

is for the law, and the law alone, to punish him. It is still more outrageous to suggest that assaults can be committed with impunity against some women because other women with whom they may or may not be connected are guilty of violent action.

Forcible Feeding for Unconvicted Persons

Scandalous as is the practice of forcible feeding as applied to convicted prisoners, it is still more contrary to all sense of decency when applied to persons awaiting trial who are hunger striking because of the refusal of the magistrate to allow them bail. We hope that when Parliament meets the Home Secretary will find that his sanction for this disgraceful proceeding has earned for him the condemnation of the right thinking members of the House.

Items of Interest

A deputation of East London working women is marching to the House of Commons on Wednesday evening, June 10, with the intention of waiting upon Mr. Asquith. It will be led by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.

The *Manchester Guardian*, in a leading article on Tuesday last, has a strong comment on the encouragement given by the Press to mob violence practised on the suffragettes.

The *Times* on Tuesday last published an interesting article on the Civil Service Commission Report from the pen of a correspondent, in which the recommendations for continuing the exclusion of women from the higher posts of the Service, and for segregating the men and women clerks, are cleverly shown up. Another article in the same issue, by a solicitor, pleads hard for the retention of the protective discrimination in favour of the male sex in that profession.

The United Suffragists are holding a free public meeting in the Essex Hall on Thursday evening, June 11. It is expected that members of the Irish-women's deputation to Mr. Redmond will be present, and will speak, in addition to the originally announced list of speakers.

"THE PRICE OF LIBERTY"

The Last Written Word of Emily Wilding Davison

[We reproduce below the striking article by Miss Emily Wilding Davison which appeared in the "Daily Sketch" of May 28. It was probably her last written word before going out to meet her death by stopping the King's horse in the Derby last year. "Miss Davison," says the "Daily Sketch" in a foreword to the essay, "was a highly-educated woman, a B.A., Honours (London), and in Class 1 of the Oxford Final Honour School in English Language and Literature. She had published many articles in VOTES FOR WOMEN and in other periodicals. Imprisoned eight times, she hunger-struck on the last seven occasions, and on three of these she was forcibly fed. The poignant interest of this, her last utterance, is obvious."]

The true suffragette is an epitome of the determination of women to possess their own souls. The words of the Master are eternally true:—

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

And it is the realisation of this ideal that is moving the most advanced of the feminists to stand out at all costs to-day.

Men as a sex have not yet grasped the inevitability of the forging of this last link in the chain of human progress. Ever since history peeps out of the mists of time the male of the race has made it his prerogative to give or deny the whole world to his partner, but has withheld from her that which is above all temporal things—namely, the possession of a soul, the manifestation of the Godhead within.

They have beautified and decorated the shrine, but they have kept it empty of the divinity which gave a significance to the paraphernalia of the shrine.

Especially is this error noticeable and blameworthy in the latter days of the early Christian Church, when it was seriously discussed whether women even possessed souls, and sufficient doubt on the subject was raised to condemn the sex from that time onward to an inferior position in the community.

For centuries people have been groping after the dry bones of humanity, forgetting the mighty spirit which alone could make those dry bones live, till early last century the sons of men saw the need of the vivifying breath, and one man after another, one class after another felt the quick stirring process, and rose to the wondrous life of civic freedom.

Could the partners of men be untouched by this marvellous awakening? Could women any longer remain dry bones merely or indeed even as a clod of earth in the valley? Could the newly aroused and enlightened race owe its origin to an insensate and unintelligent creature?

The wonderful renaissance of freedom has to extend its kindly influence to all! In the New Testament the Master reminded His followers that when the merchant had found the Pearl of Great Price, he sold all that he had in order to buy it. That is the parable of Militancy! It is that which the woman warriors are doing to-day. Some are truer warriors than others, but the perfect Amazon is she who will sacrifice all even unto this last to win the Pearl of Freedom for her sex.

Some of the beautiful pearls that women sell to obtain this freedom which is so little appreciated by those who are born free are the pearls of Friendship,

Good Report, Love, and even Life itself, each in itself a priceless boon.

Who will gainsay that Friendship is one of the priceless jewels of life? Did not the Elizabethan philosopher remind us that friendship doubles our joys and halves our sorrows? Have not the poets sung the inestimable riches of friendship?

Yet this pearl is sacrificed without a moment's hesitation by the true militant. And, indeed, the sacrifice is inevitable, even as the sun puts out the bright glow of the grate fire. Yet the Lares and Penates are valued gods, even if lesser lights, whilst on the sunniest day a bitter frost may necessitate the worship of the lesser but more comfortable flame.

Thus the sacrifice involves terrible suffering to the militant—old friends, recently made friends, they all go one by one into the limbo of the burning fiery furnace, a grim holocaust to Liberty.

An even severer part of the price is the surrender of Good Report—one of the brightest and most precious of the gems in a woman's crown, as anyone can realise who knows how easily her fair fame is sullied.

Men have been able to go forward through good report and ill report, and so low has been the standard of morals for them that the breath of scandal but seemed to burnish more brightly their good qualities.

But owing to the same double standard the merest whisper of venomous tongues could damn a woman socially and politically, for to be safe she must be like Caesar's wife.

Hence, to women, reputation is often as dear as life itself. Yet even this jewel has been sacrificed by the militant, for she has felt the truth of the Cavalier poet's song—

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

And she has felt in her innermost soul that there was no chance of preserving any "honour" worth the name if she acquiesced in a state of society wherein women's souls and bodies were bought and sold.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." What possibility for those who knew the existing evil to sit down and suffer it in comfort and peace? Better to be Anathema Maranatha for the sake of progress than to sit lapped in ignoble ease in the House of Good Fame! Better that all men should speak evil of her and revile her, fighting the eternal battle of glorious liberty and humanity!

But a more soul-rending sacrifice even than that of friendship and of good report is demanded of the militant, that of the blood tie. "She that loveth mother or father, sister or brother, husband or child, dearer than me cannot be my disciple," saith the terrible voice of freedom in accents that rend the very heart in twain.

"Cannot this cup of anguish be spared me?" cries the militant aloud in agony, yet immediately, as if in repentance for having so nearly lost the Priceless Pearl, in the words of all strivers after progress, she ejaculates: "Nevertheless I will pay, even unto this price"; and in her writhing asks what further demand can be exacted from her.

The glorious and inscrutable Spirit of Liberty has but one further penalty within its power, the surrender of Life itself. It is the supreme consummation of sacrifice, than which none can be higher or greater.

To lay down life for friends, that is glorious, selfless, inspiring! But to re-enact the tragedy of Calvary for generations yet unborn, that is the last consummate sacrifice of the Militant!

"Nor will she shrink from this Nirvana.
She will be faithful 'unto this last."

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