

A WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SUPPLEMENT.

Edited by HUNTLY CARTER.

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A Symposium on Women's Suffrage.

THE following questions have been put by THE NEW AGE to representative persons in science, ethics, art, politics, and economics:—

1. *What in your opinion is the most powerful argument—*

(a) *For, or*

(b) *Against woman's suffrage?*

2. *Is there any reasonable prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament, and this immediately?*

3. *Have the militant methods in your opinion failed, or succeeded?*

4. *What alternative methods would you suggest?*

MR. E. BELFORT BAX.

You state in your letter of invitation that you are impelled to do so—"in order to ascertain whether there are means of preventing the promised repetition of the disgraceful scenes and their sequences, called forth by the belief that the suffrage should be extended to women."

With your permission I will answer this before the questions. I will venture to submit that the means of preventing the "disgraceful scenes" you deplore are perfectly simple and at hand. They consist in the treatment of women who turn hooligans and break the law precisely in the same way men would be treated who acted similarly. Let the punishments dealt out to them be the same in duration and intensity as those meted out to the male hooligan in like circumstances. The incentive to continue in the same course which the cheap martyrdom afforded by farcical sentences provides would then be removed, and the "disgraceful scenes" referred to would speedily come to an end.

1. In my opinion there are two most powerful arguments against woman's suffrage. Firstly, the liability of women to hysteria in one or other of the various forms of that abnormal mental condition, a condition which notoriously impairs or destroys the power of judgment. It has been shown that on the average, one woman out of every four or five exhibits symptoms of definite hysteria. If we include those whose temperament is affected by hysteria, but where the actual symptoms are latent, the proportion would of course be larger.

Secondly, apart from any question of incapacity for political judgment, and even assuming such relative incapacity not to exist, there remains the fact that woman occupies as such a privileged and exceptional position, not only socially, but before the law and its administration, based ostensibly upon her assumed weakness of will and intellectual power, a weakness which is urged in favour of leniency and exceptional treatment of women in criminal and even in civil proceedings at law, oftentimes by the very same persons who, when it is a question of according women the political rights of men, most strenuously deny the existence of any such relative weakness or inferiority in the female sex. So long, I contend, as women occupy this exceptionally privileged position, even apart from any other consideration, they have no just claim to equality with men in the matter of political rights.

2. I believe there is little danger, as things at present stand, of female suffrage becoming law in the lifetime of the present Parliament.

3. In my opinion the "militant methods," as they are termed, of street hooliganism have failed, as casting ridicule on the movement, and furnishing a sorry sample of the quality of female intelligence, commonsense and judgment. How often do we hear the remark: "And these are the creatures it is proposed to entrust with the destinies of the nation"!

4. The alternative methods I would suggest to those who believe in, and are anxious to obtain, the franchise for women, are the methods adopted by men in every other case,

in a community organised politically on democratic lines, and possessing in general the right of free speech, and a free Press, viz.: agitation by means of argument and persuasion rather than by knocking off policemen's helmets, smacking their faces, and breaking post-office windows.

MR. HILAIRE BELLOC.

1. (a) Fun. (b) Sex.
2. Yes
3. Yes.
4. Bribery.

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT.

1. The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is the fact that women want it. Undoubtedly a large majority of women who have studied the question feel a strong desire for woman's suffrage. There is and there can be no answer to this argument. To attempt to answer it is in my opinion to be guilty of fatuousness.

2. There is no reasonable prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament. The Government has no mandate of any kind to deal with it, and its time will be fully occupied by subjects which the electorate considers far more important.

3. Militant methods have, in my opinion, succeeded so far. They would have succeeded more completely if the women who sought martyrdom had played the game when they found martyrdom. Not only their dignity, but their intellectual honesty too often gave way under the strain of martyrdom. At the same time it must be admitted that the organisers were frequently badly advised by their more zealous male supporters, who did not always escape the fatuity which masks their opponents. In particular the behaviour of certain husbands of martyrs did much to alienate the sympathies of the lukewarm. No hysterical male antics would in the slightest degree weaken my own convinced support of the cause of woman's suffrage; but then I am not lukewarm, while the electorate as a whole is either lukewarm or indifferent.

4. I can suggest no alternative to militant methods. But I think that if the organisers of militancy were to make a closer and franker study of human nature as it notoriously is, with a view to avoiding in future the rather silly air of being constantly horrified by the spectacle of human nature in activity, the result might be a shortening of the war.

MRS. MONA CAIRD.

1. The most powerful argument in favour of the suffrage for women seems to me to be that to refuse representation to duly qualified adults under a representative government is to place them utterly at the mercy of those who are represented; to deprive them of all power of self-defence; to force them to submit to all laws and enactments, no matter how atrocious and insulting, that may be imposed (and often have been imposed) by the governing sex; to deny them all responsible voice in the destinies of their country; in short, to place them in a position of abject dependence and helplessness—a position that would seem ludicrous as well as intolerable to any self-respecting person were it not that tradition and long use and wont have blinded the eyes to the real nature of the situation.

The political outlawry which women have to suffer—while bearing the ordinary burdens of the State (and far more than the ordinary burdens of general responsibility)—affects profoundly every moment of their lives, and every power and possibility they possess; and it affects down to the very roots the whole relationship of human beings one to another. The whole of life of every kind and class and condition is determined by it. It is not a question of an individual vote for any individual woman. It is a question of status and freedom for the whole sex, and eventually for the entire race. That this is so can surely not be denied when it is remembered that at present Englishwomen are Britons, but not free-born, and that their sons are the sons of bondswomen.

2. I have grave doubts as to the suffrage being granted by this Parliament. Women have no votes; therefore they can't get them. It is a vicious circle; and it is hard to see how it can be broken through except by long, patient

efforts to move the whole body of the public to juster views. Women, having no constitutional means of making their voices heard, have been driven to the much decried militant measures.

3. These militant measures have, I think, brilliantly succeeded in bringing the subject in a few short years into the region of practical and immediate questions. The public has been forced at least to attend to the matter. Previously it was ignored, except by a few thinkers, and even these placed it in the category of the unessentials. Every other question had to come first. We have had to make enemies in order to make friends.

How far all the militant measures are justifiable is a different question, and not one to go into here. But it must be remembered that many things are justified to those who are politically weaponless—especially when they have patiently tried and tried quieter measures for nearly half a century—which would be unpardonable in those who possess political representation either as a class or as a sex.

4. Alternatives are indeed difficult to suggest for weaponless fighters. Election work seems to offer the best hope, in unison with propagandist effort. But this has already been done on a large scale. Still further concentration in this direction might be perhaps advisable. The difficulty in all these measures (other than the sensationally militant methods) is that they do not make much quick effect beyond their immediate radius of effort. The papers will not report the quieter kind of work. They want something exciting; something to enable the British householder to denounce "these disgraceful women," and to suggest mediæval methods for suppressing them.

One newspaper actually stated frankly that it was not possible to give space to report quiet meetings and educational work which the public took no interest in. It was only militancy that was worth reporting. Yet women are urged to try quiet and constitutional measures as if this were to them quite a new idea! If they don't make a noise they are told they obviously don't want the franchise; if they do make a noise they are told they are not fit for it! Many no doubt have been alienated by militancy, but in any case the cause would never have made an inch of progress by the help of those who held it so cheaply and understood it so little as to be turned aside because some of its advocates adopted measures which these luke-warm friends happened (rightly or wrongly) to disapprove.

THE REV. HUGH B. CHAPMAN, M.A., Chaplain of the Royal Chapel, Savoy.

My attitude towards women's suffrage is of such an ideal character that you must excuse a poet if he hesitates to put his opinions into words. The fact is that as to the methods employed, one day I think one thing and the next day another, but with regard to one single point I never have any doubt, i.e., that from the moral, social and political point of view the success of the movement would tend enormously to the good of the country. You will easily realise that when this movement means, as it does to some of us, the whole reconstruction of the attitude of the sexes towards one another, it assumes such a deeply religious and important aspect that we are very much thrown back on prayer, and are willing to endure patiently so that the soul of the subject may be rightly grasped, rather than achieve a superficial and Pyrrhic victory, however smart and successful the means employed.

MR. CECIL CHESTERTON.

1. (a) It is the theory of democracy that every citizen should have a voice in the government of the State. Women are citizens; they have to obey the laws. Therefore, on democratic principles, there is a presumption that they should have their share in making the laws. This is not only the most powerful argument, but the only valid argument in favour of women's suffrage. Everything that the suffragist adds to it—as, for example, the absurd pretence that women as such are oppressed by men as such, and that Lady Wimborne, who can nominate three of her sons in succession to represent East Dorset, is suffering in consequence of her lack of political power—really weakens it. It will be noticed that this is an argument for adult suffrage alone, for it applies just as much to all women as to some, and just as much to the men at present unenfranchised as to the women.

(b) The two most effective arguments against women's suffrage seem to me to be (1) that women are not suffering from any grievance peculiar to their sex—which is true, but not, I think, conclusive; and (2) that the mass of women do not desire the vote, which may be true, but can hardly be

proved until the vote is offered them. These are arguments against the inclusion of women in a scheme of adult suffrage. The obvious argument against "Ladies' Suffrage" (as recommended by the suffrage societies) is that it is on the face of it a dodge of the rich to confirm and extend their already overwhelming political power.

2. I should think it improbable. The Front Benches might indeed agree that it should be brought forward if the game were in danger of collapsing and a new issue were needed. But, even then, it would probably be saved up for another General Election.

3. Beyond question they have failed. As regards the issue of fact, I will simply say that a few years ago the proceedings of the suffragettes were considered "good copy" in Fleet Street. Now, nothing less than the mutilation of a Cabinet Minister will induce an editor to give sixpence for a paragraph concerning them. As to the cause of this failure, it seems to me to be due to a miscalculation based upon a false analogy. There are only two ways of carrying a political proposal—persuasion on the one hand, force or the threat of force on the other. Suffragettes are never tired of repeating that men got the vote by rioting. But it was not the riots themselves that did the trick; a very few soldiers or police can always put down a riot. What forced the governing class to give way was the fear that if they stood out the riots might presage an insurrection. An insurrection is plainly impossible for women. Therefore their rioting is necessarily ineffective.

4. The only alternative is persuasion. The remaining question is: "Who are you going to persuade?"

If the suffragists are really democrats they will seek to persuade the people—and especially the women of the people—so that women's suffrage may be included in a general democratisation of the British State.

If they are not democrats, but only suffragists, they will probably get to their goal quicker by persuading the politicians that their proposal will help to keep the silly and dirty game going. Should they succeed in this, the "Conciliation" Bill might easily go through as smoothly as the Children Bill, the Street Betting, the Prevention of Crimes Bill, and other monstrously unpopular and undemocratic measures.

MR. G. K. CHESTERTON.

1. (a) The regrettable absence of ferocity in our politics. (b) The rooted dislike of all forcible women for government by discussion.

2. The late Bill, being plutocratic and hypocritical, might have some chance still.

3. Failed. The newspapers took them up and so they are now simply a bore.

4. The conversion of women to female suffrage.

THE HON. SIR JOHN COCKBURN.

1. Amid innumerable and unanswerable arguments for woman's suffrage the following appears at the present time to be the most conspicuous: That a Mayor, as the Chief Magistrate of the town, should be a citizen, so also should be an alderman of the L.C.C.

2. Yes, a fair prospect. The more intelligent among the anti's know that the granting of the suffrage is inevitable; and the desire for peace and good order in this Coronation year will lead many to think that what must come soon may as well come at once.

3. Militant methods have brought the question into the front rank of practical politics and therefore cannot be said to have failed.

MR. EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE.

1. (a) Men being men and women being women, as Mr. Austen Chamberlain has reminded us, or, in other words, creatures with very distinct interests and constitutions, it is obvious that one sex cannot successfully or fairly govern the other. I speak as one who thinks that we must, whether we like it or not, accept democracy as the ultimate basis of government. An unelected despot should indeed be able to interpret the wishes of his male subjects, thanks to community of sex, better than an elected oligarchy of men can interpret the desires of women.

(b) The only argument against women's suffrage that appears to be worth attention is that advanced by a lawyer named Smith—i.e., that votes are of value only in so far as they represent swords or fighting units. This is a frank recognition of brute force as the basis of government, which, if accepted generally, would revolutionise society. It would of course involve the disenfranchisement of all men over fifty

or sixty years of age, the lowering of the electoral age limit to sixteen or seventeen, and the disqualification of all invalids, however highly gifted in other respects. It means, in fact, mob rule.

2. I am not hopeful. The Ministry now feels itself firmly seated in the saddle, and would grant the suffrage only through fear of a split, which I do not think is to be apprehended. Very few of the members who voted for the Suffrage Bill would prefer it to their party allegiance. Many of them would certainly find their own seats endangered by the passing of the Bill, for I am satisfied that the majority of women in this country would for some years to come vote Tory. Asquith probably thinks that to give women the vote would be merely to compensate the Opposition for the abolition of the plural voter. The granting of Home Rule to Ireland would, I imagine, militate against this reform. Home Rule certainly will mean Home Rule if Irish women vote. Personally, I do not see why the opinions of the women, religious or otherwise, should not have as much weight as the men's.

3. It is too early to say whether militant tactics have failed or succeeded. I do not believe that the question would be a living one to-day, or that it would have been raised at all in France and Italy if it had not been for militant action. The W.S.P.U. and the W.F.L. have done more for women in four years than the other societies all taken together would have achieved in a century. Parenthetically, I may observe that I consider Christabel Pankhurst, Mrs. Despard, and one or two other of the leaders, by a very long way the grandest characters of the age.

4. Kidnapping Asquith or Churchill would probably fail of its object, as I don't suppose the nation or the party would contribute a £5 note for the ransom of either. Bombs are very uncertain in their action and expensive to manufacture. A boycott of the drapers' shops would certainly bring Lloyd George to his knees, as it would be his own countrymen that would suffer most. With concerted action it would be very easy to coerce men into compliance. On a given day, for instance, every woman might start doing the washing at home. Similarly, the wives might strike—*quâ* wives. But they wouldn't. Failing these methods, I most earnestly counsel the suffragists to acquire a controlling interest in some important daily paper, and to win over the music-halls, which are the most authoritative guides to English opinion.

MR. WILLIAM DE MORGAN.

1. That no argument has hitherto been advanced against the enfranchisement of women that is not an equally strong one for the disfranchisement of man.

2. How should I know?

3. They are successful thus far, that great swarms of liars are now claiming to have been supporters of the movement all along, but, they say, "It is the *method* we object to."

4. Answers to this question are outside my beat. I am not able to take an active part in the movement.

MR. WORDSWORTH DONISTHORPE.

You ask: 1. What is the most powerful argument (a) for, or (b) against Woman's Suffrage? Why "or" instead of "and." Why not both? Let me state an overwhelming argument for, and an irrefutable argument against.

(a) We have outlived the age in which the State consisted of a few score to a few hundred persons, when the physically strong rightly exercised a higher voting power than the weak; when Achilles counted for more than Thersites because he was more. But when States came to contain millions of citizens, it became apparent that the brute-force units cancelled one another on the average, and more complex forces decided the issue. We no longer confer more voting power on the prize-fighter than on the muffin-man, because there is probably another prize-fighter in the opposite camp, capable of neutralising his efforts. As has been well said, we now "count heads to save the trouble of breaking them." And under a system of representative government the vote is a right and not (as some maudlin sentimentalists do vainly boast) a trust. Every citizen has the moral right to see that his (or her) liberties are not being whittled away by the legislature. But would women exercise their voting power wisely? Certainly not. Like the aristocrats of old, like the plutocrats of yesterday, like the democrats of to-day, they would try (some selfishly, some altruistically) to force upon others the mode of life agreeable to themselves, or according best with their own limited view of the fitness of things. Then why grant them the vote? Because they have a moral right to it, and because they must learn by long experience what men have not yet fully discovered—that power is sweet, liberty is

sweeter. In the clash of conflicting interests lies the salvation of freedom.

"For this we know, that every law that Man has made for Man

But straws the wheat and saves the chaff with a most evil fan."

Woman's suffrage is simply a corollary from universal suffrage: and that is the bed-rock of representative government. "What? Would you give votes to criminals, to lunatics, to children?" Most certainly. They are all now accorded the rights of property; but, in the case of irresponsible persons, those rights are exercised by deputy, through parents, guardians, trustees, etc., and no harm comes of it. Yet the *right of property is far more potent* for good or ill than the right to a vote. Surely a family consisting of a father, mother and three children has a higher stake in the country than a bachelor tramp?

(b) Now for the overwhelming argument against woman's suffrage. Once admit the right of a woman to representation (by vote) and you have already admitted her right to legislate. If she can obtain the suffrages of her fellow-citizens you have admitted her right to a seat in Parliament. How, then, can she logically be excluded from Cabinet rank? Fancy a woman in the Speaker's chair. Picture to yourself a lady on the Woolsack! Then the Bar and the Church would have to be thrown open to merit, apart from sex. Think of that. We might have a lady Chief of Police, a lady Field Marshal, a lady Primate of All England. What nightmare is this? and then the crowning absurdity of all—a Woman supreme above Lords and Commons, a Woman empowered to veto the measures passed by both Houses. Is not the bare contemplation of such a possibility enough to evoke the laughter of a churchwarden, to make John Bull tremble for the foundations of the Constitution, to raise to red-heat the rage of every respectable Tory, to tire the patience of Griselda herself, to —? But was not Queen Victoria Head of the Church, Head of the Army, supreme above both Houses of Parliament? Well—er—to a certain extent, I suppose she was; but—er—er—you see—er, in point of fact—but I am trespassing on the valuable space at my disposal; and I have to answer Questions 2, 3, and 4.

Having now adduced convincing reasons why woman should exercise the franchise and why she should not, I will answer to Question 2 with a "No." To Question 3, since by "succeeded" you cannot mean that they have obtained their ultimate object, you must mean, "Have the militant methods gained or forfeited support and sympathy?" To this I would reply that they have alienated the sympathy of the ordinary citizen; but they have gained the support of the politician—which is more practically valuable. Cowards always pray to the Devil. Terrorism always appeals to the fears of the politician. Freedom has been forced from despotism by fear rather than by logic or pleas for justice. I would counsel a continuance of these tactics, but only as a means to an end. *In se* they are contemptible. In answer to Question 4, I would suggest, not as an alternative, but as an auxiliary plan of campaign, to carry the war into the enemy's camp. Let women point to the Statute Book and ask whether it would be possible for them to enact more vain, inane and even insane laws than those which men have enacted by the light of their own masculine intelligence.

DR. HAVELOCK ELLIS.

2. There is no possibility of passing any Woman's Suffrage Bill through all stages at once, not only because the rules of our complicated Parliamentary procedure must necessarily be observed, but because other questions are at the present moment regarded, reasonably enough, as more immediately urgent.

3. The militant methods of the Suffragettes have produced a variety of incongruous effects. Some of these have aided the woman's suffrage movement; others have impeded it. Personally I regard militant methods, apart altogether from the question of their effectiveness, as an unfortunate influence in the women's movement, which involves far more than the attainment of the vote.

4. There is only one infallible method by which the vote can be secured for women, and that is by convincing women themselves that it is desirable. The rest will follow.

MRS. ELIZABETH C. WOLSTENHOLME ELMY.

1. (a) In the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men we shall find the surest possible guarantee for all other social and political justice.

2. As Mr. Asquith has promised "facilities," there is no reasonable doubt that women's suffrage can be assured during the approaching session, provided only that members of Parliament prove faithful to their pledges.

3. In my opinion the militant methods (for which, as a member of the Executive of the Women's Social and Political Union, I share the responsibility) have been most effective in rousing the attention of the people at large to this grave question—far more so than all our previous quiet and peaceful agitation of forty-five years. I speak of what I know, for I formed the first Manchester Women's Suffrage Committee in October, 1865, at the same time that Miss Emily Davies formed the first London Women's Suffrage Committee. To Miss Davies belongs the honour of being the pioneer of pioneers in this movement, as also in that of the higher education of women. Should our well-grounded hopes be realised, we shall need no further agitation, and therefore I decline to suggest any "alternative methods."

I wish, however, to urge upon every convinced women's suffragist the duty and necessity of supporting the present movement by urging upon every M.P. whom he or she can hope to influence, the duty of actively supporting by his personal vote in Parliament, and by his influence with other M.P.'s, and especially by endeavouring to induce Mr. Asquith to adopt the Bill as a Government measure—as would be both fit and wise, despite the opposition of Lord Chancellor Loreburn.

The Government (Mr. Gladstone's) of the day did thus adopt and carry into law the Married Women's Property Bills, two for Scotland and two for England, Wales, and Ireland—thanks to the splendid help of Lord Chancellor Selborne, and of Mr. Blair Balfour, later known as Lord Kinross, and president of the Scottish Court of Appeal. Mr. Blair was at the time Secretary for Scotland.

MISS FLORENCE FARR.

1. Fools, not women, should be voteless.
2. No man can be expected to give the vote to anyone who visibly wants to keep him in order with it.
3. The vote will have to be taken by force, not given; that is what makes it worth having.
4. I should get rid of women's delusions about young girls and their education. The young could win the battle in a week if they would only try.

The Hon. MARY FORDHAM.

1. (a) The fact that only one sex is represented in the political world and most other walks of life is harmful to the nation. This being the case, women and children are at a big disadvantage, their claims ignored or overlooked. The status of woman is thus below that of man, and they labour and work under penal disadvantages.

(b) There are no arguments, in my opinion, against women's suffrage.

2. Yes, I believe there is, before the present Parliament comes to an end. I can't think that the Liberal Government, holding within the Cabinet men of both opinions, and in the House a large majority (of all shades of politics) in favour of women's suffrage, can withhold this just demand and long-delayed justice to women, many of whom have worked loyally for their party in spite of the attitude of the Government on the question.

3. The militant methods aroused public opinion to the importance of the question when all other methods had failed; and to these methods all women suffragists owe a great debt in the past. Having aroused the masses to think and act, I feel that they would do the cause a far better service now if they withheld all militant methods.

4. Solid spadework on the lines of the constitutional women's suffrage societies.

MR. W. L. GEORGE.

I am afraid it is rather difficult to say which is the strongest argument for or against women's suffrage. There are too many ethical, political and economic points at issue for me to discriminate; perhaps, taking it all round, the best argument is one that begs the question: "Women have done so much, though they have been enslaved for so long; what would they not then do if they were free?"

I think the justice of the women's demand is universally admitted by all save a few Cromerites: understand, I do not refer to methods, for there are an enormous number of men who have accepted the idea of women's suffrage, but are now inclined to oppose it because violent methods have annoyed them. As regards the prospect of a bill passing the present Parliament, they seem to me very rosy indeed; it is almost a foregone conclusion that the Lords will be muzzled within six months, which leaves the way clear for a Reform Bill. Now one does not need to be inspired to prophesy that the Government will present a Reform Bill, for it is pledged to suppress plural voting, to make London one borough, to settle the latchkey vote, to reduce the

qualification period; all this involves a Reform Bill. Mr. Asquith being pledged not to oppose an amendment for granting the suffrage to women, it appears to me almost certain that women will get the vote by 1915, or before.

As regards methods, I, for one, do not object to violence: I like it. But I am convinced that the public are no longer interested, but bored; the papers give a half-column where they once gave three, and that is a pretty good gauge of public feeling. Without violent methods there would have been no advance; the National Union would have continued to wander futile and aimless through the dreary wastes of tolerant lobbies—but the advertisement period is over, and it is time to paste new posters over the old.

The future policy should depend upon the Government's coming pronouncement on a Reform Bill. (I presume the question will be put; if not, it might suit Mr. Chancellor.) If a Reform Bill is to be put forward shortly, propaganda, hot and strong, and no violence. If the Government does not pledge itself, then the Suffragists had better set to work, collect money and put up men to break Government seats whenever a by-election gives them a good chance. I stated this policy in full in a recent article in *THE NEW AGE*, and I should like to point out that not a single letter has been written in opposition to my view.

MR. F. J. GOULD.

1. (a) The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage consists in the fact that, simultaneously with the general decline in the use of physical force as a means of government, the feminine spirit comes forward with a natural claim for a larger scope for the fulfilment of the duty of moral influence.

(b) The most powerful argument against woman's suffrage consists in the fact that all political government finally rests on physical force, and, both in respect to muscular power and moral temperament, normal woman is not fitted to govern by physical force.

In making these two replies, I have in mind complete woman-suffrage, applied to the married and unmarried, and detached from the wretched nineteenth-century principle of connecting the vote with property. I am in favour of woman's suffrage in this sense, and, if I were a member of Parliament, should only support the miserable "Limited Suffrage" because a number of intelligent women very earnestly desire it, and keenly feel the injustice of its non-realisation.

2. I do not see any prospect of the immediate passage of a woman's suffrage bill in the present Parliament, since the Lords problem will occupy the earlier months (though it is the House of Commons that needs reform far more than the House of Lords), and then the Home Rule question may hasten another General Election.

3. In my opinion, the militant suffragist methods have virtually failed. My reason for saying so are these:—

(a) For many years (since the time of Miss Lydia Becker, for instance), the woman's suffrage movement grew in volume and force, and its supporters had the satisfaction of freedom from any disquietude as to its reflex action on the dignity of the feminine movement in general. Had the militant method not been practised, the power of the movement would probably have reached its present point without arousing disquietude among many of its more serious supporters.

(b) It has associated the subject of women's votes with the idea of disorder and rough manners, and thus discounted to a considerable extent the value of the suffrage when granted. I support woman-suffrage, but should witness its accomplishment with regretful thoughts of the set-back caused to the progress of the genuine feminine spirit.

(c) It has undoubtedly caused the inner circles of politicians and statesmen to reconsider the value of democracy, and to study possible methods of government, imperial and local, which will practically circumvent the popular ballot and referendum.

4. If I could have my way, I should persuade all women to support Socialism as the only effective solution of evils they, and the community at large, suffer from. The chief use of the present woman's suffrage movement is to hasten the demand for the true proletarian woman's suffrage, and that, in turn, will lead to Socialism; and Socialism will render much of our present voting apparatus unnecessary and obsolete.

MISS BEATRICE HARRADEN.

1. The strongest argument in favour of woman's suffrage is contained in the words: No taxation without representation.

2. I am unable to say at this juncture.

3. The militant methods have, in my opinion, succeeded. If all the other suffrage societies had the courage to be-

come militant, I believe we should get the suffrage at once.

4. I can suggest no alternative methods. The so-called constitutional methods have failed all along the line.

MR. HENRY HOLIDAY.

1. (a) I put aside the claim itself, because it can hardly constitute an argument, and ought to need none. The claim is that neither sex can have the right to say to the members of the other sex, "You shall not be citizens!" The justice of this claim ought to be self-evident, and undoubtedly the whole onus probandi must lie with those who maintain so monstrous an exclusion. But since this subjection has survived as a relic of barbarism till now (just as chattel slavery survived in the civilised world till fifty years ago), and we are only now realising its unspeakable injustice, we have to contend with the vis inertia of prejudice, and to persuade those who would maintain any evil however great if it has only lasted long enough.

Thus our opponents pass over the claim of justice, and seek to alarm us by the terrible consequences which must (so they say) ensue if women are treated as citizens. We maintain, on the contrary, that good, and nothing but good, can arise from granting to women their full rights as human beings.

If I must choose among the many unanswerable arguments urged in support of this view I am inclined to select the following, because of its national character:—

Women bear and rear children, and they alone are conversant with what concerns these all-important functions, upon which the existence and well-being of the race primarily depend.

Words do not exist which can adequately characterise the folly of denying to women all direct influence upon legislation bearing on these matters with which only they have practical acquaintance, and which vitally affect the whole nation physically and morally.

If there were no other argument for giving women the vote this should be conclusive.

(b) What is the most powerful argument against woman's suffrage?

A year ago or more I was invited to join the men's league for opposing the suffrage, and wrote to the secretary to ask him to send me their statement of the case as the members of the league viewed it. There were some well-known names among them, and I assumed that they would hardly have united without agreeing on something having at least the appearance of cogency. But I received only a packet of literature already issued by the women's league: the pamphlets by Mrs. Humphry Ward and Mrs. Frederic Harrison, and many others. I waded through the whole, but could not find one argument worth even passing consideration. The one that seemed to be regarded as most powerful by the writers was that "The ultimate basis of government is Force"; therefore only the strong man may vote, which would disfranchise large numbers of men, and ought to give a plurality of votes to prize-fighters, navvies, bargees, etc. The point seemed to be that if after an election it were possible to test the fighting capacity of the majority and the minority, and it were found that the majority could not punch the heads of the minority, the legislation of a parliament so elected must be bad, and fraught with evil consequences to the country.

But if the thesis be sound the proper method would be to have a weight-lifting machine and a measuring tape at every polling-booth, and dismiss every would-be voter whose lifting-power or whose biceps came short of the standard.

Or an admirable system of "Proportional representation" could be secured by giving each elector a number of votes determined by the number of pounds he or she could lift, or the number of inches round his or her arm. Our legislation would then be accurately based on force, which it would not be under a sex division. By the by, Mr. Sandow would be besieged by canvassers. A man lately asked a "Force" advocate: "Would you like to try a bout with my sister?" He could not well refuse, and was on the floor in three seconds. But the man on the floor had the vote, and the victorious lady had not.

2. I hope certainly in the present Parliament; but as to the precise time, we must remember the other pressing claims of causes even older, the actual pledges to be fulfilled, and that an extension of the franchise is usually the last act of a Parliament before a dissolution, because after such an extension a Parliament no longer represents the electorate.

3. If compelled to answer "Yes" or "No," I should say "Yes," for surely the cause has progressed by leaps and bounds since the militants began. But a correct answer must, in my opinion, discriminate. On the pro side their

enthusiasm, their determination and perseverance, their splendid organising power, their initiative and resource, and indomitable courage are beyond praise. It would be unfair in a high degree to non-militant bodies to attribute all the progress made to the militants, but I cannot doubt that it is so largely.

On the contra side, they have, in my opinion, sometimes allowed their enthusiasm to get the better of their judgment, as when they convey the impression of opposing good causes, such as peace, temperance, and even woman's suffrage by disturbing meetings in support of these causes merely because the chief speaker has been a member of a Government which includes some anti-suffragists. Or when, for the same reason, they oppose a suffragist candidate and support an opponent, and so (if successful) diminish the number of their supporters in the House of Commons. These tactics I regret on their own account, but more because they have alienated many from the cause.

With regard to any acts of violence, I deplore these, but am unwilling to treat them censoriously, remembering how many acts far more serious have been committed with impunity by men, remembering the more deplorable treatment of these ladies in prison (often when there has been no act of violence) and remembering the great provocation often received.

4. I should not suggest alternative methods. I would only urge the retention of the admirable methods already in use, and abstention from those which irritate and repel many who but for their use would befriend the cause. Besides those above-mentioned, I would name the perpetual attempt to send deputations to Ministers. So far as I remember deputations are sent to Ministers when some unfamiliar subject has to be explained by experts. I do not recall deputations being sent by Irish Nationalists, Welsh disestablishers, or other advocates of causes familiar to all politicians, and I believe that these repeated attempts are felt to be unpractical and irrelevant, that they do not advance the cause, but are merely occasions for disturbance and mutual irritation.

The able and effective advertising of the cause by the highly successful great meetings and processions and by admirable literature has, I believe, led to its present hopeful position, and will, I hope, result in making the United Kingdom the first of the great European nations to perform a long-needed act of wisdom and justice.

THE REV. CANON SCOTT HOLLAND.

1. The strongest argument generally used against woman's suffrage, i.e., that women are weaker than men, is in reality the strongest argument in its favour. They need the suffrage to balance their weakness.

3. I am sure that the militant methods have thrown the cause back; while the women's splendid power of persuasive and effective agitation has done wonders.

MR. LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

1. The most powerful argument in favour of woman's suffrage must vary according to connection. In relation to a form of government which claims to be "representative" and to "depend upon the consent of the governed" the fact that so many thousands of women are demanding full citizenship, with a persistence and courage that repressive measures have only intensified, is a most powerful argument from the democratic point of view, and is also, probably, the one which, in actual practice, will prevail. The corresponding argument of the anti-suffragists that so many women object to full citizenship, and object to other women having it, may have weight from an anti-democratic point of view, and under a form of government that claimed to be anti-democratic would deserve consideration. But a government is not less representative because it admits to citizenship those who do not wish to avail themselves of citizen-rights; and the fact that a great many men don't want to vote themselves is not allowed by any man in this country to be an argument why he who does want to vote should not be allowed to. Until, therefore, that argument is applied to men it is fatuous to apply it to women.

To my own mind the strongest argument for woman's suffrage is that the man represents only one half of human nature, and that as you extend your electorate to all classes of the community you accentuate in your legislation the male bias which underlies our present moral and industrial conditions. To make government representative it is necessary for both sides of human nature to have electoral power; and in that respect it is the difference of the woman from the man which will give her electoral influence its special value.

2. Whether there is any "reasonable prospect" of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament depends upon the "reasonableness" of our legislators. If there is not, then legislation must be brought about by something

which may, at first sight, appear less "reasonable" in character. But in that connection I would say that if men remain persistently deaf to reason and justice, there does come a time when it is "unreasonable" merely to go on arguing with them: they must be given a definite object-lesson in what failure to govern by consent may mean to the machinery of government.

3. Militant methods have failed to arouse among the majority of the electorate that indignation against the Government's veto on woman's enfranchisement which would have been aroused had the Press been open and truthful in its accounts of what the women actually endured at the hands of the authorities, of plain-clothes policemen, and of the stewards at public meetings, or had there existed among the general public a little more love of liberty for its own sake, and a little less *lust* of liberty for the sake of party—two very different things. But militancy has succeeded in giving the movement a driving force which it would not otherwise have obtained; and if our legislators remain deaf to reason and justice it is militancy which will at last bring conviction to their criminal minds.

(4) The methods which I believe will be effective to this end are not an alternative to, but an extension of, militancy. Tax-resistance should be conducted not merely on passive lines, but so as to insure that the Government secures no penny of profit from the women whom it taxes against their will. This can be done in ways that will involve no unequal struggles with the police, and I believe that in the near future it will be done—that women will "take back" in value all those forced levies and deductions of income tax at the source (the return of which, on demand, has been refused by the authorities) in such a way that, though it will involve no danger to any member of the community, will effectually make taxation without representation unprofitable to the Government that attempts it. To me this seems an absolutely right principle—no act of revenge, but a clear demonstration of a constitutional claim which the public will not fail to understand. And if the women recognise the principle as right, then the cost to the Government of unconstitutional taxation will be an accurate measure of the women's desire for political enfranchisement.

MR. FORD MADOX HUEFFER.

I have only just received your letter asking for my views on a question of woman's suffrage, and I am afraid it is too late for me to send a formal reply. I am heartily in favour of the suffrage for women, and I believe that, however unpleasant they may be for all parties, the militant methods are the only ones that are expedient or possible to-day.

MISS B. L. HUTCHINS.

1. (a) The wording is ambiguous, as you may mean, powerful or persuasive to M.P.'s or to the electorate, or you may mean what argument carries most force to me personally. In general, I imagine the most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is that a large and probably a growing proportion of women are economically self-dependent, and earn their own living, while all women obey the laws (or take the consequences of disobedience), pay taxes (or take the consequences of refusal), and in other ways are made to feel the obligations of civic life, and it is increasingly felt to be only fair they should have the privilege at least of voting for the law-makers. But the most persuasive argument to me personally is that I believe, in time, the exercise of the vote would bring women into closer consciousness of communal life, and give them a sense of public duty, which appears to me quite the most crying need of our present civilisation. Women have terribly little of what Mr. Wells has called "the sense of the State," and the best of women are often the worst in this respect. How are children to learn citizenship when their mothers have never heard the word or dreamed of the thing? I am not hopeful that the vote will all at once do all the good that is expected of it, but I do hope and believe that, in a generation or so, say, it will have brought women more into touch with the national life; that they will have begun to feel themselves "citizens of no mean city," and see that their children are not only theirs but their country's, the bearers of the national life, who will be helping to make England in the next generation. Mr. Barker's "Madras House," in a scene of the finest comedy, has shown us the narrowness and isolation of family life that is out of relation to the larger life of the city and the State. One could wish that all parents of children could be made to learn the lesson of the Huxtable family in that wonderful Act. I. If the vote comes, and having come, helps to bring home the consciousness of communal life and responsibility to women, it will mean an incalculable increase of national strength and happiness.

(b) You next ask me what is the most powerful argument against woman's suffrage. There is a conviction deeply

rooted in the minds of some that social strength and efficiency are best promoted by emphasising the differences between men and women, by removing women from the sphere of men's active work and politics, and by concentrating women's minds on the family, and the art of pleasing. To this type of mind the idea of "comradeship" between men and women is usually unreal and distasteful. I think this attitude represents the strongest side of the anti-suffrage movement, and it is worthy of sympathy, respect, and consideration. There is a great deal in it. But it fails to take account of many hard facts. It is ludicrous, in the face of statistics, to talk as if women who demand work and a place in the world were merely revolting against marriage and the home. There are many more women than men in this country and in most old countries, and for a large number of women economic self-dependence is no theory, but a stern necessity. Those who are immovably against women's entrance into political and professional life will probably be driven to advocate some kind of conventional life for superfluous women.

2. I cannot tell. I should be inclined to surmise that some step towards granting women's suffrage will be taken in this Parliament, but probably not immediately.

3. It is most difficult to say whether militant methods have failed or succeeded. They undoubtedly alienate some support, but on the other hand, often win over former opponents, and it is almost impossible to estimate the balance. My own impression is that the going to prison did a great deal for the cause at first, and made a profound impression, but that the leaders made a tactical mistake in carrying it on so long. The recent scenes in Parliament Square seem to have alienated more than they gained. Personally I am intensely, perhaps pedantically opposed to all violence, and regard victory by persuasion or conviction as infinitely better worth having than conquest by a crude appeal to the emotions; at the same time, I cannot help greatly admiring the pluck, ability, and courage of the W.S.P.U., even when I dissent from them most. They have woken up women and exploded the ideals of drawing-rooms. As a matter of fact, too, I believe the violence used by members of the W.S.P.U. has been of a merely technical and mild nature, while they have pluckily suffered real hardship and maltreatment themselves. At the same time, I do not think these considerations can justify or excuse their leaders in deliberately provoking street fighting. There are some conquests of civilisation that are too precious to be risked, and the inhibition of violence between men and women is one of them.

4. The only alternative to militant methods that I can suggest are (a) educational measures; a good deal might be done by demonstrating the inevitableness of a change in the position of women under modern economic and industrial conditions; and (b) a general strike of women from political work as canvassers, organisers, etc. This would probably be an extremely effective weapon. But there are many women who are interested in other political questions as much as, or more than, in the suffrage, and the strike is therefore unlikely to be general.

MR. LAURENCE JERROLD (Paris).

1. (a) The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is that women are undeniably superior to men in the arts of living, irrespective of the other arts; they are the realists, men the idealists.

(b) The same is also the most powerful argument against woman's suffrage.

In the particular case of England, a strong argument against woman's suffrage is the excess of the female over the male population.

3. I should much dislike womanfolk of mine joining in the suffragettes' militant practices, but I have to acknowledge that they seem to have made more headway by violence in a few years than they made by peaceful agitation in several decades.

DR. OSCAR LEVY.

My chief objection to woman's suffrage is the unwomanly modesty of the whole movement. All women I have ever known (and liked) wanted something more than—a vote.

DR. A. M. LUDOVICI.

I am entirely in favour of woman's suffrage. Truth to tell, only women ought to vote; only *women* do vote.

THE HON. NEVILLE LYTTON.

1. (a) Women are taxed, and therefore they should vote, is much the strongest argument in favour of woman's suffrage.

(b) There is no argument against the suffrage that can hold a candle to it.

2. I have no opinion on the matter.

3. Up to the last militant outbreak the militant methods had succeeded admirably, and had done more for the movement than years of work by the constitutionalists. The militants caused the peaceful workers to be put on a pedestal at once. If there had been no militants there would have been no one to compare the non-militants with, to the disadvantage of the former. Before the arrival of the militants the non-militants were ignored. Also the sufferings of the women in prison worked powerfully on the imaginations of the important men in politics. Their success reached its climax when they secured ardent and influential supporters in either House to take up their cause. The resumption of militant methods immediately before the last election was a great tactical mistake.

4. I should suggest canvassing the country as before, and leaving the Parliamentary campaign in the hands of the supporters of woman's suffrage inside Parliament, presuming, that is, that they are still willing to continue their labours.

DR. MAARTEN MAARTENS (Holland).

1. (a) In my opinion the most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is undeniably the present-day condition of Parliamentarism, resultant on man's suffrage.

(b) In my opinion the most powerful argument against woman's suffrage is undoubtedly the present-day condition of Parliamentarism, resultant on man's suffrage.

3. I am strongly in favour of militant methods. They are simply the repetition of the street conflicts by which Europe obtained the blessing of Parliamentarism, less than a hundred years ago.

4. I would suggest every other form of forcible appeal and intelligent argument, but not as an alternative.

MR. JOSEPH McCABE.

1. (a) The most powerful argument that I know in favour of women suffrage is that not a single political theorist has ever laid down a basis of right to the suffrage which does not extend to women, if they care to claim it, nor can I imagine any basis. The payment of taxes never was recognised as a basis by political philosophers, and has lost all meaning as a rough educational test since the giving of free education.

(b) I know no argument against women suffrage that can be described as powerful.

2. I see no reasonable prospect of obtaining women's suffrage under any Ministry presided over by Mr. Asquith, and fear it is far off. It will not be given until the giving is proved to be an advantage to the party that gives it, or they are induced to think so.

3. The militant methods—by which I understand the use of violence—were, in my opinion, most valuable until a year or two ago in calling attention to the movement through the Press. Now they have ceased to help, and are an excuse to many to go back on their admission of the justice of woman's suffrage.

4. I hesitate to take owls to Athens, but think the incomparably best method is for women, especially Liberals, to refuse entirely to lend a finger to the men, at election or other times, and to maintain their educational propaganda in spite of the disgusting action of the House of Commons.

MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

1. (a) I am and have long been a firm believer in the importance and the justice of the claim for woman's suffrage on the same terms as the suffrage now given in these countries to men. I think that the strongest argument in its favour is that while a woman is held to be responsible to the same system of legislation as that which governs men she ought to be accorded the same right of voting for or against the passing of those laws as that which is given to the male sex.

2. I can only say that as this is the new Parliament, I think there is a possibility of its passing woman's suffrage, but I could not say that in my opinion there is any great likelihood of such legislation being so soon accomplished.

3. The militant methods have, in my opinion, failed, and deservedly failed, because they seemed to many observers in both sexes utterly unsuited to the conduct of so important a political controversy.

4. I would suggest calm, deliberate, and thoughtful exposition of argument in support of the claims of woman's suffrage.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN.

1. (a) The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is that as women are taxpayers, and in the main as intelligent as men, as well as the chief administrators of the family life of the country, they have every right to demand direct political representation.

(b) The most powerful argument against it is simply that of sex. The natural instinct of a man being to dominate, and that of a woman to rely upon his strength and power.

This argument is, however, weakened by the fact that a great number of women are compelled by economic and other causes to lead lives of complete independence, or perhaps, to put it more correctly, of dependence on their own unaided industry. Even wives have no direct legal claim against their husbands for support.

2. There is every prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the Reform Bill to which the Government are pledged in this Parliament, but there is no reasonable prospect of obtaining it immediately.

3. The militant methods, in my opinion, have advertised the question enormously in the Press, and as they have been directed against a Liberal Government, have enlisted the sympathy of the wealthy and Conservative classes. Probably, however, they have alienated large numbers of middle-class Liberals.

4. The alternative methods I would suggest would be persistent agitation without resort to methods of physical force, which are, and must be, repugnant to the public generally.

THE RIGHT REV. ARNOLD HARRIS MATHEW, D.D.

1. That women are men's equals (not their inferiors), and should therefore possess equal rights, since they bear the same responsibilities as men in matters of taxation, etc.

2. I think the present Parliament will yield only to compulsion in this respect. If the chivalry of the Irish members is aroused, they can obtain votes for women at once.

3. The militant methods fill me with mingled anguish and admiration. I am ashamed at the brutality of men in their conduct towards their female political opponents. Men who can under any circumstances maltreat women are cowards and ruffians. They are not followers of Him Who chose to become the obedient Son of a lowly Maiden. For that Maiden's sake every woman should be a sacred being, an object of man's protection and tender care. Even those women who disgrace their sex do not forfeit the sacredness which attaches to them as the sisters of that Blessed Maid through whom the Redeemer of mankind was given to the world. The militant methods have shown us that women are more courageous than men, and that if heroism is to win the day success is theirs.

4. I cannot suggest any alternative to militant methods while men are so pig-headed that they prefer to be driven instead of led to do their duty.

C. MANSELL MOULLIN, M.D., F.R.C.S., Vice-President
College of Surgeons.

1. Where all arguments are equally powerful it is difficult to select the most powerful. The one I think that appeals to me the most is the undoubted fact that the influence of women as a body has always been, and I believe always will be, exerted on the side of morality, temperance, and justice. It is so in our Colonies, and it will be so here. Another argument, scarcely less strong, is the injustice of taxation without representation. This was a good old Liberal war-cry in times gone by, and has done mighty service in the cause of Liberalism. It is as true now as it was then, when it was used in the cause of working men. But the injustice of our present method of legislation is the most powerful argument of all. All our laws have been made by men, and quite unintentionally, I admit, have been made in men's own interests. Many of those laws are grossly unjust to women—for example, the law that a woman may not be the guardian of her own child, unless she is unmarried. None of them ever take into consideration the woman's point of view. Parliament has altered its scope of late years. It no longer confines itself to voting supplies for the King and the King's forces. It deals with the most minute details of home and home life—matters upon which men are quite incompetent to legislate. To take but one instance, the laws affecting children. Would women, had they had a vote, have countenanced the sin of child-labour in our factories, which so many seemingly conscientious men upheld? Would they countenance half-timers now? Are men proud of their Education Bills, which have wrecked the reputation of so many of our Ministers? What do men know of the feeding or clothing of necessitous children, upon which they legislate so lightly? Of the mortality of babies in workhouses? Of the working of the Midwives Act? And of a hundred other similar questions that come before Parliament every session? Either Parliament should let these things severely alone, or the opinion of those who alone are competent to deal with them should be sought in the only constitutional way.

(b) Of arguments against women's suffrage, I have never heard but one—that men always have been the masters of women, using them as they would, and therefore always should be.

2. There is every prospect of obtaining women's suffrage in the present Parliament, and immediately. Wherever I go, into whatever part of the country, into whatever social stratum, it is recognised as a fact that the enfranchisement of women is the burning question of the day. It has even displaced the veto of the House of Lords, as Ministers have found out for themselves. It cannot any longer be neglected.

3. Whether militant methods have succeeded or failed can be easily judged. For upwards of forty years the cause of the emancipation of women made absolutely no progress, and was treated with ridicule. In the last five, since militant methods were adopted, it has forced its way through the most unprincipled opposition, until now it stands in the front of everything. Militant measures are necessary. Rightly or wrongly, the British public never believes in a cause for which the supporters are not ready to give up everything else—and this the militant suffragettes have done and are doing, even to the extent of giving up their lives.

4. There is no alternative method.

DR. MAX NORDAU (Paris).

1. I see no argument whatever, whether powerful or feeble, against woman's suffrage. Her present disfranchisement is not an argument, but a brutal fact. To declare her intellectually incapable of exercising political rights is not an argument, but an impertinence.

(a) The strongest arguments in favour of woman's suffrage seem to me to be the following:—

Woman pays all the taxes, bears the burden of all the laws, and shares all the fates of the Empire, exactly as does her masculine fellow-subject. She is therefore, in logic and justice, entitled to an equal share with him in the voting of the taxes, the giving of the laws, and the preparing of the destinies of the Empire. We credit her already with the capacity of ruling the small commonwealth of the family, and of shaping the future of the nation by the education she gives to her children; there is no reason for denying her the faculty of managing the public affairs which are now subject to the influence of voters who may be drunkards, prodigals, blockheads, or ignorant fools.

3. The violences committed by the "suffragettes" are coarse, stupid, and thoroughly inefficient. They offend good taste and create resistance in quarters where otherwise the opinions may incline towards favouring the emancipatory tendencies.

Surely, most of the rabid "suffragettes" must have fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, or other masculine relatives or friends. Let them bear their influence upon these men and determine them to fight the battle for woman's right with the usual correct weapons—with their vote on polling days, with their voice or pen on other occasions. If they are incapable of converting to their ideas the men of their own circle, they have no chance, for the hour, of winning strangers.

MR. C. H. NORMAN.

1. (b) The principle of democratic government being that the people should initiate control and enforce legislation, women are debarred from the franchise in that they cannot enforce legislation without the aid or consent of men; whereas men, broadly speaking, do not need the assistance of women in giving effect to their legislative functions. That is the fundamental difference between the male and female units in a democratic State. The present laws regulating the economic status of men and women are so draconic in their operation against men that it would be economic madness to enfranchise women under present conditions.

2. I should say not. Democratic government rests upon the consent of the majority of the people to legislative measures. There is no evidence that the electorate has given a mandate to the present Government to carry woman's suffrage. The trifling polls obtained by woman's suffrage candidates are some evidence, though not conclusive, that any extension of the franchise to women would be against the will of the people. In any case, the issue has not been specifically put to the people except by isolated candidatures, which have resulted most disastrously for the protagonists of woman's suffrage.

3. The militant tactics were successful up to a point; but when the people were convinced that attacks upon individuals, accompanied by deliberate infringements of the rights of public meeting, were being used to harass members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers into passing a legislative measure of far-reaching importance, public opinion supported the Government, and the advantage gained by the original militant tactics was partially lost. It may be pointed out that as any minority of persons could enforce their views on the majority if the militant tactics were successful, the Government was bound, as representing the majority for the time being, to resist any attempt to pass a franchise

measure. Militant tactics should only be resorted to when a minority is resisting the clearly expressed demand of the majority.

4. The usual methods by which minorities seek to convert majorities to their ideas or proposals.

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD.

1. (a) To me the most powerful argument in favour of woman's suffrage is the inherent rightness of it. The government of any country should be in the hands of the intelligent and honest members of that community. Intelligence and honesty, therefore, should be the criteria for determining the *jus suffragii*. At one time "sex," like "the possession of property," may have been a fairly accurate thumb rule as to the possession of cultured intelligence, but to-day neither the one nor the other has any practical value in the presence of the more or less general education of all classes and both sexes. "Sex," therefore, is an archaic and valueless distinction, and the moment any member of a community attains to a required standard of intelligence and honesty it is indecent to make any enquiry as to sex. A woman to-day, *qua* member of the community, has as much *prima facie* right to a vote as a man has.

(b) To me the most powerful argument against woman's suffrage is that it would tend to drag the more idealistic half of the community into that sordid, dishonest, corrupt, uncharitable atmosphere which is inseparably connected with party politics. I do not think that the advent of large numbers of women into the arena of vote getting and vote influencing will benefit the political probity of the people, but I do think that it will injure the character of women as a whole. Just as I look upon a body of legislators like the House of Lords as an asset of exceptional value, because they are outside the spirit of party elections, so, too, I look upon the possession by the nation of a great body of intelligent women, removed from the evil influences connected with voting, and the insane party spirit engendered by it, as of inestimable value to the beauty and saneness of the land, and as a great residuary force making towards stability and decency.

2. I do not think there is an immediate prospect of woman's suffrage being obtained, but I am satisfied that it will be obtained before another decade is passed, and then everyone will try to lay upon the other party the blame for not obtaining it long ago!

3. I think the militant method has been the only one which has brought woman's suffrage within the range of success. Up to the time that militancy was adopted the whole subject was academic, and since "justice" is a plea of but little value in dealing with the House of Commons, women might have waited until doomsday had they tried to win suffrage on the ground that it was "right." The Boers won South Africa because they fought the English. Had they copied the attitude of the Babus of India and pleaded the justice of their claims Capel Court would rule in Johannesburg to-day. "The kingdom of heaven" was said to be "won by violence," and who believes that John Burns would be a Cabinet Minister had he not fought fights in Trafalgar Square years ago? M.P.'s will only take interest in the burning questions which are in people's mouths, and therefore the women who wanted the vote were obliged to resort to the only weapon understood by the House of Commons—namely violence and publicity and advertisement. It is truly a disgraceful sight to see women struggling in the streets with policemen, but the disgrace is to the England of the 20th century that such things are necessary in order to obtain a hearing and a sufficient momentum to get a Bill through the House.

4. I see no alternative to the present action, viz., two great organisations. The one militant, and aggressively militant, and following the line of Napoleon's dicta, and opposing obstinacy and inertness by big battalions of enthusiasm and force, until a promise is obtained. The other teaching and persuading and winning over the great body of respectable middle-class minds to the rightness of woman's suffrage and to the grievances and hardships which women have to endure because they have no political power. The only alternative I can suggest is that the militants become more grandly and imposingly and impressively militant, and avoid all tactics which savour of the Bashi Bazouk, and that the non-militant go on their own way, but cease to carp at or criticise that portion of their army which has produced the greatest number of martyrs, and which has borne the burden of the soldier for a great cause.

MR. EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

Woman's suffrage is happily a certainty at no very distant date. The line pursued by those fighting the battle will no doubt delay the victory somewhat, and the anti-Liberal attitude of the propagandists is to be deplored; but with increase of knowledge we may trust that the generation

actually destined to receive the vote will not only use it, but use it on the side of progress. The resolute battle of the women against Liberalism during the recent General Election argued a lack of perspective, a lack of instinct, and a confusion of principle that distressed me to observe; for it has given the anti-feminists an argument capable of potent application.

MR. EDWIN PUGH.

1. I am not young enough to know a great deal about women, but it does seem to me that the majority of them are either reactionaries or revolutionaries. So, I would not give them the vote, because they are reactionaries. But I would give them the vote, because they are revolutionaries. There are, however, no logical, but only partisan arguments against woman's suffrage.

2. I think there is no least prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament, since the Government is a Liberal Government, and a Liberal Government stands for compromise. Women, being either reactionaries or revolutionists, have no use for compromises, and Mr. Asquith is shrewd politician enough to know that, as practically all the women's votes would be given either to Conservatism or Socialism, to grant woman's suffrage would be to destroy the power of his party for ever.

3. The militant methods have failed, I think, because they have alienated public sympathy. It is impossible for men and women to wage physical warfare against one another upon equal terms. The women are favoured by their weakness, whilst the men are handicapped by their strength. The police are either unjustly condemned or unjustly excused. Fair play for both sides is impossible. And the public likes to see fair play.

Alternative methods should not be "suggested," but expounded. And you could not give me enough space—even if I had time or the impudence—to expound mine.

I would like to add that, in my opinion, what is wanted is Universal Adult Suffrage. One person, one vote. I would let paupers and criminals vote. As the greatest sufferers under our social system their points of view should be illuminative. But I would not let anyone vote who was under 25 years old, or who could be proved—by a few simple questions such as everyone has to answer when applying for any kind of trading license—to know nothing whatever about politics.

MR. ALFRED E. RANDALL.

1. In reply to your first question, the most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is, in my opinion, the fact that women have not the right to vote. This is also, in a country like England, the most powerful argument against it; for it is clear that if women have been able to improve their status, to increase their power, and to enlarge the sphere of their activity without the vote, then the vote is not necessary to their welfare or progress. Its value, which is the only thing I care about, is nil. It will not increase the representation of women in Parliament, for it will add nothing to the abilities of the members returned. It will simply increase the numbers of the poll, and add to the work of the returning officers and scrutineers. The extension of the franchise to women may, by registering a greater number of votes, give greater confidence to the Government; for the will of the people, as the phrase goes, will be more accurately ascertained. But as the introduction of legislation is practically the prerogative of the Cabinet, and it is a statesman's business to get the country to allow him to do as he likes, it offers no guarantee of better government or of the removal of practical disabilities from which the sex undoubtedly suffers.

2. I do not think that there is any hope of passing a bill for the enfranchisement of women in the present Parliament. The House of Lords and Home Rule will provide enough work for the next two sessions; and the Liberal Party will probably have to make another bid for popularity with another so-called Socialist Budget before it appeals to the people again.

3. The militant methods have failed. To continue to shock people is impossible; they become accustomed to it, or protect themselves from it. Violence must succeed at once, or fail. The militant suffragists have been too violent to have their claims reasonably considered, and not violent enough to enforce them. To continue to riot is not only ridiculous, but dangerous; for the mob is no longer to be diverted by their stupid antics.

4. If, as I suppose, women wish to share in the government of the country, they would be more profitably employed in developing a party organisation and selecting and supporting their own candidates. Not that they should be woman's suffrage candidates; the ghastly failure of Herbert Jacobs and Mirrilees should be sufficient warning. But men should be chosen who can commend themselves to the electors in ordinary political matters, and yet are in sympathy with the

peculiar aspirations of women. In representative Government, to change the members is to reform the House. To make every Government a coalition Government, to increase the parties of which the coalition is composed, is the only hope of getting a given body of opinion effectively represented. To cry for the vote is futile if women want political power; to obtain political power organisation, independent candidates, and control of the electorate are necessary. If the vote were then needed, it could be had for the asking.

MR. WILL REASON, M.A.

1. The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is, in my opinion, the fact that the nation needs it. The social problems that have to be solved concern women, and especially need the expression of the woman's point of view. This rests upon the truth that "woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse," not upon any fancied "equality" in particular ways. There is a question of right, but the nation's need is supreme.

2. I do not think there is any reasonable prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament, if it be taken by itself. Very many will vote for the principle, even when embodied in the so-called Conciliation Bill, so long as they know that that form of it will not be proceeded with. This was shown in the voting last session; the great majority were against giving that particular Bill the facilities necessary to become law. But if a general revision of the franchise takes place, I believe that women will find their place on the register. The Conciliation Bill opens the door to the creation of qualifications of wealth, and excludes the great majority of married women. It is the voice of these that is most required; any satisfactory solution must bring in the mothers of the nation. Those who do men's work are not so imperatively needed in the national councils.

3. The militant methods may have attracted some, but they have repelled vast numbers of others, including many women who were before eager for the vote. These methods also have had a most disastrous effect upon the militants themselves, blunting their sense of fairness and truth, and destroying their sense of humour. Many of them simply cannot recognise facts, and their arguments fail to convince because of their lack of consistency and proportion. This applies to both sexes in the movement.

4. I think the older methods of real argument and persuasion were making great headway, as shown by the majority of Members of Parliament who were in favour of woman's suffrage before the militant methods were begun. I consider that we should have had a much fairer and more thorough franchise for men had some of the earlier extensions not been sought by violent procedure. What men give through fear they seek to make useless by craft; there have been many pebbles put into the electoral machine in this way, whereas a really convinced majority seeks to make the machine as workable as possible.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON, M.P.

1. (a) Strongest argument for woman's suffrage: The admitted moral and legal equality of the sexes in all other respects, and the general use of women's help in political work.

Best answer to this: Present practice a *good division of labour*. *Rebuttal to that:* The vote cannot rationally be called a form of *labour* for which women are unfitted.

(b) Strongest argument *against* woman's suffrage: That the inevitable rancour of political strife will bring men and women into new and unhappy *hostile relations*.

Answer: Such hostile relations already exist—the worst instance being that set up by the *demand* for the vote. Once it is given, there will be *less* bad feeling; and in any case no more than subsists in respect of the present general political activities of women. Further, their action in politics may tend to *soften* the rancours of men.

2. Not immediately, so far as I can see. The Lords would certainly not pass a Bill. If plural voting is first dealt with, woman's suffrage might follow. But there is much to be said for taking that with a *general* franchise reform.

3. Obviously they have failed, in terms of their avowed purpose—*immediate* legislation.

4. The methods of all rational political causes. *If brawling is good for this cause, why not for all?* The first brawl in the gallery of the House prevented a closure and a vote, and at once set up new activities of opposition. Militancy has doubtless won *new support*, in view of many women's excitability; but the *new resistance* is in the same ratio.

MR. ROBERT ROSS.

1. (a) Every class of the community has the right (in a philosophic sense) to obtain what it requires: the right that belongs to every individual (whether it is good or bad for him or her), so far as the exercise of such right does not cause

pain, annoyance or discomfort to any considerable majority or minority of that community. I have never been convinced that allowing women to exercise the vote would inflict any pain, annoyance or discomfort on anyone. If women were eventually permitted to sit in Parliament, they could only be a source of possible discomfort to the male members of Parliament, an insignificant minority of the community not worth considering. They could not possibly, if they wanted, do more harm than an Imperial or Tariff Reform Government. Nor could women's votes be exercised more foolishly than those of men are already.

(b) The large majority among women are, I believe, against the suffrage. It must be recognised that woman with a large "W" will lose many of the prerogatives she now enjoys—among other things, precedence; (in a shipwreck, for example). She must tend to become unsexed and unattractive to males; this is already noticeable among the upper middle classes, from whom suffragettes and suffragists are chiefly drawn. It will be the suicide of femininity. It is certainly noteworthy that the sons of women who are concerned in the suffrage movement are liable to be sexual inverters. I know of fourteen cases myself. At present there are, of course, no scientific statistics possible on such a subject. But the point is worth considering. Men and women of wider experience than mine have admitted the phenomenon to me when I have made observations on the subject, and have quoted a larger number of cases than I can do. Whether this is really an argument against woman's suffrage or not is entirely for women to decide.

2. So far as I can judge there is no prospect of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament, or even in the near future. I should be willing to bet. I do not know.

3. The militant methods have succeeded, but they have created a very hostile feeling among those who were waverers; the cause has certainly suffered in an academic sense. Women would have got more (when they get anything) if they had abstained from childish outrages.

4. Instead of reforming or abolishing the present admirable House of Peers—the most valuable asset in our whole constitution—I would suggest the formation of a Third Chamber—a House of Women Representatives. It would consist entirely of women elected by adult women, married or single, who chose to exercise their votes. There would be no restrictions about latch-keys or property or prostitution.

In a short space it is impossible to do more than sketch the functions of this Third Chamber. It would be allowed to legislate on all matters relating to women and to female children, but not to *male* children. The Government would go in and out according to the position of parties, and irrespective of what Government was in power at Westminster. There could be as many general elections as the Chamber demanded. With regard to legislation; when an Act had passed its third reading there would lie with the Government of the Third Chamber the responsibility of choosing to which of the two Houses (the Lords or Commons) it would send up the Bill. The choice being made, the Act amended or passed by either Lords or Commons would become the Law of England. No Act would have to pass both Lords and Commons. The scope of legislation in this Third Chamber might be modified as time went on. But at present there would be no prerogative to interfere or express an opinion on foreign policy or the Budget. Where some piece of proposed legislation interfered with the liberties or well-being of men, there would have to be some adjustment, and it would be understood that the Westminster Parliament refrained as far as possible from introducing on its own account legislation which affected favourably or unfavourably the condition and status of women. The Divorce Laws would be one important point—hardly less important than the Marriage Laws—on which the Westminster Parliament would have to meet the Third Chamber amicably. There are other and obvious questions into which I need not enter. In the course of, say, fifteen years, if the Third Chamber showed itself worthy or capable of its august prerogatives, it might be given further powers, and be called into the nation's councils with regard to foreign and financial policy. The Anglican Church, while it remained an endowed and established Church, would still be immune from any legislation of the Third Chamber. And the cloistered nuns of the Catholic Church would also claim privilege and immunity from any laws imposed by the Third Chamber.

The ladies' colleges of Oxford and Cambridge must be suppressed as part of the price for a Third Chamber. They now produce an enervating effect on both undergraduates and dons, and have vitiated the value of a University education for men. In the future, with increasing powers of the Third Chamber, they would be bases and sources of danger. They have already introduced a spirit alien to the wishes and testaments of University benefactors. Westminster should, however, found and endow a university for women elsewhere.

With three Chambers watching our destinies, and quarrel-

ling among themselves, the Shaw-fearing and peaceful citizen might pursue the even tenor of his way unmolested, or, at least, less molested, by the quackeries of an Imperial Yellow Press; undeafened by the tin-kettle drums of Navy scare-crows; and the mixed metaphors of disreputable and discredited Sunday papers.

MR. FRANK RUTTER.

1. (a) Because "nowhere on earth can the interests of women and children be safeguarded where Parliament is not equally responsible to women as well as men."

2. Yes, if those members of Parliament who profess to be in favour of woman's suffrage put principle before party and resolutely decline to support the Government until time is found for all the stages in the Lower House of a Bill enfranchising women. The Conciliation Committee has two-thirds of the House in favour of its Bill, and if these members, irrespective of party, are determined that the will of the House of Commons shall prevail in this matter, woman's suffrage could be obtained within six weeks of the opening of Parliament.

3. Five years of "militant methods" have advanced the cause infinitely further than fifty years of tame peaceable propaganda. So long as women merely debate the question academically men will only take an academic interest. "Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow;" and when women show themselves prepared to run grave risks and make great sacrifices for their cause, they prove themselves to be sufficiently in earnest to secure the co-operation of earnest men. The weaker brethren, who excuse their own inaction on the plea that militant methods have weakened their faith in woman's suffrage, may be profitably reminded of Lord Morley's saying: "No reformer is fit for his task who shrinks from the excesses of his extreme wing."

4. Militant methods were not employed till all other forms of constitutional agitation had been tried (since 1867) and found to be of no avail. I can suggest no alternative milder methods and can point to no other successful methods of agitation except those used some years ago by the Irish.

MR. HENRY H. SCHLOESSER (Barrister-at-Law,
Lecturer on Public Administration at the
London School of Economics).

1. (a) The argument for woman's suffrage is the argument for democracy, namely, that progressive government can only attain its fullest results when the governed are, through the medium of their elected representatives, participators in the government, benefiting or suffering through their own acts and by their own desires.

Since women must necessarily gain or lose as much as men according to the value of the government which rules them, they are equally entitled to a share in choosing their governors and their laws.

(b) The arguments against the enfranchisement of women are firstly those which are employed against democracy, and secondly those which say that women are incompetent to choose legislators.

As, however, when democracy is recognised as the only possible form of healthy administration, in that it is educative—just as the less competent men must be allowed to take their share and learn from their mistakes, so also women (if they are less competent—a highly disputable question) must become responsible participators. In this way only, by enfranchising every adult citizen of either sex, can the government represent the resultant opinion of the whole community. In this way only, by the necessity for political action, can the latent political faculties of the citizens be strengthened and made effective.

2. I am not in a position to say, but I should think not. The best chance is to avoid emphasising the women's aspect of the question, to drop such measures as the "Conciliation" Bill, and to introduce one generous Reform Bill, giving the franchise to all men and women alike, on the lines indicated by the Bill which we have just drafted for the Fabian Society—the Twentieth Century Reform Bill.

3. It is difficult to say what methods have been most successful. Some of the women's actions, such as the petitioning, have been perfectly legitimate, others have been more anarchic. We must not forget that subjectively every person who is not a law maker is justified in acting as a law breaker. Whether such a policy, however, is politic in this legal-minded country is another question. I should imagine that all kinds of methods might proceed harmoniously together. Being a lawyer, by own prejudice is on the side of order, but I realise the women's grievances.

4. Vote Labour: The Labour Party is the only one that is sincere in this matter, and if women really desire the vote as democrats, and not to protect their property only, they should all concentrate on this. Join the Labour Party as a body, and

so strengthen it that it can force the Fabian Reform Bill through Parliament; also continue working as at present in the educational field.

MR. CLIFFORD D. SHARP.

1. All the usual arguments for woman's suffrage based on the alleged moral, intellectual, or physical equality of men and women seem to me not only to rest on very controversial, and therefore very shaky, foundations, but to be utterly beside the mark from the democratic point of view. No one supposes that the ordinary unskilled agricultural labourer is actually the intellectual equal of his employer. But in the eyes of the democrat that intellectual difference has not the slightest bearing on the claims of either party to a vote. Physical or moral comparisons are equally irrelevant. In my opinion there is only one theoretical argument for woman's suffrage that is worth a moment's consideration; but that one is overwhelming and final. Whether, considered broadly as human beings, the average woman is the equal of the average man may be an open question, but whether at present she considers herself his equal is not an open question at all. The convention of the "superior sex," if it be a convention, is one which women cherish far more persistently than men, and for the maintenance, if not for the origin, of which they are chiefly responsible. Just as most agricultural labourers believe in the bottom of their hearts that their masters are really superior beings, so most women believe in the bottom of their hearts that they belong to the inferior sex. Clearly this is in either case a most undesirable state of mind, unless the value of self-respect and intellectual independence as conditions of human progress are very much over-rated. At all events, the best way I know of attacking this convention, whatever its chief bulwarks may be, is to give women political equality; if necessary, to force it upon them. That ought to prove a staggering blow. It will take away from women their last excuse for being the slaves of men, or at all events the last excuse for which men can be held responsible.

I do not believe that the political results of extending the franchise will be appreciable, that women's interests will be better looked after, or anything of that sort, because I cannot conceive of any issue present or future in the sphere of national politics which is likely to divide the sexes as such. Even if such an issue were to arise the possession of votes would not affect the ultimate decision. But I do believe that the social results of the change will be immense, and by securing a healthier equality in the relations of the sexes will prove far more beneficial to society in the long run than those of any other piece of legislation which is likely to be undertaken in our generation.

2. The answer to your second question depends upon what is at best a very doubtful quantity, the value of election pledges given to people who, in case of non-fulfilment, have no power of making their displeasure felt at the next election. The difficulty is that in the present state of opinion amongst men a candidate has probably more to lose than to gain by supporting woman's suffrage. I am inclined to think, however, that if this Parliament survives its normal term a good many women will have votes at the next General Election. But the only certainty is a negative one, that no measure bearing any resemblance to the Conciliation Bill of last session has the remotest chance of becoming law whilst there is a Liberal Government in power. The acceptance of adult suffrage is more likely.

3. If the success of "militant methods" is to be judged by their effect upon the Government or upon the male electorate, I believe they have been a most disastrous failure. But if, as is alleged, they have aroused the interest of women as nothing else could have done it may be that their use has been justified. I am not in a position to estimate the nett result.

4. I have nothing to suggest except that the suffrage societies should concentrate their propagandist efforts on the conversion of women and leave men alone. When it becomes plain that a really large proportion of women actively desire votes there will be no more difficulty about their getting them. It will be time enough afterwards to persuade the majority of men of the reasonableness of the accomplished fact. The most urgent need is for the political education of the women of this country, and I would suggest that the delay which is trying so severely the patience of the suffrage societies has possibly its compensations. The Act which extends the franchise to women will also bring about the suspension of a great deal of very valuable activity.

MR. S. J. D. SHAW.

1. The necessity for woman's suffrage is shown in the extreme difficulty that exists in getting women's questions discussed in Parliament.

Those who have been concerned in extending the municipal franchise to women and in legalising the appointment of women to posts in Local Government know how often the Bills have been, and still are, delayed by not being able to secure a place for them in the ballot. All private members' Bills are taken in the order in which they obtain a place in the ballot. When a Bill has been adopted by a member of Parliament, and is "backed" by the requisite number of members it cannot be brought forward until it secures a place in the ballot, and the almost invariable answer to the request for a place in the ballot is that every member has to place first the Bills of his constituents. Women are not constituents, and therefore their Bills can be and are laid aside.

2. Of the prospects in the present Parliament it is impossible to judge, but that is no reason for ceasing to work, but rather the contrary.

3. The militant methods were in the early stages of much value, as without them the question would not have received the attention which it now attracts from all parties. That the militant methods have been carried too far and should cease altogether is my own opinion.

4. The constitutional methods of holding meetings, promoting petitions, speaking on every occasion that offers in favour of the suffrage, and supporting Parliamentary candidates who are in favour of and will work for a Bill to extend the suffrage to women.

DR. GILBERT SLATER.

1. (a) The most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is, I think, the change that is proceeding in the functions of the State. Originally a military organ, the State is on the point of becoming the nerve centre through which the nation's collective thought and will is translated into action, and its function is no longer to seize territories for exploitation by a parasitic governing class, but to shape a fit environment for future generations. With regard to home affairs this is quite obvious; but even in foreign affairs sensible people see quite clearly that the great task of the State is to secure peace and international good feeling. The work the State did in the eighteenth century was man's work. For the much finer work now in hand women's assistance is essential. As long as the State denies women citizenship it is doing its work with one hand, perhaps the right hand, tied behind its back.

(b) Perhaps the powerful argument against women's suffrage is the half recognised fact that to give women the vote is to give them greater power in the decisions of society on the established ethics of sexual relationships and the laws relating thereto. That, I fancy, is what is in the background of the minds of those who say that women electors, being in a majority, might decree laws against which men would revolt. But rightly considered, this is the most important reason for woman's suffrage. The importance of any one generation of human beings consists mainly in the fact that it is the soil from which all future generations must spring. Now that parentage is being so generally removed from the sphere of control of instinct into that of deliberate choice, it is essential that a great deal of serious study should be given to the ethics of sexual and reproductive actions; and the thinking must be done by women, and from the mother's point of view at least as much as from the man's point of view. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that for the future of the race it is necessary that women's sense of what is right in these matters should prevail.

2. I should think that there must be an excellent prospect of the passing of a Woman's Suffrage Act in this Parliament, but practically no chance of its passing in the present year—not that my opinion is worth anything on this point.

3. On the whole the militants, in my opinion, have done a great work, but while some of their methods have been well chosen, others, I think, have been grievous mistakes.

(a) Heckling Ministers I consider perfectly fair and expedient. I think it might be extended more to other members. Since the great majority of members of Parliament are pledged to woman's suffrage, heckling is like dunning for the payment of an acknowledged debt.

(b) Peaceful picketing of the Houses of Parliament I consider most effective.

(c) By-election work I consider very effective; action in the General Election except on the old lines adopted by the N.U.W.S.S. is of doubtful value.

(d) Stone-throwing I consider a very great mistake. At the very beginning Mrs. Pethick Lawrence declared that the W.S.P.U. tactics were to suffer, not to commit violence. This policy, in my opinion, should have been adhered to without the slightest deviation.

(e) I consider that one blunder of extreme importance was made on the occasion when the W.S.P.U. refused to allow Mr. Lloyd George to address the Liberal women on the suffrage question without interruption. They should have

stipulated instead for a few minutes to reply, and should have appealed to Liberal women to insist on the Liberal Party taking up the suffrage. The Liberal women were then, as they will often be, the key to the situation. How Mr. Asquith must have chuckled to see the W.S.P.U. handing it over to the anti's! That one blunder, in my opinion, undid almost all the good the militants had done up to that point.

(f) I consider that the hunger strike, especially as carried out by Lady Constance Lytton, has been extremely effective.

4. Women's suffrage, in my opinion, except for the observation of the fundamental principle, "Suffer, but do not commit violence," should be as elastic as possible. I think the time is now come for more co-operation, even in tactics, between the militants, the non-militants, and the Parliamentary friends of the movement: Battles are not won by the army of which the infantry, cavalry and artillery each act on their own, and in occasional skirmishes against one another. And yet the various wings must reserve their separate freedom of initiative. The sort of combination to be aimed at is that of a good football team.

MR. HAROLD SPENDER.

1. In my opinion the most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is that, in spite of the undoubted difference between the moral and intellectual powers of the two sexes, there can be no permanent justification for the political subjection of either. As long as women were brought up in seclusion, and debarred from the intellectual privileges given to men, there was a strong practical case for their exclusion from the suffrage. One injustice bred the necessity for another. But now that women are obtaining almost equal opportunities in education, and are being received on equal terms in most of the activities of life, the case for exclusion from the suffrage is rapidly and progressively diminishing. In fact, their participation in the labour and perils of modern life creates a claim to the suffrage which is every year increasing in power.

2. I do not think that it is beyond hope that women should obtain the suffrage in the present Parliament, if the House of Commons should succeed in achieving its claim to predominance in the State. But if this claim were not achieved, I think it is certain that the House of Lords would attempt to recover its popularity by throwing out any Womens Suffrage Bill. Such an Act would undoubtedly produce a state of political confusion, and would obscure all present political issues.

3. I think that the militant methods were, to some extent, justified during the early months of the 1906 Parliament, in view of the way in which the women's cause had been treated by previous Parliaments. But I think that, once the women's cause had begun to receive serious attention, those militant methods became a serious impediment to the progress of the cause, and have been so ever since. They have created a feeling among men that women are enamoured of violence, and that to extend the suffrage to them would be to introduce a new and disturbing element into politics. I believe that during the last two years the militant methods have been seriously and continuously putting back the cause of woman's suffrage.

4. The alternative methods that I would suggest now would be the normal employment of political persuasion, agitation, and pressure in all its proper developments. The advocates of woman's suffrage are probably wise not to identify themselves with any one party in the State, unless they can obtain from that party a pledge to their cause, but I cannot imagine anything more unwise than the deliberate alienation and estrangement of the main progressive movement which is involved in the present policy of opposing all Liberal candidates at the polls. The division on woman's suffrage in the House of Commons in 1910 revealed the fact that the rank and file of the Tory Party are more opposed to woman's suffrage than the rank and file of the Liberal Party. The dream, therefore, of achieving woman's suffrage through the Tory Party may be put aside once and for all. The hope for the present should be to unite the progressive forces on a broad policy of wide enfranchisement, both for men and for women. That policy, if pursued with energy and wisdom, will, I firmly believe, end in success.

MR. H. Y. STANGER, B.A., K.C (Recorder of Birkenhead).

I have always from the very first condemned and deplored the so-called "militant tactics" as wholly wrong and indefensible from every point of view.

MR. W. T. STEAD.

1. That women are believed to possess immortal souls.
2. Not immediately, but possibly in three years.

3. They succeeded in compelling attention; but the breach having been made in the fortress, other methods should now be employed.

4. The method of going baldheaded for the candidate who supports the cause and against the candidate who opposes it.

MRS. CHARLOTTE C. STOPES.

1. Take all the arguments for giving the vote to men, and you can apply them with added force to giving the vote to women. Men need the vote because it is a protection to them, women need it more, because they have more need of protection. More defenceless by nature, they are made more so by artificial restrictions. Greater difficulties are thrown in their way in regard to earning money, fame or position; they have more powerful enemies, more open and more insidious dangers, and "the laws are partial against women's side."

Men need the vote because it gives them power; power to annul or to modify laws that press hardly on themselves in any way; power for the inception of new ideas of improvement for others, power to help the party which helps them. Women are helpless to remedy the much more serious wrongs that affect them. It is mockery to talk of influence. The women who need it most have none. Until we have the vote there is no chance of our securing fair-play, and that is all any of us ask. Boys are taught at school to give fair-play to their fellows, even to the younger and weaker ones. Why are they not told to give fair-play to their sisters? We are better off now than we were, because the universities have been opened to us, and our mental powers have been developed. It is significant that a large proportion of university women are keen suffragists, and also of those who work in any way for social welfare. These have recognised the relations of cause and effect, and know that no permanent reform can take place in the condition of the poor, until women are enfranchised. The women who work for this have high aims and high ideals. They demand justice and freedom.

"There is but one thing needed in the world," said Carlyle, "but that one thing is indispensable, Justice; justice in the name of Heaven; give us justice and we live, give us only counterfeits of it and we die!" Our opponent, "The Daily Mail," quoted this passage in its issue of January 7, little realising it voiced so clearly the cry of the women suffragists. Freedom is a part of, or a consequence of, justice. We want freedom to develop our individuality, to perform our duty, to fulfil our responsibility. The national song, "Britons never shall be slaves," is a mockery to every woman who understands, because she knows that though born a Briton, by the accident of sex she is born a slave. That is, one who is forced to obey laws which she has had no voice in making; one who is forced to pay, not the taxes of a free people, but the tribute of a conquered and subject race; yet we know that Magna Charta secured justice to all, to women as well as to men. We know that since 25 Ed. I. it has been unconstitutional to tax any without the consent of their representatives; that in the reign of Henry III. it was decreed that these representatives should be chosen by all who had to pay. Ever since his time the name for a chooser had been written in the common gender, until 1832, when in the great reform bill of the Liberals, the word "male" was interpolated before "persons." Eighteen years after, Lord Brougham's Act settled that "man" should always include "woman," except where otherwise expressly stated. The second Reform Act of 1867 used the term "man," which included woman, as it was not otherwise expressly stated. The judges in the case of Chorlton v. Lings, 1868, denied that the word "man" ever included woman in public office, showing their ignorance of constitutional history and public records. The Interpretation Act of 1889 upheld Lord Brougham's statute and his reading in every act passed since 1850, and thus includes the Representation of the People Acts of 1867 and 1884. Women have lost many freedoms through the deficiency of the English language in not having a word to express "homo" as distinguished from "vir." The White-book of the City of London says, "And the freeman, when she is a woman, shall have no excuse." It remained for the lawyers of the nineteenth century to define the word "man" as including women whenever a penalty was imposed, and never including women when a privilege was conferred. We want our vote as equivalent for our taxes.

(b) There is no argument against the enfranchisement of women. Opinions there are many, founded variously on (1) savagery, (2) sentimentality, (3) selfishness, (4) ignorance of the question, and (5) inertia. (1) To the savage might is right, force is justice. Some anti's insist that even in civilised times brute force ought to dominate, though the definition of civilisation is the substitution of moral force for physical force. In this country, at least, the Army is a voluntary profession. The men who talk loudest as to the sacred rights of physical force take care not to enter

it. The only consistent anti I ever met was a lame man. "Oh, yes, I know that there are delicate, diseased, stunted, and old men. There are crippled and maimed men more helpless than many women. I would disfranchise the lot, including myself, because I cannot fight." (2) Sentimental persons of both sexes say, "I do not like the notion of women voting. Nice women are better in a glass case than in a polling-booth. Anywhere they may use their influence. As to other women, who have no influence, and many needs, we are too susceptible to think of them, so we shall not mention them." (3) Selfish anti's, generally men (though not always so) say, I am not going to share my privileges with a horde of women! They would swamp my opinions, belittle my arguments, and I am sure they would vote for the other party." (4) Ignorance of the question is the general cause of the opposition of feminine anti's, which may be illustrated at every anti-suffrage meeting. (5) Beyond that may be added the power of inertia. "Whatever is, is right." "We are very well off as we are," etc. "Let well alone." But what if it is not well? "Still let it alone!" Those dominated by inertia agree with the others that the possession of a vote would unsex women. Would it really do them any more harm to put a cross against the name of a candidate for Parliament, than to put one for a candidate for a borough council, or to write a whole shilling telegram? And would it do them the tith of the harm that canvassing does? Yet the anti's of both sexes implore women to canvas, and nullify all their so-called arguments.

2. I do not pretend to be a Mother Shipton, nor am I good at conundrums. Ordinary processes of thought and generalisation do not empower me to foresee—

"Through the ways that are dark
Of the leading M.P."

Our best moves are frustrated through unexpected blocks. Our enemies will condescend to do anything to keep us back. From the days of Mr. Labouchere, who talked our bill out in futile quibbles on the Verminous Persons Bill, to the last day of the Old Year, when the "Times" showed us that a great nobleman was not ashamed to lend his good name to influence a secret collection of funds to work against us. The Prime Minister, who foams against the constitutional veto of the Lords, has usurped an unconstitutional veto against majorities in the House of Commons, supposed to be representative of the people. We never know what may happen next. Our friends are out-manceuvred; sometimes they are influenced; they are apt to have other interests irreconcilable to their promises and intentions to help us, and keep their consciences clear. The number of loyalists to our cause who will put it in front of everything, as we do, is few. And this is a country governed by the numbers, not by the intelligent values, of the votes. We cannot therefore prophesy concerning times and seasons, but we know there can be no true new age until women have fair-play. And we know that we never shall cease working for it until we win it.

3. One cannot answer a question clearly without defining its terms. What is a militant method? The commonplace man, guided by an antagonistic and misrepresenting Press, thinks it is "going out to have a row with the police and getting sent to prison." A militant method as defined by those who practise them, is, after all ordinary methods have been tried, trying various means of compelling attention to demands which they have a right to make. Communications between human beings are generally carried on either through a special messenger, otherwise a representative, by letters, which in writing represents speech; or by direct speech. Now women are denied the common right of sending a representative with their message; their letters are generally burned unread, and rarely answered even formally; so the militants tried to have free speech with the Prime Minister in a deputation. They were refused by him, hustled and driven about by the police, and in attempting to defend themselves were arrested and sent to prison. There is no doubt that in the first instance their heroism succeeded in awaking public attention as it never had been awaked before. Their cruel and often illegal treatment brought thousands of women and hundreds of men to their side. To their action the women of Norway owe their enfranchisement. But it was not sufficient to awake the Cabinet; so their next method was one which many people dislike. Language is a system of signs of thought, but there are other signs of thought than language. The flinging of stones is a primeval sign; the flinging of stones at windows is as old as the invention of windows. It is a message that some one stands without who has not been able to make himself heard by ordinary means. Men have tried it, and wise Ministers, understanding the message, attended to them, and they got what they wanted. The methods which have been successful when used by men have been considered disgraceful when tried by women on more moderate lines. There is no doubt that it alienated some supporters, cooled the ardour of others, and shocked the

sensibilities of many who did not understand. It made many unite in the illogical announcement: "Ah, yes, the women have a right to ask justice; but I would not give it them, because they try such methods to get it!" Enemies have used it as a weapon: "We are in the wrong, but we must make them seem to be so."

Another method is only called militant because practised by the militants. They say that the day of the private member has gone, that the Cabinet is the sole governing power in the country, the sole Lords in Parliament. The Cabinet has coerced its followers, and killed women's suffrage bills supported by large majorities in all parties. Therefore the militants have given up the private member, and go against the Cabinet. That has frequently been tried by party men when the Government defined a policy they did not like. It is only because men are voters that their going against the Government is considered quite right and gentlemanly. If women had votes, they would do it in the same quiet way, through the ballot box, and it would seem quite right and womanly. But having no votes, they do it in any way they can. This has roused many party men against them. But it has gained some others who put the claims of justice first.

The militant methods have not succeeded as yet, seeing that qualified women have not received and exercised the vote. But we cannot say whether or not they have failed. Time will try.

We of the law-abiding societies would rather gain our enfranchisement in a common and ordinary way, and so would the militants. It is only when womanly arguments fail, they try another way. The days have been when our law-abiding methods were stigmatised as disgraceful and unwomanly; at present the action of the militants is considered so by some; the day may come when it will be considered so no more; the day when the anti's cease from troubling, and justice and freedom have been secured by women for women.

4. Every constitutional method open to women has been tried by the non-militant societies, or by the militants before they became so. They have sent up petitions for 60 years, the first being presented in 1851. There have been a greater number of petitions than for any other cause, one of them at least over a quarter of a million. They have organised effective processions, enormous demonstrations; they have held innumerable public meetings, fifty times as many as have been acknowledged by an indifferent or antagonistic Press. They have subscribed money, and given personal service more freely in proportion to their means, than any other reform has ever called forth. Some have tried passive resistance in regard to their taxes. Male electors have joined with them in sending up electors' petitions. Some have taught the Government their views or their action on this point by voting against them at the poll. The militants have shown initiative heroism and the martyr-spirit that counts all things but loss for a great ideal.

The only alternative method I could suggest must begin from the other side. It would be to make the study of logic, constitutional history, economics and moral philosophy compulsory for all members of Parliament, with an honours certificate in these for members of the Cabinet. Government is only necessitated by the natural tendency of human beings to make the interests of others subservient to their own. Yet the art of government is the only great art which men are supposed to be able to undertake without preparation, study, apprenticeship or experience. My plan would at once end the disgraceful scenes for which Ministers alone are to blame; because they would then understand the principles of justice and the spirit of the women who count in the country. But as we are women and have no votes we cannot raise the tone of our politics by proposing this suggestion, and we are forced to continue as a sex, at least for a time, to go on being governed, and seeing our country governed, by those who have studied neither in relation to both sexes who make up *the people*.

MR. G. S. STREET.

1. (a) The industrial employment of women.
- (b) The want of evidence that it is widely desired by women.
2. None whatever.
3. Succeeded at first by attracting attention; fails at present because they irritate without frightening.
4. I have no new suggestion to offer.

BARONESS BERTHA VON SUTNER (Vienna).

1. The best reason for woman's suffrage is that politics can only become worthy of a progressive civilisation if the (as yet) essentially female qualities of gentleness and graceful dignity are permitted to penetrate political life.

3. It seems to me that the violent methods at present in use are ineffective because they lack the above-named qualities. Means should never be less noble, less beautiful than the end.

4. Speak, dear sisters; write, organise, meet, assert your claims, but do not offer violence. Your steadfastness, your earnestness will bring victory,—not your umbrellas.

MRS. FRANCES SWINEY.

1. (a) In my opinion the most powerful argument for woman's suffrage is the human argument—the bottom rock of humanity—Womanhood. Women constitute the larger portion of adult humanity. They form the basis of the human race, of the home, of national and social life. They are the sole means by which human evolution can proceed. Physiologically they are the most complex and highly specialised of organic forms; psychologically they are the most highly evolved on the plane of vibration, receptivity, assimilation and responsiveness; hence they are the most adaptable to environment, the more imaginative, sensitive and sympathetic; therefore they possess creative, constructive and synthetic functions and faculties to a greater degree than men. By no natural law, nor by any code of justice, nor without grievous hurt to the community at large, can the higher be placed in subjection to the lower; nor can arbitrary, artificial and purely egotistical restrictions be allowed to impede the full and perfect development of that basic factor—motherhood—upon which the future of the race depends. Justice to humanity as a whole is, therefore, the strongest and most irrefutable argument for the political enfranchisement of women. For the nation suffers in every department of social, industrial, economic, civic and imperial activities through the thwarted and repressed energies of its better and more evolved half.

"Woman is humanity," declared the Jewish seer; "Woman is the race," say the biologists; and "with women nothing is impossible," affirms the prophet of the Superman. For the sake of that race, bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, and soul of her soul, woman demands her political rights to obtain that race's heritage of liberty and unity.

(b) Against woman's suffrage there can be no powerful argument, as no argument brought forward could rest on a basic foundation of justice, logic, truth or reason. The arguments, so-called, of the opponents to the enfranchisement of women, are negative, supposititious, and contradictory of each other. Evolution, development, progress, are positive realities. We can safely leave the anti's with their hypothetical arguments to the fate of fabulous monsters.

2. The unwritten laws of Parliamentary precedents and the professed code of Liberalism would presuppose an emphatic affirmative to this question if we were not dealing with a Government that contemns precedents and principles except as expediencies to forward the personal ambition and convenience of its members. The nation and the House of Commons are now arbitrarily governed by a self-elected triumvirate within the Cabinet—an inner Cabal which has long since cast to the winds the elementary ethics of their party—i.e., taxation and representation, equality of political rights, freedom of the Press, liberty of speech, government of the people, for the people, by the people. Judged by the test of their attitude towards woman's suffrage, Messrs. Asquith, Lloyd George and Winston Churchill stand confessed as a trio of responsible Ministers who have failed to act up to the grand principles they should embody, and are content to be mere mechanical music-hall gramophones, repeating meaningless party shibboleths. An agitation for a reform and a demand for a withheld right extending over forty years, that has numbered among its supporters the greatest of politicians, the most famous of Prime Ministers, the advance guard of philanthropists, scientists, thinkers and writers, has returned to Parliament after each general election an increased majority of members pledged to carry out the reform, has secured large majorities in favour of its bills, has constituted itself as a powerful, organised body of opinions throughout the country, and by societies, meetings, deputations, petitions, demonstrations, and an active propaganda has made its demand a living political issue for immediate settlement, would, under any normal Parliamentary procedure be secure of obtaining a speedy settlement of its claims at the earliest opportunity, and during the first session of the new Parliament. But—the position of woman suffrage is unique. Its supporters have to deal with a corrupt and subsidised Press, with a paralysed and corruptible section of Party men, and above all, with a question that, objectively, affects women alone. One thousand miners, with votes, could squeeze any bill they chose out of a Machiavellian Cabinet; nine tailors in Tooley Street, with votes, could wind up the gramophones to play their special tune; but 8,000,000 women, without votes, though embodying the really essential part of the nation, can, in the opinion of the sapient exponents of Liberalism,

justice, and all conceivable righteousness, remain in the outer wilderness of unrecognised and unrepresented humanity, and their demand, even though supported by the elected representatives of the male electors, can be safely disregarded and deferred sine die. Given a Cabinet with principles, woman suffrage should be law this year of grace 1911. Given a Cabinet devoid of principles, and existing on expediency, self-interest and self-aggrandisement, prospects nil for woman suffrage, but dark with the ruined reputations for honour and statesmanship on the part of these shufflers with eternal human rights. The nation will, however, some day demand of its Ministers deeds, not words, even for its women.

3. The militant methods have been the torch set to a long-smouldering fire. The militant party is the flame that at last burst forth from a mass of seething, combustible material ready to be transmitted into the living light and warmth of fire. When Annie Kenney first waved her half-yard of bunting in the sex-obsessed precincts of the House of Commons the revolt of women against the baneful dominance of male-rule found trite expression. That little white flag was the signal of battle, of conquest and of victory. A half-century of peaceful constitutional agitation had failed. Women had appealed in vain to man's reason, to his sense of justice, to his humanity and his sympathy. These qualities appeared to be non-existent. Men had not heard, had not felt, and not understood. The militant tactics roused the nation from stagnation, the men from somnolence, the women from apathy, the politician from an abyss of sophistry. The militants demanded a straight answer to a straight question. They refused to be shelved, to be put off to a more convenient season, to be ignored, to be circumvented, denied, played with, cajoled and suppressed. They were quick to make use of precedents, to employ ancient Parliamentary usages, and civic prerogatives. They gauged at every point the justice, the equity, the logic and the reasonableness of the powers that be, and at every point the weakness of the Governmental armour was proved; and throughout the prolonged conflict the shame, the disgrace, the humiliation, the scorn and the obliquity have fallen on the Government and their tools and not on the militants. These have been justified in their deeds and in their wisdom, in their fearlessness of danger, in their unflinching courage, in their utter forgetfulness of self, in their wealth of service to the woman cause, in their contempt of suffering and even death, in their persistent battle for the right and their desperate struggle with the wrong. The disgraceful scenes, which were the outcome of the Government's unconstitutional methods of dealing with a great national question, of its imbecile inaptitude of grasping the extent and strength of the movement, of its shameful manipulation of the police force as a means to create riot and disorder, and to assault, torture and arrest innocent persons (as evidenced in the treatment of the various constitutional deputations to the House of Commons), will reflect, as long as history lasts, to the condemnation and discredit of politicians who could thus cast such a slur on British manhood, modern civilisation and Christian chivalry as these officially manoeuvred "disgraceful scenes" bear witness. No page of English history will be read with greater shame and indignation by future generations than the record of the Liberal Government's dealings with the women of England who demanded the elementary right of citizenship. I am thankful that for the recital in those pages there will be women historians, and no facts will be suppressed. The old constitutional society did the spadework, the seed of freedom was sown broadcast in the prepared soil by the able hands of the militants, and the crop is ripening to a bountiful harvest, fed by the blood and the tears of the martyrs who sanctify every human cause.

4. The only alternative method that I consider feasible is in the alteration of the Government's method in dealing with the agitation. The Government has simply to act according to precedent. It requires no brain-work; only a week's steady application to business. All is laid down with mechanical, automatic precision. According to Mr. Asquith's pledge, let facilities be given for the introduction and passing into law of a woman's suffrage bill on the lines of the Conciliation Bill, but left open to amendment. Four hundred and seven members are returned to the newly elected Parliament as pledged supporters of the Bill; its safe passage into law is assured if dealt with honourably, faithfully, and above-board. The autocratic triumvirate can thus redeem their character, can uphold the principles of true Liberalism, of true patriotism and true statesmanship by transforming words into acts, and showing to the world at large what is now widely doubted, that Englishmen are at bottom just and ready to put into practice the best traditions of their race.

If these alternative methods are not adopted there is only one other, in my opinion, that can meet the case. In addition to the various ways by which the different suffrage societies, militant and otherwise, will continue the

agitation with renewed vitality and persistence, I advise that the women of Great Britain and Ireland should become earnest and practical students of biology, and learn from that science a certain though perhaps protracted remedy for their evil state. If the suffrage is refused this year, it will be evident that we are dealing with a large proportion of elementals—half-baked men, as Edward Carpenter dubs them; let the mothers of the kingdom see to it that no more elementary males are born to disgrace themselves and the nation. It requires only some extra chromosomes in the initial cells for girls (the standard of humanity) to be produced. Therefore let motherhood put forth its best energies and bring forth daughters, until the super-Asquith, Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill is evolved. Perhaps a consummation so greatly to be desired would almost compensate for the long periods of waiting for justice to be born in the hearts of men.

MR. ALLEN UPWARD.

1. (a) That some women want votes.
- (b) That most women do not.

The demand is due to the fact, pointed out by Darwin, that our ancestors were bi-sexual; and hence in every generation some female spirits are born in male bodies, and male spirits in female ones. The latter are entitled to the franchise for themselves, but not entitled to force it upon ladies.

2. I should say an unreasonable prospect of an unreasonable suffrage, that is to say one based upon some other ground than the desire to possess, and the capacity to exercise, the franchise.

3. Violence is the only method that ever can succeed in overcoming apathy. The fact that parliamentary candidates now hesitate to pledge themselves to woman's suffrage proves that the question has entered the sphere of practical politics.

4. I think the leaders would do well to give their minds now to the tactical problem of framing a concrete proposal less contrary to the spirit of modern legislation than a property franchise. Yet I fear the alternative proposal of an educational franchise is too evidently right to be tolerable to the English mind.

However, the whole question, including that of the admission of women to the Houses of Parliament, is becoming of less moment every day. The only result of previous extensions of the franchise to the unwilling, such as the agricultural labourers, for instance, has been to lower the influence of the House of Commons, and to deprive it of a voice in public affairs. I do not remember that the House has been allowed to debate any foreign topic seriously since Gladstone moved his famous resolutions on the Eastern Question. Regarded as a machine for registering public opinion in legislation, it is almost immaterial by what means, or of what materials, Parliament is composed.

MR. H. G. WELLS.

1. (a) Endless powerful arguments for.
- (b) The most powerful against is the assertion that women under the excitement of discussion become monomaniacs more readily than men, based chiefly on the militant campaign, and the behaviour of Lady Frances Balfour upon the Divorce Commission.
2. A limited suffrage, yes; but of course not immediately.
3. They succeeded in the beginning as an advertisement of the question; they have now become ridiculous and irritating to the general public.
4. Sane and sober agitation without silly violence, and a demonstration that women can take an intelligent interest in public questions other than the vote.

MR. RICHARD WHITEING.

1. I know of nothing valid against woman's suffrage; and for it I think the chief consideration is that the man's half of the world cannot get on properly without knowing how the other half lives in regard to thought and opinion and the sense of its own interest in public affairs.

2. I do not see much chance of obtaining woman's suffrage in the present Parliament. The women got very little out of the last Parliament, and the new one is but the old one with a more imperative mandate, which is not suffrage, whatever else it may be.

3. No, I think they have been a dead failure, and naturally so, for they tend to scare the cautious, always the majority, back to the old and, as we hoped, discredited idea of woman's essential unfitness for public life. My ob-

jection to these methods is that they show no knowledge of politics. How can the Liberal party, or any party, give anybody anything on a mere counsel of perfection? Parties have to do not merely what is desirable in a general sense, but also in the first place what is possible, that is to say what they have good reason to believe will win the support of the majority of the people. They are no missionary associations with a prime duty of self-sacrifice.

In the present state of opinion a Woman's Suffrage Bill brought in by a Government of either party would wreck that Government at once.

Therefore, if all the Cabinet without exception were ardently in favour of such a measure, they could not guard against the assured disaster of putting it on their programme. The question is quite unripe for Parliament as a Government measure, because it is not ripe for the country. "Keep the Liberal out!" That is all very well, but he naturally prefers that slight risk to the certainty of being put out in a moment if he attempted to hustle the Legislature into a vast and far-reaching scheme on which the constituencies have not yet made up their minds. The militant party should know this, but it seems to think that it has only to increase its supply of dog whips and cobble stones to terrify this Government or any other Government into instant submission. To be frank about it, this is rather womanish in the uncomplimentary sense of the term. It is ridiculous as pressure, and as an irritant merely exasperating. Force is no remedy unless it is absolute and overwhelming. Militancy simply angers and disgusts, but it frightens nobody. Just think of being dog-whipped into such a leap in the dark as woman's suffrage and by such hands! No wonder the country grows colder and colder as the Albert Hall grows hotter. The last election was crushing for the militants. It seems hardly to have turned a single vote. A referendum on this question would probably show that the cause was never before in such low water in regard to the support of the electorate.

The only alternative method I could suggest is the old-fashioned one of what is called peaceful agitation. It seems a long road to travel, this road back to sweet reasonableness and give and take, but we must not forget that the question is quite a young one as age is counted in our political history. You cannot elevate mere spite and temper into a school of political thought, or even into a plan of campaign. To attempt to do so is only to play the game in the narrow and contemptible sense of play-acting it. While this is going on of course the elector continues to give no sign, except an ominous shake of the head. The determination to bring him up to the mark with the strong arm belongs not to politics, but to the playground and the infant school. "A little child shall lead them"; well and good, but it must be the right child after all. Men have possibly provoked this infliction by past indifference, but that is no reasoning for a too close reckoning in old scores. Let us all lay our heads together and see what can be done to put the measure on the Statute-book. Above all, let us get rid of cant. No one believes in this burning indignation regulated by the calendar and the hours of the clock, or in this martyrdom tempered by the second division.

MR. FILSON YOUNG.

1. (a) The strongest argument for woman's suffrage was that there was not sufficient argument against it until the militant suffragists supplied it.
- (b) The strongest argument against woman's suffrage is that, so far as anything has been shown, the effect of political excitement upon women has been on the whole bad and demoralising.
2. Is a question for a parliamentary politician.
3. I think that up to a point the militant methods were successful in attracting attention to the cause, but that they have been carried beyond that point and are now, in effect, its worst enemy.
4. I have no alternative methods to suggest.

MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

1. The most powerful argument for women's suffrage is that all the ablest women demand it, with the exception of those who selfishly feel that they already possess its equivalent.
2. Certainly in the present Parliament and quite early in it.
3. Succeeded as emphatically as all other methods have failed.
4. No alternative method, but every kind of supplementary method in the way of educating the masses, the M.P.'s and the Ministers.

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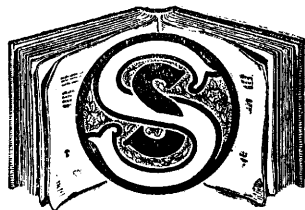
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