

Women's Suffrage



Reasons why women should or should *not*
have the right to vote

What was the campaign about?

"WHY I WANT THE VOTE."

*** Under this heading we shall have from time to time the personal opinions of our best-known supporters, giving the reasons why they want the vote. We all know the broad reasons why we want it; but the intimate reasoning which has led others of us into the ardent fighting front ranks has a special interest. This week one of our most eloquent speakers gives her reasons—and with no uncertain voice.*



MAUD ARNCLIFFE-SENNETT.

I want the Vote because Lord Curzon says "it is the imperishable heritage of the human race," and therefore it belongs to me.

I want it because the young workmen over the age of twenty-one whom I employ are going to the polls to proudly register their Imperial views on the Budget and Tariff Reform, while I, a middle-aged woman, sit in my office and construct the means by which they earn their living, yet am shut out myself.

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I want it because I do not see why the women I employ—skilled workers, the chief or sole supporters of their humble homes—should not, the same as men, protect their labour and their other interests at the polls. I want the vote because I pay to educate the children of my older workmen, yet they, who pay no rates or taxes, are marching to the ballot-box, and the Government, which impudently robs me of my hard-earned money, would send me to prison as a third-class criminal were I to walk to St. Stephen's and importune for a hearing to redress my grievances.

I want the Vote because Mr. Lloyd George received a deputation of footballers who, in order to protect their playgrounds, claimed exemption from the land taxes in the proposed Budget; yet deputations of women desperately claiming protection for their livelihood and lives are derided and declined a hearing!

I want it because of the ever-increasing numbers of poor women who are annually murdered in this country, and because of the horrible apathy with which Parliament and Society meet the wholesale destruction of these girls and the hideous system revealed in such cases as the late Brixton one.

I want it because Daisy Lord is being detained for the term of her natural life, while the author of her agony, who abandoned her to her fate, is still at large—a voter,

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or potential one. I want the authority, which my responsibility as an experienced, thinking, intelligent member of the community demands, to reconstruct the false and cruel standard of morality by which forlorn maternity is so often plunged in the mire, and in its fear and frenzy driven to kill the thing it loves and longs for, namely, its young.

I want it for woman's work—to educate children, house the poor, protect the mother spirit, to vote away the bad divorce law which the "Englishman's sense of fair play" has thought good enough for English wives! Lady McLaren's Charter would, at one fell stroke, uproot the many wrongs from which our women suffer; but how to force that Charter home without the weapon of the Vote? Impossible!—and that is why I want it!

MAUD ARNCLIFFE-SENNETT.

What was the campaign about?

FOURTEEN REASONS FOR SUPPORTING WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

- 1.—Because it is the foundation of all political liberty that those who obey the Law should be able to have a voice in choosing those who make the Law.
- 2.—Because Parliament should be the reflection of the wishes of the people.
- 3.—Because Parliament cannot fully reflect the wishes of the people, when the wishes of women are without any direct representation.
- 4.—Because most Laws affect women as much as men, and some Laws affect women especially.
- 5.—Because the Laws which affect women especially are now passed without consulting those persons whom they are intended to benefit.
- 6.—Because Laws affecting children should be regarded from the woman's point of view as well as the man's.
- 7.—Because every session questions affecting the home come up for consideration in Parliament.

What was the campaign about?

8.—Because women have experience which should be helpfully brought to bear on domestic legislation.

9.—Because to deprive women of the vote is to lower their position in common estimation.

10.—Because the possession of the vote would increase the sense of responsibility amongst women towards questions of public importance.

11.—Because public-spirited mothers make public-spirited sons.

12.—Because large numbers of intelligent, thoughtful, hard-working women desire the franchise.

13.—Because the objections raised against their having the franchise are based on sentiment, not on reason.

14.—Because—to sum all reasons up in one—it is for the common good of all.

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What does Women's Suffrage mean ?

Some people think that Women's Suffrage means breaking windows and spoiling other people's property.

This is a great mistake. Only a small number of women do these violent actions.

Thousands and thousands of quiet law-abiding women are asking for the vote.

Why do they want it ?

Not in order to sit in Parliament. It would not give them the right to do that.

They want it in order that they may be able to help choose the men who make the laws.

What are these laws about ?

Many of them are about children, houses, wages, taxes

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[Many of them are about children, houses, wages, taxes, insurance, old-age pensions, and lots of other things which matter to women just as much as to men.

Don't you think it fair that a woman should be able to help decide how her children are to be educated, and what kind of home she is to live in?

Women want to help men to make this country a better place than it is for all the men and women and children in it.

In order that they should be able to do this, women ask men to help them get votes.

If you think it is fair that women should have votes, will you sign a card and become a "Friend of Women's Suffrage?"

[There is nothing to pay, and your name will not be printed or used in any public way. We just want to know that you are a Friend in order that we may let you know when we have meetings and send you some of our papers.

[Remember that we are a law-abiding, non-militant society, and that our work depends on Public sympathy.

You can help us if you will !

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**What was
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Was there an
organized
plan for
success?

Was there an organized plan
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Was there an organized plan for success?



Who were their opponents? What stood in their way?



THE OPPONENTS' VIEW.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL ANTI-SUFFRAGE LEAGUE.

By MRS FREDERIC HARRISON.

THE INVITATION to our league to set forth our views in the *Queen* comes at an opportune moment, and is in great contrast with the illiberality of many journals, who do their best to close their columns against us. We often hear of the injustice done to that small minority of women who demand the Parliamentary vote; we do not hear of the injustice done to that large majority of women who have conscientious objections to the vote, and feel that in every scheme of franchise as yet set forth a great wrong is intended to the wives and mothers of this country.

The public has hardly had time or opportunity as yet to understand our position. This franchise movement for women is too recent a growth to have become a practical question, and the women who disapproved it, did not feel it their business to oppose or to thwart those other women who sought to convince them and the general public. It is always

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a painful and an unpleasant task for women to oppose other women who command respect, even though their arguments may not carry conviction.

The constitutional ladies, as I may call them, for they made their demands in a constitutional way, have been swept out of sight by a number of "irresponsibles," who have, as we think, brought discredit on the cause, and forced us into action. Their appearance on the scene entirely changed the situation, which Mr Asquith's guarded pronouncement has made acute. The women who did not want the vote were forced into a position of defence, and had to seek some way of putting their case before politicians and the country. Our silence would have implied consent and approval.

As I hope to write with respect and consideration for our opponents, I must say a word in justification of the term "irresponsible." The somewhat rough gambols of the militant ladies have not, as we think, done much harm, beyond annoying candidates for Parliament, who, as the old Italian vetturino used to say, "sont là pour cela." The cleverness and energy of these ladies is beyond dispute; so is the fertility of their imagination, though they do not bear imprisonment with the quiet dignity of the passive resisters. But we agree that prison is not a pleasant place.

How, then, do I justify the term irresponsible? I will quote from a well-known Socialist organ, presumably a friend to the cause of woman's suffrage:

Listening to Miss Christabel Pankhurst the other day. . . . If the limited suffrage for women were passed into law, that is to say, all the disabilities under which women suffer—physical, mental, economic, social, and moral—would all be done away with at a stroke. It is the lack of the vote, so we were given to understand, that renders women liable to sweating, that subjects them to bad husbands, that drives them into prostitution, that cripples their intelligence, &c. . . . We admire the energy and self-sacrifice the suffragettes have shown in a poor cause. But their misrepresentations will finally wreck them.

Who were
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What stood
in their
way?

The suffragette's millennium is a dream; but though it is well that our young women should dream dreams and see visions of a happier future, it is not well that they should make promises which cannot be made good, or that they should talk irresponsible "rubbish" (I quote again) to poor working women.

We have waited long for some word or sign from the constitutional suffragists to curb and restrain this flood of frothy effervescence. They have amongst them women of distinction well able to prick these economic and other bubbles, but no word or sign has come. So it is that the women of our league find a duty thrust upon them to speak plainly their mind, and to say openly what they think of a movement which seems to them morbid and retrograde.

We consider that the extension of the suffrage to another sex is no simple addition to the roll of electors; it is not analogous to an extension of the male franchise. It is a vast upheaval of social institutions and habits, which must cut into the peace and well-being of families and re-act for harm on the education of children.

We quote from our leaflet "Woman's Suffrage—and After!":

Let it not be supposed that this agitation will be appeased by small concessions of a limited suffrage. If it be given exclusively to spinsters it will be an offence to wives and mothers, who are certainly not less qualified to vote on national issues. If it be given to wives it will divide homes and leave decisions to the sex which cannot defend the State nor enforce obedience to the laws. If it be extended to all adults it threatens us with a majority of women voters.

These difficulties have never been met or answered, nor has any suffragist lady told us how she proposes to avoid inflicting a gross injustice on the bulk of Englishwomen. The vote, of course, first; but after will come the demand to be admitted to Parliament, to sit on juries, to be judges of the land, &c. These things are not written fair on any one chapter of

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THE RIGHT TO WORK.

Dr. Macnamara Says Home is Place for Married Women.

"There are too many married women——" said Dr. Macnamara, Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, last evening, in the course of an instructive address which he delivered at Credon-road L.C.C. School, Bermondsey, under the auspices of the North Camberwell Liberal and Radical Association.

A great outburst of laughter followed Dr. Macnamara's declaration. His audience had not quite caught his point.

"Let me finish," he said. "Don't be in a hurry. You get hold of me sometimes, but not very often. There are too many married women whose husbands could maintain them as any gentleman could, but who are yet engaged in the labour market. (Hear, hear.) You may say I am old-fashioned, but I say that a married woman, whose husband can maintain a home, ought to be at home looking after her children." (Hear, hear.)

Some interruption took place here, to which Dr. Macnamara replied: "If a husband can maintain his wife and their children without the wife going out to work, he ought to do so. Apart from that, however, I am looking to the ultimate effect on the race. It is not good for the race that women should go out into employment, and it is not good for the children when the mothers do so." (Cheers.)

In the course of his address, Dr. Macnamara, referring to the unemployed problem, said he knew of no magic solution for it. He criticised at some length the "Right to Work" Bill and showed how seriously it would affect the rates in Camberwell.

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Ten Reasons Why The Great Majority of Women Do Not Want the Ballot.

BECAUSE they have not lost faith in their fathers, husbands, sons and brothers, who afford full protection to the community, there being no call for women to relieve them of the task.

BECAUSE women realize that when they become voters they will in consequence have to serve as jurors, and be compelled to hear all the repugnant details incident to murder trials and trials for other crimes disclosing unspeakable wickedness. Jury service is abhorrent to every normal woman.

BECAUSE in political activities there is constant strife, turmoil, contention and bitterness, producing conditions from which every normal woman naturally shrinks.

BECAUSE the primary object of government is to protect persons and property. This duty is imposed by nature upon man, the women being by nature absolved from assuming a task to them impossible.

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BECAUSE when women noisily contest and scramble for public office—woman pitted against woman—they write an indictment of womankind against which all right-minded women strenuously protest.

BECAUSE women can accomplish more through counselling than they ever can attain through commanding.

BECAUSE woman suffrage will not enhance peace and harmony in the home, but, on the contrary, in the heat of a campaign, it is sure to bring about dissension and discord.

BECAUSE Nebraska women are already enjoying a greater measure of protection and privilege under the law than do women of any state where women vote.

BECAUSE the woman worker wants rest and quietude—not political excitement.

BECAUSE every reason supporting the claim of women to vote supports also the right of women to be consulted as to whether they shall or shall not be given the ballot.

What sort of tactics did the opposition use?



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The Adventures of the Woman Who Did It.

MISS DAVISON'S CAREER.

Always in the Battle Line of the Militants.

Miss Davison is one of the most noted women in the suffragist movement. She is a militant of militants, and has certainly earned for herself the description one of the officials at the W.S.P.U. offices gave the *Daily Sketch* yesterday: "A woman who fears nothing; permanent address Holloway Prison."

The daughter of Charles Edward and Margaret Davison, she was born at Blackheath.

She graduated B.A. with honours at London University.

Joining the W.S.P.U. in November, 1906, she soon became one of the most prominent of its members.

Here is a list of her offences and imprisonments, which began in March, 1909:—

March 30, 1909.—One month for an offence while on a deputation.

July 30.—Two months for obstruction at Limehouse, released after five and a half days' hunger strike.

September 4.—Stone-throwing at White City, Man-

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September 4.—Stone-throwing at White City, Manchester, two months, but released after two and a half days' hunger strike.

October 20.—Stone-throwing at Radcliffe, one month's hard labour on each count; hunger struck, forcibly fed, defied prison authorities, who turned hose-pipe on her. Afterwards she brought an action against the visiting magistrates of Strangeways Prison and won her case.

December 14, 1911.—Arrested for setting fire to pillar-boxes in London, sentenced to six months' imprisonment, hunger struck twice, and released ten days before expiration of sentence on account of injuries received while being forcibly fed.

November 30, 1912.—Ten days' imprisonment at Aberdeen for assaulting Baptist minister whom she said she mistook for Mr. Lloyd George. Released after four days after hunger-striking for that period.

Among her other exploits are:—

Hid in hot-air shaft of House of Commons.

Hid in crypt in House of Commons twice.

Miss Davison is a member of the Kilburn branch of the W.S.P.U., but she is a guerilla fighter, and as a rule the officers of the movement had no knowledge of what she intended to do.

According to one of the women at the head offices this was the case in the Derby incident.

"She is a level-headed woman," said the official to the *Daily Sketch*, "and when she threw herself at the horse she would realise fully that she was practically throwing her life away. You may take it from me that if she made her mind up to do anything, the fear of death would not cause her to hesitate for a single moment."

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prisoners. After a while my door opened, and I saw a stream of wardresses. I was lying on my bed, and I immediately turned to the wall, but they wheeled the bed out into the middle of the room, and tried to get me into position for feeding. I struggled violently, but they sat on my legs, and I was fed with the nasal tube. I was so exhausted at the end of the feeding that a wardress was left with me for some time.

“Next morning, when the time came for them to feed me, I got up, as I felt I could never be fed on the bed again. I felt so helpless, and ached all over from the fight.

Horrible Pain.

“On Sunday morning the religious service which is held for inmates of the infirmary was going on over my head, and their first hymn had just finished when the doctor and wardresses appeared to feed me. I was violently sick during this feeding, but it was nothing

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When the doctor and waitresses appeared to feed me. I was violently sick during this feeding, but it was nothing to the time I had in the evening. When the tube was put up my nose it twisted, and part of it came out of my mouth. The pain was so horrible I felt as if my nose was being pulled off, and I struggled violently. At this the doctor said, 'After all, it is only an indiarubber tube,' but to me it felt more like a crowbar. I was violently sick, and when the operation was over I cried with relief and pain.

"The following morning they tried the throat tube, and the doctor gave me the choice of a gag. That night they gave me something rather thick, which took a long time to go through the tube, and made me feel very ill.

"On New Year's Day I had been sleeping so badly that they gave me a sleeping draught.

"The prison officials were most kind, and seemed to loathe the abominable practice of forcible feeding."