

lower in Cincinnati than in any other large city in the United States." May it not be that these two facts, if they are facts, have a relationship of cause and effect?

+ +

### Voting and Taxpaying.

Regarding the recently formed organization for helping Chicago women to resist the collection of personal property taxes on the ground that "taxation without representation is tyranny," a woman who opposes equal suffrage observes that the movement is "toward plutocratic distinction of women who own property as against those who do not." Persons so undemocratic as to oppose women's suffrage as a right, or so devoid of civic spirit as to cling to laws that prevent its use as a duty, may not be in position to object to property qualifications on the ground that they would be plutocratic. But there is a suggestion in that criticism which should not be ignored by the newly organized advocates of resistance to taxation without representation. Although it is sound policy to resist taxation without representation, very dubious at best is the policy of complete identification of taxpaying with voting. One who is not allowed to vote may very well object to paying taxes. This is a blood-bought and time-honored American principle. But the converse is not true. He who does not pay taxes cannot therefore be denied the vote, without opening the way to plutocratic distinctions. It is incumbent upon the "League of Unrepresented Taxpayers," in its effort to propagate the doctrine that taxpaying should be limited by voting, to avoid the dangers of giving further vitality to the idea that voting should be limited by taxpaying.

+ +

### Judge Wright Again.

Judge Wright of Washington, that interesting judicial product of Cincinnati who, as an appointive judge at Washington, threw the network of contempt proceedings around Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison last year (vol. xii, pp. 1, 3, 1188) in order to throttle freedom of the press for labor papers, now reaches up for higher game. In a mandamus proceeding to compel a Congressional committee to consider officially something which it had officially decided not to consider (pp. 146, 156), Judge Wright holds that his court has jurisdiction over them. His argument is worthy the lawyer of the anecdote who was a dabbler in many subjects, and of whom a candid friend therefore said that he would know a little of everything if he only knew a little law. Graciously conceding that his court could not interfere with the action of Con-

gress, this interesting judge nevertheless holds that it can interfere with a Congressional Committee, because Congress has no power to delegate its duties to committees. It will be an instructive spectacle, the appearance before Judge Wright of a Congressional committee to purge itself of contempt of court!

+ + +

### VOTES FOR WOMEN IN GREAT BRITAIN.

A notable phase of the recent political campaign in Great Britain, was the subsidence of suffragette militancy. As the campaign was about to open threats of disturbance of Liberal meetings were freely made, and in its earlier stages there were attempts to break up Liberal meetings at which members of the Ministry spoke. But as the campaign went on, these disturbances died down; and before it came to an end, the whole militant movement took on the appearance of a closed and forgotten incident.

Perhaps it makes little difference whether this decline in physical force tactics may be attributed to the waning of a hysterical fever, as some Britons contend, or, as we venture to hope, to a clearer apprehension by suffragette leaders of the necessity for a right policy and reasonable tactics. The fact of the apparent tendency away from physical force directed at one political party, is itself the important thing.

To anger the Liberal rank and file, as the violent suffragettes were doing, with spiteful attacks upon Liberal leaders and Liberal meetings in the heat of their fight against the gigantic political and economic privileges of Lords and landlords, was not at all calculated to promote the suffrage cause. Nothing could be thereby gained for this cause from the Tories, the only element that could be especially pleased with such tactics; for under no circumstances could women's suffrage be got of the Tories, unless it might be for women of the "upper classes" alone. On the other hand, much was to be lost by it with Liberals; for its natural effect in that direction was to embitter and to drive away friendly Liberals who were not thoroughly anchored as suffragists. All the more likely were these indefensible tactics to affect prejudicially the average Liberal, and make him averse or indifferent to the influence of radical Liberals on the women's suffrage subject, when it seemed that the suffragettes might be inspired by Tory influence, or at any rate by undemocratic sentiment.

And indeed it did so seem.

The richest and most influential body of militant suffragettes is absolutely undemocratic in its own organization. So autocratic has its organization been that a secession occurred two years or so ago, which set up an organization on democratic lines. These two bodies have been alike in pretty much everything except form of organization, political spirit, and ability to get funds. While both have adhered to militant methods, and worked for a limited women's suffrage measure, the original organization, governed by Mrs. Pankhurst and her associates, gets larger funds, exerts a greater influence, and in its membership is more alive with Tory spirit than the seceders, whose organization is known as the Women's Freedom League.

It is not a fair criticism, I infer, to attribute Tory purposes to either organization. Although Tory influence may often seem dominant, it is nevertheless reasonable to account even for the limited suffrage measure for which both organizations stand, upon the theory of an error in judgment rather than a deliberate purpose to play the Tory game.

In advocating the limited suffrage measure the suffragette leaders thought, in all probability, that they were proposing to insert "the thin end of a wedge." That is to say, it probably seemed to them at first, as it did to many others who with better knowledge have since changed their minds, that the measure extending suffrage to women on the same terms upon which it is or may hereafter be conferred upon men, would break ground for enfranchising all adult women.

So considered, the measure would have been a step in the right direction. And, so considered, the argument regarding it would hold good, that it is no objection to a forward measure that it does not go the whole distance.

But, unfortunately for that argument, the limited women's suffrage for which the militant suffragettes have stood, would not be in the direction of womanhood suffrage. It would be to womanhood suffrage an obstacle in the way. By enfranchising women of independent property, and those of propertied families, to the exclusion of great masses of women of the working class, this measure would raise up a new body of voters in opposition to further extension of suffrage either to men or to women. In its tendency, whatever be the motives for it, it is essentially undemocratic, and therefore essentially Tory.

To be sure, it must be conceded, as has been claimed, that the question of how women may vote when enfranchised is irrelevant, since all vot-

ers, women as well as men, should have undisputed freedom to vote as they please. To a measure for extending the voting right to all women, this claim would be invincible. Not necessarily so, however, when the measure proposed is merely a step in that direction. Very relevant is the question then, of how the limited class of women to be immediately enfranchised would vote with reference to extending the voting right to their unenfranchised sisters. If the so-called first step would enfranchise only such women as would for the most part vote against extending the suffrage to other classes of women, then it is not a step toward womanhood suffrage. It is, on the contrary, a step away from both womanhood suffrage and manhood suffrage.

And such a measure the measure supported by the militant suffragettes clearly is. If it were adopted it would strengthen and tend to perpetuate property qualifications. If it were adopted, the workingwomen of Great Britain, and the wives and daughters of British workingmen—the classes that need the ballot most—would be farther away than ever from getting the ballot.

We have explained this matter before (vol. xii, pp. 1108, 1153, 1205), and been criticized for our conclusions. After further examination, made directly in connection with the actual operation of British electoral methods, and comprising information derived from electoral experts, we renew our former indictment of the suffragette measure. So far from tending toward womanhood suffrage, it would be an obstacle. So far from promoting democracy, it would reinforce its enemy; and this, not by giving to each side a fair recruiting field and no favor, but by enfranchising the women who as a class tend toward toryism, and leaving unenfranchised those who as a class tend toward democracy.

+

In our previous articles on this subject there may have been some errors of detail with reference to suffrage qualifications, due to complexities of the British electoral system. But we referred to the best authorities then at hand; and now, with the benefit of advice from electoral experts on the ground, we find no substantial errors. With reference, however, to some obscure or refined points of detail, positive assertions cannot be made. An illustration arises over the question of whether there can be joint occupancy of a dwelling for voting purposes. There probably cannot be; yet we are unable to make the statement positively, for it is asserted that there can be, an assertion which

probably springs out of actual cases where occupier and lodger are mistakenly supposed to be joint occupiers. The only value of the point involved in this illustration is that if there may be joint occupancy of a dwelling, both husband and wife might vote as joint occupiers, if the suffragette measure were adopted. It is pretty clear, though, that the right does not exist; and if it did, that a money test would apply, under which the average workingman's wife would still be without a vote unless her husband gave her his and went without his own. And so, in general effect, of other doubtful points of detail. They do not affect the conclusion that the suffragette measure would limit women's suffrage to a class of women whose votes against its further extension would tend to make extensions more than ever difficult if not quite impossible.

Whatever may have been the errors in detail of our former articles—and at the worst they were few and slight—there were none to vitiate the conclusions.

+

If women were granted the vote in Great Britain on the same terms upon which it is held by men, their right to vote would come almost if not quite from one or more of five qualifications: freeholder, occupier of a dwelling house, occupier of business premises, lodger, and caretaker of premises not occupied by the owner or tenant.

Let us consider them in detail.

As to freeholders, any man owning two freeholds might make his wife a voter by vesting in her the title to one; if he had more than two, he might in like manner make voters of his daughters. Under this qualification few workingmen's wives or daughters could vote; for workingmen are not as a rule multiple freeholders. Propertied families alone could largely increase the women's vote under this qualification.

As to dwelling house occupiers ("household" suffrage as it is commonly called), if the occupier were also the owner, he might make his wife his tenant, thereby giving her the vote as occupier and voting himself as freeholder. Under this qualification, cottage owning workingmen might confer the voting right upon one woman in the family. Propertied men could, indeed, do no more—so far as this qualification is concerned—but for every workingman able to do it there would be many propertied men.

As to occupiers of business premises, if the premises were worth £10 annually one occupier could vote. If they were worth £20 or more the voting right would accrue to two joint occupants,

but no more. Under this qualification, then, workingmen might enfranchise their wives with reference to business premises if they had any. Even if the value were only £10 per year, they might enfranchise their wives with the business premises and themselves with the dwelling, or vice versa. But the number of workingmen, or women of workingmen's families, who could get the vote in any such way would be negligible in comparison with those of the "upper classes" in trade.

As to lodgers, each individual lodging must be worth, unfurnished, at least £10 a year. Some workingwomen of Great Britain doubtless occupy individually rooms of that value in boarding or lodging houses or hotels, and some workingmen's daughters may occupy individually rooms of that value at home; but these are few indeed in comparison with corresponding instances among the propertied classes. As propertied men now enfranchise their propertyless sons by giving each of them individual bedrooms at home of £10 annual value, so, under the suffragette measure, they could enfranchise their daughters who individually occupy rooms at home of that value. But the thriftiest workingman would be "put to it" to give even one of his daughters a £10 bedroom individually; and just as he now fails to do so with his sons (thereby having but one vote to the family against the possibility of his propertied neighbor having two or three or more), so would it be when home-staying daughters came in for the suffragette franchise under the "lodger" clause.

As to caretakers (known as "service" voters, being persons who live in service upon premises not occupied by the owner or tenant), this qualification would not be affected by the suffragette measure so as to enfranchise any of the women of coachmen's families, nor of janitor's families, nor of any other male servitors' families occupying detached premises. In so far, then, it would not strengthen politically the employer of this kind of dependent; but it would add women dependents to that aggregation of male dependents, by giving the vote to women janitors and other caretakers of premises not occupied by the owner or tenant. Thereby the "gentry" influence in politics would be strengthened, without any corresponding offset from the more independent workingwomen; for caretakers of either sex must vote with the owner of their job in order to keep it. Nor would ballot secrecy be any protection. At the recent elections it was no uncommon thing for landlords to notify their dependents that they might vote as they pleased, but would be expected afterwards to tell how they voted. They

had to vote as they were wanted to, or be prepared to lie about it.

The more one learns of the intricacies of British electoral laws, the clearer it becomes that the suffragette measure of votes for women on the same terms as votes for men, would, without general electoral reform, operate to prevent rather than to promote womanhood suffrage.

Mr. Hyndman was not very far wrong when he characterized the suffragette measure as a measure for conferring the suffrage upon fine ladies; and the People's Suffrage Federation is right enough in its pamphlet in pointing out some of Keir Hardie's errors in a by-gone pamphlet of his on the effect of the suffragette measure, when it says:

We wish it to be clearly understood that we do not deny that the majority of women householders under the municipal franchise may be called poor, nor that the same would be true, though not in quite the same proportions, of the women householders who would get the Parliamentary vote. Neither do we deny any woman's right to the vote. What we wish to point out is that the potential property vote might actually swamp the working class element in the women's electorate, if the propertied classes were at any time spurred by self-interest to take full advantage of their opportunities under the limited women's suffrage; and that in any case, owing to the disproportionate increase of the property vote, the women's electorate under the limited bill must be less democratic than the existing men's electorate, and must therefore increase the power of property over the people. We know too well what this may mean to wish to risk it. If there were any reason to suppose that the present Government were more favorable to the limited than to a democratic measure, the case would be different. As it is, it would be a mistake both of tactics and of principle to identify women's suffrage with a measure so unfair to working people. The right tactics for the true friends of women are to press for a democratic suffrage—the only one compatible with the expected reform bill—and leave the limited bill to its natural friends, the Conservatives. To miss the opportunity of the reform bill would be to lose the best chance, indeed the only chance, of women's suffrage that a Government of this country has ever admitted.

+

Not to the suffragette organizations but to the People's Suffrage Federation, with its doctrine of "one man, one vote," and "one woman, one vote," must the democracy of Great Britain look for leadership in getting votes for women. The suffragette organizations neither demand womanhood suffrage nor proceed rationally for securing women's suffrage limited. But the People's Suffrage Federation, composed of men and women alike, demands adult suffrage upon a reasonable residence qualification alone, and goes about the matter in a reasonable way.

Of this Federation it has been occasionally said in disparagement of its importance, that it is new. This would not impress us as a very serious objection, though it were true. But it is true only in a superficial sense. The Federation itself, merely as a name and by date of its charter, is new, having been formed last October. But its constituent organizations are not new. They comprise a number of established Trade Unions, many Branches of the Women's Co-operative Guild, several radical Liberal Associations; Branches of the Women's Labor League; and fully 75 Branches of the Independent Labor party. The Federation's personal membership, already numbering 1,200 or more, notwithstanding its organic newness, includes such representative persons as Crompton Llewelyn Davies (United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values), Joseph Fels and Mrs. Fels, A. G. Gardiner (editor the London Daily News), Professor Hobhouse, George Lansbury, Russell Rea and Mrs. Rea, Sidney Webb and Mrs. Webb, Josiah C. Wedgwood, M. P., and Mrs. Wedgwood, Percy Alden, M. P., W. P. Byles, M. P., and Mrs. Byles, Sir Charles W. Dilke, M. P., D. J. Shackleton, M. P., and Mrs. Shackleton, J. M. Barrie, George Cadbury and Mrs. Cadbury, the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, W. R. Lester, Margaret McMillan, John Orr, Arnold Rowntree, Frederick Verinder (Secretary English League for the Taxation of Land Values), Charles H. Smithson, Miss Margaret Bondfield (executive of the Women's Labor League), Miss Janet Case (president of the University Women Teachers' Association), R. Donald (editor of the London Daily Chronicle), Mrs. Fenton McPherson (secretary of the Women's Railway Guild), H. W. Massingham (editor of the London Nation), Frank Rose (editor of the Labour Leader), Mrs. Salter (of the Bermondsey Borough Council), and Mrs. Charles Trevelyan.

Miss Emily Hobhouse is chairman of the Federation's executive committee, Edward McGegan is secretary, Miss Llewelyn Davies (Hon. Secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild) and Miss Mary R. MacArthur (secretary of the Women's Trade Union League), are the honorary secretaries, and the headquarters is at "League House," 34 Mecklenburgh Square, London, W. C.

At the time of its formal organization the Federation made this announcement:

The People's Suffrage Federation asks for the vote for every man and woman on a short residential qualification. If the House of Commons is to represent the people truly, every man and woman must have the vote independently of property and tenancy.

The Prime Minister announced last year that he intended to bring in a Reform Bill, and would accept

the decision of the House of Commons and the country on an amendment giving votes to women on democratic lines. At this critical time, with a general election at hand, all who value representation should rally without a moment's delay, and do their best to obtain a definite promise before the election that if the present Government returns to power, the Reform Bill shall be made a part of its immediate programme, and shall give votes to all men and women.

Women's enfranchisement is urgent. They are as much concerned in law and government as men. A large proportion of the wage-earners are women, and women control the greater part of the people's consumption. Their personal rights need protection as much as men's, and only through full citizenship can justice be done to their claims.

Property and tenancy qualifications would place women of the working class, whether married or single, at a great disadvantage on account of their relatively low earnings, and because the working housewife, though economically self-supporting, is unpaid.

In the case of men, the present qualifications give too much weight to the propertied class and make representation unstable through its dependence on transient conditions. Depression of trade, for instance, disfranchises men at the very time when their state most requires public consideration; unemployment extinguishes votes by the thousand in many a great manufacturing center, through inability to pay rates punctually, through the necessity of moving from houses to lodgings, and through taking temporary work at the Poor Law stoneyard. In the interests of the whole nation, and especially of women and of the workers, Parliament should give the people true representation instead of the present unjust and arbitrary electoral system.

We invite all adult suffragists to join funds and forces with us without delay. We do not ask those who become members of the Federation to leave other suffrage societies, but we offer a new opportunity for men and women to work together for complete political freedom.

+

Indications are strong that if the present Parliament is able to overcome Tory opposition by reform of the electoral laws—the necessity for which every radical Liberal and every Labor member realizes keenly—the reformation will include adult suffrage regardless of sex.

So long as the electoral laws remain as they are, the Tories are at a great advantage. With plural votes telling in their favor, with property disqualifications telling against their opponents, and with registration rules operating easily for their class of voters and harshly upon hosts of the opposing class, there must be a tremendous preponderance of public feeling against them to insure their defeat at any election. They lose only when their opponents are enormously in the majority, and they win with minorities. The electoral system must be reformed so as to abolish plural voting, establish simple methods of regis-

tration, give the vote to persons instead of property, and modify the long residential period now imposed, or the Liberals and the Labor party will remain at the disadvantage which at the recent elections nearly defeated them in spite of a great preponderance of public opinion in their favor.

When this reform is made, the Labor demand in Parliament for womanhood suffrage as well as manhood suffrage will be unanimous; while that of the Liberals, under the influence of wiser suffrage tactics than they have been angered at, will doubtless be sufficiently strong to carry the point, unless enough Irish members unite with the Tories to defeat them.

+

Among the leading Liberals who stand out for womanhood suffrage—one who has not been chilled regarding it by exasperating interruptions of his meetings in the bitter contest of the Liberals with the Lords and the Tories—is Lloyd George.

Another is the Prime Minister himself. At his Albert Hall speech last December he pledged his Government, when it shall have been able to wipe out the Lords' veto (which is manifestly a necessary prerequisite to any progressive legislation whatever), to bring in an electoral reform measure, including women's suffrage, as soon as the Commons desire it. This means that the Ministry will assume responsibility for a womanhood suffrage measure, provided they are assured in advance that the Commons will carry it through.

Reflections have been made upon Mr. Asquith's sincerity in this regard, because he does not offer to bring in a measure for women's suffrage without the prior request of a majority of the Commons. But no such criticism can come in good faith from informed sources. If the Ministry were to bring in the measure as a Ministerial measure, and the Commons defeated it, the Ministry might be forced to an election at an inopportune time and upon an embarrassing question, which would please the Tories well enough, no doubt, but would not advance the cause of women's suffrage. The Prime Minister's declared willingness to bring the measure in if requested by the House of Commons is complete evidence of Ministerial sympathy and good faith.

With that pledge on the part of the Prime Minister, only two things are necessary to secure womanhood suffrage in Great Britain. One is the pledges of enough Liberals, Irish, and Labor members to constitute a majority of the House of Commons; the other is the abolition of the veto power which the House of Lords asserts over the House of Commons.