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The Suffragette Movement : An Initmate Account of Persons and Ideals

(London: Longmans, 1931)

Christabel Pankhurst

Unshackled: The Story of How We Won the Votes

(London: Hutchinson, 1959)

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THE SUFFRAGETTE MOVEMENT

AN INTIMATE ACCOUNT OF
PERSONS AND IDEALS

BY

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST

NEW INTRODUCTION BY
DR RICHARD PANKHURST



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PREFACE

I GRATEFULLY render thanks to all who have assisted me in preparing this book, and especially to Mr. R. G. Longman for his sympathetic understanding of the author's aims and difficulties in a work at once so intimate and so composite.

I have essayed to describe events and experiences as one felt them; to estimate character and intention in the mellowing light of intervening years. My desire has been to introduce the actors in the drama as living beings; to show the striving, suffering, hugely hopeful human entity behind the pageantry, the rhetoric and the turbulence. In this effort I have often been thrown back upon my own experience. I have given it frankly, knowing that I could thus describe with greater poignancy and vigour the general experience of those who cherished and toiled for the same cause and encountered the same ordeals.

No history, whether of movements or of persons, can be truly expressed apart from the social and economic conditions and thought currents of its time. I have endeavoured to convey these not through the medium of statistics or argument, but by incidents in the moving course of life.

The book is largely made up of memories. In the earlier chapters, the key and the basis of those which follow, I have paid tribute to pioneers whose labours made later achievements possible. Their story is dear to me for its tender recollections and for the spirit of earnest public service which animated their work.

The many deeds of devotion and heroism chronicled in the later pages are greatly outnumbered by those I have been compelled, most reluctantly, to omit.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

was now declaring that she had wasted her time in the I.L.P. She astonished, by an abrupt refusal to contribute, the good comrade who called for her small annual donation to the Keir Hardie wages fund, the modest £150 a year, voted by the I.L.P. Conference in 1901, to maintain him in Parliament. She declared that she would do no more for Labour representation till women's interests were considered.

She decided that the new organization, which she would form without delay, should be called the Women's Labour Representation Committee; but when Christabel returned from a meeting with Miss Roper and Miss Gore Booth and learnt the name her mother had chosen, she said it must be changed, for her friends had already adopted this title for the organization they were forming amongst the women textile workers. Christabel did not at that time attach any importance to her mother's project; her interest lay with that of her friends. Mrs. Pankhurst was disappointed and distressed that Christabel should insist upon their prior claim to the name she wanted, but she bowed to her decision and selected instead: "The Women's Social and Political Union." It was her intention to conduct social as well as political work; she envisaged the provision of maternity benefit, and other such amenities for the members of the new organization, which at that time she intended should be mainly composed of working women, and politically a women's parallel to the I.L.P., though with primary emphasis on the vote.

On October 10th, 1903, she called to her house at 62 Nelson Street a few of the women members of the I.L.P., and the Women's Social and Political Union was formed. Under its auspices a campaign of resolutions calling for action by the N.A.C. was immediately initiated amongst the I.L.P. branches. It must be admitted that a degree of impatience was evinced, which was somewhat precipitate, following, as it did, on a long period of inaction towards women's suffrage on Mrs. Pankhurst's own part. Christabel, young and impetuous, was scarcely two years old in active suffrage work; the rest of us younger still. As in a family quarrel, bitter reproaches were let fly too readily on both sides of opinion regarding the new activity.

Katharine Bruce Glasier was then editing the *Labour Leader* in Black Friars' Street, Manchester. I called at her office with a W.S.P.U. resolution for which publication was desired. She at once commenced to scold me for the aggressive attitude of our family, declaring that since her daughters had grown up, Mrs. Pankhurst was no longer "sweet and gentle" as of old. I burst into tears at thought of the breach growing up between

old friends, but my weeping only inflamed the annoyance of the irate lady, who by no means realized that she had an advocate for friendship and conciliation in my own breast. I was as anxious as she for the growth of the Labour movement. I saw very clearly that the bulk of the I.L.P. membership was ready to support us, and that it was not in the I.L.P. that either the power or the opposition lay.

Keir Hardie came presently to Manchester. The torrents of W.S.P.U. frenzy were outpoured before him. A bevy of angry women prepared to fight him on every point. He raised no objection to the most impatient of zeal. On the contrary he greeted all this with the keenest sympathy. Votes for women? Of course! The Party must be brought into line, and a big campaign set on foot. A separate women's organization? Excellent! The very thing to provide the necessary spur. A simple one-clause measure to give votes on the same terms as men? Certainly. Give him the necessary data; he would prepare a pamphlet and get the I.L.P. to publish it. Christabel wrote out the facts and arguments. With a few words of his own to preface and conclude the manuscript, he signed it and sent it for printing as it stood. On the N.A.C. he moved at once; a request was sent out to I.L.P. branches to ascertain the proportion which would be regarded as working class amongst the women local Government voters in their area; working-class women being defined as "those who work for wages, who are domestically employed, or who are supported by the earnings of wage-earning relatives." Upwards of forty branches undertook this laborious task, and out of a total of 59,920 women local Government electors canvassed, the working women voters were found to number 82.45 per cent. Here was the evidence which would enable the I.L.P. executive to convince its members that they could press for the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men without handing an advantage to the propertied classes. Mrs. Pankhurst toured the I.L.P. branches, calling for the adoption of such a Bill; Keir Hardie, wherever he went, urged the same plea. At its Cardiff Conference, Easter, 1904, the I.L.P. elected Mrs. Pankhurst to its executive, which was instructed to secure the introduction to Parliament of a Votes for Women Bill. Keir Hardie arranged for this to be done by Will Crooks. The nucleus of the Parliamentary Labour Party was already in being; a long and stormy struggle to win for Votes for Women a place in its active programme had begun.

Behind all this arose a poignant, human incident: the kind Ellen had married; her husband was chronically unemployed. She had taken to charring, then returned to be our housekeeper,

more, and she came forth shuddering from the greyness and solitude of the cell.

For months I had not seen her. In August the Lawrences invited a crowd of Suffrage and Labour people to a performance of Old English Folk Songs and Dances¹ by the Esperance Girls' Club in the gardens of "The Mascot." Annie Kenney greeted me gaily: "This is *my* home now. Would you like me to take you round the garden? Would you like me to pick you an apple or a pear?" She radiated her joyous satisfaction, a perpetual fountain of smiles and ecstasies. So she passed on to new circles and new experiences, with her thin neck and her golden hair, her twinkling blue eyes, and her mouth gasping as though to drink in every new sensation, her restless, knotted hands tearing her gloves as she dragged them on, reciting the little odd snatches of poetry she was acquiring by the way.

In 1904 Dora B. Montefiore had raised the ancient slogan: "Taxation without representation is tyranny!" and for refusal to pay her income tax had twice suffered a distraint upon her goods. On the W.S.P.U. agreeing to champion her stand, she now barred her doors against the bailiff. Her house, on the Upper Mall, Hammersmith, "Fort Montefiore" as it became known, was surrounded by a high wall with a stoutly-built doorway. The "siege" began on May 24th, 1906, and continued for six weeks. Meetings were held outside, and Theresa Billington was photographed passing a loaf over the wall. Eventually the brokers forced an entry, and a piece of furniture was seized and auctioned.

On June 30th Christabel had taken her LL.B. degree at Victoria University with honours in the first class,² a distinction shared with but one other student in that year. She was the only woman law student at the college, and had already obtained the prize for International Law. When she went up to take her degree there was a humorous hostile demonstration by some of the men students, one of whom, as he afterwards confessed to me, was Walton Newbold, later, for a brief period, the first Communist Member of Parliament, or, as he was fond of calling himself in those days, the representative of the Soviet Government and the Third International. That he proceeded soon to repudiate the Russian connection was characteristic.

Her degree taken, Christabel left Manchester to become chief organizer of the W.S.P.U. at a commencing wage of £2 10s. a week. Adela, on her release from prison, had also become a

¹ Collected by Cecil Sharp. Mary Neal was the first to organize their performance through the Esperance Girls' Club.

² In 1903 she had matriculated in the second class.

W.S.P.U. organizer. When Mrs. Pankhurst had told the Prime Minister that women were prepared to sacrifice their livelihood for the cause, she spoke with feeling; her waning enthusiasm for Emerson's having snuffed out what meagre degree of prosperity had ever smiled on it, the business was now closed. The quarterly fees of her registrarship were still largely drawn upon for liabilities arising from the defunct Emerson's and the W.S.P.U. Whilst she travelled about on the Votes for Women mission, her sister, Mary Clarke, who was now her deputy in the registrarship, remained at Nelson Street with Harry, keeping house on the proceeds of the daily fees, and doing it somewhat too sparsely for the needs of a growing lad. Having been taken from West Heath School, Hampstead, in July, 1906, Harry's future was now the subject of occasional, inconclusive debate. His irregular schooling and poor eyesight rendered it impossible for him to sit for any examination.

The two years of my scholarship were almost at an end. I was facing the world with the last month's payment in my pocket. W.S.P.U. work had been packed into every moment left over from college work, with no spare time to prepare anything which might produce the money for a crust of bread. The teachers in the painting school had advised me to apply for a free studentship to enable me to complete the five years' course and take the diploma, but I would not, for I saw no possibility of supporting myself under those conditions. Where now should I seek for work? Of the firms to which I had previously sold designs, the ill-fated Emerson's had been a customer. I did not wish to visit them now. Moreover I was ill, tormented by neuralgic pains in my arms and hands and around my ribs. I had suggested to Mrs. Pankhurst that I should be relieved of the W.S.P.U. honorary secretaryship some months before in order that I might prepare myself to meet this pass, but she heatedly insisted that I should retain it till Christabel came to London. I did not wish to become a paid worker for the W.S.P.U., nor did Mrs. Pankhurst desire it. She thought it not well for all her family to be on the Union pay-roll. I was emphatically determined to maintain my own independence. The dream of being an artist in the cause of progress still held me. Moreover, in spite of my love for Christabel, I was, even then, not fully in accord with the spirit of her policy, which eventually always swept Mrs. Pankhurst along with it.

In those closing days of the college session, so full of anxiety for me, and those of my fellows, who were also facing a precarious future, I expected a letter from my mother, if only of encouragement. None came. We were no longer a family;

the movement was overshadowing all personal affections. I had written to her regularly every second day in all the years of my absences. Now, my last letter unanswered, I ceased to write at all, except on matters of importance. The world seemed lonely and cold. It was six weeks before any communication passed between us. I was tired to the breaking-point, and it seemed that Mrs. Roe was wondering whether I should be able to pay the rent when I left the college. Suddenly I resolved to resign the honorary secretaryship: in my uncertainty for the future, I could not give my mind to it as before. The growing work of the Union was inevitably drifting more and more towards Clements Inn, where the Pethick Lawrences were already devoting most of their time to it, and into the hands of the paid organizers. Christabel, too, was nearing the end of her college term: she would be coming to London as chief organizer.

The committee was meeting in my room at Park Walk that evening: I wrote a letter of resignation, left it on the table for Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, and took my drawing-board and materials to the rooms of a fellow student. Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Edith How Martyn, B.Sc., a teacher and member of the I.L.P. and already a close friend of Theresa Billington, were at once appointed as joint honorary secretaries in my place. The committee now consisted of the honorary secretaries and the honorary treasurer, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Annie Kenney, Mary Neal, C. Hodgson, Elizabeth Robins, the novelist, and Mary Gawthorpe and Mrs. Martel, who had both become organizers of the Union. Mrs. Pankhurst was greatly annoyed that I had not deferred my resignation till Christabel could be present to preside over the choice of the new honorary secretary. She feared that divided counsels would result from the appointment; her prophecy proved correct. Henceforth the committee meetings were held in the Lawrence's flat at Clements Inn.

I resolved to leave Park Cottage as soon as the last days of the college term had run their course. It was quiet enough there now, for the organizers were in the provinces, but I did not wish to encounter Mrs. Roe or any of them in what might be a stiff struggle with want. I engaged two unfurnished rooms in Cheyne Walk, on the Embankment, next door to the house once occupied by Turner. I was so racked with pain that I took nearly a week to pack my small belongings. Then I hired a lad with a handcart to take my case, camp-bed, packing-cases of books and paints, and my one little bag of clothes. These I pitched in at random, with the penny-in-the-slot gas meter and a gas ring capable of boiling two small pans, were my only

furniture. I sat among my boxes, ill and lonely, when, all unexpected, Keir Hardie came knocking at my door. With quick discernment and practical kindness, he took command of the situation. He lifted the heavy things into position, and when all was, so far as it could be, in order, took me out for a meal at the little Italian restaurant where Harry and I had lunched on many a happy Sunday. I was immensely cheered, but the immediate future was dark enough. I had 25s. in the world, and my rent was 11s. a week. I cut my expenses to the lowest ebb: Egyptian lentils, and loose cocoa, sold in the King's Road, close by, with the addition of water alone, I selected as convenient and fairly sustaining; bread, milk, eggs, fruit and everything else were discarded as too expensive. After some months, Egyptian lentils became so distasteful that I was unable to swallow them any more. In the meantime they served. But where to look for work? I called at the offices of several magazines. There was always a titter when my name was announced. If the editors consented to see me, they assumed that I wanted to write about Votes for Women, and at that time they were unwilling to give much space to the subject, still less to pay for it. They seemed unable to switch on to the idea that I might be able to do other work. I called at the Bodley Head with some sketches for illustrating an old favourite, "The Open Air" of Richard Jefferies. I saw John Lane; he was exceedingly kind, but reminded me that the copyright of the work had not yet expired. He told me the publisher who held it, and even looked up the address for me to go there at once, but I was too crestfallen at the thought that I had expended my slender resources on a work that must stand or fall by the decision of one publisher, to put its fortune to the test. I thrust the sketches in a drawer. When I was almost at the end of my pence, Keir Hardie got me a commission for a couple of illuminated addresses. Later I wrote a series of articles for the *Whitehall Review*, and got other odds and ends of work which kept me going. Sometimes I made designs for the W.S.P.U. One of these was a banner, depicting Woman as Mother and Worker, which was unveiled at the Portman Rooms in 1908, and the cartoon for which was placed over the W.S.P.U. literature stall at the Hungarian Exhibition at Earl's Court that year. A stall at such an exhibition was regarded as a new and very enterprising departure for a suffrage society in those days. One of the most popular W.S.P.U. productions was the brooch presented by the Union to its released prisoners, a miniature portcullis, bearing the broad arrow in purple, white and green. I had forgotten that it was my own idea and design, till the fact was recalled to me in turning over the files of *Votes*

CHAPTER V

CLEMENTS INN

ON taking up her work as organizer of the W.S.P.U., Christabel had hastened immediately to a by-election at Cockermouth, which polled on August 3rd. She was joined by several other women speakers, all members of the I.L.P. There were three candidates: Liberal, Conservative and Labour, but it was made clear that the W.S.P.U. was in the field purely to attack the Liberal. Christabel was most pointed in emphasizing to the electors that she cared not a straw whether they voted Tory or Labour. Coming from I.L.P. women, these tactics were a shock to the Labour Party. George N. Barnes, of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, one of the Labour Members hitherto most friendly to us, was the first to display his consternation. I was on the terrace of the House of Commons with Keir Hardie one day during the election; Barnes approached us with the words: "Cockermouth! I hear the women are independent!" Keir Hardie said "Yes" in a way he had which precluded further discussion, but that was by no means to be the last of the controversy.

From Cockermouth Christabel came to London to open a campaign in the constituency of John Burns, in Battersea. As the assumed special representative of Labour and democracy in the Government, he was selected for attack by way of exposing the hollowness of the Government's professions, since it would not practise them towards women. Pavement chalking announced the meetings; in the dinner hour at works gates, in the afternoon and evening at street corners. A big muffin bell was rung to summon the crowd. The people soon knew what it meant, and shouted in delight: "The Suffragettes! Come along!" To Christabel these campaigns seemed as the very wine of life. With what eagerness she would mount the chair and the platform and begin: "Now I'm going to tell you about our tactics!" She saturated her mind with politics. From the daily Press, assiduously studied as the first business of every day, from the memoirs and writings of prominent politicians, and the standard works on Parliament and the Constitution, she drew the material for her speeches. Street corner audiences heard from her a keen and ruthless analysis of the Government's latest proposals in home and foreign affairs, enlivened by saucy quips and scathing denunciations.

CLEMENTS INN

tion. It was all destructive; but how much easier to win applause by destructive condemnation than for any constructive scheme, however brilliant, however beneficent! That she was slender, young, with the flawless colouring of a briar rose, and an easy grace cultivated by her enthusiastic practice of the dance, were delicious embellishments to the sterner features of her discourse. Yet the real secret of her attraction was her audacity, fluent in its assurance, confidently gay. "Queen of the mob," J. J. Mallon named her. "Lively arabesques," Max Beerbohm called her gestures. "An enthusiast" in the *Daily Mail* wrote of her during the Peckham by-election:

"Her questioners are for the most part earthenware, and this bit of porcelain does them in the eye, quaintly, daintily, intellectually, glibly. Look to it, Mr. Gautry, or the witchery of Christabel will do you in the eye."

Elizabeth Robins, the novelist, fell in love with her, and with the movement. The result was her drama: "Votes for Women," first produced at the Court Theatre on April 4th, 1907, and her novel *The Convert*, developed from the same theme. Christabel had the admiration of a multitude; hundreds, perhaps thousands of young women adored her to distraction, and longed to be and to do likewise. For the next six years her life was crammed with occupation and incident. Speaking, writing and being interviewed, thinking out plans and tactics, and organizing their performance. To those who had known the lethargic Christabel in the days of Emerson's, and remembered the schoolgirl who could always have done much better if she would, her activity was a marvel. For a time she even managed to fit in a course of dancing lessons by way of recreation. Her physical welfare was meanwhile watched over by Emmeline Pethick Lawrence with the solicitude of a mother. For years she lived as the guest of the Lawrences at Clements Inn, and every week-end which could be snatched from meetings she spent with them at Holmwood. They took her abroad at every holiday.

Mrs. Pankhurst upheld her as an oracle, the Pethick Lawrences lauded her political genius to all comers. As for me, I detested her incipient Toryism; I was wounded by her frequent ruthless casting out of trusty friends for a mere hair's-breadth difference of view; I often considered her policy mistaken, either in conception or in application; but her speaking always delighted me; her gestures, her tones, her crisply-phrased audacity. I admired her, and took pleasure in her, as I had done when we were children together in Russell Square. I avoided crossing swords with her; for six years I refrained from dissent from her decisions, in word or deed. I could not have done this so

consistently were it not that I regarded myself as one who had come into active political life only as a sacrifice to the urgency of the need, departing from the path I had marked out for myself, and to which it was then my intention to return. There came a time when I could efface my desire for the development of another policy no longer; but this was not yet.

In October, 1906, the W.S.P.U. opened offices in Clements Inn; at first there were but two rooms: the large general office and Christabel's room. Emmeline Lawrence worked in her own flat upstairs. Frederick Lawrence had his editorial office for the *Labour Record* in the same building. In 1906 he became business manager of the W.S.P.U. When Mrs. Lawrence became the treasurer the accounts of the Union were placed under professional supervision; first under the honorary auditorship of A. G. Sayers, Chartered Accountant. As the income rapidly increased, the auditing was taken over, on a business basis, by the firm of Sayers & Wesson. The Government prosecutor in the conspiracy trial of 1912 testified to the fact that the accounts of the W.S.P.U. were kept with the precision of a first-class business concern. Lawrence was meticulous in matters of detail and economy, conservative in assuring a surplus to meet all contingencies; but he had large conceptions of equipment and advertisement, which would have done credit to a general of "Big Business." He was a rigid disciplinarian, demanding accuracy and attention from all who worked under him; but he never made the mistake of placing new burdens on a staff already working to the limit of efficiency, nor did he attempt to make the shilling do the work of the pound. For each large additional venture he insisted upon new offices and a new staff; and Emmeline Lawrence, with her remarkable capacity as a treasurer, coupled with the great enthusiasm engendered by the militant tactics, was always able to call up from sympathizers with the movement such money as might be required. "Our treasurer," Christabel once declared, "excites the envy of the entire political world." Of a certainty every other organization in the country wondered at the income of the W.S.P.U. It rose with increasing momentum; reaching £3,000 in 1906-7, £7,000 in 1907-8, £20,000 in 1908-9, £32,000 in 1909-10. Then there came a truce for nine months; the income decreased somewhat, but was still enormous, being £29,000 in 1910-11. Actually the donations had risen to £23,668 16s. 8d. from £18,057 8s. 10d. in the previous year; it was the income from other sources which had dropped. In 1911-12 another truce again resulted in a certain reduction of income, which nevertheless reached the large total of £25,494 17s. 9d., the donations amounting to £19,844 5s. 3d. The years 1912-13 and 1913-14

showed another great increase, reaching £28,502 9s. 6d. and £36,896 6s. 4d., but by this time the finances were under other auspices and another policy. By the end of 1907 the Union already occupied thirteen rooms in Clements Inn, and by the end of 1909 it had spread into twenty-one rooms. In 1910 the literature department was transferred to a shop in Charing Cross Road, other departments taking up the space it had vacated at Clements Inn, the offices in both buildings now comprising thirty-seven rooms. The salaried officials at this time numbered one hundred and ten, the greater part of the propaganda being done by volunteers. All the larger meetings were made a source of income.

In 1907-8 upwards of five thousand meetings were organized, including the first women's suffrage meeting ever held in the great Albert Hall. When the offices at Clements Inn were first opened, weekly "At Homes" were held there on Monday afternoons. In February, 1908, these meetings were transferred to the small Portman Rooms in Baker Street, and a fortnight later to the large Portman Rooms. In July of the same year a move was made to the large Queen's Hall, which was frequently filled to its utmost capacity. Literature sales rose from £60 in 1906 to £9,000 in 1910. In October, 1907, the Pethick Lawrences founded the paper *Votes for Women* and handed it over to the Union in the following year, at which time the cost of its production was covered by advertisements and sales. In 1909-10 the paper reached the zenith of its circulation, having risen in that year from 16,000 copies weekly to nearly 40,000. After this the circulation declined, from causes which will be enumerated later. It was too exclusively a one-subject propaganda organ to command the large circulation which the great efforts made to promote it, and the extensive scale of other W.S.P.U. activities might suggest. Moreover the Union, with an income and central offices far exceeding those at the disposal of the Labour Party, for instance, was a creation of rapid growth under burning enthusiasm. It had not the multitude of local organizations which may under favourable conditions be developed in a lengthy period of growth by a movement like Trade Unionism. The W.S.P.U. effort was not so much to form branches as to create an impression upon the public throughout the country, to set everyone talking about Votes for Women, to keep the subject in the Press, to leave the Government no peace from it. In these objects phenomenal success was achieved. Organizers were holding campaigns, individual volunteers working in districts where no branches existed; indeed the movement was much more largely one of individuals working directly under the headquarters, than of

branches. By the end of 1911 there were thirty-six local W.S.P.U.'s in London, ten of which had their own shops, and twenty-eight centres in the Home Counties. Here, drawing its inspiration largely from headquarters, was the greatest concentration of the Union; in the rest of England, Wales and Scotland were seventeen shops and fifty-eight centres, some of them very strong and active.

In the early days the office "At Homes" were informal gatherings of enthusiasts. Christabel, a slight figure in green with rosy, engaging smiles, mounted a chair, a sheaf of letters and cuttings in her hand, to give the news of the week. Mrs. Petrick Lawrence, a newly released prisoner, an organizer from the provinces, a visitor from overseas, would take up the tale. Old Mrs. Sparborough would bring round the tea, with a wealth of quaint stories and old saws: "Gin was made of junipers and beer of hops once upon a time; now they are made to make men thirsty!" In less than two years all this had been replaced by the impressive weekly gatherings in the large Queen's Hall, which no other organization of men or women in the country attempted to fill save as an occasional rare event. The staff, in the main, had been members and enthusiasts before coming to the office. Miss Kerr, the office manager, eminently methodical and correct, had been running her own typewriting office. She was the daughter of an architect, of whom she had forgotten all save the acerbity, the memory of which, reaching down from her youth, had predisposed her to be a Suffragette. The chief bookkeeper, good-humoured, business-like Beatrice Sanders, was an I.L.P. member, wife of William Sanders of the Fabian Society. Mary Home kept newspaper cuttings and research material, a pale, young woman, with a hare lip, leading a repressed life as the only daughter of an Indian army doctor knighted and retired in Kensington in his old age. Learned young Eta Lamb, a frail orphan, born in Demerara, flitted about like a disembodied spirit for her paleness and her shyness seldom appreciated at her worth. A steady secretary kept in order the engagements of the fly-about Flora Drummond. Jessie, the youngest of the irrepressible Kennneys, was generally engaged on matters affecting militancy. She was as eager in manner as her sister Annie, with more system and less pathos, and without any gift of platform speech. There were hosts of casual volunteers who came in to address envelopes and wrappers for a few odd hours, the plague of good Miss Kerr, who found it well-nigh impossible to impose upon them the excellent order, and to prevent a distracting babel of talk and laughter arising from their tables. Amongst the younger elements always at the office when their work was done, was young Jessie

Spink, a shop assistant, who wore Christabel's portrait on her chest, and eventually changed her name to Vera Wentworth, becoming an organizer with ambitions towards novel writing and the university. There was Vera Holme, an orphan educated in a French convent, and now singing in the chorus of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, who presently became chauffeur to the W.S.P.U., a noisy, explosive young person, frequently rebuked by her elders for lack of dignity. As the staff rapidly grew, the casual volunteers were eliminated from the office. There was work outside for them, paper selling, poster parading, pavement chalking, militant action of various sorts.

Since the days of the first Caxton Hall meeting women of all ages and classes, but especially of the middle class, had been flocking into the W.S.P.U., drawn by the magnet of the militant tactics and the gigantic publicity they achieved. There was a great stirring of the social conscience. The swing of the electoral pendulum from Tory to Liberal and the birth of the Parliamentary Labour Party, had taken place amid a long-continued fire of propaganda, in which the searchlight of publicity had been turned upon the evils of overcrowding, jerry-building and rack-renting, of overwork and under-payment, of dangerous and ill-regulated trades, the hardships of unemployment, the hideous insecurity of the wage worker in the face of illness and old age, the cruel insufficiency of the Poor Law. In the spring of 1906 the *Daily News* held a sweated industries exhibition in the Queen's Hall, where women out-workers, many of them mothers with babies at the breast, were seen making garments, shoes, flowers, boxes and so on, aided at times by their tiny children, at rates so low, and under conditions so miserable, as to awaken horror in the public mind. Statistics of women's wages in other industries were published. The women's Trade Union movement was rising; strikes broke out; from every side came evidence of grievous under-payment of women workers, and of the appalling miseries of widows, and the wives of invalid and unemployed men. Tragic cases of poor women, which in other days might have passed unnoticed, were seized upon to point the moral of woman's inferior social status: Daisy Lord, the young servant sentenced to death for infanticide; Margaret Murphy, the flower-seller, who, after incredible hardships, attempted to poison herself and her ailing youngest child, when she lost the purse containing the scanty proceeds of her sales at the Derby; Julia Decies, committed to seven years' penal servitude for throwing vitriol at the man who had betrayed and deserted her; Sarah Savage, imprisoned on the charge of cruelty to her children for whom she had done all that her miserable poverty

her history, a deputation of women, a hundred and fifty strong, went to the Chamber of Deputies to demand the vote.

On December 23rd a Liberal Parliamentary Committee for Women's Suffrage was formed, the all-party committee established at the beginning of the session being allowed to lapse.

Shortly after my release from prison that autumn, Mrs. Lawrence wrote asking me to go to her for a fortnight in Italy. Again I saw those fair scenes under the splendid sun: Verona, lovely among the plains; Venice, of ancient splendours; Torcello, mysterious jewel of the lagoon. During our halt on the shores of Lago Maggiore I would be off, while the others were asleep, by winding paths to some tiny terraced village, where, setting down my stool, I would make sketches of the men, women and children eagerly waiting their turn, and would cease from work only when the brief violet twilight presaged swift darkness. That care-free life from which I had turned aside allured and delighted me as of old. In Milan I went with Mrs. Lawrence to ask the Conte X for a permit to visit the women's prison. He gave it with cordiality. The prison surprised us. It seemed bright and homely after the machine-like grimness of Holloway. The cells were large rooms with casement windows, like those of an ordinary dwelling, which the inmates could open and shut at will, though there were bars outside. The furniture was that of an ordinary, plain room, the dress like that of the peasants at large. The exercise ground seemed a relic of earlier barbarism, each prisoner in a separate little yard, a soldier with his gun on guard high up in the centre.

In Venice we met the famous Scandinavian writer, Ellen Key. She told us that the twentieth century would be the century of the child. She seemed uninterested in Votes for Women. I hurried with eager steps to the old apartment in the Calle dell'Arco, but found it deserted—the Englishwoman and the Countess were away.

CHAPTER VII

THE BREAK WITH THE LABOUR PARTY

TIME often makes nonsense of political prophecy. The Suffragette leaders inherited from the older movement the theory upon which they never wearied of insisting, that Votes for Women must be brought in as a separate Government measure, and that any attempt to deal with it in connection with an Adult Suffrage Reform Bill would end in manhood suffrage alone. Never were prophets more confident, yet never were predictions more completely falsified by events, and never did Time more convincingly reveal that the effort, the earnestness and the sacrifice had been fruitful; the vaunted political prescience mere trumpery, to be torn to tatters by the realities of events. If the Suffragettes had never intervened in the elections, if they had gone there to oppose all Parties, or no Parties, given the determination of women to go to prison to advance their cause, the movement would have grown and flourished.

The severance from the Labour Party had all the bitterness and heart-break of a family quarrel. Keir Hardie cherished both movements; to him they were but phases of the same cause; but the militants were impatient, the Labour Party slow and amorphous, a mere agglomeration of Trade Unions groping towards a common policy. To Keir Hardie militancy was a divine fire; to Macdonald disreputable "antics." He had no desire to retain these termagants in the Labour movement; to his temperament it appeared that association with the W.S.P.U. must be at the expense of votes in the constituencies. Moreover his ideal of independence for the Labour Party, under the conditions then existing, was a peaceable accommodation with the Liberals whom these harridans, as he thought them, were attacking with unexampled virulence. The dislike which Macdonald had for the militants was abundantly returned by them, above all by Christabel, who regarded all Socialists, Labourists and Liberals as arrant humbugs unless they were prepared to place Votes for Women before all other issues. Like Lydia Becker before her, she considered that all other reforms should be held up till women could participate in their enactment. Very early she based her hope and her policy on the speedy return of a Conservative Government. As Macdonald was apprehensive of losing supporters by association with the militants, so she feared that even a trace of alliance with

¹ Christabel Pankhurst in the *Labour Record*, February, 1907.

the Labour movement might weaken the W.S.P.U. Moreover she could not brook a divided allegiance; she wanted to build up a body of women caring for no public question save the vote, interested in no party or organization save the W.S.P.U.

The attitude of Keir Hardie was wholly different; he wanted the Labour Party to work for Votes for Women because the cause was just, entertaining no ulterior motive. In face of principle, he never counted votes, or feared that one good cause would hurt another. He stood for humanity and progress, his ardour knowing no closed compartments.

The view of Macdonald towards militancy was that of a large section of the Labour Party officialdom. Moreover the Labour Party had come into being on economic issues; Mrs. Pankhurst herself, as a propagandist in the Labour and Socialist movement, had for many years almost laid Votes for Women propaganda aside. From its inception the Labour movement had accepted the principle of sex equality, and given verbal assent to womanhood suffrage. As a question for immediate political pressure by the Labour Party the suffrage had but lately been mooted, and scarcely even yet on a national scale. To make it a foremost plank in the active Party programme, an extensive work must be done in the branches, to move the officials. The main obstacle to be overcome within the Labour movement was the Adult Suffrage controversy. The militants insisted upon support for a limited Bill which, though technically it would establish political sex equality, would enfranchise only one woman in thirteen; the Labour Party stood, and characteristically must stand, for Adult Suffrage. The argument: "Oh yes, we shall get women admitted first, and then we shall go on together for adult suffrage," was too narrow, too tactical, for popular appeal; it might convince, but it did not enthuse; it had constantly to be restated and re-argued. Adult Suffrage was the main refuge of those who did not care for Votes for Women and disliked the militant tactics. The active and advanced minority of the Party, which did the main share of the Party's work throughout the country, was virtually united behind Keir Hardie for Votes for Women at any price. Therein lay the pith of the quarrel. Yet whatever the Labour Party might desire to do, when it came to a question of sheer political weight against the Government, it was, as yet, too small to be powerful; it might, and did, unseat a Government candidate here and there, but in the Commons it was the Irish Party which was able to hold the Government to ransom; with Irish support the Liberals could maintain office even though Labour Members should vote against them. This fact dominated the entire pre-war history of the Parliamentary Labour Party, on

this and every other issue. It produced discouragement and divided councils within the Parliamentary Party, and criticism and discontent in the Labour movement at large.

The W.S.P.U. anti-government policy was much advertised as the policy of Josephine Butler in her fight against the C.D. Acts and of the Irish under Parnell. Towards the Labour Party it was provocative. Initiated by women who were members of the I.L.P., a constituent section of the Labour Party; by women, moreover, who appealed to Labour men and women and to Labour branches for support, it went to the electors saying: Give your vote against the Government; we care not whether you give it to the Tory or Labour candidate. It was made clear that whilst complete devotion to Votes for Women was demanded of the Labour Party, no support for the Labour Party would result, since the W.S.P.U. was pledged not to support the candidates of any Party. Persuasive speakers and canvassers were withdrawn from active work for Labour candidates, in order to pursue this new policy—a serious matter to a struggling movement to which every volunteer was an important asset.

The policy was resolved on already before the General Election of 1905-6 had brought twenty-nine L.R.C. members to Parliament; at a time, indeed, when Will Crooks and Keir Hardie had introduced the Women's Enfranchisement Bill on behalf of the handful of Labour Members who had been returned at recent by-elections. The policy was put into combatant practice, with all its bristling provocations, in the first session of the Labour Party's existence. It is true that Votes for Women had not been placed in the active Parliamentary programme of the Party that first session, but the W.S.P.U. demand had come at the eleventh hour. In spite of its ostentatious neutrality towards Labour candidates, there was at the time great support for the W.S.P.U. in the Labour Party, and above all in the I.L.P. Labour and Socialist branches gave W.S.P.U. organizers active assistance, their platforms were open to its speakers. Throughout the long struggle and its acrid denunciations this friendly spirit still in large measure remained.

The Pethick Lawrences, on joining the W.S.P.U., regarded it still as a part of the Labour movement. Emmeline Pethick Lawrence wrote in the *Labour Record*:

"The women of the Labour Party are at one with the men in their determination to hasten the day when every adult citizen in the country shall have the right to vote. Before that day comes, the bar of sex disqualification must be swept away. . . . This is a people's movement. It is the awakening of the working women of this country to their need to representation."

There were tendencies in the early days of the W.S.P.U. towards the adoption of other objects than the franchise alone; indeed towards a general assistance to reform movements. In May, 1906, on the motion of Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, the Central London Committee of the W.S.P.U. sent a resolution to the Government calling for a commission of inquiry into the unrest amongst native races in Natal. On May 14th the Glasgow branch of the Union attempted to interview the President of the Local Government Board on behalf of the unemployed, and sent him a resolution supporting the then demand of the Labour Party that unemployment should take precedence of all other questions during that session of Parliament. The demand for a Government measure for women's enfranchisement followed. In the summer and autumn of 1906 Adela Pankhurst, organizing for the W.S.P.U. in Yorkshire, mustered the local members in support of the textile strikers at Daubhill and Hebden Bridge, and two members of the W.S.P.U. were actually summoned as strike pickets; articles by Adela on these campaigns appeared in the *Labour Record*. All this was totally at variance with the policy of Christabel. She desired absolute and vigorous concentration on the vote, and on that alone; her persistent effort was directed to eradicate from the W.S.P.U. all other interests.

When the Cocker mouth election revealed that the W.S.P.U. had determined upon a policy of election work without support of Labour candidates, the Manchester Central Branch, of which Christabel and Theresa Billington were members, had discussed their conduct. Not desiring yet to make a complete severance with the I.L.P., Christabel appeared to defend her policy in person. The branch capitulated to her arguments, and declared her policy "not inconsistent" with the constitution of the Party, thus countenancing a degree of personal independence in its members which Christabel herself, the most rigid of disciplinarians, would not have tolerated for an instant had the positions been reversed. This branch decision did not settle the question in the Party. Resentment was intensified by the Huddersfield by-election, where Annie Cobden Sanderson and the other released prisoners, all members of the I.L.P., drew the audiences from the candidates, and where, though the Liberal majority was lowered, the Labour vote was also reduced, the Unionist being the only apparent gainer.

Already a move had been made to counter the activities of the W.S.P.U. Margaret Macdonald had taken the lead in forming the Women's Labour League, which held its preliminary conference on June 21st, 1906. Keir Hardie opposed the formation of this body. He saw in it a rival to the W.S.P.U., moreover he

wanted the women to be in the Labour Party and the Socialist societies on equal terms with men. He did not wish them relegated to a special section outside the main current of the movement, expected to help the Labour Party in elections, but powerless to control its policy. He approved the W.S.P.U. as a fighting body, created for obtaining the vote, and to raise the status of women. To such objections Mrs. Macdonald replied: "I was glad that we in the Labour Party had not separate women's organizations like the other Parties—but now that some people are running off and forming them, I think we should do the same." At an I.L.P. baby-naming ceremony about that time, the child's mother asked Keir Hardie to place the badge of the League on her baby's breast. He turned to me and asked for a W.S.P.U. badge to place beside it.

Another effort to counteract the W.S.P.U. influence was the formation of the Adult Suffrage League, with which Margaret Bondfield and Arthur Henderson were associated. Had this organization worked for Adult Suffrage, it might have performed a most useful function; but it did not. Keir Hardie wrote of it in the *Labour Leader*:

"It holds no meetings, issues no literature, carries on no agitation on behalf of Adult Suffrage. It is never heard of, save when it emerges to oppose the Women's Enfranchisement Bill. Its policy is that of the dog in the manger."

In certain Labour quarters there was bitter resentment at Keir Hardie's open support of the W.S.P.U., and at the great prominence he gave to Votes for Women itself. From the first announcement of the Government Bill to abolish Plural Voting, he had opposed the measure, on the ground that when any change should be made in the franchise, women must be included. No other Labour Member as yet adopted this view; all the others supported the Plural Voting Bill as a step in the right direction. When the measure reached the Report stage Keir Hardie joined with the high Tory, Lord Robert Cecil, in an amendment postponing the operation of the Plural Voting Bill until the General Election following the enactment of Votes for Women on the same terms as men. In support of this amendment only one Member of the Labour Party followed its leader into the Aye Lobby, this single Member stating that he had done so only because he had not the heart to leave "Old Keir" to vote alone.

In spite of all this controversy it had been announced in October, 1906, that the Labour Party would put Women's Enfranchisement amongst the measures it would ballot for in the coming session. At the Labour Party Conference at Belfast in January, 1907, the strife was renewed. Christabel, with her

CHAPTER VI

HARRY

CERTAINLY there was no peace for me at Penshurst, or for anyone else who had touch or sympathy with the militant movement. Keir Hardie came down to see me. He told me that the thought of forcible feeding was making him ill. The levity in the House had surprised and saddened him. "I cannot stay here if it continues," I told him. "I shall have to go to prison to stand by the others." "Of what use to make one more?" he asked me ruefully. "Finish what you are working on at least!" So I resolved. Then a great blow fell.

I returned from my work in the little wood, with my canvas on my back, to find a telegram announcing that my brother had been brought to London, seriously ill. I found him at the nursing home in Pembridge Gardens, completely paralysed from the waist downwards, and suffering intolerable agony. He had been obliged to cease work and return to bed the previous day, and had waked in the morning to find himself unable to move. The people with whom he lodged had sent to Mrs. MacLachlan, a member of the W.S.P.U., who lived near, with the message: "Mr. Pankhurst is dying." She had brought him in her car to the nursing home. He had contracted that terrible and obscure disease, known as infantile paralysis, which sometimes occurs in adults, and in which the grey matter of the spinal cord is the seat of acute inflammation; and destruction, more or less great, occurs in the spinal motor nerve path to the muscles. We could only wait till the inflammation had abated to know how far the lesions extended, and whether there could be any hope that he might regain the use of his limbs.

Mrs. Pankhurst was to sail in a few days' time for a lecture tour to America. So ruthless was the inner call to action, that, finding her son thus stricken, she persevered with her intention. It must be added that she would thereby have the opportunity of earning money which might be needed for her boy, but there was never a moment of doubt as to where she should be substituted—on the platform or by the bedside of her son. The movement was paramount. She left us two together, not knowing what might be his fate.

Each day Dr. Mills tested the boy's progress. He lay there

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extended in his nudity, proportioned like the ancient Greeks, lovely as an image of the young Adonis, showing no trace of illness, save only in his clear, smooth pallor. "A beautiful boy," the doctor murmured in shocked distress each day as he left his room. Gradually he recovered the power to move his toes; then that, too, ebbed away. He could raise himself with his arms by a pulley above his head; that was all; pain he felt in all acuteness, but all movement from the waist downward was destroyed for ever.

In his long, sleepless nights of agony he often asked me: "Shall I be able to walk again?" I lied to him faithfully: "Yes, yes." Then, later, when weeks had passed, learning a desperate cunning, I added, as though this were the whole, unpleasant truth I had wished to keep from his knowledge: "You must not be impatient; it will be rather long." Soon I should have to tell his mother that he would never be able even to sit up unaided; to tell her and to warn her: "He must not know it; he is not strong enough to bear it yet."

She returned to learn the truth my letters had not disclosed to her. "He would be better dead!" she cried in startled consternation. "No, no!" I urged her. "His mind is active; he will occupy himself; he will be happy." Together we pledged ourselves to do what remained for his welfare. I was to stay with him, and when he was strong enough I should continue my work, helping him to find interests he could pursue, thus stricken as he was. A youth with his powers in the bud, though prostrate of limb, he would compensate in mind; his kind philosophy would defy despair; desperately I willed it; it must, it should be so.

Friends of the movement, going to India for a year, generously placed at our disposal their house and studio, and their servants. Convalescent now, Harry was to be moved there next day. Then suddenly he was less well. The move was postponed. Dr. Mills met me with clouded face. The bladder trouble of last year had recurred. Steadily it gained on him, bringing its toll of wearing agony. Consultants were called in; they gave no hope. Recovery was impossible; he might live perhaps three weeks.

In those long nights of pain and fever, delirious or alert, he talked to me of his childhood; his father's death; the shock to the little son to see dear Father's face so changed when they carried him to his bedside on that last day. He told of his hard life down at Mayland. The superintendent thought him a "muff," and treated him with a rough contempt. He had striven to prove his grit: toiled at hard tasks, endured the

bitterest cold. Once it had been his lot to gather a crop of turnips into sacks, and carry them on his back to the gate of the field, in readiness for the cart which would come hastening to take them to the train with barely the time to load. He had filled the sacks and sewn them up before he realized they were too heavy for him to shoulder. He feared to delay by undoing them to reduce their contents, shrank from the bitter reception awaiting him should he fail. Staggering and straining, almost exhausted, he managed at last to get them to the gate at the appointed hour. Even now he groaned in agitation at those memories, as though battling again with those hard conditions. He described, whilst I hid my face and set my teeth to hide my sorrow, the sordid poverty of his lodging; the degenerate husband, the crushed and weary wife, whom the lad in his gentle kindness had tried to help, the ill-nourished children, the animals woefully neglected. One night, as he had lain in bed there, he heard a strange bleating. He went outside and found the goat had given birth to her young in the snow. He spoke of it with a cry in his voice. Deeply shocked, and moved by the mystery of new life in this harsh adversity, he opened the shed and made a bed for her. Suffering continual distress for the poor creatures at his lodging, his own hardships were increased by his sensitive reserve. "Oh, Harry, it was too much for you!" "Don't cry, dear; it has made a man of me." His arm was round me. "It has killed you, my darling boy!" Oh bitter, unspoken thought!

One night when the pain seemed to be crushing him down, as he told me later, he confided to me his love for "Helen." He had arrived in Manchester for the by-election in April of the previous year. The Suffragette committee rooms were in darkness. "Is Mrs. Drummond here?" he questioned. A voice which made him tremble answered he knew not what. He was in love. . . .

When she appeared to his sight he saw she was of his own age, fair and tall, with a bright little face, well poised on a graciously curved throat. He regarded her as the most adorable of beings. Driving the Suffragette four-in-hand at the election, he always contrived a place for her beside him. What days of bliss! But when the election was over she returned to her boarding school at Brighton. He had written to her and received an answer; and once he had gone down there and spent the night on the cliffs, in the hope of catching a glimpse of her. He had seen her for an instant, as she passed by in a troop of girls. Her parents were wealthy, he had been told, and now, more than ever, so sorely stricken, he despaired of ever

being able to reach her. I soothed him to rest, determined to bring her to him.

Next morning I telegraphed to Mrs. May. She came, ugly as an old toad, but human and understanding. Did she know who the girl was? Could she find her? In an hour Helen was with me. I begged her: "Think of him as your young brother. Tell him you love him; he has only three weeks to live." Gallantly she played her part, if part it were. To me, who watched them with anxious absorption, her constant tenderness was very real. All day she sat with him, and at night slept on a sofa to be near the telephone, lest I should summon her. I never did so, but always she was prepared.

Great joy transfigured him, endowing him with extraordinary fortitude; for several days he firmly refused to permit the injection of anodynes, having conceived the idea that they would undermine his character, and render him unworthy of his love. It was with difficulty that Dr. Mills overcame his determination, and only by persuading him that his character would be unharmed. His transcendent happiness comforted the poignancy of my sorrow; he had reached the highest pinnacle of joy. His illness enclosed those two young creatures within a haven of dream; the hard realities of life were shut away. They planned a delightful convalescence; they would go to Venice and take me with them. "Dear Sylvia," they were very kind to her; they called her to sit beside them and share their happiness. She was content; life has no greater gift than this, she told herself. He has achieved the highest point of being: life cannot long endure thus perfect, thus unclouded.

His mother was not glad of his love; she reproached me for having acted without waiting to consult her. This girl, she repined, was taking from her the last of her son.

One night in delirium, or in dream, he imagined that Helen had been stolen away and imprisoned by her father on his account. He cried out in a man's angry tones against himself: "That young scoundrel!" Then clinging to me in misery, with unseeing eyes, bewailed her loss, piteously moaning: "Little Helen . . . little Helen . . . just a few of us . . ." In vain I told him it was a dream, assuring him she would return to-morrow; he did not hear me. Together we wrestled with his loss till he fell back exhausted. Returning day effaced all memory of his dream, renewed his confidence and joy.

Although the doctors declared his malady increasing, and precluded hope, not one of us could believe this radiant boy was dying. We said it with our lips; our minds refused to know it, until those final days, when all his frame was racked with

torture, and only the stifling aid of drugs enabled him to drift into unconsciousness. The end came in the new year—lightly at last, with one small, stifled gasp, as though to wake. . . .

In those sad and yet precious months of illness his life from childhood passed before me in his talk; his gentle, loyal character, unsullied by flaw or smirch, revealing itself with limpid clearness. Reserve and shyness fell from him; his mind gained in maturity. As though subconscious memories were at work, his gestures and phrases strangely recalled his father. Ever more closely he twined himself about my heart; my life seemed merged in his.

When the great blank fell, some remnants of his glory clung about me.

His mother was broken as I had never seen her; huddled together without a care for her appearance, she seemed an old, plain, cheerless woman. Her utter dejection moved me more than her vanished charm. We rode that sad way in the funeral coaches, stricken with regret—regret that we had not saved our boy. I saw him, beautiful, gentle; little forgotten incidents forcing their way into my mind of the toddler with flaxen hair, the eager child watching the trains, the schoolboy meeting me on his holidays, the youth with his dreams. We stood in our hopeless impotence beside the grave. The sods fell down. We parted in the misery of our regret.

Before Mrs. Pankhurst left London she asked me to arrange for a headstone, for she and the Doctor had never been able to bend themselves to the sad task of placing a stone over their first little son. "Choose something you like," she said; then with insistent passion: "Sylvia, remember, when my time comes, I want to be put with my two boys!"

"Blessed are the pure in heart," were the words I chose to be written over them—for that sweet purity and gentleness was all they had.

After our great bereavements life seems grey. I went to the little cottage on Cinder Hill; gathered the paintings and the writings, with all their interest gone; collected my little furniture from the rooms on the Embankment, which Aunt Mary had taken over for a time; and found myself a studio in Linden Gardens, close to the nursing home; and there endeavoured to gather up the broken threads of my life. "Let me still come to see you!" Helen said. "No, dear girl, you must forget; go; and be happy, or I shall blame myself that I have cast a shadow over your future."

Later Harry's small belongings were sent to me. Amongst them I found some little slips of vellum on which he had written:

"I saw thee, beloved,
And having seen, shall ever see,
I as a Greek, and thou,
O Helen, within the walls of Troy.
Tell me, is there no weak spot
In this great wall by which
I could come to thee, beloved?"

last, a hospital cell, as I knew by the sound of babies crying, and the iron bedstead in place of the plank, I climbed to the window and called out loudly: "Are there any Suffragettes here?" There was no response. I tapped the walls on either side, as prisoners do; still no one answered. My companions had evidently been taken to another part of the prison. I was sorry for that: I wanted the others near me to aid them in their struggle.

Rule 243A being in force, we were exempt from the search and permitted to wear our own clothes. Writing materials were not allowed, but I was well supplied with paper and pencils; I wore a bag of them round my waist, under my skirt, and had an additional thick wad of paper as a lining to my brush-and-comb tidy. As it was known that we should hunger strike, we were at once placed in hospital cells, which differed from the ordinary cells in having an ordinary bed with a spring mattress instead of the plank. In spite of the hunger and thirst strike I was able to write fairly steadily, for the greater part of most days, until near the end of my imprisonment, lying on the bed in such a position that what I was doing could not be observed through the spy hole, and always on the *qui vive* to conceal my work between the sheets. I kept a calendar scratched with a hairpin on the white-washed walls of my cell, and printed favourite verses there to keep myself occupied during the periods when my secret writing was likely to be interrupted. For this the governor, a tall, sandy-haired man with a long red face, several times sentenced me to various terms of "close solitary confinement," but as exercise and books from the library had already been withdrawn as a punishment for the hunger strike, the additional punishments were only a matter of form. I permitted myself the great luxury, for such it became, of rinsing out my mouth only once a day, lest the tongue should absorb moisture. I was careful never to swallow a single drop. I was always cold, but I felt only a trace of hunger, and less as the days passed. Thirst strikers crave only for water. Food such as I had never before seen in Holloway was daily placed in my cell: chicken, Brand's essence, fruit. The varied colours diverted my eye in the drabness of the cell, but I had no more inclination to eat the still life groups on my table than if they had been a painting or a vase of flowers. Nevertheless the first night I took the precaution of putting the eatables on the floor under the table, with the stool in front, in case I should go to them in my sleep; then realized the absurdity of such measures, for I could not sleep.

On the third day the two doctors sounded my heart and felt my pulse. The senior told me he had no alternative but to feed

me by force. Then they left the cell. I was thrown into a state of great agitation, heart palpitating with fear, noises in my ears, hot and cold shivers down my spine. I paced the cell, crouched against the wall, knelt by the bed, paced again, longing for some means of escape, resolving, impotently, to fight to prevent the outrage—knowing not what to do. I gathered together in the clothes-basket the prison mug and plate, my out-door shoes—everything the cell contained which might be used as a missile, and placing the basket on the table beside me, stood with my back to the wall, waiting to hurl these things at the doctors as soon as they should appear. Presently I heard footsteps approaching, collecting outside my cell. I was strangled with fear, cold and stunned, yet alert to every sound. The door opened—not the doctors, but a crowd of wardresses filled the doorway. I could not use my missiles upon them; poor tools! Yet nervously the hand that lay on the basket clutched a shoe and it fell amongst them as they closed with me. I struggled, but was overcome. There were six of them, all much bigger and stronger than I. They flung me on my back on the bed, and held me down firmly by shoulders and wrists, hips, knees and ankles. Then the doctors came stealing in. Someone seized me by the head and thrust a sheet under my chin. My eyes were shut. I set my teeth and tightened my lips over them with all my strength. A man's hands were trying to force open my mouth; my breath was coming so fast that I felt as though I should suffocate. His fingers were striving to pull my lips apart—getting inside. I felt them and a steel instrument pressing round my gums, feeling for gaps in my teeth. I was trying to jerk my head away, trying to wrench it free. Two of them were holding it, two of them dragging at my mouth. I was panting and heaving, my breath quicker and quicker, coming now with a low scream which was growing louder. "Here is a gap," one of them said. "No, here is a better one. This long gap here!" A steel instrument pressed my gums, cutting into the flesh. I braced myself to resist that terrible pain. "No, that won't do"—that voice again. "Give me the pointed one!" A stab of sharp, intolerable agony. I wrenched my head free. Again they grasped me. Again the struggle. Again the steel cutting its way in, though I strained my force against it. Then something gradually forced my jaws apart as a screw was turned; the pain was like having the teeth drawn. They were trying to get the tube down my throat, I was struggling madly to stiffen my muscles and close my throat. They got it down, I suppose, though I was unconscious of anything then save a mad revolt of struggling, for they said at last: "That's all!" and I vomited as the tube came up. They left

me on the bed exhausted, gasping for breath and sobbing convulsively.

The same thing happened in the evening, but I was too tired to fight so long.

The governor came to my cell that day or the next accompanied by the crowd. I was accused of striking the principal wardress with the shoe which fell from my hand. The others gave evidence that I had done so. "Did I hurt you?" I asked. She answered "No." I said no more. The governor sentenced me to some days of solitary confinement.

Day after day, morning and evening, the same struggle. Sometimes they used one steel gag on my jaw, sometimes two. "Don't hurt more than you can help," the senior sometimes said when his junior prodded with the sharp point of steel. My gums, where they prised them open, were always sore and bleeding, with bits of loose, jagged flesh; and other parts of the mouth got bruised or pinched in the struggle. Sometimes the tube was coughed up three or four times before they finally got it down. Sometimes, but not often—I was generally too much agitated by then—I felt the tube go right down into the stomach; a sickening, terrifying sensation, especially when it reached the breast. My shoulders were bruised, my back ached during the night. I scarcely slept. Often I fainted once or twice after the feeding.

Infinitely worse than the pain was the sense of degradation; the very fight that one made against the outrage was shattering one's nerves and one's self-control. Daily there grew on me more strongly the realization that the other human beings who were torturing me came to the task with loathing and pity and would have refrained from it if they could. Sometimes when the struggle was over, or even in the heat of it, in a swift flash I felt as though my entity had been broken up into many selves, of which one, aloof and calm, surveyed all this misery, and one, ruthless and unswerving, forced the weak, shrinking body to its ordeal. Sometimes, breaking forth, it seemed, from the inner depths of my being, came outraged, violated, tortured selves; waves of emotion, fear, indignation, wildly up-surge. Whilst all these selves were struggling, resisting, shrinking from the tortures, would rise in them a fierce desire to scream. The ruthless one permitted: "Yes, let them hear it! Others too often suffered dumbly, hiding their wrath and agony! Yes, let them know." Occasionally after the torturers had left the cell, that poor body and its voices, which seemed not part of me, protested, wailing in rage and misery. The ruthless one allowed it. "Yes, let them hear!" Then a small fear would creep up, lest all those voices, of those maddened, agonized sensations, those huge,

untamable emotions, should overwhelm alike the ruthless and the calm self, and, with great effort, I would silence them—lie still and, when I could, clean off all the filth left from the outrage—and put myself to write on my precious store of paper, cautiously lest I might be surprised. At first I kept a regular diary, but as the toll of days lengthened into weeks I lost heart in it; the events it chronicled were too hateful to be dwelt upon. I gave it up and used my paper for more inspiring things, with fear that it might be filled up too quickly. With this thought I wrote verse as the most concentrated form of expression, and the greater part of a play dealing with the Biblical story of David and Bathsheba. I hoped to complete it after release, but in the stress and turmoil of those days it was thrown away by someone tidying up my papers. Sometimes to crush down despondency I would draw on my slate. Once it was an illustration to Omar Khayyam's "Awake for morning in the bowl of night has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight," which helped to divert my mind from the torture. Another time it was Ezekiel xxxiv., where it is told that the shepherds have eaten the fat and clothed themselves in the wool, but they have neither cared for the sick nor sought the lost, but with force and with cruelty have ruled them, so that the flock, for lack of a shepherd, has been scattered and has become meat to all the beasts of the field. Reading the words I saw in my mind's eye a group of shepherds feasting together on the edge of a cliff beside a fire at which they had roasted a young lamb. A ram had caught its horns in the branches of a tree overhanging the chasm. Many of the flock had fallen and were lying dead on the rocks below. The shepherds were dressed like the shepherds of old, but their faces were those of the Cabinet Ministers. Here was another picture for my slate, but a slate is a dismal thing to draw on; one cannot long retain one's zest in making drawings to rub out.

At night I scarcely slept, and when free from pain those dark, quiet hours were more peaceful than the day. I would lie still, thinking of things for which there is too little time in the hurry of one's life. Passages from the Bible I had read during the day brought resplendent visions.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth of peace."

Sometimes I tossed in feverish impatience and anxiety. I felt once that a dear friend was beside me in the cell, and afterwards there smote upon me sometimes a fear that this dear friend was dead.

Not a whisper of news came to me from the outer world, nor even from within the gaol itself. My mother was arrested and

a taxi for Holloway. I remained there till January 10th, decidedly piqued at having been caught so easily.

For some time messages had been reaching me that Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel desired to see me in Paris. I was loath to go, for as the ports were watched I was likely to be arrested on embarking, and I was unwilling to expend my energies in another hunger and thirst strike except as the price of a rousing struggle. I realized that, like so many others, I was to be given the *congé*. In November Elsa Dalglish had been persuaded at Lincoln's Inn House that her duty was to resign the honorary financial secretaryship of the East London Federation, and to "concentrate" on the honorary secretaryship of the Kensington W.S.P.U.¹ as the East End work was on "wrong lines." I was unwilling to argue points of view, which I knew would not be reconciled, unless by the development of events. I was anxious to avoid a rupture in the full impact of our struggle with the Government, and, as far as possible, to stand together in the fight. Yet so insistent were the messages from Paris, that a few days after my release, and as soon as the welcome meetings were over, I agreed to go. The arrangements for the journey were made by Lincoln's Inn House. I was smuggled into a car and driven to Harwich. I insisted that Nora Smyth, who had become financial secretary of the Federation, should go with me to represent our members. My uncle, Herbert Goulden, always kind and thoughtful, to my surprise appeared to accompany me to the boat. He knew, I suppose, the reason for which I was summoned to Paris, though we did not discuss it. I was miserably ill in body, and distressed by the reason of my journey. A small private cabin had been booked for us in an assumed name. I reached it without mishap, but my uncle came down to tell us that detectives were on the boat. So ill that I almost wished I might die, I was tortured throughout the night by the thought that I should be seized on emerging from the cabin, and dragged back on the return voyage next morning. The detectives, however, were not seeking me, but on the trail of diamond thieves, and I landed at the Hook of Holland unmolested. The journey, which in other circumstances would have been delightful, seemed only excessively tiring.

As soon as we reached Paris the business was opened. Christabel, nursing a tiny Pomernian dog, announced that the East London Federation of the W.S.P.U. must become a separate

¹ I had been honorary secretary of the Kensington W.S.P.U. for a short time and had asked Elsa Dalglish to take the position, thinking that we could thus link up our popular campaign work from East to West.

organization; the *Suffragette* would announce this, and unless we immediately chose to adopt one for ourselves, a new name would be given to us. Norah Smyth was known both to Christabel and Mrs. Pankhurst. She had served as unpaid chauffeur to Mrs. Pankhurst; she had been the companion of Helen Craggs at Newnham, and had assisted the W.S.P.U. headquarters in other ways. Dr. Ethel Smyth said of her to Mrs. Pankhurst in my hearing: "She is just the class we want." She happened, in fact, to belong to a distant branch of Ethel Smyth's own family. Having experienced both aspects, she had chosen to work with the East London Federation as the branch of the movement which appealed to her as most useful. Like me, she desired to avoid a breach. Dogged in her fidelities, and by temperament unable to express herself under emotion, she was silent. I said she had accompanied me to represent our members and to report to them. Therefore she should be told the reason for our expulsion. Christabel replied that I had spoken at Lansbury's Larkin release meeting, which was contrary to W.S.P.U. policy. Lansbury was a good fellow, of course, but his motto was: "Let them all come!" The W.S.P.U. did not want to be "mixed up with him." She added: "You have a democratic constitution for your Federation; we do not agree with that." Moreover, she urged, a working women's movement was of no value: working women were the weakest portion of the sex: how could it be otherwise? Their lives were too hard, their education too meagre to equip them for the contest. "Surely it is a mistake to use the weakest for the struggle! We want picked women, the very strongest and most intelligent!" She turned to me. "You have your own ideas. We do not want that; we want all our women to take their instructions and walk in step like an army!" Too tired, too ill to argue, I made no reply. I was oppressed by a sense of tragedy, grieved by her ruthlessness. Her glorification of autocracy seemed to me remote indeed from the struggle we were waging, the grim fight even now proceeding in the cells. I thought of many others who had been thrust aside for some minor difference.

We drove in the Bois; Christabel with the small dog on her arm, I struggling against headache and weakness, Mrs. Pankhurst blanched and emaciated.

We returned to our conversations. "Moreover," urged Christabel, "your Federation appeals for funds; people think it is all part of the same thing. You get donations which might come to us." "That is what *we* say!" Norah Smyth interposed at last; it was a practical point of interest to the financial

secretary. "We know people have sent money to Lincoln's Inn House on account of our big demonstrations, for which we have the bill to pay!" "How much do you want? What would you think a suitable income for your Federation? You can't need much in your simple way!" Christabel challenged her. "All we can raise for our work, like you!" "Suppose I were to say we would allow you something," Mrs. Pankhurst interposed; she was obviously distressed by the discussion. "Would you——?" "Oh, no; we can't have that!" Christabel was emphatic. "It must be a clean cut!" So it went on. "As you will then," I answered at last.

Afterwards, when we were alone together, Christabel said that sometimes we should meet, "not as Suffragettes, but as sisters." To me the words seemed meaningless; we had no life apart from the movement. I felt bruised, as one does, when fighting the foe without, one is struck by the friend within. My mind was thronged with the memories of our childhood: the little heads clustering at the window in Green Hayes; her pink cheeks and the young green shoots in the spring in Russell Square; my father's voice: "You are the four pillars of my house!"

The Federation was unaltered. We had defended the W.S.P.U. against outside attack; we still would do so. Our place in the Union had been merely nominal: indeed the local unions were united by no tie of organization, only by sympathy and support to Lincoln's Inn House. There was no real change, yet the sadness remained. Any resentment I might otherwise have felt, then and always, was allayed by commiseration for Christabel: how terrible to be away over there, giving the orders leading to imprisonment and torture for other women! I would not take that part. A thousand times easier to be in the struggle and share its anguish. I knew the call of a compelling conscience, stronger than all the shrinking of unwilling impulses, dominating the whole being, permitting no reprieve from its dictates. Under that force I believed she, too, was acting. When the War came I was glad of the "clean cut" she had insisted upon.

Norah Smyth and I left Paris immediately. She had arranged with the others that we should travel by a circuitous route through Normandy, taking some days for the journey to give me time to regain strength before running the risk of arrest on touching English soil. I left it all to her. Provided with disguises procured on the journey, we landed unrecognized at Southampton, and were motored to London by a man supporter accustomed to carry Christabel's visitors. He had

been notified by her messengers where to meet us in the town. On reaching London we at once summoned a general meeting of the Federation. The members at first declared they would not be "thrown out" of the W.S.P.U., nor would they agree to a change of name. I persuaded them at last that refusal would open the door to acrimonious discussions, which would hinder our work and deflect attention from the Cause. The name of our organization was then debated. The East London Federation of the Suffragettes was suggested by someone, and at once accepted with enthusiasm. I took no part in the decision. Our colours were to be the old purple, white and green, with the addition of red—no change, as a matter of fact, for we had already adopted the red caps of liberty. Mrs. Pankhurst, annoyed by our choice of name, hastened down to the East End to expostulate; she probably anticipated objections from Paris. "*We* are the Suffragettes! that is the name *we* are always known by," she protested, "and there will be the same confusion as before!" I told her the members had decided it, and I would not interfere.

When the W.S.P.U. sent out a brief announcement of the separation, the newspapers jumped to the conclusion that a split had occurred, because the W.S.P.U. had resolved on a truce from militancy, which I had refused to accept. The *Daily News* observed exultantly:

"There could scarcely be a more crushing condemnation of militancy than its formal abandonment by all save one of its inventors and patentees."

The W.S.P.U. protested:

"There is no change in the policy of the W.S.P.U. . . . The statement already issued by the Union is a recognition of the fact which for a long time has existed—viz., that Miss Sylvia Pankhurst prefers to work on her own account and independently."

Christabel followed this up with a letter over her own signature:

"The true position is that since the W.S.P.U. does not exist for the mere purpose of propaganda, but is a fighting organization, it must have only one policy, one programme and one command. The W.S.P.U. policy and the programme are framed, and the word of command is given by Mrs. Pankhurst and myself. From the very beginning of the militant movement this has been the case. Consequently those who wish to give an independent lead, or to carry out either a programme or a policy which differs from those laid down by the W.S.P.U., must necessarily have an independent organization of their own."

The subject was further developed in the *Suffragette*, coupled with a reference to a new organization for men and women, "The United Suffragists,"¹ which had just been formed, and in which it had been announced that militants and non-militants were to join hands: "Now that something like fifty Suffrage organizations have come into existence those who are connected with the W.S.P.U. . . . are determined not to have their energies and subscriptions divided and sub-divided." The attitude which led to such expulsions as my own and the denunciation of old supporters like Zangwill was upheld:

"As victory grows nearer and the fight, therefore, grows sterner, distinctions have to be drawn and a stringency displayed which were less needful in the early days of the militant movement . . . the course becomes specially dangerous and careful piloting is needed. . . . The Suffragettes as the fighting force—the advance guard—necessarily stand alone. Theirs is a glorious isolation—the splendour of independent strength."

In the following issue appeared a warning against "Liberal intrigue":

"It is as the result of Liberal intrigue and inner weakness that the Labour Party has come to naught and is to-day powerless and despised. Here is a tragic end to twenty-five years of effort and sacrifice, generously spent by those who brought the Labour Party into being!"

Strange that the woman who wrote thus should depart absolutely from the Suffrage movement on the outbreak of war. Yet in those days she appeared inflexible in that one purpose. To me it seemed that her isolation in Paris was the main cause both of her growing intolerance and of her sudden retirement. Yet, withal, one must say: she was the true begetter of the militant movement, though others bore a greater share of the physical suffering of its travail, and the labour of

¹ Barbara Ayrton Gould, daughter of Hertha Ayrton the scientist, and step-sister-in-law to Israel Zangwill, was the honorary secretary. She had visited me before its formation, suggesting that she should join the East London Federation and become assistant treasurer or occupy some other office. I told her I had no doubt the Federation would welcome her, but she afterwards wrote that "there was a general desire" for a new organization of men and women and she was helping to form it. The United Suffragists mustered a large proportion of those who had been thrown out of the W.S.P.U., or had left it on account of recent developments. Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, Nevinston and Evelyn Sharp were members of its committee. Its long list of vice-presidents included William de Morgan, potter and novelist, who had become a subscriber to the W.S.P.U. in 1912, Bernard Shaw, George Lansbury, Israel Zangwill, Lady Olivier, whose husband later became a Member of the first Labour Government, Sir Harry Johnston, the explorer, Beatrice Harraden, St. John Ervine, Sir Ronald Ross, the Rance of Sarawak and several well-known authors, physicians and ministers of religion.

many equally devoted workers maintained its life. Carrying the majority of the W.S.P.U. membership with her, she had travelled far from its starting point in the I.L.P. and her interest in the Women Textile Workers' Labour Representation Committee. Her early speeches had dealt almost entirely with the industrial status of women; her later utterances with the political tactics required, in her judgement, for winning the vote. She who had deprecated and shunned every mention of her sex, now hinged the greater part of her propaganda upon the supposed great prevalence of venereal diseases and the sex excesses of men. "Votes for women and chastity for men," became her favourite slogan, elaborated in articles in the *Suffragette* and a collection of these called *The Great Scourge*. She alleged that seventy-five to eighty per cent. of men become infected with gonorrhœa, and twenty to twenty-five per cent. with syphilis, insisting that "only an insignificant minority—twenty-five per cent. at most"—escaped infection by some form of venereal disease. Women were strongly warned against the dangers of marriage, and assured that large numbers of women were refusing it. The greater part, both of the serious and minor illnesses suffered by married women, including the vague delicacy called "poor health," she declared to be due to the husband having at some time contracted gonorrhœa. Childless marriages were attributed to the same cause. Syphilis she declared to be "the prime reason of a high infantile mortality." The mutilation of a "White Slave Traffic" Bill in 1912, the notorious Piccadilly flat case in 1913,¹ cases of assault on young children punished with leniency by the Courts, were seized upon, week by week, to illustrate the text that "Man is not the 'lord of creation,' but the exterminator of the species." The injuries of women in the sex relationship were now put forward as the main reason and basis of militancy. The tremendously advertised *Great Scourge* was on the whole well received. The *Medical World* cast some doubt upon its statistics, which had been largely culled from American writers:

"Were eighty per cent. of the male population infected with gonorrhœa, the state of the country would be too appalling to contemplate . . . but even if there is some exaggeration, the figures are far too high!"

¹ Queenie Gerald, charged with living on the immoral earnings of other women, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment on July 10th, 1913. Men prominent in social and political circles, whose names were kept out of the case, were said to be frequenters of the brothel, which was alleged to be of luxurious type. Sadist practices were said to be carried on. The case created a tremendous sensation. Rolf Hardie wrote a pamphlet on it, which was published by the National Labour Press.

The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, appointed in 1913, reported in 1915 a prevalence of such diseases which was certainly serious, but very much smaller than that asserted in *The Great Scourge*. Sir William Osler placed syphilis as fourth amongst the "Killing Diseases," and the Commissioners estimated that not less than ten per cent. of the population in large cities was infected with syphilis, congenital or acquired. Thirty to fifty per cent. of sterility amongst women they attributed to gonorrhœa. Later researches suggest that even these estimates were exaggerated. Post mortem examinations of still-born infants by Holland and Lane Clayton showed 8.7 per cent. of syphilis. Other investigators found from eight to eighteen per cent. In the British Army in 1912 a strength of 107,582 men showed an average of 593 men incapacitated from venereal disease.

How exaggerated was the alarmist view of syphilis as the prime cause of the high infant death-rate has been revealed by the great reduction in infant mortality which has happily been secured. The establishment of mother and infant Clinics and Welfare Centres, and other social improvements, did much to reduce the then terribly high rate of infantile mortality. Our East London Federation was subsequently to bear a notable part in this work.

Apart from any intrinsic merit, a great advantage of *The Great Scourge* propaganda in W.S.P.U. eyes was that, like the vote itself, it cut across the usual line of Party programmes. It did not offend the sensitive class consciousness of those frail hot-house blooms, the Conservative supporters of Women's Suffrage, whom the W.S.P.U. was eager to encourage. By its sensational nature, this propaganda encouraged the fevered emotions, and sense of intolerable wrong, required to spur women to the more serious acts of destruction. Christabel was now, in effect, preaching the sex war deprecated and denied by the older Suffragists. Mr. Lawrence had often said he had thrown in his lot with the militant women in order that the Suffragette struggle might not become "a sex war." Not from the speeches of

¹ The death-rate per million of men over fifteen years of age, from venereal diseases was given as follows:

I. Upper and middle classes	302
II. Intermediate between I and III	280
III. Skilled labour	264
IV. Intermediate between III and V	304
V. Unskilled labour	429
VI. Textile workers	186
VII. Miners	177
VIII. Agricultural labourers	108

Mrs. Pankhurst, who never lost her gift of sympathy with her audiences, but from the columns of the *Suffragette* the deduction was clear: women were purer, nobler and more courageous, men were an inferior body, greatly in need of purification; the W.S.P.U. being the chosen instrument capable of administering the purge. Masses of women, especially of the middle class, were affected by this attitude, even though they remained outside the ranks of the Union. The pendulum had swung far, indeed, from the womanly humility of Victorian times. No matter; it must right itself.

The propaganda for sexual purity made strong appeal to the clergy and social workers, brought by the nature of their work into close contact with the sad effects of prostitution and the sexual abuse of girl children. Mrs. Fawcett, always strictly temperate in her observations, testified to the fact that Votes for Women had made great advances amongst the clergy during the years 1913-14, the period in which the W.S.P.U. had shrieked this propaganda of "chastity for men" in every key of vehemence and excitement. A number of clergy were ardent supporters of the W.S.P.U., speaking from its platforms, contributing to its organ, hailing the militants as heroines and martyrs.

In the East End, with its miserable housing, its ill-paid casual employment and harsh privations bravely borne by masses of toilers, life wore another aspect. The yoke of poverty oppressing all, was a factor no one-sided propaganda could disregard. The women speakers who rose up from the slums were struggling, day in day out, with the ills which to others were merely hearsay. Sometimes a group of them went with me to the drawing-rooms of Kensington and Mayfair; their speeches made a startling impression upon those women of another world, to whom hard manual toil and the lack of necessities were unknown. Many of the W.S.P.U. speakers came down to us as before: Mary Leigh, Amy Hicks, Theodora Bonwick, Mary Paterson, Mrs. Bouvier, that brave, persistent Russian, and many others; but it was from our own East End speakers that our movement took its life. There was wise, logical Charlotte Drake of Custom House, who, left an orphan with young brothers and sisters, had worked both as barmaid and sewing machinist, and who recorded in her clear memory incidents, curious, humorous and tragic, which stirred her East End audiences by their truth. Told with her brief, inimitable keenness, they would have made the fortune of a realistic novelist. "You ought to breed," was her first spoken greeting to me, when she came to my side as I was being carried to speak on a stretcher on release from one of

CHAPTER VI

GREATER DESTRUCTION—SUFFRAGETTE MILITANCY TURNS
UPON ULSTER

THE destruction wrought in the seven months of 1914 before the War excelled that of the previous year.¹ Three Scotch castles were destroyed by fire on a single night. The Carnegie Library in Birmingham was burnt. The Rokeby Venus, falsely, as I consider, attributed to Velazquez, and purchased for the National Gallery at a cost of £45,000, was mutilated by Mary Richardson. Romney's "Master Thornhill," in the Birmingham Art Gallery, was slashed by Bertha Ryland, daughter of an early Suffragist. Carlyle's portrait of Millais in the National Portrait Gallery, and numbers of other pictures were attacked, a Bartolozzi drawing in the Doré Gallery being completely ruined. Many large empty houses in all parts of the country were set on fire, including Redlynch House, Somerset, where the damage was estimated at £40,000. Railway stations, piers, sports pavilions, haystacks were set on fire. Attempts were made to blow up reservoirs. A bomb exploded in Westminster Abbey, and in the fashionable church of St. George's, Hanover Square, where a famous stained-glass window from Malines was damaged. There were two explosions in St. John's, Westminster, and one in St. Martin's in the Fields, and in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. The ancient Breadsall Church, near Derby, was destroyed, and the ancient Wargrave Church. The organ was flooded at the Albert Hall, the damage amounting to £2,000. The bombs and other material used were of a much more professional and formidable character than those of the early period of secret militancy. One hundred and forty-one acts of destruction were chronicled in the Press during the first seven months of 1914. In respect of these there was a total of thirty-five arrests. There were one hundred and seven cases of arson, but only nine arrests. On the other hand, window smashing and outrages in picture galleries and museums,

¹ Amongst 261 of the more serious acts of destruction attributed by the Press to the Suffragettes in the years 1913 and 1914, an estimate of the loss appeared in 78 cases only. For these 78 cases the estimated loss totalled £722,850. The remaining 183 cases must have shown a much higher total had the damage been given. They included the destruction of two ancient churches, piers, grandstands, timber-yards, factories and private houses, including Lloyd George's new house and Sir William Lever's bungalow.

made under the public eye, almost invariably resulted in the arrest of all the perpetrators.

The destruction of church property becoming more serious and frequent, and the Suffragette prayers and interruptions in churches more unrestrained, the feelings of some of the clergy became acerb. The Rev. C. H. Percival, Vicar of All Saints, Branksome, Bournemouth, went so far as to say he would "honour the man or woman who took the law into his or her own hands against the Suffragettes." Dean Inge, when a woman wrote to him to protest that a verger had struck her in the face while she uttered her prayer, replied: "I am glad to have your name and address, which may be useful to the police." He averred that the "shameless monkey-tricks" and the "infamous crimes" and "unparalleled wickedness" of "the scoundrels" with whom she appeared to be in sympathy had "ruined for a generation" a political reform of which he had long been in favour. Thus may the prophets be misled. On the other hand, the Bishop of Kensington wrote in the *Daily Graphic*: "The present outbursts of militancy are mainly due to the persistent disregard of the claims of women." Canon Scott Holland, in a strong plea for the Suffrage, wrote that forcible feeding was "hideously cruel," and "maddens people into criminal acts of indignant retaliation." The Bishop of Durham, when interviewed by a W.S.P.U. deputation, said: "I will do all I can to help, and will do it as soon as possible." The Bishop of Leicester, Dr. Peake, in reply to a deputation, said that forcible feeding was a detestable practice, politically, legally and medically indefensible, but pointed out that four bishops and five hundred clergymen had already protested against it.

In February forty women, much distressed by accounts of the Holloway prisoners, went from one of the W.S.P.U. meetings in the Knightsbridge Hall to the Bishop of London, to urge his intervention against forcible feeding. He promised his help, and eventually made two visits to Holloway, after which he reported that forcible feeding was performed "in the kindest spirit," and pleaded for a cessation of militancy, promising in that event to lead a Votes for Women deputation to the Prime Minister. "A whitewash brush has been put in your hand, my Lord Bishop!" was the W.S.P.U. reply. In fact his statements had made light of the effect which forcible feeding had had upon the prisoners, though the Judge who presently sentenced

¹ The Monday afternoon "At Homes" had removed there from the London Pavilion, the management of the former hall having objected to the platform struggles with the police.

replied that our action was not in conformity with W.S.P.U. policy; as to me, she said: "Tell her I advise her when she comes out of prison to go home and let her friends take care of her, as Annie Kenney and Mrs. Drummond have done." Norah Smyth was shocked by the reply. She knew me well enough to understand that I should not withdraw. Moreover she considered it would be humiliating to me and to the Federation to give way. "It is like Asquith saying the women could walk out of prison if they would give an undertaking!" she protested when she afterwards showed me the letter. "You ought not to have written at all," I told her. "Did you not understand in Paris that no family or other considerations are permitted to intervene?" But this was later.

In prison the days crawled by, weary and painful from illness, yet otherwise calm. For the first time I made no fight to hasten release—the longer they kept me, the better for my purpose. I made no effort to write. My thoughts were occupied with the struggle before me. I wondered how long it would last. I had never believed myself so near the limit of my endurance as the doctors, in prison and out, had assured me to be the case. I suspected one could last much longer without food and water than was generally supposed by those who had dealt with the hunger strikers. I anticipated that the end would be very painful and protracted. I conceived a possibility, not, I hoped, a probability, that at a certain stage I might lose command of myself, lose perhaps my memory of present events, and fall into a state of semi-consciousness when nourishment could be pressed upon me. If that were to happen, with returning strength I should have to begin all the weary struggle over again. I hoped this might not be, that my mind would remain alert until the last. Yet I was resolved for all contingencies.

Release came on June 18th. The wardresses took me, as usual, in a taxi to Old Ford Road. A crowd had collected, for the pickets had telephoned I was coming. Norah Smyth had a motor at the door, waiting to take me to Westminster. Mrs. Payne helping me, I washed my face, changed the dress I had worn night and day in the prison, and came out immediately to take my seat in the car. The women were weeping. In a bodily sense I was weak, for this last hunger and thirst strike had followed only ten days after the preceding one, but I was cool and collected; only when I attempted to stand or sit upright I felt faint. I told Norah Smyth to call to the women to be of good cheer, and to drive with speed to the House of Commons. My mind was concentrated on the object, emotionless and unfearing, like one who is running a race.

The long summer evening was fading as we reached the House. A little crowd of our women were waiting for us there. We drew up near Richard Cœur de Lion's statue. Keir Hardie and Josiah Wedgwood came out to the car, both very gentle and kind. Keir Hardie said it would be best for me to go with them to wait in St. Stephen's Hall whilst they made efforts to communicate with Asquith. I smiled at his thoughtfulness: "I would, but they will not let me in," I told him. He went to arrange it, but came back saying that I was still black-listed.¹ I must do, he told me, as Members of Parliament do when compelled to withdraw from the Chamber; I must write a letter to Mr. Speaker apologizing for having "broken the rules of the House." It was simply a matter of form, he urged. To please him I consented. He returned with the news I expected: Mr. Speaker maintained his prohibition. "I must go to the steps; there is nothing else for it," I told him. He begged me to wait in the car a little while longer, and hurried away to get speech with Asquith. My companions, too, begged me to wait his return. I waited; the time seemed endless.

I called to my friends to help me, over-riding kind efforts to delay and obstruct me. Norah Smyth and the others supported me. They swerved from the Stranger's Entrance, unable, I saw, to face the policemen standing on the steps. Their instinct might be right—I should be moved immediately from that spot. I indicated the little square door to the left, nearer to Cromwell's statue, and there they laid me. A police inspector came forward to tell me I could not stay there. I replied I must wait there till the Prime Minister would consent to receive the deputation. There was some altercation. Policemen were bending to seize me, when Lansbury and Nevinson came running out to say that Asquith had agreed to receive us. I thought they might be mistaken, or saying it just to induce me to go away; to save me from being taken to prison. Then I saw Keir Hardie beside me. He told me, in his quiet way, that Asquith would receive six of our women on Saturday morning. I knew it was true; he would not lie. People began to cheer. Everyone was laughing and talking around me. Keir Hardie and Nevinson, Norah Smyth and Mrs. Watkins, dozens of people were helping me back to the car, amid waving of hands and handkerchiefs, congratulations and delight. "We are winning! At last we are winning!" Everyone felt this an omen of the turning of the tide. As many women as possible crowded on to the car. Back we went racing to the East End. Then: "Do you not think we could stop for a drink of water now?" I asked them. They laughed again.

¹ For throwing a stone at the picture of Speaker Finch being held in the chair.

We pulled up at a "Cabin" Restaurant; a jug of hot water was brought to the car. The news had flown round. "Happy to bring it! Of course no charge!"

Outside 400 Old Ford Road the crowd of women had been fretting and crying throughout the evening. The telephone rang. Mrs. Payne rushed out, her dear face beaming, to give them the news. They responded with laughing and cheering. The road was thronged when I reached it. What cheers! What laughter, and what excitement! Mrs. Payne hugged me; we kissed each other and laughed. What talk and excitement! We could not sleep.

Next day I prepared a statement to be read by Mrs. Julia Scurr. She was to lead the deputation. I did not care to go. Let these working mothers speak for themselves; it was for this I had struggled. The statement would give them their cue and break the ice for them. I had put into it what I knew to be near their hearts. They were photographed at our door before starting. Stout old Mrs. Savoy, the brush-maker, jolly and brave in spite of her dropsy and her palpitations—an example, indeed, to the *malades imaginaires*. "The best woman in Old Ford," George Lansbury called her. In spite of her poverty, she was bringing up two orphan boys, and was ever ready to share her last crust, or perform any service for a neighbour, from bringing her baby into the world to scrubbing out her room, or minding her children at need. She had called herself "Mrs. Hughes" for the day, because her husband, an elderly eccentric, almost past work, objected to having his "name in the papers." Motherly, anxious Mrs. Payne. Mrs. Bird, the wife of a transport worker, keeping a home for him and their six children on his wage of 25s. a week. Mrs. Parsons, a frail little woman, who, having a delicate father, had worked to help her mother to support her little brothers since she was twelve years of age; and now with a husband earning a small wage, was caring for her two little girls and an orphaned niece. Mrs. Watkins. Mrs. Scurr, who till the first advent of the Suffragettes in 1905-6, had been a "quiet housewife," but aroused by them to a sense of public duty, as she often told me, was now a vigilant Poor Law Guardian. They had been selected by the mass meetings as women known and respected in the districts where they lived.

They brought before the Prime Minister, in simple, moving phrases, the toilsome life of poor women. The Alien Immigration Board had but recently refused to permit a Russian girl to come into this country, because her prospective employer offered her a weekly wage of only 13s. 6d.; the Board declared she could not live in London under 17s. 6d. Yet none of the Trade Boards

set up to alleviate the conditions of women wage earners had fixed a higher minimum wage than 13s. 6d. for a full week's work, and in most of the industries concerned there was much short time. Mrs. Savoy herself, who had worked forty-three years as a brush-maker, was only paid 1¼d. for a brush which took her nearly two hours to make. The Prime Minister and his companions started, as though it had been a bomb, when she put the brush, with its two hundred holes, on the table. "I do all the work; I keep my home; I ought to have a vote for it!" As a girl Mrs. Parsons had earned less than 1s. a day by packing cigarettes. Mrs. Bird, with her six children, declared herself better off than thousands of other wives, for thousands of husbands earned only 18s. a week, and many had larger families than hers. "The husband scarcely knows how the money is spent," one of them urged. "A man brings his money home and lays it on the table, and then he is able to go out. There are all the expenses of rent, clubs and everything, and then clothes wear out; and you have to find clothes for the children, and the things that wear out in the home: it all has to come out of the weekly money; you do not get any extra." "You can tell we do not get a living, but an existence." They spoke of the housing conditions, so hideous in their district; the yards "only fit for a dirt pail." "We have to leave our children to the mercy of the street." It was but a little while after the deputation that the child of one of our active members was run over and killed by a motor-bus. "In a strike it is the mother who has to do the ferreting." "Our husbands die on the average at an earlier age than the men of other classes; modern industrialism kills them off rapidly by accident and overwork. . . . The Poor Law has treated us mercilessly. It is hated by every poor woman. In many cases out-relief is altogether denied to the widow and the deserted wife; only the Workhouse is offered, which means separation from the children. Where out-relief is given, it is surrounded by humiliating conditions. . . . The women local government voters number only one-sixth of the electorate. The Boards of Guardians are obliged to administer the rules of the Local Government Board, which is controlled by Parliament." Mrs. Payne disclosed her great sorrow: "I have had to work on the side of my husband making shoes, and to look after my daughter and do everything for her. From the time she was born until she died she never combed her own hair; she was mentally deficient and lived to be twenty-seven. . . . Once when my girl was taken bad she went into the Poplar Workhouse. My husband thought he was compelled to let her go. When I got there next morning they had put her in a padded room. I

German Peril." Mrs. Pankhurst toured the country, making recruiting speeches. Her supporters handed the white feather to every young man they encountered wearing civilian dress, and bobbed up at Hyde Park meetings with placards: "Intern Them All." The *Suffragette* appeared again on April 16th, 1915, as a war paper, and on October 15th changed its name to *Britannia*.¹ There week by week Christabel demanded the military conscription of men, and the industrial conscription of women, "national service" as it was termed. In flamboyant terms she called also for the internment of all people of enemy race, men and women, young and old, found on these shores, and for a more complete and ruthless enforcement of the blockade of enemy and neutral nations. She insisted that this must be "a war of attrition." In her ferocious zeal for relentless prosecution of the War, she demanded the resignation of Sir Edward Grey, Lord Robert Cecil, General Sir William Robertson and Sir Eyre Crowe, whom she considered too mild and dilatory in method. So furious was her attack that, in its over-fervent support of the National War policy, *Britannia* was many times raided by the police, and experienced greater difficulty in appearing than had befallen the *Suffragette*. Indeed it was compelled at last to set up its own printing press. A gentler impulse was embodied in an early proposal of Mrs. Pankhurst to set up Women's Social and Political Union Homes for illegitimate girl "war babies," but only five children were adopted. Sterner interests prevailed. Lloyd George, whom Christabel had regarded as the most bitter and dangerous enemy of women, was now the one politician in whom she and Mrs. Pankhurst placed confidence.

When the first Russian Revolution took place and Kerensky rose to power, Mrs. Pankhurst—like many others—journeyed to Russia, in the vain effort to prevent that vast country with its starving multitudes from retiring from the War. Her circuit was like that of Hervé, the French "anti-patriot," as for many years he had called himself, and of whom she had been an ardent admirer in her youth. Christabel received the commendation of many war enthusiasts. Lord Northcliffe observed that she ought to be in the Cabinet. Lord Astor told me, when I happened to be seated beside him at dinner, that he had received two letters from her; he had sent one of them to the War Office, the other to the Minister of Blockade. Undoubtedly he was much impressed by their contents.

When first I read in the Press that Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel were returning to England for a recruiting campaign

¹ *Britannia* announced the transformation of the W.S.P.U. to the *Women's Party*, November 2nd, 1917.

I wept. To me this seemed a tragic betrayal of the great movement to bring the mother-half of the race into the councils of the nations. "Women would stand for peace!" How often, how often had they and all of us averred it!

My own activities were no more to their taste than theirs to mine, and I was publicly repudiated by Mrs. Pankhurst,¹ through the medium of the Press. Adela in Australia was working with Vida Goldstein in the Women's Party there much as I was doing here. She took a prominent part in opposing Conscription and in securing its defeat when submitted to Referendum. She, too, was publicly repudiated by Mrs. Pankhurst. Families which remain on unruffled terms, though their members are in opposing political parties, take their politics less keenly to heart than we Pankhursts. Yet often in those days I woke in the night, hearing the words of the father who had guided our early thoughts: "My children are the four pillars of my house!"

It was at a great joint meeting we had organized in Trafalgar Square on Sunday, September 26th, 1915, that the newsboys began crying: "Death of Keir Hardie!" The news stared at me from the posters in their hands. Shocked and trembling, I turned to W. C. Anderson, M.P., of the I.L.P., who stood beside me: "Is it true?" "It must be," he answered gently, and turned with practical mind to draft a resolution. "I will move it," he said; "he was our man." I knew that Keir Hardie had been failing since the early days of the War. The great slaughter, the rending of the bonds of international fraternity, on which he had built his hopes, had broken him. Quite early he had had a stroke in the House of Commons after some conflict with the jingoes. When he left London for the last time he had told me quietly that his active life was ended, and that this was forever farewell, for he would never return. In his careful way he arranged for the disposal of his books and furniture and gave up his rooms, foreseeing his end, and fronting it without flinching or regret.

I spent the day which followed his death writing an article about him for the *Dreadnought* and refusing to see anyone; my sole respite for mourning and tribute to this great friend; then I was back in the surge of work, with the charge on my conscience to be doubly steadfast and true.

¹ *Britannia*, April 28th, 1916, published the following paragraph:

"A MESSAGE FROM MRS. PANKHURST.

"Hearing of a demonstration recently held in Trafalgar Square, Mrs. Pankhurst, who is at present in America, sent the following cable: 'Strongly repudiate and condemn Sylvia's foolish and unpatriotic conduct. Regret I cannot prevent use of name. Make this public.'"

[This was a demonstration for Adult Suffrage and against Conscription.]

a Franchise Act for men inevitable. I believed the form of Suffrage we should get for women largely depended on the Suffrage movement itself.

In April the Liberal and Unionist War Committees demanded a vote for every soldier in the trenches, and *The Times* threatened to force a General Election. The thought came to me: "Call another Suffrage conference." Norah Smyth, our financial secretary, funked the expense. I made the proposal to the executive of the Women's International League. After all, I thought, by working from another angle new influences might be brought into play. The conference met at the Fabian rooms in June. After two days' discussion some of the organizations withdrew, whilst those which found themselves able to work together for a wider demand formed a small provisional committee. A further meeting in the Central Hall, Westminster, was called on September 2nd, 1916, when a National Council for Adult Suffrage was set up. The active officials were Miss Katharine Marshall, Mrs. Swanwick and Miss K. D. Courtney, all of whom were members of the Women's International League and seceders from the National Union of Suffrage Societies. They were determined to run the new organization in their own way and to do all the wire-pulling, at which they were adept. In spite of their secession from her on her War policy, they were still obsessed by the methods and ideals they had acquired under Mrs. Fawcett.

Meanwhile a new factor had arisen: Asquith had come forward definitely as a convert to Women's Suffrage. Speaking in Parliament on August 14th, 1916, he said:

"The moment you begin a general enfranchisement on these lines of State Service you are brought face to face with another most formidable proposition. What are you going to do with the women? I have received a great many representations from those who are authorized to speak for them, and I am bound to say that they have presented to me not only a reasonable, but I think, from their point of view, an unanswerable case. They say . . . If we are going to bring in a new class of electors, on whatever ground of State Service, they point out—and we cannot possibly deny their claim—that during this War the women of this country have rendered as effective service in the prosecution of the War as any other class of the community . . . what is more—and this is a point which makes a special appeal to me—they say when the War comes to an end . . . when the process of industrial reconstruction has to be set on foot, have not the women a special claim to be heard on the many questions which will arise directly affecting their interest, and possibly meaning for them large displacement of labour? I say quite frankly that I cannot deny that claim."

Since our deputation of 1914 I had regarded him as a convert, whether of expediency or conviction mattered not, though I like to believe that conviction had at least some part in the change. This last utterance was a clear declaration on which to build. I wrote on behalf of our Federation, congratulating him, and urging him to implement his statement in legislation.

Still stranger indeed than the change in Asquith was that in Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel. Asquith had not long made his statement when Commander Bellairs rose up to say that he had been called out and authorized by Mrs. Pankhurst on behalf of the Women's Social and Political Union to repudiate the statement of the Prime Minister and to say that they would "not allow themselves to be used to prevent soldiers and sailors from being given the vote." Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel were now in fact demanding, not votes for women—but votes for the men in the fighting forces. At a meeting held with this object in the Queen's Hall, on October 1st, Mrs. Pankhurst complained that Asquith, having previously attempted "to use the men to dish the women," was now "using the women to dish the men."

"The men had proved their claim to the vote by making it possible to keep a country in which to vote. Could any woman face the possibility of the affairs of the country being settled by Conscientious Objectors, passive resisters and shirkers? . . . In the name of the women she declared that they were ready to make every sacrifice, in order that the sacrifices already made should not be made in vain."

Christabel's organ, *Britannia*, stated that the question of women's enfranchisement would "arise again in practical shape after the victory of the Allies."¹

An effort to stave off the inevitable Franchise Extension Act was made in the Special Register Bill, which passed its Second Reading on August 16th, 1916, and which Asquith himself admitted to be "a lopsided temporary makeshift." On November 1st he stated that he was prepared to give the House an opportunity to decide, either by Bill or Resolution, whether a Special Franchise should be created for soldiers and sailors as such. We wrote again and repeatedly to remind him of his many promises. We recalled to him the fiasco of the last Reform Bill with its promised "opportunity" for a Women's Amendment, urging him on this occasion to include women in the original Bill.

Asquith's tenure of office was daily growing more precarious. The factions which were presently to place Lloyd George in his political shoes were employing votes for the men in the trenches

¹ *Britannia*, November 26th, 1915.

324
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Unshackled

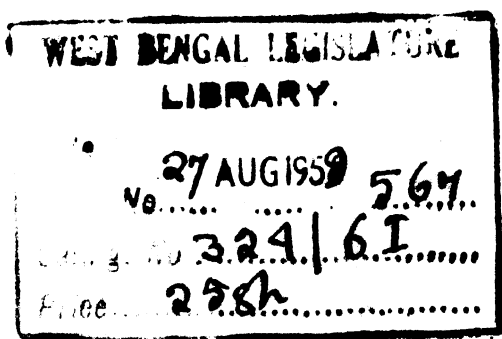
THE STORY OF HOW WE WON THE VOTE,

Dame Christabel Pankhurst

Edited by the Right Honourable

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

of Peaslake



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serious purpose behind my recent application. It also seemed that a knowledge of law might be useful in work for woman suffrage, and useful it was indeed to prove. The threefold task of business, woman suffrage work, and study for the degree would be rather difficult to manage, yet Mother liked to have one of her own family by her side in her business. Formerly it had been her sister. In her latest venture it had been I, and now she turned to her second daughter, Sylvia. After her travelling scholarship ran out, Sylvia had stayed on in Venice and she was still there. Mother now called her home to take a turn of business duty. Sylvia's artistic gift might adapt her better than me to some phases of the undertaking, especially as her task was mainly to design and paint in a studio, but she, too, was not born for business. She did part-time at business, part-time at the School of Art. After a while she returned wholly to the School of Art and continued her success there.

Then Mother herself, whose political zeal was reviving, yielded to the competing claims of politics. She gave up her business and concentrated upon her official duties and upon the campaign for women's enfranchisement.

Mother strongly approved the idea of urging the Labour movement to make woman suffrage an urgent part of its programme and so bring the question into immediate practical politics, if only by stirring the other political parties to emulation. The practical difficulty was, however, that Labour men cared relatively little for franchise reform even for men, because already the working-men voters were in a majority. 'We have votes enough to get all we want, if the votes are used as we wish them to be used,' was their thought. To be in favour of women having the vote was the proper thing, but when it came to action there were many other matters that to men, even Labour men, seemed much more important. Mother and I arrived at the conclusion that who would be politically free herself must strike the blow, and that women could not do better than pay the independent Labour movement the compliment of imitation, by starting an independent women's movement.

'Women,' said Mother on a memorable occasion, 'we must do the work ourselves. We must have an independent women's movement. Come to my house tomorrow and we will arrange it!'

Next day a little group assembled, mostly wives of Labour men; women of character and personality. We resolved ourselves into the Women's Social and Political Union, on an independent non-party, non-class foundation. Neither Mother nor I held any office. We did not want the Pankhurst name to appear lest the Union be discounted as 'just Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel' and dubbed 'a family party'. Later on, when the W.S.P.U. grew to be a power in the land, it mattered not what anyone called it. It became a family party indeed, when hosts of women of all sorts and conditions, in all parts of the country, were united by a common purpose and devotion. We gloried in being in that sense a family party, but in the small beginnings of things it was politic that officers should not have the Pankhurst name.

W.S.P.U. business was done at weekly meetings and all present subscribed what they could to the funds. Mother supplied the rest of the money needed. Militancy was not part of the programme in those early days. Our work was still entirely peaceful and educational, being designed to prove to the public women's need of the vote and to rouse women to insist that the political parties, including the new Labour Party, should take practical and speedy action in our cause.

Heavy work it was to travel hither and thither, to Lancashire, and Cheshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, watching occasion, and taking it, to bring woman suffrage to the fore, at public meetings, at Trade Union gatherings, at lecture and debating societies, in parks and fair grounds, and at street corners. 'Won't you speak on some *other* subject than the Vote?' would be the appeal, but the answer was always adamantly: No. We did not speak for speaking's sake. If we could not have a say on the great and vital cause, then we would rather stay comfortably at home. As women speakers were then more of a rarity than now and much in demand, the answer would be: 'Please come all the same and speak on whatever you will.' Fine training for speakers was all that varied and incessant platform experience. To speak innumerable times, in widely differing conditions, indoors and outdoors, at the smallest and the largest meetings, to all sorts of people, of every place in the social and educational scale—that led to elasticity, suppleness and naturalness, a command of a speaker's whole resources—in a word, to spontaneity.

In those early days Annie Kenney joined us. The Oldham Trades Council asked me to address a meeting, and as my subject was the

1905—Militancy

Prison—N.-W. Manchester Election—The Liberal Rally

AS THE year 1905 went on, the Liberal Party was more clearly in the ascendant and the Liberal leaders counted upon early political office. Manchester—the Free Trade Hall—was again to be the scene of a rally at which the Liberal Party would utter their war cry for the General Election. Here was my chance! I would make amends for my weakness in not pressing that earlier amendment! Now there should be an act the effect of which would remain, a protest not of word but of deed. Prison this time! Prison would mean a fact that could not fade from the record, a proof of women's political discontent, a demonstration that the political subjection of women rested not on women's consent but on *force majeure* used to impose and enforce it.

Compelling argument for our protest at this Free Trade Hall meeting was provided. Unemployment was, just then, as it has been in more recent days, a pressing problem. Great hope had been set upon the Unemployment Bill brought before Parliament, but the Conservative Government was accused of frustrating this hope by shelving the Bill. The Manchester unemployed gathered at an open-air protest meeting in a place unauthorized by the police. The meeting was dispersed, the crowd scattering hither and thither. Quite a small and mild affair it was, as we on the spot well knew, but the news grew in telling, and reached London as an Unemployed Riot in Manchester. The politicians were stirred—they acted. The Unemployment Bill was brought down from the shelf and passed into law.

We must do something like that to get a Woman Suffrage Bill carried, I resolved. Militancy by the unemployed, *militancy that was only thought to have happened*, moved the Government to do what before they would not or could not do! That Government, like preceding Governments, had shelved woman suffrage, although Mr.

Balfour, the Prime Minister, was himself in favour of it, and a majority of the House of Commons was pledged to it. Women had greater justification for militant methods than the unemployed, because, unlike men, they were without any constitutional means of gaining their end. The more democratic the constitution, the more deaf the ruling Government to the pleas of any class that was voteless and so outside the Constitution. Women today, with their immense voting power, are rapidly forgetting, and the younger ones never knew, what was the political and the economic helplessness of women in the days when Mother put herself behind militancy. It was a tremendous and, she knew, irrevocable decision.

That night of the first arrest and imprisonment is unforgettable. The life of the Conservative Government was ebbing fast, so we wasted no powder and shot upon them. The Liberal leaders, who were to replace them in office, must be challenged on the fundamental principle of Liberalism—government of the people by the people, even such of the people as happened to be women. If the new Liberal Government were willing to enfranchise women, the Liberal leaders would say so; if they were not willing, then militancy would begin. A straight question must be put to them—a straight answer obtained.

Good seats were secured for the Free Trade Hall meeting. The question was painted on a banner in large letters, in case it should not be made clear enough by vocal utterance. How should we word it? 'Will you give woman suffrage?'—we rejected that form, for the word Suffrage suggested to some unlettered or jesting folk the idea of suffering. 'Let them suffer away!'—we had heard the taunt. We must find another wording and we did! It was so obvious and yet, strange to say, quite new. Our banner bore this terse device:

WILL YOU GIVE
VOTES
FOR WOMEN?

Thus was uttered for the first time the famous and victorious battle-cry: 'Votes for Women!'

Busy with white calico, black furniture stain and paint-brushes, we soon had our banner ready, and Annie Kenney and I set forth to victory, in the form of an affirmative Liberal answer, or to prison. We knew only too well that the answer we longed for would be refused.

'We shall sleep in prison tonight,' said I to Mother. Her face was drawn and cold when I said goodbye. Our action was really hers. She accepted the responsibility of a militant policy, which she knew must be continued until victory. She considered, as we two young ones who went into the fray that night naturally did not quite so deeply consider, its effect upon our own lives. She realized that her official post, with its present emoluments and future pension, was at stake; she foresaw a day, which later arrived, when she would have to choose between surrendering that position and giving up the militant campaign which she believed politically necessary for the enfranchisement of women. It was for Mother an hour of crisis. She stood utterly alone in the world, so far as this decision to militancy was concerned. Reckoning the cost in advance, Mother prepared to pay for it, for women's sake. The loss might be all hers, but the gain would be theirs.

The Free Trade Hall was crowded. The sky was clear for a Liberal victory—save for a little cloud no bigger than a woman's hand! Calm, but with beating hearts, Annie and I took our seats and looked at the exultant throng we must soon anger by our challenge. Their cheers as the speakers entered gave us the note and pitch of their emotion. Speech followed speech. Interruptions came from eager partisans or from a few stray critics. The interrupters, we noticed, were ignored or good-humouredly answered. But, then, they were all men and voters! Our plan was to wait until the speakers had said their say, before asking our question. We must, for one thing, give these Liberal leaders and spokesmen the opportunity of explaining that their programme included political enfranchisement for women.

Annie as the working woman—for this should make the stronger appeal to Liberals—rose first and asked: 'Will the Liberal Government give votes to women?' No answer came. I joined my voice to hers and our banner was unfurled, making clear what was our question. The effect was explosive! The meeting was aflame with excitement. Some consultation among chairman and speakers ensued and then the Chief Constable of Manchester, Sir Robert Peacock, genial and paternal in manner, made his way to us and promised us, on behalf of the platform, an answer to our question after the vote of thanks had been made. We accepted the undertaking and again we waited. We gave him our question in writing. The vote of thanks was carried. Sir Edward Grey

rose to reply without one word in answer to our question! The bargain thus broken on his side, we were free to renew our simple question: 'Will the Liberal Government give women the vote?' The answer came then—not in word, but in deed. Stewards rushed at us, aided by volunteers and accompanied by loud cries: 'Throw them out!' We were dragged from our seats and along the centre aisle, resisting as strongly as we could and still calling out: 'Will the Liberal Government give women the vote?'

Violence answered our demand for justice. Yet better violence than jeers, sneers, or silent contempt. Equality was ours that night, we felt, for the force used against us proved that our question was a thrust which had touched the new Government-to-be in a vital spot. The meeting was in frenzy. We were being dragged nearer to the platform which we must pass before our captors could get us behind the scenes. With more than all my strength, resisting theirs, I could stand a moment below the platform. I looked into Sir Edward Grey's face, eye to eye, and asked him again: 'Will your Liberal Government give votes to women?' I remember thinking that, suitably wreathed and attired, he would have looked exactly like a Roman Emperor. Pale, expressionless, immovable, he returned me look for look. I was swept away through the side door, which muffled the deafening tumult in the hall. A revulsion of feeling came in the audience as we disappeared from view. There were cries of 'Shame!' and of sympathy with the questioners. In deference to this, Sir Edward Grey said he was not sure that unwittingly he had not been a contributing cause of the incident which he regretted. The trouble, he understood, had arisen from a desire to know his opinion on woman suffrage, but it was a question that he could not deal with that night, because it was not, and he did not think it likely to be, a party question. His words too plainly meant that women would not in his opinion ever get the vote!

Outside the auditorium and behind the scenes, we were in the grip of policemen and surrounded by stewards. The matter must not, I knew, stay where it was. The Free Trade Hall protest twenty months before had taught me that. What we had done must be made a decisive act of lasting import. We must, in fact, bring the matter into Court, into prison. For simply disturbing the meeting I should not be imprisoned. I must use the infallible means of getting arrested, I must 'assault the police'. But how was I to do it? The police seemed to be skilled to frustrate my purpose. I could not strike them, my arms were

being held. I could not even stamp on their toes—they seemed able to prevent that. Yet I must bring myself under arrest. The vote depended upon it. There could be no compromise at that moment of crisis. Lectures on the law flashed to my mind. I could, even with all limbs helpless, commit a technical assault and so I found myself arrested and charged with ‘spitting at a policeman’. It was not a real spit but only, shall we call it, a ‘pour’, a perfectly dry purse of the mouth. I could not *really* have done it, even to get the vote, I think. Anyhow, there was no need, my technical assault was enough.

But how awful it was to read in the newspaper next morning, and I could not and dare not explain the entirely technical and symbolic character of the act, because the magistrate might have discharged me and the political purpose in view would not have been achieved. Even after I came out of prison I was afraid of explaining and so seeming to weaken or recant. It was a great comfort when some person wrote of me as a spitfire. That seemed to show a certain approach to discernment of the real fact.

Annie and I, to make assurance doubly sure, were as militant as we could be, in speaking to the crowd outside the hall. The police dragged us off, followed by a veritable procession of members of the audience. ‘What would your father have said to this?’ asked one policeman reprovingly. I thought I knew what he would have said. Then a light dawned on another policeman: ‘Why, this is what they have been aiming at!’

Arrived at the police station, we were uncompromising and duly defiant. The charge against us must, we were resolved, be entered, and it was. We refused to be bailed out, lest the vital chain of events be broken. Not anxious, it seemed, to display the wretched hospitality of the police cells, they sent us home without bail, adjuring us to appear next morning at the Police Court. We assured them that we should be there!

Mother was anxiously awaiting us and we told her all. Next morning we found that the long, long newspaper silence as to woman suffrage was broken. So far, so good.

Mother came with us to the Police Court. We shivered rather on entering. Police Courts then were associated in my mind only with the sordid and discreditable. However, we were there. A benign magistrate, who had known Father, was not at all severe! But we gave him not the least chance or excuse to let us off. To prison we went.

One was entering the unknown. Prison was a word of unimaginable possibilities. We entered its gates, received prison clothes to wear, of antique pattern, scrubby texture and incredible thickness in layers and layers of pleats. Cells were box-like, lit by high small windows. A stool, a shelf as table, rolled-up bed and a plank on which to spread it at night, an array of tins with a wooden spoon, unpleasantly and unhygienically porous. Such was the furniture. A Bible lay on the table, and for that much thanks! Later we knew of library books coming round and chose the longest. Food, served in the tins, was, according to the time of day, a thickish gruel, bread of dark complexion, yet preferable, I admit, to some of the dead-white, lifeless stuff we get when at large; a sort of broth with floating meat; tea or a cocoa brew to drink! Imprisonment was solitary, save for the time in chapel and at exercise when there was a single-file march, round and round the high-walled yard. Prison hardships were negligible to us. We were thinking of other things. On the question of prison conditions I may say, out of experience thereof, that the hardest of these conditions is—*being in prison*, the deprivation of liberty. The joy of the first day out of prison cannot be expressed. To pass outside those gates is to come alive again. But soon the glory fades and one forgets to remember how precious is the common liberty of everyday.

During that first imprisonment, short, but so long-seeming, because it was the first, kindly visitors came to urge me to have the fine paid and come out. One, a prison visitor, a friend of Mother's who afterwards joined our ranks, appealed in this sense, but when she failed seemed to be really sympathetic after all. Then came a visiting magistrate, another old friend of Father's. He arrived as the midday meal was being brought to my cell. Viewing this unappetizing fare with disfavour, he exclaimed: 'Fancy your father's daughter eating such food! Why don't you come away this minute! Let me pay your fine!' He was really distressed. He accepted my explanation with a genial smile and seemed to understand. One evening, between eight and nine o'clock—a late hour for prisoners—as I lay on plank and straw mattress, there came a sharp knock at the cell door and a loud voice announced that someone stood at the prison gate wanting to pay the fine and secure my instant release.

'No,' I said, 'I will not have my fine paid!'

Receding footsteps, silence, and that was the end of that! But rumour went that Mr. Winston Churchill, Sir Edward Grey's partner

on the platform, had called or sent an emissary to pay the fine. We neither knew nor cared to know who had tried to release us before the day which the law and our own resolve had fixed. Annie and I knew that in the contest of wills our will must prevail. This was the decisive battle in the war between women and the Liberal Party. The Liberals had started the war with women, but they must not win it, however long it might last.

The moment of release arrived, and at eight o'clock one morning we passed through bolts and bars to the outer world. A crowd was waiting; all pressed forward but one outstripped the rest. She was a complete stranger to me, but she gave me the first greeting. It was Flora Drummond. We were friends at sight. She became another pillar of the movement and one of its most notable personalities.

Mother, then, and home, and all the news! Not an echo from the outside world had penetrated the prison walls and we knew nothing of how things had turned out. Mother had had the brunt of it to bear—being in prison was easy and peaceful, compared to what she had to bear. Anger, criticism, had run high. We had known that must happen. Mother and I had together faced it, before we took the fateful step of forcing the Liberal leaders to fight or give votes to women.

The world, at that time, was at its most tranquil. The Boer War had receded into the past and the greater upheaval of 1914 was still undreamt of. Breaking in upon that placidity, this outbreak of women's militancy was the more startling. Since 1914 the world has grown accustomed to real and terrible disturbance, but then it took less to thrill and startle it. That women should rise alone and independently, solely for the women's cause, was a thing without precedent.

Mother's heroine's heart was needed in those first critical hours. It is not so easy now to realize the position in which she then stood. A widow, with still dependent children, risking (and eventually losing) her income and future pension in the Government service, Mother had stood firm against a world. From the blow she thus struck with her own hand at her position and fortune, there might have been no recovery, especially in those days. She faced the risk and took it—for women's sake. As history knows, she did not take it in vain, and victory was to follow.

Among Suffragists of other camps, Esther Roper and Eva Gore-Booth were foremost in expressing sympathy with Mother in the crisis. In the militant years that followed, nothing rejoiced us more

than the support of such pioneers as Mrs. Bright Maclaren (John Bright's sister), Dr. Garrett Anderson (the pioneer medical woman), who herself, despite her weight of years, once braved arrest by going with Mother at the head of a deputation to the Houses of Parliament. Mrs. Ashworth Hallett, Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, Miss J. C. Methuen, Mrs. Taylor of Chipchase and many another were with us in sympathy.

The Free Trade Hall meeting of welcome to the two prisoners was crowded. Teresa Billington and a band of workers had, in that short week, organized and advertised it with energy, and the Manchester public were, of course, greatly stirred by the event which had echoed through the newspapers of the world. Perhaps Manchester folk, on the principle that what Manchester thinks today, England will think tomorrow, were, even then, not without an intuition that militancy, started there, would spread and triumph in the country as a whole. We two prisoners, speaking that night in the very hall whence a week before we had been forcibly ejected, confidently foresaw the day of future victory. That great meeting made it evident that the first storm had been weathered. Our first and decisive battle had been won.

We had certainly broken the Press silence on votes for women, that silence which, by keeping women uninformed, had so largely smothered and strangled the movement. This newspaper silence had, at the same time, protected politicians from criticism of their offences, omissive and commissive, against the suffrage cause. Mother and I—in the pre-militant days—called on the editor of one of the most important newspapers in the country, asking for the publication of a leading article drawing attention to a Woman Suffrage Bill. The editor, we found, was away; an associate received us. Mother put her request. 'I cannot do this without the editor's authority,' he told us, and went on to explain that in all his twenty years' association with this newspaper its practice had been, as far as possible, to ignore the woman suffrage question. But where peaceful means had failed, one act of militancy succeeded and never again was the cause ignored by that or any other newspaper. Weird rumours were heard now and again of newspaper potentates meeting in conclave and agreeing to be blind and dumb concerning the doings of the militants, but the rumours were false or else the agreements broke down.

spirit in it, a spring that we liked. Suffragists, we had called ourselves till then, but that name lacked the positive note implied by 'Suffragette'. Just 'want the vote' was the notion conveyed by the older appellation and, as a famous anecdote had it, 'the Suffragettes [hardening the 'g'] they mean to get it'.

It was a great day for the young militant movement, the W.S.P.U., when Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence joined it and on the same day became its honorary treasurer. News of the first militant protest had reached her in South Africa. She wanted to know what was behind this action. When Emmeline Pankhurst and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence met in London, they felt the bond of a common inspiration. Their first long talk really determined that partnership which was to build a movement equal at all points to its historic enterprise. A Triumvirate was now in supreme control of the Women's Social and Political Union—to 'Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel' was added Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence.

One of the many questions Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence asked Mrs. Pankhurst in their first and really decisive interview was whether money was needed for the work. 'The money will come,' was Mother's answer. Come it did, at the call of Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence. As honorary treasurer she was the envy of all other organizations of every kind. The income of the W.S.P.U. increased year by year, until, under our unique treasurer's wand, the Union was raising and spending at the rate of £200 a week on its nation-wide propaganda and campaign, and income and expenditure were still mounting with its ever-growing activity.

Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence's powers of organization were remarkable. She imagined fine projects and knew how to execute them. All this, with wisdom in counsel, eloquence on the platform, courage in the fight, and true friendship she brought into contribution. She had had experience as a social worker, during her association with Mrs. Hugh Price Hughes and the West London Mission, had with Miss Mary Neal formed and controlled the Esperance Girls' Club and like activities, which had developed the innate gifts she now devoted to the militant Suffrage movement. Her husband gave his sympathy and support to her decision to join the W.S.P.U. and stood by her from the beginning. Sympathy became active co-operation, and he put his scholarly attainments as a Cambridge man, a fourth wrangler, holder of many

My final examination was approaching and that meant release or London and the work there. Panic prompted concentration and I withdrew from human society to that of my books. When the result came out I found that I was bracketed with one other at the top of the examination list.

Mother came to see my degree conferred and we thought of Father, his Owens College days, his interest in the University and his thoughts about my taking to law.

London next! Characteristically, as it seemed, all our people, more or less, were in the Police Court when I arrived—either as prisoners or as onlookers.

Our Union flourished and all was high promise of coming victory. Prison and prisoners, yes, but the first shock and odium of militancy had passed, and the grim, harsh days of the later coercion were yet in the future. We were ready for all, if it must come—but it might not come if the Liberal Government were liberal in deed and in truth as well as in name.

All the same, that London trial was a painful thing. It was only the second time I had ever been in a Police Court. The first time was for my own trial. There, in the dock, were our women, facing prison. Soon they were in the prison van, locked each in a little cramped cell, and shaken and rattled to Holloway Gaol.

This fresh imprisonment, like every other, brought strenuous if welcome tasks for those outside. Sympathy with the prisoners and indignation with the Government drew more women into our ranks. Meetings multiplied, correspondence increased, so that those who wanted to know why we did these things might be informed. Instantly, then, into the saddle, reins in hand! How thankful I was to be all of me in London instead of having my mind there and my body in Manchester!

Surveying the London work as I found it, I considered that in one sense it was too exclusively dependent for its demonstrations upon the women of the East End. The East End women were more used to turning out in numbers, for many of them had done so in connection with Labour demonstrations, and at the very beginning of our London campaign it was natural for our organizers to rely mainly upon them. It was, however, the right and duty of women more fortunately placed to do their share, and the larger share, in the fight for the vote which might be, whatever our hopes to the contrary, long and hard. Besides,

critical murmurs of 'stage army' were being, quite unjustly, made by Members of Parliament about the East End contingents, and it was evident that the House of Commons, and even its Labour members, were more impressed by the demonstrations of the feminine bourgeoisie than of the feminine proletariat. My democratic principles and instincts made me want a movement based on no class distinctions, and including not mainly the working class but women of all classes.

No! We must show no respect of persons. An individual gift for command and organization, united with freedom from domestic and other circumstances, gave the title to manage departments of the work. Consequently it was sometimes found in our W.S.P.U. that directions would be given by a junior in age to seniors, or by one of less to those of more social consequence. But true equality reigned with us between women of every class. All belonged to the aristocracy of the Suffragettes. The recollection that remains with those who took part in the movement is that life in those days was a big and a fine thing.

Campaigns in London were increasing our membership by enabling us to reach the women whose interest had been roused by the militant action of the past months. The weekly Hyde Park meetings near the Reformer's Tree were a great recruiting ground. In those days audiences in Hyde Park were larger and more representative than they would perhaps be now, when the motor-car and bus carry folk farther away. Some of our best members were found at the Hyde Park meetings. It was a great thing to notice the faces in every audience and to enlist in our ranks the women of promise. There would be a light in the eye, a set of the mouth and an expression of the face! 'She is one of ours: she has the makings in her.' Our movement was largely built of personal initiative and responsibility. Especially in the early days, every individual adherent counted for much.

A great discovery was Mrs. Tuke, who for the longer part of the W.S.P.U.'s existence was honorary secretary. Mr. and Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence had met and greatly liked her on their homeward voyage from South Africa, whence she was returning after the death out there of her husband, a young Army officer. Mrs Pethick-Lawrence invited her to luncheon, I being also a guest. She came, still in mourning, gentle and beautiful, the last woman in the world, it might have been supposed, to join a militant movement. Yet when, after luncheon, I remarked: 'I must go now and chalk pavements for a meeting' (for

leaders were still at the chalking stage), what did she say but 'I'll come and chalk pavements too!' I knew, then, that she was of the right stuff, and all the more as she did her chalking with such a will, and laughed when a rude errand boy called her youthful self 'You old fool!' From that day onward she was one of us.

The first by-election at which our anti-Government policy became generally understood was at Cockermouth. I went there to prepare for the campaign. Two other speakers, Teresa Billington and Mrs. Coates Hansen, were to follow. We knew not a soul in the whole constituency. However, the hotel people, the newspaper people, the police and everyone else, seemed very glad of a visit from the Suffragettes. I announced an open-air meeting, hired a lorry as platform and three chairs, one for each speaker, and awaited the other two. A telegram: they could not come! Nothing for it, then, but a meeting with one speaker, three chairs and an audience. A large crowd was waiting. I apologized for the absence of my colleagues, was chairman and speaker in one, and begged them all, with reasons why, to vote against the Government. It was the most friendly audience, we all enjoyed the evening, and a meeting was announced for the morrow. Came the morrow and another telegram: still the other two could not arrive. Again three chairs, one speaker and much apology, and again the same friendly atmosphere. Another meeting with all three speakers was announced. The third day came and again the other two telegraphed: unable to come. This time when I joined my three chairs on the platform, everyone, the speaker, too, laughed long and loud. But we had a very pleasant meeting. The same thing happened for what seemed countless evenings, while in the daytime I was in other parts of the constituency. But at last the other speakers really came and we had a great campaign. These Cumberland people were all our friends. Most of them did what we asked, voted against the Government and kept the Liberal out, while even the others showed no rancour.

There were three candidates in the field, Liberal, Conservative, and Labour, but we remained entirely and scrupulously independent of them all and their parties. We had started and were keeping the W.S.P.U. free of all political allegiance and it seemed that our independence of party stirred real indignation in some political quarters. The Conservatives were, perhaps, still serenely confident that their

women would continue to help them, vote or no vote, but the Liberals were already feeling disturbed, and many Labour men were distinctly displeased that a women's union should, at the by-elections, oppose Liberal candidates without supporting Labour. Yet we were simply pursuing that course of political independence which they thought best for themselves. It is evident that had we supported either the Labour or Conservative candidates we should have been reckoned simply as appendages of the Conservative or the Labour Party and the 'votes for women' issue would have been dangerously obscured. Also, we should, by working for any one party, have alienated women whose preference was for one or other of the remaining parties. As it was, we could rally women of all three parties and women of no party, and unite them as one independent force. We could not let the 'votes for women' movement be a frill on the sleeve of any political party.

Political independence of party was, it may here be said, the cause of a difference of view between Mother and myself, on the one hand, as the leaders of the W.S.P.U. who determined its policy, and the two younger daughters, who would have preferred to associate the W.S.P.U. with the Labour Party. This was a vital difference of policy, the more practically difficult because of their name and relationship. 'These things must be,' doubtless, but would it were otherwise! The inevitable outcome was an ultimate political parting of the ways between those who stood for political independence of all parties and those who did not. This was only fair to W.S.P.U. members outside our family; for a policy divided against itself cannot succeed. Mother and I were ever insistent that W.S.P.U. members should accept our policy and maintain a united front, and it would have been unjust to them, and illogical favouritism, to make an exception in the case of relatives—though perhaps we may have been justly chargeable with having shown too long a little partiality, out of a natural desire to maintain family peace.

The unfortunate experience of the Women's Liberal Federation was sufficient warning against making our W.S.P.U. an ally of any party. The Women's Liberal Federation had for years rendered immeasurable service to the Liberal Party, but though individually many Liberals would gladly have seen women enfranchised, the Liberal leaders had always placed other things first. The same was the case with the Conservative Party. Already there were some Labourists

The New Year, 1907, had found the Women's Social and Political Union organized for the march to victory: with a growing membership, a fine band of organizers and speakers, funds which expanded to meet the expanding needs of the movement, a headquarters well staffed and equipped, new offices opening and new branches forming outside London. Throughout the year we went on deepening foundations and enlarging and strengthening the fabric of the Union. The weekly 'at homes', which began in our office and overflowed it, were transferred to the Portman Rooms and overflowed them, and then every Monday filled the large Queen's Hall, were due to the initiative of Mrs. Tuke. 'People ought to know you, they don't realize what Mrs. Pankhurst and the rest of you are like,' she declared. These gatherings became an invaluable part of our programme. There we explained past actions and announced those to come, there we dispelled misunderstandings, won new members, and called for service, thence we sent our messages to the Government. Now, as I sit in the Queen's Hall at some concert, I go back in memory and see again Mother speaking and the hall filled with women, alive, individualized and yet united in devotion to the great cause.

The spirit of the movement was wonderful. It was joyous and grave at the same time. Self seemed to be laid down as the women joined us. Loyalty, that greatest of the virtues, was the keynote of the movement—first to the cause, then to those who were leading, and member to member. Courage came next, not simply physical courage, though so much of that was present, but still more the moral courage to endure ridicule and misunderstandings and harsh criticism and ostracism. There was a touch of the *impersonal* in the movement that made for its strength and dignity. Humour characterized it, too, in that our militant women were like the British soldier who knows how to joke and smile amid his fighting and trials.

If only the Liberal leaders had also been, like the Suffragettes, gifted with a sense of humour!

Clement's Inn, our headquarters, was a hive seething with activity. Mother and Mrs. Tuke had their honorary secretaries' office. Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence and her assistant, Mrs. Sanders, treasured the money in their offices, the Pethick-Lawrences jointly edited *Votes for Women*. The large general office housed Miss Kerr and a battalion of secretaries and typists, with place for voluntary workers and a corner for tea. My own office adjoined it and next to this was Jessie Kenney's office, where,

with the aid of Miss Hambling, plans for pestering Cabinet Ministers were laid and the most diversified measures were taken. Press-cuttings and reference books were housed beyond. General Flora Drummond's office was full of movement. As department was added to department, Clement's Inn seemed always to have one more room to offer. And so on, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly! All the time, watching, attacking, defending, moving and counter-moving! It was indeed a question of 'I shall not cease from mental fight'. Yet how glorious those Suffragette days were! To lose the personal in a great impersonal is to live!

The policy of opposing Government by-election candidates until women should be granted the vote became after 1907 a still more prominent part of our campaign. Mother, aided by Mrs. Massy, Mrs. Martel, the Brackenbury sisters and other of our speakers, went from by-election to by-election, urging electors to vote against the Government, unless and until they granted women the vote. Mother might have been a candidate herself, so far as work went—indeed hers was a harder task, for whereas the candidates fought only their own campaign, she electrified every constituency in turn. In the earlier days, she would perhaps find indifference or even hostility. The first meeting would change all that—the Press, the public, would be won by her courage in face of hostile shouting and even of missiles at times, and before they knew it it would be, 'We glory in your pluck,' and the newspaper correspondents would be telegraphing reports of the public enthusiasm for Mrs. Pankhurst, her helpers, and her cause.

Mother, although so much concentrated upon her chosen task, was versatile and could always meet persons of other interests on their own ground. She kept her eyes and ears open to ideas and doings in many fields, the dwellers therein being ever surprised and charmed that this 'woman of one idea' was interested and informed as to their special subjects. After all, to understand one thing very well and deeply is to have intercommunication with all others, for in their heights and depths all great subjects are related; their roots intertwine, their branches interlace. Mrs. Pankhurst, if only by her political gifts and experience, had the freedom of many intellectual cities! Many persons would have known this of her, but for the extreme social reserve imposed upon her, as upon us all, by the exigencies of militant policy. A certain mystery enhanced the reputation of the militants for inflexible purpose. Mother's gentleness and charm, had they known it too well, might have misled the opponents as to the steel strength of

her determination to fight to the end for women and their right to vote.

Great stir was made by the Women's Parliament and much sympathy aroused. Some Members of Parliament, who had witnessed the treatment of women outside the House of Commons, put questions of protest and criticism to the Government.

In this favourable atmosphere Mr. (afterwards Sir Willoughby) Dickinson, having gained in the ballot a place for the second reading of a Bill, decided to introduce a Bill to give votes to women on the same terms as men.

This was fortunate for us. It was still more fortunate for the Government, for a golden opportunity was theirs to let Mr. Dickinson's Bill pass the second reading and then adopt it and carry it through its final stages into law. This would avert further militancy and bring forty years of patient pleading to a happy end.

The Government's decision was still unknown, the fate of the Women's Enfranchisement Bill was still in the balance, when Mother received a letter of great importance to her. This letter concerned the official position she had held ever since she had been widowed. The letter was from the Registrar-General. Someone, he said, had complained—who the complainant was she did not know—that her activities in the direction of political agitation were exercised in a manner and to an extent that were detrimental to the proper performance of her duties as Registrar of Births and Deaths.

Mother had never been to prison. No charge had been made against her; she had never been arrested. Her personal activities had been exclusively non-militant, because, for the sake of her youngest child Harry, still a schoolboy, she did not feel justified, if she could avoid it, in risking to that extent the loss of her income and her home. The deputy-registrar was Aunt Mary, who was on duty in Mother's absence, but Mother, with her gift of being, as it were, everywhere at once, used to take the most extraordinary measures to get back, by night trains, in order to be in her office during the hours officially appointed for her attendance. No shadow of complaint had ever reached her, from any member of the public.

The Registrar-General proceeded in his letter to say that he himself had noticed in the public Press reports of the prominent part

in Trafalgar Square of our plans and our need of their sympathetic presence on 13th October.

The speakers in Trafalgar Square were Mother, Mrs. Drummond, and myself. Not until afterwards did we learn that in the great crowd, listening to our call for support, was a Cabinet Minister, none other than Mr. Lloyd George. His presence proved fortunate for us. At this meeting was distributed a leaflet which became famous. It bore the device: 'Men and Women—Help the Suffragettes to Rush the House of Commons.' That word 'Rush' rankled in the feelings of the foe. It was the proximate cause of the first of our big trials. It brought Mother and me and 'General' Drummond into the dock, and two Cabinet Ministers into the witness-box. Little did we suppose, in composing that momentous handbill, that so much would hang upon one short word 'rush'. At a loss for the *mot juste*, I had appealed to Mrs. Tuke. 'Raid will not do,' I said, 'it has been used so often. Give me a fresh word.' Help the Suffragettes to storm, or besiege or invade the House of Commons! None of these words was exactly right. 'Rush,' she suddenly suggested. '“Rush” it shall be!' The handbill was so printed.

Days passed, which were devoted to announcing the event of 13th October. A votes for women kite was flown above the Houses of Parliament; a banner-decked steamer moved up and down the river; pavements were chalked; meetings large and small, indoor and outdoor, were held.

On the day before 13th October a summons was served on the three Trafalgar Square speakers. It read thus:

Information has been laid this day by the Commissioner of Police that you in the month of October in the year 1908 were guilty of conduct likely to provoke a breach of the peace by initiating and causing to be published a certain handbill calling upon and inciting the public to a certain wrongful and illegal act, viz.: to rush the House of Commons at 7.30 p.m. on October 13th inst.

We were thereby summoned to appear that same day at 3.30 at Bow Street to show cause why we should not be ordered to find sureties for good behaviour. We decided, however, not to appear at Bow Street but to appear at the Queen's Hall instead, where, most conveniently, our usual weekly gathering would be held. The hall was crowded to the utmost, as a hint of some new happening had appeared in the early edition of the evening papers.

Mother made all known, saying: 'The Government's representatives are now, as I speak, expecting us at Bow Street, but we have decided that our engagement to meet you here is of far greater importance to us. So we are here, and we shall not go to Bow Street until they come and take us.'

Warrants for our arrest were issued, but we decided to appoint our own time and place for arrest. After twenty-four hours spent in an apartment on the roof of Clement's Inn, preparing for what might be a long absence, we descended to the office whither we had, by letter, summoned the police.

We now had our first experience of the police cells in which accused persons are kept until they appear before the magistrate, and were astounded and indignant that we or any persons charged, but not found guilty of an offence, should suffer the ordeal of a night in such conditions. Nothing could so unfit a person for the demands of the morrow. To us it obviously mattered less than to the ordinary accused prisoner, because we had no moral distress to suffer. We knew ourselves to be in the right and we had the support of thousands. Yet even for us, it was bad enough. Sleep would be impossible; the cell boasted but a narrow bench—the conditions were really indescribable. Prison hardships had hitherto never much troubled me—after all, one just had to go through with it, and there was no work to be done in prison which required one to be at concert pitch. But this, I thought, was too much! Mercifully for us, and for the work we had to do, Sir James Murray, M.P., came to the rescue. He was father-in-law of one of our young members, and had already welcomed Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, Mrs. Despard, and myself to Aberdeen, and shown much sympathy with our work. His genial and commanding presence brought life, cheer, and comfort to that dreary, foul place—that modern dungeon. He acted, and it was like a fairy tale. Beds from the Savoy were brought by minions quickly answering to the fairy wand. A table was spread and delicious foods and fruits appeared. Our gaolers, now all interest, lent a hand. When all was in order, our friend-in-need gave us hearty good wishes for the coming trial. With thankful hearts we fed and slept, and awoke refreshed and ready for all that might betide. . . .

Stirring things had been happening in the world outside our cells.

'Make strong protest tonight against injustice of the Liberal Government' had been our message to the women gathered in Caxton Hall. They needed no bidding. The meeting sent forth a deputation formed

of Mrs. Monck Mason, Clara Codd, Ada Wright, Wallace Dunlop, Flatman-Ansell and others, followed by many women acting on their individual responsibility. Never had such crowds gathered at Westminster. The handbill had done its work, not to speak of the immense publicity given by the Government proceedings against us. Five thousand police were, according to Government confession, on duty. The Home Secretary, who took a close personal interest in the proceedings, came out to watch them. It was the biggest encounter yet between the Government and the Suffragettes and their sympathizers and, although arrests followed and imprisonments were many, that night saw another strategic victory for women.

While the great crowds were surging, shouting, cheering outside, and women were fighting their way towards the doors of Parliament and being beaten back, only to renew their efforts, a woman had suddenly appeared at the Bar of the House, had all but seized the mace and had raised the accusing and appealing cry 'Give votes to women'. . . .

A turning point in the movement had now been reached, for the Government had adopted a new plan for ending our militancy. Was it the plan of giving votes to women? Far from that! Their new plan was coercion in a new form. The leaders were to be captured and, by stern treatment, convinced of the error of their ways. The futility of this plan was evident. One of the leaders, or ringleaders, or whatever they were pleased to call us, whom they had just arrested, had been the first to insist at every cost upon being arrested and going to prison as a protest against disfranchisement. Why then should the Government hope to quell militancy by arresting and imprisoning the leaders? We thought we knew why! They hoped, by capturing the shepherds, to scatter the flock! This view of their inner motive was fully vindicated some four years later, when they attempted to capture all those in control of the movement—an attempt which was most fortunately frustrated by my stepping through their net and escaping to Paris—but that is to anticipate!

We now return to Bow Street for the trial of 14th October 1908. We defended ourselves, the legal aspects of the affair being left mainly to me as the lawyer of our trio. At the outset we asked that the case be sent for trial and not dealt with summarily, as we were advised that under a section of the Summary Jurisdiction Act we were entitled to the option of being tried where we desired, and we wished the case to go before a jury. The prosecution told its tale and called as witnesses two

police officers. The first of these, Superintendent Wells, testified that, on visiting our office to inquire our intents for 13th October, he had been shown Mrs. Pankhurst's letter to Mr. Asquith and told that if a satisfactory reply were given there would be nothing but a great cheer, but if not, the women would try to enter the House of Commons. 'You cannot get there,' the witness had replied, 'unless you come with cannon.'

'Are you aware that a member of the Government was at our Trafalgar Square meeting?' he was asked, and answered: 'I don't know whether I should answer that.' 'You can say yes or no,' interposed the magistrate, so 'I saw one there,' said he. 'Was it Mr. Lloyd George?'—and his look was affirmative. 'At a later stage I shall have to require the presence of Mr. Lloyd George as one of the witnesses,' I remarked. 'You are aware,' the cross-examination proceeded, 'that, at another Trafalgar Square meeting many years ago, Mr. John Burns, now a member of the Government, used words very much more inflammatory, very much more calculated to lead to destruction and damage to property than anything we have said?' The witness was not aware—it was all beyond reach of his memory—but never mind, we had made our point. 'You are aware, however, that Mr. John Burns, as a member of the present Government, is responsible, jointly with his colleagues, for the action which has been taken against us?' 'Yes.' 'Were you present at a quite recent Trafalgar Square meeting when Mr. Thorne, M.P., made a speech in which he called upon the people to rush the bakers' shops?' 'I did not hear it,' replied Superintendent Wells, 'but it was reported to me.' 'Does it occur to you that this language used by a Member of Parliament was far more dangerous to the public peace than ours? He, too, used the word "rush" but he also incited the people to riot and violence. Does it occur to you that his conduct is more reprehensible than ours?' 'It occurs to me that he might be prosecuted the same as you are.' Mother asked the witness: 'Do you know that in previous franchise demonstrations, Mr. John Bright and Mr. W. E. Gladstone advised the people to do exactly as we have done?' 'To a certain extent,' was his reply. The trial was adjourned for a week, and Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Herbert Gladstone were requested to attend as witnesses, since the one had been present at the Trafalgar Square meeting and had received a copy of our handbill, and the other had seen the occurrences outside Parliament. They expressed doubt that their evidence would be of use. When I thereupon applied for a subpoena to

compel their attendance, Mr. Curtis Bennett suggested and advised the dispatch of a second letter to both, and this time they said they would appear.

The day came: the two Ministers were there. The Court was packed: the atmosphere was tense. Again, as at the Free Trade Hall three years ago, there was the relief of knowing women at that moment of political combat humanly even and equal with men. True, they still held back our vote, but they had to reckon with us as representing womanhood. We were in the dock, but they that day were also there. For the witness-box of the Police Court was really the dock in that larger and higher Court of public opinion, and indeed of history, before which we Suffragettes, the advocates for womanhood, were arraigning these two Ministers and political leaders on the charge of illiberality and injustice.

Mr. Lloyd George was first to enter the witness-box. 'Did you hear any violence advocated in Trafalgar Square?' we asked him. 'Not except to force an entrance to the House of Commons.' 'There were no words used so likely to incite to violence as the advice you gave at Swansea that women should be ruthlessly flung out of your meeting?' The witness said he had been, with his small daughter, in the neighbourhood of the House of Commons on 13th October. 'Did you think it safe to bring this young child?' 'Certainly, she was very much amused.' 'Were you yourself attacked or assaulted in any way?' 'No.'

'You are aware that we argue that, as we are deprived of a share in the election of Parliamentary representatives, we are entitled to go in person to the House of Commons?' 'That was a point put by Mrs. Pankhurst in the speech I heard.' 'Do you agree with that point of view?' 'I should not like to express an opinion.'

The magistrate interposed: 'It is not for the witness to express an opinion.'

We, of course, were not on that occasion sticklers for legal technicality! We were concerned to express, in question form, the home-truths we were ever desirous of declaring to Cabinet Ministers.

Mr. Lloyd George was then asked: 'Can you tell me whether any interference with public order took place in connection with previous movements for franchise reform?' He answered: 'I should think that was an historical fact.' 'Have we not received encouragement from you from your colleagues—to take action of this kind?' 'I should be

very much surprised to hear that.' 'Do you recognize these words as coming from a Liberal statesman: "I am sorry to say that if no instructions had ever been addressed in political crises to the people of this country, except to remember to hate violence and to love order, the liberties of this people would never have been attained"?' 'I cannot call them to mind.' 'They are the words of William Ewart Gladstone. Were you present in the House of Commons when his son, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, encouraged women to action of this kind?' 'No.' 'Do you know that John Bright and Joseph Chamberlain in the past recommended to men action such as we took on 13th October?'

Mother put the most telling question of the day, the question in which all others were summed up.

'I want to ask you whether in your opinion the whole of this agitation which women are carrying on—very much against the grain—would be immediately stopped if the constitutional right to vote were conceded to them?' 'I should think that is very likely,' replied Mr. Lloyd George.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone was rather cheery as he entered the witness-box.

'Did you anticipate that you would be in bodily danger as a consequence of the issue of this Bill?' he was asked. 'I didn't think of it at all.' 'Like ourselves you are above such a consideration!'

He thought that, but for the police, the crowd might have done more harm, yet admitted that, taking all our Westminster demonstrations together, very little harm had been done. 'Did you say,' he was asked, 'that it was impossible not to sympathize with the eagerness and passion which have actuated so many women on this subject, that you were entirely in favour of the principle of votes for women, that men had had to fight for their rights from the time of Cromwell and that for the last 130 years the warfare had been perpetual? Did you say that on this question of the franchise, experience had shown that argument alone is not enough to win the political day and that "there comes a time when political dynamics are far more than political argument"?' 'Yes,' was the answer to all these questions.

'Did you speak of men assembling in the "thirties", the "sixties" and the "eighties" of last century and do you know that we have done this in Leeds, in Hyde Park and throughout the country?' 'Yes.' 'Why don't you give us the vote then? Are you familiar with the words of your distinguished father, quoted in this Court today?' 'I heard the

quotation.' 'Do you assent to his proposition?' 'Yes.' 'Then you cannot condemn our methods any more.'

Mother then put the question: 'May I ask you this: Are you aware that ten thousand people assembled in the City Square in Leeds have just carried, with two dissentients, a resolution calling upon the Government to pass the Woman Suffrage Bill this Session?'

We thanked the two Cabinet Ministers for acting as witnesses and they departed, leaving us to trial, sentence, and imprisonment.

A long list of witnesses was called for the defence, but the longest trial must have its end and the moment came for the accused to address the magistrate. We had urged that the case go before a jury, but in vain. We had argued, with reference to the dictionaries and to common usage, that the word 'rush' implies 'haste' and not 'violence'. The only person who had succeeded in fulfilling our behest, and had rushed the House of Commons, was, happily, scot free, while we were in the dock. Unlawful assembling might be our offence—or incitement thereto—but to charge us with that would have brought us before a jury, which the Government feared to do, lest the public opinion, now so favourable to us, might bring about an acquittal.

Mrs. Pankhurst addressed the magistrate in the following words, ever memorable to those who heard them:

I was brought up by a father who taught his children, boys and girls alike, to realize they had a duty toward their country. I married a man whose wife I was, but also his comrade in all his public life. He was, as you know, sir, a distinguished member of your own profession, but he felt it his duty, in addition, to do public work to interest himself in the welfare of his fellow countrymen. Throughout the whole of our marriage, I was associated with him in his public work. I was for many years a Guardian of the Poor and a Member of the School Board, and, when that was abolished, of the Education Committee. This experience brought me into touch with many of my own sex who found themselves in a deplorable position because of the state of the English law as it affects women. You must have seen women come into this Court who would never have come here if married women were afforded by law that better claim to maintenance which should in justice be theirs when they give up their economic independence on marriage and are unable to earn a subsistence for themselves. You know how unjust the marriage and divorce laws are, and that the married woman has no due right of guardianship over her own children. Great suffering is endured by women because of the state of the law. Since my girlhood I have tried

'constitutional' methods. We have presented petitions and we have held meetings greater than men have ever held for any reform. We have faced hostile mobs at street corners because we were told we could not have our political rights unless we converted the whole of the country to our side. We have been misrepresented and we have been ridiculed; contempt has been poured upon us. We have faced the violence of ignorant mobs, unprotected by the safeguards provided for Cabinet Ministers.

I am here to take upon myself now, as I wish the prosecution had put upon me, the full responsibility for this agitation in its present phase. I want to address you as a woman who has performed all the ordinary duties of a woman, and, in addition, has performed those duties which ordinarily men have to perform, by earning a living for her children. I have moreover been a public official. For ten years I held an official post under the Registrar-General and performed those duties to the satisfaction of the department. After my duty in connection with taking the census was over, I was one of the few who qualified for a special bonus and was specially praised for the way in which the work was conducted. Well, I stand before you, having resigned that office when I was told that I must either do that or give up my part in this movement.

I want to make you realize that if you decide—I hope you will not—to bind us over, we shall not sign any undertaking as did the Member of Parliament¹ who was before you yesterday. Perhaps his reason for so doing was that the Prime Minister had given him some assurance that something would be done for the people he claimed to represent. We have received no such assurance. So if you decide against us today, to prison we must go because we feel that if we consented to be bound over we should be going back to the hopeless condition in which this movement was three years ago. We are driven to this; we are determined to go on with the agitation: we are in honour bound to do so until we win. Just as it was the duty of your forefathers to do it for you, it is our duty to make this world a better place for women. We believe that if we get the vote, it will mean changed conditions for our less fortunate sisters. We know how bad is the position of the women workers. Many women pass through this Court who would not, I believe, come before you if they were able to live morally and honestly. The average pay of women wage-earners is only seven shillings and sixpence a week. There are women who have been driven to live an immoral life because they cannot earn enough to live decently.

We believe that your work would be lightened if we got the vote.

¹ Mr. Will Thorne, M.P., who, after his name had been mentioned in the course of our trial, was also brought into Court. He maintained that no action would have been taken against him but for our having drawn attention to the matter.

Some of us have worked, as I have told you, for many years to help our own sex, and we have been driven to the conclusion that only through legislation can any improvement be effected, and that this legislation cannot be obtained until we have the same electoral power as men to move our representatives and to move Governments to pass the necessary laws.

I do not come here as an ordinary law-breaker. I should not be here if I had the same power to vote that even the wife-beater has, and the drunkard has—and in this I speak for all the other women who in the same cause have come before you and other magistrates.

This is the only way in which women can get the right of deciding how the taxes to which they contribute should be spent, and how the laws they have to obey should be made.

If you had power to send us to prison, not for six months, but for six years, for ten years, or for the whole of our lives, the Government must not think they can stop this agitation.

We are here, not because we are law-breakers; we are here in our efforts to become law-makers.

The magistrate's decision was given. As we refused to be bound over, the alternative was, for Mother and the General, three months' imprisonment, and for me ten weeks.

Back to prison! Back to the cell that it seemed one had never left. And imprisonment did, after all, express the crude reality of women's political condition. Being in prison, we Suffragettes were simply showing the politically fettered, and penalized political status of British womanhood.

Some reform in prison conditions one noted since former imprisonment. Ordinary prisoners—women who had been there more than once and perhaps often, for the sundry petty offences that victims of bad environment are tempted to commit—were already saying: 'Things are very different here since you ladies began coming.' Mother always insisted that better social conditions would empty the prisons of this type of prisoner, and her expectation has already been largely fulfilled, as prison statistics show.

Prison doors having closed upon us, those outside demanded for us the rank and treatment of political prisoners. What were the Government to do? By acknowledging us to be political prisoners, they admitted by implication that we were not ordinary law-breakers, but claimants to political liberty. If they refused us political treatment, they

The so-called constitutional aspect of the work of Mrs. Pankhurst and her followers, which in all these years exceeded that of any other movement, Suffragist or otherwise, can never be too much emphasized, because of the historically false impression given by some persons that our movement was only militant, while the constitutional and educational work for the women's vote was done by others.

As to the militant effort of 1909, it surpassed all that went before. Deputations were more frequent, imprisonments far more numerous, protests in Parliament increased, and of challenges to Cabinet Ministers one could lose all count!

The womanless-meeting policy adopted by Cabinet Ministers moved the Suffragettes to more ingenious and adventurous ways of getting into their meetings.

'Daring Suffragist interviewed—Miss Phillips' "Recital" under an Organ . . .' thus the *Liverpool Echo* headed a detailed account of the experience of Lord Crewe and Mr. Birrell when they visited Liverpool to receive honorary degrees. A chorus of 'Votes for Women' from University students greeted the two Ministers as they appeared on the platform. As Mr. Birrell rose to speak, a voice belonging to some invisible woman made a loud and quite long discourse on votes for women and the misdoing of the Government in preferring to imprison women rather than enfranchise them. Consternation reigned on the platform, search was made, and our organizer was found crouching beneath the organ, where she had been since eight o'clock of the evening before!

When Mr. Asquith arrived to speak in Sheffield he found a state of siege. The hoardings were posted with bills headed 'Warning', giving the text of the Public Meetings Bill.

The meeting 'could not,' said the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'be called a success. The Prime Minister was dull, those inside were wishing they could get out and thousands outside were clamouring to get in.'

'It is not a very dignified proceeding,' remarked the *Yorkshire Telegraph*, 'to have to smuggle a Prime Minister into the city, yet that was the sort of triumphal entry Mr. Asquith made'.

Manchester proved that keeping militant women out of Cabinet Ministers' meetings was no easy matter and the attempt to do so caused indignant protests from influential Liberal women, including Miss Margaret Ashton, a member of the Manchester City Council and sister of

mysterious prisoner was, they suspected, someone other than she professed to be.

Lady Constance Lytton had proved her point: that the Liberal Government had, as she pointed out in a letter to the Home Secretary, a different standard of treatment for working women and for other women. When she was Lady Constance Lytton, they found her to be suffering from serious valvular disease of the heart and unfit for forcible feeding. When she was 'Jane Warton', they did not even question the state of her heart and fed her by force.

Lady Constance had made a stand for real democracy. She had taken a desperate risk for votes for women.

Even if forcible feeding had been a medical operation, as the Home Secretary claimed, until at last he classed it as punishment or an aggravation of punishment, this operation without the consent of the prisoner 'patients' was illegal, so one prisoner, Emily Davison, insisted, when the prison doctor entered her cell. He ignored her protest and she was seized, held down by force despite her resistance, and the operation was performed. She barricaded herself in her cell to prevent a repetition of what she deemed an unlawful assault. As the door could not be forced open, a hosepipe was turned on her through the small window in the door and she was drenched with icy water. Finally the door was forced and Miss Davison, shuddering with cold, was placed in hot blankets—but soon after was again forcibly fed, then, after medical examination, was released. The visiting committee was held responsible for the use of the hosepipe. Later Miss Davison brought an action for this assault and though she did not secure adequate damages, she won the case.

Victory was emerging ever more clearly from the increasing struggle of that time. Nine years of suffering was still dividing women from their enfranchisement but from the moment that women had consented to prison, hunger-strikes, and forcible feeding as the price of the vote, the vote was really theirs.

The immense and growing responsibility of her whole movement; the hard work of campaigning at meetings, far beyond her real strength; the constant demand upon her attention, her vigilance, her amiability, her judgment, her inspiration; the imminence of imprisonment and hunger-strike—Mother had all this strain and burden

to bear, when she was smitten by a great grief. Harry fell ill with infantile paralysis. Once again, practical necessity sharpened grief and trial. Her son's future had already been an anxiety to her. Her past experience had made her fear any of the professions: she was seeking some opening in which political opinions would not conflict. He had been for a time on an experimental farm owned by a wealthy idealist concerned in the revival of agriculture on scientific lines and the return of the people to the land, a cause in which her son himself was interested. Now he would be an invalid, more than ever needing her care. She turned to her friend of many years, Mrs. Stanton Blatch, now living again in New York, and the outcome was her first tour in America. Mrs. Stanton Blatch writes in a letter to me:

It was in 1909 that your Mother wrote to me about the illness of Harry who had been a great favourite of mine. She spoke of her desire to earn some money so as to be able to secure for Harry the best of medical care and asked if I could put her in touch with some reliable lecture bureau.

Without a day's delay I brought her and my mother's former agents into communication and arranged also that the Women's Political Union of America, of which I was president, should give the great militant leader a suitable send-off in the popular auditorium of Carnegie Hall.

Nerved by necessity, Mother sailed to America, leaving her boy in a nursing home in charge of Aunt Mary and his sisters, and under the skilled and loving care of two Suffragette nurse friends, Miss Townend and Miss Pine.

Her American visit was short though crowded and strenuous. She soon came back again, hoping to find her child improving; she had heard in America of wonderful recoveries. He was no better. We had Christmas together. He had grown so like his father, in his support of the women's cause, in his way with his mother and sisters, and in his attitude towards all women.

In the New Year he left us.

Mother turned to her work again. Her son was gone. She would, all the more, use her life and, if need be, give it to serve the women who were looking to her for leadership and depending on her for victory.

the Bill it proposed, without of course exonerating the Prime Minister and the Government from final responsibility, and we supported the movement with all our strength.

Mrs. Pankhurst said: 'It appears that Members of Parliament, as a whole, are prepared to vote the Conciliation Bill into law. The successful passage of the Bill seems therefore to be ensured, provided that the Prime Minister is willing that this shall be. It is difficult to believe that he will prevent the passage of the Bill and by so doing frustrate the present responsible effort towards peace.'

We increased our already vast non-militant propaganda in London and throughout the country and maintained the Truce which we had begun of our own accord.

We militants had, in fact, done our share of conciliation, before the Conciliation Committee was formed. It now only remained for the Government to do their share by seeing to it that women got the vote. If the Government refused to do this and so destroyed the conciliation movement, we should have more public sympathy than ever on our necessary resumption of militancy.

My own strongest, but unspoken, reason for welcoming the Conciliation movement was that it might avert the need for stronger militancy and would at least postpone the use thereof. Mild militancy was more or less played out. The Government had, as far as they could, closed every door to it, especially by excluding Suffragette questioners from their meetings. Cabinet Ministers had shown their contempt for the mildness of our protests and had publicly taunted us on that score. And neutral onlookers had warned us that these milder acts would, by their 'monotony', grow futile, because they would cease to impress anybody, and therefore would cease to embarrass the Government. As W.S.P.U. strategist, I saw this as plainly as any outside critic or counsellor. Strategically, then, a pause in militancy would be valuable, for it would give time for familiarity to fade, so that the same methods could be used again with freshness and effect. Much depended, in militancy, as it depends in other things, upon timing and placing, upon the dramatic arrangement and sequence of acts and events. A particular kind of protest, made after the Government had wrecked the Conciliation Bill—if the Government should indeed decide to wreck it—would in its effect be different from the same kind of protest made before the Conciliation movement began.

Another reason why mild militancy could not avail much longer

was that our women were beginning to revolt against the one-sided violence which they experienced in the course of their attempts to petition the King's Prime Minister. It was being said among them that they would prefer to break a window than be themselves thrown about and hurt. They were arguing that the W.S.P.U. respect for human safety ought to apply to themselves as well as to everyone else. They were questioning whether, for the sake of others dear to them, or even for their own sake, they had any right to risk personal injury, if a little damage to panes of glass would have the same, and indeed more, effect. For they were not ignorant of the fact that the law itself, as enforced in the law courts, was often more indulgent to those who attacked persons than to those who attacked property.

The forcible feeding of Lady Constance Lytton and others had driven our women to the conclusion that there was, to say the least of it, a singular indifference to the suffering and indignity endured by women for the sake of political enfranchisement.

The Parliamentary field was clear for the Conciliation Bill. Time was available and a large majority of the Members of the House were prepared to vote for it.

The opportunity had arrived, we urged, for reforming the Constitution by 'yielding to women their political birthright', and it was 'inconceivable' that at that moment of crisis in their conflict with the House of Lords the Government could shut the door of citizenship in the women's faces. What right had a Liberal Government to condemn the House of Lords as a hindrance to liberty, if they themselves denied liberty to half the people by depriving women of the possibility of voting on any terms?

Giving the Government the benefit of our doubt, we worked in non-militant fashion, in support of the Bill. Mother stirred the country by her appeals. The Liberal newspapers made encouraging forecasts, especially the *Manchester Guardian*, which declared that there was more than a hope that 'we are on the eve of the accomplishment of a deeply desired and long-delayed reform'.

The general public, the House of Commons, a large section of the Press, notably the Liberal Press, were supporting the Conciliation Bill. 'Politicians who, six months ago, despaired of any solution during the present session of Parliament now admit that the omens are favourable,' wrote Lord Lytton.

Sir Edward Grey gave the Government's answer to this in a reply to a deputation of women in his own constituency. He acknowledged the democratic nature of the Bill and approved its terms. He also admitted that he could quite understand the 'growing exasperation' felt when the House of Commons passed Woman Suffrage Bills on second reading by large majorities and made no further progress with them. Yet when questioned as to the autumn facilities, he definitely refused them and would give no promise for the next or any other year.

'Veto—utter blank sullen Veto!'—this telling phrase, coined by Mr. Winston Churchill for the Lords' veto, applied exactly to the Government's veto on the Conciliation Bill.

Sir Edward Grey's announcement really ended the Truce, yet we still clung to peaceful methods. Our next appeal for facilities was made at an Albert Hall meeting in November which was, if that could be, more determined, enthusiastic, electrical, than any of our former rallies. Money spoke! A sum of £9,000 was raised within a few minutes, representing who will ever know what self-denial, expressing the devotion of our women to a great cause, and their resolve to leave an inheritance of liberty to others.

This was our last non-militant effort. 'If the Conciliation Bill is killed,' said Mother, 'there will be an end to our truce.'

Now was Mr. Asquith's turn to speak and he did so by informing Parliament, when it met for the autumn's work, that it had but ten days more to live and would be dissolved on 28th November. No mention did he make of votes for women.

So ended the Government's unfulfilled pledge to women!

This sudden dissolution was generally recognized as the Government's mode of escape from a dilemma. 'Abandonment of the business of the Session,' said *The Times*, 'has some serious advantages for a Government confronted with many awkward questions such as . . . Woman Suffrage.'

While Mr. Asquith was announcing to the House of Commons its early end, Mrs. Pankhurst was addressing the Women's Social and Political Union in the Caxton Hall.

The three hundred women whom she led from there in deputation to the doors of Parliament included Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., pioneer medical woman, twice mayor of Aldeburgh, who with her sister,

the non-militant leader, Mrs. Fawcett, had been so long identified with the suffrage cause; Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, the distinguished scientist, friend of Madame Curie; Miss Charlotte Haig, a kinswoman of Sir Douglas Haig; Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, daughter of Richard Cobden; Miss Neligan, a pioneer in women's education, whose seventy-eight years did not keep her from braving the dangers of the occasion; Miss Georgina Brackenbury, the younger Dr. Garrett Anderson, and Mrs. Saul Solomon, widow of the South African statesman.

Again the public had gathered in vast numbers to manifest their support of the women. 'For five hours Parliament Square was in a state of siege and only the rising of the House brought it to a close,' said the *Daily Chronicle*. 'During the whole of this time the women were in continual conflict with the police.'

Black Friday was the name by which that day was remembered, because of what the women suffered. As they advanced, they were not arrested but forcibly resisted. Pictures in the newspapers gave evidence of what the women endured and one in particular of Miss Ada Cécile Wright, knocked to the ground.

One of the oldest members of the deputation subsequently wrote to the Home Secretary that she had witnessed and endured insult and assault, although, said she, 'we know of no law to prevent us from going in groups of twelve as we did to the House of Commons, whether the Government of the day choose to receive us or not. Our cause was not only a just but a reasonable one. We proceeded in the most orderly manner, hoping that a few of our representatives, headed by our leader Mrs. Pankhurst, would be graciously received, more especially since the Conciliation Bill had passed its second reading by a majority greater than that accorded to the Budget or against the Lords' veto. But how were we met? By the engine of physical force—the Metropolitan Police—an instrument under the control of the Government.

'Mrs. Pankhurst was already standing with the rest of her distinguished company on the steps of St. Stephen's entrance where they had been allowed to take up their position. I stepped forward to join the deputation when the police obstructed me. . . . I saw several of our members flung repeatedly like myself into the crowd. . . . Our women were knocked about, tripped up, their arms and fingers twisted, their bodies doubled under and then forcibly thrown, if indeed they did not drop stunned to the ground. . . . During many hours, that game of

pitch and toss played with the agonized and quivering bodies of women and girls went on unchecked.'

The women would not yield, But that Black Friday struggle made them think again that property, rather than their persons, might henceforth pay the price of votes for women.

A sensation was caused next morning when the magistrate was informed that the Home Secretary, Mr. Winston Churchill, having had the 'whole matter under consideration', had decided on the ground of public policy that 'on this occasion no public advantage would be gained by proceeding with the prosecution'. No evidence was offered and the arrested women were discharged. Public policy apparently meant election policy, because hundreds of women had already been prosecuted and imprisoned for taking precisely the same action.

The newspapers broke into posters, headlines, and comments: 'Electioneering Tactics'—'Government Afraid to Prosecute Suffragettes'—'We suppose that Mr. Churchill is afraid of raising new opposition during the General Election,' said one paper. 'If he had any hopes of conciliating the women, they have been disappointed, for the true motive of his conduct has been at once recognized.'

Inside the House of Commons, during the five hours' struggle outside, M.P.s had debated the issue. 'Why should the House be dissolved now?' asked one member, Mr. Sanderson, when there were 'subjects of great gravity, unfortunately, to be discussed' and 'some think Woman's Suffrage is one of these'. He would tell his constituents that 'Mr. Asquith had dissolved Parliament because he dare not face the subjects he has got to face'.

The representative women's deputation even then waiting outside to see the Prime Minister was mentioned by Mr. Kettle, who urged him to receive Mrs. Pankhurst and her colleagues. Sir Alfred Mond (later Lord Melchett) reminded Mr. Asquith of the unwisdom of alienating the electors by having two or three hundred women in prison, and he, too, urged him to receive the deputation. The outcome of the debate was that Mr. Asquith, while refusing to receive the deputation, promised to make a statement on woman suffrage.

The Prime Minister made this statement in the House of Commons six days before the dissolution. It reached us a few minutes later, as we were in session at Caxton Hall. So completely unsatisfactory was

parleying had been long drawn out. Coronation Day had almost come. If a militant response to the refusal of facilities in 1911 was to be made and timed effectively, we must decide and act. A very weighty reason for refraining from militancy was that the Conciliation Committee asked us to accept the Prime Minister's promise, as they themselves had decided to accept it. Our great appreciation of their work and our sense of the value of that work, our strong wish to retain their co-operation made us wish to accept their advice and not bring their movement of conciliation to an end while there was any remaining possibility of its success. Naturally if this Conciliation experiment were to fail we should then resume the entire and independent conduct of our policy. This was initiated by women and from first to last conducted by women. The help of men was welcomed but a women's movement must be led by women.

The responsibility of decision was great. On the one hand there was the danger of being tricked by a worthless political promise, on the other hand there was the desirability of keeping with us, in understanding and sympathy, the Conciliation Committee, the large House of Commons majority which supported the Conciliation Bill, and the general public and vast numbers of as yet non-militant women.

In strict logic we ought to accept nothing less than immediate 1911 facilities for the Conciliation Bill. The Government's refusal to let it be carried in the appropriate atmosphere of Coronation time was a positive danger signal. But by acting upon the real facts we might, at that special juncture, lose more than we should gain. It was not wise for us militants to risk breaking the Conciliation movement. If it were to be broken—and we hoped it might yet steer the Conciliation Bill safely to harbour—then the Government, not we, should break it. If renewed militancy became inevitable, better let the Government make the need for it clear. Better let the entire responsibility for the good or ill-fate of the Conciliation Bill rest upon the Government! We would let neither the Government nor anyone else have the possibility of arguing that but for our resumption of militancy in 1911 the Conciliation Bill would have passed in 1912.

Then our national feeling and loyalty were too strong to make militancy at Coronation time anything but painful to us. We were glad to be able to justify to ourselves a non-militant policy.

Another strong, decisive factor in my own mind was the desire to

uprising which accounted for the burning of Nottingham Castle. Was not that statement an incitement to women to go and do likewise? Mr. McKenna would not accept this invitation to 'criticize the speech of my colleague'.

Evidently the Government were preparing some big blow to put an end to militancy.

In a letter to Mr. Asquith, Mrs. Pankhurst called for further explanation of the Government's intentions and sought an interview for the discussion of matters which had arisen since the previous autumn. She received the usual negative reply. She then made her protest, in company with many other volunteers, the protest being spread over two days.

A band of women [reported the *Daily Telegraph*] set out on such a window-breaking campaign in the principal streets of the West End, as London has never known. For a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, nothing was heard in the Strand, Cockspur Street, Downing Street, Whitehall, Piccadilly, Bow Street or Oxford Street, but the falling, shattered glass. . . . Many of the finest shop fronts in the world had been temporarily destroyed and splinters of glass had been scattered over their valuable contents. The attack was begun practically simultaneously. It was one of the busiest periods of the day. Suddenly women, who a moment before had appeared to be on peaceful shopping expeditions, produced from bags or muffs, hammers, stones, and sticks and began an attack on the nearest windows. Information was immediately conveyed to the police and all the reserve constables were hurried out.

The most daring incident of the day, was the excursion of Mrs. Pankhurst and two other ladies to Downing Street. The police patrols in the street were taken completely by surprise. A large force of extra police immediately proceeded to Downing Street. In spite of the efforts of the constables however, four other women escaped their vigilance and succeeded in inflicting further damage before they were arrested.

Mother, who had driven in a cab to the Prime Minister's residence, was arrested with her two companions, Mrs. Tuke and Mrs. Arthur Marshall.

In the dock next morning Mother said to the magistrate: 'The last time I was here I laid before you certain reasons for my action with which I do not propose to trouble you this morning. At that time I

hoped that what we were doing would be sufficient. Since then the Government have left me and other women no possible doubt as to our position. We have not the vote, because, hitherto, we have not been able to bring ourselves to use the methods which won the vote for men, and within the last fortnight a member of the Government has challenged us to do very much more serious things than we are now charged before you with doing. Over a week ago, I wrote to the Prime Minister asking him to see a deputation of women. The request was refused with contempt. Yet Cabinet Ministers have gone, cap in hand, to the Miners' Federation. [A miners' strike was then in progress.] I hope that this will be enough to convince the Government that our agitation is going on. If not, if you send me to prison, as soon as I come out I shall go further and show that women must have some voice in the making of the laws which they have to obey.' Mother was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

One hundred and twenty other women had now been arrested and on the following Monday, when the protest was renewed, their number was greatly increased, and included the veteran Mrs. Saul Solomon, Dr. (Dame) Ethel Smyth, Mrs. Brackenbury and her two daughters, Mrs. Ayrton Gould and Miss Downing the sculptor.

The Government now dealt us their great blow. It was to arrest those who were directing the policy, controlling the organization and editing the paper *Votes for Women*. Already hints and rumours had been afloat that the leaders would be arrested and sent to prison for a long term of years. The hope was, perhaps, that this threat would produce surrender. But the vote was worth the price of years of imprisonment and if the Government imprisoned the leaders others would carry on the fight.

The Government acted. Mother and Mrs. Tuke were already in prison under sentence of two months' imprisonment. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence and myself. All five were charged with conspiring, on and since the 1st day of November 1911, to commit damage and injury to property of 'liege subjects of our Lord and King' and aiding and abetting, counselling and procuring the commission of offences against the provision of Section 5 of an Act of 1861 dealing with injuries to property.

Armed with the warrant, the police raided the W.S.P.U. office in the evening when members of the general public would not be about, but when officials and staff were still to be found at work. They

displayed the warrant, made the arrest, but of the Pethick Lawrences only. I was not there and knew nothing of what was happening. In the new flat which I had lately taken, I was writing an editorial for *Votes for Women*, headed 'The Challenge'.

A knock at the door! I opened it. One of our members¹ entered. She had come from Clement's Inn and gave me the news. Would I sign the cheque which Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence had already signed, enabling the transfer of W.S.P.U. funds before they could be attached by any order of the Court? Would I give her the article I had been writing, for the printer? Was the arresting over, I asked, or should I be in time if I went to Clement's Inn, to be arrested there? No, she said, the police would have left with their prisoners. I decided to wait where I was.

In the challenge of the moment a flash of light came to me and showed me the position to be more dangerous than I had foreseen. Theoretically, the prolonged isolation of the leaders would be counteracted by the devotion of our membership. But in *practice* fatal dangers would arise, especially as the same *coup* could and would be repeated over and over again. We had a resolute foe to contend with. The Government's purpose was to hold the shepherds captive, while they did their utmost to scatter and suppress the flock. They were resolved to stamp out the movement. I foresaw, as the result of this, or some future move, the shepherds sentenced to years of imprisonment and quietly kept out of action or else, if by the hunger-strike they resisted imprisonment, reduced to illness and inability for effectual leadership. If others replacing us gave as strong a lead, they would be dealt with in the same way. I foresaw an even greater danger—the infiltration of our movement by new elements prompted by our opponents, who would put peace, or party politics, or both, before justice and votes for women. Stirred by these forebodings, I said to my visitor, almost as one would write and sign a last will and testament: 'It must be shown by militancy, and still greater militancy, that the arrest of leaders has not checked the movement and its methods, but has had the opposite effect.' She departed.

I was alone facing a great problem, a crisis for the movement. Those who had shared the responsibility were prisoners. What best

¹ This member was Miss Evelyn Sharp the novelist, whom I had sent to warn Christabel and who had also undertaken to edit *Votes for Women* during the detention of my wife and myself.—Ed.

use could I make of the few remaining minutes of freedom to guard against the evident dangers? At any moment the police would come.

I barricaded the locked door. I would make a fight anyhow. A bell rang from the outer door. The building was locked by this time and the housekeeper, who lived next to my top-floor flat, went slowly downstairs to open. I waited. Ascending feet were heard. A knock! 'Who's there?' I said. A woman's voice: 'Mrs. ———.' One of our members! I opened. 'A note from Jessie Kenney,' she said. Jessie, too, had sent me warning of what had happened. My chance had come. I would get away for the night, if I could, and gain time to think what could be done before going to trial and prison. 'Have you a cab at the door?' I asked. 'Yes.' 'Then take me with you.' We tiptoed downstairs to the door. Were the police there? Not one to be seen. We drove away. My companion lived in Whitehall Court. 'I mustn't take you there,' she said, 'you will be recognized.' 'Drive me to Victoria Station!' I said. I entered the station, lingered a little, went out again, hailed a cab and drove to the nursing home at Pembridge Villas, kept by Miss Townend and Miss Pine, remembering that they had jestingly said one day when their new lift had been placed in a recess in the hall: 'We could hide you here.' It was late by then. A night nurse admitted me. I told my two friends that I needed a night's security to reflect and plan. 'You can't stay here because there is an operation due at midnight; you might be seen,' said they. An inspiration came to them. They dressed me as a nurse! So dressed I went with one of them to the home of friends of hers, sympathizers, who lived in a flat not far away. They welcomed me. I had found a haven. Not long after I left the nursing home, where my too-well-known hat had just been reduced to ashes in the drawing-room fire, the police arrived to search for me! They made further search that night, but not yet desperately, for they doubtless thought that I meant to vary the programme by making some dramatic entry on the scene of trial.

I did not sleep at all that night for thinking. Suddenly, in the small hours, I saw what I must do! Escape! The Government should not defeat us. They should not break our movement. It must be preserved and the policy kept alive until the vote was won. My law studies had not been in vain. They had impressed indelibly upon my mind the fact that a political offender is not liable to extradition. Long before,

when actually a prisoner in Holloway, that thought had come to me, in my prison cell, as a matter of purely academic interest. 'Of course if one ever did wish to avoid imprisonment, one could escape to a foreign country and as a political offender be able to stay there.' Not an academic matter now, but one of vital, practical, political concern! I must get to Paris, control the movement from there—and from there keep the fight going, until we won! I could hardly wait for the morning! As soon as I could venture to rouse my kind hostesses I told them my purpose. Would they see Miss —— and ask if she could arrange for me to drive in her car to the boat instead of travelling by train? One of them went to inquire. It was impossible, she learned, for reasons of possible recognition, but she returned with money for my needs. This was helpful indeed, for approach to my own bank might be imprudent. I must risk taking the train, and risk it was, for a Suffragette speaker was known by sight to thousands, and the morning newspapers gave the news that I was 'wanted by the police'. One of these friends said she would go with me to Paris. I borrowed a black coat and a black cloche hat. My face was sufficiently disguised by an unaccustomed pallor. We drove to Victoria Station. The boat train was crowded, for the coal strike had reduced the service. I bought fashion papers, as providing a non-political screen, and sat quietly in a corner. The train started. Safety so far! Opposite me sat a lady writing letter after letter, but not too busy, it seemed, to look at me intently every now and again. The train reached Folkestone town and stopped. The lady opposite crossed the compartment, put her head out of the window and called: 'Policeman!' My heart stood still. She gave him her letters to post! The train moved on to the boat station. I went aboard. 'Don't come any further with me,' I said to my kind companion. 'Take this letter back with you and see that Annie Kenney gets it.' She left me. The boat started . . . arrived! My foot touched the soil of France. We were saved. We would win.

London was all astir. The broken windows drew thousands of sightseers. One Cabinet Minister, at least, made some inspection of the wreckage, for Lord Riddell reports: 'Lloyd George and I went to look at the Prime Minister's windows, which had been broken the night before. We both thought it a strange sight.' Strange indeed! Most strange that in a free country, under a Liberal Government,

Mother received them with all her majestic indignation. They fell back and left her. Neither then nor at any time in her long and dreadful conflict with the Government was she forcibly fed. The Government could not induce any of their officers or agents to do it, and dared not, it may be, again order it to be done.

At the end of five days' hunger-strike, Mother was released. Mr. and Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence were released later after a period of forcible feeding. So ended the great conspiracy trial and the Government's raid upon the militant movement.

I knew well, however, that the Government had recoiled for another attack. I saw clearly that next time they would profit by this first experience of failure to seize us all. I accordingly determined, with a determination as iron-strong as theirs, that I would never return to England until the vote was won.

This was not a 'Joan of Arc' role that I had chosen, and any laurels that might belong to the pioneer prisoner would certainly wither from my brow. But I could not depend on any of the others to stay abroad through thick and thin. Least of all could I depend upon Mother to do it! I knew her ardent spirit too well. I knew that if I were to return to England and she were to stay in Paris, and if I were to find myself in prison, as I certainly should, Mother would soon be back in London and we should meet in Holloway, both prisoners, and both disabled for command. Whatever my limitations, I knew that in two respects I was well equipped—in the capacity to control affairs from a distance and in the capacity to read the mind of particular Cabinet Ministers and of the Government in general.

For the moment, however, everything in outward appearance was clear on the war front. 'Why does not Christabel come back?' was being asked by one and another. 'There is no reason for her to stay away any longer. When is she coming?' But she was not coming back at all. In her hard-headed way she had resolved to stay exactly where she was!

Mother now came to Paris. It was just the change she needed. We could talk over everything and rejoice in our triumph over the Government's latest onslaught. Mother could relax; she revived her schoolday memories, explored Paris, looked at the shops. It was a happy interlude for both of us, in which, for a brief moment, we could prepare for the hard fight yet to come. The other 'conspirators' came to see us and, of course, Annie Kenney and Mrs. Tuke. As the summer advanced, I moved to Boulogne-sur-Mer. This meant an easier journey

declared that the torpedoing of the Conciliation Bill had cleared the way for the passing of the Woman Suffrage Amendment to the Reform Bill and now the same torpedoing of the Conciliation Bill was used by the Prime Minister as an obstruction and a destruction of any Women's Amendment.

After this blow, what was left but militancy! Petitions, fresh processions, meetings, were a waste of time and energy. Indeed they were hardly self-respecting. No peaceful evidence would have affected the Government's attitude.

The Prime Minister's speech on the second reading of the Reform Bill in which he wrecked, in anticipation, any Woman Suffrage Amendment, combined with the significant silence of Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George on the same occasion and the inflammatory utterances of Mr. Hobhouse and others, was, of course, the immediate and direct cause of the Dublin affair and the stronger militancy of which that was an early example.

The Prime Minister, having torpedoed his own pledge to women, went to Dublin to advocate Home Rule. This was his first important engagement after his act of political destruction. A group of Suffragettes set out to make a protest in such a manner as might be possible in view of the extraordinary difficulties to be overcome. Strict precautions would exclude them from Mr. Asquith's meeting, yet they went on their mission. What they would do and how they would do it they knew not. Still less did we! But Mother and I were determined to stand by them. If they failed to make any protest it would not be for want of will and effort. They would respect life and hurt no one unless it were themselves, we knew. It was a rule we had laid down that none of our women had broken, and none of them ever did. We can, long after the battle is fought and won, proudly call our movement 'the Women's Bloodless Revolution'.

Mr. Asquith's Dublin meeting was strictly closed against women. The London *Times* reported it as 'probably the first public meeting addressed by a Minister during the year, into which the Militant Suffragists failed to penetrate'. However, the necessary question was asked by men. To suppress it completely, Cabinet Ministers would have had to speak to empty halls. Indignant at the exclusion of women from the Prime Minister's meeting, a woman militant had entered the

pledge than await it passively. As leaders, we had felt bound to restrain this eagerness but now there was no reason for delay. Nor were the women willing to return to the former ways of militancy, which led them in droves to prison and left Cabinet Ministers sneering at methods so relatively untroublesome to themselves, though so great a trial to the women.

Mrs. Fawcett's declared objection to a plan of voluntary starvation by non-militants—that it would inconvenience only the women and their families, without in the least inconveniencing the Government—was applying to mild militancy, such as deputations to the House of Commons, followed by imprisonment and hunger-strike. Remain, if you can, free to fight another day and another, and another! Face imprisonment if it should come with courage, but do not run into it! This was now W.S.P.U. policy.

One woman, however, could not avoid arrest—Mother! Already, Members of Parliament were asking the Government whether they intended to arrest Mrs. Pankhurst for the many acts of other Suffragettes.

Mother knew that the Government would let Mr. Bonaw Law and Sir Edward Carson prepare bloodshed in Ulster, without lifting a finger against them, because they were men and leaders of men voters, but on a far less serious count would arrest and imprison her because she was a woman and a leader of voteless women.

Years of imprisonment, with or without hunger-strike—that was Mother's fate and she knew it!

Heroine! That is the name for her and I say it, though I am her daughter. How small we all look in comparison, except the other women who took upon themselves the sterner deeds and also faced long years of imprisonment.

The Prime Minister ventured to the Kinnauld Hall in Dundee. 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,' thrilled the organ. Sang the audience: 'Wha wad be a traitor knave? Wha sae base to be a slave?'

The freedom of the city was then presented to Mr. Asquith. 'Ladies and gentlemen——' he began. 'And Suffragettes! Don't forget them,' came as an intimation of their presence and *their claim*. Suffrage protests punctuated all Mr. Asquith's speech, several times silenced him, and were the sensation of the evening. A Dundee newspaper reported 'the long fruitless search' made by the police, with many assistants, to discover hidden Suffragette hecklers and said that

ing of our Suffragettes, must not be lost. This was a double blow to us, for when it came we were just on the point of Votes for Women victory.

Mother arrived. She had been through much since we last met and now, instead of the rest she needed, there was a world crisis to face and a grave decision to be made.

War was the only course for our own country to take. This was national militancy. As Suffragettes we could not be pacifists at any price.

Mother and I declared support of our country. We declared an armistice with the Government and suspended militancy for the duration of the war. We offered our service to the country and called upon all our members to do likewise.

The cause of Votes for Women would be safe, provided our country and its constitution were preserved, for on the restoration of peace we should, if necessary, resume the pre-war campaign. To win votes for women a national victory was needed for, as Mother said, 'What would be the good of a vote without a country to vote in!'

Astonishment was felt in some quarters at our wartime truce to militancy. How, it was asked, could we support a Government that had been torturing women and had opposed the women's cause!

The answer was that the country was our country. It belonged to us and not to the Government, and we had the right and privilege, as well as the duty, to serve and defend it.

Mrs. Pankhurst's greatness was never more evident than in her instant grasp of the war issue, and the quickness of decision and strength of action with which, ill as she was, and after the strain of nine years' concentration upon one absorbing cause, she announced and pursued her policy. The truce she declared for the duration of the war had undoubtedly a decisive influence in securing peace at home during war abroad. If the Suffragettes had continued their pre-war campaign during the war, others with a grievance might have followed suit!

The news of Mrs. Pankhurst's armistice went far beyond her own country and especially to America, where she was known and loved by vast numbers. On the outbreak of war, I should have liked her to revisit America. The voyage would have rested her and she was not yet really equal, after her prison experience, to face the possible rigours of war. She, whom the Government imprisoned in her campaign for justice would now have returned to America to tell the American

people that her country and its Government were fighting in a just cause. It would have been a great gesture. Yet she was urgently needed also at home. She began work here and her wartime visit to the United States and Canada was deferred.

Mother seemed for the time to dismiss her ill-health in her ardour for the national cause. She spoke to Service men on the war front and to Service women on the home front. She called for wartime military conscription for men, believing that this was democratic and equitable, and that it would enable a more ordered and effective use of the nation's man-power. She declared that the military situation imperatively required the admission of women to munition factories and to many other unaccustomed forms of employment, to liberate men for the Front. She believed that a speedy increase of national effort in which men and women shared would shorten the war, reduce its cost in life and make victory more sure.

Anticipating shortage due to war conditions, she early called for the rationing of food supplies and claimed that, since we were engaged in the greatest of wars, the nation should be at once put in all respects on a war footing. Our way in the Suffragette time had been to anticipate and prepare for the biggest and worst difficulties, so that we might be equal to them if they came, and relieved if they did not come.

Strong national leadership and unity of military command we urged, on the strength of our experience in the Suffrage campaign.

We were constantly mindful of votes for women and watchful in case the war should end leaving a Suffrage agitation still necessary.

A Paris stronghold was re-established which was useful in the meantime as a point of observation and information.

Mrs. Pankhurst's campaign to open the door for women's war service was highly effectual. The munitions shortage and the need of man-power at the Front moved Mr. Lloyd George, as Minister of Munitions, to seek woman-power for the factories.¹ Opposition from various sections of men, political and industrial, blocked the war. He therefore turned to Mrs. Pankhurst as the pioneer in women's new and larger war service, and as the leader and inspirer of women claiming to help in the emergency. One day Mr. Lloyd George sent an emissary to her, Sir James Murray, M.P., a friend of his and a friend of the W.S.P.U. Mr. Lloyd George wanted to see Mrs. Pankhurst, to

¹ The Government had of course, in response to Mrs. Pankhurst's action in suspending militancy, released all the Suffragette prisoners.

country in the munition factories, and he only too gladly said yes. The needed atmosphere had been created, and the opposition made no sound!

The presence of women in the munition factories, later, prevented the threatened man-power strike, for the women simply announced that they would refuse to hold up the munitions supply and so leave the soldiers defenceless at the Front. They would go on working, even if the men went on strike.

Our Suffragettes were to be found in every kind of war service. The two women doctors, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Flora Murray, who had devoted herself to the Suffrage prisoners of war, established a military hospital, first under the French Government in France, until the British Government were ready and anxious to utilize their service in London. Others were serving in Serbia and Roumania, in Italy, with other allied nations.

The militant Suffrage movement had given women new confidence in their capacities, new power to undertake difficult tasks. The Suffragette spirit had become generalized and expressed itself in women's war service. 'I never knew we had such women,' exclaimed a Liberal Cabinet Minister. He ought to have known it, for such women had been battling with him and his Government for women's right to political service.

The action of Mr. Lloyd George in opening the war factories to women, his readiness to turn for help in the national emergency to Mrs. Pankhurst and the Suffragettes, showed us that he was in earnest in the country's cause. When he became Prime Minister we supported him as the national leader. We had confidence in his will to win. Without in the least forgetting the possibility of an eventual resumption of the Suffrage fight, we gave his Government our loyal support for the duration of the war. We increasingly believed, however, that the political opposition to votes for women was at an end and that the Suffragette armistice would end not in the resumption of the former hostilities but in the enfranchisement of women.

Two foreign missions were undertaken by Mrs. Pankhurst during the war—self-chosen, not official missions. Her sympathy for the smaller nations, whether Belgium in the west or Serbia in the east, was strong, and she went to the United States to raise funds for Serbian relief.

Russia she visited after the Revolution, during the régime of

Kerensky, with whom she had an interview. Her stay in Petrograd and Moscow and her conversations with many interesting personalities gave her a full harvest of information and impressions.

On her return to London she saw the Prime Minister and predicted to him the early end of Kerensky's rule and the succession of the present régime. Her first and only visit there had shown her the end of the old and the beginning of the new Russia.

Votes for women came in wartime. War conditions had shattered the electoral register and Parliament must attend to the franchise before it could be re-elected. The franchise could not be touched without giving votes to women, because Mrs. Pankhurst and her Suffragettes would resume militancy as soon as the war was ended, and no Government could arrest and imprison women who, in the country's danger, had set aside their campaign to help the national cause. The 'Cat and Mouse' Act could never be used again; forcible feeding was ended. The men voters would not have tolerated any more coercion of the women who had shown themselves as true to their country as to their own cause. Indeed, if the men voters had tolerated it, the women themselves would not. The resumption of militancy would have found thousands of new recruits joining the militant ranks and even before the war women had proved their power, by their own unaided exertions, to place any Government that resisted their just claim in an impossible position.

Mrs. Pankhurst at the onset of the war had written: 'In the black hour that has just struck in Europe, the men are turning to their women and calling on them to take up the work of keeping civilization alive. In all the harvest fields and orchards women are garnering food, for the men who fight as well as for the children left fatherless by the war. In the cities, the women are keeping open the shops, driving trucks and trains and attending to a multitude of business.' When the war ended would men, she asked, forget the part that women had taken, as they had forgotten it after previous wars? For the present, the struggle for the vote was in abeyance, but it was not abandoned. 'But one thing is reasonably certain,' she wrote; 'the Cabinet changes which will necessarily result from warfare will make future militancy on the part of women unnecessary. No future Government will undertake the impossible task of crushing or even delaying

the march of women towards their rightful heritage of political liberty.'

Cabinet changes did in fact occur in wartime, as Mother anticipated, and they eased the situation. Mr. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, and Mr. Bonar Law, his partner in control of national affairs, were both avowed supporters of the principle of women's enfranchisement and in that sense had nothing to retract. Mr. Lloyd George, who in the pre-war days had resisted the smaller measure of votes which would then have given us a political foothold and opened the door for more, now had the power to give us the larger measure which had been unobtainable in the former political conditions. It was now his turn to advise against wider and still, said he, impracticable demands. An echo of past history sounded in Mr. Lloyd George's assurance that woman suffrage would appear in the Franchise Bill as first introduced and not be left to be added by amendment. Mrs. Pankhurst held rather aloof from the negotiations that attended the Speaker's Conference of members of all parties to consider franchise reform generally and woman suffrage in particular. She and I believed that a certain detachment on our part would give more effect to the potential, post-war militancy which it was the aim of political leaders to avert. We therefore left it to others to discuss such points as the differential age limit for women voters, designed to prevent them from becoming at once an electoral majority.

Mother did, however, join the deputation of women's societies to the Prime Minister on 17th March and thanked him in the name of the Women's Social and Political Union for having made it possible for the question of woman suffrage to be dealt with in a practical way. 'I want to assure you,' she said, 'that whatever you think can be passed, with the least discussion and debate, we are ready to accept.' Mr. Lloyd George explained that he had that morning had a draft Bill prepared so that there would be no loss of time in that respect. 'The attitude of the Government with regard to woman suffrage,' he said, 'will be this: that they leave the question of votes for women as an open question. As far as the Government are concerned the majority will vote for the retention of the Women's Suffrage in the Measure.'

'We take the responsibility of conducting the Bill through the House of Commons, but the Measure itself is a House of Commons Measure, which every section of the Commons is equally responsible for. It is not quite in the same category as an ordinary Government