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Act No. 54, 1902.

Women's Franchise.

Act No. 54, 1902.

An Act to extend the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, and for purposes consequent on or incidental to that object. [27th August, 1902.]

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the "Women's Franchise Act, 1902," and shall be construed with the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act of 1893 and any Act amending the same.

2. The right to vote at elections of members of the Legislative Assembly is hereby conferred upon women. And for that purpose the expression "male person" in the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act of 1893 shall be read "male or female person," and the word "son" in the definition of natural-born subject in section four of that Act shall be read "son or daughter," and all alterations necessary to carry out the provisions of this section shall be made in the form of any documents as prescribed in that Act: Provided that the right so conferred shall not be exercised until the general election next happening after the commencement of this Act.

3. Where a female elector's name is changed in consequence of her marriage after enrolment in any roll, or where after such enrolment her marriage is dissolved or declared to be null and void and she reverts to and becomes known under her maiden surname or her surname before such marriage, the chief electoral officer, on being satisfied of such change of name, may amend such roll or cause it to be amended accordingly, and on receiving the elector's right then issued and in force in respect of such elector may issue a new elector's right in the changed name of the elector.

4. Nothing in this Act shall be taken to enable or qualify a female not to be a woman to be nominated as a candidate at any election or to be elected as a member.

WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ACT (1902)
THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

To the memory of my Father

IN

NOEL GORDON COOPER

NEW SOUTH WALES

13 December 1899 - 11 March 1970

R.G. Cooper

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Pass) in the University of Sydney.
To the memory of my Father

NOEL GORDON COOPER

13 December 1899 - 11 March 1970
This thesis is an examination of aspects of the women's suffrage movement in New South Wales between 1890 and 1902, when Parliament passed the Women's Sufferage Enfranchisement Bill (1902).

The introductory chapters give an account of the women's suffrage movement in the United Kingdom until 1902, the United States of America until 1919, New Zealand until 1893 and South Australia until 1924. In an attempt to fit the movement in N.S.W. into the proper context in relation to similar movements in other political environments, in addition, some of the influences in N.S.W. between 1890 and 1902 are briefly considered.

1. INTRODUCTION

2. THE ADVOCATES

3. THE ARGUMENTS

4. PARLIAMENT

5. CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY
This thesis is an examination of aspects of the women's suffrage movement in N.S.W. between 1891, when Sir Henry Parkes introduced into the N.S.W. Parliament a resolution recommending the extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women, and 1902, when Parliament passed Sir John See's Women's Franchise Bill (1902).

In the introductory chapter, a brief account is given of the women's suffrage movement in the United Kingdom until 1902, the United States of America until 1910, New Zealand until 1893, and South Australia until 1894, in an attempt to fit the movement in N.S.W. into its proper context in relation to similar movements in other political environments. In addition, some of the early moves made in N.S.W. between 1888 and 1890 are briefly considered.

In subsequent chapters the organisational structure, goals and leadership of the two organisations that were most prominent in the campaign for the admission of women to the ballot-box - the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Womanhood Suffrage League - are considered in detail; the arguments that were used by the supporters - both inside and outside Parliament - are examined; and the parliamentary debate on, and the fate of the various women's suffrage resolutions, private members' bills, and government bills, is outlined.

I wish to thank the members of the staff of the Mitchell Library, Sydney for their assistance; the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of N.S.W. for permission to use the minute books in its possession; my supervisor, Mr. Trevor Matthews, for his endless patience and valuable advice; my typist, Miss Marjorie Todd; and finally, my parents, without whose unstinting co-operation this thesis would never have been written.

R.G. Cooper,
Colegio San Jorge,
Quilmes,
Argentine Republic.

11 March 1970.
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ABBREVIATIONS


N.S.W. New South Wales.


S.M.H. Sydney Morning Herald.

W.C.T.U. Woman’s Christian Temperance Union.

W.S.L. Womanhood Suffrage League.
Only in the last fifty years has women's suffrage become a well-nigh universal phenomenon.\(^1\) The question first came into prominence during the late nineteenth century as part of the feminist movement or, what contemporaries labelled as "The Woman Question."\(^2\) The feminist movement had its origins in the radical socio-political thought of the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution and its ideology gradually became an accepted part of the 'canon' of liberal-democratic and socialist thought during the nineteenth century. While many of the goals of the movement varied from place to place, the political suffrage was invariably demanded and often only reluctantly conceded. When World War I broke out in 1914 women had the right to vote in only four countries - New Zealand, Australia, Finland and Norway - and in eleven states of the United States of America. In the "older nations" it took the holocaust of one or two World wars to hasten the advent of women's suffrage;\(^2\) in new political communities women's suffrage came just before, or in the wake of independence.\(^3\)

The date of the birth of the women's movement, at least in the Anglo-Saxon world, can be conveniently placed at 1792, with the publication of "the keystone of the women's movement,"\(^4\) Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*.\(^5\) Inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, Mary Wollstonecraft made a passionate plea for the emancipation of women from the legal, political and social subjection which characterised the lot of her sex in eighteenth century Britain. In so doing, she issued a radical challenge to the then current assumptions regarding the roles of men and women in society. In fact, nothing short of a 'revolution' would be needed to free women from the bonds which kept them in subjection and so place them on a footing of equality with men.

---

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
Mary Wollstonecraft wrote at a significant turning point in British, indeed in world history - in an age of intellectual ferment and rapid economic and social change following the French Revolution and at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

Norman MacKenzie ably summed up the significance of these revolutions for the women's movement when he wrote:

The democratic and rationalist concepts of Tom Paine and his American and French contemporaries could no more be limited to one class or one sex than the factory system could be confined to one country. Both crossed traditional boundaries, one bringing new patterns of social organisation and the other establishing industry and the market economy, affecting the way people lived, the conditions under which they worked, and the means by which they were governed - and, not least, the economic role and personal relations of men and women.6

It was not, however, in Great Britain, where the ideology of the women's movement and the social revolution prompted by industrialism began, that the ideal of women's suffrage was first victorious. Nor was the initial victory achieved in the socially sophisticated and economically advanced states on the eastern seaboard of the United States of America - the states whose leaders drew up the politically radical Declaration of Independence. Rather, the first victories were achieved, paradoxically it seems, in what Alan Grimes calls the new frontiers of democracy: the Protestant perimeters of Europe; English-speaking outposts, and the last settlements of America.7

Wyoming (1869), Utah (1870 and 1896), Colorado (1893), New Zealand (1893), Idaho (1896), Australia (1894 - 1908).

In the relatively new communities in the Australasian colonies and in the west of the United States of America the radical liberal-democratic ideas from Great Britain and the east coast of the United States of America were more easily applied. Entrenched vested interests and entrenched patterns of behaviour had not emerged to oppose the adoption of women's suffrage and, partly at least as a result, there appears to have been a greater willingness and ability to experiment with new political forms. This was particularly so where - as in the west of the United States of America, in New Zealand, South Australia, and Western Australia - there was the possibility of using women's suffrage to reap tangible political benefits. Moreover, in Australia,

the admission of women to the federal franchise in 1902 made it difficult for the four 'non-women's suffrage' states to justify their continued refusal to admit women as voters at state elections.

The victory of the women's suffrage cause in any one place was dependent, not so much on the force of the ideology that was used to justify demands for the suffrage, as on the characteristics of the political environment in which the women and their male supporters were making their demands. Any explanation of the victory of women's suffrage in a particular political environment must attempt to take account of conflicting political forces at work in the environment and the extent to which they hindered or aided the cause of women's suffrage. As Alan Grimes says:

Every acquisition of political rights by one group affects the distribution of power held by others. Lurking behind the avowed principles of justice and eternal right are conflicts of interests and struggles for power out of which the law emerges with its affirmation of social values.8

While the main concern of this study is to trace the history of the women's suffrage movement in N.S.W. an attempt will be made in this introductory chapter to place the N.S.W. movement in its setting and provide some points of comparison by briefly examining aspects of the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain until 1902, the United States of America until 1910, New Zealand until 1893, Victoria until 1888, and South Australia until 1894.

II
GREAT BRITAIN

Early Advocates

For women in Britain the nineteenth century saw both the removal of many of those restrictions which held women in legal and political subjection and the growth of a measure of equality between the sexes for which Mary Wollstonecraft had first so passionately pleaded. In their assault against the traditional barriers which restricted the role of women in society, the advocates of female emancipation had to fight hard

8. Ibid., p. 3.
against vested conservative interests and be prepared to risk ridicule and ostracism. Despite the opposition, enormous changes had taken place in the rights and the role of British women by the end of the nineteenth century but they were (perhaps surprisingly considering the extent of the changes that had taken place in their status) still excluded from the parliamentary suffrage and in their efforts to obtain this particular privilege women had to wage a long, and at times violent and bitter campaign.

The first demand for women's suffrage in Britain appears to have been made by William Thompson in his Appeal to One Half of the Human Race published in 1825. The pamphlet was really a reply to James Mill's article "On Government" in the Encyclopaedia Britannica Supplement of 1824. Thompson attacked Mill's claim that the rights and interests of many persons (women) were included in those of others (fathers, husbands, brothers). He was, in effect, pointing out that the development of political thought away from the "representation of interests and towards individual rights was necessary before women could hope to have the vote."12

The passing of the Reform Act (1832), incorporating the word 'male', saw the introduction of the first statutory bar to women exercising the franchise. In August of the same year the first petition in favour of women's suffrage was presented, unsuccessfully, to the House of Commons by Henry ('Orator') Hunt on behalf of Miss Mary Smith of Yorkshire who sought the extension of the suffrage to unmarried women with the necessary property qualification. Between 1832 and 1866 the subject was

10. The full title is: Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to restrain them in Political and thence Civil and Domestic Slavery.
occasionally debated in Parliament, in journals and by some political organisations but it was not until 1866 that a continuous campaign for women's suffrage began.

**J.S. Mill and women's suffrage, 1867**

In 1866 John Stuart Mill, an ardent champion of women's suffrage who in 1865 was elected to represent the borough of Westminster in the Commons, agreed to present a petition in favour of women's suffrage to the House. A suffrage committee was immediately formed by some prominent women supporters of the cause and it managed to collect 1,499 signatures to a petition which Mill presented to the Commons in June 1866. Because this small group of women interested in gaining the suffrage for their sex and, encouraged by Disraeli's apparent support for women's suffrage, were prepared to form a rudimentary suffrage organisation and petition in favour of their cause and because they found a champion in Parliament (at a time, following Palmerston's death, when the whole question of the parliamentary suffrage was under review and was the subject of considerable debate both inside and outside Parliament) who was prepared to present their petition to the House and propose, in May 1867, a women's suffrage amendment to the Representation of the People Bill which provoked a serious debate on the subject and gained the cause considerable publicity, that the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain was born.

**The 'constitutional' suffrage societies, 1867-1902**

In 1867 the petition committee formed itself into the London National Society for Women's Suffrage and in the same year the women's suffrage societies of Manchester and Edinburgh federated with the London National Society as the National Society for Women's Suffrage (N.S.W.S.). In 1868 societies in Birmingham and Bristol joined the N.S.W.S. and in 1872 a Central Committee of the N.S.W.S. was established to link provincial women's suffrage societies and help co-ordinate policy and campaigning.

In the early years the women "felt victory to be very near". Despite J.S. Mill's defeat in the elections of 1868 and the failure of the Chortlon v. Lings case in November 1868, "the suffrage societies flourished," encouraged and strengthened by the belief that victory was close at hand. In 1870 Jacob Bright introduced the first Women's Suffrage Bill into the House of Commons where it passed the second reading stage by a majority of thirty-three, only to be 'killed' a week later when W.E. Gladstone made his opposition known. "So began a long series of hopes and disappointments."

In December 1888 the suffrage movement split. Superficially the split appeared to be what Ramelson called "a convoluted discussion on rules" but in reality more important issues were at stake. A new set of rules designed to transform the Central Committee of the N.S.W.S. "into a tight political organisation," to increase the power of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the N.S.W.S. and, most importantly, to permit the affiliation of women's organisations which had women's suffrage as one, but not necessarily their only aim. The proposed changes were the work of a leading member of the National Liberal Women's Association and they appeared to threaten the political impartiality that the N.S.W.S. had tried studiously to preserve since 1867. The Central Committee approved the new rules and the minority, led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, left the meeting. The society based on the new rules called itself the Central National Society for Women's Suffrage (C.N.S.); Millicent Fawcett's organisation continued to call itself the N.S.W.S. The two organisations continued their separate existence until 1897 when they were linked, under the presidency of Millicent Fawcett, as the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (N.U.W.S.S.).

The N.U.W.S.S. and its predecessors represented what has become known as the constitutional branch of the women's suffrage movement. The Women's Social and Political Union

21. Ramelson, The Petticoat Rebellion, p. 82. See also Kamm, Rapiers and Battleaxes, p. 131.
23. Kamm, Rapiers and Battleaxes, p. 131.
24. Ibid., p. 133.
25. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 138.
(W.S.P.U.) founded by Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst in 1903 represented the militant branch of the movement and its advent introduced an entirely new element into the women's suffrage campaign - an element which believed that, since the constitutionalists had failed militant tactics should be tried to force Parliament's hand, an element which is entirely absent from the women's suffrage campaign throughout Australia.

The leadership and dynamism of the constitutional campaign came - as it did for the extra-parliamentary women's suffrage movements in the United States of America and the Australasian colonies - largely from the middle-class. 30

Talented women were frustrated by the conventional limitations on their activities and the consequent apparent uselessness of their lives, others were incensed by the legal disadvantages under which women laboured and many were aroused by the distress suffered by middle-class spinsters living in a society which unrealistically assumed marriage to be the "whole duty" of all women and who were forced by convention, financial necessity, and poor or no education into ill-paid occupations. The feminists saw woman suffrage as one of a number of important reforms which would enable women to defend their interests, develop their personalities and abilities to the utmost and participate fully in the life of society. Like their United States and Australasian counterparts, British women appear to have argued in favour of women's suffrage as a result of their experience of the world around them or the experiences of others - arguments based on abstract political rights and abstract justice usually came later.

Opposition to women's suffrage

Liberal socio-political thought and rapid economic and social change helped the feminists realise many of their goals by the end of the nineteenth century - but Parliament stubbornly refused to concede the justice of the claim to the suffrage.

Between 1867 and 1903 the constitutionalists worked strenuously and patiently to educate public and parliamentary opinion in favour of women's suffrage - but to no avail. During the thirty-six years of continuous campaigning before the
emergence of the W.S.P.U. thirty-six private members' bills, designed to extend the suffrage to women on the same terms as it was exercised by men, were tabled in the Commons. Only thirteen were read a second time and only three passed the second reading but went no further - they were the bills of 1870, 1886, and 1897. Three attempts were made in the Commons to amend suitable government bills - in 1867, 1884, and 1894 - but these attempts also failed.

The inability of the suffragists to convince either the Liberals or the Conservatives to treat women's suffrage as a government measure instead of as a non-party issue constituted one of the greatest political difficulties facing the movement. Parliamentary supporters of the women's cause were, therefore, forced to promote it by proposing amendments to infrequent government measures dealing with the parliamentary franchise or by undertaking the almost hopeless task of promoting and attempting to steer through all stages a private member's bill.

Conservative Party leaders Disraeli, Salisbury, and Balfour, while each personally favouring the women's cause, were unwilling to commit their party to support it. The cause had only "limited support" among Conservative members of parliament and during the long period of Conservative Party rule (broken only in 1886 and between 1892-1895) between 1885-1905 party leaders did not regard the question as being of major importance, particularly since pursuing it as a party measure involved the risk of splitting the party with the probability that little would be gained politically.

In the Liberal party on the other hand it was the opposition of the leaders and not of the rank and file of the parliamentary members which effectively ruined the suffragists' chances of success. Parliamentary support for women's suffrage originated from within the Liberal party, was consistent with Liberal party principles and was generally supported by more 31. This information was extracted from Appendix I in Ibid., pp. 211-213.
32. The information was extracted from Appendix II in Ibid., pp. 218-221.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 180.
35. Ibid., p. 189.
36. Ibid., pp. 103-106.
37. Ibid., p. 109.
38. Ibid., pp. 109-110.
39. Ibid., pp. 117-118.
Liberals than Conservatives. Yet many members were unwilling to support the cause in the face of opposition from the party leadership or at the risk of splitting the party. According to Rover the time was ripe for conceding a measure of women's suffrage in 1884 and had it not been for Gladstone's opposition to William Woodall's amendment to the Representation of the People Act Amendment Bill, then before the House of Commons, it seems possible that women's suffrage would have been conceded. After the failure of 1884 the movement declined and did not revive again until the emergence of the W.S.P.U. and its adoption of militant tactics.

Not until 1917, after the Commons passed the Representation of the People Amendment Bill, did the House of Lords ever seriously debate a women's suffrage bill. Five private members' bills conferring the parliamentary franchise on women were tabled in the Lords between 1884 and 1897 but that House was reluctant to deal with measures altering the constitution of the Commons unless they had first passed the Commons. Until 1917 their Lordships were not given such an opportunity and in the political climate of that year rejection of the Bill by the Lords would have been inconceivable - assuming, that is, a majority would, in different circumstances, have voted against the measure. In N.S.W., on the other hand, the Legislative Council was able to twice reject the Women's Franchise Bill after it had passed the Assembly and in Victoria the Upper Chamber was even more obstructionist.

The very success that attended those who, in nineteenth century Britain, demanded changes in the legal and social status of women may well have strengthened the hands of those who opposed the extension of the suffrage. Women were admitted to the municipal franchise (1865) and the county franchise (1884) if they had the appropriate qualifications, they were permitted to sit on School Boards (1870) and Boards of Poor Law Guardians.

42. Ibid., p. 192.
43. Ibid., p. 217.
10.

(1875), they were guaranteed property rights when married by the various Married Women's Property Acts (1870, 1874, 1882, 1893), they were provided with better educational opportunities and were entering (albeit sometimes in the face of considerable opposition) fields of work previously monopolised by men. With the emancipation of women from many long-standing disabilities it was argued that women's suffrage, once seen as desirable to help women defend their interests and achieve some measure of equality with men, was no longer necessary.45

Parliament, elected by and composed solely of men, had, it was argued, proved itself quite willing to remedy those injustices of which the feminists complained and, therefore, it was quite unnecessary to grant women the suffrage while men were prepared to defend the women's interests. The opponents of women's suffrage in N.S.W. resorted, as we shall see, to a similar type of argument.

Although the Industrial Revolution and political liberalism together radically changed British economic and political life in the nineteenth century and helped make possible the emancipation of women, it seems probable that, in addition the failure of one or other of the political parties to support the cause, the continuing influence of traditional values and prejudices towards women was a factor delaying the extension of the franchise to women. Opponents of women's suffrage both within and outside Parliament certainly frequently expressed with vigour the belief that women were unsuited to involvement in politics. How critical this attitude was in hindering the women's cause is difficult to gauge. By contrast, the movement for women's suffrage in the Australasian colonies seems to have benefited because many of the entrenched traditional British attitudes towards women, although voiced, seem to have been modified by the social environment developing in Australasia and because, in the important formative years, English precedents guided Australasian colonial legislatures in their approach to the 'Woman Question.'

The fact that adult male suffrage had not been conceded in Britain by the end of the nineteenth century was undoubtedly a factor limiting the support given to the women's suffrage movement and may well have helped delay the women's victory. Certainly the emerging Labour party viewed the women's suffrage campaign with suspicion since it was essentially a middle-class

movement and because it demanded that the franchise be extended to women on the same basis as it was granted to men - in other words, votes for women of property. At the same time, however, it must be pointed out that the Labour party in Britain did not, at the turn of the century, have a great deal of political influence. By contrast, the women's suffrage movements in Australasia were not hampered by the fact that women were demanding a privilege that had not yet been conceded to all men. In N.S.W. during the 1890's the Labour party emerged as a politically significant force and, in contrast to the Labour party in Britain, it is an important factor to be considered in helping to account for the victory of the women's suffrage cause in N.S.W.

III

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The women's suffrage movement in the United States of America had its formal beginnings in July 1848 at the convention organised by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott at Seneca Falls, New York State. But it was not until 1869, during the debate on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, that the subject became an issue of "national concern." The final victory was achieved only after a long and often bitter campaign when, on 26 August 1919, the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution was adopted.

It would be impossible here to trace in any detail the history of women's suffrage movement in the United States. Like most movements seeking extensive socio-political reforms and extending over a comparatively long period of time it is extremely complex and the United States' political environment in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, characterised by rapid change, sectionalism and federalism only adds to the difficulty. However, at the risk of relying too heavily on Alan P. Grimes' study, The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage, a brief

46. Ibid., p. 146.
account of the reasons for the first victories of the women's suffrage cause in the United States and some of the reasons for its failure to achieve more rapid success will be given.

**Wyoming and Utah**

It would be superficial to attempt to explain the victory of women's suffrage in Wyoming in 1869 and in Utah in 1870 simply in terms of either the influence of the ideology of equal rights or of "frontier equalitarianism." Grimes says of the cry "equal rights":

Struggling for power and status behind the relatively innocuous phrase of equal rights for women were social forces whose ultimate goal was the establishment of a system of values embedded in the law.\(^{48}\)

And of the notion of "frontier equalitarianism" he says:

The hypothesis of frontier equalitarianism as an explanation for the coming of woman suffrage in the West is inadequate at the outset, for it never comprehended a political equality for women at all, any more than it included in its scope Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, or in some cases Spanish-Americans.\(^{49}\)

Rather, Grimes looks to the victory in the West of the United States of what he rather loosely calls the "Puritan ethic" as probably the most significant contributory factor to the coming of women's suffrage in that region.

It is well to point out that Grimes also admits that another factor that undoubtedly hastened the coming of women's suffrage in the territories of Wyoming and Utah was the relative technical ease - usually only legislative enactment by the territorial legislature and the assent of the territorial governor was required - with which the appropriate legislation could be adopted. In most states, however, a constitutional amendment requiring legislative endorsement and approval in a referendum were needed - and this, at best, usually proved a very difficult task.\(^{50}\)

In Wyoming, while admitting that the adoption of women's suffrage "was in large measure the product of chance and circumstance,"\(^{51}\) aided by the fact that frontier conditions meant "that a small political group in a highly disorganised territory could legislate, unchallenged, unusual statutes,"\(^{52}\) Grimes claims

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50. Ibid., pp. 26, 79-80.

51. Ibid., p. 53.

52. Ibid., p. 76.
that it must also be seen against the "background of lawlessness and chaos, aggravated by the presence of a proportionately large transient population."

He points out that women's suffrage in Wyoming was a reaction against frontier violence and it became the instrument of those seeking to build a stable and civilized community in the territory.

Though men conquered the wilderness, women made it inhabitable. Women, in scarce supply in early Wyoming, were respected at the polls and in the court rooms not because they were politically equal but because they were - quite simply - women, and as such were symbols of home and civilization, . . . Their very presence was in some fashion a civilizing agent.

Once in force, "vested interests" arose to ensure its preservation and following the abortive (but very nearly successful) attempt to repeal it in 1871, the statute remained in effect until 1890 when in a very different political environment from that in which it was adopted, it was replaced by a women's suffrage provision in the new state constitution drawn up just prior to Wyoming's admission to the Union.

In February 1870 women's suffrage was enacted in the Mormon territory of Utah and it remained in force there until its abolition in 1887 by the federal Congress' anti-polygamy Edmunds-Tucker Act. Although there is no evidence of there having been any public discussion in Utah on women's suffrage, prior to its adoption, Grimes claims that it can nonetheless be argued that Mormonism in the nineteenth century, in spite of polygamy, represented the Puritan ethic, and that woman suffrage came about in Utah to bolster the power of the Mormon Church in its effort to defend that ethic.

In its social doctrines the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints was the nineteenth century heir of the "Puritan ethic of piety, sobriety, industry, frugality, and asceticism."

53. Ibid., p. 51. See Ibid., pp. 47-52 for details of the "background of lawlessness and chaos" and pp. 53-59 for details of the actual passing of the bill by the territorial legislature. See also Sinclair, The Better Half, pp. 208-212 for a brief account of the coming of woman suffrage to Wyoming.
55. Ibid., p. 76.
56. Ibid., p. 72.
57. Ibid., pp. 76-77.
58. Ibid., p. 28.
59. Ibid., p. 28.
In 1869 and 1870 the power of the Mormon Church to defend the Puritan ethic was challenged from two sources. First, in 1870 the federal Congress appeared likely to pass the anti-polygamy Cullom Bill and the adoption of women's suffrage "would appear to have been a calculated move on the part of the Mormon hierarchy to forestall federal legislation on polygamy." Second, with the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and the possibility of the establishment of hostile "gentile" mining communities in Utah, the adoption of women's suffrage represented an attempt to defend the Mormon ethic and save the 'Mormon civilization' from the fate which overtook the Puritan settlements in New England and the Roman Catholic settlement in Maryland. At no point was there any attempt to justify women's suffrage on the grounds of equality between the sexes - a doctrine to which the Mormon leaders would not have subscribed. Rather, women were the "reserve troops to be called upon when needed" to help defend the Mormon theocracy.

In his summary of the reasons for the victory of women's suffrage in Wyoming Grimes claims that it may be said that the same social forces which were at work in Utah to sustain a civilization were at work in Wyoming to achieve one. In both cases these social forces sought to establish the norms of community behaviour usually associated with the term "the Puritan ethic." These norms included order, temperance, honesty, and an extraordinary sense of calling or divine mission in the process of community building. The efforts to establish the Puritan ethic as the controlling political force was basic to the coming of woman suffrage to these territories.

Opposition

While many of the goals of the United States feminist movement had been conceded, or were shortly to be conceded by most state legislatures by the end of the nineteenth century, women's suffrage had been victorious in only four states by 1900 and in an additional seven states by 1914. Some explanation of both the reasons for the failure of the suffrage cause and for its victories in nine western states (in addition to Wyoming and Utah) is needed.

60. Ibid., p. 33.
61. Ibid., pp. 35-42.
62. Ibid., p. 41.
63. Ibid., p. 77.
64. Wyoming (1890 - first adopted by the territorial legislature in 1869), Colorado (1893), Utah (1896 - first adopted by the territorial legislature in 1870, abolished by federal legislation in 1887 and restored by the state constitution when Utah was admitted to the Union in 1896), Idaho (1896), Washington (1910), California (1911), Oregon (1912), Arizona (1912), Kansas (1912), Nevada (1914), and Montana (1914).
One reason has already been mentioned; namely, the technical difficulty of amending most state constitutions so as to admit women as electors. The other demands made by the feminists could be obtained by simple legislative action, but convincing a legislature to approve a women's suffrage amendment to state constitution and then have that amendment approved by the male electors voting in a referendum, was no easy task.

While the smaller political parties were prepared to support women's suffrage the 'party bosses' of the two national parties - Democrat and Republican - refused unequivocally to endorse the principle. Clearly the major party leaders were uncertain as to how women would vote; they could see no tangible advantages to be gained from advocating the cause; and they feared for their parties' and their own positions (particularly in view of the hostility to the alleged control of the instruments of government by corrupt party machines) if women, who by the 1890's "were increasingly coming to be looked upon as the custodians of public as well as private morality," were admitted to the political suffrage.

Because the women's suffrage movement was generally backed by 'temperance' forces (in particular the strong and well-organised W.C.T.U.) and because its victory was frequently followed by the success of the prohibitionists, the liquor interests worked to defeat the movement wherever and whenever they could. According to the suffrage leaders the liquor interests "controlled" the two main political parties.

The foreign-born also tended to oppose women's suffrage for a variety of reasons probably the most important of which was the conservative social backgrounds of most immigrants to the United States. The opposition of the foreign-born was only reinforced as anti-foreign organisations, established to preserve the status of their members through the enforcement of what they perceived as traditional American norms, allied themselves with the suffrage cause, particularly in the western states.

The strength of the opponents of the suffrage cause - the immigrants, the party bosses and the liquor interests - lay in the cities. It was in the fast-growing industrial cities of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century United States that the values associated with the women's suffrage

movement - values their rural and small town adherents regarded as the traditional values of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Puritan America - were most strenuously opposed. "At issue," says Grimes, "was a conflict over styles of life or modes of existence." 67

It is also impossible to ignore the strength of deep-seated conservatism. This was particularly strong in the South where, even after the Civil War, life for much of the white male community, including its relations with the 'weaker sex', was regulated by traditional values inherited from the past. It was also largely conservatism that accounted for one of the major problems faced by women's suffrage organisations - that of political apathy among women. Denied for centuries the right to actively participate in the life of the community, they were frequently more conservative than men when faced with the opportunity to support attempts to improve the status of their sex.

Finally, additional difficulties were met in any attempt to amend the federal Constitution so as to incorporate women's suffrage provisions. 68 The amendment procedure, itself a formidable task was hampered by the extreme conservatism of, and hostility to constitutional amendments by the South throughout the whole campaign to introduce women's suffrage by an amendment to the Constitution, 69 and for a time (until "the Progressive wave swept across the west and into the east before the First World War") 70 it would seem, by the association of women's suffrage with aspects of the "Puritan ethic" of the West. 71

Colorado and Idaho

In spite of opposition, two western states (in addition to Wyoming and Utah) adopted women's suffrage during the 1890's. Colorado, after the defeat of a referendum in 1877, adopted the reform in a vigorously-fought campaign in 1893. The amendment was supported by all political parties but it was the support of

67. Ibid., p. 89.
68. Ibid., pp. 120-121.
71. Ibid., pp. 323-324. See also Grimes, The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage, pp. 140, 129.
the Populist party (then at its zenith) that seems to have been decisive because Populism and women's suffrage appealed to much the same type of voter and "because Populists needed voters and women constituted an untapped source of supply."72 Three years later a women's suffrage amendment was adopted in Idaho and a major contributory factor to the success of the amendment referendum seems to have been the support of the Populists and other major political parties.73 Grimes sees the alliance between the Populist movement and women's suffrage as indicative of a fundamental conflict between differing social values that was taking place in America in the 1890's.74 Both were movements of the spirit of the Revolution which was striving to hold the nation to the ideals which won independence.75

Unfortunately, at least for the women's suffrage cause in the west, Populism was short-lived as an effective political force. It was not until 1910 that further women's suffrage referendums were successful.

The Progressives and status in the West

The victories for women's suffrage between 1910 and 1914 were again victories recorded in the west because there was to be found in the west a correspondence between the values of the women's suffrage movement and the "ethic of progressivism."76 The three main values which the Progressive and women's suffrage movement had in common were a belief in

the superiority of native-born, white Americans; the superiority of Protestant, indeed Puritan, morality; and the superiority . . . of some degree of direct control over the state and city machines which, it was alleged, were dominated by the "interests."77

The Progressive movement also attracted the support of many people in the west who

". . . were victims of an upheaval in status that took place in the United States during the closing decades of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth century. . . ."78

72. Ibid., pp. 96-97.
73. Ibid., p. 95.
74. Ibid., p. 97.
76. Ibid., pp. 99-100.
77. Ibid., p. 102.
Richard Hofstadter has labelled the essentially non-economic goals pursued by many of the supporters of movements like the Progressive as "status politics."

The tremendous social changes that took place in the United States during the latter part of the nineteenth century and during the early years of the twentieth century as a result of rapid industrialisation, and the growth of big cities with their extremes of wealth and poverty; improved means of transport and communication; the influx of migrants associated with industrialisation, urbanisation, urban poverty and the growth of corrupt political machines all resulted in the belief by some, particularly in the predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant West, * that these changes were responsible for the breakdown of

the old social system with its traditional lines of deference. 

Those who suffered a loss of status as a result of these changes sought to stem the tide bringing with it the new system of values and, if possible, reinstate the old. Women's suffrage was seen as one of a number of reforms which, it was hoped, would help achieve this end. As has already been pointed out, women were viewed "as the custodians of public as well as private morality" and it was believed that they would oppose "the conspicuous evils of the present" and seek to restore in the future "the purity of the past." And it was hoped that this restoration would be accompanied by a restoration of the "traditional lines of deference."

It is in terms of status politics that Joseph R. Gusfield analyses the United States temperance movement, frequently the 'handmaiden' of women's suffrage. To Gusfield the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution is the high point in a struggle over status - a struggle with which the women's suffrage movement was associated. Gusfield provides an admirable summing up of the nature of status politics, as it relates to the adoption of Prohibition, and is worthy of quotation:

The significance of Prohibition is in the fact that it happened. The establishment of Prohibition laws was a battle in the struggle for status between two divergent styles of life. It marked the public affirmation of the abstemious, ascetic qualities of American Protestantism.

80. Ibid., p. 104.
81. Ibid., p. 104.
In this sense, it was an act of ceremonial deference toward old middle-class culture. If the law was often disobeyed and not enforced, the respectability of its adherents was honored in the breach. After all, it was their law that drinkers had to avoid.82

The Progressives of the west supported women's suffrage because the suffrage movement contributed to the triumph of the goals of progressivism; immigration restriction; prohibition of alcohol; the restriction of gambling and prostitution; initiative, referendum, and recall; and the direct election of senators.83

The victory of the Progressive cause would also be to many Progressives a "public affirmation" of and a "ceremonial deference toward old middle-class culture."

IV

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand was the first colony in the British Empire and the first country in the world to permit its adult women to vote on the same terms as men for representatives to the national parliament.84 In contrast to Great Britain and the United States of America, New Zealand women were conceded the suffrage in the easiest and most unexpected manner in the world, by male politicians, whose leaders, for the most part, had been converted to faith in the experiment by reading the English arguments so gallantly but unavailingly used by Mill and others in controversies on the other side of the earth.85

Early advocates and women's suffrage bills

Early moves for women's suffrage in New Zealand can be traced as far back as 1843 when a demand for women's suffrage was voiced by a Mr. A. Saunders supported by Sir William Fox.

82. Gusfield, Symbolic Crusade, pp. 7-8. Italics in original.
84. In the absence of the availability of any thorough study of the women's suffrage movement in New Zealand it is very difficult to make any but the most tentative comments on the movement.
However, these demands, like the fairly well publicised demands of Mrs. Miller (wife of the Resident Magistrate for Wairau in the Nelson district) in the early 1850's stimulated little lasting public interest. 86

In 1877 the Liberal (or Progressive) party, led by Sir George Grey, came to power believing "that a beginning should be made of giving the parliamentary vote to women."87 Accordingly, in August 1878, when the Government introduced its Electoral Bill, it proposed to extend the parliamentary franchise to women ratepayers. The proposal was strongly defended by the Attorney-General Robert Stout but "Parliament would not give the mildest instalment of it in 1878."88

On 11 October 1879, John Ballance induced the House of Representatives to agree to extend the parliamentary franchise to women property owners during the committee stages of the Qualification of Electors Bill. "The right was withdrawn a few days later before the Bill finally passed the House."89

After the failure in 1881 of Dr. Wallis' Women's Franchise Bill to get further than its first reading, the New Zealand Parliament was not again faced with the question until 1887.90 In that year the unstable Stout-Vogel coalition ministry embodied the principle of a general extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women in a government measure. The Bill passed its second reading and, "though, on getting into committee, it at once went to pieces, a long step forward had been taken."91

The W.C.T.U. of New Zealand

In the year before the Stout-Vogel government's bill, the W.C.T.U., which was represented by district unions throughout the Colony, held a Convention in Wellington and the W.C.T.U. of New Zealand was established. As was customary elsewhere, various colonial departments of work were constituted and included amongst these was a Franchise Department which, in 1887,

88. Ibid., p. 106.
90. Ibid., p. 192.
was taken over by the energetic Mrs. K.A. Sheppard. The emergence of a national W.C.T.U. as a champion of women's suffrage introduced a new element into the campaign for the vote; namely, the threat of prohibition.

In New Zealand, ... the question was, ... opened and first discussed by politicians who sincerely urged the change on its own merits; but, as the struggle came to a head, general arguments scarcely masked the intense feeling caused by the cross issue of Prohibition. In this, for the time, the broader question of women's right to citizenship was almost submerged, and a heat, till then unknown on either side, marked the controversy.

Outside the Union and the anti-prohibitionist circles, however, New Zealanders appeared to show little interest in the suffrage cause. The Electoral Bill, 1891 and 1892

As a result of the elections of December 1890 the Liberals, with John Ballance as Prime Minister, came to power and almost at once a member of the opposition and enthusiastic supporter of women's suffrage, Sir John Hall, took up the question of the extension of the franchise to women. Ballance agreed to the amendment of the Electoral Bill, then before the House of Representatives, so as to include a clause extending the suffrage to women. Despite the fact that women's suffrage had not been an issue of importance at the elections, the proposal was nonetheless adopted by the House only to be rejected by a two vote majority in the conservative Legislative Council.

The defeat of the 1891 proposal came during a vigorous "temperance revival" in the Colony. The 'temperance' leaders, believing that women would, on the whole, support prohibition, saw the granting of women's suffrage as a means by which they would be able to achieve their desired goal. The W.C.T.U. in particular threw its full strength into the suffrage campaign and by 1892 it had the signatures of about 31,000 women on petitions in favour of the suffrage.

In the Electoral Bill of 1892 the Ballance government made a further attempt to grant women the vote, but the proposal

94. Ibid., pp. 112-114.
95. Ibid., p. 110.
96. Ibid., p. 110.
was defeated when the House of Representatives refused to accept a Legislative Council amendment permitting women to vote by post because they saw in this "an attempt to circumvent the secrecy of the ballot." According to Norwood Young, on the other hand, the members of the government and its supporters in the House of Representatives were, with a few notable exceptions, not at all convinced of the desirability of granting women the suffrage, but were more concerned with engineering a quarrel with the conservative Legislative Council.

The Electoral Bill, 1893 and victory

In May 1893 John Ballance died. He was succeeded as Prime Minister by Richard John Seddon who, although he had supported Ballance's attempts to enfranchise women and continued to do so after Ballance's death, had some doubts, along with other members of the government, "as to the wisdom of the promise." The Seddon Government reintroduced the Electoral Bill which the Parliament had rejected the previous year and by 8 September 1893 it had passed both houses of the legislature and it received the royal assent on 19 September 1893. Norwood Young, in his Westminster Review article, claimed that Seddon continued Ballance's policy in the hope that the Council "would somehow suffer by rejecting it." In summing up Young also argued that

if it had not been for the friction between the two Houses of Parliament, the Cabinet would never have taken up female suffrage, nor would the Lower House have passed it if they had believed the Upper House would follow suit.

Reeves, on the other hand, believes that the Council passed the Electoral Bill because general elections were due to be held at

97. Ibid., p. 111.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., pp. 667-668.
the end of November 1893 and opposition members of the Council thought that women's suffrage "would do the Progressives more harm than good,"102 because, they believed, women would support the 'temperance' cause and in 1893 the 'temperance' supporters and the Seddon Government were in disagreement.103

The movement for women's suffrage in New Zealand, as in most of the Australasian colonies and states, seems chiefly noteworthy for the apparent lack of interest shown by both men and women. Victory was certainly not achieved as the result of any sizeable effort on the part of the supporters of women's suffrage. It seems probable that what may be best called the 'experimental' political environment of the Colony made the application of the ideals and goals of British liberal thinkers and the British feminist movement more readily acceptable than was frequently the case in the mother country. The cause also undoubtedly benefited from the fact that manhood suffrage was a reality and not, as in Britain, a goal still being pursued by some reformers at the same time as women were making their demands. In addition, a New Zealand government was willing to make women's suffrage a government measure and did not leave it to be sponsored in a private member's bill or make the grant conditional upon a favourable vote in a referendum.

At the same time, however, it must also be pointed out that other issues appear to have been more important, in fact probably decisive, in accounting for the granting of women's suffrage in New Zealand in 1893. According to Young most of the members of the government and many of its supporters in the House of Representatives did not sympathise with the cause but allowed the legislation to pass in an attempt to embarrass the Legislative Council which, they believed, would reject the proposal. Reeves places emphasis on the poor relations between the government and the 'temperance' advocates and suggests that the Legislative Council reluctantly gave its assent to the legislation because, with general elections due, many members believed that women's suffrage would work to the government's disadvantage.

Although New Zealand pioneered women's suffrage legislation in the British Empire it is impossible to estimate the extent to which the New Zealand example influenced the granting of women's suffrage elsewhere. In the Australian colonies and states, for example, the New Zealand precedent was

103. Ibid.
widely cited by supporters of women's suffrage but it certainly does not seem to have been an important, let alone a decisive factor in any of the Australian women's suffrage movements.

V

AUSTRALIA - SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

VICTORIA, 1863-1884

Australia - some general observations

The movement for women's suffrage was vastly different in the Australian colonies and states from the movement in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Because Australia was settled almost exclusively by Britons and was, initially, ruled by British governors appointed by and responsible to the Secretary of State for Colonies in London it is hardly surprising to find that the legal and social disabilities under which women laboured in the United Kingdom also applied to women in the Australian colonies. Yet the removal of these disabilities, for which English women had to fight long and hard was achieved for women in the Australian colonies and states with relatively little difficulty. The claims that women in the Australian colonies and states were, on the whole, "passive recipients of reform handed down from above"\(^{104}\) and the "women's movement was a chorus to a performance in which the main roles were taken by men"\(^{105}\) are substantially accurate.

Although it is not possible to explain precisely why it was that the movement towards women's suffrage achieved its goals earlier in the Australian colonies and states than it did in Britain or the United States of America a very tentative analysis can be attempted.

Australian historians have shown quite clearly that Australia in the nineteenth century was not, despite many important similarities with the Mother Country, simply a 'little England.' The inter-related factors of physical environment,

105. Ibid., p. 52.
the human occupations it permitted, the type of settlers, and the nature of the government all helped to develop a distinctly Australian outlook and way of life which was not (despite many similarities) characterised by the same sort of social and political arrangements, with the long-established vested interests and patterns of behaviour that were customary in the 'Old World' or even the United States of America.  

It has been further argued, as an extension of the viewpoint that Australia in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (and particularly after the rise of the colonial Labor parties in the 1890's) has been predominantly democratic and radical in its outlook and this accounts for the rapid advance of democratic political forms and the early adoption of radical social policies in the Australian colonies and by the federal and state governments after 1901.  

Whether or not this latter hypothesis, often called the 'Whig' view of Australian history is accurate - and the issue is being debated by contemporary historians - it does seem very important to bear in mind that in a very real sense Australian society was a society in transition and this, in conjunction with other important factors, helps account for the readiness of Australian legislatures to enact 'progressive' social legislation, including legislation affecting the status of women.

MacKenzie points out that "Australia was founded at a turning-point of history." At the time of the first settlement, in New South Wales, the Economic Revolution, which was to radically alter traditional British society, was progressing rapidly. Soon after the establishment of the first settlement the ideology of the French Revolution began to have a profound impact on British social and political thought and practice. The British connection made it well-nigh inevitable that the Australian colonies would, in turn, be significantly influenced by these movements.


The changes in the status of British women, which accompanied the Economic Revolution and the growing influence of nineteenth century liberalism, and for which many British women campaigned so hard, were generally rapidly accepted in the Australian colonial environment. English liberal ideology and English precedent were frequently appealed to by colonial governments seeking to justify the adoption of English laws relating to the status of women and in the more simple and more experimental colonial society reforms encountered less opposition than they did in Britain. This is one of the interesting paradoxes about female emancipation in Australia. It did not matter as much as it did in Britain and the women were not so interested in it, yet it could be taken up more easily and be more effectively applied in the democratic political climate of the colonies than it could in London.

Additionally, the passing of the Imperial Colonial Laws Validity Act (1865) increased the independence of Australian colonial legislatures and gave them "the right to amend the rules of common law in accordance with local conditions, and generally to legislate on social questions, subject only to the scrutiny of the Colonial Office." 

While English precedent was important in encouraging Australian legislatures to adopt laws improving the status of colonial women, it is impossible to ignore the importance of colonial precedent, at least as far as the franchise is concerned.

In 1894 South Australian women were given the parliamentary suffrage and this was to prove very significant in 1897 at the Adelaide Convention where a draft constitution for the proposed Commonwealth of Australia was being prepared. Three important decisions relating to the federal suffrage were made. Firstly, the Commonwealth was to have jurisdiction over the suffrage for the federal legislature. Secondly, it was

111. 28-29 Victoria, c. 63.
113. Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, 1900, 63-64 Victoria, c. 12, Chapter 1, Part II, Section 8; Chapter 1, Part III, Section 30.
decided that the first federal elections would be held under existing state lower house suffrage provisions - thus the women of South Australia were guaranteed a vote in the first federal elections. Finally, on the motion of Sir Frederic Hilder, Treasurer of South Australia, who was determined to ensure that the women of South Australia were not disfranchised for federal elections, the Convention adopted the following:

No adult person who has at the establishment of the Commonwealth, or who afterwards acquires a right to vote at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of a State shall, while the right continues, be prevented by any law of the Commonwealth from exercising such a right at the elections for either House of the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

These decisions, particularly the latter, made it well nigh inevitable that the federal parliament would legislate in favour of adult suffrage and Prime Minister Edmund Barton gave an undertaking to that effect in 1901 and in the following year women were enfranchised for federal elections.

With the granting of the federal franchise to women it became even more difficult for the remaining four state governments to refuse to concede the state franchise to women. Nevertheless, the women of Queensland were not given the right to vote in state elections until 1905 and the women of Victoria were forced to wait until 1908.

In accounting for women's suffrage legislation, abstract political ideas about women's rights and justice or the allegedly radical-democratic character of the Australian political environment were not the sole, or possibly even the most important motives behind the decisions to grant women the right to vote. Like Grimes, W.P. Reeves observed:

It is as well . . . to point out that the main motives behind the women's suffrage movement were ulterior. They may have been very good motives - some of them were; but they were not the motives which swayed the intellect of John Stuart Mill.

Some of these motives were certainly puritan and conservative in character but, in the absence of any adequate study, it seems reasonably safe to claim that the supporters of women's suffrage,

114. Ibid., Chapter 1, Part II, Section 10; Chapter 1, Part III, Section 31.
unlike many of its supporters in the west of the United States of America, were not the victims of a significant decline in status. In the Australian colonies and states the "Puritan ethic" with its element of "status politics" was not the basis of a strong political movement as it was in the United States of America.

Social and political conditions differed significantly in the two countries: the religious aspect of Australian life did not give rise to a very strong 'temperance' and religious social reform movement; Australia received relatively few migrants compared with the United States and those that did come were, after the 1880's, of primarily Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Irish stock; rapid industrialisation and the social upheaval that invariably accompanied it had not started in Australia. Insofar as the "Puritan ethic" was a force in the Australian colonies and states it was best represented by the overwhelmingly Anglican and Protestant 'temperance' societies. The W.C.T.U. actively associated itself with the women's suffrage cause, but its appeal was very limited and, despite its high hopes, its aims were certainly not fulfilled in any of the Australian colonies or states when women's suffrage was adopted.

Australian women were fortunate that the extension of the suffrage did not depend, as it did in most of the states of the United States of America, upon a constitutional amendment that required endorsement by the colonial or state legislature and the male electors in a referendum. While it is impossible to say that women's suffrage referenda would have been defeated in all, or even any, of the Australian colonies and states it is a well recognised Australian political phenomenon that electors have been very reluctant to adopt proposed changes submitted to them in a referendum. Certainly the supporters of women's suffrage were only too well aware of United States experience in this regard when they opposed C.C. Kingston's 1893 proposal to submit the Adult Suffrage Bill to two referenda if it passed both houses of the South Australian legislature. In addition, the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (1900), unlike the United States Constitution, did not need to be amended to extend the federal suffrage to women. As already mentioned, the Act clearly gave the federal legislature the right to determine the extent of the franchise for federal elections - and the federal legislature swiftly took advantage of this right to enact women's suffrage.

The Australian women's suffrage movements were also fortunate that they were not opposed, as the women's suffrage
movement in the United States of America for a long time was, by long established, nationally organised political parties directing their appeal to conflicting sectional interests and a population of diverse national origins. In the United States, as already noted, the association of women's suffrage with federal constitutional amendment and with the victory of prohibition, referendum, recall, and anti-immigration forces alienated, at least for a time, certain sectional interests and migrant groups and thus helped delay the final victory of the cause. In Australia political parties did not emerge until the 1890's and, when they did, they did not have to direct their appeals to a multiplicity of conflicting sectional interests and migrant groups. Nor were they faced with a women's suffrage movement that was intimately associated with one sectional interest or with a strong "Puritan ethic."

Victoria, 1863 to 1884

The question of women's suffrage appears to have first become a matter for parliamentary debate in an Australian colony in 1865. The Local Government Act (1863) and the Municipal Constitutions Act (1863) had given female ratepayers, aged twenty-one years and over, the local government franchise. In addition, as the result of an oversight, women whose names were on the municipal rolls were automatically enrolled on the parliamentary register and were hence qualified to vote at the parliamentary elections. It appears that some women may have taken advantage of this anomaly because, during the debate on the subject, "one member asserted that 'many females' had voted for him." The Victorian Parliament 'rectified' the position by Section 63 of the Electoral Act (1865) which permitted only the automatic inclusion of the names of male ratepayers on the parliamentary rolls. It appears, however, that the subject continued to be debated from time to time because in 1868 John Stuart Mill wrote to Sir Alexander Michie, who was later to become Attorney-General of Victoria, "noting with pleasure that the question of women's suffrage had been raised in the

117. 27 Victoria, 1863, No. CLXXVI.
118. 27 Victoria, 1863, No. CLXXXIV.
120. 29 Victoria, 1865, No. CCLXXIX.
30.

"...and claiming that "for the first time a colony has outstripped the mother country in advocating improved principles of legislation"." 122

In July 1873, John Richardson, M.L.A. for Geelong East, proposed an amendment to Clause 6 of the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, then before the Legislative Assembly, by moving the omission of the word "male" and thus enabling female ratepayers to vote at parliamentary elections. The amendment was accepted by the Assembly by a majority of two votes but the rejection of the Bill by the Legislative Council prevented the proposal becoming a reality. 124 According to Alice Henry "subsequent attempts" to enfranchise women ratepayers after 1873 "met with no better success." 125

One of the reasons for the failure of these early attempts to confer the suffrage on the women of Victoria was the absence of any strong support, outside parliament, for the enfranchisement of women. 126 Certainly George Higinbotham, the editor, had raised the matter in the Argus and Mrs. Harriet Dugdale and some of her friends had advocated "publically and privately woman's moral right to the franchise" 127 but these pressures were hardly sufficient to make the Victorian legislature concede the principle.

It was not until 1884, eleven years after Richardson's attempt to secure the parliamentary suffrage for the ratepaying women of Victoria, that a successful attempt was made to provide an extra-parliamentary organisation that would be able to back

124. The amendment was not rejected as Henry in North American Review, Vol. CLXXXIII, No. DCV, 1006, p. 1273 claimed and Scott, A Comparative Study of the Movement for Woman Suffrage in Australia and the United States, p. 34, also claimed. Nor was the proposal adopted by the Legislative Council of Victoria by two votes as Maybanke Anderson in Meredith Atkinson (editor), Australia: Economic and Political Studies, p. 272, claimed.
any moves made in parliament to grant women's suffrage. In that year Mrs. Dugdale, supported by Mrs. Love and George Higinbotham, formed the first Australian women's suffrage society. 128

Significantly, Mrs. Dugdale's society was founded three years before the W.C.T.U. of Victoria and, unlike many Australian colonial women's suffrage societies, it was not connected with the Temperance Union. 129 Five years were to pass, however, before Dr. Maloney introduced the first women's suffrage bill in the Victorian Legislative Assembly and by then the women's suffrage movements in New Zealand and South Australia were pressing their respective colonial legislatures to concede the principle and (unlike Victoria where the conservative Legislative Council refused to pass legislation granting women the parliamentary suffrage until 1908) were to achieve victory before the mid-1890's.

VI

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The question of women's suffrage was first raised in South Australia on 22 July 1885 when Dr. Edward Stirling, one of the members for North Adelaide, moved in the House of Assembly:

"That in the opinion of this House, women, except while under coverture, who fulfil the conditions and possess the qualifications on which the parliamentary franchise for the Legislative Council is granted for men, shall, like them, be admitted to the franchise for both Houses of Parliament." 130

129. Scott, A Comparative Study of the Movement for Womanhood Suffrage in Australia and the United States, p. 34. Dianne Scott claims that the Victorian Woman Suffrage Association and the Queensland Women's Equal Franchise League "were the only such societies quite unconnected with the Temperance Union." In fact, the same applies to the W.S.L. of N.S.W. which although it occasionally co-operated with the W.C.T.U. was not in any formal way connected with it and took pains from time to time to emphasise this.
During the speech in support of his motion, Dr. Stirling admitted that it would be far more logical to grant the vote to all women of property but said that he deliberately limited the scope of his motion because he knew that some members of the House would object to the inclusion of married women.\textsuperscript{131}

Several members raised objections to Stirling's motion because there was no property qualification for the male electors of the House of Assembly and it was believed that a dangerous precedent would possibly be created by admitting women of property as electors. One member also pointed out that the logical conclusion of Dr. Stirling's arguments in favour of women's suffrage was that all women should be granted the right to vote and not simply those who were unmarried and able to meet the necessary property qualifications.\textsuperscript{132}

Despite this opposition, Dr. Stirling's motion was carried by the House without a division and with no voice raised against it. Thus, without any public agitation in its favour, affirmation was given by the House of Assembly to the principle of women's suffrage. However, neither Dr. Stirling nor his parliamentary supporters proceeded further with the motion until the following year.

Stirling's motion was, it appears, motivated by his liberal political principles and by English precedent. Born in South Australia in 1848, Stirling was educated in England between 1866 and 1880. While there he became a disciple of the English liberal, J.S. Mill, and his (Stirling's) advocacy of women's suffrage was consistent with Mill's political ideology and practice. Dr. Stirling's move was also in keeping with the political environment of South Australia; an environment characterised by fairly radical political experimentation and the widespread advocacy of social reform. It was the first colony to introduce triennial parliaments and manhood suffrage, to abolish the property qualification for members of the lower house of the legislature and to permit single women ratepayers to vote in municipal elections.\textsuperscript{133} In such an environment Stirling's proposal was "bound at least to receive a sympathetic hearing."\textsuperscript{134}

In addition, Dr. Stirling emphasised that women's suffrage had been the subject of a number of debates in the House

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., pp. 6-7.  
\textsuperscript{133} MacKenzie, Women in Australia, p. 32.  
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., p. 33.
of Commons and that another attempt was soon to be made there to legislate in favour of the principle - "Recourse to some English precedent was an accepted means of winning favour for one's measure and this proved no exception."\(^{135}\)

In 1886 Dr. Stirling introduced in the House of Assembly the Constitution Act Amendment Bill to amend both the Constitution Act and the Electoral Act (1879) and so carry into law the principles of his motion of the previous year. Faced with a very much more definite proposal the opposition to the reform "was much more clearly formulated."\(^{136}\)

On this occasion, as in 1885, some members of the House opposed the proposal because they objected to the introduction of a property qualification for electors to the House of Assembly and others because there had been no agitation by South Australian women in favour of the extension of the suffrage whereas Englishwomen "had agitated for ten years without success."\(^{137}\) Although at the end of its second reading the Bill had the support of a majority of the members present in the House it failed to obtain the absolute majority necessary for bills amending the Constitution Act. Wadhams claims that "the fact that it had any majority at all must be attributed to the personality of the mover of the measure since the Bill itself had so many deficiencies."\(^{138}\)

In the general elections of 1887 Dr. Stirling lost his seat and Robert Caldwell, Member for Yorke in the House of Assembly, became the champion of the women's cause. In July 1888 Caldwell introduced his Woman's Suffrage Bill. It abandoned Stirling's distinction between married and unmarried women of property and enfranchised women aged 25 years and over; not those aged 21 years and over as proposed by Dr. Stirling. Once again the property qualification clauses and the lack of support by women were the main objections raised by those members of the House who opposed the Bill,\(^{139}\) and, although a majority of members present in the House supported the Bill at the second reading, it failed to obtain the required absolute majority and

\(^{135}\) Wadhams, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, p. 73. See also p. 70.

\(^{136}\) Ibid., p. 80.

\(^{137}\) Ibid., p. 82. See also pp. 79, 81-82, 84.

\(^{138}\) Ibid., p. 83.

\(^{139}\) Ibid., pp. 85-86.
was lost. Despite the publicity given to Stirling's moves of 1885 and 1886 no attempt was made to form an extra-parliamentary organisation to agitate for women's suffrage in South Australia until July 1888 when a preliminary meeting was held which led to the formation of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia on 20 July 1888. While Stirling's moves on behalf of women's suffrage had provided the impetus which led to the formation of the League, the League itself grew out of the Social Purity League which had been formed in August 1882 (largely as the result of the efforts of a Congregational clergyman, the Rev. Joseph Coles Kirby) to prevent the introduction into South Australia of the French system of licensed brothels.

Dr. Stirling became President of the Suffrage League and a "large and influential" committee was chosen to direct its operations. According to Kiek "the personnel of the League was largely identical with that of the Social Purity organisation" and Wadham lays stress on the importance of an interest in philanthropy, of the 'temperance' movement and of Protestant Christianity in rousing women to take an interest in the suffrage cause.

From the outset the League was faced with two major difficulties. It had, firstly, to decide what sort of bill it would support and, secondly, it was faced with a largely apathetic public and until public opinion in favour of women's suffrage began to make itself felt, the supporters of the cause would continue to find their case vulnerable to attack on the ground that there was no widespread demand by women for the right to vote.

Wadham describes the six year history of the Women's Suffrage League as the history of the struggle between those who advocated 'a thin edge of the wedge' policy which would accept any advancement as a means to a more complete suffrage, those who wanted adult suffrage, and those who preferred female suffrage based on a property qualification.

142. Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, pp. 89-90.
145. Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia 1883-1894, pp. 61-62, 69, 70.
146. Ibid., pp. 90-91.
Initially the latter group had their way and in 1889 Caldwell again introduced a Woman's Suffrage Bill in the House of Assembly. The Bill was designed to extend the franchise for the Legislative Council to all women aged twenty-one years and over who met the property qualification. Doubts were raised about "the propriety of the Lower House introducing a measure which concerned much more directly the franchise of the Upper House," and, although it had a majority at the end of its second reading, the Bill lapsed for want of the necessary absolute majority.

At the same time public opinion was beginning to express itself. Petitions containing 1,285 signatures were presented to the House during the debate on Caldwell's 1889 Bill and in the same year the W.C.T.U. held its first convention in Adelaide and unanimously resolved 'that believing prohibition will only be reached by the aid of woman's ballot, while justice demands that this weapon would be placed in her hands for the protection of the home, we continue to urge our plea for an amendment to the colonial constitution granting women the franchise.'

As a result of this "not altogether unexpected" resolution the membership of the Suffrage League increased and the W.C.T.U., with its sixty-five branches throughout the colony, was able to disseminate suffrage propaganda and, in 1891, appoint a special officer charged with the task of obtaining signatures for suffrage petitions for presentation to Parliament. Although the Women's Suffrage League continued to survive as a separate entity the W.C.T.U. dominated the suffrage movement in South Australia. Indeed, in a report on the women's suffrage question presented to the South Australian W.C.T.U. Convention in 1891, Mrs. Lake claimed that the W.C.T.U. is giving leadership in South Australia . . . The Union is the outstanding educator of public intelligence on the question . . .

1890 saw the introduction, in the House of Assembly, by Caldwell, of the Constitution Act Amending Bill. The Bill's terms were exactly the same as those of the Bill of 1889 and it came closer than its three predecessors to passing both Houses of the Parliament. The Bill obtained the required absolute majority and passed the House of Assembly but was rejected by the

147. Ibid., p. 92.
148. Ibid., p. 93.
149. Ibid., pp. 93-94.
150. Ibid., pp. 94-95.
151. Ibid., p. 95.
Legislative Council where it obtained a majority but not an absolute majority. 153

The opponents of the Bill again pointed to the lack of support by women for the suffrage cause154 but more serious objections were raised in both Houses and these were well expressed by F.W. Holder, M.H.A.:

The more electors there were for the other branch of the Legislature the more influential and powerful that branch would become and he was strongly opposed to increasing the power and influence of the Legislative Council without making a corresponding increase in the power and influence of the Assembly. If the Bill passed the Legislative Council would be given the opportunity of saying again and again that they were the stronger House and that their opinions carried greater weight. Moreover if they passed the Bill in its present form they would delay indefinitely the full realisation of women's suffrage. 155

Certainly some members of the Legislative Council agreed with Holder that the Bill would increase the Council's power and the Hon. J. Warren, who introduced the Bill in the Council, claimed that "with Land Nationalism, progressive land tax, strikes and such like the Council wanted more powers." 156

Mr. Warren initiated a Woman's Suffrage Bill in the Legislative Council in July 1891 and its terms were the same as those of the Bill of the previous year. The apparent lack of interest by South Australian women in the suffrage cause was again a source of opposition to the Bill as was the suspicion of an increasing number of members of the Council that the Bill was designed to increase the power and influence of the property vote. 157 The Bill gained an absolute majority at the end of its second reading but failed to gain an absolute majority thereafter because of the adoption, during the committee stages, of an amendment providing for the extension of voting privileges to women on the same basis as men. 158

In April 1891 the Women's Suffrage League changed its attitude towards the type of suffrage legislation it wanted and

153. Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, pp. 96-98.
154. Ibid., pp. 96, 101.
156. South Australian Parliamentary Debates, 17 December 1890, Col. 2465ff, cited by Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, p. 102. Italics in original.
157. Ibid., p. 105.
158. Ibid., pp. 106-107.
adopted universal adult women's suffrage as its goal. This was a significant change in the League's policy and one towards which it had been moving since 1889.  

A Women's Suffrage League deputation to the Premier, the Hon. T. Playford, in June 1891 and a combined Suffrage League - W.C.T.U. deputation to the Treasurer, F.W. Holder (an ardent 'Temperance' advocate and supporter of universal, adult women's suffrage) in July 1892 both failed to achieve their desired goal of having women's suffrage made a government measure. However, in 1893, Dr. J.A. Cockburn, the Minister for Education in the Ministry of Premier Charles C. Kingston, introduced, as a government measure, the Adult Suffrage Bill in the House of Assembly.

The Bill proposed to extend to women the right to vote for members of both the House of Assembly and Legislative Council on the same terms as male electors but before the proposals could become law they had to be approved, not only by an absolute majority in both Houses of Parliament, but also by the electors of the House of Assembly and by the adult women of the colony, voting in two referenda. The insertion of the referendum clauses into the Bill and the Government's insistence on their retention, despite the fact that the Referendum Bill had not been passed, resulted in serious doubts being cast on the Government's sincerity and aroused considerable opposition amongst members of the House of Assembly - including some who, but for the referendum provisions, would undoubtedly have supported the Bill. The Bill was defeated in the House of Assembly by four votes on its third reading "but Kingston's sincerity was proven by the introduction of an Adult Suffrage Bill the following year."  

Premier Kingston's support of the Adult Suffrage bills of 1893 and 1894 represents a reversal of his previous attitude. While in opposition he had consistently opposed measures designed to extend the suffrage to women. There are several reasons that help account for this change. Firstly, two members of the Ministry, Cockburn and Holder, were supporters of women's suffrage and undoubtedly encouraged its adoption as a Government

159. Ibid., pp. 109-110.
161. Ibid., p. 111.
162. Ibid., pp. 112-113.
163. Ibid., p. 113.
measure. Secondly, the Government faced an economic crisis and a united Ministry with strong extra-parliamentary support was necessary if effective economic measures were to be taken. Finally, and probably most importantly, Kingston undoubtedly hoped to use the measure to justify the reform of the constitution of the Legislative Council and a redistribution of electoral districts on the basis of population.164

In 1894, with the referenda clauses dropped, the Adult Suffrage Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council "where, exceptionally, the progressive members had a majority"165 and because of the exceedingly clever steering of the adroit and popular Chief Secretary, the Hon. J.H. Gordon, the Bill, after a tempestuous passage crossed the bar by the bare statutory majority (13 votes) required to pass an amendment to the Constitution Act.166

Throughout 1894 the members of the Women's Suffrage League, led by the secretary Mrs. Mary Lee, and the members of the W.C.T.U., whose Franchise Department had been taken over by the President Mrs. Elizabeth Webb Nicholls, worked very hard collecting signatures for a petition for presentation to the House of Assembly, addressing meetings, writing letters to newspapers, and interviewing members of Parliament. On the 23 August 1894 a petition bearing the names of 11,000 persons was presented to the House of Assembly in support of women's suffrage. 8,268 of the signatures on the petition had been collected by the W.C.T.U. which only serves to highlight the value of this organisation to the extra-parliamentary crusade for women's suffrage.167

The Adult Suffrage Bill remained on the House of Assembly's notice paper for three months before the Government

165. Mackenzie, Women in Australia, p. 35.
166. Proud in Review of Reviews, January, 1895, p. 29.
felt confident that it would be able to muster the required statutory majority. The Bill had a difficult passage and twice the Government was defeated in committee when two amendments (one permitting women to become members of Parliament and the other permitting women to vote by post) were adopted "with the hope of wrecking the measure either on the third reading or when amendments went up to the Council." On Tuesday, 18 December 1894 the third reading of the Adult Suffrage Bill passed the House of Assembly and the Assembly's amendments were adopted by the Council on the same day.

In no sense is it true to say that the women of South Australia achieved victory for themselves - rather, it was achieved for them by men. The formation of the Women's Suffrage League depended largely on the enthusiasm of men such as Sir Edward Stirling and the Rev. J.C. Kirby and neither the League nor the W.C.T.U. (like their counterparts in the other Australian colonies) ever represented more than a small minority of the women of South Australia. It was only when their cause was taken up, albeit with ulterior motives, by a man of Kingston's ability and determination that victory was achieved.

Wadham comments:

The parliamentary debates themselves reveal the gradual movement from the first logical case presented in favour of female suffrage by Dr. Stirling through the struggles between the property qualification party and the democratic party, to the adoption of the measure by the Kingston ministry, which was incited to this step in order to bring about two other reforms - the abolition of the Upper Chamber and the re-division of electoral districts on a population basis. Thus the Adult Suffrage Bill became a facade, behind which lurked, firstly, those who desired to strengthen the property holders' power over the Legislature and then the radicals with their desire to sweep away the property-representing House and the old electoral divisions.169

In his *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, W.P. Reeves dryly notes:

Some classes are born to political power, some achieve it, and some have it thrust upon them . . . In South Australia the fight to obtain this privilege for them was begun, directed, and almost entirely waged by men.170

169. Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, p. 72.
Early advocates

Organisations to demand the extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women did not finally emerge in N.S.W. until 1891, when, in response to Sir Henry Parkes' determination to debate the women's suffrage question in the Legislative Assembly, the Womanhood Suffrage League of N.S.W. and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of N.S.W. Franchise Department were constituted. The matter had, however, been the subject of some public discussion and a number of ephemeral organisations had emerged prior to 1891; largely, it would seem, as a result of Parkes' inclusion of a clause extending the parliamentary suffrage to women in his Electoral Law Amendment Bill (1890).

According to George Black, Miss Helen Hart, "an angular but kindly manhater," was "the pioneer advocate of women's suffrage in Australia" and Rose Scott, while not recognising her as "the pioneer advocate," claims that she was one of the early advocates of the cause. Helen Hart, it appears, would have agreed with Black. Mrs. Euphemia Bowes, one of the founding members of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. and president of the Sydney Union from 1884 to 1890 and of the N.S.W. Union from 1890 to 1893, was also an early advocate of women's suffrage. According to Mrs. E.J. Ward, Euphemia Bowes had publicly supported women's suffrage "as far back as 1887 or 1888" but that "she did not then think the time was ripe to undertake the work, so that no organised effort was made at that time."

171. N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. XLIV, p. 2; Vol. XLVIII, p. 4555. See also Sydney Mail, 3 May 1890.
174. Undated card advertising a lecture by Miss Helen Hart "(Founder of the Womanhood Suffrage Movement in New Zealand and Australia)," Ibid., Item 30. As early as 1875 John Robertson, Premier of N.S.W., advocated the extension of the suffrage to women - see S.M.H., 19 August 1875 - and in a speech opposing manhood suffrage made in the Legislative Assembly in July 1858, W.R. Piddington, member for the United Counties of Northumberland and Hunter, pointed out that the arguments in favour of manhood suffrage applied equally well to the extension of the suffrage to women and that if all men were given the vote it would be illogical to refuse women the same right - see Manhood Suffrage. Report of the Speech delivered by W.R. Piddington, Esq., Member for the United Counties of Northumberland and Hunter, in the Legislative Assembly, on the debate on manhood suffrage on Friday, the 30th July, 1858. Sydney, 1858, Dixon Library No. 85/176.
175. E.J. Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong. Being a Record of
The W.C.T.U. and women's suffrage, 1889 to 1890

The first suggestion of organised public agitation in favour of women's suffrage made by the W.C.T.U. is to be found in the minutes of the meeting of the W.C.T.U. of Sydney for 19 February 1889:

Mrs. Bowes read a paragraph [sic] from the 'Christian World' upon Woman's suffrage [sic] which it was hoped would become law in this land, as it was in some parts of America. The ladies of the Union contemplated getting up a large meeting, to agitate and ask for the measure to be passed,176

There is no record of the proposed meeting ever having taken place and the question of women's suffrage does not appear to have been discussed again by the W.C.T.U. of Sydney until its meeting of 5 March 1890 when, after having heard a paper read and a talk given in favour of women's suffrage by Mrs. Eliza Pattie, the meeting voted unanimously in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women and carried a resolution that a "Woman's League" be formed.177

Eliza Pattie, reluctantly it would seem,178 became president of "'The Franchise League" and, at a W.C.T.U. meeting held on 4 June 1890, she reported having convened, on 2 June 1890, "by public advertisement," a meeting at which "the attendance was small but that she was satisfied with the results."179 According to a report in the Daily Telegraph about twenty women attended the meeting, which was presided over by Eliza Pattie, "to organise an association of women to advocate the Franchise and other benefits claimed for the sex." Mention was made of only one speaker; namely, Mrs. George (Dora) Montefiore and the report ended by pointing out that "the meeting was merely a preliminary to a public meeting and therefore no resolutions were passed. It was stated that over fifty members had already been enrolled."180 There appears to be no record of the public meeting having ever been called and in August 1890 Mrs. Pottie

the Life and Labours of Mrs. E.J. Ward, Sydney, 1903, p. 50. See also Mrs. Jamieson Williams and Mrs. Andrew Holliday (editors), Golden Records. Pathfinders of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of N.S.W., Sydney, 1926, p.50. 176. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, 19 February 1889. In the possession of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W., George Street, Sydney. 177. Ibid., 5 March 1890. 178. Ibid., 16 April 1890, 7 May 1890. 179. Ibid., 4 June 1890. 180. Daily Telegraph, 3 June 1890.
resigned as president of the Women's Franchise League. 181

Mrs. E.J. Ward said of Eliza Pottie's attempt to organise a women's suffrage league, that "it was found . . . that many of the ladies declined to work under the auspices of the W.C.T.U. so the matter lapsed for a time." 182

Louisa Lawson, the "Dawn" and the Dawn Club

Louisa Lawson, mother of Henry Lawson and founder and editor of the women's journal, the Dawn, was probably the most noted of the early N.S.W. feminists and advocates of women's suffrage. Louisa Lawson was born at Guntawang, near Mudgee, in 1848, the daughter of Henry Albury and his devout Methodist wife, Harriet. She was educated at Mudgee but her parents refused to permit her to become a school-teacher or to take the advantage of an offer to have her fine singing voice trained professionally - although she was allowed to use it to attract customers to the stores her parents ran on the goldfields - first at Wibtree and then at Eurendree - following their financial ruin in 1864. In 1866 Louisa married a Norwegian sailor turned gold-digger, Peter Larsen (later Anglicised to Lawson) and after struggling to eke out a living on a free selection near Grenfell, the family moved to Sydney in 1884 and Peter Lawson died soon afterwards.

Louisa Lawson was a radical and, for a short time at least, a republican and throughout most of her life she showed a great interest in the occult and in spiritualism. The first journal she acquired was a monthly called the Republican, but it did not survive long, and in May 1888 she published the first issue of the Dawn - a women's journal, wholly produced by women. Mrs. Lawson's determination to employ solely women in the production of her paper roused the opposition of the all-male Typographical Union whose members, for a time, victimised employees of the Dawn. 183

Not only did Louisa Lawson use the pages of the Dawn to draw attention to the injustices under which women laboured and call for women's suffrage but, at a meeting in Sydney on 23 May 1889, she founded the Dawn Club

181. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, 5 August 1890. Mrs. Pottie refused a request to reconsider her resignation - see Ibid., 3 September 1890.
183. Biographical details concerning Mrs. Lawson's early life were taken from News Cuttings etc. Concerning Mrs. L. Lawson, (Binder's title) M.L.; Gertrude Lawson, "The Mother of Henry Lawson", Aussie, 15 July 1922, pp. 9-10.
to amalgamate women for mutual development, for mutual aid, and for the consideration and forwarding of various questions of importance to the sex. 184

One of the "questions of importance" considered by the Club at its inaugural meeting was women's suffrage and Louisa Lawson read a paper on the subject to the gathering. 189 A year later the Senate considered women's suffrage in the Federal Parliament: Hearers were averse to the formation of a national registration as Sir John Forrest declared it "a merely academic and answering question in the Electoral Law Act." The letter written in opposition to participation in the subject of women's representation was signed "a suffragist for the future." 192 Mrs. Lawson later persuaded the women's suffrage movement to adopt a program which included a demand for women's suffrage; but after the latter's death in 1899, the women's movement lost its momentum.

Public attitudes to women's suffrage

The growing interest in women's suffrage in the late 1880's was, it appears, accompanied by a shift in public attitude at the inaugural meeting of the Dawn Club.

Editor of Dawn and founder of the Dawn Club


on the great change of public opinion in recent years which made it now possible to introduce and publicly discuss the Women's Question. Some years ago, a speaker on Women's Suffrage received no hearing, and met from the press nothing but ridicule. 189

184. Dawn, 1 July 1889.
185. Ibid.
186. Ibid., 5 July 1890.
187. Louisa Lawson to Sir Henry Parkes, 21 November 1890, Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 22, M.L.
188. Dawn, 1 July 1889.
to amalgamate women for mutual development, for mutual aid, and for the consideration and forwarding of various questions of importance to the sex. . . .184

One of the "questions of importance" considered by the Club at its inaugural meeting was women's suffrage and Louisa Lawson read a paper on the subject to the gathering185. A year later the Dawn refers to Mrs. Lawson as "president of the Woman's suffrage society in Sydney"186 but no details are given about the formation or membership of the society nor is there any clear indication as to whether it may have been the same organisation as that headed by Eliza Pottie.

Later in the same year (1890) Louisa Lawson wrote to Sir Henry Parkes enquiring as to the best method of answering those critics of the women's suffrage provision of the Electoral Law Amendment Bill who claimed that women were indifferent to the subject. She suggested the circulation of a petition, or of a letter printed in the Dawn "which subscribers might cut out, sign and post." In addition, she asked Parkes whether it would "be better to leave petitioning until the actual time of discussion?"187 There is no record of Parkes having replied and evidently Mrs. Lawson took no action. By the time the subject of women's suffrage was debated in the Legislative Assembly for the first time, in July 1891, the W.S.L. of N.S.W., of which Mrs. Lawson was a member and a councillor, had been formed and it, together with the W.C.T.U. Franchise Department, after the latter's formation in September 1891, assumed responsibility for collecting signatures to petitions for presentation to the Legislative Assembly.

Public attitudes to women's suffrage

The growing interest in women's suffrage in the late 1880's was, it appears, accompanied by a shift in public attitudes which caused Mrs. Kingsbury to remark, at the inaugural meeting of the Dawn Club,

on the great change of public opinion in recent years which made it now possible to introduce and publicly discuss the Woman's Question. Some years ago, a speaker on Woman's Suffrage received no hearing, and met from the press nothing but ridicule.188

184. Dawn, 1 July 1889.
185. Ibid.
186. Ibid., 5 July 1890.
187. Louisa Lawson to Sir Henry Parkes, 21 November 1890, Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 23, M.L.
188. Dawn, 1 July 1889.
There was, however, still opposition in some circles to discussion of women's suffrage as, for example, Mrs. Maybanke Wolstenholme discovered at a meeting of the Women's Literary Society but Australian women did not, as a rule, have to risk social ostracism that was frequently the lot of the more ardent women's suffrage supporters in Great Britain. If Mrs. Kingsbury is to be believed much of the opposition that there was, at least in N.S.W., was decreasing.

**Sir Henry Parkes and women's suffrage, 1887 to 1890**

The debate in the Legislative Assembly in 1891 was not the first occasion on which Sir Henry Parkes had publicly advocated women's suffrage. In August 1887 he received a letter from Addie L. Ballon, "Chairman" of the Committee of the Woman's Suffrage Society of Victoria, expressing "appreciation of the strong and helpful words which you have already said on her [woman's] behalf" and asking Parkes to write a letter, outlining his views on women's suffrage, to be read at a "mass meeting" that the Woman's Suffrage Society of Victoria proposed to call "in the near future." In his reply Parkes evidently voiced his support for the women's suffrage cause.

In January 1888 a letter by David Buchanan appeared in the Herald attacking Parkes for advocating the extension of the suffrage to women. Buchanan asserted that

Sir Henry Parkes, in his old age, seems to be the victim of strange delusions and somewhat grotesque notions and ideas, ... to my mind his oft-repeated and evidently serious intention to try and confer the franchise on women is the worst attack of his present malady.

Buchanan's letter raises the question of Parkes' motives for supporting women's suffrage. While we can probably safely reject Buchanan's claims, quoted above, as little more than ridicule, he further claims that

Sir Henry Parkes has not always been so anxious to do what he calls justice to women.

and that:

I can ... hardly suppose that justice to women has much to do with Sir Henry Parkes' evident intention to confer the franchise on them.

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189. S.M.H., 2 May 1925.
190. Addie L. Ballon to Sir Henry Parkes, 5 August 1887, Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 3, M.L.
191. Addie L. Ballon to Sir Henry Parkes, 4 September 1887, Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 3, M.L.
192. S.M.H., 17 January 1888.
193. Ibid.
194. Ibid.
These suggest that Parkes had ulterior motives for advocating women's suffrage. Unfortunately Buchanan does not attempt to enlighten the readers of the *Herald* as to what the ulterior motives were or may have been. Nor does an examination of the N.S.W. political scene between 1888 and 1890 clearly demonstrate that Parkes and his supporters stood to gain any tangible benefits by advocating women's suffrage.

It is possible that in 1890 Parkes saw the advocacy of women's suffrage along with other liberal reforms as likely to be of some advantage (and certainly of no disadvantage) in the event of a general election. The *Sydney Mail* took this view and, in its editorial comments on Lord Carrington's Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament on 29 April 1890, it claimed:

The mere enumeration of these measures is sufficient to indicate that in the preparation of the speech Ministers were not dealing simply or seriously with arrangements for the new session, but were conscious that an appeal to the country cannot be very long delayed, and alive to the tactical expediency of clearing the way for it. 195

Among the measures listed was the Electoral Bill which, in addition to proposing the extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women, proposed the abolition of plural voting, the redistribution of seats, the introduction of "the principle of self-registration, and the enfranchising of the members of the armed forces and the police." Other important measures mentioned in the editorial included: the amendment of the mining laws, the enactment of legislation to protect women and children in factories and for the "promoting of public health," and the introduction of the principle of local option. It seems unlikely, however, that Parkes would have included women's suffrage in his government's legislative programme simply because of its possible value as a 'vote-catcher.' In 1890 public interest in and discussion of women's suffrage was slight and limited primarily to a few women. Electoral reform involving the abolition of the plural vote and a redistribution of seats, local option, factory legislation, and a revision of the mining laws would probably have had wide appeal in an all-male electorate; the same could not have been said of a proposal to extend the suffrage to women.

It would appear that one of the strongest, if not the strongest reason for the 1890 proposal to admit women to the

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parliamentary suffrage is to be found in Parkes' personal conviction that the claim of women to the vote was a perfectly just one. According to the hostile David Buchanan, Parkes' support for the introduction of women's suffrage was an "oft-repeated and evidently serious intention" and the Sydney Mail described it as "one of the Premier's sentimental fads" and, while both elsewhere imply that his support was at least partly based on political motives (and, although perhaps difficult to verify, the possibility cannot be denied) it is difficult to ignore the fact that Parkes' belief - or "sentimental fad" - was of long-standing and may very well have stemmed from his radical liberal background.

The Electoral Law Amendment Bill, with its proposals for extensive electoral reform, provided Parkes with an ideal opportunity to test the feeling of the Legislative Assembly towards women's suffrage. Its adoption by the Assembly would have implied a recognition of the right of all adult individuals to choose, as members of the legislature, those who they thought would best represent their interests and a final rejection of the claim that the interests of adult non-voters are represented despite their exclusion from the suffrage.

196. S.M.H., 17 January 1888.
197. Sydney Mail, 15 November 1890.
Chapter II. THE ADVOCATES

Introduction

The continuous and organised campaign for women's suffrage in N.S.W. began in 1891. In that year two organisations - the Women's Christian Temperance Union Franchise Department and the Womanhood Suffrage League - emerged as champions of the suffrage cause and each continued in existence until victory was finally achieved in 1902. Both organisations replaced a number of societies that Louisa Lawson and Eliza Pottie had attempted to establish in 1890.

Although the W.S.L. and the W.C.T.U. Franchise Department performed a significant function by keeping the issue of women's suffrage constantly before the public, by seeking pledges of support for women's suffrage from candidates for election to Parliament, and by encouraging members of Parliament to introduce or support measures designed to grant women the suffrage, neither organisation had a very large membership. Nor could they reasonably claim to represent the opinions and aspirations of the majority of women in N.S.W. with regard to the suffrage question - something opponents of women's suffrage never tired of pointing out. Nevertheless, while the achievement of women's suffrage in N.S.W. cannot be ascribed to massive public support for the principle expressed by the W.S.L. and the W.C.T.U. it is difficult to conceive Parliament conceding the reform without some form of organised public agitation for it.

Although this chapter is limited to a consideration of the W.S.L. and W.C.T.U. Franchise Department, it must not be taken to imply that these were the only organisations that supported the extension of the suffrage to women. A number of other organisations expressed their support for the cause, but, unlike the W.S.L., did not devote themselves solely (or almost solely) to obtaining women's suffrage or, unlike the W.C.T.U., did not commit one section of their organisation to the achievement of the suffrage.

1. For example: The Labor Electoral League, the Sydney Labor Council, the Trades and Labour Council of N.S.W., the Order of Good Templars of N.S.W., the N.S.W. Temperance Alliance, and the National Council of Women of N.S.W.
The W.C.T.U. was first established in N.S.W., in Sydney, in August 1882 as the result of the efforts of Eli Johnson, a United States temperance lecturer. Its principal goal was the prohibition of the sale and consumption of alcohol. The W.C.T.U.'s growth was at first very slow and by 1885 it had only 170 members. In that year, it was reorganised by Mrs. Mary Clement Leavitt, a W.C.T.U. world missionary from the United States, and the scope of Union work was expanded. In 1890 the first colonial convention was held and the N.S.W. colonial W.C.T.U. was constituted and assumed the organisational structure that characterised its history throughout the period of this study. In 1891, largely as a result of the efforts of Miss Jessie Ackermann, another W.C.T.U. missionary from the United States, whose influence on the W.C.T.U. in the Australian colonies was very considerable, the W.C.T.U. of Australasia was formed and linked the six colonial unions.

Organisation and Membership

At the base of the organisational structure of the W.C.T.U. was the local branch. In 1890, the earliest year for which details are available, the Union had twelve branches in Sydney and its suburbs and nine branches in country areas; the

2. Williams and Holliday (editors), Golden Records, p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. Ibid., p. 50.
5. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, 5-7 November 1890. The official report of the 1890 convention styles the meeting as the "Eighth Annual Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of New South Wales." In fact, the first seven annual conventions appear to have been little more than conventions of the W.C.T.U. of Sydney.
6. The W.C.T.U. of Australasia is of practically no significance whatever in a study of the women's suffrage movement in N.S.W. The national convention met only triennially, long distances and poor communications made co-ordination difficult and meetings of the full Australasian executive infrequent, finance was very limited indeed, and, most importantly, until 1901 and in many areas of concern, after 1901, it was the colonial and state governments with which the W.C.T.U. had to deal.
overall membership figures were not disclosed.\textsuperscript{7} In 1902 the Union had twenty-six branches in Sydney and its suburbs and thirty-one branches in country areas with an approximate membership of 1,214.\textsuperscript{8} Each local union was headed by an elected executive committee and undertook to promote the 'temperance' cause and other W.C.T.U. aims locally.\textsuperscript{9} The work of the Union was divided into departments and each local branch promoted a number of departments of work. The work undertaken by local branches seems to have depended upon the size of the branch, the interests of its members and, most importantly, the departments of work sponsored by the N.S.W. convention and its executive. Each department of work undertaken by a branch union was supposed to be supervised by a local superintendent.

The local W.C.T.U. branches sent \textit{ex officio} and elected delegates to the N.S.W. convention of the Union which met annually in September or October. Between conventions the work of the N.S.W. Union was carried out by the executive committee consisting of \textit{ex officio} members and members elected by the convention.\textsuperscript{10} The colonial organisation served to direct and co-ordinate the work of the branch unions, particularly in those areas of W.C.T.U. concern - of which women's suffrage was one - where an attempt was being made to influence the policies of the colonial government.

The by-laws of the N.S.W. Union, in 1892, list thirty-seven possible departments of work that could be undertaken by the Union;\textsuperscript{11} by 1902 the number had been increased to fifty-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7} Report of the Eighth Annual Convention of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. . . . 1890, Sydney, 1890, pp. 4-5, 7, 10-16. The reports of the proceedings of each convention were printed and bound separately. The reports have been collectively bound by M.L. and are to be found in \textit{W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Reports}, 1890-96. \textit{[Binder's title]} and \textit{W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Reports}, 1897-1902. \textit{[Binder's title]}
\item \textsuperscript{8} \textit{W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Annual Report of the 20th Convention . . . 1902}, Sydney, 1902, pp. 14-18, 41. The membership figure is only approximate and there is not sufficient detail in this or any other report of the annual convention to enable a comparison to be made between the number of members in Sydney and suburban branches and the number of members in country branches.
\item \textsuperscript{9} See Colonial Report of the Tenth Annual Convention of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. . . . 1892, Sydney, pp. 7-8 for details of the W.C.T.U. branch constitution.
\item \textsuperscript{10} See \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 4-6 for details of the colonial constitution and the by-laws of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 5-6. The W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. undertook twenty-one of these departments - see \textit{Ibid.}, p. 3 for details.
\end{itemize}
Each department of work undertaken by the N.S.W. Union was headed by a colonial superintendent nominated by the N.S.W. executive and each colonial superintendent was, ex officio, a member of the executive. Their duties were:

To advise, and to direct plans of work relating to their several departments; to correspond and co-operate with local Superintendents, and to report to the Annual Convention work proposed and work accomplished.\(^{13}\)

Full membership of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. was limited to Christian women who paid an annual membership subscription of two shillings and six pence and who subscribed to the W.C.T.U. pledge:

"I hereby solemnly promise, God helping me, to abstain from all intoxicating liquors as beverages, and employ all proper means to discourage the use of and traffic in the same."\(^{14}\)

By subscribing the sum of five shillings and signing the same pledge men could also join the ranks of the Union, in its crusade against "the demon drink," as honorary members.\(^{15}\)

Despite the absence of any thorough study of the W.C.T.U. it appears accurate to describe its membership as belonging almost exclusively to the middle and the lower middle class and to the Anglican and the various Protestant churches.\(^{16}\) It is impossible to disagree with Bollen when he notes that the W.C.T.U.

drew its strongest support from such middle-class suburbs as Stanmore, Enmore and Ashfield, while branches in Woolloomooloo and MacDonaltdown found themselves struggling in an alien environment.\(^{18}\)

An environment in which the Anglican and the Protestant churches

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 8.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 8.


\(^{15}\) Ibid. The largest honorary membership claimed by the Union was 237 in 1895. W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Annual Report of the Thirteenth Convention . . . 1895, Sydney, 1895, p. 45.


\(^{17}\) Ibid., p. 163. Bollen includes "Anglican" in the term "Protestant." It appears that the strongest support for the W.C.T.U. came from the Methodist, Baptist, Churches of Christ, and Congregational churches. The Anglican and Presbyterian churches appear to have contained a smaller proportion of temperance supporters.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 164.
made but little impact and in which the temperance values they propagated had but slight appeal. The leadership of the Union appears to have been overwhelmingly Anglican and Protestant.
The first president of the W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Mrs. John Roseby, was an ardent Congregationalist and she was succeeded by Mrs. Euphemia Bowes, the wife of a Methodist minister, who was also first president of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. and was probably the Union's earliest advocate of women's suffrage. Her successor as president of the N.S.W. Union in 1893 and holder of that office until 1907 was Mrs. Sarah Nolan, also the wife of a Methodist minister, Rev. J.A. Nolan. Local unions were encouraged to elect, "when practicable," vice-presidents representing each of the local churches and the only reference to a Roman Catholic vice-president occurs in a report of the formation of a branch union at Dubbo. A further indication of the extent of the Anglican and Protestant affiliations of the leadership of the W.C.T.U. can be gained by looking at the list of the addresses of the officers of branch unions, to be found in the reports of the annual conventions - not infrequently these are given as rectories, manses and parsonages. While it seems clear that the leadership of the W.C.T.U. "came from the bosom of the Protestant Church" it is more difficult to generalise about the ecclesiastical affiliations of the rank and file of the Union. There is not, however, "a trace of evidence to suggest that it was anything but overwhelmingly Protestant."

The Anglican and Protestant character of the W.C.T.U. was further highlighted by the fact that Anglican priests and Protestant ministers were frequently invited to participate at meetings organised by the Union and to sit on the platform with officers of the Union at conventions and public meetings.

19. Ibid.
20. Williams and Holliday (editors), Golden Records, p. 79.
22. Williams and Holliday (editors), Golden Records, p. 16.
24. Ibid.
25. See for example White Ribbon Signal, 15 July 1893, 1 June 1894; Daily Telegraph, 9 September 1892; S.M.H., 1 October 1894.
addition, the Union was represented on the committees of the Local Option League and the N.S.W. Temperance Alliance - both led by Anglican and Protestant clergymen - and it had the sympathy of the Order of Good Templars and the militantly anti-Roman Catholic, Loyal Orange Lodge.

The Goals

The nature of the goals that the W.C.T.U. sought to achieve are perhaps best summed up in the words of its motto: "For God and Home and Humanity." The Union saw itself as, firstly, a Christian organisation carrying out the Will of God and working towards the establishment of His Kingdom on earth, secondly, as defending and maintaining the ideal of Christian family life, and, finally, as, through its endeavours, benefiting the whole of humanity.

The Union saw alcohol as the principal evil undermining society - most of the poverty, unemployment, crime, insanity, cruelty, vice, unhappy home life and other social disorders could, in the view of members of the Union, be traced directly or indirectly to alcohol - and the Union devoted most of its efforts to obtaining the total prohibition of the sale and consumption of alcohol. The Union did not, however, limit its work solely to conducting a campaign against alcohol. There were other social evils that needed to be eliminated - among the most important being opium smoking, gambling, violation of the sabbath and obscenity in literature and on the stage - and there were also reforms that once achieved would, the Union believed, hasten its victory over alcohol and the multitude of other social evils it felt called upon to speak out against - one of the most important of these reforms in the eyes of the leadership of the W.C.T.U. was the extension of the suffrage to women.

It is perfectly clear that the W.C.T.U. regarded women's suffrage first and foremost as a means to an end; namely, the total prohibition of alcohol and the suppression of other social vices. In her presidential address to the 1891


convention of the N.S.W. Union Euphemia Bowes said:

"I had hoped ere this Parliament would have granted us the Franchise, which had we got would have dealt a fatal blow to the monster Drink." 28

Elizabeth Ward, in her Franchise Department report read to the 1892 colonial convention, said:

The W.C.T.U. feel that the Franchise will help them in their efforts to raise humanity, not only in the Temperance cause, but in all their Departments, such as Social Purity, Sabbath Observance, [Etc]. 29

Further on in the same report she quoted with approval an extract from a letter written by "an earnest Christian worker":

"I believe we are working quite as much for Christ and the coming of His Kingdom in striving to obtain the Franchise for the purpose solely of promoting His glory in removing the gigantic evils from our midst, which hinder the progress of the Gospel, as when we are seeking to rescue the drunkard, or preaching the Gospel." 30

Despite the cautious warnings of some commentators 31 and despite the warnings implicit in much New Zealand and South Australian experience, the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. remained convinced throughout the women's suffrage campaign that the women's vote would spell finis for the drink traffic. Only after the passing of the Women's Franchise Act (1902) did the W.C.T.U. begin to have some doubts on the way in which women would exercise their right to vote. 32

The claim made by a member of the W.C.T.U. of South Australia regarding that Union's support for women's suffrage could, one suspects, equally well apply to the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.:

"If they would give women the right to say whether public houses should exist or not at all their agitation for the franchise would fade away like morning mist." 33

The ethic of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. can perhaps best be

30. Ibid.
described as conservative and puritan. It was the outgrowth of the Protestant conscience and it sought to conserve a set of essentially Protestant Christian values that were being widely abandoned towards the end of the nineteenth century. It stressed the personal and social evils that stemmed from the drink traffic, gambling, dancing, prostitution, opium and tobacco smoking, indecent literature and theatre, and the use of force to solve international disputes. It placed emphasis on the indissolubility of marriage, the importance of the home life of the nation, the superior moral capacities of women, the sanctity of the Sabbath, and personal purity and holiness. Women's suffrage was seen as one of a number of means by which these abuses could be eliminated and ends achieved, thus promoting the Greater Glory of God.

This ethic resembled to an extent the "Puritan Ethic" that Grimes sees as such a potent force behind the victory of the women's suffrage cause in the west of the United States of America. Although it is certainly true that the N.S.W. Union regarded cities with their numerous hotels and licensed grocers, their dance halls, their tobacconists and opium dens, their theatres, and their brothels as a greater source of temptation and evil than country towns, it does not appear to have been as opposed to city life as were the upholders of the "Puritan ethic" in the United States, where massive industrialisation was changing the character of much of the nation's life. Nor was the N.S.W. Union opposed to immigration which, at least as far as N.S.W. was concerned, was still comparatively small and predominantly Anglo-Saxon. In the United States, however, large-scale immigration helped to provide the labour force for the new industrial cities with their new life styles; included amongst the immigrants were a large number of Roman Catholic, non-Anglo-Saxon European immigrants; and it allegedly boosted the power of the party machines. The changes that accompanied industrialisation and immigration represented a challenge to the political power and, more importantly, to the social position accorded the life-style of the old United States middle-class - White, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. The "Puritan ethic" in those circumstances became an important political force; the vehicle of values which, if adopted would, it was hoped by some, enhance the status of their life-style - the life style of the old United States middle-class.

While it must be admitted that the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. was an essentially middle-class organisation and that its ethic
contrasted markedly with that of the urban and pastoral working-class, and with the values of many members of the N.S.W. Parliament - especially Cyril Pearl's "Wild Men of Sydney" - and also that it was probably seeking to raise the status of middle-class Protestants by fostering this ethic, it certainly does not seem to have been part of a political movement seeking to reassert the status of an old Australian middle-class life-style.

The W.C.T.U. Franchise Department

After Eliza Pottie's failure to form a women's suffrage league under the auspices (but outside the organisational structure) of the W.C.T.U. because a number of women interested in the cause "did not favour the association of the temperance cause with the suffrage movement," and with the formation in May 1891 of the W.S.L., devoted solely to the achievement of women's suffrage and not to temperance through women's suffrage, the 1891 convention of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. resolved to make women's suffrage a Union department of work. In so doing the W.C.T.U. clearly and intentionally linked the goal of women's suffrage to the ultimate goal of the Union - the total prohibition of the sale and consumption of alcohol.

It is difficult to ascertain whether the Union faced any opposition from within its own ranks when it adopted the women's suffrage plank, but there certainly was apathy. In her report to the 1892 convention Elizabeth Ward said:

Letters were sent to every Union in the colony, inviting them to appoint local Superintendents, and take up the work of the Franchise Department. To these letters there was very little response; however, after much correspondence some of the Suburban Unions appointed Superintendents, and did what they could to forward the cause.

The report lists only nine (seven in Sydney and its suburbs and two in the country) of the forty unions as having reported undertaking some suffrage work.

34. Williams and Holliday (editors), Golden Records, p. 54.
35. Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, p. 50. Colonial Report of the Tenth Annual Convention of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. . . . 1892, p. 24. There is no copy of the report of the 1891 convention in the N.L. or in the possession of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. so no details of the establishment of the Franchise Department are available. Press reports of the convention, S.M.L., 23 September 1891, 24 September 1891, are unenlightening, at least as far as the establishment of the Franchise Department is concerned.
37. Ibid.
At a meeting of the colonial executive in May 1893 "Mrs. Ward regretted she had not more sympathy from members of the Union re the Women's Franchise" and at a meeting one month later the executive had before it a letter from Elizabeth Ward resigning her position as Colonial Superintendent of Franchise - a decision later reversed. Elizabeth Ward's report to the 1893 convention of the Union reveals a continuing lack of interest in the women's suffrage question on the part of many unions.

The work is one of great difficulty, as a great many of our own members have to be educated up to it, but we are glad to say that many who looked upon this movement at first as quite unnecessary are now beginning to see what a valuable agency it would prove in prohibiting the drink traffic if the right to vote were once obtained.

Further on in the same report Elizabeth Ward said:

Efforts have been made to induce all Unions to take up Franchise as a Department of work, but only a few have responded.

The report lists eleven (nine in Sydney and its suburbs and two in the country) of the forty-two unions as having undertaken some suffrage work.

By 1894, however, the position appears to have improved considerably and twenty-nine (eleven in Sydney and its suburbs and eighteen in the country) of the fifty-four unions were reported as having undertaken some suffrage work and in her presidential address to the colonial convention of that year Sarah Nolan said:

Here, in New South Wales, the interest in this subject [woman suffrage] has increased beyond all our expectations.

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39. Ibid., 28 June 1893. It is not possible to say whether Mrs. Ward tendered her resignation because union members showed a lack of enthusiasm about women's suffrage; because of her own doubts about the cause - Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, pp. 51-52; or because of ill-health as the result of the death of her son in 1892 - Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, p. 18.
41. Ibid., p. 48.
42. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
We have carefully avoided pushing this department upon any Union; preferring that they should take it up from the conviction that it was their duty to do so. We find that our women are awaking and asking eagerly for information. They are beginning to find out that because they are the mothers they ought to have a vote in order to further protect their children. 

After 1894 interest in the suffrage cause, at least among the local unions, appears to have declined and in 1898 Mrs. A.A. Finegan, Colonial Superintendent of Franchise, echoes, in her report to the annual convention, sentiments somewhat similar to those expressed by Elizabeth Ward in 1892 and 1893: 

A few of the Unions have responded with reports of work done. The general feeling seems to be that our own people, as well as the general public, need educating on the subject, and we find that where time is taken for this the result amply repays the effort made.

Even where a local Union's name appears in the Franchise Department's report as having engaged in women's suffrage activity, this frequently means little more than that the union had collected names for a petition circulated by the Colonial Superintendent, or had distributed Franchise Department literature, or had written to candidates seeking to represent the local electorate in the Legislative Assembly. It was also frequently the case that local unions which reported undertaking women's suffrage work did so without appointing a superintendent to plan and supervise work done locally, and maintain close contact with the Colonial Superintendent of Franchise. This undoubtedly helped make the work of the Franchise Department much less effective than it might otherwise have been.

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44. Ibid., p. 30. See also White Ribbon Signal, 1 December 1894.
45. An estimate of the number of unions undertaking suffrage work 1894-1895, 1895-1896, 1896-1897, 1897-1898, 1899-1900 can be obtained from the Franchise Department reports, presented at the annual convention, in W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Reports, 1890-96 [Binder's title] and W.C.T.U. of N.S.W., Reports 1897-1902, [Binder's title]. No details are available for 1897-1898 and 1900-1901. The accuracy of Franchise Department reports is suspect. On some occasions it seems that the Colonial Superintendent of Franchise did not include in her report a full list of the unions that reported undertaking suffrage work. In addition, some unions submitted no report and there is no way of finding out whether or not they undertook suffrage work.
47. In a letter to Sir Henry Parkes, Lady Mary Windeyer claimed to have been told that the "main body" of the W.C.T.U. was "very much weakened" because of its large number of branches. Lady Mary Windeyer to Sir Henry Parkes, 8 September 1893, Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 48, M.L. There may well have been a great deal of truth in this claim, at least as far as the Franchise Department was concerned since, despite the energy expended, it does not seem to have functioned very...
In addition to the lack of enthusiasm by local branches the Franchise Department's work was hampered in a number of other ways. First, neither the N.S.W. Union nor its branch unions (on which it depended for a large proportion of its income) were very wealthy and, faced with a large number of activities to finance, it is hardly surprising that the Franchise Department was forced to operate on what can be best described as a 'shoe-string budget.'

There are no figures available indicating what monies local unions devoted to women's suffrage activities but there are figures that provide a guide as to the financial status of the Colonial Franchise Department. The highest income recorded in any one year by the N.S.W. Franchise Department was £13.19.3, during 1893 to 1894; the lowest income recorded was £3.8.9, during 1894 to 1895. Second, the W.C.T.U. pursued a number of goals other than 'temperance' and women's suffrage. Hence there were considerable demands, not only on the limited finances of the Union but also on the time of the limited number of personnel actively engaged in W.C.T.U. work and this was bound to restrict to some extent the effectiveness of the Union's Franchise Department. Finally, the Franchise Department undoubtedly suffered from the widespread public apathy towards the women's suffrage question. Rarely did the subject arouse the passions frequently characteristic of the women's suffrage campaign in both Great Britain and the United States of America and this helps to account for the relative weakness of the movement in N.S.W. and in the other Australian colonies and states - and it also probably helps to explain the relative ease with which victory was achieved.

effectively outside Sydney. It must be remembered, however, that Union was pursuing a large number of goals and the idea of branch unions was to enable the W.C.T.U. to mobilise support and extend its influence throughout the whole colony and not simply in Sydney. This would have been particularly important in the event of women being conceded the right to vote and exercising it in local option referendums - as they were to do after 1904.

50. W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Annual Report of the Thirteenth Convention . . . 1895, Sydney, 1895, [p. 83]. The W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. recorded a total income of £221.0.3 during 1894 to 1895 while branch unions recorded an income of £312.5.2 during the same period.
While it is certainly true that very few local branches of the Union campaigned systematically for the suffrage, and that the Franchise Department was hampered in a number of other ways, yet it was by no means inactive. It organised and provided speakers at numerous W.C.T.U. public meetings and drawing-room meetings, arranged deputations to the colonial government, circulated petitions for presentation to Parliament, and provided large quantities of suffrage literature for distribution by local unions.

The Leaders

During the years of the campaign for women's suffrage the Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. had five superintendents: Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Ward (September 1891 to April 1895, September 1898 to September 1901); Lady Mary Elizabeth Windeyer (September 1895 to March 1897); Mrs. Emma Watkin (March 1897 to December 1897); Mrs. A.A. Finegan (January 1898 to September 1898); and Mrs. Louisa Ardill (September 1901 to September 1902). The most outstanding of these superintendents was Elizabeth Ward and a short biography seems appropriate since, in many respects, her life and her interests were undoubtedly very similar to those of other W.C.T.U. leaders.

Elizabeth Jane Ward was born in Sydney in 1842, the daughter of William Garland and his wife Sarah Jenks, both natives of the colony. Her father owned a farriers and veterinary business in George Street and he had his two daughters educated at an Anglican girls' school in Liverpool Street, Sydney. The family had close church ties and as a child Elizabeth Ward attended Sunday school at St. Phillip's Church Hill and later, following her mother's example, church three times on Sunday. William Garland died in 1856 and his wife a year later and at the age of fifteen, Elizabeth Ward began working as a milliner eventually becoming head of the millinery department at Farmer's.

Following in her marriage to Charles Ward, a painter, in 1863 and the birth of seven sons, Elizabeth Ward undertook

51. The annual reports of the Franchise Department indicate that the Ashfield, Burwood, Goulburn, Newtown, Parramatta and Sydney unions appear to have been the most active workers for the Department's cause among the branches.
52. Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, pp. 9, 11-12.
53. Ibid., p. 9.
54. Ibid., pp. 10, 12.
visiting duties while a parishioner at St. Andrew's Pro-Cathedral and St. David's Surry Hills and as a result came into contact with the 'poorer' elements of Sydney society. Mrs. Ward was a foundation member of the Sydney Women's Prayer Union, founded in 1883 and she also undertook work for the Surry Hills Young Women's Christian Association, the Women's Federal League, the Sydney Women's Suffrage Association and other welfare organizations.

ELIZABETH JANE WARD
Superintendent of The Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.
September 1891 to April 1895; September 1898 to September 1901.

From: E.J. Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong. Being a Record of the Life and Labours of Mrs. E.J. Ward, Sydney, 1893; Frontispiece.
visiting duties while a parishioner at St. Andrew's Pre-Cathedral and St. David's Surry Hills and as a result came into contact with the 'poorer' elements of Sydney society. Mrs. Ward was a foundation member of the Sydney Women's Prayer Union, founded in 1883 and she also undertook work for the Surry Hills Young Women's Christian Association, the Women's Federal League, the Sydney City Mission, and the Queen's Fund for Distressed Women.57

During Mary Leavitt's mission in 1885 Elizabeth Ward joined the W.C.T.U. On the retirement of Euphemia Bowes as president of the Sydney Union in 1890 Elizabeth Ward declined to accept nomination as president but accepted instead the office of vice-president, which she held until her death in 1909. In the same year she became Colonial Superintendent of Press Work for the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. and in 1891 superintendent of the newly established Franchise Department and, despite personal doubts, remained in office until "ill health and pressure of other work" forced her to resign in April 1895.59 Three and a half years later, "at the unanimous request of the Convention, Elizabeth Ward again headed the Franchise Department and continued to do so until September 1901, less than twelve months before the N.S.W. Parliament conceded to women the right to vote.

As the head of the Franchise Department Elizabeth Ward worked extremely hard. She attempted, with, as we have seen, relatively little success, to encourage all local unions to establish franchise departments and maintained contact with those that did so. She distributed suffrage literature, wrote pamphlets outlining the case in favour of women's suffrage, defended the cause in letters published in the Sydney press and arranged and spoke at numerous public franchise meetings, and drawing-room meetings. In addition, Elizabeth Ward organised the circulation of women's suffrage petitions for presentation to Parliament and arranged deputations in an attempt to gain the support of the colonial government for the suffrage cause.

56. Ibid., pp. 14-17.
57. Ibid., p. 21 ff.
58. Ibid., pp. 51-52.
59. White Ribbon Signal, 1 August 1895. There were possibly other reasons for Mrs. Ward's resignation since soon afterwards she became Superintendent of Evangelistic Work and for a short time ran the Department of Legislation - Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, p. 57.
60. Ibid., p. 58.
THE WOMANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE

Formation

The W.S.L. was formed in Sydney as the result of a "small drawing room meeting" held at the home of Mrs. Dora Montefiore on 24 March 1891. To counteract the opposition that greeted Sir Henry Parkes' proposal to bring the women's suffrage question before the Legislative Assembly, it was thought by some residents in Sydney that it might be advisable to get up Public Meetings and form a Womanhood Suffrage League, with the object of educating Public opinion on the subject of the enfranchisement of women.

A "provisional Committee" was formed at the meeting of 24 March and it met for the first time on 4 April 1891, when it began making arrangements for a "preliminary meeting", to be attended only by invited guests. The "preliminary meeting" was held on 6 May 1891 when the W.S.L. was constituted and a Committee was appointed to arrange the first general meeting of the League.

This duly took place on 4 June 1891 with Dr. Vandeleur Kelly in the chair. The rules of the League, previously approved by the committee were "unanimously passed" and the officers of the League were elected - Lady Mary Windeyer was

61. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, [1891-1896], p. 1, Rose Scott Papers, Item 28. Only two of the minute books of the W.S.L. appear to have survived. The first covers the period 18 April 1891 to 9 April 1896 and in addition contains a three page introduction. The second covers the period 4 June 1899 to 23 September 1902 and is located in the Rose Scott Papers, Item 3. References to the minutes will be by the date of the meetings with the exception of references to the first three pages of the first minute book - these will be by page number.

62. Ibid. The founders of the W.S.L. were under the impression (false as it turned out) that a clause conferring the suffrage on women would be contained in the electoral reforms which Sir Henry Parkes proposed to introduce during the first parliamentary session of 1891.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., pp. 1-2. See also Ibid., 18 April 1891, 22 April 1891, 28 April 1891.

65. Ibid., 6 May 1891. See also S.M.H., 7 May 1891.

66. Sir Henry Parkes had been asked to chair the meeting but "he declined on the ground that as he was bringing in the Bill he could not appear publicly in the matter." W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, [1891-1896], p. 2.

67. Ibid., 19 May 1891.
elected president; 68 Mrs. Dora Montefiore, recording secretary; Miss Rose Scott, corresponding secretary; and Miss May Manning, treasurer. 69

Organisation and membership

According to Lady Mary Windeyer 70 the W.S.L., at its formation adopted the rules of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia. 71 These were amended in June 1892, 72 re-cast in September 1893 73 and important amendments to the 1893 rules were adopted in May 1901 74 and August 1901. 75 Under the rules "all administrative power" was vested in the Council of the League 76 which throughout its existence consisted of a president, two secretaries, a treasurer, eighteen councillors, and the vice presidents (these were two in number under the original rules; seven under the rules adopted in June 1892; six under the rules adopted in September 1893, and up to twelve after the adoption in June 1899 77 of an amendment to the 1893 rules).

68. The presidency of the League had been offered to Lady M.E. Jersey, wife of the Governor of N.S.W., who had declined the offer "as out here she was debarred from active political work." Ibid., p. 3, 22 April 1891. Ironically, some years after her return to Great Britain from N.S.W., Lady Jersey became president of Women's National Anti-Suffrage League. Rover, Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914, p. 171.

69. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 4 June 1891. Which see also for the names of the vice-presidents and members of the Council of the W.S.L. See also S.M.H., 5 June 1891. See also S.M.H., 10 June 1891 for report of the first public meeting of the League.

70. Lady Mary Windeyer to Sir Henry Parkes, 8 September [1893], Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 48, M.L. Reference to the appointment of a sub-committee to draw a new constitution makes it quite clear that the letter was written in 1893.

71. See Appendix I for a copy of the original rules.

72. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 7 June 1892, 21 June 1892. See Appendix I for a copy of the rules adopted in June 1892.

73. Ibid., 13 September 1893. See Appendix I for a copy of the rules adopted in September 1893.

74. Ibid., 8 May 1901.

75. Ibid., 20 August 1901.

76. Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September 1891; Report of the W.S.L. of N.S.W. ... 1892, Sydney, 1892, [p. 11]. The annual reports of the W.S.L. were printed and bound separately. The reports have been collectively bound by the M.L. and are to be found in W.S.L. of N.S.W. Reports, 1892-1901, [Binder's title].

77. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 14 June 1899.
In addition, until August 1901, the rules provided that:

Any enrolled member of the League who has been elected delegate by a group of ten enrolled members and whose election has been ratified by the council may attend council meetings and may vote on any question.78

The original rules and the amendments adopted 8 June 1892 proved inadequate, it appears, particularly as regards the formation of branches, the payment by branches of a capitation fee to the Council, and the precise nature of the relationship of the branches to the Council. The failure of frequent attempts to clarify the position of the branch leagues resulted finally in the appointment, at a special general meeting of the League, of a sub-committee "to draft a Constitution."79

The sub-committee drafted a new constitution which was adopted at a general meeting of the League in September 1893,80 and its adoption caused the first of two major disputes within the W.S.L. over the rules. Lady Windeyer, supported by several other members of the Council strenuously opposed the changes81 and resigned from the League immediately after their acceptance.82

78. Report of the W.S.L. of N.S.W., 1892, p. 11.
79. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 9 August 1893. For references to the 'branch problem' and the various attempts to solve it before 9 August 1893 see: W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 16 June 1891, 2 February 1892, 16 February 1892, 5 April 1892, 19 July 1892, 16 August 1892, 30 September 1892, 18 October 1892, 12 July 1893, 18 July 1893; a set of handwritten, unsigned and undated resolutions dealing with the branch leagues and probably written by Lady Windeyer for submission to the Council of the League, Windeyer Papers, M.L. Uncatalogued MSS, Set 186, Item 2; Mary Lee to Lady Mary Windeyer, 24 July 1893, Windeyer Papers, Item 3; Rose Scott to Lady Mary Windeyer, [July 1893], 16 July [1893], 3 August [1893], Windeyer Papers, Item 6. The reference to Mrs. Cooper Oakley's lecture in the undated letter by Rose Scott makes it clear that the letter was written in July 1893 - probably towards the end of the month - and references to the revision of the rules makes it clear that the letters of 16 July and 3 August were written in 1893.
80. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 15 September 1893. For an account of some of the difficulties that arose while the new constitution was being drafted see: Rose Scott to Lady Mary Windeyer, 15 August [1893], 22 August [1893], Windeyer Papers, Item 6. The contents of these letters make it quite clear that both were written during the 'crisis' of 1893.
81. Lady Mary Windeyer to members of the W.S.L., 11 September 1893, [Printed circular letter], Rose Scott Papers, Item 4. After the meeting Lady Windeyer claimed that, in addition to League members absent because of the Art Society's Conversazione, "new members were enrolled at that and the preceding meeting for the express purpose of making this change." Lady Mary Windeyer to Miss Walsh, 22 September 1893, [Typewritten copy], Windeyer Papers, Item 6.
82. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 19 September 1893. See also S.M.H., 20 September 1893.
Lady Windeyer had three principal objections to the new constitution. First, she opposed the alteration of rule IV so as to permit eighteen-year-olds to become full members of the League. In her letter of resignation Lady Windeyer declined "to preside over meetings at which adults may be outvoted by young people not yet of age."83 Second, Lady Windeyer was dissatisfied with the arrangements made in the new constitution for branch leagues although the precise nature of her objections is not clear. Apparently, influenced by Mrs. Mary Lee, secretary of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia and the experience of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.,84 Lady Windeyer regarded the formation of branches as being a task of secondary importance on the grounds that branches tended to weaken and disorganise an association.85 Lady Windeyer went so far as to claim that the whole split results from jealousy of the Sydney League or the "Central Branch" as they call it, on the part of the branches. This League is not like a Benefit Society or a Bank.86

Finally, Lady Windeyer was seriously concerned with the wording of rule III which, according to her reading of it, permitted

"the delivery of addresses upon any topic dealing with the Woman and Suffrage Cause generally."87

and despite claims to the contrary made by the Rev. Geo. Walters a member of the Council and of the constitutional sub-committee, Dr. Vandeleur Kelly echoed Lady Windeyer's views, claiming that the adoption of the rule would lead to a condition of things which they were all desirous of avoiding, and would drive away a large number of women who had joined the league for only one object - to secure

83. Lady Mary Windeyer to [Rose Scott], [14-18 September 1893], Draft, Windeyer Family Papers, M.L. Miscellaneous MSS, D. 159, p. 211. Lady Windeyer's letter of resignation as president of the W.S.L., the receipt of which Rose Scott announced at a Council meeting on 19 September 1893, five days after the adoption of the new constitution. See also S.M.H., 20 September 1893.
84. Mary Lee to Lady Mary Windeyer, 24 July 1893, Windeyer Papers, Item 3; Lady Mary Windeyer to Sir Henry Parkes, 8 September [1893], Parkes Correspondence, Vol. 48, M.L.
85. Lady Mary Windeyer to Miss Walsh, 22 September 1893, [type-written copy], Windeyer Papers, Item 6.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid. Cf. rule III in the copy of the September 1893 constitution reproduced in Appendix I.
the extension of the franchise to women - not to meet together to discuss every subject that could possibly relate to woman's work and woman's cause in general.86

Lady Windeyer, Dr. Vandelur Kelly, and their supporters were obviously concerned at the possibility of a repetition of an incident that occurred on 11 November 1891. At a meeting of the League, at which Lady Windeyer presided, Mrs. Julian Ashton had read a paper which dealt in part with women's suffrage and the marriage laws. The talk, though probably one of the best given at a League meeting was nonetheless tactless and the very brief and rather unjust Herald summary:

Mrs. Julian Ashton read a paper, in which she said that the suffrage once fairly attained for women, their first work must be to amend the marriage laws or - blasphemous as the words might seem - do away with them altogether. Marriage, as a solution of the great social problems of to-day, was a failure, a lamentable one; and to them, a small-thinking section in the world of marionettes, was given the righting of a wrong that had endured for centuries.89

led to the League receiving a great deal of advance publicity. 90

In a letter to the Herald, Rose Scott claimed that the sole aim of the League was to obtain the franchise for women and therefore it must be evident to every reasonable person that the league cannot possibly be identified in any way with the views expressed in Mrs. Ashton's paper, nor with any other irresponsible opinions which may be attributed now or hereafter to any individual member of its body, or with any proposed reform other than that contained in its rules.91

At a meeting of the Council of the League on 17 November 1891 that body disclaimed "all responsibility for certain views lately advanced at a meeting of the League."92 But in the eyes of some League members irreparable damage had been done to the League's image and a talk given by Mrs. Ashton (not under the auspices of the League) at Leichhardt on 10 April 189293 served, it seems,

88. S.M.H., 14 September 1893.
89. S.M.H., 12 November 1891.
90. S.M.H., 14 November 1891, 16 November 1891, 17 November 1891, 18 November 1891; Australian Christian World, 19 November 1891, 3 December 1891. See also Lady M.E. Jersey to Lady Mary Windeyer, 15 November 1891, Windeyer Papers, Item 7. For the full text of Mrs. Ashton's speech and a denial by her that her view can be imputed to the W.S.L. see S.M.H., 25 November 1891.
91. S.M.H., 16 November 1891.
92. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 17 November 1891. See also S.M.H., 18 November 1891; Lady M.E. Jersey to Lady Mary Windeyer, 17 November 1891, Windeyer Papers, Item 7.
93. Daily Telegraph, 11 April 1892, 19 April 1892; W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 19 April 1892. See also Daily Telegraph, 20 April 1892.
only to strengthen their view that the League must concern itself exclusively with the question of woman suffrage. 94

It seems probable that, in addition, there was a clash of personalities between Lady Windeyer and other members of the Council. From the beginning Lady Windeyer appears to have found it difficult to work with some of her colleagues on the Council 95 and, if this was the case, the dispute over the League's constitution, which appears to have begun in earnest in July 1893, would only have served to heighten existing animosity. It is impossible, however, to estimate to what extent personality conflicts were important in bringing about the split.

Between May 1900 and June 1902 there was a further dispute, on this occasion between the Council and the Central (Sydney) League on the one hand and several branches of the League on the other, over the League's constitution. The issues involved are not completely clear 96 and no attempt can be made here to analyse the whole dispute. Suffice it to say that the Council and the Central League emerged victorious and substantial changes were made to the League's constitution reducing considerably the influence of the branch leagues. As the result of an amendment to the constitution, adopted at a special general meeting of the League on 8 May 1901, the League's president, six of the twelve vice-presidents, recording secretary, general secretary and treasurer were to be elected at the annual general meeting of the League on 8 May 1901, the League's president, six of the twelve vice-presidents, recording secretary, general secretary and treasurer were to be elected at the annual general meeting of the League on 8 May 1901. 97

94. After her resignation from the W.S.L. Lady Windeyer immediately joined the W.C.T.U. which, although it did not confine its activities solely to pursuing women's suffrage, was unlikely to have among its members women with views similar to those of Mrs. Ashton. Interestingly, soon after the publicity over Mrs. Ashton's talk, Lady Windeyer had enquired about joining the W.C.T.U. but found its constitution unacceptable. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, 18 November 1891, 6 January 1892.

95. Mary Lee to Lady Mary Windeyer, 8 September 1891, Windeyer Papers, Item 4.

96. We can, however, safely reject as a fundamental cause of the dispute Mr. Bluett's claim that the changes in the constitution were necessary to exclude branch delegates from Council meetings because the Council had become too large in W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 20 August 1901. Likewise we can reject as a cause the implication in the League's 1901 report, of dissatisfaction arising from the fact that Central League members paid two shillings and six pence to the central funds of the League while branches only contributed six pence for each member to the central funds of the League in W.S.L. of N.S.W. Tenth Annual Report . . . 1901, Sydney, 1901, p. 11.
meeting of the League by members of the Central League and by
delegates appointed by the branches. Councillors were to be
elected by members of the Central League only. At a special
meeting of the League on 20 August 1901 further amendments to the
constitution were adopted so as to exclude the delegates of
branch leagues from attending Council meetings and permit the
Council to make rules "for the better administration of
business." 99

The branches that opposed the actions of the Council
and the Central League were Newtown, Annandale, Glebe,
Camperdown, 100 and Redfern and on 23 June 1902 at a combined
meeting of the branches a resolution was passed in the name of
the "united branches of the W.S.L." in which they broke their
ties with the Central League

"until the Central League allows branch delegates to
represent them on the Womanhood Suffrage Council, as
branches consider that taxing them and giving no
representation on the council is opposed to the principle
laid down by the W.S.L., viz., no taxation without
representation." 102

In October 1901 a five member committee of the Council was
appointed

"to inquire into claims of branches. Also to frame any
bye-laws [sic] dealing with same, which may appear to them
necessary." 103

The committee reported the action it had taken to the next
meeting of the Council 104 and 24 June 1902 it was given power to
deal with the issue of the "united branches" "without again
bringing it before the Council." 105 This injunction the
committee ignored as it reported to the Council action it had
taken and apparently in an effort to placate one member of the
committee, Rose Scott, the Council passed a vote of censure on

97. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 8 May 1901.
. 1901, Sydney, 1901, p. 11.
99. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Minutes, 20 August 1901.
100. Founded in late June 1901. S.M.H., 27 June 1901.
102. S.M.H., 24 June 1902.
103. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 15 October 1901.
104. Ibid., 25 March 1902.
105. Ibid., 24 June 1902.
Some of the dissident W.S.L. members - including Mrs. C. Martel, recording secretary from September 1896 to July 1902, were original members of the Women's Progressive Association of N.S.W., founded on 30 September 1901, with Mrs. Martel as its president. One of the aims of the Association was women's suffrage and it took care to stress that it "was a distinct organisation from the W.S.L." This apparent connection between dissident members of the W.S.L. and the foundation of and membership of the Women's Progressive Association was given further emphasis when the Newtown Branch of the W.S.L. resolved itself into a branch of the Women's Progressive Association soon after the enactment of the Women's Franchise Act.

At no stage did the W.S.L. ever have as many branches or as many members as the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. nor were relations between the branches of the W.S.L., and its Council and Central League ever as apparently stable as the relationships between the colonial executive and convention, and the branches of the W.C.T.U. The maximum number of branches (excluding the Central League) the W.S.L. reported having in one year was twelve (eleven in Sydney and its suburbs and one in the country) in 1894 and twelve (eleven in Sydney and its suburbs and one in Newcastle) in 1895. In only two annual reports was the overall membership of the League ever revealed. In May 1892 it stood at 500 and

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106. Ibid., 26 August 1902. See also Rose Scott, "The History of Woman Suffrage in N.S.W.", p. 8, Typescript, Rose Scott Papers, Item 22.
107. Mrs. Martel clashed with Rose Scott twice at Council meetings after 1900. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 12 June 1900, 27 August 1901. Mrs. Martel was also present when the meetings to form the W.S.L. branches at Camperdown, Redfern, and Toxteth were held. S.M.H., 27 June 1901, 23 July 1901, 25 July 1901.
108. S.M.H., 1 October 1901.
109. Ibid.
110. Ibid., 2 October 1902.
111. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1894, p. 6.
112. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1895, Sydney, 1895, pp. 5-6. The way in which all the annual reports are set out makes it impossible to be sure of the accuracy of these figures.
113. Report of the W.S.L. ... 1892, p. 8. The W.C.T.U. did not reveal its membership for 1891 to 1892 so no comparison between the membership figures of the two organisations is possible.
in May 1894 it stood at 362.

Branch League were formed either as the result of local initiative or, for a time, as a result of the initiative of the Council of the League. A general meeting of the League in July 1893 was unanimously of the opinion that "something should be done to encourage the formation of branches" and, following the adoption of the new constitution in September 1893 and the appointment of an "electoral committee" in October of the same year a concerted and reasonably successful effort appears to have been made "to encourage the formation of branches." Thereafter, however, the enthusiasm of the Council appears to have waned although in 1895 it did help organise and finance a series of women's suffrage lectures given by Miss Alice Thompson at Goulburn and on the south coast of N.S.W. Whatever else these lectures may have achieved they did not result in the formation of any new W.S.L. branches.

There can be no doubt at all that the strength of the W.S.L. lay, to a far greater extent even than that of the W.C.T.U., in Sydney and its suburbs rather than in country areas. Throughout its whole life the League appears to have had only eight branches in country areas and of these four seem to have survived for only one year. In addition, most of the important work of the League was undertaken in Sydney by its Council which, as far as can be ascertained, consisted almost


115. See W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 16 June 1891, 7 July 1891, 21 July 1891, 1 September 1891, 6 October 1891, 15 December 1891 for references to branches formed or about to be formed as the result, primarily it would seem, of local initiative activated by the formation of the W.S.L. in Sydney.

116. Ibid., 12 July 1893.

117. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1894, p. 6; Woman's Voice, 23 August 1894.

118. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 27 August 1895, 7 October 1895, 26 November 1895.

119. Ibid., 28 January 1895.

120. These figures were obtained from an analysis of the annual reports of the League in W.S.L. of N.S.W. Reports, 1892-1901 [Binder's title]. As already noted, it is doubtful as to whether they yield completely reliable information. It should also be pointed out that the League could rely upon members in country areas, where there were no branches, to promote the cause by collecting signatures to petitions and distributing suffrage literature.
solely of residents of Sydney and its suburbs. Certainly branch leagues did useful work in keeping the women's suffrage question alive in their local areas, in obtaining signatures to petitions and in helping to finance the undertakings of the Council but it was the Council that organised the most important public meetings of the League; provided most of the speakers at League meetings, at public franchise meetings, at drawing-room meetings, and at debates on the suffrage question; arranged deputations; and submitted petitions to Parliament.

Like the W.C.T.U. Franchise Department, so the Council of the W.S.L. found its work hampered both by financial difficulties and by the widespread apathy in the community towards the women's suffrage question. Great as the financial limitations on the Council of the League were, they were not, however, nearly as great as those on the Franchise Department of the Union appear to have been. Despite the financial difficulties of early 1895, the Council's income was highest in the twelve months from June 1894 to May 1895 - £82.0.11 and lowest in the preceding twelve months when it was £34.13.6. The League also found itself unable to generate any widespread public interest in the women's suffrage cause. League meetings usually only attracted the converted and the frequent extension of an invitation to opponents of the cause to attend League meetings does not appear to have changed the situation noticeably.

Membership of the W.S.L. was open to any person aged eighteen years and over who subscribed the sum of two shillings and six pence annually to the League and who agreed to the object of the League; namely, "to obtain the franchise for

121. Even in the realm of finance, however, the contributions of the branch leagues to the work of the Council were not as significant as the contributions of members of the Central League. Evidence of this can be found by examining the balance sheets at the end of each of the annual reports, 1895-1901 in Ibid.

122. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 26 February 1895.
124. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1894, p. 11.
125. Details of the income of the Council in other years can be found in the balance sheets appended to each annual report of the League in W.S.L. of N.S.W. Reports, 1892-1901, [Binder's title].
126. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 26 February 1895; W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1895, p. 4; Woman's Voice, 21 September 1895.
127. See for example a collection of handbills advertising W.S.L. meetings, Rose Scott Papers, Item 4.
128. Until September 1893 members had to be aged twenty-one years and over.
women upon the same conditions as those which apply to men." 128

Unlike the W.C.T.U., therefore, full membership of the W.S.L. was not limited to women and that, at least according to one member of the W.S.L. meant that

"our league is superior to that one [the W.C.T.U.] because it gives such a warm welcome to both sexes and we W.S.L. women know, that where both are interested in the same work, there the noblest and the grandest results are accomplished." 129

There are no figures available that would allow us to compare the proportion of male to female members of the League but we do know that a number of men served on the League Council and, while most were nominal members only, some played quite an active role during their terms of office. 130

While it seems accurate to describe the leadership of the W.S.L. as primarily middle-class it is rather more difficult, because of the transitory nature of most of the branches, to discover from what social class the rank and file membership came. However, the fact that the League's strongest branches were in Newtown, Granville, Glebe and Petersham suggests that the League attracted support from the working-class and from the middle and the lower-middle-class. 131 The W.S.L., unlike the W.C.T.U. cannot be characterised as being the preserve of any one

128. Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September, 1891.
129. Maria English to Lady Mary Windey er, 2 September, 1893. Windeyer Papers, Item 6. Written probably just before Lady Windeyer resigned as president of the W.S.L. Undoubtedly many members of the League, the 'unofficial motto' of which was:

"The woman's cause is man's. They rise or sink Together. Dwarfed or Godlike, bond or free." - Tennyson.

would have echoed Mrs. English's sentiments.
130. For example Alfred Allen, W. McIntyre, Julian Ashton, Dr. Vandeleur Kelly, L. Armstrong, J.H. Simpson, F.A. Winter, E. Gray, Dr. Hodgson, Dr. Morris, and Rev. Dr. T. Roseby.
131. It should be borne in mind, however, that it was the W.S.L. branch leagues in the essentially working-class suburbs of Annandale, Camperdown, Newtown and Redfern that broke from the Council and Central League in 1902 after a two-year dispute and were involved in forming the distinctly working-class Women's Progressive Association. This perhaps indicates that the alliance between the middle and lower middle-class and the working-class membership was not a very happy one. There is, however, little evidence to support this conclusion and the fact that the Glebe branch was also involved makes the conclusion seem even less acceptable.
religious group and, despite the evident sympathy of most, if not all, members of the parliamentary Labor party for the League and of some members of the League for at least some of the goals of the Labor party, P.J. Gandon's assertion

that the women's suffrage movement is essentially a socialist class, and Labor party movement rather than a wide sex movement, . . . 132

was, with the exception of its latter claim, little short of absurd when applied to either the W.S.L. 133 or the W.C.T.U.

Committees

From time to time the work of the League was handled by committees (sometimes called sub-committees) of the Council. For example, in October 1893 an eleven member "electoral committee" was formed at a special general meeting of the League "to organise public meetings in the electorates." 134 This committee continued to function at least until August 1894 135 but appears to have been superseded in September 1894 by a seven member "organising committee" charged with the task of arranging public meetings. 136 Unlike the members of its predecessor, 137 the members of the committee of September 1894 were permitted to "act entirely on their own responsibility and report monthly to the Council on the business." 138 This committee was also superseded, in October 1895, by another "organising committee," of six members, to arrange suffrage meetings in the suburbs. 139

Apart from references to the work of these committees in the annual reports for 1893 to 1894, 1894 to 1895, and 1895 to 1896; brief references in the Council minutes; 140 and a copy of the


133. Prominent members of the W.S.L. who were active supporters of the Labor party or who were socialists, included Mrs. Kate Dwyer, Miss Rose Summerfield and Miss May Hickman. Joan Cobb, The Women's Movement in N.S.W., 1880-1914, University of New England, M.A. Thesis, 1966, pp. 408, 411, 420. See also S.M.H., 10 April 1895.

134. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1894, p. 4. For details of the membership of this committee see Woman's Voice 23 August 1894.

135. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 8 August 1894.


137. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 9 May 1894.

138. Ibid., 11 September 1894.

139. Ibid., 7 October 1895, 22 October 1895. See also W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1896, Sydney, 1896, p. 4.

140. The most detailed report in the Council minutes of the operation of any of these three committees is to be found in W.S.L. of N.S.W. Minutes, 27 November 1894, 18 December 1894 and concerns a dispute between Maybanke Wolstenholme and the other members of the committee. Cf. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 9 May 1894, 11 September 1894.
report of the Electoral Committee, covering the period 1 November 1893 to 31 July 1894 in Woman's Voice there appear to be no other records of the work of these three committees nor is there any record of the existence of an "organisation committee," or some similar body, after June 1896.

Other examples are the finance and petition committees. In February 1895, as a result of financial difficulties, the Council appointed a seven member committee to raise funds for the League. The committee was reconstituted and placed "under the control of the Council" in March 1895. The annual reports of the League for 1894 to 1895, 1895 to 1896, and 1896 to 1897 indicate that the finance committee continued to function until at least June 1897, despite a recommendation in March 1896 from its secretary, Miss Edith Fry, that it be dissolved because of the improved state of the League's finances.

In March 1895, in order to ensure the more effective preparation and presentation of women's suffrage petitions for submission to Parliament, the Council elected a petition committee, to be "subject to the control of the Council," with Mrs. Martel as secretary. Mrs. Martel made occasional reports to the Council but there are no detailed reports of the committee's work.

Two other committees of the Council deserve brief mention. In March 1897 a five member committee was appointed "to arrange an appeal to the Federal Convention" of that year in an attempt to have included in the proposed federal constitution provisions granting women the federal suffrage. The appeal was presented to the Convention on behalf of the League by the Hon. J.N. Brunker, M.L.A. and N.S.W. Colonial Secretary. In 1897 a three member committee was appointed to arrange deputations to the colonial government to urge the extension of the suffrage to women. It is impossible to say for how long the

141. Woman's Voice, 23 August 1894.
142. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 26 February 1895.
143. Ibid., 26 March 1895.
144. Ibid., 24 March 1896.
145. Ibid., 26 March 1895. There is no indication given of the size of this committee. Mrs. Martel and Rose Scott are the only members mentioned.
146. See for example Ibid., 23 July 1895.
147. See S.M.H., 1 October 1901 for a reference by Mrs. Martel to her work while secretary to the petitions committee.
149. S.M.H., 25 March 1897. See also W.S.L. of N.S.W. Sixth Annual Report . . . 1897, p. 9.
150. Ibid., p. 5.
committee survived although the W.S.L. arranged a number of deputations to urge N.S.W. governments to make women's suffrage government policy.

There was little continuity in the membership of the seven committees whose work has been mentioned in this section. Maybanke Wolstenholme, the League's president from October 1893 to June 1897 was a member of six - and possibly also of the petitions committee - and Rose Scott, the League's general secretary from its inception until its dissolution in September 1902 was a member of the seven committees. Both may well have been members ex officio. Miss Tilby served on four of the committees, and Mrs. Mainer, treasurer from September 1894 to June 1897, and Miss Edith Fry each served on three committees. However, in the absence of minutes or reports of committee meetings it is difficult to determine whether or not the committees were dominated by a particular member or members.

Goals

Rule III of the constitution of the W.S.L. recognised the League as having only one goal; namely, "to obtain the franchise for women, on the same conditions as those which apply to men." This point was reiterated on a number of occasions when the League was charged with dealing with matters other than that for which it was founded. 151

The W.S.L. differed from the W.C.T.U. which, as we have seen, viewed the suffrage as a potent weapon in its fight against alcohol and a multitude of other social evils. However, while the League united under its banner men and women of various shades of opinion all pursuing the one goal - women's suffrage - individual League members, like their 'sisters' in the W.C.T.U., generally saw the suffrage as a means to some end. Certainly it is true that the members of the W.S.L. were not united in their conception of ends (although it would be a mistake to exaggerate this 'disunity') as were members of the W.C.T.U., but, nevertheless, they rarely defended the cause simply in terms of abstract justice. It was usually seen as a stepping-stone towards an end or ends. This idea was expressed by Mrs. G.E. O'Connor when

151. See for example S.M.H., 16 November 1891, 25 November 1891; W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 19 April 1892, 14 June 1892; Rose Scott, "Women and the Franchise", Australian Economist, Vol. IV, No. 15, 31 May 1895, p. 494; S.M.H., 10 April 1895.
she wrote:

The fundamental idea of suffrage was almost in every case to gain the powers of the vote, so Women would have some say in the Laws to restrict and abolish vice and injustice to make a cleaner path for their children's feet. 152

According to Miles Franklin

Rose Scott considered votes for women the big nullah-nullah with which to attack the laws and conditions unjust to women and children, ...153

With considerable caution, stemming possibly from the advantage of hindsight, Maybanke Anderson expressed a somewhat similar idea when she said:

'The English suffragettes mistakenly look upon the vote as a great weapon, whereas it is merely a useful tool.'154

On a number of occasions the League found it necessary to dissociate itself and the suffrage cause from the views expressed by particular members or from the aims of particular movements. For example, the adverse publicity that accompanied Mrs. Julian Ashton's comments on women's suffrage and marriage led, as we have already seen, to an official repudiation of her views by the League and to considerable ill-feeling within the League. And in 1899 press reports of the opposition of some prominent members of the W.S.L., including Rose Scott, to the proposed Australian federation 155 necessitated denials at the annual meeting, by Rose Scott and Mrs. Dickie, of suggestions "that the W.S.L. was as a League Antibillites [sic]"156

While the League did not officially associate itself, and on a number of occasions specifically dissociated itself with certain of the points of view expressed by particular members, the League reports make it quite clear that issues other than just women's suffrage were considered to be the legitimate concern of the League. At the monthly meetings of the Central League lectures were given by League members and guest speakers on a wide range of topics thought to be of interest to League members or valuable in furthering the political education of

154. Daily Telegraph, 12 April 1915.
155. See for example S.M.H., 9 June 1899.
156. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 14 June 1899. See also S.M.H., 15 June 1899.
women. The League actively associated itself particularly, with matters touching the welfare of women and children: the Women's College at Sydney University and the progress of women students at the University, the Married Women's Property Act (1893), the Factories and Shops Act (1896), the National Council of Women of N.S.W., the Legal Practitioner's Act (1897), the appointment of women factory inspectors and police matrons, prison reform and the building of a women's penitentiary, the early closing movement which culminated in the Early Closing Act (1899), the employment of women in the public service and, to the disquiet of Miss Louisa MacDonald, principal of the Women's College at Sydney University, the League on at least one occasion advocated compulsory domestic training for young ladies. 157

The League cannot, like the W.C.T.U., be seen as a specifically puritan and conservative organisation. While some members undoubtedly sympathised with the goals of the Union many either did not do so or believed that it was not in the best interests of the women's suffrage cause to associate it with those goals. The League's principal concern, and the one for which it was founded, was to obtain the suffrage for women. To a very much lesser degree it interested itself in obtaining reforms which, it was believed, would improve the conditions of women and children. At no time did the League, despite what individual members may have thought, claim that it was striving to build the Kingdom of God on Earth or that it sought to enforce a Protestant Christian ethic. While it undoubtedly viewed the victory of its cause as being of benefit to both "Home and Humanity" 158 it tended to have only a sketchy conception of the hoped-for benefits and made no attempt to pursue a clearly thought-out social policy once the suffrage was conceded. 159

The leaders: (a) Miss Rose Scott

No study of the women's suffrage movement in N.S.W. would be complete without at least a brief biographical account of Miss Rose Scott, whose name has become more intimately

158. See for example Rose Scott, "Why Women Need a Vote", p. 1, Undated typescript with pen and pencil alterations, Rose Scott Papers, Item 22. Written after the suffrage was conceded in 1902 and was probably a speech.
159. The W.C.T.U. had a clearer conception than did the W.S.L. of the benefits it intended to pursue once women's suffrage had been conceded but, like the League, it can hardly be said to have a very well thought-out social policy.
July 1, 1908

MISS ROSE SCOTT AT 10.

AT 30.

(TO-DAY.

MRS. ROSE SCOTT AT 10.

MISS ROSE SCOTT AT 30.

WITH A LITTLE NEPHEW.

Miss Rose Scott, one of the most ardent temperance advocates of Australia, had her first photograph taken on a public house verandah! A bashful, but born of a "booky" clan, Miss Scott was from the first endowed with great personal charm and intellectual force. She probably did more than any other woman to advance the cause of womanhood suffrage in Australia.

ROSE SCOTT

General Secretary of the W.S.L. of N.S.W.,
May 1891 to September 1892

From: The Lone Hand, Vol. III, No. 18,
1 October 1908
associated with the victory of women's suffrage in N.S.W. than the name of any other single person. Indeed, she was the most important member of the W.S.L., being its general secretary from its inception to its dissolution in September 1902. With the exception of Professor MacCallum she was the only member of the League who held a position on the Council throughout the entire life of the League, and the publicity surrounding her position was such that non-members of the League could have been excused had they associated the W.S.L. - if not the women's suffrage movement in N.S.W. - with the name of Rose Scott.

Rose Scott was born in 1847 at "Glendon" on the Hunter River, the daughter of Heleus Scott and Sarah Rusden. Financially ruined by the crash of the Bank of Australia, Heleus Scott held a number of official positions until finally becoming police magistrate in Newcastle, a post he held for nearly twenty years. Rose Scott lived for the first ten years of her life in the "bush" and, apparently as a result, she had little formal education. Following the death of her father in 1879 Rose Scott and her mother moved to "Lynton", Jersey Road, Woollahra. Financial independence was an undoubted advantage to Rose Scott when she adopted the women's suffrage cause in 1891 and proceeded to pursue her goal with unrelenting vigour. During the 1890's and almost until the time of her death in April 1925, Rose Scott ran a 'salon' in her Woollahra home:

Her Friday evenings ... were crowded with many of the most brilliant and rising men in Sydney, and there at one time or another could be met everyone worth knowing: barristers, politicians, professors, authors, artists, every class and every profession.

Early in her life Rose Scott became acutely aware of

160. Before June 1894 the position was known as "corresponding secretary".
161. Professor MacCallum was a councillor 1891 to 1892 and an 'inactive' vice-president from 1892 to 1902.
162. Franklin in Eldershaw (editor), The Peaceful Army, pp. 90-92.
163. Table Talk, 10 March 1903, cutting in the Rose Scott Papers, Item 14.
164. S.M.H., 2 May 1925.
165. Franklin in Eldershaw (editor), The Peaceful Army, p. 96.
See also S.M.H., 12 August 1969; Franklin in Eldershaw (editor), The Peaceful Army, pp. 98-100.
the injustices under which women and children laboured and this awareness was reinforced by her experiences in connection with a committee which sought to have Parliament raise the age of consent from fourteen years to eighteen years. These experiences, the letters of E.W. O'Sullivan published in the Sydney press, and J.S. Mill's *The Subjection of Women* turned Rose Scott into an enthusiastic supporter of women's suffrage.

In 1889 Rose Scott joined the Women's Literary Society and two years later, with some other members of the Society, she became a foundation member of the W.S.L. and its corresponding (later general) secretary, a position she held throughout the life of the League. Without doubt the most indefatigable worker for the women's suffrage cause in N.S.W., her friend Stella Miles Franklin aptly (if somewhat exaggeratedly) summed up Rose Scott's contribution to the cause when she wrote:

"The story of the campaign for votes for women in New South Wales is the life story of Rose Scott from the 'nineties onward..."

In addition to her work for the W.S.L., Rose Scott's name was also linked with the Ladies' Committee of the Sydney University Women's College, the National Council of Women of N.S.W., the Prisoner's Aid Society of which she was for a time president, the Cremation Society of N.S.W., the Women's Anti-Bill League and the enactment of the Custody of Children Act (1894), the Factories and Shops Act (1896), the Early Closing Act (1899), and the Children's Relief Act (1901). Even after the enactment of women's suffrage Rose Scott continued her political and social work, most notably as president of the Women's Political Educational League which she founded in 1902 and as president of the Peace Society from 1907 to 1916.

**A middle-class radical of "irreproachable family" and**

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167. *Ibid.*, p. 93; Rose Scott, Undated and untitled typescript of a largely autobiographical address given by Rose Scott, *Rose Scott Papers*, Item 32. The reference to the recent election of Mrs. Edith Cowan to the Parliament of Western Australia suggests that the talk was given in 1921.

168. *Ibid*.

169. Rose Scott to E.W. O'Sullivan, 2 October 1906, *Letters to E.W. O'Sullivan, M.L.*


171. References to Rose Scott's interest in those organisations and legislative enactments can be found throughout the *Rose Scott Papers*. See also Franklin in Eldershaw (editor), *The Peaceful Army*, pp. 95-96, 101-102.
"essentially an aristocrat," 172 an English writer said of Rose Scott:

A democrat in her views, and consistent, as few democrats are, in carrying out those views, she yet obviously belongs to the classes, and not to the masses for whose welfare she has laboured so anxiously. 173

Her former W.S.L. colleague Mrs. Francis Anderson (nee Maybanke Wolstenholme) wrote, in an obituary following Rose Scott's death:

Perfectly feminine as she was, with an attractive charm of manner and sweetness of expression, she yet often saw to the bottom of a question with masculine directness, and held on to her opinion with childlike tenacity. She believed implicitly in the power of persuasion - her persuasion - but she was a different person to persuade; and to divert her from her purpose was almost impossible. ...... it is certain that Miss Scott's attractive qualities enabled her to obtain concessions which others might have demanded in vain. And she delighted in the work which gave her fellow woman the help she knew they needed. In almost every respect she stands alone among the pioneer women of thirty or forty years ago. 174

The leaders: (b) Lady Mary Elizabeth Windeyer

During its eleven years of existence the W.S.L. had four presidents: Lady Mary Windeyer (June 1891 to September 1893); Mrs. Maybanke Wolstenholme (October 1893 to June 1897); Mrs. Neville Griffiths (June 1897 to June 1899); and Mrs. Emma Palmer (June 1899 to September 1902). Little is known of the latter two but both Lady Mary Windeyer and Maybanke Wolstenholme were, like a great many of their colleagues in the W.S.L., prominent workers in a number of fields. Both, but more particularly Lady Windeyer, lent their considerable social prestige to the League during their terms of office and helped endow it with a middle-class image. In a letter to Lady Windeyer, Maria English wrote:

It will be a sad day for our league, if you resign the presidency [sic], because it requires a Lady of Title and of good social standing to give it importance - 175

- a verdict with which many members of the League, at least in 1893, would have agreed.

172. Ibid., pp. 96, 98.
174. S.M.H., 2 May 1925.
175. Maria English to Lady Mary Windeyer, [? September 1895, Windeyer Papers, Item 6.
LADY MARY ELIZABETH WINDEYER

President of the W.S.L. of N.S.W.,
May 1891 to September 1893

Superintendent of the Franchise Department
of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.,
September 1895 to March 1897

From: The Rose Scott Papers, M.L. Uncatalogued MSS,
Set 38, Item 29.
Mary Elizabeth Windeyer was born in England in 1831, the daughter of an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. Robert Bolton who, with his wife and daughter migrated to N.S.W. in 1839 and who became the parish priest at Hexham, near Newcastle. Mary Bolton married William Charles Windeyer, future Senior Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of N.S.W., in 1857. Judge Windeyer was knighted in 1891.

Lady Windeyer participated actively in charity work and was most particularly involved with organisations responsible for helping women and children. Her name was associated with the Macquarie Street Foundling Home which grew into the Ashfield Children's Home; the Ladies' Temporary Aid Society; the Boarding Out Society which, with the help of Sir Henry Parkes, developed into the State Children's Relief Department; the Exhibition of Women's Industries; the Queen Victoria Jubilee Fund; the Crown Street Women's Hospital and the Prison Gate Brigade. 176

Lady Windeyer was a foundation member of the W.S.L. and was elected its first president in June 1891, an office she held until her resignation in September 1893. She continued her suffrage work, after her resignation from the League, with the W.C.T.U., and was Superintendent of the Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of Australasia from 1894 to 1897 and Superintendent of the Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. from September 1895 to March 1897. Following her return to N.S.W. in early 1898 after a trip to Europe, during which her husband died, Lady Windeyer retired to the family property, 'Tomago' in the Hunter Valley. She does not appear to have again actively participated in the women's suffrage campaign.

The leaders: (c) Mrs. Maybanke Wolstenholme

Maybanke Wolstenholme 177 was born in England and came to Australia as a child. Trained as a teacher, she showed a life-long interest in and involvement with education. She founded a school, Maybanke, and owned and edited the feminist paper Woman's Voice which appeared fortnightly from August 1894

177. Mrs. Francis Anderson after marriage to Professor Francis Anderson.
to December 1895, when it ceased publication. In 1897 Maybanke Wolstenholme became president of the Kindergarten Union of N.S.W. 178

In 1889 Maybanke Wolstenholme was a foundation member of the Women's Literary Society 179 which included among its members many women who later played a prominent role in the women's suffrage campaign and other reform movements. 180 Rose Scott and Maybanke Wolstenholme met at the Women's Literary Society meetings 181 and were both foundation members of the W.S.L., Mrs. Wolstenholme being elected as one of the first two vice-presidents of the League. After Lady Windeyer's resignation as president Maybanke Wolstenholme was elected to succeed her and remained in office until her resignation in June 1897 after which her name was not again prominently associated with the women's suffrage cause.

III


While the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. both campaigned for women's suffrage they remained at all times separate organisations, 182 and never co-operated to the extent that the W.C.T.U. of South Australia and the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia appear to have done. 183 While admittedly the N.S.W. Franchise Department's annual reports for 1892, 1893, 1895 and 1899 acknowledged, somewhat cautiously, the contribution of the W.S.L. to the women's suffrage cause and every W.S.L. annual report contained complimentary references to the contribution of the W.C.T.U. to the cause, Elizabeth Ward's claim that the two

179. S.M.H., 2 May 1925.
180. Ibid.
181. Ibid.
183. Wadham, Women's Suffrage in South Australia, 1883-1894, pp. 90, 94, 95.
organisations worked in "perfect harmony" does not appear to be borne out by the facts.

Between September 1891 and July 1892 the relations between the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. were, to say the least, strained. In September 1891 the Sydney Union resolved to write a letter to Rose Scott protesting against the holding of W.S.L. meetings on Sunday evenings and some months later the W.C.T.U. was embarrassed by the publicity that resulted from Mrs. Ashton's views, expounded at a W.S.L. meeting, on women's suffrage and marriage. The minutes of the Sydney Union for May 1892 contain the following:

Suffrage League. Mrs. Ward said and other members echoed her statement, that it would seem desirable if members of our Union did not occupy a place on the platform of the above League while Mrs. Ashton remained under the shelter of it.

It was presumably as a result of Mrs. Ashton's statements and of her desire not to associate either herself or the W.C.T.U. with them that Mrs. Pottie resigned from the Council of the League and refused to reconsider her resignation. Evidently the Council of the League would have liked to have had a representative from the W.C.T.U. among its members for Mrs. Pottie was asked about the possibility of Mrs. Ward replacing her on the Council - a question to which Mrs. Pottie gave an indefinite reply after which the Council seems to have abandoned the idea. At a meeting of the Sydney Union in June 1892 the President stated that frequently during her late Mission she found it needful to be very emphatic as to the W.C.T.U. have no connection whatever with that lady [Mrs. Ashton] - or the league under whose auspices she has up to the present been acting.

And in the following month Mrs. Ward told the Sydney Union that she had often felt inclined to give up her position as Superintendent of the Franchise Department owing to the confusion in peoples minds - re our Connection with Mrs. Ashton and her party - the difference between the W.C.T.U. Womans Suffrage and the Womanhood Suffrage League not being clearly understood.

186. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, [?] May [?] 1892.
187. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 2 February 1892.
188. Ibid., 2 February 1892, 16 February 1892.
189. Ibid., 2 February 1892, 16 February 1892.
190. W.C.T.U. of Sydney, Minutes, 1 June 1892.
191. Ibid., 6 July 1892.
Such evidence as there is, and it is by no means conclusive, suggests that very few members of the W.S.L. were also members of the W.C.T.U. We have already seen that Eliza Pottie, a noted W.C.T.U. worker, was also a member of the W.S.L. Council until her resignation in February 1892. Mrs. Maria English, who was Superintendent of the Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of Summer Hill in 1892 was a member of the Council of the League from June 1893 to June 1894; Mrs. Dickie, Superintendent of the Franchise Department of the W.C.T.U. of Newtown during (at least) 1892 to 1893 and 1894 to 1895 was a member of the Council of the League from February 1895 to June 1899 and thereafter a vice-president of the League; Miss Tilby, whose name appears in the annual Franchise Department reports, 1891 to 1892 and 1892 to 1893 was a member of the Council of the League from June 1892 to June 1899; and Elizabeth Ward was a member of the W.S.L. "for about eight years," although she never held office in the League. On occasions W.S.L. branches and W.C.T.U. branches that undertook franchise work existed in the same areas at approximately the same date but there is not sufficient evidence to determine whether there was any marked similarity in the membership of the branches of the two organisations.

Despite the fact that they were both pursuing the goal of women's suffrage there appears to have been very little cooperation between the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. In the first few weeks of the League's existence Mrs. Wolstenholme reported having addressed two W.C.T.U. meetings, at Summer Hill and Petersham, which pledged support for the W.S.L. However, with the establishment in September 1891 of the W.C.T.U. Franchise Department and also, possibly, partly as a result of Mrs. Ashton's talk at a W.S.L. meeting in November 1891, Union

193. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 14 June 1893, 13 June 1894.
195. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 26 February 1895. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Ninth Annual Report ... 1900, p. 3.
197. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 21 June 1892.
199. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 7 July 1891.
branches interested in women's suffrage appear to have worked wholly within the confines of the Union and to have had few contacts with the W.S.L. The organisations did not combine to run public franchise meetings or to organise deputations and petitions. Occasional references can be found to members of the W.S.L. addressing W.C.T.U. meetings and an entry in the 1898 report of the W.S.L. suggests that its members attended public franchise meetings held under the auspices of the W.C.T.U.

The main difference between the two organisations was that the W.C.T.U. was essentially a religious organisation and pursued the goal of women's suffrage in an attempt to enforce upon society at large certain of the tenets of evangelical Christianity while the W.S.L. was essentially a secular organisation - "it is open to mer and women of every shade of opinion and religion" - and, officially at least, pursued the goal of women's suffrage as an end without, unlike the W.C.T.U., committing its members to the support of women's suffrage to achieve defined ends. Perhaps the attitude of many members of the W.C.T.U. towards the W.S.L. is best revealed in the reaction of the colonial executive of the Union towards a request by Miss Margaret Windeyer that the Union appoint a representative to the recently formed National Council of Women of N.S.W. - "It was resolved respectfully to decline, as they [the National Council of Women of N.S.W.] were not working upon a Christian basis." Likewise, the W.S.L. was "not working on a Christian basis."

Not all members of the Union were very enthusiastic about the sort of approach implied in the resolution of the colonial executive of the N.S.W. Union. In a letter to Lady Mary Windeyer (copies of which were also sent, "with slight

200. An exception was a resolution passed by the Barrier District Convention of the W.C.T.U. on 12 May 1892, and forwarded to the Council of the League, pledging "to co-operate loyally with the patriotic women who are labou ring to bring about the enfranchisement to [sic] women." Report of the W.S.L. of N.S.W. . . . 1893, p. 5. See also W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 16 August 1892.


203. Maria English to Lady Mary Windeyer, [?] September 1893, Windeyer Papers, Item 6.

204. White Ribbon Signal, 1 July 1896. The colonial executive's attitude was condemned in Jos. [?] Woodhouse to Lady Mary Windeyer, 21 August 1896, Windeyer Papers, Item 7 and the decision was eventually reversed.
variation," to Sarah Nolan and Rose Scott) Mrs. E.W. Nicholls, president of the W.C.T.U. of Australasia, suggests a more practical, if perhaps less principled approach, namely, co-operation with all parties interested in achieving women's suffrage and the limiting of all discussion in such cases simply to women's suffrage. 205

While it might not be true that the W.C.T.U. Franchise Department and the W.S.I. worked together in "perfect harmony" as claimed by Elizabeth Ward, it would be a mistake to suppose that they were totally unsympathetic towards each other. On the contrary, despite differences in approach and allowing for the tactical desirability of maintaining, as far as possible a 'united front', each valued the work of the other organisation and the objectives (in addition to women's suffrage) towards which the members of each worked bore marked similarities.

205. Mrs. E.W. Nicholls to Lady Mary Windeyer, 5 May 1896, Ibid., Item 4.
Chapter 3. THE ARGUMENTS

Introduction

The arguments used in favour of women's suffrage in N.S.W. were almost identical with those used in the other Australian colonies and states and, allowing for differences in emphasis, to those used by the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain and the United States of America. Indeed, the arguments used in Australia both for and against women's suffrage were derived from British and United States sources.1

It is impossible to speak for all the supporters of women's suffrage in N.S.W., but it seems safe to claim that the interest of most of them in the suffrage cause stemmed initially from their own personal experience of the conditions of women and children in N.S.W. rather than from any abstract consideration of natural rights or natural justice. G.E. O'Connor was substantially accurate when she wrote:

The fundamental idea of suffrage was in almost every case . . . to gain the powers of the vote, so Women would have some say in the Laws to restrict and abolish vice and injustice to make a cleaner path for their children's feet. Equality and kindred arguments were developed as the movement progressed.2

We have already seen that Rose Scott's interest in women's suffrage stemmed, at least partly, from her involvement with a committee which unsuccessfully attempted to persuade Parliament to raise the age of consent. Mrs. Dora Montefiore maintained that:


It was after the death of my husband, in 1889, when I had to go into business matters with trustees and lawyers that I had my initiation into what the real social position of a widow meant to a nineteenth-century woman. 

Mrs. Montefiore was particularly incensed because one of the lawyers explained to her that, had her husband wished, he could have left the guardianship of the children to somebody other than their mother since by law "'the child of the married woman has only one parent, and that is the father." For Dora Montefiore this was a turning point, for, from that moment I was a suffragist (though I did not realise it at the time) and determined to alter the law. 

Testimonies such as Dora Montefiore's are, unfortunately, infrequent, but it is not difficult to imagine that the interest in women's suffrage taken by Lady Mary Windeyer, Louisa Lawson, Eliza Pottie, Euphemia Bowes, Elizabeth Ward, and Sarah Nolan stemmed directly from their involvement with movements seeking the reform of the laws and conditions under which women and children lived or movements seeking prohibition of the sale and consumption of alcohol.

The debate in favour of and against women's suffrage took place in two 'arenas' - inside Parliament and outside Parliament - and the arguments used to justify the extension of the suffrage and those used to oppose it were essentially the same in each. It seems, however, desirable to distinguish between parliamentary and non-parliamentary arguments in the case of four important objections urged against the extension of the suffrage to women and one important objection urged against withholding the suffrage from women and to consider these in detail when examining the fate of the suffrage proposals in the N.S.W. Parliament. They were, firstly, that the women's suffrage issue would cause a crisis with the Legislative Council which it was desirable to avoid; secondly, the proposal to extend the suffrage to women represented such a radical change in the electorate and such a radical departure from accepted practice, a departure which, it was claimed, was not wanted by the proposed beneficiaries, that a referendum ought to be held to decide the issue; thirdly, as a result of the extension of the suffrage to women there would be a greater proportionate increase

4. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
DORA MONTEFIORÉ

Recording Secretary of the W.S.L. of N.S.W., on the second May 1891 to December 1891.

From: Dora B. Montefiore, From a Victorian to a Modern, London: 1927, Frontispiece

It has been accepted, rightly or wrongly, that every person has a right to a vote. The claim to vote depends upon a natural right. If that doctrine is accepted, it logically follows that we cannot refuse women the right to vote if we give the right to men. If it depends upon any other than a natural right, the objection against giving women the
in the number of city voters to country voters and as a consequence the number of country representatives in the Legislative Assembly would decrease; fourthly, proposals to extend the suffrage to women excluded them - in two cases implicitly and in three cases explicitly - from membership of the Parliament which, opponents contended, was illogical, an insult, and an undesirable precedent; finally, supporters of women's suffrage urged its adoption once it became clear that a uniform federal franchise was well-nigh inevitable, because, they claimed, it would be ridiculous to permit women to vote in federal elections while debarring them from the ballot box in state elections.

No attempt will be made to state all the various arguments for and against women's suffrage because they are too numerous, most persons involved in the debate having produced their own variant of a number of basic themes. Further, although an effort has been made below to present the arguments in an ordered form, it would be misleading to suppose that those using them presented their cases in favour of or against women's suffrage in an ordered fashion. In most cases they did no such thing and the order below has been imposed.

Finally, while admitting that most of the arguments for and against women's suffrage were derived largely from British and United States sources it will be, with a few exceptions, N.S.W. sources that will be used below to provide an outline of the proponents and the opponents cases.

I

Natural Rights

In the debate in the Legislative Council on the second reading of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900), the Attorney-General, the Hon. B.R. Wise, reluctantly and not very eloquently commended the Bill to the House in the following terms:

It has been accepted, rightly or wrongly, that every person has a right to a vote. The claim to vote depends upon a natural right. If that doctrine is accepted, it logically follows that we cannot refuse women the right to vote if we give the right to men. If it depends upon any other than a natural right, the objection against giving women the
franchise may be valid. Accepting the basic principle which prevails here as giving the right to vote - that is to say, admitting that the suffrage depends upon a natural innate right - and that appears to be the prevalent and accepted political doctrine in this colony - logically we cannot refuse a vote to a woman, because she has exactly the same right to vote that a man has, if it depends upon a natural right at all.\[^5\]

In 1891, Arthur Rae, M.L.A. for Murrumbidgee also claimed to base his case in favour of women's suffrage on the principle of natural right:

I have one principal reason for supporting this proposal, and that is whether woman has the privilege of voting or not, she has an inherent right to vote as much as man has. I take my stand on the principle enunciated by the Secretary for Public Works [the Hon. Bruce Smith] - that the right of every man to have a vote in the election of legislators is claimed on the grounds that he is a human being, and that flesh and blood has a right to be represented in the legislature of the country.\[^6\]

The Rev. Joseph Coles Kirby believed that women's exclusion from the ballot-box was a denial of a God-given right; a repercussion of the Fall of Man:

The Bible teaches that the woman was made by her Heavenly Father in order that she might be the absolute equal of the man, and that whatsoever subjection of women to men there has been in the course of human history . . . has come about through Satan and sin.\[^7\]

Kirby went on to claim that:

Earth is a kingdom entrusted \(^{[by~God]}\) to the co-equal and joint dominion and responsibility of the man and the woman.\[^8\]

There can be little doubt that most of those who argued in favour of women's suffrage in N.S.W. usually based their case, if not explicitly at least implicitly, on the contention that women's claim to the vote rested ultimately on a "natural innate right"; on their "abstract right as members of the human family."

However, the argument in favour of women's suffrage based on natural rights never appears to have been thoroughly developed and those who used it did not do so to the exclusion of other

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7. Rev. Joseph Coles Kirby, Woman: A Queen Regnant, a sermon preached in Bourke Street Congregational Church, Sydney, on August 14th, 1898, Sydney, 1898, p. 2, in Rose Scott, Papers, M.L.
8. Ibid., p. 3.
arguments.

The opponents of women's suffrage sometimes partly rested their case in denying the validity of such natural rights arguments. In an editorial in January 1891 the Herald, while not denying the abstract existence of natural rights, claimed:

It would be a grave mistake to suppose that this [women's suffrage] is a question to be decided on the grounds of rights alone . . . In the artificial conditions of civilised society rights have to be defined and recognised by the law, which is theoretically framed in the interest of the community as a whole. The rights of existing electors are rights conferred by the law within defined limits. They were conferred, and are limited, in the interest of the community. If that interest required their further limitation, the power that made the law could alter it. If the franchise were widened by the inclusion of another class of electors, it would be because the law-making power considered that the interests of the community would be served thereby.9

Thomas Rost, M.L.A. for Argyle, expressed a somewhat similar idea when he spoke in opposition to the second reading of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900):

On this principle of abstract justice I am not aware that the vote is a natural right. . . . It is only a political right. What we mean by a natural right is, that everyone in the community has a right to have full freedom, to have liberty, or have protection under the laws of the land. When you come to political rights, you introduce altogether a different principle. . . . I insist that the right of women to vote is not a natural right, the claim must be based on political expediency.10

Likewise, P.J. Gandon, secretary of the N.S.W. Anti-Female-Suffrage League, found the notion of the suffrage as a natural right unsatisfactory and echoed Rose's sentiments to a certain extent. Gandon, however, went further. He used the common argument that the vote was a "duty imposed upon" men rather than a right:

There is no such thing as an inherent natural right of an individual to vote. The right to say who may or who may not vote must always remain with the State, and must be exercised with reference to the interest, not of an individual, but of the State. In no proper or exact sense is the suffrage a right at all, or even a privilege. It is a duty imposed upon the male citizen, because it is believed

9. S.M.H., 17 January 1891. See also S.M.H., 23 September 1891, 24 November 1900.
that its exercise by him will be for the best interest of
the whole community.11

The claim made by women that they ought to be conceded
the right to participate equally with men in government implies a
denial of any claim that women are debarred by divine fiat (or,
of course, natural law) from so doing. Patrick Crick, M.L.A.
for West Macquarie, clearly appears to have believed that divine
decree debarred women from participating equally with men in
government:

We must recognise the fact that women are women, and that,
from the peculiarity of their sex, they are unfitted by
nature - by the decree of the Divine Being - to take the
position and stand side by side with men.12

Three years later, when again addressing the Legislative Assembly
on the subject of women's suffrage, Crick claimed that the
proposal

ruthlessly destroys - . . . that very subordination of wife
to the husband which the gospel, . . . inculcates.13

A. Hutchinson, M.L.A. for Glen Innes told the Legislative Assembly in 1891 that he believed

in the fact related in Genesis, namely, that there was a
creation, that man was created, and that in the divine order
of things, and under the economy of God, men is not only her
head, but is also the protector of and provider for women;
. . . .14

Nine years later T. Rose, when addressing the Legislative Assembly expressed his apparent conviction, in true pre-Darwinian
fashion, that, but for "that fateful rib" women would not even exist.15 All three "hon. members" would have agreed with the
Hon. W. Walker who drew the attention of the Legislative Council
to the Pauline injunctions in Ephesians, Chapter 5, Verses 22 to
25 and who expressed himself at a loss to know "how professing
Christians can oppose the teachings of St. Paul."16

It is impossible to estimate how widespread was the
sympathy for views that were the same as or similar to those
enunciated by Crick, Hutchinson, Rose, and Walker. However, the

11. S.M.H., 20 November 1900.
15. Ibid., Vol. CVII, p. 5299.
by "'S" in Woman's Voice, 17 November 1894 and by
P.J. Gandon in S.M.H., 24 September 1900.
meaning of Holy Writ is often far from clear and for those women who may have wanted to "adopt" the women's suffrage cause but felt that they would be disobeying a divine injunction were they to do so there was available an ample supply of printed material purporting to show that those arguments against women's suffrage which claimed to be based on Holy Writ had no foundation. There appears to be more than a grain of truth in the attack made on Crick in the Legislative Assembly in 1894 by Dr. L.T. Hollis, M.L.A. for Goulburn:

The hon. member [Crick], beaten back on every ground of right, and upon every ground of expediency, like many another alarmed and ignorant conservative of past times, fell back upon that last resort of cowardice - that his reform was against the law of God and against the experience of centuries.\textsuperscript{17}

Justice

Speaking in the House of Commons in 1867 during the debate on his proposed women's suffrage amendment to the Representation of the People Bill, J.S. Mill said:

"It is not just to make distinctions, in rights and privileges, between one of Her Majesty's subjects and another, unless for a positive reason ... I do not mean that the suffrage, or any other political function, is an abstract right, or that to withhold it from any one, on sufficient grounds of expediency, is a personal wrong; it is an utter misunderstanding of the principle I maintain to confound this with it; my whole argument is one of expediency. But all expediencies are not on exactly the same level. There is a kind of expediency which is called justice; and justice, though it does not necessarily demand that we should bestow political rights on every one, does demand that we should not capriciously and without cause give those rights to one, and withhold them from another."\textsuperscript{19}

The advocates of women's suffrage in N.S.W. certainly regarded the exclusion of women from the political suffrage as unjust because it was withheld from them "capriciously and without cause." The Hon. W. Robson, speaking in the Legislative

\textsuperscript{17} See for example E.J. Ward, Womanhood Suffrage from a Christian Standpoint, Sydney (c. 1899); Kirby, Woman: A Queen Regnant, in Rose Scott, Papers; S.M.H., 27 September 1900; Rev. C.C. Harrah, "Jesus Christ the Emancipator of Women", Woman Suffrage Leaflet, Vol. I, No. 8, 15 November 1888, in Fischer, Woman Suffrage; Rev. J.W. Bashford, "The Bible for Woman Suffrage", Woman Suffrage Leaflet, Vol. II, No. 29, 1 October 1889, in Fischer, Woman Suffrage.

\textsuperscript{18} N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. LXXII, p. 490.

Council in 1901, clearly believed this to be the case:

I submit that all the reasons that justify the granting of the franchise to men demand its extension to women. 20

P.E. Quinn, M.L.A. for Sydney (Bligh Division) expressed similar sentiments during a debate in the previous year:

The arguments used against the measure [Women's Franchise Bill (1900)] are precisely those which were used against the extension of the franchise to men on the basis of manhood suffrage, and, in England, against the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourers. 21

Opponents of the cause on the other hand, while often arguing that "expediency" should determine whether or not the suffrage should be extended to women, would not have agreed with Mill that "capriciousness" was the basis of their exclusion. For opponents like Miss Edith A. Badham, Thomas Rose, P.J. Gandon, J. Haynes and C.A. Lee women were excluded from the ballot-box—and ought to remain so—with good cause, because: by divine law they were inferior to men; women were quite adequately represented by their fathers, husbands, and brothers; women did not want the suffrage and if they were conceded the right the best women would not take advantage of it; women were intellectually inferior to men; most women lacked the educational background and the experience to cast an independent, intelligent vote; women would promote, by their vote, the advance of socialism, the power of the clergy, and the power of the 'temperance' cause; women did not undertake the same duties as men; the home life of the nation would be placed in jeopardy if women were given the suffrage.

For most, and probably all, of the supporters of the women's suffrage cause in N.S.W., the clearest indication of the fact that women were "capriciously" excluded from the suffrage was that both men and women were subject equally to the laws of the land and yet women were not permitted to have a voice in making those laws while men were. Sir Henry Parkes expressed this view in the Legislative Assembly during the 1891 debate on his women's suffrage resolution:

In the first place, women are one half of the human family; they are responsible beings just in the same way as are the other half. In all civilised countries they necessarily are brought under the operation of the whole of the laws of

the country. If they offend in any particular, they are answerable for their offence in the manner in which men are answerable, ... It seems, then, ... that women have an absolute right to a voice in the making of our laws; ... 22

The Hon. T.M. Slattery made a similar observation in the Legislative Council in 1900:

I would put this question to hon. members: is not every woman in this community bound by every law that is made in the country, the same as every man is; and if she is bound by every law on what grounds of logic can you deprive her of the right of stating who her representatives shall be in the public life of the country to make the laws?23

"Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed" - women are governed" said one pamphlet supporting the cause.24

The claim that the suffrage should be extended to women because they, with men, were equally subject to the laws of the land was probably the most used argument and the strongest argument available to the supporters of reform, and the opponents rarely made attempts to challenge the justice of the claim.25

Use of the argument implied several things: that the government of N.S.W. was not truly democratic because it was not fully representative; that the interests of men and women could not be adequately represented at the ballot-box by men; that whether or not women needed the vote, wanted the vote, or would use the vote are immaterial considerations in deciding whether or not women should be conceded the vote; that femininity was not an adequate basis on which to exclude women from the suffrage; that how women would use the suffrage if and when it was conceded was irrelevant to any argument in favour of or against the extension of the suffrage. Each of these implications is discussed below.

Democratic representation

The denial of the right to vote was, according to supporters of women's suffrage, a denial that the participation of women in government was "an essential factor in the full and

22. Ibid., Vol. LII, p. 482.
25. These attempts were infrequent and appear to have had little appeal. See for example N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CVIII, p. 5471; Edith A Badham, "Women and Womanhood Suffrage", Australian Economist, Vol. IV, No. 14, 23 April 1895, p. 480.
free expression of the popular will." To Dowell O'Reilly, M.L.A. for Parramatta, speaking during the 1894 debate on his women's suffrage resolution,

This young Parliament, fresh sprung from the very heart and life-blood of the people, will by indorsing [sic] this resolution set the seal of sincerity upon its democratic professions. I find that the exact definition of democracy is a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people collectively.

To argue otherwise would have been to argue that women were not people. E.W. O'Sullivan, M.L.A. for Queanbeyan and Secretary for Public Works, drew attention to this during the debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1900):

If democracy means anything at all it means the rule of the people, and the people do not consist only of one gender. The people consist of both men and women, and we never can have a true and sound democracy until the whole of the people have a right to vote.

Without women's suffrage, N.S.W. was simply a "piebald democracy" according to O'Sullivan.

Claims that the government of N.S.W. was not a true democracy were clearly based on the assumption that a truly democratic government must represent the whole people. To Rose Scott, the fact that in N.S.W. women were not represented through the ballot-box meant that they were not free:

The word "Franchise" means liberty, freedom! To be unenfranchised is to be unfree and means to be one of a people who are not self governing. A Free Nation is a Nation in which the People govern themselves as opposed to a nation in which the People are governed by others. In New South Wales men were free, but women were not, for they were wholly governed by men.

and Axel Gustafson expressed a somewhat similar idea when he claimed that:

Under representative government the ballot is the freeman's deed of independence, his weapon against tyranny and injustice.

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27. Ibid.
The assertion that, because men and women were equally subject to the laws, women ought to be given the suffrage on the same basis as that on which it had been conceded to men and the claims of O'Reilly, O'Sullivan, Rose Scott and Gustafson imply a rejection by the supporters of women's suffrage of statements such as those made by David Buchanan who, in a letter to the Herald, claimed that "women, at present, are well represented by their fathers, husbands, and brothers,"32 and J. Haynes, M.L.A. for Mudgee and later for Wellington, when speaking during the debate on Sir Henry Parkes' women's suffrage resolution of 1891, maintained

that in every conceivable way the women of the country are represented by the men... Men have no individuality apart from their wives.35

Indeed, according to Haynes' reading of history,

when the franchise was asked for in England, it was asked for men who represented individualities, and they were really the individualities of women.34

The question of the representation of unmarried women and widows presented Haynes with no problems. He dismissed spinsterhood as an "unnatural condition" and went on to assert that in "nine cases out of ten single women are still regarded as part of a family and are thus represented by the male members of the household.35 "Is not the household a political unit?" he asked, during the debate on women's suffrage in 1894.36

Time and again the supporters of the women's cause emphatically denied that women could be represented in a legislature elected solely by men; time and again they rejected the notion that a man with his one vote could represent his wife, his daughter, his sister or his sister-in-law. To Arthur Rae, speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1891,

the argument that a woman as a rule has a male relative who votes for her and who represents her views is an argument that will not bear looking into. Suppose a man has a wife and half a dozen daughters and perhaps a sister residing with him. That man can exercise only one vote representing

32. S.M.H., 17 January 1888.
34. Ibid., p. 512.
35. Ibid., Vol. LXXII, p. 469. See also Ibid., Vol. LII, p. 514.
36. Ibid., Vol. LXXII, p. 469.
the opinions of eight women, whereas a single man, would also have one vote representing only his own views.  

Rose Scott claimed:

Women have never been consulted, no one pretends that they have! It is an arrogant assumption on the part of certain men that they represent women!!

The rejection of the notion that the interests of women can be adequately represented by men is indicative of "the development of political thought away from the idea of the representation of interests and towards individual rights," a development which, according to Rover, "was necessary before women could hope to have the vote."

To many women, the fact that they were denied representation which was "easily obtainable" by aliens, ex-criminals, "the very blackfellows of N.S.W.," the drunkard, the gambler, the libertine, the larrikin, "the land jobber and the speculator" and the loafer, and were thereby classed with "criminals, who have been convicted, idiots who have been discovered," was an affront that they felt very deeply.

Moreover, women were required to pay, "directly or indirectly," taxation. All supporters of the cause would have agreed with E.W. O'Sullivan when, echoing the words of the American colonial revolutionaries, he told the Legislative Assembly that "as taxation without representation is tyranny I say it is tyrannical to object to give women the right to vote."

The situation appeared even more illogical, at least to some women of property, since they had the right to vote in municipal elections and yet were denied the right to vote in parliamentary elections even after 1898 when G.H. Reed's administration had the Land Tax Act

37. Ibid., Vol. LII, p. 518.
40. Rose Scott to members of the Legislative Assembly of N.S.W., 4 December 1899, [Circular letter] Rose Scott Papers, Item 14.
43. Ibid., p. 684.
44. Ibid., First Series, Vol. LII, p. 533.
passed by Parliament. Some opponents of women's suffrage sought to deny claims to the suffrage which were based on the argument that women paid taxes. C.A. Lee informed the Legislative Assembly in 1900 that:

I have yet to learn that the women of this country are the taxpayers. As a body they never will be taxpayers, though in individual cases women may pay taxes.

The Hon. W. Walker was of a similar opinion when he told the Legislative Council in 1901:

They [women] neither drink nor smoke; and to pay taxation, you must either drink or smoke.

The Hon. F.B. Sutter: Then it is the drinkers and smokers who keep up the country!

The Hon. W. Walker: There are small taxes of other kinds, but they are a mere nothing. Teetotallers and members of the Salvation Army pay nothing, because they neither drink or smoke. Are we to extend the franchise to all the women in the country because a few pay taxes? ... Man was intended to rule the world, and not women.

Not satisfied with denying that women were taxpayers, Walker appears to claim that, even had they been taxpayers, they were still not "intended" to participate in government. P.J. Gandon was satisfied with nothing less than completely rejecting the idea that there was any connection between the payment of taxes and the right to vote:

Taxes are involuntary contributions levied and collected by the Government for the protection, benefit, and advancement of the entire community. They are imposed alike upon voter and non-voter, citizen and alien, children and adults, men and women. There is not, either in theory or in fact, any connection between taxation and the franchise.

To the supporters of the women's cause the cry, "No Taxation Without Representation!", invoked a well-established constitutional maxim and was thus useful in drawing attention to an alleged anomaly in the laws governing the suffrage. They did not, however, claim that the payment of tax should be the sole ground for determining the extent of the suffrage. The fact of

equal subjection, with men, to the law was, as we have already seen, the basis of their demand.

The claim that the interests of the women of N.S.W. were so well defended by an all-male Parliament elected by an all-male electorate that they simply did not need the suffrage was an argument frequently used by the opponents of women's suffrage. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1900, C.A. Lee asked:

Have the advocates of this measure proved, or attempted to prove, that the females of this community labour under a disability of any kind? . . . Does not woman enjoy equality with man under the laws of the country? Are not the laws so framed that they fall more leniently upon her than upon men? Has not the fullest consideration been given by the legislature to all questions affecting females which come before it? Then why does she want the franchise? What need is there to give her the franchise? If you cannot show that the females of this country are oppressed and down-trodden, so that it is necessary for the future happiness and good government of the country that they should be clothed with the franchise, the case fails and the question becomes one of sentiment alone.49

On the other hand the supporters of the suffrage cause did not regard the interests of women or of children as adequately represented by men. Consequently they argued that women needed the suffrage to foster those interests.

"Remember," said Rose Scott, that any extension of the Franchise, has been followed by the greater legal protection of the enfranchised class - hence our desire to obtain it for women, who (especially working women) do greatly need that legal protection.50

The apathy of women towards the suffrage issue was used by the opponents of women's suffrage. In July 1900 the Herald claimed:

In a community where the political institutions are so democratic as ours, it would be frankly impossible to refuse a serious request for womanhood suffrage made by a responsible majority of women themselves. . . . But we might at least wait until the demand is made by women themselves before adventuring on an experimental change in our electoral laws which is not asked for, . . . 51

T. Waddell, M.L.A. for Cowra, told the Legislative Assembly in 1900 that

49. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5471.  
51. S.M.H., 24 July 1900.
a moment's reflection will satisfy hon. members that the advocates of the extension of the franchise to the other sex consist of a few women about the city of Sydney. Now, in the city and suburbs there are 114,000 women. Although the Women's [sic] Suffrage League has been in existence in this city for the past seven or eight years, out of 114,000 women . . . perhaps not 1,000 have joined the league . . . If all the statements we have heard about the injustices done to women, and all the representations we hear, that they desire the franchise, be true, is it not singular that, out of 114,000 women . . . not more than 1,000 . . . have ever thought it worthwhile to join this league? 52

Indeed, such arguments contained more than a grain of truth since there was certainly no evidence that a majority of women in N.S.W. wanted the vote and from the evidence available there appears to be little doubt that the suffrage cause in N.S.W. was actively supported by only very few women and most of those lived in Sydney and its suburbs. Waddell's estimate of the membership of the W.S.L. appears to have been extremely generous to the League. However, as T. Rose said in 1891, and numerous supporters of the suffrage cause would have agreed:

One argument I have heard is that women should not have a vote because they have not asked for it. That appears to me to be a very peculiar argument for any one who champions democracy. Are we to give reforms only when they are asked for? 53

In the women's suffrage debates of 1900, 1901, and 1902 Rose took a different attitude and claimed that since very few women appeared to want the suffrage the question should be submitted to the women of N.S.W. in a referendum because that was the most democratic approach. The "They Do Not Want It" argument did not appeal to F. Cotton either. Also speaking in the 1891 debate he pertinently observed:

The arguments which have been used to-night are an exact parallel to the kind of arguments which were brought forward on many other great questions in times past. All who have read anything of the debates on the abolition of slavery remember how a disinterested individual always pointed out that all the slaves of his acquaintance preferred slavery and did not want freedom, . . . The main question as to the right of certain people to hold others in slavery was never touched. The only question at issue in the resolution is as to whether we, the male portion of the community, have a right to arrogate to ourselves the sole right of taking part in legislation. 54

Some opponents of the suffrage, not satisfied with claiming that most women were apathetic towards the question of the extension of the suffrage to their sex, went further and portrayed the suffragists as viragos or as unmarried women. J. Haynes dismissed the movement with the, patently inaccurate, claim that "those who are asking for the franchise are women who cannot get married:" and nine years later T. Waddell told the Legislative Assembly that the women's suffrage movement was only "worthy of effeminate men and masculine women." The Hon. A. Brown was even less complimentary when he described to the Legislative Council the sort of women who, he believed, supported the suffrage cause:

There is the section which I call the old Aunt Tabithas; then there is the gushing Girton girl; then there is the very-much married lady about whom the Saducees asked in the Bible; and then there is the lady who has had a husband, and who probably has driven him into a public-house or out into the streets. As a rule, the class who want the franchise are unmarried ladies, without husbands, without responsibilities, very much married ladies ... Aunt Tabithas, or gushing young girls with pince-nez who like to make a bit of a splash, and who are getting a little bit long in the tooth, ... And the Bulletin, although not opposed to women's suffrage, followed in the footsteps of many Punch cartoonists and generally portrayed women suffragists as old, unattractive, dowdily dressed and, frequently, as masculine in appearance.

Perhaps needless to say - as a correspondent of the Wagga Wagga Express discovered - generalisations such as those of Haynes, Waddell, Brown, and the Bulletin cartoonists were almost totally inaccurate and - with the possible exception of the latter - were treated by the supporters of women's suffrage with the contempt they deserved.

Some opponents expressed the view that since the suffrage was being "forced on women against their will," a great many would not use their vote when the opportunity presented itself. In addition, it was not unusual for the opponents to claim that it would be "the best women, the really womanly women," who would not care to become involved in

55. Ibid., p. 506.
56. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5510.
57. Ibid., p. 5875.
59. See for example the Bulletin, 26 July 1902, 16 August 1902, 23 August 1902, 30 August 1902.
60. *Wagga Wagga Express*, 14 June 1892.
61. S.M.H., 24 July 1900.
62. Ibid., 24 November 1900.
A Few Short Answers to Common Objections Against Woman's Suffrage.

BY THOMAS WESTWORTH HIGGINSON.

"The best women will not vote." Will they not? Then they are not truly the best women. Women who are really conscientious will shirk their duties when the time comes, depend upon it. The complaint has been, in Massachusetts, under the School Suffrage Law, that only the best women have voted. It is very hard to satisfy one's opponents.

"Bad women will vote." They may and will vote, and so will bad men. But bad women will not vote openly as bad women; for vice in women by instinct and policy, conceals itself and passes under another name. The worse women are, the more they will counterfeit virtue, when they come to vote; rely upon it.

"The most refined women will not vote." Many of the most refined women whom the land has produced, have gone as missionaries to foreign lands, taught schools for freedmen, visited the insane, entered bar-rooms to save their husbands, or tended hospitals during war. Will those same women shrink from dropping a piece of paper into a ballot box when the time comes? Refinement that takes the place of conscience is not worth much.

"It will turn women into men." Happily you cannot do that. It is because women, after all, are different from men that they deny the right of men to represent them, make laws for them, judge them in court, and spend their tax-money. If they are the same with men, they have the same rights; if they are distinct from men, they end the ballot to help make laws for themselves. Take which view you please, it comes to the same thing.

"Women are too busy to vote." Why not say, "Men are too busy to vote?" Men are apt to claim that their own day's work is harder than that of their wives.

"I should not like to hear my wife speak in a public meeting." Nor would she like to hear you, unless you said something better worth saying than most of the talk against Woman Suffrage. But you are often willing to pay other men's wives to sing in public, and if a woman may properly split her voice to sing nonsense, why not to speak sense?

"Women do not want to vote." How can you tell, till you give them the opportunity? America gave the ballot to the freedmen, because they needed it, whether they knew it or not. The more intelligent among them knew it, at any rate, and so the more intelligent women—the leading authoresses and philanthropists, for instance—know and say that they need the right of Suffrage, whatever the thoughtless and frivolous may say.

"The polls are not decent places for women." No place is decent from which women are excluded. Women do not refuse to travel by rail, because the smoking-car is apt to be a dirty place. They rightly demand that some other car shall be put on which shall be clean. It will be the same in politics. So soon as School Suffrage for women became the law, in Massachusetts, the Legislature passed, almost without opposition, a statute to prohibit smoking and drinking at all voting places.

A.W.C.T.U. OF N.S.W. FRANCHISE DEPARTMENT
SUFFRAGE PAMPHLET. P. 1

OPINIONS OF EMINENT PEOPLE ON WOMAN’S SUFFRAGE.

"I think women are bound to seek the suffrage as a very great means of doing good."—Frances Power Corbet.

"Woman's suffrage is undoubtedly coming, and I for one expect a great deal of good to result from it."—Henry Ward Beecher.

"We need the participation of women in the ballot-box. It is idle to fear that she will meet with disrespect or insults at the polls. Let her walk up firmly and modestly to deposit her vote, and if any one ventures to molest her, the crowd will swallow him up as the whale did Jonah."—Henry Ward Beecher.

"I leave it to others to speak of suffrage as a right or a privilege; I speak of it as a duty. What right have you women to leave all this work of caring for the country with men? Is it not your country as well as theirs? Are not your children to live in it after you are gone? And are you not bound to contribute whatever faculty God has given you to make it and keep it a pure, safe and happy land?"—James Freeman Clarke.

"One principle cause of the failure of so many magnificent schemes, social, political, religious, which have followed each other age after age, has been this: that in almost every case they have ignored the rights and powers of one-half the human race—viz., women. I believe that politics will not go right, that society will not go right, that religion will not go right, that nothing human will ever go right, except in so far as woman goes right; and to make woman go right she must be put in her place, and she must have her rights."—Charles Kingsley.

"I go for sharing the privileges of the government among all who assist in bearing its burdens, by no means excluding women."—Abraham Lincoln.

"Always do the things to which your enemy (the politician) particularly objects."—Alice Stone Blackwell.

"You may talk of "one man one vote," but if you really want a substantial reform it would be a wise maxim to say "one woman two votes," for you may depend upon it she would give her vote, on the average, more wisely than a man. I believe firmly that a woman's vote would very seldom be given under the influence of intoxicating drink. In the highest kind of courage, patient endurance under insuperable wrong—they surpass men. I will give every support possible to the cause, for women are entitled, with their fathers and brothers, to vote in electing men to make the laws of the country."—S. Henry Parke.

"It is a great wrong that woman should suffer from the result of the sale of strong drink, and yet be left powerless, with her hands tied, to help herself and her family. Women should be free to decide the policy of the government under which they must live. Men say a great deal about woman's sphere, but until men cease to appeal from women at the theatre or opera, such sentiments as they would not have women utter anywhere, and until they cease to praise and encourage such modes of dress at concerts, balls, and in fashionable social life, as they would not see all women wear at home, they have no right to say one word about what woman's sphere shall be, they are not the best judges of woman's place and power."—Lady Henry Somerville.

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A W.C.T.U. OF N.S.W. FRANCHISE DEPARTMENT
SUFFRAGE PAMPHLET, P. 4

political affairs. The Hon. J.M. Creed told the Legislative Council in 1901:

What I have a doubt about is, that perhaps a large proportion of the women, . . . will not exercise their right to vote. The better stamp of women, probably those of the highest intelligence, of the greatest refinement, and the greatest sense of responsibility, will shirk the duty of going to the poll, more than those having less refinement and less intelligence, and who are less likely to exercise the vote for the advancement of the country.63

J.C.L. Fitzpatrick, M.L.A. for Rylstone, appeared to be of the opinion that, the belief that women should be debarred from the ballot-box because a great many of them may not exercise the vote was not very convincing in view of the record of male voters:

A large portion of the men have not taken a keen interest in politics. I question if it would be possible for any of the women of New South Wales to display less interest in political matters . . .64

and by September 1901 the Herald had clearly reached the conclusion that there was no real danger involved, should women be conceded the vote and not use it:

It may be that women will think so lightly of their enfranchisement that they will spare themselves the trouble of recording their votes. In this respect they will merely follow the example of men. Here, too, it may be observed that if women are prone to disregard their privileges as voters, one of the main objections to the granting of adult suffrage falls to the ground. There can be little danger in extending the suffrage to people who will not exercise it.65

A view clearly not shared by Edith Badham who prophesied that, with their domestic and maternal duties, made even more arduous in Australia by climatic conditions, married women would have little or no opportunity to involve themselves in politics and hence, with the introduction of women's suffrage,

it would practically come to pass that Australian matrons would obey the laws which the maids, young and old, helped to make for them; that is to say, that the more useful and important part of the female community would be subordinated to the more useless and unimportant.66

64. Ibid., First Series, Vol. CVIII, p. 5474.
65. S.M.H., 12 September 1901.
Fitness to exercise the franchise

One of the dangers of the reform urged by its opponents was that women were generally intellectually inferior to men. Rose Scott, replying to a talk given by Edith Badham to the Australian Economic Association, 67 in which Miss Badham had claimed in a lengthy argument, that women were intellectually inferior to men and thereby justly debarred from the exercise of a vote, asserted:

Supposing that women have no genius, no originality, and never will have any, what has this to do with woman suffrage and the ability to record a vote? Absolutely nothing. The vote is not given to men on an intellectual basis. Men and men are not intellectual equals. The stupidest fool, if he is a man, has a vote, and the most intellectual woman has none! ... the aborigines have the power to vote - not on an intellectual basis, or because they can climb trees, or may have had the creative power to invent the boomerang. The vote is given to them because they are human beings with an interest in their country and its laws. And on the same principle, is there any logical reason for depriving the women of a country of the same privilege? 68

As a rule, however, those opposing women's suffrage, particularly members of Parliament, were prepared to admit that "the question of female mental capacity does not enter into the discussion" 69 and they would have agreed with S.W. Moore, M.L.A. for Bingara, when he told the Legislative Council in 1901:

I do not oppose this motion on any ground of want of intelligence on the part of women. I am quite prepared to admit that there are many thousands of women who have more intelligence, and who are more worthy in every way to exercise the franchise than thousands of men. 70

In 1900 C.A. Lee, M.L.A. for Tenterfield, expressed his doubts in the Legislative Assembly as to whether women, if conceded the franchise, would be

in a position to form a correct opinion upon the great subjects of legislation in this country, such as the land laws, the mining laws, water conservation, and matters of that kind? 71

71. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5471.
Lee was not claiming that women were less intelligent than men - in fact he claimed that men and women were of equal "mental capacity" - but rather that their lack of involvement in politics hitherto and their lack of interest in politics was one of a number of factors that would make them unsuitable voters. The same notion appealed to W. Affleck, M.L.A. for Yass, but he was not prepared to say that the time will not come when they will have a right to it [the suffrage]; but my opinion is that they are not, at the present moment, sufficiently educated up to it.

In an editorial in July 1900 the Herald dealt with the argument that women were educationally unfit to exercise the suffrage:

It was always argued in the old days that manhood suffrage must be a mistake, because the great bulk of the newly enfranchised would be uneducated and untrained to the use of the electoral privilege. There was an obvious truth in this reasoning, and there was only one way of meeting it. The late Lord Sherbrooke recognised it when he said, "We must educate our masters." ... the only way to educate the new voters to a due sense of the value of the franchise was to give them opportunity for the exercise of that privilege. ... So far as these objections to womanhood suffrage are concerned which base themselves on the unfitness of women to vote, they are answerable in the same way. Fitness comes with exercise, ...

W.W. Young, M.L.A. for Bathurst, also believed the vote to be a valuable educative agency and would undoubtedly have endorsed the Herald's claim that "Fitness comes with exercise":

Women should be induced to leave these useless, idle, time-wasting things, novels; and when we give them a vote I hope and believe that will be one of the results. From what I understand, they only require the opportunity, and will turn their attention to works of a solid character. Instead of reading rubbish, in the shape of novels, they will turn their attention to Hansard, and, probably, Macaulay, Carlyle, or authors of that kind.

"Fitness" may have come with the exercise of the ballot, but the hon. member for Bathurst's optimistic predictions have, on the whole, remained unfilled.

In its editorial of 24 July 1900, quoted above, the Herald expressed other fears of the opponents of women's suffrage:

Experience may tell us that women, by their tastes and habits of thought, their subjection to emotional and

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72. Ibid., p. 5470.
73. Ibid., p. 5473.
74. Ibid., Vol. LXXII, p. 489.
75. S.M.H., 24 July 1900.
personal influences, their absorption in an altogether different set of interests, would not be likely to lend much weight to the councils of the country by taking part in the election of members of Parliament. A lack of acquaintance with the ways of the world and the practicalities of life may and does predispose some women to fall under the influence of men whose fellows would have no hesitation at once in denouncing them as charlatans or fanatics. The same risk applies to men in politics though not to the same extent.77

The Herald had expressed similar views in an editorial in 1891 in which it claimed that, because women were so susceptible to the influence of others, in the event of the suffrage being extended to them the polls would not make the elections a more accurate representation of the intelligent argument of the country, but would rather tend to give increased power to the agencies and organisations which even now strive to succeed, and sometimes do succeed, by the control of the gregarious vote.

... Would it [women's suffrage] promote independent voting or would it strengthen the influence of societies, and organisations, churches, and priests? In other words, would it tend to remove the political centre of gravity, and to destroy the balance of political power; ...78

David Buchanan, in a letter to the Herald, believed that "the one tangible result" of the extension of the suffrage to women would be "to double the strength of a certain vote, which would immediately be directed to the subversion of our Public school law," - an unmistakable reference to a fear of the possible growth in the political power of the Roman Church should women be given access to the ballot-box.79 J. Hurley, M.L.A. for Hartley, suspected that because "a greater number of women attended the chapels and churches than men," Parliament would, by extending the suffrage to women, be placing a large section of the voters under the domination of the priests and parsons of the country, ... and we know that the clergy exercise a greater influence over the women than over the stronger sex.80

Hurley's belief was also shared by at least two members of the Legislative Council, the Hon. Jago Smith81 and the Hon. W.R. Campbell82 Generally, however, the fear of the possible influence of the clergy over women, should they be conceded the suffrage, does not appear to have been very widespread. Perhaps

77. S.M.H., 24 July 1900.
78. S.M.H., 17 January 1891.
79. Ibid., 17 January 1888.
82. Ibid., p. 1362.
this is not surprising in a country in which, according to John Barrett, "the ... Churches have never been able to claim the dedicated allegiance of more than a minority of the people." No. is it surprising that the more extreme anti-Roman Catholic Anglicans and Protestants did not attempt to fan the not very extensive religious hostility that there was by opposing women's suffrage on the grounds that the Roman Church would use its influence over its women adherents to reap political benefits. After all, many Anglican priests and Protestant ministers and the lay leaders of the, "overwhelmingly Protestant," 'temperance' societies had every intention of using whatever influence they possessed over their women adherents to achieve political ends.

The churches were not the only groups whose possible influence was feared by the opponents of women's suffrage, should the vote be extended to women. We have already noted that P.J. Gandon saw the women's suffrage movement as a "socialistic, class, and Labour party movement." Edith Badham, however, went even further and claimed that there was something in Socialism which appeals to one of the highest instincts of a woman's nature: I mean the desire to help the weak and suffering, which is, I suppose, an offshoot of the maternal instinct. Lest her listeners were in any doubt she then proceeded to define socialism as "nothing but a gigantic scheme of State interference with people's private affairs," and then informed them, not surprisingly in view of her claims about the appeal of socialism "to one of the highest instincts of a woman's nature", that:

already labour leagues are pledging themselves to support female suffrage. They would scarcely do so if they did not expect that the majority of women's votes would be secured to what they fondly consider the cause of labour.

An expectation Edith Badham clearly shared and viewed with abhorrence. Captain Hynes, speaking at a meeting of the Australian Economic Association at which Edith Badham's and Rose Scott's talks were being discussed, also appeared to regard the exclusion of women from the suffrage as justified because of the movements association with socialism:

85. Ibid.
86. Ibid., p. 483.
This woman's suffrage movement is root and branch a part and parcel of socialism in its most pernicious form, viz., the equalisation of the classes and sexes. ... And I may say that the impressions I received from reading newspaper reports of speeches delivered in the early stages of this woman's suffrage movement in Sydney, were, that it received its greatest support from the leaders of socialists and labour demagogues.87

The oft-proclaimed belief of 'temperance' advocates that women's experience of the detrimental effects of alcohol and of the operations of the liquor trade would make them valuable allies of the various 'temperance' bodies in their fight for prohibition, was not calculated to endear the liquor trade to the woman's suffrage movement. In December 1895 a meeting of the Newcastle branch of the United Licensed Victualler's Association carried a motion against the extension of suffrage to women88 and in February of the following year the annual meeting of the Association was also of the opinion that women's suffrage represented a threat to the liquor interests and "a motion was carried unanimously against granting the suffrage to women."89

F.E. Bevill, Secretary of the United Licensed Victualler's Association of N.S.W. published a pamphlet in 1896 in which he claimed "that the [women's] suffrage campaign was simply a mask for temperance intrigues designed

'to root out of public life a class of men which comprises some of the ablest politicians."90

The Association did not, however, organise a systematic campaign in opposition to the extension of the suffrage to women.

The women's suffrage movement in N.S.W., though clearly, in part, firmly linked to the 'temperance' cause, does not appear to have been hindered significantly by its association with groups which supported women's suffrage as a means to the fulfilment of their appointed ends. However, had the granting of women's suffrage in New Zealand and/or South Australia led, for example, to the clear victory of the 'temperance' cause it is probably not unreasonable to suggest that the suffrage movement

88. S.M.H., 17 December 1895. See also S.M.H., 25 December 1895.
89. S.M.H., 15 February 1896.
90. A Citizen (pseud. F.E. Bevill), Woman Suffrage, Sydney, 1896, cited by MacKenzie, Women in Australia, pp. 41-42. The copy of Bevill's pamphlet is missing from the M.L.
in N.S.W. would have assumed a rather different character.

Thomas Rose believed that the female sex was justly excluded from the suffrage because they did not perform, except in rare circumstances, certain duties - "the chief responsibilities of the state" or "primary obligations" as Rose called them - (traditionally) undertaken by men. Rose referred to this as "the physical side of the question" although the argument does not appear to have degenerated into the simple assertion that "might is right" although this was perhaps implied. In the debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1901) Rose told the Assembly:

There are very good reasons why the right to vote has been restricted to manhood. One good reason is that a man takes upon himself responsibilities in conducting the affairs of the state which a woman does not take upon herself. A man can be called upon to fight for the state, or to carry out the punishment of the law, or to act as a special constable; he is sailor, pioneer, cultivator, and physical labourer. ... In return for the discharge of those primary obligations the men have the right to vote, whereas the women have not.

The argument does not appear to have been extensively used. It was open to several objections, the most obvious being that the suffrage was given to all men, not simply to those who were physically capable of, or who were not excluded by occupation from undertaking the "primary obligations" and, further, by what reasoning were tasks biologically and traditionally the responsibility of women not included among the "primary obligations"?

The consequences of granting the suffrage: (a) Family life; femininity

To some supporters of women's suffrage a woman's legitimate sphere was indeed the home but they rejected arguments which contended that, as a result of being given the vote, women would neglect their domestic duties:

Now the general rule is, that men do not devote ... one half-hour in a month - to political work. Elections are

92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
96. The Franchise for Women, in Fischer, Woman Suffrage.
not everyday occurrences. ... When an election does occur, it then becomes the duty of the elector to walk an ordinary distance to the booth, record his vote, and return to his occupation. Such an expenditure of time, in addition to the average half-hour per month, could hardly interfere seriously with the home duties of the fair sex.97

J.H. Young, M.L.A. for the Manning and Minister for Public Works was rather more blunt in 1894 when he asserted:

I have no sympathy with those who say that because woman's home is her proper place, therefore she should not take part in the politics of the country. Women may just as well retort that since the proper place for a man is at his office, looking after his business, he should not take part in politics; ... 98

To J. Haynes, who with T. Rose made the most impassioned parliamentary speeches against women's suffrage, the proposal to admit women as electors was contrary to the whole conception of marriage. "The franchise," claimed Haynes, cannot be extended to women without the destruction of the marriage tie. Those men who have gone through the fatal formula of marriage know very well that in the marriage ceremony there is an absolute surrender of individuality on the part of the woman.99

Patrick Crick was of a similar opinion for he claimed that the extension of the suffrage would bring into the household that state of things which says to the wife that she can lawfully, legally, and rightfully debate with her husband on matters ... affecting the position which each shall hold in society and in the politics of the country, ... and so destroy that very subordination of wife to the husband which the gospel, ... inculcates.100

While few of the opponents of women's suffrage expressed views on the nature of marriage similar to those of Haynes and Crick an overwhelming majority of them believed that women had a sphere - either socially appointed or divinely ordained - which would suffer neglect were they given the suffrage. A.D. Nelson, M.L.A. for Sydney (Flinders Division), declared in the Legislative Assembly in 1900 that

100. Ibid., Vol. LXXII, p. 485.
a woman's place is in her home to guide and govern her children, to rear her children in such an atmosphere that when they come to mature age they will be useful members of society. I fail to see how it would be possible by giving a woman a vote to confer a benefit upon her, her husband, or her children.101

Crick enunciated, rather more forcefully, a similar view:

Woman, by the very fact of her sex, undoubtedly is intended for maternity, and her best service to the colony... is not to bother her head reading up political economy, or discussing how she shall or shall not vote. She can do a thousand times more good work by bringing up her little boys and girls in the way they should go. Nay, show me a political woman, and you show me a she-devil. Show me a political woman, and you show me the woman who neglects her little sons and daughters.102

T.H. Griffith, M.L.A. for Albury, stressed the fundamental importance of women's domestic role when, in 1900, he treated the Legislative Assembly to a poetic "quotatation":

"Though she may not in the council of the nation raise her voice, Though she may not by their ballots be proclaimed the people's choice, She can teach the little children to be brave and firm and true - True to manhood, God, and country. More than this no man can do."103

Frank Farrell, M.L.A. for Ryde, sought to show the threat the suffrage posed to women's domestic tasks by quoting the experience of Wyoming where, he claimed, women's suffrage "played such havoc" that women neglected their domestic duties to such an extent that on their marriage they were incapable of attending to those duties which legitimately belong to that condition, and that consequently it was necessary for the authorities to appoint paid lecturers to mount a rostrum, and produce a new-born baby, and teach the young ladies how it should be washed and dressed.104

The opponents of the suffrage also raised the spectre of the tranquil "domestic hearth" being shattered by political argument should women be given the suffrage. J.C. Nield, M.L.A. for Paddington believed that, should women use the vote in

101. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5546.
102. Ibid., Vol. LII, p. 524.
104. Ibid., Vol. LXXII; p. 512.
opposition to their husbands there would result "about as extensive a crop of domestic unhappiness as any man can possibly conceive," 105 J. Haynes managed to imply a similar idea somewhat more forcefully:

It [politics] is a condition of warfare in which, . . . the conflict divides families, estranges the oldest friends, and foments hatred between even brothers. 106

The fact that the ballot was secret does not appear to have been regarded as significant to Nield, Haynes and the other opponents who used a similar argument and Rose dismissed the whole idea of secrecy as being contrary to the idea of marriage. 107

Not only would women be torn from their domestic duties and possibly be estranged from their husbands, fathers, and brothers but, according to the opponents of women's suffrage, their whole dignity and innocence may have been undermined if the suffrage was extended to them. David Buchanan seemed certain that women's suffrage would inflict degradation and deterioration on woman's character by leading her into scenes of public turmoil and violent altercation, where everything coarse and discordant would grate on her ears, and where the emissaries of different factions would assail her with insolent enticements to vote as they wished. I speak, now, of women of delicacy and refinement coming to the polling booth to vote, if any power on earth could ever persuade such women to pass through such an ordeal, but who could describe the scene when some of the rougher sort of women appear upon it? . . . It would be difficult to imagine anything more calculated to destroy the innocence and simplicity of our young women than to see them [men?] arrayed against each other in violent political contention - initiated into all the tricks and coarse devices of angry political warfare, and catching up every hollow ribald party cry, while breathing the wretched atmosphere of a polling booth, and being jostled about amidst the coarse horseplay and vulgar unfeminine accompaniments of such a scene. 108

It is difficult not to believe that Buchanan's picture of N.S.W. elections was not at least a trifle exaggerated but, be that as it may, his was not "a lone voice crying in the wilderness." 109

G.W. Smailes, M.L.A. for Granville, characterised arguments like Buchanan's as "extremely offensive to men":

105. Ibid., Vol. LII, p. 509.
106. Ibid., Vol. LXXII, p. 465. See also p. 489.
That women would become degraded by commingling with men and mixing with them at the polling-booth - that they would lose their peculiar nobility and tenderness. If that statement be correct men must be radically bad, degraded, and vile; otherwise women are weaker than we generally suppose them to be. 110

Arguments defending the notion that a woman's sphere was her home and claiming that, should she enter the rough world of politics her domestic duties would be threatened with neglect, her maternal responsibilities abandoned, and her dignity and innocence undermined appear to have been based on the assumption that somehow she would be unsexed - that the home and its associated domestic duties, maternal responsibilities, and non-involvement in the 'rough and tumble' of political life were an essential part of 'womanliness.' Certainly this was the implication of Teresa Wagner's claim when, expressing a conservative Roman Catholic point of view, she wrote:

It was found that it "was not good for man to be alone," therefore, he was given a helpmate like, yet unlike himself, who would "fulfil those functions which he was unable or unsuited to fulfil for himself." Woman, therefore, having been created for this purpose, was given those qualities and virtues which he had not, or in which he was deficient and the question nowadays "should not be to make woman man but to complete man by woman."

Woman's mission in the world is a noble one; in sickness and trouble all turn to her for comfort and sympathy, and it rests with her to cheer the sad, console the afflicted, and spur on the disappointed to new efforts. ... The range is so wide that it seems foolish for a woman to demand a wider, but we often find that those who agitate for what they call "Woman's Rights" are those who neglect woman's true work. 111

To the undoubted horror of his temperance listeners, A.D. Nelson told the Legislative Assembly in 1900:

Take the case of a girl who joins a temperance organisation. She goes upon the platform and speaks. Then she becomes ambitious and wishes to enter another sphere. ... Then these girls go even further. We know that when women enter into the sphere of politics, or any other sphere of that kind, they do not want to be hampered with families; they do not want children. We know what science, or some other means, is doing to-day in our midst, ... It has a great tendency to prevent the increase in population. 112

Similarly Mr. Teece, addressing the Australian Economic Association, evidently saw the true function of women as

111. Teresa Wagner, "Women's Rights" in The Austral Light, Vol. IV (New Series), No. 9, 1 September 1903.
THE FALL OF WOMAN OR. THE GARDEN OF EDEN UP-TO-DATE

THE FALL OF WOMAN

From: The Bulletin, 26 July 1902.
threatened by proposals to extend the suffrage to women:

Everything which the national or family life knows of refinement or chivalry; everything which tends to ennoble and purify life, to make men capable of great efforts or noble aspirations; every incentive to heroism comes from the unseen - sometimes unacknowledged, but no less potent influence of women. If these statements be accepted as facts, I ask these political crusaders to say why this is. I say it can only be because the sphere of women does not keep the same orbit as that of the man, because nature has assigned to her a place in the economy of life which she alone can occupy, and which she cannot vacate without a serious disturbance of that economy.113

The Hon. W.R. Campbell was very much more straight-forward than Teece. In his opinion the effect of the bill would be "to make women more masculine, and men effeminate."114

Thomas Rose, speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1891, in the one parliamentary speech in which he sympathised with the women's suffrage cause, rejected as unrealistic the notion that a woman's only proper sphere was her home:

We have to face the everyday circumstance that hundreds and thousands of women and girls leave their homes in Sydney to earn their living behind the counter; and it would be a gross insult to say they are any more masculine than the ladies who remain at home.115

Frank Cotton, M.L.A. for Newtown, appears to have been satisfied with nothing less than tearing down the whole image that frequently tended to build up around the idea of the home as a woman's sphere - the image of a woman living in domestic bliss, caring for her faithful hard-working husband, "bringing up her little boys and girls in the way they should go," living in ignorance and innocence of the 'polluted' masculine world outside the home, free from the necessity of participating in "the lowest drudgery in life - the drudgery of politics" and from exercising the suffrage "the lowest drudgery of politics,"116 ruling without the franchise and ornamenting and adorning the domestic circle - and replacing it with what he evidently considered to be a more realistic, if very much less appealing

117. Ibid., p. 1372.
I wish to offer a few remarks on that time-honoured old platitude about woman confining herself to her own sphere. Existing social conditions have long forced woman out of her sphere, and most hon. members who talk in that way know this fact as well as I do. The existing social conditions have forced women into open competition with men, into working in sweating dens, . . .

. . . That is the way in which woman under present conditions enjoys the full blessing of her own sphere. Hon. members have the hypocrisy to talk about woman being content with her own sphere, about her maternal duties, and all the rest of that humbug and claptrap. . . . she is the greatest sufferer through unjust social conditions, and therefore, as a democrat, I must vote for her having a hand in altering those conditions. 118

Cotton's claim may not be acceptable as a generalisation about the position of women in N.S.W. during the last decade of the nineteenth century but it certainly goes some of the way to challenging the unrealistic image of his opponents. In addition, Cotton was undoubtedly expressing a viewpoint that would have had the sympathy of most, if not all, of his fellow members of the Labor party.

The consequences of granting the suffrage: (b) Social

The claim that women should exercise the suffrage because they were subject to the laws equally with men also implies that it was irrelevant as to what they did with the vote once it was conceded. F. Cotton, speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1891, emphasised this point:

We are not here to discuss what they [women] are likely to do with the franchise if they get it. That does not happen to be any business of ours. 119

However, while most of the supporters of the suffrage cause would have conceded that the way in which women may or may not exercise the suffrage once it had been conceded was no ground for refusing to concede it, 120 most saw fit to speculate as to the benefits which they believed would result from the extension of the suffrage to include women, just, as we have already seen, the opponents saw fit to speculate about the possible detrimental results of admitting women to the ballot-box to justify their

119. Ibid., p. 507.
120. See for example W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Annual Report of the Fifteenth Convention . . . 1897, p. 36.
claim that the female sex was excluded with good cause. Many members of the W.S.L. joined the League, not simply as a result of a belief that the exclusion of women from the ballot-box was a denial of either innate natural rights or natural justice but, because they wanted social reform. They saw women's suffrage as a useful weapon in their fight for reform. It is not surprising, therefore, that members of the League asserted with some confidence the changes they believed would follow the adoption of women's suffrage. Likewise, had the W.C.T.U. not believed that the 'temperance' cause would be aided by the enactment of women's suffrage, it seems highly unlikely that it would have included the suffrage plank in its platform and established a clear link between part of the women's suffrage movement and the 'temperance' cause.

At the risk of some repetition it is worth while sketching some of the benefits that the supporters of women's suffrage believed or hoped would accompany the extension of the franchise to women. Speaking in the Legislative Council during the debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1901), the Hon. G.F. Earp claimed:

Women are more conservative than men, and that they have a restraining influence. . . . When we find that every democrat seems to be inclined to go one step further than his democrat brother, it is time we paused and considered the bearing of the thing. . . . The introduction of the female element into politics . . . will be like adding ballast to the ship.121

The Hon. Colonel J.A.K. Makay, speaking during the same debate as Earp, also regarded women as more conservative than men and was convinced that by extending the suffrage to women "a certain salutary brake will be put upon extreme socialistic legislat-ion.122 Not all those who regarded women as more conservative than men supported women's suffrage as did Earp and Makay. At a meeting of the Paddington branch of the W.S.L., a Mr. Cohen, a member of the Paddington branch of the Labor Electoral League, "expressed the opinion that the granting of the franchise to women would keep back social reform.123 Although Cohen was a member of the Labor Electoral League, Woman's Voice was able to

122. Ibid., p. 1536. See also pp. 1542-1543.
tell its readers that "it transpired that Mr. Cohen was not expressing the views of the Labor Electoral League of Paddington.\footnote{124} The whole idea that women's suffrage would tend to strengthen the position of conservative political elements was certainly not a view that would have commended itself to P.J. Gandon, Edith Badham, and Captain Hynes.

To Rose Scott the ballot conferred upon women the inestimable benefit of liberty, freedom!\footnote{124} and the right of self-government which carried with it

\begin{quote}
\textit{a voice in electing those men who are chosen to arrange all those Public affairs which so greatly affect us, to have a voice in the National Housekeeping, in taxation, the laws we live under and the just administration of those laws -} \footnote{125}
\end{quote}

The right to be represented was seen as being of very great importance because of the potential benefits that it carried with it. Maybanke Wolstenholme stressed this when she wrote:

\begin{quote}
Women ask for a vote because they know that those outside the legislative pale have always suffered, and must, while the world is selfish, continue to suffer from legislative neglect.\footnote{126}
\end{quote}

To Rose Scott and Maybanke Wolstenholme, however, the suffrage did not mean simply that women would be able to defend their interests through the ballot-box. Addressing the men in the audience at a public meeting in North Sydney during 1894, Rose Scott said:

\begin{quote}
You can never be free yourselves whilst your mothers, your sisters, and your wives are slaves!\footnote{127}
\end{quote}

Maybanke Wolstenholme saw the granting of women's suffrage as the prelude to a new era in the progress of mankind:

\begin{quote}
Hitherto, in every step of his toilsome upward progress, man has had to drag behind him the dead weight of woman who, whether pleasure-loving or ease-loving, was more inert and more obtuse, because less educated than himself. But the dawn of a better day is coming. When man and woman stand
\end{quote}

\footnotesize

124. Woman's Voice, 23 August 1894.
127. Rose Scott, Womanhood Suffrage, speech by Miss Scott given at a public meeting at North Sydney, 2 April 1894 and extracted from the \textit{North Sydney}, in Rose Scott Papers, Item 4.
together for progress, each superior in some things, each willing to acknowledge inferiority in other things, both equal in political power, the nations of the world will see such progress as past centuries have never imagined.\textsuperscript{128}

The supporters of women's suffrage clearly believed that by giving women the vote a new and different element would be introduced into N.S.W. political life that would prove of considerable benefit. The Rev. J.C. Kirby, having described government by men alone as "a grotesque, horrible, cruel failure," went on to claim that history proves that the male left to himself cannot maintain social justice, health, order, or comfort. God never made man alone responsible for all the governing, but through his depraved folly he has assumed a responsibility for which he is not equal, and refused the aid of woman, his helpmeet.\textsuperscript{129}

Mrs. William McLean claimed that woman's influence would be on the side of righteousness:

Woman's vote will be on the side of that righteousness which exalteth a nation, and will make for peace. Women have to bear the heavier burden of all the social ills which afflict our race. Let her come to the help of the State in finding a remedy for them. We think you need us. Much has been done in the way of reforms already, but very much more remains to be done.\textsuperscript{130}

Rose Scott wanted "less partyism and more patriotism",\textsuperscript{131} while Sir Henry Parkes, speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1891, asserted that if women form a part of the electoral body of this country, a large number of the higher questions to be submitted to Parliament - all questions affecting the training of children, all questions affecting the sobriety of the population, all questions affecting the care of the infirm and helpless, all questions affecting the introduction of the higher and more refined methods of social conduct - all such questions as these will have a steadier, more argumentative, and a higher moral support than they would from men.\textsuperscript{132}

The "higher questions" to which Parkes believed women would give "higher moral support" than men were, as we have already seen, questions concerning the laws and the social

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{128} "A Citizen" (Who Has No Vote), Woman Suffrage, p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Kirby, Woman. A Queen Regnant, p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Mrs. Wm. McLean, More About Womanhood Suffrage, a paper read by Mrs. Wm. McLean at the annual conference of the Victorian Alliance, on 25 August, 1891, Melbourne, n.d., p. 8, Rose Scott Papers, Item 7.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Scott, Womanhood Suffrage, Rose Scott Papers, Item 4.
\item \textsuperscript{132} N.S.W.P.D., Vol. LII, p. 483.
\end{itemize}
conditions affecting women and children. "The protection of the Home, and the relief of suffering Humanity," was the way Rose Scott once expressed it and the members of the W.C.T.U., as well as those of the W.S.L. would have heartily endorsed these words.

While the supporters of the suffrage cause drew attention to the supposed benefits to women and children that would result from the extension of the suffrage to women and supported their contentions with reference to the alleged success of women’s suffrage in Wyoming, New Zealand, and South Australia, their opponents claimed that women’s suffrage had had in those places where it had been adopted and would have in N.S.W. at best a "negative result" and initiate few, if any changes and at the worst it may prove a positive harm—a point already mentioned.

H. Macdonald, M.L.A. for Coonamble, said, when speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1894:

It appears to me that the opponents of the motion have not argued against the extension of the franchise to women, but against an imaginary result that would follow as a corollary to the extension of the franchise.

Experience was indeed to prove the worst of the opponents' fears to be "imaginary" and groundless, just as it was to prove that many of the supporters' dearest hopes were equally "imaginary" and groundless.

136. See for example N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CVII, pp. 5306-5307, 5313.
137. Ibid., First Series, Vol. LXXII, p. 503.
Having stated the arguments in favour of women's suffrage, it seems appropriate at this point, by way of conclusion, to examine some of the values and beliefs concerning the ends and means of government held by supporters of the women's suffrage cause, and some of the symbols they used to rouse support for their cause.

Values

The advocates of women's suffrage were strongly of the opinion that government had a responsibility to protect the weak and suffering members of the community. One of the reasons that women demanded the suffrage was their conviction that the weak and suffering - primarily women and children - were not being adequately protected by legislatures elected solely by men.

Rose Scott expressed this view when she wrote:

"Remember, that any extension of the Franchise, has been followed by the greater legal protection of the enfranchised class - hence our desire to obtain it for women, who (especially working women) do greatly need that legal protection."

Following the extension of the suffrage to women Rose Scott hoped that, among other things, the age of consent would be raised above fourteen years, more women factory inspectors would be appointed to "protect Women Workers," equal pay for equal work would be conceded, more police matrons would be appointed and women in hospitals, lunatic asylums and gaols would receive better treatment.

The W.C.T.U. cartoon "Just Out of Reach" also expresses the idea that the ballot in the hands of women would force government to act to protect the weak and suffering - women and children - from the evils of alcohol, seduction, gambling, and cruelty.

George Black, M.L.A. for Sydney (Gipps), believed that working women needed protection by legislative action and hence he contended that the ballot would offer them a means of improving their economic position:

"It might be just possible that if woman were given a vote she would cease to be such a cheap labourer as she is now,"

139. Ibid., p. 13.
140. See below p. 135.
that she would take some steps to be placed, not only on a political equality with man, but to some extent on an economic equality; and, if that were possible — . . . then the enfranchising of women would do something more than elevate her politically — it would also elevate her economically — . . . 141

Rose Scott rejected the notion that charity would suffice "to help the weak and suffering":

Do not let us satisfy our souls with working for charities. Charity is not Justice! We all like to obtain justice, and we all know that charity is not what we prefer to have for ourselves? Why then be so anxious to offer it to others? We who might give the bread of justice and we content ourselves with doling our [sic] cold stones of charity? 142

Perhaps not all supporters of the cause would have agreed entirely with Rose Scott’s condemnation of charity although none would have claimed that charity was a completely adequate substitute for legislative action if the weak and suffering were to be adequately protected.

Most of the supporters of women's suffrage seemed to be of the opinion that, in addition to its responsibility to protect the weak and suffering, government ought to concern itself with the moral welfare of the community. To members of the W.C.T.U., the consumption of alcohol, gambling, divorce, smoking, obscenity in literature and on the stage, defilement of the Sabbath and prostitution - to mention but a few - were not simply social problems but in themselves immoral. Hence it was that the W.C.T.U. sought legislative action not simply to protect the weak and suffering but to protect society at large from moral danger by incorporating certain moral precepts into the law. Rose Scott, it appears, was also of the opinion that government should concern itself with the moral welfare of the community:

I can imagine no more effectual way of raising the tone of Public opinion, of purifying its moral sentiments, than by importing into Public Life the women’s [sic] influence and something of that tenderness, refinement and Purity for which women are especially noted. 143

The members of the W.C.T.U. held that not only ought government concern itself with the moral welfare of its citizens but also that it ought to concern itself with the religious

143. Rose Scott, Untitled typescript with pen and pencil alterations, p. 13, Rose Scott Papers, Item 22.
welfare of its citizens. The members of the Union did not place morality and religion into separate compartments. They regarded the morality they preached as a vital part of the Christian faith and if that morality was established in the law so some of the hindrances to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth would be removed.

If the ends of government were to be fully realised, the supporters of women's suffrage were convinced that the means by which they would be realised was by the participation of all adult members of the community in the activity of government through the ballot-box. We have already noted that the women's suffrage supporters rejected the notion that the interests of women and children, the weak and the suffering could be adequately represented and were being adequately represented by men. All supporters of the women's cause would have agreed with the words of a W.C.T.U. of Western Australia suffrage pamphlet:

Those outside the legislative pale must suffer from legislative neglect, as proved by the condition of our working women, which now needs special legislation.144

And also with Rose Scott when she said:

It is often argued that a woman can be represented by her husband, father, or brother. . . . I would point out to you that women differ very widely from men - even from husbands - on such questions as intemperance, gambling, and immorality; and naturally so, as they, the women, are the chief sufferers from these vices. We object to slavery, however kindly slaves are treated, because it is wrong in principle that the destinies of one man should be confided to the keeping of another; and so it is equally unjust that the rights of one sex should be granted or withheld solely at the will and pleasure of the other sex. Unjust principles give rise to unjust laws, and women suffer as the working classes suffered in times past from this absence of political power.145

While women placed great value on direct access to the ballot-box as the means by which they could best represent their interests they were at the same time not unaware of the importance of and the value of electing the right sort of men to represent those interests in Parliament. Sarah Nolan emphasised this point in her presidential address to the 1902 state convention of the W.C.T.U. of N.S.W.:

This vote of ours should be a great help to the good men of the country. . . . We shall require good temperance men to

Item 22: Initiative in the organic.
149. Scott: Why women need a vote? p. 29, Rose Scott Papers.
146. W.C. T. U. of N. S. W. Annual Report of the 20th Convention,
1902, p. 20.

Women's influence: importance, fraud, exaltation, oppression, submission: influence from the predominance of the female
and in that department we find all the marks of absolute sway.

In the political world the man-element holds absolute sway:

Mrs. Oppara's forcing clause:

Why, except that of self-interest interfering others the
encouragement to develop this industry to any possible
extent are the goods of all? but each unit should have
its own.
Governments, each unit make of their own the goods
of nations, there is no dearth of development or self
enforcement of either a home or a nation. It is a question of how
the goods must be used. There can be no doubt. The goods of
man are man's property. If a man is a farmer, the goods of
man he farms the site and man the farm (destructor, I do not
mean economic destruction) are his. These man and woman
knows and live, and they know [her] the strongest,

The women's vote.

One cannot be justly entitled to any enjoyment unless
one can show that one is entitled to such enjoyment.

Women's vote.

Religious women.

Women's vote, in the inscription 'the sacredness of all
the goods that are the goods of all,' man is not entitled to
enforcement of his goods. We allow for the full development of
women's interests.

Speaking at a suffrage convention in Hobart in 1899 said:

"Women and man, our city and our province,
who mean the same, the same, and who mean the same.
Rose Scott was uninterested in a smaller political vote.

The woman's vote was undermined by party politics. The
woman's vote was undermined by party politics.

Rose Scott was a great bourgeois woman's vote.

The woman's vote was undermined by party politics. The
woman's vote was undermined by party politics.

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woman's vote was undermined by party politics.

Rose Scott was a great bourgeois woman's vote.
profanity, and all sorts of uproarious and belligerent conduct characterize it in every department.\textsuperscript{150}

In his sermon, \textit{Woman: A Queen Regnant}, the Rev. J.C. Kirby made clear his opposition - and that of Holy Writ - to government solely by men:

In the ideal and original order and constitution of humanity and the world, according to the Bible, we see that God never intended that men should do all governing and have all the dominion. God knew what all the histories of all the nations, countries, and generations during the past so clearly evince, that government by males only would be a grotesque, horrible, cruel failure.\textsuperscript{151}

If government under manhood suffrage was tyrannical or bad or against divine precept, the supporters of women's suffrage believed that the position would be rectified by giving women a voice in the affairs of government - and thus obtaining a balanced approach towards governing:

"As we need two eyes to get a correct perspective, so we need to have both the masculine and the feminine points of view represented in legislation in order to reach a just result."\textsuperscript{152}

Time and again the supporters of women's suffrage expressed their belief, either implicitly or explicitly, that women generally were more conscious than men of social evils and, because most supporters of the cause regarded social evils as moral evils, they therefore tended to regard women generally as having a superior moral capacity to men. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1891, E.W. O'Sullivan claimed that women possess virtue and purity, and would be more likely than man to use her vote with a desire to maintain these great virtues.\textsuperscript{153}

A W.C.T.U. of N.S.W. Franchise Department publication was rather more specific and claimed that women are more peaceable, refined, chaste, temperate, economical, humane, and law-abiding than men. These qualities will influence the character of the Government.\textsuperscript{154}

Rose Scott was undoubtedly of a similar mind when she stressed her belief that women were generally less selfish and more public spirited - more patriotic - than men:

\textsuperscript{150} Dawn, 5 April 1890.
\textsuperscript{151} Kirby, \textit{Woman: A Queen Regnant}, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{152} Why Women Want the Vote? Rose Scott Papers, Item 5.
\textsuperscript{153} N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. LII, p. 534.
\textsuperscript{154} What a Woman's Vote Means, and What it Will Do, Sydney, n.d., Rose Scott Papers, Item 5.
We want less partyism and more patriotism; and I agree with the chairman of the Government Congress in America when he declares that though 'women will bring some inexperience intopolitical life,' yet on the other side they will bring 'anoverwhelming wealth of public spirit far greater than the menof the country now possess, and that their unselfish interest inpertinent questions will be of inestimable value to the
State.'\textsuperscript{155}

The supporters of the suffrage cause seemed to be of theopinion that women's greater awareness of social evil and her"higher moral qualities"\textsuperscript{156} were the result of her experience as a
daughter, wife, mother and sister:

Women differ very widely from men - even from husbands - onsuch questions as intemperance, gambling, and immorality;and naturally so, as they, the women, are the chief sufferersfrom these vices.\textsuperscript{157}

In addition they sometimes seemed to imply that these qualitieswere innate qualities. Mrs. E.J. Ward wrote:

If it \textsuperscript{[the suffrage]} is refused her now on the ground thatshe is a woman, let her ask for it for that very reason,because she is a woman, with a woman's sympathies for theweak and defenceless; . . .\textsuperscript{158}

while Maybanke Wolstenholme claimed that

God has implanted deep in the woman's breast love for thefather of her children, and if he be worthy of her love, thenthrough and because of him, love for all humanity.\textsuperscript{159}

The Rev. J.C. Kirby was of a similar frame of mind when he wrote
that woman "has more emotion, her life is more a life ofaffections,"\textsuperscript{160} and even that arch-opponent of women's suffrage,Edith Badham, agreed although, unlike the supporters of the cause,she regarded the "highest instincts of a woman's nature" as a
potential danger:

There is something in Socialism which appeals to one of thehighest instincts of a woman's nature: I mean the desire tohelp the weak and suffering, which is, I suppose, an offshootof the maternal instinct. So strongly is this desire tohelp others implanted in a woman's heart that in the presenceof any kind of distress she is impelled to do something forthe sufferers; and it is only a few of those who are by

\textsuperscript{155.} Scott, Womanhood Suffrage, Rose Scott Papers, Item 4.
\textsuperscript{156.} "Discussion on 'Women and the Franchise'" , AustralianEconomist, Vol. IV, No. 16, 21 June 1895, p. 496.
\textsuperscript{157.} Scott, Womanhood Suffrage, Rose Scott Papers, Item 4.
\textsuperscript{158.} S.M.H., 26 July 1892.
\textsuperscript{159.} A Citizen Who Has No Vote [pseud. Maybanke Wolstenholme],Woman Suffrage. A Refutation and an Appeal, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{160.} Kirby, Woman: A Queen Regnant, p. 6.
nature strong-minded, . . . or who have learned by some special training that there are many distressing occasions in life when we can do nothing but sit still and wait, who do not rush forward to help without first asking whether the proffered help is likely to do any kind of good.\textsuperscript{161}

There is much to commend Norman MacKenzie's claim that:

If there is one theme that runs through all the variations of the women's movement in the late 19th century, and recurs even today, it is this insistence on public and private morality as the most immediate matter of women's concern in society. It was, even more than issues of legal emancipation or of the right to education or of wider social policy, the mainspring of the suffrage movement in Australia.\textsuperscript{162}

While the supporters of women's suffrage in N.S.W. did not claim that women were intellectually superior to men and generally regarded the questions of women's intelligence as an irrelevant issue when deciding whether or not women should be conceded the suffrage, some did believe that women possessed - in addition to their greater awareness of social and moral evils - a certain "faculty" of mind which would prove a valuable asset at the ballot-box. When replying to Edith Badham's claim that women were intellectually unsuited to be admitted as voters Rose Scott said:

The very faculty that Miss Badham allows that women possess - "the surface quickness" - is really of more use to the elector. Mill speaks of women's far greater quickness of apprehension, and he asks if this is not pre-eminently a quality which fits a person for practice [as an elector], for in action everything depends on deciding promptly. A woman's intuition and quickness, even if she possesses nothing else, would come in far better than the creative faculty in choosing men for Parliament. The sanity of common sense rather than the insanity of genius is the useful faculty which manages a family and ably directs housekeeping, and I maintain that it is these very faculties on a larger scale that are needed in directing the national housekeeping, and in protecting and managing the huge state family.\textsuperscript{163}

In addition, Rose Scott was of the opinion the government would improve if the franchise were extended to women because, she believed, they were less fickle than men:

Women, too, are more faithful. The country suffers more from men's fighting spirit and love of change than the people are aware of. No sooner do they elect one man to the head of affairs than they pine for another! Meantime, in perpetual change of men and uncertainty about measures, the real interests of the country are tossed to and fro like a football.\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{161} Badham in \textit{Australian Economist}, Vol. IV, No. 14, p. 482.
\textsuperscript{163} Scott in \textit{Australian Economist}, Vol. IV, No. 15, 31 May 1895, p. 494.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
Symbols

To maintain the support of their followers and to arouse support in the community at large the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. made use of symbols. One of the very best examples is the W.C.T.U. cartoon "Just Out of Reach". The woman chained to her sphere is seen struggling to grasp a stick, symbolising the suffrage, so that she can defend herself and her children against the four evil serpents of alcohol, sexual immorality, gambling, and cruelty. The cartoon clearly implies that a woman's principal interest and sphere is her home and the children she rears there; that it is men, not women, who are behind the social evils that threaten to overwhelm the purity of the woman's sphere; that it is men with an interest in the maintenance of social evil who will attempt to prevent women from obtaining the suffrage; and that if women want to defeat the social evils that threaten the home they cannot rely on men to do it for them, but must enter the fray by obtaining the suffrage and making themselves a power through the ballot-box.

A similar impression was given verbally by Louisa Lawson in "The Curse of Bad Example", a pamphlet published by the Woman's Suffrage Association. Louisa Lawson saw the vices of men - and particularly those of the "greasy Mongolian" - as the source of the corruption of many boys and young men and as contrary to the influences exerted by women, in the home. Louisa Lawson calls upon women to "rise as one and denounce these vices, the result of men's weakness and apathy" and she claims that,

if the father, who is in power, and helps to make the laws, has not the moral courage to put down these vices, how can the son be strong enough to avoid them handicapped as he is by transmitted weakness.

Louisa Lawson clearly implied that, if vice is to be suppressed, women must be given the political suffrage.

In her address to the 1891 convention of the Victorian Alliance Mrs. William McLean said:

As to that great curse of our country - drunkenness - how long would our present licensing laws remain in force if we

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165. See below p. 135.
166. Louisa Lawson, "The Curse of Bad Example", an undated typescript in Mrs. Louisa Lawson Papers, [Binder's title] M.L.
167. Ibid., p. 3.
168. Ibid.
[woman] And the ballot? Ah! too many women know to their cost that the law does not protect their homes, when it allows temptations in drunkennes to be placed so thickly in our streets, and when their husbands come home reeling with drink, and when the vagrants bite which they should feed and clothe the little ones are to the policeman's tilt. And what of our young men, what of the men of to-day? The parental responsibility and what decent strivings are left for them to resist temptations to vice? usual commerce is not streets. Can they not be purified? 

Apart from the implications that were our forebears more moral than men, the W.C.T.U. match, and the name of设有

Laeson and Mrs. McLean clearly possess, known as "women" or "in the


JUST OUT OF REACH.

THE WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION, FRANCHISE DEPARTMENT, in reply to those who are constantly talking about "Woman's Sphere," tends to emphasize the fact that one of their chief reasons for wanting the Suffrage is, in order that they may guard their homes and children from the state of the above. At the same time, it must be said that the problem of the woman is met by the fact that the ballot is an issue that is good and pure. Women must obey the laws, but they have no power to elect the men who make those laws. As the cartoon shows, women is charter as far as using her right to protect her offspring from the curse of drink, gambling, etc., is concerned. We call upon every Union in the country to educate and agitate upon this question.

JUST OUT OF REACH

[women] had the ballot? Ah! too many women know to their cost that the law does not protect their homes, when it allows temptations to drunkenness to be placed so thickly in our streets, and when their husbands come home reeling with drink, and when the wages [with which] they should feed and clothe the little ones are in the publican's till. ... And what of our young men and women who have to leave the parental roof? ... And what horrible traps are laid for them - temptations to vice flaunt themselves in our streets. Can they not be purified? 

Apart from the implication that women are generally more moral than men, the W.C.T.U. cartoon and the words of Louisa Lawson and Mrs. McLean clearly portray women as symbols of loving devotion to the welfare of their homes, their husbands, and their children and as the upholders and perpetuators of those standards of sexual purity, of abstinence from alcohol and gambling, and of devotion to the welfare of the weak which, in the words of Mrs. McLean, place women "on the side of that righteousness which exalteth a nation and will make for peace."

Men, on the other hand, were portrayed as symbols of evil and corruption since it was men who were primarily responsible for perpetuating those vices which placed in jeopardy the efforts of women to maintain and uplift the moral standards of the nation.

170. Ibid., p. 8.
Chapter 4.  

PARLIAMENT

Introduction

As already noted, the debate in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women took place in two 'arenas' - inside Parliament and outside Parliament. Within Parliament, over a period of eleven years, two resolutions - one in 1891 and the other in 1894 - in favour of women's suffrage were debated in the Legislative Assembly; four private members' bills proposing the extension of the suffrage to women were introduced into the Legislative Assembly - in 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898 - and all passed the first reading stage but were not proceeded with further; and three government sponsored bills were introduced - in 1900, 1901, and 1902 - and passed all stages in the Legislative Assembly but the former two were rejected by the Legislative Council and the latter, after its acceptance by the Council on 14 August 1902 and the signification of the Royal Assent on 27 August 1902, became the Women's Franchise Act (1902).

Outside Parliament the two organisations principally concerned with obtaining the suffrage for women - the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. - attempted, both to build up public support for women's suffrage and to use that support to obtain legislative enactment of the reform. The Union and the League used basically the same methods in their campaign for women's suffrage: the holding of public and drawing-room meetings, the distribution of suffrage literature, the publicising of their demand in the press, the sending of questionnaires to candidates seeking election to the Legislative Assembly, the organising of deputations to the colonial governments of the day in an attempt to have those governments sponsor a women's suffrage bill, the petitioning of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, and the petitioning of individual members of Parliament.

Although, as we have seen, both the Union and the League were very small and could not reasonably claim to represent the women of N.S.W. they nonetheless performed an important function by keeping the women's suffrage question before the public and the Parliament, thereby helping to prepare the way for the enactment of the reform. However, as important as their role might have been (and without some form of extra-parliamentary organisation it seems probable that the concession of women's suffrage would have been delayed) the Union and the
League could hardly claim that it was their efforts which forced Parliament to grant women the parliamentary suffrage.

I

PARLIAMENT, 1890 TO 1899

The Electoral Law Amendment Bill (1890)

The first definite parliamentary proposal to extend the suffrage to women was made in 1890. In his 29 April 1890 Speech from the Throne, written by the Parkes Ministry, the Governor of N.S.W., Lord Carrington, announced his Government's intention to amend the electoral law so as to eliminate certain "defects." It was proposed to recast the electorates, to introduce the principle of self-registration, ... and to limit the right of the suffrage to one vote for one elector.

In addition, the Government also proposed to admit to the exercise of the elective franchise all persons not legally disqualified without distinction of sex, ... We have already noted - and it seems worth repeating briefly - that it is not possible to say precisely why Parkes decided to extend the suffrage to women. Certainly the Ministry may, as the Sydney Mail suggested, have been conscious that an appeal to the country cannot be very long delayed, and alive to the tactical expediency of clearing the way for it.

It is however impossible to ignore the fact that Parkes' support for women's suffrage was of long-standing and, while he might have thought that politically his Government stood to benefit from its advocacy of the cause, he also undoubtedly genuinely believed that the exclusion of women from the ballot-box was not defensible. Parkes' radical liberal background most probably gave rise to such a belief.

While the 1890 proposal seems to have been the most

2. Ibid.
3. Sydney Mail, 3 May 1890.
important factor that gave rise to the formation of the W.S.L. and the establishment by the W.C.T.U. of its Franchise Department as the principal extra-parliamentary advocates of women's suffrage, it did not lead to a parliamentary debate on the subject. A few members of both Houses commented on it during the debate on the Address in Reply \(^4\) and a few members of the Legislative Assembly commented further \(^5\) when Parkes sought leave from that House to introduce the Electoral Law Amendment Bill on 7 November 1890. \(^6\) The first reading of the Bill took place on 12 November 1890 \(^7\) but the Parliament was prorogued before the Bill could be brought forward for its second reading.

The 1891 Women's Suffrage Resolution

The Earl of Jersey's Speech from the Throne on 19 May 1891 did not include women's suffrage among the proposed electoral reforms. \(^8\) However, during the debate on the Address in Reply Parkes, challenged by W.H. Traill, M.L.A. for South Sydney, who claimed that the Premier, when addressing his constituents "distinctly stated that woman suffrage would be a feature of his bill," \(^9\) announced:

> If the hon. member desires to know, I may state at once that I shall submit to the House a motion in favour of female suffrage!\(^10\)

Parkes honoured his promise in July 1891. On 15 July 1891 in his opening speech to the First Session of the Fifteenth Parliament the Earl of Jersey announced his Government's

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5. See for example Ibid., Vol. XLVIII, pp. 5038, 5039, 5040.
6. Ibid., p. 5036.
7. Ibid., p. 5160.
8. Ibid., Vol. LI, p. 2.
9. Ibid., p. 80.
10. Ibid. It is difficult to say when Parkes abandoned his desire to include women's suffrage among his proposed electoral reforms. Clearly the founding members of the W.S.L. were under the impression that Parkes proposed to include a clause granting women the suffrage in his electoral bill "to be introduced early in the Session of 1891" - see W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, \([1891-1896]\), p. 1 - and his refusal to take the chair at the first public meeting of the League "on the ground that as he was bringing in the Bill he could not appear publicly in the matter" - W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, \([1891-1896]\), p. 2 - suggest that at least until March 1891 Parkes proposed to retain women's suffrage as part of his electoral bill.
SIR HENRY PARKES

From: Rose Scott Papers, M.L. Uncatalogued MSS, Set 38, Item 29.

Quite clear that he was prepared to accept a women's suffrage amendment to his election bill, and the House declared its support of the amendment.

Most of the arguments used by the parliamentary proponents and opponents of women's suffrage have already been outlined in the previous chapter and it is unnecessary to deal with these again. Likewise, it is unnecessary to deal with the

12. Ibid., p. 402.
13. Ibid., p. 402.
15. See for example ibid., pp. 493, 507, 530.
intention to submit a resolution to the Legislative Assembly "in favour of the expediency and justice of extending the franchise to women." On 30 July 1891 Parkes duly moved the following motion:

That, in the opinion of this House, the franchise for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly should be extended to women, on the same conditions and subject to the same disqualifications as those imposed by law upon male electors.

In his speech opening the debate Parkes explained his reasons for introducing the question of women's suffrage in the House in the form of a resolution rather than as a clause in the proposed electoral bill and the significance he attached to the motion:

Observing as I did in the last Parliament that many hon. members who generally agreed with the principles of the Electoral Bill were nevertheless strongly opposed to this particular provision, it seemed to me, both on that account, and also on account of the newness of the question, that it would be much fairer to treat the question of the expediency of extending the franchise to women apart from the bill for the reform of the electoral law. I think I shall thus enable the House to give a more frank and clear expression of its opinion, and that is all I aim at obtaining. The question can now be discussed without in any way embarrassing the consideration of the bill itself. Supposing ... the Assembly is adverse to the motion ... there is an end to the matter at once; if the Assembly be in favour of it, the substance of the resolution can readily be ingrafted upon the [electoral] bill I am about to introduce ...

Parkes' speech introduced an element of uncertainty into the debate for on the one hand he suggested that his resolution allowed the women's suffrage question to be discussed "without in any way embarrassing the consideration of the [electoral] bill itself" (thus reinforcing the impression given in the Governor's speech, namely, that the women's suffrage resolution would be an "abstract resolution" yet on the other hand he made it quite clear that he was prepared to accept a women's suffrage amendment to his electoral bill should the House declare its support for the women's suffrage resolution.

Most of the arguments used by the parliamentary proponents and opponents of women's suffrage have already been outlined in the previous chapter and it is unnecessary to deal with these again. Likewise, it is unnecessary to deal with the

12. Ibid., p. 482.
13. Ibid., p. 482.
15. See for example Ibid., pp. 493, 507, 530.
claims, made by some members of the Assembly, that, for example, Parkes was not a sincere or genuine supporter of women's suffrage because he would not include the substance of his resolution in the proposed electoral bill; that his support for the cause was the result of old age; that he was simply attempting to draw attention to himself by proposing the resolution before the House; and that the resolution had been introduced in the absence of any other government business or in an attempt to prevent the House dealing with more pressing issues - none of these claims have, it appears, very much to commend them. There were, however, several objections urged against the extension of the suffrage to women that merit special consideration here.

J.C. Nield, an opponent of women's suffrage, claimed that the resolution was unjust because it proposed the extension of the suffrage to women yet, by implication, denied them the right to sit in Parliament:

I assert that the resolution, only going a certain distance, embodies one of the greatest injustices that has ever been submitted in the form of a resolution in this Chamber. It is proposed to bring into existence a body of electors numbering in round figures 300,000, and, then, having given them votes, to deny them the right of representation [by their own sex].

In every parliamentary debate on women's suffrage the opponents of the principle demanded to know why, if it was just to extend the suffrage to women, it was not equally just to admit them as members of Parliament. Some supporters of the suffrage cause could, in fact, see no reason why women should not be admitted as members of Parliament but other supporters viewed the idea of the admission of women to Parliament with disfavour and for tactical reasons those members who sponsored women's suffrage motions and those members who took charge of women's suffrage bills did not seek to remove the bar that prevented women becoming members of the legislature.

Opponents of the motion also argued against the extension of the suffrage to women on the grounds that the electorate had not sanctioned such a change in the electoral laws - that Parliament had no mandate to introduce such a reform.

16. See for example Ibid., p. 485.
17. See for example Ibid., pp. 511, 530.
18. See for example Ibid., p. 486.
19. See for example Ibid., pp. 485, 504.
20. Ibid., p. 508.
G.H. Reid, M.L.A. for East Sydney, although not opposed to the principle of women's suffrage claimed that the idea amounted "to a revolution of the whole political system" and after he realised that Parkes was prepared, in the event of the House adopting the motion, to accept an amendment incorporating the motion's substance into the proposed electoral bill, argued that it is a question upon which the public have not commissioned us to express an opinion. If I were a thousand times in favour of female suffrage I could not support any government that proposed to pass it into law behind the backs of the electors of the country. I say, therefore, that the proposal is an idle one. Until we can speak as representatives of the people we have no right to speak in our private capacity in the House.

In addition, some opponents claimed that, not only did Parliament have no mandate to consider the question of women's suffrage, but that the women themselves did not want it. G.R. Dibbs, Leader of the Opposition and M.L.A. for the Murrumbidgee, informed the House that he had "not found one woman in a thousand who cared to have a vote" and J. Haynes, in an impassioned speech against women's suffrage, claimed that "a majority of the women as well as the men of the country would be against it."

Undoubtedly Reid, Dibbs, and Haynes were, to some extent at least, right. The question of women's suffrage had not been seriously placed before the electorate and, while there was little evidence to show that a majority of women were opposed to the extension of the suffrage to their sex, there was also, on the other hand, little evidence to show that women, other than a small vocal minority, wanted the right to vote. However, as E.W. O'Sullivan pointed out, in reply to Reid, Parliament had, in the past, passed legislation "to which the public had not given one moment's consideration" and T. Rose was of the opinion that the claim that women should be denied the suffrage because they had not demanded it was a very peculiar argument for any one who champions democracy. Are we to give reforms only when they are asked for?

21. Ibid., p. 490.
22. Ibid., p. 495.
23. Ibid., p. 486.
24. Ibid., p. 511.
25. O'Sullivan cited as an example the Naval Tribute Bill to which Reid had given his support - see Ibid., p. 533.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 521.
The most important argument urged against Parkes' resolution was most forcibly enunciated by Reid. He claimed that the adoption of the resolution by the Assembly would possibly post a threat to the proposal to abolish plural voting; a proposal many members of the House were committed to support. Reid asserted that if the members of Legislative Council wanted an excuse to justify blocking a bill abolishing plural voting they could claim, if the Legislative Assembly adopted Parkes' women's suffrage resolution, that it was unjust to send up a bill dealing exclusively with the rights of male electors while ignoring the rights of those who the Assembly had itself admitted by resolution were equally, with men, entitled to register a vote.  

When Parkes interjected and implied that, should the Assembly approve his resolution it could be incorporated as a clause into the proposed electoral reform bill, Reid altered his tack somewhat and argued:

If hon. gentlemen are really in earnest about the abolition of plural voting there is one thing they will not have in the bill - they will not insert in it a vital principle upon which the other Chamber can say, "We reject your bill because you have put into it a vital principle rearranging the foundations of society without the warrant of the people of the country." Then what becomes of the abolition of plural voting? It is knocked on the head, and people . . . would say that the Upper House was justified in taking the course it did . . . At the present time if the Ministry were to send up a bill containing the principle of one man one vote no upper house dare touch it . . . Because the most unscrupulous opponent of that principle in the Legislative Council could not deny that it had received the emphatic assent of the whole people.  

It is difficult to assess whether or not Reid's argument was really well founded but it was in the belief that he might well have been right which led J.D. Fitzgerald, M.L.A. for West Sydney, a member of the Labor party and, like his colleagues in that party, committed to the abolition of plural voting, to propose an amendment to Parkes' resolution by moving:

That the question be amended by the omission of all the words after the word "that" with a view to insert in lieu thereof the following words:- "in the opinion of this House the question of the extension of the franchise to women should remain in abeyance until the principle of one man one vote becomes law."  

28. Ibid., p. 492.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., pp. 492-493.
31. Ibid., p. 508.
Fitzgerald then explained the reasons for his action to the House:

I am one of the foremost advocates of womanhood suffrage. I am a member of the Council of the Womanhood Suffrage League; but, as one who came here pledged not upon womanhood suffrage, but upon manhood suffrage, I want to see that nothing shall step in to prevent, or even to endanger, the passing of the one man one vote bill. I believe that the arguments adduced by Mr. Reid, are simply unanswerable.

For reasons that are not clear, Parkes told the House that if Fitzgerald withdrew his amendment he, Parkes, would withdraw the motion. But Fitzgerald, a new member, and ignorant of the procedures of the House, failed to do so. As a result, Parkes determined to defeat the amendment and, in his speech in reply at the end of the debate, he told the House:

I withdrew the principle of women's suffrage from the proposed electoral bill, and I frankly and plainly told the House to-night that I asked it to give an assent or a dissent. . . . I left the question a non-party question to be voted upon independently, . . . But it becomes quite another thing if there is a power in this House to take away the words of my resolution and to substitute other words, . . . if the amendment be carried I will not attempt to govern this country. I should like to know what man with any conception of honor could propose a motion as I have proposed mine, explaining . . . that he was willing to take the sense of the House upon it as a non-party motion, and could then allow every word of the resolution to be cut away and other words substituted.

In view of the fact that Fitzgerald's amendment could hardly have been regarded as being adverse to the principle contained in the resolution, Parkes' reaction to it was, to say the least, extraordinary. In an editorial that was highly critical of Parkes' threat the Herald said:

Thus we see that, whilst the Premier accepted the positive decision of the House against the policy of the Government

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 509. Crick claimed that Parkes and Bruce Smith, M.L.A. for The Glebe and Secretary for Public Works, feared a solid Labor party vote in favour of Fitzgerald's amendment and hence, rather than see the Government embarrassed by the defeat of the resolution Parkes preferred to withdraw it. Ibid., p. 523. Crick may have been right. Certainly Parkes was determined to prevent the acceptance by the House of Fitzgerald's amendment but his opening speech, his speech in reply at the end of the debate and the indifference with which he accepted the defeat of his resolution all certainly suggest that Parkes, no matter how much he may have wanted the House to affirm the principle contained in his motion, was prepared to accept the House's rejection of the principle without regarding it as a vote of no confidence in the Ministry.
34. Ibid., p. 535.
upon this momentous question by a majority of 23 . . . with indifference, he was prepared to break up the Government and let everything go by the run if the House had, without giving any opinion upon that question, expressed its wish that it should be postponed until a more convenient time. 35

On division the House rejected Fitzgerald's amendment by a majority of eight votes 36 and then rejected the original resolution by a majority of twenty-three votes. 37

In 1891 the Legislative Assembly had 141 members and, of these, ninety-one members (plus the Speaker) were present in the House when the division - the largest during all the debates on women's suffrage - on the original resolution was taken. Ten members had paired. 38 All of Parkes' ministerial colleagues who had seats in the Legislative Assembly supported the resolution. 39

It is difficult to specify accurately the party allegiance of all the members of the Assembly but it would seem that the Woman's Suffrage Journal was substantially accurate in its claim that, of the thirty-four members of the Assembly who voted in favour of women's suffrage, twenty were "Ministerialists," five were "Oppositionists," and nine were members of the Labor party. Of the fifty-seven members who opposed the resolution the Woman's Suffrage Journal claimed that seven were "Ministerialists," thirty-three were "Oppositionists," fourteen were members of the Labor party, and three were independents. 40

35. S.M.H., 1 August 1891.
37. Ibid., p. 536.
38. Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September 1891.
39. This was the only occasion on which all ministers who were members of the Assembly were present in the House at the one time to support the extension of the suffrage to women.
40. Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September 1891. A comparison of the names in the division list in N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. LII, p. 536, and those in Thomas R. Roydhouse and H.J. Taperell, The Labour Party in New South Wales. A History of its Formation and Legislative Career together with the Biographies of the Members, Sydney, 1892, p. 25 and George Black, History of the New South Wales Labor Party, From its Conception till Now, Sydney, n.d. [but c. 1910], p. 4, suggests that in fact seventeen members of the Labor party opposed the motion, not fourteen, as claimed by the Woman's Suffrage Journal. I can only assume that the editor of the Journal did not include J.G. Gough, J.A. Mackinnon, and R.M. Vaughn as members of the Labor party since all three entered politics before the labour upheavals of the early nineties.
It would seem that, had not seventeen members of the Labor party been particularly concerned about the possibility that Parkes' resolution, if adopted, would threaten the chances of the proposed one man one vote bill being accepted by the Legislative Council, the principle of women's suffrage would probably have been affirmed by the Assembly. Writing in 1917 George Black, M.L.A. for West Sydney in 1891, asserted:

The Labor Party opposed the inclusion of womanhood franchise in Parkes' One-Man-One-Vote Bill of 1891, merely from a belief that its inclusion would wreck the measure in the Upper House, and that it should be sent there as a separate measure. 41

This was not a conclusion that Black and his colleagues in the parliamentary Labor party reached only after Reid's speech in the Assembly against Parkes' resolution. In April 1891 the Seventh Intercolonial Trades and Labor Congress of Australasia had voted against the inclusion of a women's suffrage plank in its platform and one of the factors motivating that decision was the fear that support for attempts to obtain the suffrage for women would only hinder the advent of reforms in the electoral laws as they applied to men. 42 The N.S.W. parliamentary members of the Labor party were undoubtedly aware of the decision, 43 and, although not obliged to follow it, at least fourteen members of the party considered that, in the interests of the principle of one man one vote, it was expedient to oppose Parkes' motion.

While most, if not all, of the parliamentary members of the Labor party at least approved, in principle, of women's suffrage, it would be inaccurate to assume that this was the attitude of the labour movement as a whole. Dr. Robin Gollan notes that some trade unionists opposed women's suffrage for other than just "tactical reasons":

Arthur Rae, a radical member of the party, explained the reluctance of some trade unionists to adopt it [the women's suffrage cause] as due to 'that narrow conservative trades unionism which seeks only to establish a more or less close


43. At least one future N.S.W. Labor party parliamentarian, J.D. Fitzgerald, was present during the debate on the proposal to adopt a women's suffrage plank - see Ibid., p. 100.
monopoly or trade guild'. He considered that 'most of the city unionists seem as narrow as the streets of the city and uncharitable as it is to say so, some of them are as crooked and as dirty'. Craft prejudices, ... existed in many of the older unions and prevented them giving full support to the women's case.44

Louisa Lawson discovered the extent of these prejudices when, starting in 1888, she employed women typesetters on her monthly journal, Dawn.

Some of the supporters of women's suffrage outside Parliament were undoubtedly disappointed with the result of the debate on Parkes' resolution although at the same time they seemed aware of the tactical reasons that lay behind the opposition of many members.45 Elizabeth Ward, while she may have shared that disappointment, told a W.C.T.U. suffrage meeting in September 1891:

We must not be discouraged because Sir Henry Parkes' bill [sic] did not pass, but rather be glad that we have so many members of Parliament in favour of the extension of the franchise to women.46

In an editorial, the Herald admirably summed up the significance of Parkes' resolution:

When the Premier's resolution for the extension of the franchise to women was lost by a majority of 57 to 34, the conspicuous fact was not the loss of it, but rather the support of it by so large a minority. . . . the introduction of the resolution and the division upon it, have placed the question in a new position, so that it can no longer be laughed out of court, but will command serious consideration and treatment, and now that a systematic agitation has been commenced by the Womanhood Suffrage League the presumption is that more will be heard about it at every general election for some time to come.47

The 1894 women's suffrage resolution

The question of the extension of the suffrage to women was not again debated in the Legislative Assembly until September 1894 when the House considered Dowell O'Reilly's resolution in favour of the admission of women to the ballot-box. Between July 1891 and September 1894 at least one attempt was made by the W.S.L. to have a women's suffrage amendment incorporated in an electoral reform bill. The bill was the Electoral Bill (1892) sponsored by the Dibbs Ministry and it incorporated a provision

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45. See for example Report of the W.S.L. of N.S.W. . . . 1892, p. 4; Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September 1891.
46. Ward, Out of Weakness Made Strong, p. 86.
47. S.M.H., 23 September 1891.
abolishing plural voting. There is no need, here, to go into the details of the attempt to amend the Bill. It is sufficient to point out that Parkes failed, because of his absence from the House, to honour his promise to the W.S.L. to move the omission of the word 'male' from the Bill but had he, or any other member done so, there would, it seems, have been very little chance of the amendment having been accepted. Dibbs himself was opposed to women's suffrage and those members of the Labor party on whose support Dibbs relied to govern regarded the adoption of the principle of one man one vote as being of greater importance than the adoption of women's suffrage.

The 1894 women's suffrage resolution was introduced into the Assembly by Dowell O'Reilly, M.L.A. for Parramatta, on 18 September 1894 and it asked the House to affirm that "the time has arrived when the franchise should be extended to women." O'Reilly urged the acceptance of the motion, claiming that:

"This young Parliament, fresh sprung from the very heart and life-blood of the people, will by indorsing [sic] this resolution set the seal of sincerity upon its democratic professions."

As in 1891, some opponents of women's suffrage believed that if women were given the suffrage it would be impossible to justify their continued exclusion from membership of Parliament. W.P. Crick argued that the logical outcome of giving woman the right to vote is her right to come and sit in this Chamber. I should like to know who will contend that she has a right to sit in this Chamber? W.C. Wall, M.L.A. for Rylstone, a supporter of women's suffrage, evidently agreed with Crick about the logical outcome of extending the suffrage to women but did not agree with Crick that

48. S.M.H., 15 October 1892.
49. For details of the attempt to amend Dibbs' Electoral Bill see Report of the W.S.L. of N.S.W. . . . 1893, pp. 5-4; W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 16 August 1892, 6 September 1892, 30 September 1892, 4 October 1892, 18 October 1892, 1 November 1892, 15 November 1892, 20 December 1892; Rose Scott to Sir Henry Parkes, 5 September 1892, Parkes Correspondence, M.L. Vol. 38; Rose Scott to Sir Henry Parkes, 5 October [1892], 13 October [1892], 17 October [1892], 22nd November [1892], Parkes Correspondence, M.L. A928. Internal evidence and evidence from the minutes of the W.S.L. make it clear that the letters of 5 October, 13 October, and 17 October were written in 1892.
51. Ibid., p. 463.
52. Ibid., p. 486.
this was in any way undesirable:

There is no doubt in my mind that the corollary to the enactment of this principle is the granting to women of the right to come into this Chamber. If they are capable of using the franchise with judgment and discretion, I see no reason why they should not exercise a vote in the House.\(^{53}\)

Other supporters of the motion agreed with Wall\(^{54}\) but it is probable that a majority of the House would not have done so.

Premier George Reid, although he claimed that "as an individual member of the community" he had "no opposition to this principle,"\(^{55}\) urged several important objections against O'Reilly's resolution all based, it would seem, on the fact that it included the words: "the time has arrived when . . ." Reid argued that:

There are two things which are absolutely in our way as a house sent here to legislate. One is the absolute absence of a mandate from the electors to make so vital a change in our Constitution; the other is the absolute apathy, as far as I can see, of the great majority of the women of this city. These are two solid obstacles in the way of practical legislation.\(^{56}\)

He then went on to argue that O'Reilly's motion meant that the time has arrived to remodel the Constitution.

. . . the time has arrived for this House to go back to the electors, because if the time has arrived for the granting of the female franchise then the time has arrived for introducing a measure to carry out that principle, and the moment that measure becomes law will any hon. member say that this House is entitled to sit for another week after the electoral rolls have been doubled? . . . if you ask this House now to enter upon the remodelling of our Constitution, to tear up our electoral reform act by the roots, and substitute another measure which will revolutionise our electoral system and throw our House and our politics into chaos at the very threshold of useful work after an appeal to the people, then I say that you take up a rash and mistaken position, . . . \(^{57}\)

Reid's, to say the least, strained interpretation of the meaning of O'Reilly's motion led James Ashton, M.L.A. for Hay, to propose an amendment to O'Reilly's motion:

In order that what I consider a not very forcible point raised by the Premier may be got over, . . . I move:

That the words "the time has arrived when" be omitted.\(^{58}\)

\(^{53}\) Ibid., p. 507.
\(^{54}\) See also Ibid., pp. 473, 482, 509.
\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 496.
\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 495.
\(^{57}\) Ibid., p. 495.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 502.
In his speech in reply at the close of the debate, O'Reilly indicated his willingness to accept the amendment although he regarded it as unnecessary:

I cannot see that it in any way modifies the assertion of the principle . . . but if the Premier wishes to have these few unimportant words excised, leaving the principle affirmed - and, . . . if, by excising these words, we can hook the Premier and nail him to his own professions, having him with us for future use when this question comes up again, . . . I will, . . . accept the amendment.59

By a majority of forty-three the Assembly agreed to accept Ashton's amendment60 and the amended motion by a majority of forty-five - not thirty-five as shown in Hansard.61

In 1894 the Legislative Assembly had 125 members and, of these, seventy-one members (plus the Speaker) were present in the House when the division was taken. Eighteen members had paired.62 The Premier and five of his seven ministerial colleagues who were members of the Assembly supported the amended resolution.63 The Leader of the Opposition, Sir George Dibbs, who, as Premier, had told a W.S.L. deputation in October 1892 that he was opposed to the extension of the suffrage to women,64 informed the Assembly during the debate on O'Reilly's resolution that, in the previous twelve months, he had "come to the conclusion that women are actually better than men,"65 and he, also, voted for the amended resolution.

59. Ibid., p. 514.
60. Ibid., p. 514-515.
61. Ibid., p. 515.
62. Woman's Voice, 3 November 1894.
63. The two absent ministers were A.J. Gould, M.L.A. for Singleton and Minister of Justice, and J.H. Carruthers, M.L.A. for St. George and Secretary for Lands. Both, as ministers, had voted in favour of Parkes' women's suffrage resolution in 1891. In 1895 both supported the application of W.N. Willis, M.L.A. for The Barwon, for leave of the Assembly to introduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1895) - see N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. LXXIX, p. 793 - and Gould supported the application of J.L. Fegan, M.L.A. for Wickham, for leave of the Assembly to introduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1897) - see N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. LXXXIX, pp. 2944-2945. Gould lost his seat in 1898 and Carruthers spoke against the extension of the suffrage to women during the debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1901) - see N.S.W.P.D., Second Series, Vol. 1, pp. 678-683 - although he never recorded a vote against the principle.
64. S.M.H., 15 October 1892.
By including the nine members who paired, sixty-seven members of the Assembly supported O'Reilly's motion: thirty-four belonged to the Freetrade party; twenty-two were Labor members; and eleven belonged to the Protectionist party. Similarly, by including the nine members who paired, twenty-two members of the House opposed the motion: nine belonged to the Freetrade party; the remaining thirteen were supporters of the Protectionist party.

Two points worthy of comment emerge from the above figures. Firstly, no Labor member voted against the motion. With the one man one vote principle recognised by law, all the Labor members were quite prepared to support attempts to extend the suffrage to women and from 1894 until the Women's Franchise Bill (1902) became law no Labor member of the Assembly voted against any proposal to extend the suffrage to women. Secondly, in 1894, as in 1891, the members of the Protectionist party showed a much greater reluctance to support the proposals recommending the extension of the suffrage to women than did the members of the Freetrade party. In 1894, of the members voting or paired, the Protectionists were almost evenly divided on the issue whereas a considerable majority of Freetrade members endorsed O'Reilly's resolution.

In its annual report for the year ending 1 June 1895 the W.S.L. Council expressed its pleasure over the acceptance of O'Reilly's motion by the Assembly believing that it was a victory for "justice"; the result of "educative forces" that had been at

66. The names of the eighteen members who paired can be found by comparing the division list in Ibid., p. 515 with the analysis of the voting published in Woman's Voice, 3 November 1894.

67. The party allegiance of the members of the Legislative Assembly who voted in the division on O'Reilly's motion, or who paired, is based on the information contained in Ibid., 9 August 1894, 3 November 1894. There were two groups of Labor members in the Assembly in 1894. Black called them the "Solidarites" and the "Independent or Parliamentary Laborites" - see Black, History of the N.S.W. Labor Party. From its Conception till Now, p. 13. Woman's Voice class Joseph Cook, M.L.A. for Hartley and Postmaster-General, as a Labor M.L.A. I have varied the journal's classification and, since Cook was a member of Cabinet, have counted him with the Freetrade party members.
work during the previous three years and because "younger and less conservative members had come to the front." In her annual Franchise Department report for the year 1894 to 1895 Elizabeth Ward mentioned the success of O'Reilly's motion but with less enthusiasm than the W.S.L. report.

The private members' bills: 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898

Throughout the period during which the four private members' bills proposing the extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women were introduced, the Reedy Ministry was in office. However, despite the fact that Reid and a majority of the members of the Free trade party, of which he was leader, supported the principle, Reid refused to accord the extension of the suffrage to women a place in the Government's legislative programme.

In September 1894, before O'Reilly's resolution was debated in the Assembly, Reid told a W.S.L. deputation that he had greatly changed his mind on this question of women's suffrage, and that now he viewed it with much favor [sic], but he could make no definite promise as he had many other obligations to fulfill.

Reid's speech during the debate on O'Reilly's motion certainly raises doubts as to whether he really did view women's suffrage with "much favor," as the Council of the W.S.L. believed. However, there can be little doubt that Reid's legislative programme for 1894 and 1895, and the difficulties that he encountered with Legislative Council, which led to a dissolution in June 1895, precluded the possibility of Reid making women's suffrage part of the Government's legislative programme.

On 12 September 1895 W.N. Willis, M.L.A. for The Barwon, obtained leave of the Assembly - after a division - to introduce the first Women's Franchise Bill. The Bill was read for a first time on the same day. It was to have been read a second time on 5 November 1895 but it was postponed and the

68. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1895, pp. 6-7.
70. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report ... 1895, p. 6. See also Woman's Voice, 22 September 1894; S.M.H., 7 September 1894; Daily Telegraph, 7 September 1894 for a more detailed report of the deputation. The reports contained in the Herald and Telegraph differ considerably from the report of the deputation contained in the 1895 report of the League.
Parliament was prorogued before the Assembly could debate the second reading.

Rose Scott, for reasons that are not clear, strongly objected to Willis sponsoring the Bill and the W.S.L. report for the year ending 1 June 1896 noted that the Council would be much better pleased if it went so far as to confer the same rights on women as men now enjoy.

The reasons for the Council's dissatisfaction are not at all clear. It seems highly unlikely that Willis' Bill stopped short of proposing the extension of the suffrage to women on the same terms as it had been granted to men for, had it done so, it would presumably have met with the determined opposition of the W.S.L. which, as we have already noted, was firmly committed to obtaining the suffrage for women on the same conditions as those which applied to men. It also seems unlikely that the Council of the League was expressing its dissatisfaction that the Bill did not give women the right to sit in Parliament. No matter what individual members may have thought, the W.S.L. never officially associated itself with demands that women be permitted to sit in Parliament. In her annual Franchise Department report for 1894 to 1895, Elizabeth Ward mentioned Willis' Bill but, unlike the Council of the League, she did not express any dissatisfaction with its provisions.

In February 1896 a Good Templar - W.S.L. deputation saw Reid in a further attempt to have the question of the extension of the suffrage to women included in the Government's legislative programme. Reid gave the deputation an indefinite reply. He promised to submit the matter to the Cabinet but warned "that the Cabinet were not united on the subject" - a claim he also made nearly five years later during the debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1900). It is not clear just how much opposition there really was in the Cabinet to women's suffrage. In 1900 Reid claimed that, when he was Premier, "one or two" of his colleagues had been opposed to the principle and that as a result he would not make women's suffrage a Government measure.

73. Rose Scott to Dowell O'Reilly, 6 September 1897.
76. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Annual Report . . . 1896, p. 8; S.M.H.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
One of the "one or two" of Reid's Cabinet colleagues who opposed women's suffrage was undoubtedly the Hon. J.H. Want, Attorney-General during most of Reid's term as Premier, and a strenuous opponent of the Women's Franchise Bill of 1900 and those of 1901 and 1902. Reid also told the deputation that three questions would have to be considered,

first, whether the Government could undertake the Bill next session. Next, whether they would allow a member of the Government, who was in favour of Womanhood Suffrage, to introduce a Bill, and give him time out of the Government time. If left to a private member, Mr. Reid promised that member, as far as he was concerned, every facility to pass the Bill.80

As events turned out, the Bill remained in Willis' charge 81 and on 30 June 1896 it was restored to the notice paper of the Assembly "at the stage it had reached" before the end of the 1895 session. 82 However, the proposal made no headway and, on Willis' motion, the Bill was discharged and its withdrawal ordered on 22 October 1896.83 The Bill was withdrawn because, since Willis did not have a message from the Crown authorising the Assembly to consider "the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses" in connection with the Bill, it was out of order. On 29 September 1896 a W.S.L. deputation, accompanied by Willis, had seen Reid and requested that the Government give Willis a message from the Crown so that he could proceed with the Bill.84 Reid refused to pledge himself "in any way" until the matter came before Cabinet and he suggested that Willis submit a written request for a message to Cabinet.85 Reid also noted that "he knew of no precedent for a Government giving a message from the Crown to a private member in charge of a Bill."86 Evidently Cabinet refused to grant Willis' request and he was, therefore, forced to withdraw his Bill.

In 1897, with Reid overseas, J.N. Brunker became Acting-Premier and, although he promised a large women's suffrage deputation, on 4 June 1897, that he would consult his Cabinet colleagues about the possibility of the Government sponsoring a women's suffrage bill and expressed his own belief that the

84. S.M.H., 30 September 1896.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
question should be made a Government measure the matter remained in the hands of a private member - on this occasion J.L. Fegan, M.L.A. for Wickham. Fegan was given leave by the Legislative Assembly - after a division - on 12 August 1897 to introduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1897) and it was read for a first time on 19 August 1897. The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on 7 December 1897 but "was blocked by the press of other work" on that day and the Parliament was prorogued three days later, on 10 December 1897.

In November 1897 Reid refused to receive a W.S.L. deputation and he informed the League "that a deputation could do no good now," and advised it to make itself "a power at the next elections" - a reply that did not please the League. In January 1898 some members of the Assembly met with Rose Scott and it was agreed that before next session, a deputation should interview the Premier upon the subject [of women's suffrage], and a Parliamentary Committee of three was formed to work to that end.

The committee was composed of Fegan and one member from each of the Protectionist and Labor parties. In May Reid again refused to receive a women's suffrage deputation but in its report to the annual meeting of the League in 1898 the Council expressed the hope that, with the federal referendum over and Parliament about to meet, Reid would consent to receive a deputation.

Reid did so on 24 June 1898 and expressed his "utmost sympathy for the movement," promised to "consult his colleagues," and said "that in all probability, the question would be placed upon the next Ministerial programme, and a Bill introduced at the next Parliament." Elections were held in July 1898 but, to the bitter disappointment of the League, women's suffrage did not appear on the Government's electoral manifesto. Once again the

87. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Seventh Annual Report ... 1898, p. 10.
88. J.R. Dacey, M.L.A. for Botany, also proposed to introduce a women's suffrage bill but the task was finally left to Fegan - see Ibid.
90. Ibid., p. 3220.
92. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Seventh Annual Report ... 1898, p. 10.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
97. W.S.L. of N.S.W. Eighth Annual Report ... 1899, pp. 4-5.
matter was left in the hands of Fegan who, as a private member, was faced with an almost impossible task in his attempt to steer a women's suffrage bill through all stages in the Assembly.

On 11 October 1898, after a short debate and a division, Fegan obtained leave of the Assembly to introduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1898) and it was read for a first time on the same day.\(^98\) The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on 29 November 1898 \(^99\) but pressure of business relating to the proposed federation prevented the second reading. However, in April 1899 Reid interviewed Fegan and Rose Scott and promised that, in the following session of Parliament, he would "treat Mr. Fegan as a colleague with reference to the Woman Suffrage Bill" and "procure a message from the Crown."\(^100\)

On 17 August 1899 Fegan obtained leave of the Assembly to reintroduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1898) "at the stage it had reached" before the end of the previous session and the Bill was ordered to be read a second time on 24 August 1899.\(^101\) This reading was postponed until 28 November 1899 but did not take place then, and on Fegan's motion the Bill was discharged and withdrawn on 30 November 1899.\(^102\) Presumably Fegan withdrew the Bill because, since its introduction had not been preceded by a message from the Crown, it was out of order.\(^103\) However, unlike Willis in 1896, Fegan was able to obtain the required message before the end of the session.

On 11 September 1899, after a vote of no confidence by the Legislative Assembly, the Reid Ministry resigned. Reid was succeeded as Premier, on 14 September 1899, by the leader of the Protectionist party, W.J. Lyne, M.L.A. for the Hume, who was only able to govern with the support of the Labor party. Fegan was Secretary for Mines and Agriculture in the new Government and on 6 December 1899 he delivered to the Deputy-Speaker a message from the Lieutenant-Governor recommending

102. Ibid., p. 247.
103. R.A. Price, M.L.A. for Gloucester, drew the attention of the House to the fact that the Bill was possibly out of order when Fegan first sought leave to introduce it on 11 October 1898 - see N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. XCIV, p. 1301.
for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the expediency of making provision to meet the requisite expenses in connection with a Bill . . . to extend the franchise to adult female persons . . .

The message was ordered to be referred to the Committee of the Whole House but pressure of business prevented this being done before Parliament was prorogued on 22 December 1899.

II

PARLIAMENT, 1900 TO 1902

The Women's Franchise Bill (1900). (a) The Legislative Assembly.

In his speech opening the 1900 session of Parliament, the Governor of N.S.W., Lord Beauchamp, said, that

in view of the fact that other colonies, with which this colony will be brought into political connection after the establishment of the commonwealth, have a system of representation which is based upon adult suffrage, you will be asked to consider the expediency of establishing our electoral system on a similar basis.

The Governor's words give an indication as to one of the most compelling reasons why the Lyne Ministry decided to include women's suffrage among its legislative proposals for the session; namely, that with the inauguration of the proposed Commonwealth of Australia the women of South Australia (and, after the acceptance of the Constitution of the Commonwealth by Western Australia in July 1900, the women of Western Australia) would have the right to vote in federal elections and, hence, it appeared almost certain that the new Commonwealth Parliament would legislate in favour of uniform adult suffrage for federal elections. In the event of this happening, it would have been anomalous, in the view of many members of the N.S.W. Parliament, if women were permitted to vote in federal but not in state elections.

Important as the likelihood of a uniform federal adult suffrage was in motivating the Lyne Ministry to propose the introduction of a women's suffrage bill during the 1900 session

105. N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CIII, p. 3.
of Parliament, at least one other probable reason for the Ministry's action deserves mention. As already noted, Lyne governed with the support of the Labor party and, according to W.G. Spence, M.L.A. for Cobar, to obtain this support Lyne made very definite promises to some of the party before the debate [on Lyne's motion of no-confidence against the Reid Government] closed. He showed the writer a list of democratic measures which he offered to give in writing and signed, to be used against him if he failed to pass them through the House.106

It is not possible to say whether Lyne promised to sponsor a women's suffrage bill in his moves to obtain the support of the Labor members of the Assembly. However, in view of the fact that since the annual conference of the Political Labor League in January 1896 women's suffrage had been a plank in the Labor party's platform107 it is quite possible that the Labor members of Parliament pledged their support to Lyne on condition that his Government sponsored (among other things) a women's suffrage bill. Further, it is also worth noting that, at its conference in February 1900, the Labor party adopted adult suffrage "as a first plank in their platform for the Federal Elections,"108 and in May 1900

the Labour Party went in deputation to the Premier to request that Adult Suffrage should - in view of the Federal elections - be made part of the Government's programme.109

On 17 July 1900, almost four months before Lyne introduced the Women's Franchise Bill (1900), Thomas Rose moved, in the Legislative Assembly, the following resolution:

(1) That, in the opinion of this House, the franchise should not be imposed upon the women of New South Wales until a majority of adult females voting at a referendum have approved of womanhood suffrage.

(2) That the above resolution be communicated by Address to His Excellency the Governor.110

In his speech opening the debate Rose claimed that he wished only to raise one issue; namely,

as to whether the Government is or is not justified in introducing very serious legislation behind the backs of the people. I say behind the backs of the people advisedly,

106. W.G. Spence, Australia's Awakening, Sydney, 1909, p. 240, cited by Herbert Vere Evatt, Australian Labour Leader. The Story of W.A. Holman and the Labour Movement, Sydney, 1940, p. 120. See also p. 121.


because, to my knowledge, no government has ever yet placed womanhood suffrage in the forefront of its political programme on an appeal to the country. Again, no spontaneous public meeting has ever been called in any part of New South Wales, to my knowledge, in favour of woman suffrage, and I honestly think that the great majority of women are against the proposal.\textsuperscript{111}

R.D. Meagher, M.L.A. for The Tweed, attacked Rose's resolution on the grounds that it was not established constitutional practice to extend the suffrage only after having obtained the consent of the proposed beneficiaries of the measure\textsuperscript{112} and, in addition, Meagher pertinently noted that Rose was an "out-and-out" opponent of women's suffrage and that his resolution was nothing other than a "diplomatic scheme" to prevent the extension of the suffrage to women.\textsuperscript{113} He claimed that Rose hoped that if a referendum was held it would be defeated and if it was not defeated that the number of women voting would be so small that he (Rose) would be able, "throwing aside the question of the small percentage of men voting at a general election," to claim "that on account of the small number polled at a referendum the women are not entitled to vote."\textsuperscript{114}

Other supporters of women's suffrage echoed Meagher's sentiments and Rose's resolution was defeated when the House divided at the end of the debate; ten members voted in favour of the resolution and forty-seven against it.\textsuperscript{115} The most interesting feature of the division list is the fact that among those listed as supporting the resolution are to be found the names of Patrick Crick, John Perry and Thomas Waddell. At the time Crick was the Postmaster-General and Perry held the two portfolios of Public Instruction and Labour and Industry. Their support for Rose's resolution indicates that Lyne's proposal to introduce a women's suffrage bill, to become law without a referendum, did not have the wholehearted support of the full Cabinet - a fact Lyne admitted to the W.S.L. in 1899\textsuperscript{116} but denied during the debate on the second reading of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900).\textsuperscript{117} Less than twelve months after the defeat of Rose's resolution Waddell, as well as Crick and Perry, were sworn in as members of John See's Ministry. See, like his

\textsuperscript{111} N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CIV, p. 1003.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., pp. 1015-1016.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.; p. 1016.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} N.S.W. V. & P. (L.A.), 1900, Vol. I, p. 117.
\textsuperscript{116} W.S.L. of N.S.W. Ninth Annual Report . . . 1900, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{117} N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CVII, p. 5303; Vol. CVIII, p. 5563.
predecessor Lyne, seems, therefore, to have sponsored women's suffrage legislation despite opposition from within the Cabinet.

Lyne did not introduce the Women's Franchise Bill (1900) into the Legislative Assembly until 9 November 1900, a few weeks before the Parliament was due to be prorogued. When moving the second reading of the Bill on 16 November 1900, Lyne regretted the delay in its introduction but told the House that he was

still more anxious to deal with this question of women's suffrage now, because during the early part of next year the federal elections will take place, and when initiating the new system under the Commonwealth I think it would be a good thing that we should have the vote of the whole adult population of the Australian continent. 118

He denied that it was too late to change the electoral laws of the colony to admit the women of N.S.W. as voters at the first federal elections, and he undertook, if the Bill passed, to call Parliament together in time to approve of the new rolls before the first federal election took place. 119 Lyne also assured the Assembly that he would not prorogue Parliament until the Women's Franchise Bill was either "passed or rejected by the Council." 120

The arguments used in the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the second reading of the 1900 Bill and in the second reading debates of the 1901 and 1902 women's suffrage bills were, with the exception of the argument urging the extension of the suffrage to women because of the provisions of the Commonwealth Constitution, the same as those used during the debates on the women's suffrage resolutions of 1891 and 1894.

Three arguments urged against the measure will be considered, briefly, here and will not be dealt with again. As in 1891 and 1894 the opponents of the measure claimed that the House had no mandate from the electors to justify the extension of the suffrage to women 121 - a concession, they furthermore claimed, that a majority of women did not appear to want 122 - and they demanded that, instead of legislating for women's suffrage

118. Ibid., Vol. CVII, p. 5286.
119. Ibid., pp. 5289-5290. See also pp. 5305-5306.
120. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5531. See also p. 5565.
121. See for example Ibid., Vol. CVII, pp. 5292, 5294, 5305; Vol. CVIII, p. 5535.
122. See for example Ibid., Vol. CVII, pp. 5293, 5308; Vol. CVIII, pp. 5472-5473, 5482, 5487, 5533.
"behind the backs of the people," the question should be decided in a truly democratic fashion by a referendum or after a general election in which the proposal to admit women to the ballot-box was an important plank in the victorious party's electoral manifesto. This argument had no appeal to many members of the House who supported the Bill and they would have agreed with Meagher, who pointed out that there was no English precedent to justify the holding of a referendum on a proposal to extend the suffrage and claimed that the fact that women were required to obey the law was itself sufficient to justify the extension of the suffrage to them and thus give them a voice in making the laws that they were required to obey.

The fact that women were excluded from membership of Parliament by clause 4 of the Bill was attacked by opponents of the measure as illogical and as "a gratuitous insult to the women." If women were fit to vote then surely they were fit and proper persons to admit as members of Parliament, the opponents of the Bill argued and Rose claimed that if there is anything in the reforms in favour of woman, the practical work is not done at the ballot-box. The ballot-box is the expression of the general principle. The practical work is done in Parliament. Where women's vote and woman's voice would appeal to the nation is in this Chamber.

While it may well have been the case that the arguments used in favour of the extension of the franchise to women applied equally well as arguments in favour of their admission as members of Parliament, it is difficult to see how the refusal to concede the latter is a sound basis for a refusal to support the former. Furthermore, the inclusion in the Bill of a clause permitting women to sit in Parliament would (as the opponents of women's suffrage doubtlessly well knew) probably not have proved acceptable to a majority of members in the Assembly and, even had it done so, such a provision would have given the Legislative Council a further excuse by which to justify its rejection of the Bill.

123. Ibid., Vol. CVII, p. 5307.
124. See for example Ibid., pp. 5294, 5305, 5308; Vol. CVIII, p. 5517.
125. See for example Ibid., Vol. CVII, pp. 5293, 5308.
126. Ibid., p. 5309.
127. Ibid., p. 5310.
128. Ibid., p. 5292; See also, for example, Ibid., Vol. CVIII, p. 5481.
129. See for example Ibid., p. 5472.
130. Ibid., Vol. CVII, p. 5292.
J.M. Chanter and T. Waddell both cited as one of the reasons for their opposition to the Bill their belief that the extension of the suffrage to women would only serve to increase the voting power of Sydney and its suburbs, and other large centres of population, where a majority of the women of the colony lived, and weaken further the political power of the country areas. The debate on the Women's Franchise Bill (1900) appears to have been the first occasion on which this argument was directed against the proposal to extend the suffrage to women - it does not appear to have appealed to very many members of the House.

With the rejection, after a division, by forty-nine votes to twenty votes, of T.W. Taylor's amendment proposing that the Bill be read "this day three months" the House agreed to the original motion recommending that the Bill be read a second time, by a majority of thirty-two votes. In 1900 the Legislative Assembly had 125 members and of these seventy-two members (plus the Deputy-Speaker) were present in the House when the division on the second reading was taken. The Premier and five of his seven ministerial colleagues who were members of the Assembly supported the Bill. Crick and Perry were not present in the House when the division was called and, in view of the support that they had given to Rose's resolution just over four months earlier, it seems safe to say that they were, at best, not very enthusiastic about the measure. The Leader of the Opposition, G.H. Reid, supported the Bill.

Fifty-two members of the Assembly supported the second reading; nineteen belonged to the Protectionist party; fifteen belonged to the Labor party; sixteen belonged to the Free-trade party and two were independents. Twenty members opposed the second reading: twelve belonged to the Protectionist party; five belonged to the Free-trade party; and two were independents. The Protectionist party had fifty-seven supporters in the Assembly, the Labor party nineteen, the Free-trade party forty-six, and there were three independent members.

131. Ibid., Vol. CVIII, pp. 5508, 5510-5511.
135. No details are available regarding the number of members who paired.
136. I have been unable to discover what party one of the opponents, T.W. Taylor, supported.
members. Although a larger number of Protectionists supported women's suffrage on this occasion than in 1894 there was still — as in 1894 — a very significant proportion of Protectionists who opposed the principle.

After the failure in Committee of an attempt to have clause 4, which prevented women taking a seat in Parliament, deleted, the Bill was reported back to the House without amendment and passed its third reading on 27 November 1900. The Women's Franchise Bill (1900). (b) The Legislative Council.

The Assembly's acceptance of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900) gave the members of the Legislative Council their first opportunity to consider the question of women's suffrage and the occasion was marked by an extremely short debate which was followed by a rejection of the motion that the Bill be read a second time.

The measure was placed in the charge of the Attorney-General, the Hon. B.R. Wise, who, when opening the second reading debate on 28 November 1900, told the Council:

Until thirty seconds ago I quite understood that the Vice-President of the Executive Council [the Hon. F.B. Sutter] was going to move the second reading of this... measure. I confess frankly that I feel the greatest difficulty in moving it, because... I personally have very little sympathy with the measure. ... I look upon this question merely as a question of practical politics, and I recognise that the advent of federation has, for practical purposes, altered the situation. Under the Commonwealth Bill, the votes are counted for Commonwealth purposes, according to the electoral laws of each state; and the number of members apportioned to the Commonwealth Parliament as representing each state is calculated on the voting power of each state. 140

In other words, Wise argued that if N.S.W. admitted women to the suffrage the state would "have a larger representation in Federal Parliament" because the number of voters in a state determined, "to some extent," the number of members a state could send to the

137. Information regarding the party allegiance of the individual members of the Legislative Assembly is based largely on the election results published in the Daily Telegraph, 29 July 1898; S.M.H., 8 July 1901. Information regarding the "state of the parties" in the Legislative Assembly is based on the election results published in the Daily Telegraph, 29 July 1898 and the figures probably do not provide a completely accurate picture of the "state of the parties" in November 1900. 138. N.S.W.P.D., First Series, Vol. CVIII, p. 5566. 139. Ibid., p. 5741-5743. 140. Ibid., p. 5873.
House of Representatives. Having thus grossly misconstrued section 24 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, Wise then proceeded to argue that, if the right to the suffrage "depends upon any other than a natural right, the objection against giving women the franchise may be valid" but he noted that, since the "accepted political doctrine" in N.S.W. was that the suffrage depended upon a "natural innate right," it was logically indefensible to refuse it to women.

Wise was followed by the Hon. A. Brown, whose speech against the Bill was little short of frivolous, and the Hon. T.M. Slattery, who supported the measure and informed members that they "may reject the bill to-night; but the time will come, and that before long, when they will accept it." The House immediately proceeded to a division and rejected the Bill by nineteen votes to twenty-two votes.

The rejection of the Bill by the Council brought a mixed reaction. In the Legislative Assembly, on 29 November 1900, Rose asked the Premier whether he would, in view of the Bill's rejection by the Council, hold a referendum on the question of the extension of the suffrage to women and J.S.T. McGowen, M.L.A. for Redfern and leader of the parliamentary Labor party, asked Lyne whether he was prepared to call a further session of the Eighteenth Parliament in an attempt to have the Women's Franchise Bill passed by the Legislative Council before "the general elections." Lyne indicated his unwillingness to submit the question of women's suffrage to a referendum "at the present time" and claimed that, "it has gone past that." He undertook, if still Premier after the federal elections, to summon Parliament and send the Women's Franchise Bill back to the Legislative Council or, alternatively, revive it in the Council. Lyne concluded his remarks by saying:

141. Ibid.
142. Ibid. See S.M.H., 28 June 1901, for a letter by the Hon. J.H. Want criticising Wise's handling of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900) in the Legislative Council; 29 June 1901 for Wise's reply to Want's (substantially unwarranted) criticisms.
143. Ibid., pp. 5874-5876.
144. Ibid., p. 5879. Slattery's speech extends from p. 5877 to p. 5879.
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid.
I have made up my mind that the Legislative Council shall have an opportunity of dealing with those measures [namely, the Women's Franchise Bill and the Arbitration Bill] before we have an appeal to the country. . . . I feel satisfied that the Women's Suffrage Bill will . . . be passed by the Council. If not, then, as I have said before, we cannot play at politics any longer.149

The Herald informed its readers, in an editorial, that the Legislative Council's rejection of the Bill was not indicative of a total hostility to the principle on the part of the Upper House. It means only that that branch of the Legislature has asked for delay in order to ascertain the definite will of the public. And we are bound to admit in behalf of the Council that to be presented in the week of prorogation with a whole series of bills of the first importance is neither more nor less than an invitation to put them aside. . . . The friends of womanhood suffrage have now been challenged to prove by the attitude of the community whether the Council or the Assembly has truly reflected the sense of the electorate on this proposal. If it be manifest during the recess that not only the men but the women of the colony wish for womanhood suffrage it will be conceded.150

Both the W.S.L. and the W.C.T.U. were, quite naturally, disappointed that the Council had "thrown out"151 the Bill. At a meeting of the Council of the League on 10 December 1900 a resolution was submitted to the effect:

1. "That this Council emphatically protests against the manner in which Mr. Wise - a member of the Government - introduced and spoke to the Women's Franchise Bill in the Upper House on Nov. [sic] 28th.

2. That this resolution be communicated to the Premier & [?] Government."152

The motion was lost on the casting vote of the President, Mrs. B. Palmer, and by June 1901 the Council of the League was prepared to admit, at least publicly, that Wise did his best in a difficult situation.153

The Women's Franchise Bill (1901). (a) Legislative Assembly.

Between the end of November 1900 and July 1901 when the N.S.W. Parliament again assembled, following general elections, a number of events occurred which undoubtedly served to promote the eventual adoption of women's suffrage by N.S.W. in 1902.

149. Ibid.
150. S.N.H., 29 November 1900.
152. W.S.L. of N.S.W., Minutes, 10 December 1900.
In a speech at Maitland, N.S.W., on 17 January 1901, the new Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, Edmund Barton, pledged his support for a uniform, adult federal suffrage and in his speech from the Throne at the opening of the first session of the first Commonwealth Parliament on 10 May 1901, the Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, announced his Government's intention to legislate to establish "... a uniform franchise for all Federal elections by the adoption of adult suffrage." 

Lyne resigned as Premier of N.S.W., to enter federal politics, in March 1901 and he was succeeded by John See, M.L.A. for Grafton. In the Government's election manifesto, issued in April 1901, See pledged his Ministry's support for the extension of the suffrage to women:

The fact that two states have already adopted female suffrage, and that the Federal Parliament proposes to pass a similar measure, makes it manifestly inconsistent that our local suffrage should be on a narrower basis. We therefore propose to confer the franchise on women without delay.

G.H. Reid also resigned from the N.S.W. Parliament to enter federal politics and was succeeded as Leader of the Opposition by C.A. Lee, M.L.A. for Tenterfield. In his policy speech before the N.S.W. elections, Lee voiced his opposition to the extension of the suffrage to women but at the same time he stressed that the members of his party would be free to support the principle if they desired to do so:

I do not pose as one who has suddenly changed his political principles. Personally, I am opposed to adult suffrage. But that is not the opinion of all the members of my party. Consequently, as there are differences of opinion existing amongst members of the Liberal party on the proposal to extend the franchise to women, the question has not been included as a plank in the Liberal platform, but freedom of action in relation to this matter is conceded to its members.

As a result of the elections, in July 1901 the Progressive party (successor to the Protectionist party) headed

154. S.M.H., 18 January 1901. Barton expressed his opposition to the admission of women as members of Parliament but, as P.J. Gandon noted in a letter to the S.M.H., 21 January 1901, the application of the Acts Interpretation Act, 13 & 14 Vic., c. 12 to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act meant that women could become members of either House of the federal legislature.
156. S.M.H., 27 April 1901.
157. S.M.H., 17 May 1901.
by See and supported by the members of the Labor party, was
returned to power. Parliament met on 24 July 1901 and in his
Speech from the Throne the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Frederick
Darley, informed the members that:

The fact that other states are adopting female suffrage, and
that the Federal Parliament proposes a similar law, makes it
inconsistent that the franchise of this state should be on a
narrower basis. It is, therefore, proposed to submit for
your consideration a measure for the establishment of adult
suffrage within the state.158

The Women's Franchise Bill (1901) was read a first time
on 14 August 1901 and See moved the second reading the following
day. In his speech See pointed out that the Bill differed from
the Women's Franchise Bill (1900) in that it contained a
provision stating "that the right so conferred shall not be
exercised until the general election next happening after the
commencement of this Act"159 and that the Government had a clear
mandate to proceed with the Bill:

I am very hopeful that, as the will of the people has been
so recently expressed in a most unmistakeable manner, it
will not be frustrated. If ever there was a question fresh
from the country, where the people by their votes had given
their indorsement [sic] to the proposal, this is one of
those questions, and we can fairly say that we had a clear-
cut issue put before the people, and we had the authority of
the people to put this bill on the statute book.160

Thomas Rose was quick to attack See's claim that the Government
had a mandate to proceed with the Women's Franchise Bill. He
claimed that:

The question of womanhood suffrage never came before the
electors. I want to knock this on the head straightaway.
... The one great question was as to whether this
Government should continue in office or not. That was the
great question which absorbed all other questions.161

To some extent Rose was probably right since the question of the
extension of the suffrage to women appears to have been a minor
issue in the electoral contest. However, the Government did
include the proposal in its electoral manifesto and could,
therefore, legitimately claim that the proposal had been put
before the electors and that it was not acting "behind the backs
of the people."

On 22 August 1901 the House agreed to the motion

159. Ibid., p. 581.
160. Ibid., p. 582.
161. Ibid., p. 586.
recommending that the Bill be read a second time, by a majority of forty-four votes. In 1901 the Legislative Assembly had 125 members and of these fifty-eight (plus the Speaker) were present in the House when the division on the second reading was taken. The Premier and three of his ministerial colleagues — including John Perry — who were members of the Assembly, supported the Bill. Four ministers were absent. They were Thomas Waddell, Patrick Crick, John Kidd, and James Hayes. Waddell and Crick were possibly still opposed to the extension of the suffrage to women; there is no evidence to indicate whether Kidd supported or opposed the principle in 1901; and Hayes supported the third reading of the Bill.

Fifty-one members of the Assembly supported the second reading: 162 eleven belonged to the Progressive party; nineteen belonged to the Labor party; eighteen belonged to the Liberal party (successor to the Free trade party) and three were independents. Seven members of the Assembly opposed the second reading: six belonged to the Progressive party and one was an independent. The Progressive party had forty-two members in the Assembly, the Labor party twenty-four, the Liberal party forty-one and there were eighteen independents. 163

Once again an attempt, during the Committee stages, to delete clause 4 (which prevented women taking a seat in Parliament) from the Bill failed and the measure was reported back to the House without amendment. 164 On 22 August 1901, after a debate 165 and the failure of an attempt to have the Bill recommitted 166 the House divided and agreed to the third reading by fifty-six votes to eighteen votes. 167

The Women's Franchise Bill (1901). (b) The Legislative Council.

The second reading of the Bill was moved in the Legislative Council on 4 September 1901 by the Hon. Francis Suttor, Vice-President of the Executive Council. In his speech Suttor claimed that

162. According to See, eighteen members in favour of women's suffrage paired — see Ibid., p. 738.
163. Information regarding the party allegiance of the individual members of the Assembly and of the "state of the parties" is based on the election results published in the S.M.H., 8 July 1901.
165. See Ibid., pp. 734-749.
166. Ibid., pp. 738, 749.
the position of the measure has been materially altered since the Government submitted it to the Chamber last session. It has been altered because, by an overwhelming vote, the Commonwealth electors have returned men pledged to support the measure in the Commonwealth Parliament. Since the measure was before this House on a former occasion, we have had an election of members to the State Parliament, and, by an overwhelming majority, representing all parties in the popular branch of the legislature, members have been returned to advocate its passage.168

The Herald expressed a similar point of view in an editorial, published while the Legislative Council was still debating the second reading motion:

It is of course no argument against the measure to say that it was rejected last year. The facts since brought under the notice of the Chamber, including the fact that the elected representatives of the people are wholly in favour of the extension of the franchise to women, are sufficient to warrant the Legislative Council in passing the Women's Franchise Bill. Nor is it desirable that there should be a referendum on the subject. Members fresh from their constituencies are emphatic in their support of the Bill, and this should be enough for us...169

The leader then commented on the proper function of the Legislative Council. It claimed that the Council had "sufficiently done its duty" by rejecting the Women's Franchise Bill of 1900, thus providing the opportunity for "the advantages and disadvantages of adult suffrage" to be "duly weighed." However, the Herald asserted, it was "no part of the duty of the Council to oppose itself to the clearly expressed wishes of the people."170

Supporters of women's suffrage in the Council relied on arguments that were the same or similar to those used by the supporters of the cause in the Legislative Assembly. In addition, they also commented on the proper function of the House of which they were members. Speaking during the debate on Suttor's motion, recommending that the Bill be read a third time, B.R. Wise, a reluctant supporter of the Bill, echoed the words of other members of the Council and of the Herald's editorial of 12 September 1901 when he outlined what he believed was the proper function of the Upper House:

Not being a representative Chamber, but a revising Chamber, I hold that we have no right to set ourselves in antagonism to the expressed opinion of the representative Chamber when that opinion has been once formally expressed, and after two

169. S.M.H., 12 September 1901.
170. Ibid.
elections. . . . If it is part of the constitutional duty of this Chamber to pay regard to the opinion of the people when that opinion has been expressed very emphatically and after due deliberation, then surely there never was a clearer case in which we ought to sink our own individual feelings in order to do our duty and give effect to the will of the people when the people have intimated their wishes as clearly as they have in this instance, . . . 171

The opponents of the measure also relied on arguments that were the same as, or similar to those used in the Legislative Assembly. There is no necessity to outline these again. It is sufficient to note here that the opponents of the Bill implicitly rejected the claim, made by some supporters of the measure, that it would be constitutionally improper for the Council to reject the Bill for a second time.

At the end of the debate, on 19 September 1901, the House rejected, by twenty-one votes to twenty, 172 a proposal by the Hon. J.H. Want that the motion recommending the second reading be amended by the omission of all the words after the word "be" "with a view to the insertion of the words 'read this day six months'" 173 and agreed to the original motion without a further division. 174

In Committee the Council agreed, by nineteen votes to sixteen votes, to a motion by Want recommending the deletion of clause 4 so as to permit women to sit in Parliament. 175 Want left the House in no doubt as to his motives for seeking the amendment. During his speech in the second reading debate he had said:

My hon. friend [Suttor], who is in charge of this bill, asked me the other night if I was in favour of women sitting in Parliament, and if I would accept the bill with such a provision in it. I told him I would, because I believe that if we insert a provision of that kind in the bill in this Chamber, they will throw it out in the other. 176

There is no doubt whatsoever that the other opponents of the Bill agreed with Want's reasoning. Suttor, speaking for the Government, opposed the amendment but promised that the Government would do its utmost to have the amendment accepted by the Legislative Assembly.

172. Ibid., p. 1551.
173. Ibid., p. 1227.
174. Ibid., p. 1551.
175. Ibid., pp. 1552-1556.
176. Ibid., p. 1222. See Ibid., Vol. I, p. 1024 for that part of Suttor's speech referred to by Want.
Suttor moved the motion recommending the third reading of the Bill on 25 September 1901 and immediately the Hon. R.G.D. Fitzgerald rose and moved:

That the debate on this bill be adjourned until Wednesday next. I take this step because of the very great importance of the Women's Franchise Bill, and with a view to having a call of the House upon a date to be fixed.\(^{177}\)

Fitzgerald, a supporter of the Bill, then went on to note that:

Although a new member of this House, I have noticed in the past that some hon. gentlemen present to-night are very frequently absent on other occasions.\(^{178}\)

Fitzgerald was cautiously but nonetheless unmistakably referring to the fact that in his opinion - which was also shared by other supporters of the Bill - the Council had been 'stacked' in an effort to defeat the measure. The Hon. J.N. Buzacott seems to have been of the opinion that Want arranged to have the House 'stacked' because he does not want to take his own physic if the bill is sent back to the Legislative Assembly. His courage has deserted him at the last moment. . . . He gave the House to understand, . . . that if he got a certain clause eliminated he would support the bill so that it might be sent back to the Assembly.\(^{179}\)

After a short debate\(^{180}\) the Council rejected Fitzgerald's motion by twenty-five votes to twenty votes\(^{181}\) and it then rejected,\(^{182}\) after further debate,\(^{183}\) Buzacott's proposal that Suttor's motion recommending that the Bill be read a third time, be amended, with a view to recommitting the Bill so as to enable the House to further consider clause 2.\(^{184}\)

In his speech in reply at the end of the debate, Suttor, obviously convinced that the Council would reject the Bill, questioned the propriety of such a move and warned the House against it:

I say now, that if on this occasion the Council - which really, after all, is a revising Chamber - rejects the bill, it will be taking a most unusual if not an unprecedented course. Hitherto, when any bill has received the approval

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178. Ibid., p. 1631.
179. Ibid., p. 1646.
180. Ibid., pp. 1632-1635.
183. Ibid., pp. 1648-1654.
184. Ibid., p. 1648.
of the people, and that approval has been confirmed by vote in the Legislative Assembly on more than one occasion, that measure has invariably received a favourable reception at the hands of hon. members of this Chamber. ... The responsibility for the vote that is about to be taken I place entirely upon those in opposition to this bill. I tell hon. members plainly that, although they may succeed in defeating this measure, at the next general election women will have a vote. When this matter comes up again — ... hon. members will find the women will have a vote, though they may not intend to bestow it now.185

Despite Suttor's warning, the Council rejected the Bill by twenty-six votes to twenty-one votes186 and the opponents then moved, successfully, to have the Bill discharged187 and withdrawn.188

In the Legislative Assembly, a few hours after the Council voted to reject the Bill, J.C.L. Fitzpatrick, M.L.A. for Rylstone, attacked the decision:

It is a very serious matter. Seeing that in another place a majority of votes has been cast against the measure after it had been accepted by the people who sent a very large majority into this House pledged to carry this new system of voting into effect, I should like to know what the Premier proposes to do.189

See's reply was non-committal:

My hon. friend may depend upon it that I shall preserve the rights of this House, but I have not yet decided what course I shall take. I am not going to make any rash promises. I have not yet consulted my colleagues. I feel that I have the voice of the people with me, and whatever course I take will be in the interests of the people.190

The Herald reported that

whatever the Council might think to the contrary, the Government was determined that the bill should pass, but what steps would be taken to bring about this result Mr. See could not state off-hand.191

In an editorial on 26 September 1901, the Herald criticised the Council's decision to reject the Bill:

This disappointment to friends of womanhood suffrage will be great, for it had seemed at last as if even the Council would recognise that the granting of the Parliamentary vote to women had become a mandate from the constituencies and a demand from the women of the State. ... If at all events

185. Ibid., p. 1657.
187. Ibid.
188. Ibid.
190. Ibid.
191. S.Y.T.H., 26 September 1901.
most of those women prominent in public affairs desire the franchise, if the people have authorised their elected representatives to give it, and if the Government and the Assembly seriously accept that authority, then the Council must see that it does not occupy a strong and tenable position in holding out.\(^{192}\)

The Women's Franchise Bill (1902). (a) The Legislative Assembly.

Sir John See introduced the Women's Franchise Bill (1902) in the Legislative Assembly on 17 July 1902. In his opening speech See drew the attention of the House to the fact that, since the question of women's suffrage had last been debated in the N.S.W. Parliament, the Commonwealth Parliament had extended the federal suffrage to all adult women, and as a result he felt confident that the N.S.W. Parliament would follow suit and extend the state suffrage to the women of N.S.W.:  

Since this bill last passed this Chamber by an overwhelming majority, when the details and merits of the case were gone into, a measure of this description has passed the Federal Parliament. Therefore, whatever disabilities there may have been in the minds of those who were opposed to this bill for the extension of the franchise to women they must be removed by the fact that the women of the Commonwealth now have a vote. I think the State Parliament will realise that, as the Federal Parliament has already passed an enactment to give the women of Australia a vote, we in New South Wales should not be behind in doing the same for the women with regard to our State Parliament.\(^{193}\)

The measure faced little opposition and on 24 July 1902 the Assembly agreed to the motion recommending that the Bill be read a second time by a majority of forty-five votes.\(^{194}\) Of the 125 members of the Legislative Assembly sixty-one (plus the Deputy-Speaker) were present in the House when the division on the second reading was taken. The Premier and four of his ministerial colleagues - including Thomas Waddell - who were members of the Assembly, supported the Bill. Three ministers - Crick, O'Sullivan, and Hayes - were absent from the Chamber.

Fifty-three members of the Assembly supported the second reading:\(^{195}\) thirteen were members of the Progressive party; fifteen were members of the Labor party; nineteen were members of the Liberal party; and six were independents. Eight members of the Assembly opposed the second reading: five were members of the Progressive party; two were members of the

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\(^{192}\) S.M.H., 26 September, 1901.  
\(^{195}\) There is no evidence to indicate how many members paired.
Liberal party; and one was an independent.\(^\text{196}\)

In Committee Rose proposed two amendments to the Bill. One to allow women to vote by post\(^\text{197}\) and the second to permit women to sit in Parliament.\(^\text{198}\) Both were rejected and the Bill was reported back to the House without amendment. On 30 July 1902 the Assembly passed the third reading without division.\(^\text{199}\)

The Women's Franchise Bill (1902). (b) The Legislative Council.

Suttor moved the second reading of the Women's Franchise Bill (1902) in the Legislative Council on 6 August 1902. Like Sir John See, Suttor drew the attention of the House to the fact that the Commonwealth Parliament had recently enacted legislation providing for adult suffrage in federal elections. As a result, claimed Suttor,

it would be inconsistent, if not ridiculous, if we should have the election of members of Parliament in the State of New South Wales on a franchise different from that in existence for the election of members of the Federal Parliament. ... That being the case, I submit to hon. members that there is no other course open to them - ... but to submit to what they called, during a former debate, the inevitable, and allow the motion to go.\(^\text{200}\)

Supporters of the Bill also commented, as they had done in 1901, on the proper function of the Legislative Council and Suttor warned the House against rejecting the Bill for a third time:

I have never endeavoured to coerce a single individual in this Council, nor have I held out any threats. I do not do it now. I can only say that, for this Council to reject on three occasions a measure which has been practically unanimously passed by the other House, ... is to take a serious step.\(^\text{201}\)

The House, however, seemed unwilling to reverse its former stance. During the debate the Hon. C.E. Pilcher moved

That all the words after the word "that" be omitted with the view to insert in lieu thereof the following words: - "in the opinion of this House a referendum of the adult women of New South Wales should be taken before dealing further with the Women's Franchise Bill."\(^\text{202}\)

\(^{196}\) Information regarding the party allegiance of individual members of the Assembly is based on the election results published in S.M.H., 8 July 1901.
\(^{198}\) Ibid., p. 1447.
\(^{199}\) Ibid., p. 1517.
\(^{200}\) Ibid., p. 1662.
\(^{201}\) Ibid., p. 1689.
\(^{202}\) Ibid., p. 1671.
THE BULLETIN

ON THE GRANTING OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

From: The Bulletin, 23 August 1902
When the question: "That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question" was put the "noes" had a majority of three. In an effort to save the Bill Suttor successfully moved the adjournment of the debate before the second part of the question was put.

The second reading debate resumed on 13 August 1902 when the House rejected Pilcher's amendment and Suttor then moved:

That the blank after the word 'That' be filled up by the insertion of the words 'this bill be now read a second time.'

A lengthy and complex debate followed as to whether the motion was in order and, following the Deputy-President's ruling that it was in order, the House agreed to the recommendation that the Bill be read a second time by twenty-three votes to thirteen votes. The measure was reported from Committee without amendment.

On 14 August 1902 the Council agreed to Suttor's motion recommending that the Bill be read a third time and on 27 August 1902 the Women's Franchise Bill (1902) received the Royal Assent.
Chapter 5. CONCLUSION

The enactment of the Women's Franchise Bill (1902) by the N.S.W. Parliament seems to have been the result of two principal factors; first, the provisions of the federal constitution which permitted the women of South Australia and Western Australia to vote in federal elections and which empowered the federal legislature to extend the suffrage for federal elections to the women of Queensland, N.S.W., Victoria, and Tasmania; and second, the rise of the Labor party which was prepared, after the enactment of one man one vote in 1893, to support proposals to extend the suffrage to women and which was in a position to exert pressure on those ministries that relied on its parliamentary support to so extend the franchise. It is difficult to estimate which of these two factors was most important, although neither can be ignored in any analysis of the reasons for the victory of the women's suffrage cause in N.S.W.

In 1900, 1901, and 1902, when the N.S.W. Government announced its intention to introduce legislation conferring the suffrage on women, it argued that the provisions of the federal constitution made it desirable for N.S.W. to adopt the reform: in 1900 Lyne was of the opinion that, since the women of South Australia were permitted to vote in federal elections, the same right should be extended to the women of N.S.W.; in 1901 the N.S.W. Parliament met soon after the first federal elections and the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament, and the N.S.W. Premier, John See, drew the attention of the Legislative Assembly to the promise of the Barton Ministry to introduce legislation into the federal parliament conferring the federal franchise on the women of Queensland, N.S.W., Victoria and Tasmania; in 1902 See's hand was further strengthened because, before he introduced the Women's Franchise Bill of that year, the Commonwealth Parliament had approved of a bill which extended the suffrage in all federal elections to all adult women.

But the reliance of N.S.W. governments on Labor Party support was also important. After the general election of July 1898, the Reid Ministry was forced to rely on the support of the members of the parliamentary Labor party to govern. But the debate about federation meant that, although Reid was sympathetic to the women's cause, as was the Labor party, he was unable to allow time for Parliament to debate Fegan's Women's Franchise Bill, (1898). By September 1899, however, the situation had
changed considerably. The question of federation had been decided and in September Reid resigned as Premier and was succeeded by the leader of the Protectionist party, W.J. Lyne, who, like Reid, also relied on the support of the parliamentary Labor party to govern. We have already noted that Lyne made an agreement with the Labor party to sponsor certain of the reforms it sought. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is not unreasonable to suggest that women's suffrage may well have been one of those reforms which the Labor party expected the new ministry to include as part of government policy. This possibly explains, at least in part, why Lyne was able to take the necessary steps to give the women of N.S.W. the suffrage, despite the opposition of two members of his Cabinet - Crick and Perry - and the reluctance of a third member - Wise - to endorse it.

Lyne's successor, John See, also relied on the support of the Labor party to govern and he too may well have continued to follow his predecessor's policy - despite the fact that his Cabinet included opponents such as Crick, Perry, and Waddell - because of the demands of the Labor party and the demands of those members of the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly who, after the defeat of the Women's Franchise Bill (1900), were determined to force the Legislative Council to bow to the will of the Assembly.

While the role of the Labor party may well have been an important factor in accounting for the decision of Lyne and See to introduce into the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly bills conferring the franchise upon women, it at the most appears to have simply hastened the granting of a concession that was well-nigh inevitable. It would have been almost impossible, as well as quite absurd, for the N.S.W. state government to refuse to concede the state suffrage to women while women were permitted by federal law to vote in federal elections. Even the conservative Legislative Council of Victoria was forced to recognise the fruitlessness of its opposition to the extension of the state suffrage to women, and in 1908, after repeated refusals, approved a bill admitting women to the ballot-box in state elections.

It would be wrong to ignore the role of the W.C.T.U. and the W.S.L. in accounting for the victory of women's suffrage. Both organisations worked energetically to promote the cause. They organised deputations to various N.S.W. governments, petitioned the N.S.W. Parliament, strove with considerable success to obtain the support of all candidates seeking election to the
Legislative Assembly, and sought the support of the members of the Assembly and Legislative Council for women's suffrage measures as they were introduced into each Chamber. In addition, they attempted, through public meetings, drawing-room meetings and publicity in the press to obtain public support for their cause and to use that support as a further means of convincing Parliament that their demands were widely endorsed by the community. These activities helped prepare the way for the granting of women's suffrage, but the support that the W.S.L. and the W.C.T.U. received was not very extensive and they could not reasonably claim that the granting of women's suffrage in N.S.W. was primarily due to their efforts.

In the United States of America the various victories of the women's suffrage cause in the west, between 1869 and 1910 can, by and large, be ascribed to the political significance of the "Puritan ethic." The women's suffrage movement became associated with the values propagated by the upholders of the "Puritan ethic" and with attempts to use those values to symbolically enhance - by legislative enactment - the status of the "old" middle-class. In N.S.W., the women's suffrage movement was associated, primarily through the W.C.T.U., with values that were in many respects similar to those distinguished by Grimes as having been part of the "Puritan ethic" in the west of the United States. Unlike the situation in America, these values had only a very slight political significance in N.S.W. and the eventual victory of women's suffrage in 1902 appears to have had little to do with any association between the women's suffrage movement and a "Puritan ethic." Moreover, while the movement obviously hoped to enhance the status of women in N.S.W., the victory in 1902 does not appear to have been an attempt by a particular class to use women's suffrage to prevent a further decline in its status.

The women's suffrage cause in N.S.W. was not hampered by the necessity of having to depend for victory upon the success of a referendum, as was usually the case in the United States of America. It cannot, of course, be assumed that a referendum in N.S.W. would have resulted in the rejection of a proposal to admit women to the ballot-box but, if American experience and Australian experience after 1901 are any guide, it seems extremely difficult to have proposed reforms approved at a referendum. Proposals made by opponents of women's suffrage, such as Thomas Rose, M.L.A. for Argyle, that the question of whether or not women should be permitted to vote be the subject of a referendum were probably made in the hope that the voters would reject the proposition.
In contrast to Britain, the supporters of the women's suffrage movements in N.S.W. and the other Australian colonies and states did not resort to violence in an attempt to achieve their goals. No 'heroes' like the Pankhursts, the Pethick-Lawrences, or Flora Drummond emerged to become the leaders of a movement of women and men who were determined to use force in an effort to compel a reluctant government to give in to their demands and grant women the right to vote.

In 1867, years before the birth of the women's suffrage movement in the Australian colonies, the British constitutional women's suffrage societies began their campaign to obtain the franchise for women but, despite all their efforts, they had made little or no progress when, in 1903, Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union (W.S.P.U.). Frustrated by their inability to achieve what they regarded as the legitimate rights of women, the members of the W.S.P.U. resorted, after 1905, to more militant methods than those adopted by the constitutionalists, led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett. The tactics adopted by the W.S.P.U. led, finally, to violence.

In N.S.W., on the other hand, the movement met little opposition and victory was achieved before the emergence of leaders who were prepared to resort to violence. Further, the supporters of women's suffrage in N.S.W. were encouraged when: in 1893 New Zealand extended the suffrage to all adult women; in 1894 South Australia followed suit and in the same year the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly endorsed in principle a resolution recommending that the suffrage be extended to women; in 1897 the federal constitutional convention incorporated provisions into the draft constitution which guaranteed the women of South Australia the right to vote in federal elections and gave the federal parliament the right to extend the suffrage to all adult women; and in 1900 the Lyne Government made the enactment of women's suffrage a plank in the Ministry's policy and Lyne's successor, See, followed suit. In Britain the women's suffrage movement faced disappointment after disappointment and finally a section of it resolved to resort to violence; in N.S.W. the supporters of the movement were encouraged by victories close at hand and did not at any stage feel that it was necessary, or would be necessary, to resort to militant tactics if they were to achieve their goal.
APPENDIX

Rules of the W.S.L. of N.S.W., May 1891 to June 1892.

1. That the name of this Association be the Womanhood Suffrage League of N.S. Wales.

2. That the object of the League is to obtain the franchise for women upon the same conditions as those which apply to men. (For the accomplishment of this object all administrative power shall rest with the Council.)

3. That any person over the age of twenty-one, paying the sum of one shilling annually, shall be a member of the League, and shall be entitled to attend all its General Meetings.

4. That the Council of the League shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, two Secretaries, and a Treasurer, a Chairman of Committee, and eighteen Members of Council. (Presidents and Secretaries of Branches shall be ex-officio Members of Council.)

5. All officers shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting. Retiring officers shall be eligible for re-election. Immediate vacancies may be filled by the vote of the Council.

Rules of the W.S.L. of N.S.W., June 1892 to September 1893.

I. That the name of the association be the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales.

II. That the object of the League is to obtain the franchise for women upon the same conditions as those which apply to men. For the accomplishment of this object, all administrative power shall rest with the council.

III. That any person over the age of 21 on paying the sum of one shilling annually shall be a member of the League and shall be entitled to attend its general meetings.

IV. That the council of the League shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents not more than seven, a recording and a corresponding secretary, and eighteen members. Vice-Presidents will be elected by the council. Any enrolled member of the League who has been elected delegate by a group of ten enrolled members and whose election has

1. Woman's Suffrage Journal, 1 September 1891.
been ratified by the council may attend general council-meetings and may vote on any question.

V. The council shall be elected at the annual general meeting. Retiring Officers shall be eligible for re-election immediately. Vacancies may be filled by the council.

Rules of the W.S.L. of N.S.W., from September 1893. 3

I. The name of the Association shall be "THE WOMANHOOD SUFFRAGE LEAGUE OF NEW SOUTH WALES."

II. The object of the League is to obtain the franchise for women, on the same conditions as those which apply to men.

III. The object of the League shall be promoted by the formation of branches, the holding of public meetings, the deliver [sic] of lectures or addresses upon any topics dealing with the Woman's Suffrage Cause generally, and by any other such means as the Council may from time to time approve.

IV. Any person over the age of eighteen agreeing to the objects of the League, on payment of the sum of 2/6 annually, to the Treasurer of the League, or of any branch, may become a member and shall be entitled to attend and vote at all general meetings of the League.

V. A branch of the League may be formed in any district as soon as ten members are enrolled, such a branch to elect its own officers, to manage its own local affairs, to be allowed to establish any rules with regard to fees, and to contribute 6d. per member, annually to the general fund of the League.

VI. The head-quarters of the League shall be in Sydney, members not associated with any branch shall be considered members of the Central League, and subscriptions paid direct to the Treasurer of the League shall be entered to the general fund.

VII. The management of the League shall be vested in a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary, a General Secretary and a Council. The Council to consist of members and delegates. Members not less than eighteen to be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the League, nominations to be in the Secretary's hands one month prior to the General Meeting. Delegates to be elected by the branches as hereafter provided. Immediate vacancies to be filled by the Council.

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