

# The Public

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A Weekly Narrative of History in the Making

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## EDITORIAL

### "Kindling."

That it is easy to be good, for everybody likes you when you are good, but hard to do right, for in doing right you are often contemptuously deserted and despitefully used, is the key-note of "Kindling," the play which failed in New York, but of which Margaret Illington and her company have made a great success at the Cort theater in Chicago. A play of the period, its lesson pierces to the center of both sentiment and thought. "Crude" it has been called, and this was the verdict in New York. But its crudity is not of play or players; it is the reflection of a transitional period in industrial life, and the reflection must seem crude to be true. What of its immorality in fostering sympathy for a thief? A poor interpreter indeed must he be who takes that lesson from this play. So far from apologizing for larceny, "Kindling" brings the great legal larcenies into contrast with petty ones that are illegal, and with such dramatic force as, while not approving the latter, to expose the destructive wickedness of the former.



### A Women's Suffrage Test in Chicago.

"Do you approve of the extension of suffrage to women?" This question is to be voted on at Chicago on the 9th of April at the regular primary elections. The women's suffrage organizations,

under the lead of the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, are busy making a general organized effort to poll a heavy vote and to secure a large majority in the affirmative. While the result will be only an unofficial and legally powerless expression of opinion, it nevertheless will be such an expression under the best existing electoral machinery for securing one; and if the opinion turns out to be favorable, favorable action by the legislature will be stimulated by it. There are plenty of reasons for voting "Yes" on that question. If you want women to be housekeepers, give them a chance to take a responsible part in that municipal housekeeping in which men alone do so badly—as, for that matter, they do in all other housekeeping. If you want women to look after children, give them a chance at the government of the public schools. If you believe in democracy, which means what Lincoln called it, government of all by all, throw aside your selfish vanity and recognize that women are of the all, that they have a right to the ballot you yourself set so much store by, and that feminine influence in the public affairs of our common life is as important as in the private affairs of the family.



### Women's Suffrage in Great Britain.\*

Lloyd George's women's suffrage speech at Albert Hall, the principal points of which are reproduced in another column, fairly discloses the indefensible conduct of the physical violence faction of British suffragists—indefensible not alone as matter of decent order, but also for its manifest tendency to wreck the women's suffrage cause, and in no other possible interest—be the motive what it may—than that of the Tory party and its property-class allies.



This speech was given prior to the criminal conduct of the violence faction in wantonly destroying private property. It was given before a non-partisan audience of women's suffragists, organized by representative women's suffrage associations. Instead of co-operating, or at least holding aloof from this meeting, the violence faction sought to break it up. By disorderly methods they endeavored to prevent any presentation of the subject by the one person in all England who could speak with most political authority and influence in behalf of the cause which they profess; and this on an occasion when he was the guest of

women's suffrage organizations and leaders with at least equal right with Mrs. Pankhurst's group to represent suffrage sentiment.



What is the pretense for that disorder? To force the Liberal Cabinet to insert votes for women in its electoral reform bill. But as the Cabinet is divided—one-fourth of its members (like most of the Tory party and a small proportion of the Liberty party), being opposed to votes for women,—and as unanimity in proposing Ministerial measures is an absolute political necessity, how could the Cabinet be coerced? Only by giving to the Cabinet the alternative of doing so or of resigning official responsibility to the Tories until another election could be held under the present property-qualification and plural-voting system! Such is the demand of the violence faction of British suffragists. No other interpretation of their attitude and conduct is possible.



The women's suffragists in the Cabinet proposed something better than this interesting plan of the violent suffragists. Led by Lloyd George, they secured an agreement by the Cabinet to refer the dispute to the House of Commons. If a majority of that House would amend the electoral bill by inserting suffrage for women, the Cabinet would make women's suffrage an integral part of the official bill. This spelt victory for the women's suffrage cause. For even though the Tory members were to vote unanimously against the amendment in the House, and all the anti-suffrage Liberals and Irish were to vote against it too, it would fall only 16 votes short of a majority. This gap could easily have been bridged under such leadership for the amendment as George's. It could easily have been bridged, that is, if the weaker supporters of women's suffrage in the House, and the better inclined among its opponents and the neutrals, were not angered into active hostility, as there is reason to fear they may have been, by the tactics of the violence faction of suffragists. If women's suffrage, widely democratic at that, fails at this crisis in Great Britain, the fault will lie at the door of that violence faction for having resorted at the present critical juncture to tactics which, criminal in law and criminal in morals, have also every appearance of having been exquisitely designed to baffle the democratic cause.



It is gratifying to be able to believe that in the United States, where the militant British tactics

\*See *Publics* of Dec. 17, 1909, page 1205; Mar. 4, 1910, pages 210, 211; Dec. 1, 1911, page 1209; Dec. 22, 1911, page 1232; Jan. 19, 1912, page 52; Feb. 2, 1912, page 98; Mar. 8, 1912 page 219.