters, of whom 82 per cent. are working women, and everyone of whom would at once be placed on the parliamentary register were the Bill now before Parliament to become law.

Here, then, we have it proved beyond cavil or question that whatever the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill might do for propertied women, it would for a certainty and at once put 850,000 working women on the parliamentary voters' rolls of Great Britain, and a like proportion in Ireland. The fact speaks for itself. The Woman's Enfranchisement Bill does not concern itself with franchise qualifications; it is for the removal of the sex disqualification only; and yet on the present franchise qualifications and reactionary registration laws it would at once lift 1,250,000 British women from the political sphere to which "idiots, lunatics and paupers" are consigned, and transform them into free citizens, and open wide the door whereby in the future every man and every woman may march side by side into the full enjoyment of adult suffrage.

Hitherto I have been dealing with those opponents whose objections to the Bill is that it does not go far enough, and who prefer waiting for a measure of adult suffrage under which every man and every woman, married and single alike, shall be enfranchised at one stroke. Now, I have had some experience of politics and of political methods, and I give it as my deliberate opinion that nothing would so much hasten the coming of that much-to-be-desired time as would the passing of the Woman's Enfranchisement Bill. If the workers were prepared to lay every other reform on the shelf, and begin an agitation for adult suffrage, they might, if specially fortunate, be successful in getting it about the year 1929.¹ Manhood suffrage could probably be secured almost at once and for the asking; but the complete enfranchisement of all men and all women at once would be resented bitterly by all parties. And the main difficulty in the way would be the enfranchisement of all women, married and living with their husbands, as well as single. The leap from what is now to what this proposes is too great for the mind of the British elector to grasp, and not by any means the least of the opposition would come from the working classes. Reformers gain nothing by shutting their eyes to facts which stare up at them from every part. I speak what most people know to be true when I say that the chief obstacle to reform of any kind in England is the conservative, plodding, timid mind of the average man. Hence the reason why all our reforms have come to us, not leaping and bounding, but slowly and hesitatingly. Even the franchise, such as it is, has been dribbled out to us in almost homeopathic doses. This difficulty applies to women's enfranchisement in a special degree. The male man, even he of the working classes, will not lightly or all at once part with the authority which has so long been his, and admit that the wife of his bosom is his political equal. But once women are admitted to citizenship and some women become voters, the male mind will inevitably accustom itself to the idea of woman citizenship, and the way thus prepared for adult suffrage complete and unrestricted by sex, poverty, or marriage.

To those who are opposed on principle to women having the vote at all I have little to say. These I find it easier to pity than to reason with. But when they foresee the deluge following upon the enfranchisement of women, I refer them to the Colonies. There women are citizens and voters, but they have not because of that ceased to be

¹ Little did Hardie know that his prophecy became truth. Women got full enfranchisement in Britain in 1928!

wives—even housewives, or mothers. Their outlook on life has been a little broadened by the possession of the vote which, willy nilly, forces them to interest themselves somewhat in political and social questions. They are thus in a fair way to become better companions to their husbands, and—and I say this with deep conviction— better mothers. Women whose circle of interests is circumscribed by her pots, pans , and scrubbing brushes, varied by an occasional gossip with a neighbour or quarrel with her husband, can never, however, affectionate, be other than a curb upon the opening, eagerly questioning intelligence of her children. Broaden the outlook of the mother, and you open a new world for childhood to grow in, and bind many a wild, wayward youth to his home-life whom is now driven out into the hard world for lack of that sympathetic, intelligent companionship which an educated and enlightened mother can alone supply. Colonial statesmen and social reformers all admit that women’s influence in the sphere of politics has been healthy and quickening, and, as it has been there, so undoubtedly would it be here.

The “half angel, half idiot” period is over in the woman’s world. She is fighting her way into every sphere of human activity. Her labour is coming into competition with that of man in nearly every department of industry. In the learned professions she is forcing herself to the front by sheer determination and force of intellect in a way that will not be denied. Sooner or later men will be compelled to treat with her and recognize her as a co-worker, and they could not begin better than by admitting her right to be a co-voter. Those who prate so glibly of adult suffrage might surely learn something of men’s opinion of women by taking note of the way in which lawyers and doctors are resisting her encroachments upon their preserves. A woman may be Queen of England, but she may not enter the profession from which Lord Chancellors are drawn.

The enfranchisement of women is not a party question. Its supporters and opponents are distributed over all parties. The measure is again coming well within the sphere of practical politics, and it is for women to see that it is kept there until a settlement is reached. If they will, as I think they should, make it not a test but a test question at elections, and resolutely refuse to work for or in any way countenance any candidate who is not whole heartedly with them, they will, if not in this Parliament, then certainly in the next, secure the passage of a measure through the House of Commons at least which will place them on terms of political equality with men. If this comes as part of a measure for giving complete adult suffrage well and good; but political equality they should insist upon, whatsoever the conditions of that equality may be.

Disraeli speaking on this question in the House of Commons said:

“I say that a country governed by a woman—where you allow women to form part of the other estate of the realm—peeresses in their own right, for example—where you allow a woman not only to hold land, but to be a lady of the manor and hold legal courts—where a woman by law may be a churchwarden and overseer of the poor—I do not see, where she has so much to do with the State and Church, on what reasons, if you come to right, she has not a right to vote.”

And with these words I conclude.

J. KEIR HARDIE

Fourteen Reasons for Supporting Women's Suffrage or for demanding the removal of Sex Disability in regard to the Parliamentary Franchise.

1. Because it is the foundation of all political liberty that those who obey the Law should be able to have a voice in choosing those who make the Law.
2. Because Parliament should be the reflection of the wishes of the people.
3. Because Parliament cannot fully reflect the wishes of the people when the wishes of women are without any direct representation.
4. Because most Laws affect women as much as men, and some Laws affect women especially.
5. Because the Laws which affect women especially are now passed without consulting those persons whom they are intended to benefit.
6. Because Laws affecting children should be regarded from the woman's point of view as well as the man's.
7. Because every session questions affecting the home come up for consideration in Parliament.
8. Because women have experience which should be helpfully brought to bear upon domestic legislation.
9. Because to deprive women of the vote is to lower their positions in common estimation.
10. Because the possession of the vote would increase the sense of responsibility amongst women towards questions of public importance.
11. Because public-spirited mothers make public-spirited sons.
12. Because large numbers of intelligent, thoughtful, hard-working women desire the franchise.
13. Because the objections raised against their having the franchise are based on sentiment, not on reason.
14. **Because to sum all reasons up in one - it is for the common good of all.**

For Important List of Signatures in Favour of Women's Suffrage see inside.

Attached to **Declaration by Men in Support of Suffrage.**

MEN'S LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

Seven Good Reasons

WHY MEN SHOULD SUPPORT WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

BECAUSE what is unjust to women is unjust also to men; and injustice in the State breeds injustice in the individual.

BECAUSE what hinders the development of women, hinders the development of the race, and causes poverty to the nation.

BECAUSE without full freedom there cannot be full development; and privilege for one sex means privation for the other.

BECAUSE while women are unrepresented, the interests of the home are belied, neglected or misunderstood.

BECAUSE the complete human point of view is the man's and the woman's combined; while the man's point of view alone is necessarily one-sided.

BECAUSE the woman's inferior economic position in the labour market is largely the result of their unrepresented condition, and tends to lower wages and force men out of employment.

BECAUSE under representative government, the interests of the unrepresented are insufficiently safe-guarded and what concerns all, should have the consent of all.

Join the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, and help to give these reasons effect! You have power to remedy this injustice to women:

USE YOUR POWER!

No.1. 2s.6d. per 1000.

No. 59.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

The Women's Social and Political Union. [1]

Head Office: 4, CLEMENTS INN, STRAND, W.C.

Telegraphic Address: "Wopolu London" Telephone No. 2724 Holborn (three lines)

Founder and Hon. Secretary – MRS. PANKHURST

Hon. Treasurer – Mrs. PETHICK LAWRENCE

Joint Hon. Secretary - MRS. TUKE

Organising Secretary - MISS CHRISTABEL PANKHURST, LL.B.

Publishing Office - THE WOMAN'S PRESS

Newspaper - VOTES FOR WOMEN

Bankers - MESSRS. BARCLAY & CO, FLEET STREET, E.C.

Colours - PURPLE, WHITE & GREEN

Treatment of the Suffragettes in Prison.

By F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE. [2]

By common consent of civilised countries political prisoners receive different treatment from that of ordinary criminals. The object aimed at not so

much punishment as detention. They are accordingly generally allowed books, newspapers, writing materials & c.; they are permitted to see their friends and to write to them; the degrading prison regulations are not enforced; they are allowed their own clothes and their own food. This practice of civilised nations, established by regular usage and defended by British Statesmen, is reversed by the present Liberal Government in dealing with the women who are their political opponents. The Suffragettes have been put in prison in the second or third class and subjected to indignities of ordinary criminals-

What Constitutes a Political Offence?

In the year 1891 an English Court had before it the case of a Swiss subject who had committed an offence in Switzerland, and against whom the Swiss Government wished to put into operation the process of extradition. The English Court had to decide whether his offence was a political one, because if it were so the right of extradition would not apply, and the man could obtain a harbour of refuge in this country. They then laid down the doctrine **that any offence, even that of murder itself, is a political offence if it is committed with a political object.**

In October 1908 during the trial of Mrs. Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst, and Mrs. Drummond at Bow Street for issuing a handbill calling on the crowd to "rush" the House of Commons, Mr., Herbert Gladstone stated on oath on the witness box, in answer to Mrs. Pankhurst, that in this opinion they would not have come into that Court except owing to a political motive; yet when they were sent to prison he refused to allow them, to be treated differently from ordinary criminals-

Views of Liberal Statesman as to Treatment of Political Offenders.

In 1889, **Mr. Asquith**, referring to the treatment of the Irish prisoners, rebuked the then Home Secretary, saying: -

After sentence, when he has got them into prison, he has subjected them - men, by his own admission, mistaken and misguided. If you please, but still the victims of a genuine, if perverted enthusiasm - to the lot of the very common felons.

The Rt. Hon. W.E. Gladstone said: -

I am not going to be entangled in argument as to what are and what are not political offences. I know very well that you cannot attempt a legislative definition of political offences [this was said previous to the legal decision given above], but what you can do, and what always has been done, is this, you can say that in certain classes of cases the imprisoned person ought not to be treated as if he had been guilty of base and degrading crime.

The Right Hon. Professor Brice said: -

Whenever the moral judgment of the community at large does not brand an offence as sordid and degrading, and does not feel the offence to be one which destroys its respect

for the personal character of the prisoner, It may there [sic] be held that prison treatment ought to be different from that awarded to ordinary criminals.

Examples of Favoured Treatment

The treatment denied to the Suffragettes has been given to such men as Dr. Jameson , who "raided" the Transvaal in time of peace, to Mr. Ginnell, M.P., imprisoned for encouraging cattle-driving, to Baker Pasha, convicted of a disgraceful assault on a young girl, and recently to a city councillor of Bradford, convicted of seducing and ruining a girl of 15 years of age in his own employ.

Why Suffragettes insist on being treated as political offenders.

No one nowadays is likely to accuse Suffragettes of cowardice or of a desire to shirk responsibility for their actions. Yet some people cannot understand why they refuse to submit to prison discipline. The reason is that they refuse to allow the rights of political prisoners, won for them by the heroism of great men and women of the past, to fall into disuse. They accordingly have protested and will continue to protest against the treatment which the Government have inflicted upon them.

The Hunger Strike

Originally Suffragettes protested in words against their treatment. Finding this useless, they decided to protest by deeds. They rebelled against the prison regulations and they adopted the Russian method of the hunger strike. At tremendous personal cost they refused all food. This placed the Government in a difficulty; they did not want to let their women political opponents die in prison, because they knew that would raise a storm of indignation in the country. They did not want to yield and treat women as political offenders. So instead they released them from gaol after letting them starve, some for 90, other for 100, others for 120 and even 150 hours.

Forcible Feeding

But this did not break the resolution of the women. Therefore Mr. Gladstone in September 1909, determined to employ against them the inhuman practice of forcible feeding by means of **a tube passed through the nostrils into the stomach**. The danger and injury caused by this operation have been attested by many doctors, over a hundred of whom have petitioned the Home Secretary against it.

Sir Victor Horsley says that, apart from the brutality of the proceeding, it has the following consequences:

Pain, congestion of the nose and pharynx, leading, in my own hospital experience, to ulceration of the nasal mucous membrane, retching, vomiting and depression.

He adds that forcible feeding is a miserable expedient of a weak Minister and an outrage on a political offender, and that it will be looked back upon by our children with the pity which the succeeding generations bestow upon the crude ignorance of their forefathers.

Mr. Mansell-Moulling, the famous Surgeon, says: -

It is absolutely inhuman and unjustifiable. It appears to be legal, to the undying shame of our laws and of those who make them.

Mr. Hugh Fenton, M.D., says: "It is an absolutely beastly and revolting procedure."

Mrs. Leigh, who suffered it for one month in Birmingham Gaol, says of it: "The sensation is most painful. The drums of the ears seem to be bursting; there is a horrible pain in the throat and breast."

Nevertheless, from that day to this (Dec. 27, 1909) this operation has been carried out daily in the different prisons of the country, by the instructions of the Government, upon bodies of women political prisoners.

Electors! Mark your detestation of this treatment of women, and vote against Liberal Candidates

Read our paper, "VOTES FOR WOMEN," One Penny Weekly.

Copies of this Leaflet can be obtained from The Woman's Press, price 9d. a hundred, 6/-a thousand, post free.

Published by THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION, 4. Clements Inn, Strand, W.C., and Printed by ST. CLEMENTS PRESS Ltd., Portugal St. W.C.

[1] Formed in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst and her two daughters Christabel and Sylvia. WSPU soon established itself as a militant version of the many women's suffrage organizations, starting in 1905 when Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney refused to follow police orders in a meeting, and were imprisoned for violent behaviour against the police. from now on the members became know as Suffragettes. In 1909 the first incident of hunger strike occurred, and was soon followed by other members of WSPU who were

imprisoned. The violence escalated in the teens, and when E. Pethick Lawrence spoke against the development she was expelled. In 1915, both because of the outbreak of WWI and because all the leaders were either in prison, in exile or ill, the organisation negotiated a treaty with the Government, whereby all prisoners were released and WSPU suspended its activities and concentrated on the war effort.

[2] Frederick W. Pethick Lawrence, Emmeline Pethick Lawrence's husband (when they got married in 1901 they took both surnames!) was a lawyer and editor of several left-wing and union magazines and newspapers. He and Emmeline founded "Votes for Women" in 1907, and worked closely together in WSPU until they in 1912 were both expelled over reluctance to a planned arson campaign (see note 1). Pethick Lawrence remained politically active in the Party for most of his life.

Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement.

13, BUCKINGHAM STREET, STRAND, W.C.

The Case of William Ball.

Official Brutality on the Increase.

Last December the 21st, Mr. William Ball, a Birmingham man, and a member of the Transport Worker's Federation, was sentenced to two month's imprisonment for breaking a Home Office window, in protest against the sentence passed on another Suffragist.

In gaol he demanded the treatment laid down by Mr. Churchill's regulation for political offenders of this kind. His demand was refused, and he adopted the hunger strike.

Twice a day for five-and-a-half weeks, the authorities, doctors and wardens of Pentonville Gaol fed him by force, Still he held out. Visitors, Letters, and examination by doctors from outside were refused him. Nothing could shake his determination to claim the rights granted to political prisoners like Dr. Jameson, and Mr, Ginnell, M.P. not even the collapse of his mind, under the prolonged and repeated torture broke his will.

On January the 22nd, Mrs. Ball was informed that he was in his usual health. She heard no more until February the 12th, when she received the following brief and inhuman note: -

"I regret to inform you that it is intended to certify your husband insane on Monday the 12th inst., and I am applying to a Justice to attend on Monday to make an order for his detention as a pauper lunatic, and investigate the case." H.M. DAVIES, Governor."

Could anything be more pitiless, more heartless, more devoid of common humanity? A man is driven mad by torture, and this is how his wife is informed.

A convicted swindler like Mr. Hooley is even allowed to pursue his profession in gaol. A working man, for a merely nominal political offence is tortured into insanity. We who demand the enfranchisement of women are thus treated under a Government that calls itself Liberal. The House Secretary, the Prison Commissioners, the Governors of Gaols

are the country's servants. We pay them large salaries; unenfranchised women out of their own pockets help to pay them; in the hope that they will maintain justice. And this is the way in which our paid servants fulfil their trust.

But no matter what their treatment may be, the members of the Men's Political Union,

like Mr. Ball himself, will not cease from their endeavour to secure full and equal citizenship for the women of our country, and we call upon all the men of the country who care for freedom, to join our Union, and fight without reservation against this or any other Government that is guilty of such atrocious acts.

HENRY W. NEVINSON.*

Chairman of Committee.

*Henry W. Nevinson, university lecturer in history and later journalist (earning a reputation for his excellent coverage of the Boer war) was co-founder of Men's League for Women's Suffrage. His writings include *Women's Vote and Men* (1913), *Essays in Freedom and Rebellion* (1921) the autobiographical works, *Changes and Chances* (1925-28).

Reprinted from "Votes for Women," September 10, 1908.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

FROM A MAN'S POINT OF VIEW

It is man's fault and the country's misfortune that women have had no Parliamentary vote for 76 years. They lost the right to vote because they trusted the men, and neglected to guard their rights when the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed. They have not regained the vote because, until we heard of the militant women, they have not fiercely insisted that they want it.

I have attended Women's Suffrage meetings, and heard women mildly explain why they ought to have the vote, and the good they will do when they get it. This is purely academical. Woman is too reasonable on the Suffrage question. To a man it is merely a matter of business. I get the vote because I am an owner and occupier of rateable property; and I am still waiting to know why an exception should be made in the case of the occupier who is a woman.

I met a lady this week who has been for 15 years the successful proprietor of a large boarding house. I thought, "Here is a Suffragette." No! She knew nothing of politics. She left politics to the men. Fancy a man refusing to be interested in a thing because he doesn't understand it. Wise men! We never give the show away. Do we refuse to travel in a railway train, or electric car, because many of us do not understand the mechanism of the steam engine, or electric traction? Do we refuse to send wireless telegrams because only a few of us can explain the Marconi system? We are satisfied if some of us know. For the same reason the 70,000 illiterate men on the present Parliament registers of the United Kingdom do not refuse to vote. They vote as directed, or as they please, and no one proposes to take the vote from them.

Brother and Sister.

I often ask the question : Do women realise what little intelligence men require to send a member to parliament? I am one of those who have more Parliamentary voters than my share, at least, I think so, as long as the women are without. I never asked for a vote. I passed no examination, like some of the University graduates, to get it. I found when I was 21 that I was the half-owner of a little freehold. That was enough. The officials gave me the vote. The other half-owner was my sister. That was enough to refuse it to her, when she was 21, because she was a woman. Afterwards I went into business and paid office rent. Another vote. In a year I did so well that I married and my wife and I set up house. Of course, I was given a third vote for that. My conscience never troubled me whether I was wise enough to exercise the vote, No one ever suggested it to me, although possibly when I voted Liberal the Conservatives had their doubts about it. Why, should it trouble a woman whether she understands politics or not? How many men do we know who are really politicians? I didn't get three votes because I was a politician, but because I owned rate-paying property in one place, and occupied rate-paying property in two other places.

At election times I looked around. Were the voters left to themselves, like sheep

without a shepherd? On the contrary, we were admirably shepherded. Candidates spent a lot of money to guide us. They issued long printed addresses, which few voters read, and none remembered. They called upon us, and were most friendly. If they could do anything for us in Parliament, they would be only too delighted. Then came speeches galore, and election colours: Liberal; red ; Conservative, blue. What could be simpler? A child could understand.

The voter, before he entered the polling-station, was given as a specimen voting paper a red card, or a blue card, containing the candidates' names, with a big cross marked against the name of the candidate for whom each of the parties wanted him to vote. So little does the average voter understand politics, that he always votes for the same party—the same colour he calls it ; he does not, as a rule, turn his coat ; consequently, party votes neutralise one another, and the turn-coat turns the scale. When the voter enters the polling-station he gives his name to a clerk at a table, who compares it with the printed register and ticks it off, to indicate that he has voted, and gives him a ballot-paper. He is then directed to go to the enclosed desk where, with a pencil provided for that purpose, he puts a cross on the ballot-paper against one of the names, if one M. P. has to be elected, or a cross against each of two of the names, if two M.P.'s are to be elected; or he may plump for one only Then, having folded the paper so that nobody sees for whom he has voted, he puts it in the ballot-box, and his vote is recorded.

He has by this simple operation done what it is said women are physically and mentally incapable of doing. There is one remedy; if they feel their deficiencies, they can stay away. A large number of men always do.

Henceforth let women no longer, like Milton's guardian angels, stand and wait. Let them tell men they know the game of politics, and can play it, too. They have found us out. We are not the wisecracs we pretend to be. Remind us, and particularly Cabinet Ministers at home and travelling abroad, in season and out of season, that the vote is exercised by marking a cross, and that all women who are occupiers of rateable property can mark a cross against a candidate's name on a ballot-paper. Remind us that we ordinary voters are not called upon to exercise even the intelligence of selecting and nominating a candidate. The candidate packs his bag and collies. The candidates are all, more or less, representative men, selected by, their political parties, and nominated by local supporters.

Remind us that you women who possess the necessary qualification have for a long time been voting in this way for the election of guardians of the poor, for parish councils, for borough councils, for county councils, and so useful have you proved yourselves to be that you are now eligible to sit on these various councils, and are doing citizens' work alongside the men. Demand from us men whether we can point out a single instance in which our interests have suffered in any way through city municipal votes given by women. Insist that to the municipal vote shall be added the Parliamentary vote. It is a question of practical politics. Let mere academical discussion of the subject cease. It has been going on fruitlessly for 40 years. You are being robbed. You are paying rates, and get no Parliamentary vote in exchange.

No Vote Without Militancy.

Militant women, indeed ! I am proud to see you have the pluck to be militant. You will never get the vote without. Can you women imagine for one moment what we men would do if we had a Bill before Parliament to give us the common rights of citizenship, the right to be raised above criminals and lunatics, a Bill which, on February 28 last, actually passed the second reading in the House of Commons by a

majority of three to one? Can you imagine what men would do if the Premier refused absolutely to set aside a day for the Committee stage and third reading of our Bill, notwithstanding that, on his own admission, two-thirds of the Government are against him? Women, pause here, and insist on the answer, *What would men do?*

Do you suppose that, if the Government dared to deal with men in this manner, they could brutally imprison over 300 when they voiced their demands? Thank God there are many men in the country like the Haggerston voter who said to Mrs. Drummond, "I have been a Liberal all my days, but I shall not vote for a Government which imprisons women because they ask for a vote. That is a disgraceful thing in liberty-loving England. Tell me, missus, what to do for your cause, and I'll go to gaol myself." When men go to gaol it will be on a more serious charge than breaking two panes of glass or shouting Votes for Women.

W. W. H.

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.

-*Reynold's*, Sept. 9th, 1906.

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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