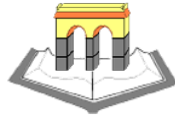


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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
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**Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Section of English**

**Female Opposition to Women Parliamentary
Franchise in England and its Impact on the Suffrage
Movement (1908-1918)**

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature in
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of “Magister” in British
Commonwealth and American Studies

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DEDICATIONS

This work is dedicated to my dear parents.

It is also dedicated to my sisters **KADAOUIA** and **MOKHTARIA**.

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Abstract

In the nineteenth century, the female suffrage movement was launched by women suffragists in Great Britain (England as a case study) in 1866 to call for the parliamentary enfranchisement of women. As a response to the female suffrage movement, the female anti-suffrage movement sprang up in 1889 to oppose the grant of the parliamentary franchise for women. The female anti-suffrage movement was carried on by women antis till 1908 when it started in an organized way through the resort to anti-suffrage organizations. This research work endeavours to tackle the reasons behind the female opposition to the parliamentary vote although it concerned all women. All the arguments, which were put forward, shared the resentment of the political equality between men and women through the acquisition of the parliamentary vote. This research sheds light also on the outcome of the female opposition which was failure. The defeat of the female anti-suffrage campaign was seen through the partial enfranchisement of women over the age of thirty in 1918.

List of Acronyms

B.R.C.: Belgian Relief Committee

I.W.C: International Women's Congress

M.P : Member of Parliament

N.C.F.: No Conscription Fellowship

N.L.O.W.S.: National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage

N.U: National Union

N.U.W.S.S : National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies

U.D.C.: The Union for Democratic Control

W.F.L: Women Freedom League

W.I.C.: Women's Interests Committee

W.N.A.S.L : Women's National Anti-Suffrage League

W.S.P.U : Women's Social and Political Union

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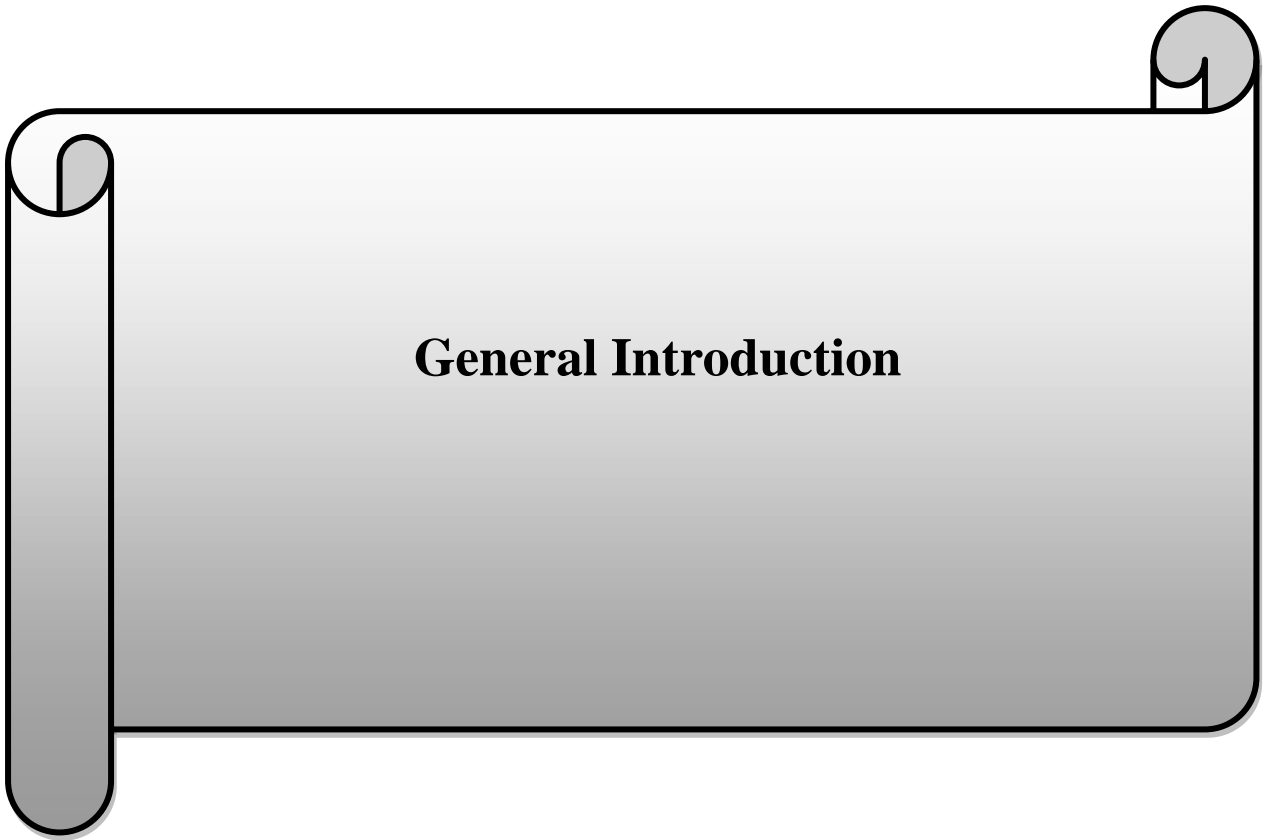
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General Introduction

General Introduction

In England, as in any country, there are surfeit of norms and conventions that guide the way men and women live and perform their roles in society. The arena where both genders performed their roles was called “sphere”. In this vein, there were two spheres. The public sphere for men and the private sphere for women. In nineteenth-century England, women lived in a patriarchal society under the authority of their male controllers (brothers, fathers or husbands). Women were deprived of their rights, their sole onus was to do the housework and take care of the family.

The state of being subordinated to men and being deprived of their rights forged women to react. Their awareness arose due to ample changes and events that paved the way for the process of the female social change that they desired to determine. The most crucial change in the English society that empowered women to demand their rights was the emergence of the Industrial Revolution (1750-1850). The latter acquainted women with an occasion to perform paid-jobs, they started to question their status in society. The alteration of women’s roles and their process of seeking social change were labeled as “Woman Question”.

For the sake of achieving their rights that they were denied, women organized a series of movements that mirrored the different rights women desired to accomplish. One of the female movements, launched in nineteenth-century England, was the suffrage movement. The latter started in 1866 and it aimed at demanding the right to vote in parliamentary elections on the same terms as it was extended to men. Most important of all, one of the rights that women lacked was the right to vote (the franchise). The latter, if granted to women, would enable women to enjoy their citizenship, political freedom and climb the ladder of political participation.

The suffrage movement started under the leadership of the female suffragist Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1846-1929) through her pro-suffrage organization the National Union for Women Suffrage Societies (N.U.W.S.S.). The female members of the N.U.W.S.S demanded the right to vote peacefully without the resort to violence. Unlike the N.U.W.S.S’s peaceful demand of the parliamentary vote, the militant suffrage movement flared up in 1903 under the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst

General Introduction

(1858-1928) and her daughter Christabel (1880-1958). They established the Women's Social and Political Union (W.S.P.U) in 1903. The female members of the W.S.P.U or as they were called "the suffragettes" demanded the vote through reliance on militancy and violence. They resorted to force such as breaking windows, burning governmental buildings and destroying public properties.

From the beginning of the suffrage movement, women suffragists encountered opposition from Members of Parliament. The government kept denying the vote for women and pursuing several suffrage extensions to men. The parliamentary opposition to women enfranchisement was portrayed through the repeated rejection of the pro-suffrage petitions presented to Parliament. Most importantly, women suffragists and suffragettes did not encounter opposition solely from government. They encountered opposition from the male and female opponents of the vote outside Parliament.

What worsened matters was that women suffragists were opposed by other women who endeavoured to oppose the suffrage movement and prevent women from gaining the parliamentary vote. Those women who opposed the vote were known as "women antis" or "women anti-suffragists". They launched their anti-suffrage campaign in 1889 as a response to the female suffrage movement. The female anti-suffrage campaign was launched under the leadership of Mary Humphrey Ward (1851-1920). Women antis strove to convince the government that the vote should not be granted to women.

The female opponents vehemently resented the parliamentary vote because they believed that politics and the political participation alongside men did not fit women. Politics in one way or another was a male concern. The core goal of their campaign was to prevent the political equality between both sexes to better preserve the traditional virtues of women. To fuel their hostilities towards acquiring the parliamentary vote, women antis resorted to an avalanche of anti-suffrage tactics to air out their anti-suffrage arguments.

General Introduction

The present work is entitled “Female Opposition to Women Parliamentary Franchise in England and its Impact on the suffrage movement (1908-1918). This research tackles the female opposition in an era extended from 1908 when the organized opposition started to 1918 when women were partially enfranchised. England was selected as a field of work since the suffrage and the anti-suffrage movements flared up in Great Britain. The aim of this research, in turn, is to shed light on the opposition women suffragists encountered from other women opponents. It attempts to highlight the reasons behind the female opposition and to find out whether the opposition was a success or failure.

This research work, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions. What were the reasons behind the female opposition to women’s parliamentary franchise in England? What was the outcome of the female anti-suffrage campaign? Was it fruitful or a vain attempt to deny the vote for women?

To conduct this research and answer the above-mentioned questions, this work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the origin of the female suffrage and anti-suffrage movements. It examines women’s position in society before the start of the suffrage movement. Besides, it tackles the beginning of the suffrage movement in 1866. The chapter ends with shedding light on the rising female derision towards the suffrage movement through the launch of the anti-suffrage campaign in 1889. Its start went in sync with the draft of an appeal known as an Appeal Against Female Suffrage drafted and published in June 1889.

The second chapter examines the anti-suffrage campaign when it started in an organized way in 1908 and reached its peak through the establishment of the first anti-suffrage organization Women’s National Anti-Suffrage League (W.N.A.S.L.). The chapter, in turn, lists the reasons and the arguments put forward by women antis to oppose the acquisition of the parliamentary vote for women and sheds light on the series of tactics relied on to fuel the opposition. It concludes with the reactions of women suffragists and suffragettes towards the fierce opposition they encountered from their own sex (women).

General Introduction

The third and the last chapter is devoted to the outcome of the anti-suffrage movement during World War I (1914-1918). It examines the response of the women suffragists, suffragettes and anti-suffragists to the outbreak of the war in 1914. Furthermore, it is concerned with the impact of the war on the destiny of the female suffrage and the anti-suffrage campaigns.



Chapter One

Historical Background of the Suffrage Campaign and Female Rising Hostilities to the Parliamentary Vote (1866-1908)

Chapter One: Historical Background of the Suffrage Campaign and Female Rising Hostilities to the Parliamentary Vote (1866-1908)

1. Introduction

In the nineteenth century, the British women organized several movements for the sake of demanding their rights which they were previously deprived of. They endeavoured to liberate themselves and get rid of the obstacles that impeded their emancipation as citizens. Women's awareness did not arise from scratch, but there were several changes that paved the way for their reactions. Their awareness, in turn, forged them to clog the obstacles that hindered their way of enjoying their rights similarly as men.

An important event that took place in the British society and prompted a change in the lives of women was the Industrial Revolution. The latter was an occasion when women found themselves as paid-workers outside their homes. With the promotion of the economic independence through the involvement in paid-work, women started to seek other rights that they lacked. One of those rights, that women started to ask for, was the right of taking part in parliamentary elections. Before the early calls for the parliamentary franchise in 1866, women lived in patriarchal society. They were deprived of their rights. The onus was placed on them to do the housework and take care of the family without any right to enjoy.

The female suffrage movement was organized by women suffragists who rallied to determine their goal of being enfranchised. From the beginning, they encountered opposition to their campaign. On the one hand, Members of Parliament repeatedly refuted their petitions. On the other hand, they were opposed not solely by male anti-suffragists, but by other women who strove to prevent them from gaining the parliamentary vote based on several arguments. Those female opponents of the vote organized their anti-suffrage campaign in 1889 as an opposing campaign to the pro-suffrage one.

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2. Women's Position in England before the Beginning of the Suffrage Campaign

The beginning of the female suffrage campaign in England in 1866 marked a watershed in the status of women in the English society. Women suffragists, through their suffrage campaign, did their best to liberate themselves; they strove to determine their rights. Before the rise of several movements that reflected women's desire for emancipation and improvement in every aspect of life, women lived under the control of men undergoing a state of marginalization and injustice.¹ Politically, women were not participants in the political process because politics was seen as a male domain. All these ways of women's lives were reliant on the cultural components which governed the way people lived. The culture of nineteenth-century England dictated that women's place, where to assume their responsibilities, was the home.

2.1. Women's Social Position

During the Victorian Era (1837-1901)², women whether married or not spent all the day in the home doing the housework and taking care of the family under the control of their husbands or fathers. In the case of being unmarried, they shared also the circle of patriarchy³ undergoing the submission to their fathers and devoting their time for domestic and unpaid jobs in the home. In the light of this, it can be said that women lived under the umbrella of marginalization in the English society since either married or not had no right to enjoy. "Women are only children of larger growth...a

¹ Clare Midgley, *Feminism and Empire: Women Activists in Imperial Britain, 1790-1865* (New York:Routledge Taylor& Francis Group,2007),26.

² During the Victorian Era (1837-1901), women's place was the home where they had to assume their domestic responsibilities. The arena outside the home (political participation as an example) was left to men. Kathryn Hughes, "Gender Roles in the 19th Century"

<http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/gender-roles-in-the-19th-century> (August8,2016 at 13:26).

³ Patriarchy is a term used to describe and analyze a social system in which men had power over women in personal life. "The Beginnings of Modern Feminism"

http://catalogue.pearsoned.co.uk/assets/hip/gb/uploads/Feminism_M02.HANN5575_01_SE_C02.pdf (December 03, 2015 at 12:37).

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man of sense only plays with them, he neither tells them about, nor trusts them with serious matters”.¹

When referring to the social position of women, one important aspect was the nature of their labour. Before the Industrial Revolution², women devoted their time for the housework and other domestic unpaid jobs. With the emergence of the Industrial Revolution, the activities and the domestic jobs that women had to accomplish underwent a huge change. The Industrial Revolution, in turn, required factories where women found themselves running paid-jobs outside their homes. Thus, the new economic circumstances came to alter women’s position in the English society because they started performing other jobs.

It is important to note that those women who entered factories and became wage workers were not married. They were either widows or single because the married women were submissive to their husbands. During the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the married women lived subordinated to their husbands. They spent the whole day in the home under the control of their husbands. They were described as the property of their husbands³.

The female way of life was synonymous with domesticity.⁴ That is to say, women were entitled to devote their whole time to the home and the family. The idea that women and men had to perform different tasks and even their real place in society was different was the core principle of an ideology that governed their status in society. This ideology came to known as the “separate sphere ideology”.⁵

The separate sphere ideology dictated that the real place of men and women differed. The real place of women was the home which represented the “private

¹ David McDowall, *An Illustrated History of Britain* (UK: Longman Group, 1989), 116.

² The Industrial Revolution (1750-1830) was a period of major industrialization that took place during the late 1700s and early 1800s. It began in Great Britain and quickly spread throughout the world.

<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/industrial-revolution.asp> (January 17, 2015 at 15:22)

³ Tanya Evans, “Women, Marriage and the Family” in *Women’s History: Britain 1700-1850 An Introduction*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2005), 64.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵ *Ibid.*

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sphere”.¹ Put simply, the real place of men, in society, was the sphere outside the home. It was named the “public sphere”² that women had not the right to reach. Men’s sphere was the one where several responsibilities had to be assumed such as breadwinning, political participation and other public issues. With the entry of women into factories in an industrialized society, the core essence of separate sphere ideology and female domesticity took another turn. Women’s awareness of their missing rights represented a turning point that led to the beginning of the suffrage campaign.

The social position of women in English society did not remain unaltered. Women did not keep devoting their time for their homes and families due to the fruits of Industrial Revolution. The latter impacted their lives and their relationship with their pre-industrialization environment.

2.2. The Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Women’s Lives

The Industrial Revolution in England was an occasion when unmarried women and widows found themselves performing paid-jobs in factories. This shift in the nature of their labour raised their awareness of being marginalized and discriminated. In factories and mills, they portrayed their abilities as workers since they performed difficult jobs. Their work, outside the home resulted, in a financial income that would serve as a way to support themselves although they performed low-paid jobs if compared to men.³

The industrialization of the English society played a vital role in surging work opportunities for women and easing their economic independence. “The industrialization progressively side-lined women workers”.⁴ Accordingly, women

¹ T. Evans, “Women, Marriage and the Family” in *Women’s History: Britain 1700-1850 An Introduction*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, op.cit., 70.

² Ibid.

³ “The Movement for Women Suffrage 1850-1928”, (Cults Academy History Department) <http://www.edubuzz.org/plhs-socsubs/wp-content/blogs.dir/919/files/2012/02/votes-for-women.pdf> (December 25, 2015 at 13:31), paragraph 2

⁴ Hannah Barker, “Women and Work” in *Women’s History: Britain 1700-1850 An Introduction*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, op.cit., 125.

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were not the sole workers in factories, but they joined men in their public sphere of work. This overlap of both genders in the same sphere created a kind of conflict.

In the light of the aforementioned idea, the nineteenth century was overshadowed by conflicts between both genders since women went beyond their private sphere (the home) and started seeking liberation and the destruction of gender barriers that clogged their way to enjoy their rights. For this reason, the nineteenth century was described as the century of “gender conflicts”.¹

The Industrial Revolution, indeed, prompted a change in women’s participation in the labour force. They did not solely enter factories and mills for gaining money, but they started to enhance their independence. The Industrial Revolution in England offered women ample opportunities to become workers. The word worker, in this case, went in sync with earning money since they were previously performing domestic jobs without any financial income.

The Industrial Revolution was a double-edged sword. It had positive results on women’s lives as well as negative ones. Among its negative aspects on women was that they neglected their domestic responsibilities and went beyond their real sphere which was the private sphere, namely, the home. The industrialization was “a trend which was destroying the nature of the family and traditional relationships between women and men.....[women]moving their productive work from the home to the factory... reducing their ability to perform household duties”.² Despite the economic emancipation for the unmarried women and widows through the shift to paid-work, the married and the unmarried women remained confined to a set of cultural norms that guided their lives.

¹ Hannah Barker, “Women and Work”, op.cit., 125.

² Marjorie Cohen, “Changing Perceptions of the Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Female Labor”, *International Journal of Women’s Studies*, Vol.7 No.4. 291-293.

<http://www.sfu.ca/~mcohen/publications/labour/Changing%20Perception.pdf> (accessed on January 11, 2016 at 11:18)

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2.3. The Cultural Perspectives Governing Women's Lives

Before the beginning of the suffrage movement in England, women lived under the umbrella of patriarchy. The way women lived relied on a set of cultural perspectives that governed the way both genders lived. Since this research is about women, light would be shed on a couple of cultural perspectives that concerned both the married and the unmarried women. That is to say, to expound the ideology that defined the roles of both genders “separate sphere ideology” and to tackle a system that defined the nature of the married women known as “coverture”.¹

2.3.1. Separate Sphere Ideology: General Overview

The separate sphere ideology was an ideology that reflected the cultural dimensions for men and women. It demarcated the real place of each gender. According to this ideology, there were two separate and different places for each gender in society. This place took the name of a “sphere”. Men and women had different spheres where to perform their tasks. The focal principle of this ideology was that women were confined to the private sphere which referred to the home where they were obliged to do the housework and take care of the family. Men, in turn, were confined to the public sphere.² The latter referred to the sphere outside the home such as working and doing other things that women were not allowed to do. The two diverging aspects of this ideology were femininity and masculinity. If the kernel of this ideology was the exclusion of women from having a hand in the public sphere and public issues, it reflected the marginalization and the exclusion of women from the public life.³

¹ H.Barker, “Women and Work”,op.cit.,139

² Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914* (Princeton:Princeton University Press,1987),04

³ Cathy Ross, “Separate Spheres or Shared Dominions?”(*Sage Publications,Ltd* (2006),228,
<http://www.jstor.org/www.snd11.arn.dz/stable/pdf/43052674.pdf?acceptTC=true> (November30,2015 at 16 :18)

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The home, therefore, was the suitable place where women portrayed their own values and virtues. For this reason, women were labeled as “angels of the house”.¹ during the Victorian Era (1837-1901). Cathy Ross, in her article entitled “Separate Spheres or Shared Dominions” (2006), stated that the separate sphere ideology was synonymous with “The Angel in the House² Phenomenon”.³ Accordingly, the home was the setting where patriarchy took its shape through women subordination to men either married women or single ones. The difference of the spheres meant that men and women were different. The separation of the spheres portrayed the idea that women had no right to intervene in the men’s sphere. “.....separate sphere ideology, encompassing the notion of natural differences between the sexes, justified the exclusion of women from power and reinforced and perpetuated the stereotype of women as “the Sex, making them vulnerable to abuse by men”⁴.

During the Victorian Era, women’s role as mothers and wives was glorified. Their domestic and private sphere was the sole place where motherhood and womanhood were exhibited because the home was seen as the “proper sphere” for women.⁵ It is worth noting that the separation of the spheres marked inequality between men and women. For this reason, women resented this inequality and started to ask for their rights as the first step to bring themselves into line with sex equality. The right of parliamentary franchise was one example through which women would enjoy the seeds of equality.

Although the separate sphere ideology dictated the necessity of women’s place in the home and it concerned all women whether married or single, the unmarried women

¹ “Women in the Middle Class in the 19th Century” http://web.clark.edu/afisher/HIST253/lecture_text/WomenMiddleClass_19c_Europe.pdf (December24,2015 at 13:22), paragraph 05.

² “The Angel in the House” was firstly used as a title of a poem written by the English poet Coventry Patmore (1823-1896) in 1854. Later, this expression was used to refer to women’s suitable place which was the home. (The Woman Question in Victorian England <http://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ENGL203-Subunit-4.1.4-The-Woman-Question-in-Victorian-England-FINAL-pdf> (October31,2015 at 14:04)

³ C.Ross, op.cit.,229.

⁴ Susan Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990* (New York: Taylor& Francis e-Library,1990),194

⁵ Ibid.

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could go beyond their private sphere. This was seen through their involvement in factories and paid-jobs after the Industrial Revolution sprang up. As far as the married women were concerned, they could not challenge the principle of this ideology because they were under the control of their husbands.

2.3.2. The Married Women and the System of Coverture

Throughout the British history, women underwent a state of discrimination in all the fields of life. Social, economic, educational and political opportunities were denied for them. The unmarried women and widows could enjoy little rights such as property ownership and work. The married women encountered discrimination and subordination to their husbands. Under the umbrella of marriage, the married women became submissive to their husbands. This process of being under the control of a husband without any right to enjoy was labeled as “coverture” or as it was also called ‘unity principle’.¹ The patriarchal authority became the defining aspect of the conjugal life. The marital relationship, under this system, was based on a total loss of the wife’s rights. The onus was placed on her to take care of her husband and children.

A wife could not hold property in her own name; whatever she had by inheritance or by her own enterprise or labour became his. She could not enter any legal contract. She had no legal rights over her own children.....if she left the marriage, she could take nothing with her, not her children, not even those possessions which were hers prior to the marriage....²

Under the law of coverture, women’s existence was interlinked with their husbands. Marriage signaled woman’s subjection and her subordination to her husband without any right to enjoy. “.....under the law of coverture, married women had no

¹ Claudia Zaher, “When a Woman’s Marital Status Determined her Legal Status: A Research Guide on the Common Law Doctrine of Coverture” (Kentucky:Chase College of Law Library,2002),459.

² Jennifer Somerville, *Feminism and the Family : Politics and Society in the uk and usa* (New York :St.Martin Press,2000),19

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rights or existence apart from their husbands...by marriage, the legal existence of a woman is suspended”.¹The female subordination to men deprived women to practice freely what they wanted due to the male authority. The social barriers that hindered women to enjoy emancipation and freedom banned them from political participation.

2.4. Women’s Political Status before the Start of the Suffrage Movement

Since the core goal of the female suffrage movement was to gain the right of voting in parliamentary elections, the parliamentary franchise would remain, for women, a way to climb the ladder of political participation on the same terms as men. Before the launch of the suffrage campaign by women suffragists in 1866, women were not totally banned from political participation. The upper-class women or the aristocratic women were involved in politics.² The aristocratic women, the upper-class women who were involved in politics before the beginning of the suffrage campaign were called “the elite women”³. Women of middle and lower classes were denied the right of political participation. One pivotal example of the elite women was Queen Victoria⁴ who reached the pinnacle of political participation through her crowning as a queen from 1837 to 1901. She was a woman who represented the challenge to the separate sphere ideology. She was called “the mother of the nation”⁵

The fact that women of the middle and low classes were deprived of their political rights was one factor that widened women’s awareness of the necessity of

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990*, op.cit.,27.

²Shihui Yun, “How it Began : the Rise of the Women’s Suffrage Movement in Britain” (Master Thesis., Washington University, 2011),09.

³ Elaine Chalus and Fiona Montgomery, “Women and Politics”, in *Women’s History: Britain 1700-1850 An Introduction*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, op.cit.,125.

⁴ Queen Victoria (1819-1901) was a queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. She served as a queen from 1837-1901 in an era known as “Victorian Era”. Her reign was the second longest reign of any other British monarch in history. <http://www.biography.com/people/queen-Victoria-9518> (January17,2016 at 15:17)

⁵ Lynn Abrams, “Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain” *History Trails Victorian Britain* (August,2001), http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/victorian_britain/women_home/ideals_womanhood_01.shtml (November21,2015 at 13:29).

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political involvement whatever their class. Women's political participation went in tandem firstly with the possession of the vote. Since they could not vote, they could not reach the gate of politics. The vote was a way that confirmed their recognition in society and reflected their individuality as citizens.

The first occasion when women were firstly denied the vote came with the Representation of the People Act of 1832 which was known as the Great Reform Act. The latter extended voting rights to men of the middle classes and excluded women from voting. It excluded even the male lower classes and the male working class.¹ The act referred to the voters as "male persons"² to confirm the impossibility of extending voting rights to women.

The Great Reform Act of 1832 was proposed by the Whigs under the Prime Minister Charles Grey (1764-1845)³. At that time, the impossibility of granting women the franchise was based on the idea that politics was a male domain.⁴ Following their defeat in the Great Reform Act of 1832, women kept trying to get access to the public life through owning the vote. Each bill or petition, in favour of enfranchising women, was repeatedly refuted in the coming years. This repeated rejection of their petitions led them to react.

The process of the female reactions to seek their rights sprang up as a result of several changes that overshadowed their lives. The questioning of their status in society and their efforts to seek emancipation led them to assume new different responsibilities which were impossible for them before. These reactions of women and the alteration of their roles during the nineteenth century came to be known as the "Woman Question".⁵

¹ Neil Johnston, "The History of Parliamentary Franchise"(House of Commons Library,2013),19

² Ibid.

³ Charles Grey, also called Baron Grey (1764-1845) was a British politician, leader of the Whig (liberal) Party and a Prime Minister (1830-1834). <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Grey-2nd-Earl-Grey> (accessed on November19,2016 at 14:30).

⁴ E.Chalus and Fiona Montgomery, "Women and Politics", op.cit., 220

⁵ C. Midgley, op.cit., 13.

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3. Woman Question and the Female Response during the Victorian Era (1837-1901)

Women lived in a state of discrimination and marginalization if compared to the male citizens. Women did not carry on living under such circumstances. In the second half of nineteenth century, women started reacting to the situations they underwent and even the roles they had to perform were changed. This change was due to their attempts to liberate themselves and get rid of those glitches that impeded their way of enjoying their rights similarly as men and realize their dream of sex equality. As the first step, they started launching movements that mirrored their rights.

3.1. Woman Question as a Concept

Woman question referred to the shift in woman's status in society and the challenge for the female traditional roles. Women of middle-class started to question their position in society. Their awareness did not emerge overnight, but there were several factors which served as preludes to their rising awareness to hone their status in the English society.

One of these factors was the Industrial Revolution. With their entry to factories, women started being aware that they had to ask for their rights in time when they could work outside. Since their rights were numerous, one of these rights was the political participation similarly as men. As the first step, they started organizing movements. One of these movements was the suffrage movement which took place in 1866. It is worth noting that woman question did not mean that all women favoured social change because the married women were under the control of their husbands. "The woman question in Victorian England referred to the various debates about women's place in society emphasizing the need for women to greater economic,

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educational and political opportunities or the idea that women belonged to the home as care takers....”.¹

Utell Janine, in her article entitled “Woman Question”, defined the concept as “The changing [of] political, economic and professional roles for women and of social and sexual liberation gained increasing urgency in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century....”.² The concept referred to the case when women started to react and go beyond their domestic roles. They attempted to ameliorate their political, economic, social and employment opportunities. This meant that they attempted to join men in their public sphere and challenge the principle of the separate sphere ideology.

3.2. Challenging the Separate Sphere Ideology

Desiring social change in general and seeking to possess the parliamentary franchise in particular, women’s efforts were considered as opportunities to prove their citizenship and portray their abilities in the building of their nation. The woman question referred to the efforts of those women who desired change outside the circle of marriage because the married women were still under the system of coverture. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (1836-1917), the first female doctor in England, confirmed that the married woman did not take part among the women who framed the “Woman Question” because they were under the system of coverture. Hence, they were submissive and subordinated to their husbands. She stated that “.....the woman question will never be solved in any complete way so long as marriage is thought to be incompatible with freedom and with an independent career”.³

In nineteenth-century England, the changes that overshadowed women’s lives led them to meddle in the sphere of men; the sphere of work and political participation. In

¹ “The Woman Question in Victorian England” <http://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/ENGL203-Subunit-4.1.4-The-Woman-Question-in-Victorian-England-FINAL-pdf> (October31,2015 at 14:04).

² Utell Janine, “The Woman Question”, *The Modernist Journals Project* (Brown University Library), http://modjourn.org/render.php?view=mjp_object&id=mjp.2005.00.088 (December24,2015at 12 :51)

³ Barbara Caine, “Feminism, Suffrage and the Nineteenth-Century English Women’s Movement”. *Women Studies Int.Forum*, Vol.5.No.6 (1982):544

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this vein, they started subverting the ideals of the separate sphere ideology. Accordingly, there was a challenge and a deviation from the principles of the ideology which stated that the real place of women was the home.

The Industrial Revolution, in turn, served as a springboard that paved the way for an altered position of women in society because they started to reach factories and earn money outside the home. The questioning of women's status in society did not solely push women to demand their rights under the umbrella of the woman question, but it led in one way or another to the disappearance of the traditional roles of women. One of those changes was the paid work women underwent after the process of industrialization. Bessie Raynor Parkes explained that women labour due to the Industrial Revolution led to the neglect of home responsibilities. She pointed out that ".....the great Industrial Revolution is the withdrawal of women from the life of the household and the suction of them.....within the vortex of industrial life"¹

The focal demand of women was to improve their lives through ample opportunities they would be offered to join men in their public sphere. The female political intervention is an example for this research. This social change and the development of educational, political and employment opportunities of women reversed the role of women in society which was the housework and the care of the family. Their role as "angels in the house" became "the angel out of the house".²

3.3. Female Enfranchisement: an Aspect of Woman Question

To make their voice heard and their demands clear, middle-class women started to organize movements for the sake of accomplishing their goals. These female movements, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, were characterized by

¹ B. Caine, op.cit., 541.

² C.Ross, op.cit., 230.

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women's efforts to quench their thirst for achieving their rights, that's why these movements were labeled as "women's rights movements".¹

It may be also noted that the middle-class women were the first to react against the hurdles that corroded women to enjoy their rights. They represented the first class to broaden women's awareness that there were a surfeit of rights to be determined. "The middle classes as a social group with the capacity or will to change society".² Women's goals were numerous, but all of them stated the interest in change and improvement. Since they resented their situations of being deprived of their rights, women of the middle class endeavoured to bring social change under the umbrella of woman question.

One ingredient of woman question was the political development through women's attempts to gain the parliamentary franchise. The latter was an aspect that would portray equality between both sexes and, above all, it would serve as a key to open the gate of political emancipation for women. The female suffrage movement signaled the desire for social change through the fight for gaining the parliamentary vote.

Since woman question dictated social change and the deviation from the traditional female roles, women would strive to gain the parliamentary franchise not solely because the suffrage would guarantee their political participation, but because it would free them from the shackles of subordination and discrimination.³ Furthermore, women suffragists strove to gain the parliamentary vote not for the sake of voting, but because the male political privileges cemented their patriarchal control and power over women. Accordingly, male patriarchy took multiple forms. It started at the home, but it was also exercised in politics; men's political participation added to their powerful control over women. As a way to decrease this tyranny, women attempted to join men in politics through the possession of the vote, to better enhance their autonomy and rid

¹ J.Somerville, op.cit., 27.

² Ibid.,26.

³ B.Caine,op.cit., 538.

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themselves from the male patriarchal control through the privilege of political participation. Susan Kingsley Kent in her book *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914* published in 1987 linked the patriarchal control with the political participation. She stated:

The ultimate source and embodiment of patriarchal power was seen to lie in political expression or law and the vote was perceived as a strategic tool for changing law.....the demand for women's enfranchisement was a direct strike at the symbolic locus of patriarchal power...¹

The social change that women desired encompassed a surfeit of rights that women were previously denied. One of these rights was the participation in the process of decision-making through their efforts to gain the parliamentary vote. Their demand of the vote did not take place at random, but women suffragists organized a movement that reflected their interest in the political participation on the same terms as it was granted to men. To achieve the parliamentary franchise, the suffrage movement sprang up in the second half of the nineteenth century in 1866.

4. The Victorian Suffrage Campaign in England (1866-1901)

Since women suffered the burden of inequality and exclusion from the public life, they organized several movements as mirrors that reflected their demands during the nineteenth century. Those movements or campaigns served as shields that would protect women from the arrows of inequality and marginalization. Above all, these movements, which favoured reform, aimed at bringing them into line with equality and full citizenship. Women, in turn, started to delve in the process of demanding an

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914* , op.cit., 13.

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unchallengeable acquisition of their rights to reach a viable level of liberation and emancipation.

Women did not strive solely to quench their thirst for social change on the basis of economic, educational or employment opportunities, but they also questioned their political status and would endeavour to surge their presence in politics¹. Since the latter is the vehicle to govern a given country, women had to take part in the process of decision-making and the management of their country through the choice of their representatives. Thus, their political participation would be guaranteed and promoted through the parliamentary franchise.

One of the female reform movements which took place in nineteenth-century England and was carried on in the twentieth century was the suffrage movement or the suffrage campaign. The latter started in 1866 with the establishment of the first suffrage committee in London² for the sake of collecting signatures for a suffrage petition to be presented to the House of Commons.

The campaign was organized and led by women who attempted to rely on it for gaining one of the pivotal rights they were previously denied. It was, indeed, the right to vote (suffrage). What overshadowed the campaign was that women did their best to gain the parliamentary franchise and take part in parliamentary elections on the same terms as men.

4.1. Definition of Suffrage

Since the core principle of the suffrage campaign for women was to win the suffrage, the definition of the latter is required. The suffrage or the franchise is the case when people can vote and take part undisputedly in elections to be elected or to choose their representatives. *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (2001) defined the word suffrage as “voting and the right to vote or to participate in choosing

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990*, op.cit.,45.

² Ibid.,193.

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governmental officials by election.....”¹ As another definition for the term suffrage, it was defined in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as “the right to vote in electing public officials and adopting or rejecting the proposed legislation.....it is the political and the constitutional right to vote for elected public office...it is the means through which people elect their representatives and freely express their opinions and desires...”.² Last but not least, it was defined in the *Merriam –Webster Dictionary* “the right to vote in an election”.³

The suffrage movement started officially in 1866, but its origin was traced back before this year due to the series of preparations and negotiations among women suffragists.

4.2. The Origin of the Female Suffrage Question

According to the period in which the suffrage campaign took place, there were a couple of suffrage campaigns. The Victorian suffrage campaign (1866-1901) which took place during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) and the Edwardian suffrage campaign. The latter took place during the Edwardian Era (1901-1910) referring to the reign of Edward VII⁴ (1841-1910).

The suffrage movement was firstly organized by middle-class women. Due to their efforts, several movements led by them sprang up. For this reason, the nineteenth century is called “the century of the middle class”.⁵ The middle- class women were those who devoted their time previously for home and family and later they went

¹ Garrett Ward Sheldon, *Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (New York: Library of Congress Cataloging –in Publication Data,2001),287.

² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/suffrage> (August21,2016 at 13:55)

³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/suffrage> (August21,2016 at 13:51)

⁴ Edward VII (1841-1910) was the British King who took the throne after the death of Queen Victoria. He was crowned a king in an era extended from 1901 to 1910. <http://www.biography.com/people/edward-vii-9284671> (August23, 2016 at 15:22).

⁵“Women in the Middle Class in the 19th Century”

http://web.clark.edu/afisher/HIST253/lecture_text/WomenMiddleClass_19c_Europe.pdf (December24,2015 at 13:22), paragraph 01.

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beyond their sphere to climb the ladder of social change. In the light of the beginning of the suffrage movement by middle-class women before the intervention of other social classes during 1890's, the movement itself took the name of "Middle-class movement".¹

The suffrage campaign did not start from scratch, it required preparations to pave the way for its beginning. The campaign dated back to 1856 when a group of women led by Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, Bessie Rayner Parkes, Emily Davies and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson assembled in Langham Place in London to establish the Married Women's Property Committee². Those women were known as "ladies of Langham Place".³ They set up a journal which they called *English Women's Journal*⁴ for the sake of publishing pro-suffrage articles. The journal was a monthly magazine which was introduced in March 1858. It carried on its publications until August 1864.⁵

One of the conditions to vote was property ownership. The married women, under the system of coverture, had no right to own a property even if it was their own. "When a couple became engaged in England, her property was now his".⁶ Before asking for the right to vote for all women on the same terms as men, the female suffrage seekers had first to acquaint the married women with the right to own a property. They established a committee and drafted a bill, in 1870, to be approved by the House of Commons. The bill was called Married Women's Property Bill⁷. If it would be passed, the married women would be granted the right of property ownership and could take part in the suffrage campaign. The bill was finally approved by the House of Commons in 1882. If women would gain the right to vote, the married women would be included since the vote was intertwined by property ownership.

¹ Harold L. Smith, *The British Women's Suffrage Campaign 1866-1928*, 2nd ed. (United Kingdom: British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2001), 17

² H.L. Smith, op.cit., 08.

³ J. Somerville, op.cit., 38.

⁴ H.L. Smith, op.cit., 08.

⁵ Ncse nineteenth century serials edition <http://www.ncse.ac.uk/headnotes/ewj.html> (August 25, 2016 at 15:01)

⁶ "Women in the Middle Class in the 19th Century"

http://web.clark.edu/afisher/HIST253/lecture_text/WomenMiddleClass_19c_Europe.pdf (December 24, 2015 at 13:22), paragraph 06.

⁷ B. Caine, op.cit., 538.

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Granting the married women the right of property ownership was the starting step to launch the suffrage campaign. The latter propagated to succor all women to gain the vote. Accordingly, the suffrage campaign started in 1866 with the establishment of the first Women's Suffrage Committee in London and the draft of a petition that carried among its folding the demand of the vote. In June 1866, the petition was signed by 1,499 women.¹

The first step to launch the female suffrage movement and clarify the sole aim of their campaign was the resort to petitions drafted by women suffragists and signed by women in society who desired the parliamentary vote. In the nineteenth century, every single petition introduced in the Parliament was refuted.

4.3. The Pro-Suffrage Petitions and the Parliamentary Response

As a way to support and introduce the suffrage cause in Parliament, the female suffragists hinged on drafting petitions to be introduced to Parliament for approval. If accepted and passed, women would be undisputedly enfranchised. All the petitions, in favour of female enfranchisement, were rejected from the very beginning of the campaign. In this vein, the repeated refutes empowered women suffragists not to submit their cause, but to fight for their cause till the accomplishment of their goal. To extend voting rights to men, the government passed bills. They were introduced to reform the voting laws and to extend the vote to men. Those bills were called "reform bills".² There were three reform bills that were passed in the nineteenth century (1832, 1867 and 1884). All of them banned women from voting and extended the right to vote solely to men. Women presented their own petitions, but in vain.

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 192.

² Reform bills were proposals to reform voting in the British parliament. A reform bill was a British parliamentary bill that became an act. There were three reforms bills (1832, 1867 and 1884) <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Reform-Bill> (January 21, 2015 at 13:02)

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4.3.1. The Reform Bill of 1867

In 1865, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)¹ was elected to Parliament. He was one of the proponents of women suffrage. The Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881)² introduced the reform bill of 1867 to enfranchise a large proportion of men. John Stuart Mill seized this opportunity and presented the second petition, which had already been prepared by women suffragists, to Parliament on April 05, 1866 with 1499³ female signatories.

It is worth noting that the first female petition, in favour of enfranchisement, came in August 1832, but it was refuted. On May 20, 1867, John Stuart Mill proposed an amendment to the 1867 reform bill. The amendment stated the replacement of the word “man”, in the reform bill of 1867, by the word “person”⁴ to guarantee the inclusion of women in the vote on the same terms as men. The amendment was rejected in the House of Commons under the Liberal Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, denying the vote for women. The Reform Act of 1867, in turn, enfranchised adult males living in urban areas and who either owned or rented houses.⁵ In addition, it enfranchised male working class in urban areas.

4.3.2. The Reform Bill of 1884

The Reform Bill of 1884 was introduced by the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. It enfranchised all the male working classes in rural and agricultural areas, but banning women from the vote.⁶ The denial of the parliamentary vote for women, in this act, marked the defeat of the Victorian female suffrage movement. Although the

¹ John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) was the son of the philosopher and the economist James Mill. He was a British liberal politician and philosopher. He served in Parliament from 1865 till 1868 when he was replaced by Jacob Bright. (*Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, op.cit.,208)

² Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) served as the British Prime Minister twice (1867, 1874-1880) <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Benjamin-Disraeli> (August 24, 2016 at 11:45).

³ H.L.Smith, op.cit.,08.

⁴ S.Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990*, op.cit.,194.

⁵ G.W.Sheldon, op.cit.,123.

⁶ N.Johnston, op.cit.,04

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Liberal Prime Ministers supported the female suffrage, they were against the idea of reform.¹

4.3.3. The Women's Pro-Suffrage Petitions

The reform bills were passed by the Prime Ministers to extend voting rights for men. What characterized those reform bills was that all of them excluded women from voting. The women's pro-suffrage petitions were drafted by women to be approved by Members of Parliament and become bills. The first petition was drafted in 1870. It was presented to Parliament by the successor of John Stuart Mill in Parliament Jacob Bright (1821-1899).² The 1870 petition was rejected by the Prime Minister William Gladstone (1809-1898).³ During 1870's, several petitions in favour of enfranchising women were introduced, but they were quashed in Parliament.⁴

In 1889, there were three⁵ suffrage petitions which were introduced in Parliament to extend voting rights for women in national elections. They sought extension of voting rights in parliamentary elections because women had already won the right to vote in local elections in 1869. All of these petitions of 1889 were refuted. Moreover, another pro-suffrage petition was drafted in 1897. It was the first bill that encountered parliamentary support, but it did not become a law. It passed its second reading, but it was refused.

¹ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,13.

² Jacob Bright (1821-1899) was a British liberal politician. After the defeat of John Stuart Mill in the election of 1868, he became the female movement's parliamentary leader in the House of Commons (1868-1874). (H.L.Smith,op.cit.,09)

³ William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898) was a British Liberal Prime Minister who served for four terms (1868-1874,1880-1885,1886,1892-1894). <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Ewart-Gladstone> (August24,2016 at 13:32)

⁴ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,13.

⁵ Susan Hamilton, "Marketing Antifeminism :Eliza Lynn Lynton's "Wild Women" Series and the Possibilities of Periodical Signature" in *Antifeminism and Victorian Novel*,ed. Tamara S.Wagner (New York: Cambria Press,2009),38.

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4.4. John Stuart Mill and the Support to Women's Suffrage

Women, in England, did not start their mission of defending their rights by their own through petitions and organizations, but they were supported by the ideas of other thinkers, politicians and philosophers. The ideas of those thinkers inspired women campaigners to ask for their rights. Those thinkers supported women rights in general and the suffrage cause in specific.

One of those thinkers and politicians who encouraged women in their campaign was John Stuart Mill. He did not help lonely women in presenting their petitions to Parliament, but he used his writings and speeches to strengthen women's demands. What pushed the researcher to focus on John Stuart Mill, as an example of men who supported women in their campaign, is that he did not use solely his writings and speeches to support women and favour their emancipation. He was also a politician who led female suffrage campaign in Parliament. He was described as "a parliamentary champion of the women's cause".¹

As a Member of Parliament, he seized the opportunity to help women in presenting their petitions to the House of Commons for approval; he served as a liaison between women campaigners and Parliament. It can be said that John Stuart Mill sided with women in their first attempts to resent the state of inequality they underwent in a patriarchal society. Starting from 1830 until his death on May 8, 1873, he relied on his writings to expound several topics such as justice, individuality and liberty. Among these topics was the emancipation of women to free themselves from the burden of male control and power, besides the equality between men and women. Thus, he linked the social improvement with the equity between the sexes. His support to sex equality was reflected through his writings. He believed that "all persons are deemed to have a right to equality of treatment....".²

¹ Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 194.

² *Ibid.*, 116.

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One of his articles, that glorified the rights of women and criticized the subordination of women to men, was entitled “The Subjection of Women” published in 1869. He pointed out that freedom and liberty were pivotal aspects of justice. Freedom, in turn, was required for the advancement of women. Besides, he believed that partnership existed in society, but this did not mean that one side had to enjoy total control and power over the other. In his article, he claimed that “...the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself, and is now one of the chief obstacles to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality.”¹

In his support to the equality of sexes on the one hand and the support to the female suffrage cause on the other hand, John Stuart Mill did not only use his ideas scattered on papers, but he delivered also public speeches to favour the female enfranchisement. One of his speeches that supported women suffrage was entitled “Votes for Women Speech”². It was held in the Music Hall in Edinburgh on January 12, 1871. In this speech, he stressed the significance of granting women the suffrage on the same terms as it was granted to men. He claimed:

.....All our recent constitutional reforms, and the whole creed of reformers are grounded on the fact that the suffrage is needed for self-protection..... the suffrage for women, and a grand moral improvement in human nature—the suffrage, to my thinking, is likely to be the soonest obtained.... Men are so much accustomed to think of women only as women, that they forget to think of them as human.....³

¹ John Stuart Mill, “The Subjection of Women” in “John Stuart Mill’s Feminism: The Subjection of Women and the Improvement of Mankind”, ed. Susan Moller Okin, 106

http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1973/NZJH_07_2_01.pdf (January30,2016 at 15:17).

² For more details about the whole speech, see Appendix One, 141-144.

³ “Men in Support of Women’s Suffrage”

<http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/4517/Men%20in%20support%20of%20women's%20suffrage.pdf?sequence=1> (January30,2016 at 15:31)

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He went to clarify that the suffrage served as a way for women to protect themselves from the subordination and brutality they were subjected to. Another point that he tackled in his speech was that since women were tax payers, they had to have representatives in Parliament. Hence, they would be represented in government through their choice of their representatives. This idea went in tandem with the doctrine of the British constitution that stated “no taxation without representation”.¹ Furthermore, he confirmed, in his speech, that women subordination to men would be inevitable in society. Even with the acquisition of the parliamentary suffrage, women subordination to men’s control would never cease. Women would keep obeying their husbands and fathers; they would be still responsible for their domestic responsibilities.

He believed that with the accomplishment of the suffrage, women would undergo another type of subordination. The latter would take place when both sexes would enjoy their rights. Women would find themselves under male control, but at least they could participate in the management of their country through possessing the franchise. In the light of this point, he added “...women ought to be, and always must and will be, in a state of domestic and social subordination to men, why, then, they require the suffrage so much the more, in order that the sovereignty of men over them may be exercised under the fitting responsibility”.²

The sole aim of the female suffrage movement in England was to win the right to vote in parliamentary elections similarly as men. From the very beginning of the campaign, women started drafting written petitions that stated the enfranchisement of women. All the petitions were rejected in Parliament. In 1869, the parliamentary support to women’s enfranchisement took another form. The unmarried women were granted the right to vote in local elections, but not on the national level. The first step

¹ “Men in Support of Women’s Suffrage”
<http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/4517/Men%20in%20support%20of%20women's%20suffrage.pdf?sequence=1> (January30,2016 at 15:31)

² Ibid.

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to include women in the public affairs went in sync with granting them the local franchise.

4.5. Women' Acquisition of the Local Franchise (1869)

The genesis of the women suffrage campaign was to gain the parliamentary vote on the same terms it was granted to men. Things took another turn in 1869 when the Municipal Corporation Franchise Act was passed. This act gave the unmarried women and widows the right to vote in local elections because they enjoyed the status of "femme sole".¹ This kind of enfranchisement came to be known as "local household suffrage" or "Municipal suffrage".²

To be allowed to take part in local elections, the unmarried women and widows had to be property owners and taxpayers. The married women were excluded from the local franchise because they were not freeholders of property and all their properties returned to their husbands who were responsible for paying the rates. It was estimated that by 1892, there were 503,000 women who could vote in local elections³ and by 1900, women represented 13,7% of the local government electorate.⁴ The right of parliamentary vote was still an elusive dream to be realized. The possibility of acquainting women with the municipal vote, on the same terms as men, forged women suffrage seekers to keep ceaselessly demanding the parliamentary vote as an aspect of full equality. To do so, women organized the suffrage campaign in order to draw a place for themselves in politics.

Despite the fact that the married women were excluded from the local franchise at the beginning, they were offered an opportunity to take part in the local elections due to an act which allowed them to do so. This act was labeled as Local Government

¹ H.L.Smith, op.cit.,12.

² Emilia F.S.Dilke, "Women Suffrage in England", *The North American Review*.Vol.164,No.483(1897):153.

³ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,10.

⁴ Ibid.,19.

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Act which was passed in 1894. This year marked a remedy for the issue of banning married women from the local vote. The married women were allowed to take part in local elections because they had already gained the right of property ownership in 1882. The Local Government Act “removed the issue of coverture from the franchise reform by making married women eligible to vote in all the local elections in which single women and widows could”.¹

It is worth noting that women were granted the vote in local elections due to their successful involvement in the labour force. Two other legislations, after the first one in 1869, were passed in 1888 and 1894 to allow women to vote in municipal, county, district and local elections.² Above all, women were enabled even to stand as councilors.

This partial political participation of women, through the vote in local elections, was not the goal that women suffragists would endeavour to achieve. Their goal was a full political participation through the possession of the parliamentary franchise. The repeated parliamentary rejection of the suffrage petitions spurred women to increase their efforts to accomplish their goal. What characterized the suffrage campaign was its focus on the possibility of women’s inclusion in parliamentary elections; to choose their representatives in Parliament and even to become Members of Parliament. In the light of this idea, the suffrage campaign was labeled the “parliamentary suffrage campaign”.³ The repeated parliamentary rejection of female suffrage petitions led women to move to another tactic. They moved to the establishment of pro-suffrage organizations.

¹H.L.Smith,op.cit.,10.

² J. Somerville,op.cit., 39.

³ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,18.

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4.6. The Establishment of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (N.U.W.S.S.)

In their campaign to accomplish their right of parliamentary franchise, women did not rely solely on written petitions presented for gaining parliamentary approval. Another important way to strengthen their campaign was the establishment of organizations as a new tactic to fuel their movement. The sole goal of these organizations was to secure the parliamentary franchise for women. Several auxiliary organizations were established¹, but the largest and the most important organization that would lead the suffrage movement was the N.U.W.S.S.

The N.U.W.S.S. was established in 1897 by the female leader of the suffrage movement Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1846-1929).² It was an umbrella organization that united 17 suffrage societies.³ Accordingly, there were a myriad of suffrage organizations that supported the suffrage cause; the N.U.W.S.S. came to encapsulate these suffrage societies together. What overshadowed this organization was that it linked the campaign with Parliament. Its sole role was to convince Members of Parliament to grant women the franchise on the same terms as men through the resort to the draft of petitions and the delivery of speeches.

On this point, it may be as well to add that the members of the N.U.W.S.S. were called suffragists because their campaign was peaceful and not violent if compared to the militant suffrage campaign in Edwardian Era (1901-1910). The female leaders of the violent suffrage campaign in the twentieth century were called the suffragettes.⁴ The members of the N.U.W.S.S, led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, tried to demand the parliamentary franchise peacefully through the organization of meetings, drafting

¹ Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 194.

² Millicent Garret Fawcett (1846-1929) was a leading suffragist and campaigner for equal rights for women. She was the leader of the biggest suffrage non-violent organization the N.U.W.S.S from 1890-1919. She played a key role in gaining women the vote. Millicent Fawcett, Biography Online <http://www.biographyonline.net/politicians/uk/millicent-fawcett.html> (January 24, 2016 at 16:01)

³ H.L. Smith, op.cit., 19.

⁴ Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 205.

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petitions, publishing newspapers that supported their cause and organizing peaceful marches and demonstrations. These peaceful tactics of the N.U.W.S.S were carried on until the partial parliamentary enfranchisement of women in 1918. Millicent Garrett Fawcett stated that “I always was one, from the time I was old enough, to think about the principles of representative government”.¹

Women suffragists’ aim was to reach the male public sphere through possessing the vote. They endeavoured to determine political participation alongside men. It should be pointed out that women suffragists did not solely encounter opposition from the parliamentarians, but they encountered also opposition from their own gender; from other women who would oppose the suffrage movement simply because it came to challenge the traditional values and conventions that governed the lives of women. These women oppositionists started their anti-suffrage campaign in 1889 through an anti-suffrage appeal that stated the denial of the vote for women.

5. The Beginning of the Female Anti-Suffrage Campaign (1889)

For any campaign, there are proponents as well as opponents. This was what happened with the female suffrage campaign in England when the female campaigners for the parliamentary vote were opposed by other people who worked for the failure of the campaign. To climb the ladder of parliamentary franchise, female suffragists encountered a surfeit of hindrances that clogged their campaign from its early stages till the end.

One of those glitches that hampered the suffrage campaign from its beginning was the opposition of those people who resented the parliamentary vote for women. Those opponents were called the anti-suffragists based on the fact that they acted to

¹ <http://www.biographyonline.net/politicians/uk/millicent-fawcett.html> (January24,2016 at 16:01)

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prevent female suffragists from gaining the vote. The anti-suffragists, in a general, were divided into two parts: the positive and the negative anti-suffragists.¹

The positive anti-suffragists were the female oppositionists and those women who opposed the suffrage movement whereas the negative anti-suffragists referred to male oppositionists.² Thus, those opponents to female enfranchisement were male and female opponents. Even women themselves opposed the possession of the vote although it concerned them all. Accordingly, women suffragists were opposed by their own sex; by other women. The women oppositionists who launched the anti-suffrage campaign were known as women anti-suffragists or “women antis”.³ The emergence of the female suffrage campaign led to the emergence of another campaign whose defining principle was the opposition of the suffrage movement. For this reason, this campaign was known as the female anti-suffrage campaign which was organized by women solely.

Women suffragists, during the Victorian Era (1837-1901) and Edwardian Era (1901-1910), underwent parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition. The former referred to the refusal of parliamentarians to accept the repeated petitions that favoured female suffrage. The latter referred to the male and female opposition to the suffrage campaign. Jennifer Somerville in her book *Feminism and the Family: Politics and Society in the uk and usa* (2000) called the obstacles to women suffragists outside Parliament extra-parliamentary obstacles.⁴

One of the extra-parliamentary obstacles was the female anti-suffrage campaign organized to corrode women suffragists' way in gaining the parliamentary franchise. Their first step to start their mission of opposition was the draft of an appeal to convince the parliamentarians that women were not in need of the vote. In the light of

¹ Myriam Boussabha-Bravard, *Suffrage Outside Suffragism : Women's Vote in Britain, 1880-1914* (New York :Palgrave Macmillan,2007),13.

² Ibid.

³ Julia Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain* (New York :Oxford University Press,2007),02.

⁴ J.Somerville,op.cit.,39.

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early attempts of female opposition, the women involved in the suffrage campaign did not remain hand-tied and silent, but there were also reactions from the side of women suffragists.

5.1. Female Anti-Suffragism: General Overview

Anti-suffragism was an ideology whose core principle dictated the opposition to the parliamentary vote for women. This ideology emerged and dated back to 1889 with the draft and the publication of the *Appeal Against Female Suffrage* in the *Nineteenth Century Journal* (1889). The ideology was carried on during the twentieth century. The female anti-suffragism came as a reaction to the efforts of women suffragists to gain the vote. Hence, female anti-suffragism did not arise out of vacuum, but it appeared as an opposing ideology to suffragism; the precedent ideology.

Suffragism, therefore, referred to the process of achieving the goal of the suffrage movement. The crux of this process was to acquaint women with the right to take part in parliamentary elections. Since the principle of suffragism was the support of the suffrage for women, the principle of this ideology was referred to as “the inclusion principle”.¹ Suffragism, similarly as anti-suffragism, was not a defining ideology about granting suffrage to women solely during the Victorian Era, but remained workable even during the Edwardian Era until the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918. With the emergence of the militant suffrage movement in 1903, suffragism was labeled as “militant suffragism”² because the leaders of the militant suffrage movement hinged on militancy and violence as a way to win the vote.

As an opposing ideology to suffragism, anti-suffragism emerged to fuel the wheels of female opposition to the parliamentary vote. Since the crux of suffragism was a group of women rallied to achieve the parliamentary vote, female anti-

¹ M.Boussabha-Bravard, op.cit., 09.

² Ibid., 249.

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suffragism was also intertwined with a group of women who shared their hostility and derision to the female franchise. Female anti-suffragism was a reactive movement through which female antis expressed their hostility to the suffrage campaign. It encapsulated all the tactics and measures relied on to represent their opposition.¹

The female anti-suffragism was expressed through a series of tactics. The first step to oppose the suffrage campaign was the resort to an appeal which served as a crucial factor that dictated the tenets of female anti-suffragism. This appeal was labeled as the Appeal Against Female Suffrage.

5.2. The Appeal Against Female Suffrage (June 1889)

The first symptom that signaled the start of the female opposition to the vote was the draft of an appeal known as Appeal Against Female Suffrage. It was drafted and published in the monthly *Nineteenth Century Journal* in June 1889. The journal was edited by James Knowles (1831-1908). The appeal was drafted by two women antis namely the leader of the female anti-suffrage movement Mary Humphrey Ward (1850-1920)² and Louise Creighton (1850-1936).³

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage came as a response to a pro-suffrage petition that was introduced in Parliament in April 1889. The appeal was signed by 104 women⁴. Among those women who signed the appeal Mary Humphrey Ward, Beatrice Webb (1858-1943), Eliza Lynn Linton (1822-1898) and Mrs Leslie Stephen

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 141.

² Mary Humphrey Ward (1851-1920) was born Mary Augusta Ward) A British novelist. She was born in 1851 in Tasmania, Australia. She reached England in 1856 with her family. She opposed women's suffrage movement fearing in the emancipation the loss of women's moral influence. <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Mrs-Humphry-Ward> (February8,2016 at 16:58)

³ Louise Creighton (born Von Glehn). She was born in 1850 in London, a British author and writer of popular history. She died in 1936. James Thayne Covert, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/38640> (February8, 2016 at 17:04)

⁴ Julia Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,142.

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(1832-1904).¹ Being fearful that the petition would be accepted, women anti-suffragists reacted through their appeal. The latter was seen as a document through which women anti-suffragists revealed not lonely they were anti-suffragists, but also they were ‘anti-feminists’² or as they were labeled ‘enemies of feminism’.³ The draft of the appeal in June 1889, therefore, signaled the rising hostilities to the acquisition of parliamentary vote for women. It was considered as the first symptom of the female rising opposition to the suffrage movement.

Women anti-suffragists were conservatives.⁴ They believed in the traditional ideals and conventions that governed womanhood and motherhood. They interpreted the parliamentary franchise, if granted to women, as a stumbling block that would spoil women’s mission in society. For this reason, the female opposition took the name of “conservative opposition”.⁵

The possibility of allowing women to take part in local elections through the passage of the Municipal Corporation Franchise Act in 1869 and the increase in the pro-suffrage organizations forged women anti-suffragists to react through the Appeal Against Female Suffrage. Women antis, who drafted the appeal, saw the local vote as being enough for political participation. The aim of this appeal was to convince the government not to grant women the parliamentary vote since the appeal encompassed signatories of those women who did not desire the vote. Louise Creighton, one of the architects of the appeal, declared:

¹ J.F.C Harrison, *Late Victorian Britain 1875-1901* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 1991),178.

² Martin Faraut, “Women Resisting the Vote : A Case of Anti-feminism”, *Women’s History Review*, Vol.12,No.4,(2003):605.

³ Nancy Fix Anderson, “Women Against Women in Victorian England: A Life of Eliza Lynn Lynton” in “Women Resisting the Vote : A Case of Anti-feminism”,ed. M.Faraut,op.cit.,605.

⁴ The word conservative, in this case, means someone who believes in the value of established and traditional practices in politics and society. The word conservative, in this case, does not mean someone who is a member of the Conservative party in the British House of Commons. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conservative> (August23,2016 at 13:31) .

⁵ Julia Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,142.

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My friends and I started the idea of organizing an opposition to the extension of the suffrage to women. I have always been opposed to it, but I did not regard it as deserving serious attention until lately when various circumstances that parliament might suddenly pass a bill granting female suffrage..... I felt that we women who do not want it ought to speak out.....we have drawn up a sort of protest against female suffrage which to appear in the Nineteenth Century Journal.....¹

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage contained 5 pages.² At the bottom of the last page, the names and the addresses of the 104 women, who signed it, were mentioned. The appeal was followed by another paper by the editor of the journal. It was entitled Female Suffrage: A Women's Protest.³ It had to be signed by female readers and given back to the editor of the journal to be published.

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage was divided into five sections⁴. The first section expressed the resentment to the political equality between men and women. Women writers of the appeal stated that since men and women were different, even the responsibilities they assume were different and politics remained the responsibility of men. It was written in the appeal on this point that "we believe that their[women]work for the state....must always differ from those of men and that their share in the working of the state machinery should be differed from that assigned to men".⁵

The second section of the appeal highlighted the cramping effects of the parliamentary franchise on the social mission of women as mothers and wives. The political participation would jeopardize women position in society. Simply put, this section clarified the real meaning of women citizenship. The authors of the appeal, Mary Ward (1851-1920) and Louise Creighton ((1850-1936) pointed out that female

¹ From a letter sent to her sister. Louise Creighton to I.Kosh (London:Lambeth Palace Library) in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed. Julia Bush, ,op.cit.,146.

² J.Bush,op.cit.,149

³ Ibid.

⁴ For more details about the whole text of the appeal, see Appendix Two, 145-148.

⁵ An Appeal Against Female Suffrage in *Literature of the Women's Suffrage Campaign in England* , ed. Carolyn Christensen Nelson (UK:Broadview Press,2004),25.

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citizenship was not intertwined with possessing the franchise. They stated that “political partnership would...blunt the special moral qualities of women...we believe that women will be more valuable citizens, will contribute more precious element to the national life without the vote.....”¹

The third section shed light on the danger of the vote on the lives of the married women. “if the suffrage is to be extended to women at all....introduces changes in family life, and in the English conception of the household.....”² Moreover, the fourth section explained that since women were previously entitled to domestic jobs, they had not enough knowledge to delve into politics and enter the political life. “...these new electors have still to be trained to take their part in the national work.....we protest against any further alteration which involves a new principle of extraordinary range and significance, closely connected with the complicated problems of sex and family life.....”³

The final section reminded the women suffragists that the parliamentary vote was not the way to prove the real role of women in society and they repeatedly resented sex-equality. They wrote “we are keenly alive to the enormous value of their special contribution to the community, that we oppose what seems to us to endanger that contribution”⁴

The Appeal of 1889 was an outcry against the deviation from the traditional norms that guided women’s lives. They portrayed their derision against what was called the “New Woman” whose awareness of her rights led her to seek an undisputed intervention in the male sphere through political participation. The anti-suffrage campaign did not oppose all the female movements of the nineteenth century. Women

¹ An Appeal Against Female Suffrage in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed.J.Bush,op.cit.,151.

² An Appeal Against Female Suffrage in *Literature of the Women’s Suffrage Campaign in England*, ed. C.Christensen Nelson,op.cit.,27.

³ An Appeal Against Female Suffrage in *Literature of the Women’s Suffrage Campaign in England*, ed. C.Christensen Nelson,op.cit.,27.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 152.

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antis were not against other issues that shaped the social change. What they resented was women's involvement in politics.

5.3. The Anti-Suffrage Campaign: An Outcry Against the “New Woman” in Politics

During the nineteenth century, women's awareness of being marginalized and oppressed in society forged them to react through several movements. The latter served as vehicles through which women would reach emancipation and equality. These early reactions gave birth to a new type of woman longing for her liberation, known as the “New Woman”.¹

The female suffrage movement was an occasion in which the New Woman fought for entering the male public sphere through political participation. Anti-suffragists resented the reactions of those women who attempted to deviate from the traditional norms that governed women's lives. One of these norms was that public affairs, in general, and political participation for women, in specific, were not women's business.

The expression “New Woman” was firstly coined in March 1894 by the English writer Sarah Grand (1854-1943)² in her article entitled “The New Aspect of the Woman Question” published in the *North American Review*³ in 1894. This expression referred to those women who endeavoured to liberate themselves through their attempt to determine social change and to get access to the male public sphere. One of the

¹ Sharon Crozier-De Rosa, “Marie Correli's British New Woman : A Threat to Empire” *History of the Family* 14 (2009) : 416.

² Sarah Grand (1854-1943) was born Frances Elizabeth Bellenden Clarke in Ireland. She was a member of the Women's Writers' Suffrage League and the vice president of the Women's Suffrage Society. She became the president of local branches of the National Council of Women and the National Union of Women Suffrage Societies. (Sarah Grand: Victorian Secrets <http://www.victoriansecrets.co.uk/authors/sarah-grand/> (December 12, 2015 at 13:16)

³ David, Rubinstein, *Before the Suffragettes: Women's Emancipation in the 1890's* in “Marie Correli's British New Woman : A Threat to Empire” ed. Sharon Crozier-De Rosa, op.cit., 419.

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components of the social change that the New Woman desired was political participation through the possession of the parliamentary suffrage.

For Sarah Grand, the one who firstly coined the expression of “New Woman”, the reactions of women who resented the state of inequality and subordination arouse in them new trends to ask for their rights. She pointed out that emerging as new women would acquaint them with remedies to the problem of being deprived of their rights. Furthermore, she explained that the problem for the New Woman was not the home as her proper sphere, but the hurdle lied in the extent on which women were excluded from the public sphere. She defined the “New Woman” as a “woman who has finally solved the problem and proclaimed for herself what was wrong with home-is the woman’s sphere and prescribed the remedy”.¹

In the light of the emergence of New Women fighting for the determination of their rights and working for social change, they found themselves deviating from the Victorian conventions on the one hand. On the other hand, their mission towards social change went in tandem with challenging the principles of the separate sphere ideology. The neglect of the principles of this ideology was what female anti-suffragists resented. For those female oppositionists, the deviations from the Victorian values would spoil women’s mission in society.

5.4. The Response of Women Suffragists to the Rising Female Anti-Suffrage Sentiments (1889-1908)

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage which was drafted by women anti-suffragists in June 1889 signaled the female rising hostilities towards granting women the parliamentary vote. In the beginning of the anti-suffrage campaign, women anti-suffragists worked to convince the parliamentarians that the majority of women did not

¹ Carolyn Christensen Nelson, *A New Woman Reader: Fiction, Articles and Drama of the 1890's* (Broadview Press,2001),IX.

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want the vote through the process of signatories' collection.¹ In this vein, the enthusiasm of women suffragists for gaining the vote did not vanish due to the deeds of women anti-suffragists. They kept responding to every step women anti-suffragists did. Whenever an anti-suffrage petition was drafted, another petition supporting the suffrage was drafted as a response.

Appeals and petitions were not the sole way for women suffragists to react. Another seminal reaction against the rising female hostilities to the vote and the repeated parliamentary rejection of suffrage petitions was the use of force and violence. The suffrage movement during the Edwardian Era (1901-1910) took another form. The violent reactions in demanding the vote was expressed through the establishment of Women's Social and Political Union (W.S.P.U.) in 1903. The resort to violence made from the peaceful Victorian suffrage movement an Edwardian militant suffragettes movement.²

5.4.1. An Appeal Against Female Suffrage: A Reply (July 1889)

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage: A Reply was drafted by the leader of the peaceful suffrage movement Millicent Garrett Fawcett and Emilia Dilke (1840-1904)³. It was written in July 1889 a month after the Appeal Against Female Suffrage was published in the *Nineteenth Century Journal*. The reactive appeal was published in the July number of the *Nineteenth Century Journal*, the same journal in which the Appeal Against Female Suffrage was published. The anti-suffrage appeal played a vital role in cementing women suffragists' efforts not to give up.

The drafters of the reactive appeal focused on the importance of the vote for women. Millicent Fawcett stressed that since men and women were different, the

¹ J .Bush, op.cit.,202.

² M.Boussabha-Bravard,op.cit.,96.

³ Emilia Dilke (1840-1904) was born Emilia Dilke Francis Strong. She was a British author and art historian. <https://dictionaryofarthistorians.org/dilkee.htm> (February21,2016 at 16:04)

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responsibilities they assume were also different, but this difference had not to be a reason that would deprive women from being represented in Parliament. She stated in the appeal that “we neither deny nor minimize the differences between men and women. The claim of women to representation depends to a large extent on those differences.....”¹

The Appeal Against Female Suffrage: A Reply was not the sole written appeal drafted by the female suffragists. Women drafters of the appeals shared a common belief that the parliamentary franchise was a crucial right that women had to gain. To emphasize the need for the franchise differently, another appeal was put forward in 1892.

5.4.2. An Appeal from Women of All Parties and All Classes (1892)

An Appeal from Women of All Parties and All Classes was another pro-suffrage appeal that was drafted for the sake of convincing the parliamentarians to grant them the vote and as a reaction to the publications of women anti-suffragists in the *Nineteenth Century Journal*. The role of these appeals was twofold. On the one hand, to answer the female anti-suffragists that the acquisition of the vote would be an inevitable issue. On the other hand, to collect women’s signatories confirming that women were really in need of the parliamentary vote. This appeal was also called “the Special Appeal”.²

Before the draft of the Special Appeal, a Special Appeal Committee was firstly formed in 1892. The role of this committee was to put forward this appeal for the sake of collecting female signatories. The appeal would be presented to Parliament as a way to persuade the parliamentarians to support the suffrage cause and grant women the vote. It was drafted to ascertain that women needed the vote and as a step to falsify the female anti-suffragists’ views as being propounded in the Anti-Suffrage Appeal of

¹ An Appeal Against Female Suffrage: A Reply in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*.ed. J.Bush,op.cit.,153.

² H.L.Smith,op.cit.,17.

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1889. It was estimated that by 1894, 140 meetings of women suffragists were held and 248,000 signatories¹ were collected due to this appeal. The introduction of the Special Appeal stated “Many of the women who sign this appeal....are of one mind that the continued denial of the franchise to women is unjust and expedient”.²

The presentation of petitions to Parliament and the publication of pro-suffrage appeals, in response to anti-suffrage appeals, were not the sole tactics used to ask for the vote and to convince the parliamentarians for approval. Militancy or the reliance on violent actions overshadowed the suffrage campaign of the twentieth century.

5.4.3. Militancy and the Resort to Violence

The futile attempts of the N.U.W.S.S. to acquaint women with the franchise led to the establishment of the W.S.P.U on October 10, 1903 in Manchester³. This organization was established by Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928)⁴ and her eldest daughter Christabel Pankhurst (1880-1958)⁵.

The W.S.P.U.’s female members were not called suffragists. From 1906, they were labeled as the suffragettes⁶ to distinguish them from the female suffragists of the N.U.W.S.S. The latter was a constitutional wing claiming for the right to vote peacefully whereas W.S.P.U. was a militant wing trying to acquaint women with the

¹ Elizabeth Crawford, *The Women’s Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide 1866-1928* (London: UCL press, 1999), 648.

² An Appeal from Women of All Parties and All Classes in *The Women’s Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide 1866-1928*, ed. E. Crawford, op. cit., 648.

³ Emmeline Pankhurst invited a group of working-class women to her house in Manchester. (H.L. Smith, op. cit., 37)

⁴ Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) was born in England. In 1903, she established the W.S.P.U. that used militant tactics to demand the vote for women. <http://www.biography.com/people/emmeline-pankhurst-9432764#synopsis> (February 21, 2016 at 15:42)

⁵ Christabel Harriette Pankhurst (1880-1958) was a suffragist leader credited with organizing the tactics of the militant British suffrage movement. She was the eldest daughter of Emmeline Pankhurst. Christabel, with her mother established the W.S.P.U in 1903. <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Christabel-Pankhurst> (February 14, 2016 at 13:37)

⁶ This name was coined as an insult by the newspaper *London Daily Mail* in January 10, 1906. Marcie Kligman, “The Effect of Militancy in the British Suffragettes Movement”, (2010) http://www.johndclare.net/women2_Kligman.htm (June 4, 2016 at 11:36).

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vote through confrontational and militant means. Hence, the sole aim of the W.S.P.U. was the enfranchisement of women in national elections equally with men since the female rate-payers involvement in local elections was not seen as the appropriate way for women's full political participation.

The establishment of the W.S.P.U. in 1903 was intertwined with the female opposition to the vote on the basis that women antis repeatedly convinced the parliamentarians not to grant women the vote. This was seen through the appeal they drafted in 1889. Since the peaceful tactics used to ask for the vote were aimless, the female suffragettes resorted to force and violence as an effective method that may lead to fruitful results.

The W.S.P.U.'s political activities did not start violently from the beginning, but they were peaceful at first such as open-air meetings, demonstrations in streets and taxes-resistance. With the consecutive parliamentary rejection of an array of suffrage petitions, the members of the W.S.P.U. hinged on violent tactics to quench their thirst for obtaining the vote. They reacted differently from the previous pro-suffrage organizations which sprang up in the nineteenth century. In the light of the different reactions of the W.S.P.U., the motto of the suffragettes was "deeds not words"¹. The leader of the W.S.P.U., Emmeline Pankhurst, asserted that "we resolved to be satisfied with nothing but action on our question. Deeds, not words was to be our motto".²

Militancy started in May 1905 when Emmeline Pankhurst arranged for a meeting to prepare for a protest demonstration against rejecting the franchise for women. Unlike other suffrage organizations, the W.S.P.U. members glorified militancy and resistance because they were not solely a way to demand the vote on the same terms as men, but they were also key methods to support women emancipation.

¹ June Purvis, "Deeds not Words: the Daily Lives of Militant Suffragettes in Edwardian Britain", *Women's Studies International Forum*. Vol.08, No.02 (1995):91.

² Ibid.

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The suffragettes returned to chaos and anarchical reactions to cope with the government's authority. These new trends of demanding the vote through chaotic methods gave birth to what was called the "direct action".¹ Since citizenship went in sync with individuality and equality, women suffragists and suffragettes saw themselves deprived of their citizenship on the extent of male tyranny. The suffragettes returned to violence to gain the vote as a key factor to minimize the male authority. Emmeline Pankhurst pointed out that "citizens had the right to resist tyrannical authority".²

The militant deeds of the female suffragettes took an array of forms. They hinged firstly in 1904 on the refusal to pay taxes because they believed that paying taxes went in tandem with being represented in Parliament as it was ingrained in the British constitution. From 1905 to 1908, women suffragettes were involved in violent actions such as stone-throwing, bombings, destruction of governmental buildings, the interruption of political meetings and confrontations with the police. The latter action led to a series of imprisonments of suffragettes. For the sake of being near Parliament to easily interrupt the parliamentarians and attack political leaders, the W.S.P.U's center was displaced from Manchester to London in the beginning of 1906³. After 1908, violent reactions reached their apogee with reference to more violent deeds.

It has been pointed out that the W.S.P.U. was not the sole militant female organization fighting for the right to vote. There was another militant organization which was Women Freedom league (W.F.L.). It was established in November 1907 by Charlotte Despard, Teresa Billington-Creig (1877-1964)⁴ and Edith How-Martyn

¹ Berenice A.Carroll, "Women Take Action" Women's Action and Social Change", *Women's Studies International Forum* . Vol.12. No.1(1989):03.

² Laura E.Nym Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement :Citizenship and Resistance in Britain,1860-1930* (New York :Oxford University Press,2003),46.

³ L.E.Nym Mayhall, *op.cit.*,46.

⁴ Teresa Billington-Creig (1877-1964) was a suffragette. She was a member of the W.S.P.U. and spent much of her time addressing meetings. <http://www.wcml.org.uk/our-collections/activists/teresa-billingtoncreig/> (September1,2016 at 16:08)

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(1875-1954)¹. This pro-suffrage league was not established by its own, but the members of the W.F.L. had been already W.S.P.U. members. They split from the W.S.P.U. and decided to establish a branch of their own.

The female members of the W.F.L. split from the W.S.P.U. because Teresa Bilington-Creig, one of the founders of the W.F.L., drafted a constitution that would govern the W.S.P.U in 1907. The leader of W.S.P.U, Emmeline Pankhurst, refused to work with a constitution because her organization was a militant one and it was overshadowed by law-breaking.². The W.S.P.U's deviation from democratic perspectives pushed some of its members to establish a separate league they called W.F.L. to be presided by Charlotte Despard.³

With the beginning of the female anti-suffrage campaign which went in sync with drafting the first Anti-Suffrage Appeal in 1889, women suffragists and suffragettes resorted to a multiplicity of measures. With a surge in militant tactics as a way to demand the vote, women anti-suffragists also brought something new in their campaign. They added a novel tactic to keep resenting the vote. So, women anti-suffragists resorted, for the first time, to the establishment of anti-suffrage organizations. Their anti-suffrage campaign was strengthened in 1908 with the formation of the first anti-suffrage league which was called Women's National Anti-Suffrage League (W.N.A.S.L).

¹ Edith How-Martyn (1875-1954) was born in 1875. She was an early supporter of the suffrage. She was an early recruit to the W.S.P.U. and was arrested in 1906. She was of the members of the W.S.P.U. to be sent to prison. She was critical of the dictatorial way of the W.S.P.U. She was one of the founding members of the W.F.L. She died in 1954 in Australia. <http://spartacus-educational.com/Wmartyn.htm> (Septemeber1,2016 at 16:14)

² Claire Louise Eustance, "Daring to be Free" :The Evolution of Women's Political Identities in the Women's Freedom League 1907-1930" (Doctoral Thesis.,University of York :Centre for Women's Studies,1993),51.

³ Charlotte Despard (1844-1939) was an Edinburgh-born suffragist, novelist and activist https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlotte_Despard (March2,2016 at 17:02)

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6. Conclusion

To sum up, women's thirst for social change forged them to determine their rights. One of the components under the umbrella of social change was to take part in elections on the national level. Since they succeeded in gaining the municipal vote in local elections, they strove for the extension of the vote to take part in parliamentary elections. Launching the female suffrage movement coincided with several glitches that hampered women's movement from the beginning. One of these hurdles was the opposition they encountered from other women.

The female opposition to the vote hinged on ample tactics and measures that fueled their anti-suffrage campaign. Female antis opposed the vote for a surfeit of reasons based on a sole idea that the vote was not a female concern. What overshadowed the anti-suffrage campaign was that all its members were women who rallied to resent the vote. Moreover, the opposition from the beginning did not lead women suffragists to give up their cause. Despite the derision expressed by women anti-suffragists, women supporters of the franchise reacted regularly to give their movement the flavour of continuity.

Supporting and resenting the suffrage occurred in a symbiotic relationship. The emergence of the suffrage movement led undeniably to the emergence of the anti-suffrage movement. The women suffragists and later suffragettes' reactions towards anti-suffrage actions were doubled. Put simply, women suffragists from their first steps relied on a variety of tactics. Women anti-suffragists, in turn, hinged solely on appeals and written forms as the first step to oppose the female franchise. Until 1908, they resorted to another effective tactic to fuel their opposition. Hence, they resorted to the establishment of organizations. So, what were the reasons which were put forward to oppose the parliamentary vote although it was a female shared interest? Why did women antis wait until 1908 to establish anti-suffrage organizations? How did female supporters of suffrage react? These questions will be answered in the second chapter.



Chapter Two

The Female Anti-Suffragism in Practice

(1908-1914)

1. Introduction

Despite the resort to anti-suffrage appeals in the nineteenth century, the female anti-suffrage campaign was carried on by women oppositionists in the twentieth century (1908-1914). It began in an organized way in 1908 with the establishment of the first anti-suffrage organization the W.N.A.S.L. The extended female opposition in the twentieth century took the name of the Forward Policy (1908-1914). Women antis' renewed opposition did not emerge out of vacuum, but there were a surfeit of reasons and arguments which were put forward to strengthen the female anti-suffrage cause. Those reasons were divided into political and social ones. All of them shared women's unfitness for entering politics. To air out their anti-suffrage arguments and determine the aim of their organized campaign, women antis resorted to numerous anti-suffrage tactics and methods to fuel their campaign.

Women anti-suffragists underwent another issue which was the suffragettes' violent protest. The latter was advantageous on the anti-suffrage cause on the one hand. On the other hand, it represented a source of condemnation from women antis based on the idea that violence would be never a remedy for gaining the vote. So, what were the reasons behind female opposition to the entry of their sex into politics through being enfranchised? What were the tactics that women oppositionists followed to mirror their anti-suffrage incentives? How did they respond to the suffragettes' militancy? The answer of these questions will be the task of this chapter.

2. The Reasons behind the Female Opposition to the Vote under the Forward Policy (1908-1914)

There were several reasons that forged women antis to renounce the parliamentary vote for women. They put forward an array of arguments to give their campaign energy and to better convince the politicians in Parliament and women in the English society that the vote should not be vouchsafed to women. The reasons for resenting the vote were divided into social and political ones. The female anti-suffrage

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battle reached its height in the twentieth century in 1908 with the resort to the establishment of the first anti-suffrage organization. The anti-suffrage campaign starting from 1908 was labeled as the “Forward Policy”¹ under the leadership of Mary Humphrey Ward.

2.1. Definition of the Forward Policy (1908-1914)

The early calls for denying the vote to women dated back to the publication of the Appeal Against Female Suffrage in June 1889. Women antis’ response took place due to a series of pro-suffrage petitions presented to Parliament. The appeal of 1889 was published to confirm that the majority of women did not want the vote. In the twentieth century, the female anti-suffrage campaign took another turn with the incorporation of more effective tactics. Their anti-suffrage endeavours were doubled and their opposition was strengthened. Thus, the organized anti-suffrage campaign and the continued resentment of the vote for women in the twentieth century was known as the forward policy and even women opponents of the vote were known as “forward women”.²

The forward policy (1908-1914) was firstly introduced by the leader of the female anti-suffrage campaign Mary Humphrey Ward in 1908. It vanished in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I when women suffragists and suffragettes stopped their suffrage movement to contribute to war efforts. This policy was supported by women anti-suffragists who rallied to oppose the vote under the umbrella female anti-suffragism.

Women antis, to cement their forward policy, put forward a surfeit of reasons that dictated the denial of the parliamentary vote for women. In the light of this policy, they strove to preserve gender roles and gender differences. It was labeled as

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,23.

² Julia Bush, “British Women’s Anti-Suffragism and the Forward Policy,1908-14”, *Women’s History Review*, Vol.11, No.3 (2002) :438.

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“forward” because it was the continuation or extension of what had been started in the nineteenth century (1889) when the early symptoms of opposition emerged.¹ The core principle of the forward policy was to strengthen the role of women’s role in local government as an alternative for full political participation through.

The forward policy in England as an anti-suffrage policy started with the establishment of the first anti-suffrage league the W.N.A.S.L. The league was set up in July 1908 to be merged with Men’s League for Opposing Women’s Suffrage in August 1910. The mixed-sex league became known as National League for Opposing Women’s Suffrage (N.L.O.W.S).The anti-suffrage cause reached its peak with the formation of anti-suffrage organizations.

The female opposition to the parliamentary vote did not spring up simply because women were not qualified for political participation. Women anti-suffragists backed up their actions based on several arguments. The first type of those reasons was the social reasons. The seminal perspective of the social reasons was that the parliamentary vote would affect women’s status negatively in society and affect society itself.

2.2. The Social Reasons

Women opponents of the female parliamentary franchise renounced participation in parliamentary elections because they believed that women’s involvement in a male sphere (politics) would threaten not solely women status in society, but even the family order and stability. Women’s interaction with men, as political participants, would lead to the decline of the English family through a surfeit of ways. The absence of order and the neglect of female responsibilities towards the family represented the core reason why female antis resented the vote.

Since women would neglect their traditional roles as care-takers and house-managers, they would find themselves busy joining men in their public sphere through sharing political participation with them. Women, in this case, would neglect their

¹ J.Bush, “British Women’s Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy,1908-14”, op.cit., 435.

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responsibilities towards their homes on the one hand. On the other hand, the principle of female subordination to their husbands would come to an end on the basis that the unity of the family hinged on the subordination and obedience of women to their male controllers.¹ In the light of this, Jennifer Sommerville, in her book, *Feminism and the Family: Politics and Society in the uk and usa* (2000), described the suffrage movement as “anti-familial ideology”² since the suffrage movement would acquaint women with a means (the vote) to destroy their families. The role and the structure of the family would be brought upside down.

The interaction of women in politics would impinge the patriarchal rule. The role of the male controller and the head of the family would be affected since women would emerge as political competitors to men. Accordingly, the home was the arena where the authority of male controllers existed and where the female subordination and obedience took place. These familial principles would be spoiled if women neglected their home, challenged the principle of the family and participated in politics.

The idea of enfranchising women imputed in women antis the fear of reversing sex roles in society. The vote would rid men from their masculinity and women from their femininity. The parliamentary vote, indeed, would introduce “the masculine women and the feminine men”.³ In one way or another, the enfranchisement of women would threaten the unity and the stability of the family. Their political participation was not the sole way to participate in the management and the progress of their societies, but the performance of their “womanly roles”⁴ either married or unmarried and the management of their families were also ways to participate in the progress of their society.

¹ Ruth Rubio-Marin, “The Achievement of Female Suffrage in Europe: On Women’s Citizenship” (New York:Oxford University Press,2014),7-8.

² J.Sommerville,op.cit.,100.

³ Brian Harrison, *Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women’s Suffrage in Britain* (New York: Routledge Library,1978),56.

⁴ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*,op.cit.,24.

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The stability of society was guaranteed through the stability of the family. The social order, in case of enfranchising women in parliamentary elections, would be jeopardized because they would refrain from performing their traditional roles towards their families and struggles inside the family would appear. Ethel Colquhoun (1874-1950)¹, a female anti-suffragist, in her book *The Vocation of Women* (1913) linked the social stability with the exhibition of the true role of women in their homes. She stated that “.....social stability depended upon the purely womanly side of social organizationand the deep physical significance of maternity...”.² In the light of the social instability caused by female enfranchisement, the suffrage movement itself was described by another female anti-suffragist Ethel Harrison (1851-1916)³, as a movement which negated the social norms and conventions that governed both genders in society. She described the suffrage movement as “an anti-social movement”.⁴

It is crucial to note that women antis were not against the social change that women endeavoured to accomplish; they encouraged and supported women to foster their social duties through an array of social advancements such as the access to education, employment opportunities and welfare activities. All these activities remained in the circle of the domestic sphere in which women had to perform their social duties and responsibilities.

Women antis believed that political participation alongside men would affect their lives, their “womanly virtues” and their femininity. They derived their anti-suffrage incentives from the separate sphere ideology. The latter, as explained in the first chapter, dictated the place and the responsibilities of each gender in a couple of separate and distinct spheres. This ideology defined, above all, the male and female

¹ Ethel Maud Tawse Jollie Colquhoun (1874-1950) was a writer and political activist. She was an avowed anti-suffragist and anti-feminist. She died in Salisbury in 1950. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethel_Tawse_Jollie (May21,2016 at 11:15).

² Ethel Colquhoun, *The Vocation of Women* in “British Women’s Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy,1908-14” ,ed., J.Bush,op.cit.,446

³ Ethel Bertha Harrison (1851-1916) was a positivist, essayist and a writer. She grew up in an upper -class family. She was educated at home in Highgate Hill in London. She was one of the female anti-suffragists. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/38/101038884/> (April28,2016 at 10:31)

⁴ J.Bush, “British Women’s Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy,1908-14”,op.cit.,446.

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obligations in society. Political participation and the public affairs fell in male public sphere. For the fact that it was an ideology that clarified the roles and obligations of each gender in society, it was called “the protective barrier”¹ because it protected each gender from the interference in the sphere of the other or trying to assume responsibilities which were not one’s own.

Women anti-suffragists resented the merger of the female private sphere and the male public sphere for the sake of protecting and freeing women from responsibilities and the obligations imputed to men such as the military service, the financial support of the family and fighting in wars. Since women would gain political participation through the vote as being a male issue, women would find themselves perform several male tasks. In this vein, the female suffrage victory would be fruitful for men because they would share some of their hard duties with women.² It may be pointed out also that the full citizenship did not coincide with political equality between men and women. Full citizenship, as women antis believed, lied in the performance of men’s and women’s duties in their appropriate sphere. Women antis supported what they called “the gendered version of citizenship”.³

One of the social reasons, that women antis put forward, was that women would lose their status in society through the emergence of hostilities between men and women in society. These hostilities would spoil the stability of families and they would result in divorce and the dissolution of the families. For this reason, acquiring the vote would signal the decline of the woman’s status. The loss of women’s respectability and virtues was referred to as “status loss”.⁴ As an example of the disappearance of men’s respect to women in society due to the possession of political rights through the franchise, Eliza D.Armstrong, in her article “Women Suffrage and the Saloon” published in 1915, pictured what would happen during any election day

¹ May Witwitt, “An Evaluation of Anti-Feminist Attitudes in Selected Professional Victorian Women”,(PhD Diss.,University of Bedfordshire,2012),26.

² Susan E.Marshall, “In Defense of Separate Spheres: Class and Status Politics in the Antisuffrage Movement”, *Oxford Journals*,Vol.65,No.2 (1986) :341.

³ M.Faraut, op.cit.,614.

⁴ Eliza D.Armstrong, “Woman Suffrage and the Saloon” in “In Defense of Separate Spheres: Class and Status Politics in the Anti-Suffrage Movement”,ed. S. E.Marshall, op.cit.,338.

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when all women would be outside their homes for voting. The election day, in this case, referred to any day when a given election would be held and women went outside to vote. She described that day as the following:

Election day in women suffrage is the only day when the social restrictions between the sexes are thrown down...the only day the man is licensed to talk to any woman he meets on the streets....why, on that day should the courtesy that protects womanhood be neglected? ¹

The core issue that women anti-suffragists resented because they did not perceive it as a component of social duties was the parliamentary vote for women. Women suffragists battled for equal franchise with men since the beginning of the suffrage campaign in the nineteenth century (1866) as a way to promote their role in society and as an aspect of full citizenship. The local franchise vouchsafed to women in 1869 was not seen as enough for their citizenship and equality with men. It could not allow women to participate in the public affairs of their country. It expressed the marginalization of their public role.²

Added to the aforementioned reasons, the female citizenship was perceived differently by women anti-suffragists than female suffragists did. For women proponents of suffrage, however, citizenship referred to the equality of rights between men and women in all aspects of life. One aspect of gender equality was political equality. Women anti-suffragists did not link female citizenship with sex-equality. For them, the female citizenship was mingled with the performance of the female duties and obligations they were obliged to do. They believed, therefore, that the English women could enjoy their citizenship without the franchise.³

¹ Eliza D. Armstrong, "Woman Suffrage and the Saloon" in "In Defense of Separate Spheres: Class and Status Politics in the Anti-Suffrage Movement", ed. S. E. Marshall, op.cit., 338.

² Christopher Harvie & H.C.G. Matthew, *Nineteenth-Century Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 140.

³ Kheir Hardie, M.P., "The Citizenship of Women; A Plea for Woman's Suffrage" in "Coming Men on Coming Questions", ed. W.T. Stead, No. VI, (1903).

The arguments which women antis put forward were not only social. They did not believe lonely that the vote would jeopardize women's status in society and create social glitches for women. In addition to the social arguments, they backed up their opposition with political reasons.

2.3. The Political Reasons

Besides the social reasons, there were also an array of political reasons which were put forward by women antis to convince the politicians and the English women that the vote should not be granted. All the reasons and arguments listed below share the dimension that political participation would never be good for women.

The first political reason went in sync with the principle of the separate sphere ideology. Hence, politics and political affairs fell in the public sphere which was the male sphere. The political administration of the country and the process of decision-making through parliamentary elections were not a female responsibility. Woman's responsibilities were propounded in her domestic sphere coincided with the principle of domesticity.

One of the pivotal reasons which led women opponents of the vote to support women's exclusion from politics was the biological structure of women which did not allow them to compete with men politically. For the fact that women were regarded as weaker than men physically and mentally, they were not allowed to meddle in politics.¹ What qualified men for political participation was their physical and mental superiority². Women's physical disability exempted her from every issue that needed physical force such as military service and political administration.³

<https://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/4517/The%20citizenship%20of%20women.pdf?sequence=6>
(December03,2015 at 12 :41).

¹ Almroth E.Wright , "The Unexpurgated Case Against Woman Suffrage"(2002):20

<http://www.searchengine.org.uk/ebooks/108/25.pdf> (January30,2016 at 14:26)

² Grace Duffield Goodwin, *Anti-Suffrage : Ten Good Reasons*(New York : Duffield and Company,1913),92.

³ Edith Massie, "A Woman's Plea Against Woman Suffrage" in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed. J.Bush, ,op.cit.,168.

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For women antis, politics remained a male domain since it required physical and mental capability. They believed in what is called “sex difference”.¹ In this vein, since women and men are biologically different, their duties have to be also different. Women antis believed that men and women biological difference made their political equality an impossible issue to be accomplished. Sex, in turn, played a focal role in the demarcation of each gender’s duties to be performed in society.

Mary Humphrey Ward claimed that due to men’s physical strength, they could establish not solely political institutions, but the whole British Empire. This fact encouraged them to be qualified for political participation without the intervention of women. She stated that “.....the empire [British] was the creation of male brawn and male combativeness”.² Women were regarded not solely weaker than men physically, but they were regarded also weaker than men mentally.³ The mental weakness of women or as it was called the “intellectual defect” encouraged women antis to call for the exclusion of women from delving into politics.⁴

Besides the physical and mental weakness of women, their emotional nature let them unfit for political participation.⁵ They are sensitive and quickly affected. Havelock Ellis, in his book entitled *Man and Woman* published in 1974, encouraged also the impossibility of female integration in politics and threw light on what he called women’s “affectability”.⁶ Being quickly affected and obsessed with their feelings and not reason, women could not be involved in politics because the decisions they would make and the laws they would set would be the creation of female thinking since they suffer from limited reasoning capabilities.

Added to the aforementioned political reasons, women’s political inexperience and incompetence remained another important argument. The political inexperience of

¹ G.D.Goodwin, op.cit.,92.

² M.Witwit,op.cit.,29.

³ Merry E.Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History: Global Perspectives* (Great Britain: Wiley Blackwell Publishing,2011),152.

⁴ Almroth E.Wright , “The Unexpurgated Case Against Woman Suffrage”(2002):20
<http://www.searchengine.org.uk/ebooks/108/25.pdf> (January30,2016 at 14:26)

⁵ G.D.Goodwin,op.cit.,92.

⁶ Havelock Ellis, *Man and Woman in Anti-Suffrage : Ten Good Reasons*,ed. G.Duffield Goodwin,op.cit.,92.

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women did not allow them to compete with men in politics. The female political participation, through the possession of the franchise, would result in anarchy and political disarray. Although the upper-class women experienced political training such as queens, women in the English society of the middle class and lower classes were not offered an opportunity to hold offices or stand as political members. Accordingly, women were not only ignorant of how to participate politically, but they did not have even a political knowledge about politics. “.....their [women] absence from political life was matched by an absence from most works of political theory”.¹

For women anti-suffragists, politics was a male-held domain. The political institutions were firstly set and established by men; political laws were dictated by men. They did not administer the country politically overnight, but after being trained and being qualified for this field. In the light of the men’s efforts to climb the ladder of political participation, politics was referred to as “man’s work”.² Political participation was related to men similarly as the housework was related to women.

Another argument which dictated the exclusion of women from political participation through the possession of the parliamentary franchise was that women’s efforts to enter politics would result in conflicts and hostilities between men and women in politics. This state of unstable relations between both genders was labeled as “sex antagonism”.³ What fueled the wheel of sex-antagonism was that men would start reacting against the entry of women to politics in fear of female domination over them. This domination would signal the placement of the whole empire under female control since the number of women was more than men.⁴

If women competed with men politically and exerted domination over them, the British government would be placed under female control. Julia Bush, a teacher of history and women’s studies at the University of Northampton (UK), referred to the

¹ M.E.Wiesner-Hanks,op.cit.,137.

² G.Duffield Goodwin, op.cit.,85.

³ Ibid.,104.

⁴ A Guide Cause: The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Scotland , Arguments for and Against Women’s Suffrage (National Library of Scotland) <http://sfpl.org/pdf/libraries/main/sfhistory/suffrageagainst.pdf> (April28,2016 at 16:35)

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fears of female domination in politics as the fear of “the feminization of the British government”.¹ The table below shows that women outnumbered men. For this reason, women needed to be exempted from political participation. Since they were more than men, they would control and dominate men politically.

Table One: The Number of Men and Women in England 1861-1911

Census	Men	Women
1861	9.776.259	10.289.965
1871	11.058.934	11.653.332
1881	12.624.754	13.343.532
1891	14.050.620	14.950.398
1901	15.721.728	16.804.347
1911	17.448.476	18.626.793

Source: *Statesman's Year Book* in “The Women’s Suffrage Movement in England”, ed. Edward Raymond Turner, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.7, No.4 (1913):592.

The male response and hostilities towards women signaled the decline of the feminine virtues such as motherhood and wifhood. Joining men in politics, women would lose the respect they previously encountered from men. Put simply, the partnership of women alongside men in political affairs would lead to male violence towards women because the interaction of both sexes in politics would result in different opinions and decisions over political matters. This would lead to political instability and fruitless management.²

It is worth noting that women anti-suffragists were overshadowed by their conservative ideas about the role and status of women in society. They glorified the traditional conventions that governed women’s lives. They rallied to oppose not only

¹ J.Bush, “British Women’s Anti-Suffragism and the Forward Policy, 1908-14”, op.cit., 450.

² S.E.Marshall, op.cit., 341.

the suffrage campaign, but the proposed changes that would reverse gender roles and jeopardize women's status through their involvement in politics.¹

The social and political reasons listed before shared a common point. They shared the necessity of denying the vote to women because women anti-suffragists' conservative principles forged them to oppose the vote. They perceived the parliamentary vote as perilous to women's status in society. Accordingly, they believed that the vote would impinge negatively not only women and their status, but even the future of the British Empire. In this vein, women antis played the role of being maternal reformers and imperial ladies.²

3. The Nature of Women Anti-suffragists

Women opponents of the vote shared an array of arguments that state the denial of the parliamentary vote for women. Their ideas on the unfitness of the vote for women were reflected through several tactics and evoked in them the interest in resenting the parliamentary vote for women. The latter was portrayed as one aspect of social change that women sought. Women antis rallied to prevent the acquisition of the parliamentary vote by women. They served in their mission of female anti-suffragism as maternal reformers and imperial ladies.³

3.1. Women Antis as Maternal Reformers

Women antis as being maternal reformers were interested in the reforms that governed women's lives. They were called reformers because they worked on the reforms that would overshadow women's involvement in the public affairs of their country. Women anti-suffragists as maternal reformers put forward an array of ways that would give women an opportunity to manifest their roles in society such as

¹ S.E.Marshall,op.cit.,332.

² J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,23.

³ Ibid.,47.

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educational reforms and employment opportunities. They resisted the involvement of women in the public affairs through possessing the parliamentary vote although it was an aspect of the public affairs of the country. Ethel Harrison, a maternal reformer, in her book *Freedom of Women* published in 1908, resented the female contribution to the public life through politics. She stated that “We undervalue the importance of women’s contribution to public life that we deplore the agitation for the vote: we think women can do better for themselves and the world”.¹ Although the parliamentary vote was one aspect of the public affairs, women maternal reformers resented it based on its cramping effects on mothers.

There were many women maternal reformers. This research sheds light on four prominent women antis, as an example to better illustrate with their views on maternalism and motherhood. Those women are: Mary Humphrey Ward (1851-1920), Louise Creighton (1850-1936), Ethel Harrison (1851-1916) and Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840-1932)².

Women antis glorified the importance of motherhood which would be spoiled if the franchise would be granted to mothers whose onus was to care for their husbands and children. The opposition to the vote was one aspect of what was called “maternal reformism.”³ It is worth noting that women maternal reformers believed in British womanhood and the necessity of women’s contribution in their marital sphere. They were conservatives and supporters of gender differences on the extent that politics was not women’s business. They believed in the difference in the responsibilities of each gender.

The duties of mothers were not intertwined with entering politics which was not included in their own private sphere. Their duties were interlinked with their homes

¹ Ethel Harrison, *The Freedom of Women* in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed. J. Bush, op.cit., 54-55

² Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840-1932) was the daughter of Anglican Clergymen Christopher Wordsworth and the niece of the English poet William Wordsworth. She was a writer and educator in an era when the role of women in their domestic sphere was glorified. She served as an anti-suffragist for many years along with other female anti-suffragists. <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/elizabeth-wordsworth> (April 28, 2016 at 10:38).

³ J. Bush, “British Women’s Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy, 1908-14”, op.cit., 34.

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and families. “The domestic roles of women were increasingly defined in relation to a spiritual mission of wifedom and maternity”.¹ For women oppositionists as maternal reformers, mothers and wives can participate in the management of their country not by possessing the vote, they can manifest their abilities and their roles in society through other fields.

It is of great significance to note that women suffragists who battled for the parliamentary vote were not against the idea that women had to neglect their responsibilities towards their homes and their families, they wanted women to transmit their virtues and their abilities in public affairs in general and in politics in particular. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, the leader of the peaceful suffrage movement, claimed that “the sphere of woman was her home: that was quite true, but it was also one reason why women should take a part in political affairs.....they wanted the home-side represented in politics”.²

It is worth mentioning that women anti-suffragists resisted the involvement of women in the male public affairs. This did not mean that they were against women advancements outside their homes. On the contrary, they encouraged women’s educational³, employment opportunities and the participation in local elections. They rallied to support the feminine influence in the public arena with a total denial of the parliamentary vote for women. Since they were maternal reformers, they shared the idea that women’s maternal role could be extended outside their homes where they could exert influence and draw their own status in society far from being enfranchised.

Women were not qualified solely for the home, but they had to perform what women antis called the “social duty”.⁴ The latter referred to all the activities that women performed outside the home. The series of advancements outside the home

¹ J. Bush, “British Women’s Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy, 1908-14”, op.cit., 24.

² Sandra Holton, “Feminism and Democracy: The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies 1897-1918”(Doctoral Thesis., University of Stirling, 1980), 20.

³ The four women maternal reformers chosen as an example shared higher education in Oxford University. This meant that they were not against educational advancement for women. J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 28.

⁴ Ibid., 43.

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were not seen as a mistake, but as an extension of their maternal roles as mothers and wives. The social duties of women took a multiplicity of forms such as access to education, employment and the involvement in local government. Under the ideology of anti-suffragism, women antis did not oppose the social reforms and the social duties for women in society.¹ Suffragism, in turn, was perceived by women antis as a threat to the social mission of women. It was seen as “anti-social movement”.²

Women antis did not consider only the danger of the parliamentary vote on women’s lives and their status in society, they considered also the threat of women’s participation in politics on the British Empire itself. For their efforts to oppose the vote based on its devastating effects on the empire, women antis were also labeled as “imperial ladies”.³

3.2. Women Antis as Imperial Ladies

Women antis resented the vote not because it affected women’s mission in society, but because the enfranchisement of women would allow them to administer the country politically alongside men. In this case, they would affect the building of the empire. For women antis, women were not allowed to take part in the process of policy-making and could not have a direct voice in the imperial affairs of the country because the administration of England through politics was a male concern. They believed that granting the parliamentary vote for women posed a danger for the future of the empire. Hence, women antis worked hard to annul any possibility of enfranchising women because women had previously gained the municipal vote. The latter would allow them to vote in local elections and they could, in one way or another, participate in the government of their country on the local level.⁴

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,47.

² Ibid.,56.

³ Ibid.,107.

⁴ E.Raymond Turner, op.cit., 588.

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The female imperial role referred to women's contribution to the building of their empire through several actions such as educational development and employment advancements. The parliamentary vote, for women antis, would be a source of destruction for England since political participation was not a female concern. Women could enjoy their citizenship, enhance their abilities in society and bolster their feminine role far from being mired in politics. Julia Bush, on this point, elucidated that

Women's very importance to the empire dictated that they should stand aside from the polluting rigours of parliamentary politics. Their mission as womanly empire-builders required a social status within British society which was protected by their exclusion from the imperial franchise....¹

Women antis, as imperial ladies, believed in the strength of men as political leaders on the one hand and they glorified the masculine authority on the other hand. ".....masculine authority was assumed to have forged the empire and most anti-suffragist women were content to operate under its shadow".²

For women anti-suffrage acolytes, men had to control women politically since women were weaker than them.³ By the same token, the imperial authority had to rest on male hands; the managers of the country had to be men and not women. As imperial ladies, women non-suffragists believed that if the parliamentary vote would be vouchsafed to women, the British Empire would be governed by women who lacked political experience.

In addition to the aforementioned arguments that shared the danger of the female parliamentary vote on the British Empire, women imperial ladies believed in another crucial argument which was the "physical force".⁴ This argument stated that women

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,110.

² Ibid.,138.

³ S.Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit.,112.

⁴ Ibid.

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were physically weaker than men. Being stronger than women, men could be political leaders because their physical strength can arouse in them the will to bear the tiring efforts of managing a country.

There were many imperial ladies who opposed the vote. For this research, three women imperial ladies were chosen as an example. Violet Markham (1872-1959)¹, Gertrude Bell (1868-1926)² and Ethel Colquhoun (1874-1950). They opposed the parliamentary franchise for women as a way to show their loyalty to the British Empire. For this reason, they were called “Empire enthusiasts”.³

The journeys of being saddled with imperial incentives towards the parliamentary vote were different. The three selected female antis as imperial ladies had different views on the denial of the parliamentary vote in fear of its bad effects on the building of the empire. Their adventures all over the world and their exposure to male colonial leaders awoke in them the interest of glorifying the significance of an empire ruled by men. Those British colonial rulers were called “the minds which are making history”.⁴

The first woman imperial lady was Violet Markham. The genesis of her anti-suffrage beliefs hinged on her travels to other countries that were under the British rule. There, she became interested in the importance of control and rule by a strong power. In 1895, her family moved to Egypt where she strengthened her contact with the British colonial ruler in Egypt Lord Cromer (1841-1917)⁵. In 1899, she reached South Africa where she met the British colonial ruler Alfred Milner (1854-1925). Put

¹ Violet Rosa Markham (1872-1959) was born at Brimington Hall near Chesterfield, England, where she grew up. She was a liberal activist, a writer, a social reformer and administrator. She was one of the leading anti-suffrage women. <http://www.vipfac.com/violet%20Markham.html> (March 12, 2016 at 12:46)

² Gertrude Margaret Lowthian Bell (1868-1926). She was born in Durham, England. She was the granddaughter of Sir Isaac Lowthian Bell who served as a member of parliament during the administration of the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. She studied history at Oxford and served as writer, a linguist, a historian, archeologist and political officer. She worked for the British government in Cairo during World War I. She was one of the leading women antis against the suffrage movement. She died in Baghdad, Iraq in 1926. <http://www.biography.com/people/gertrude-bell-21149695> (March 12, 2016 at 15:40).

³ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 109.

⁴ E.L. Riedi, op.cit., 209.

⁵ Evelyn Baring Lord Cromer (1841-1917) was a British administrator and diplomat. He served as a British agent and Consul General in Egypt for 24 years (1883-1907). <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Evelyn-Baring-1st-Earl-of-Cromer> (September 1, 2016 at 13:42)

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simply, she moved to Canada in 1905 where she met the British ruler Lord Albert Grey (1851-1917). Her contacts with British male colonial rulers in different corners of the world gave her an opportunity to glorify the status of the British Empire as an imperial power.

Violet Markham's way of thinking about the unsuitability of the franchise for women was influenced by what was called the "scientific racism" of the nineteenth century which favoured the white race and encouraged the white's forceful colonization of other territories.¹ This meant that when being in touch with the British colonial rulers in countries under the British rule, she perceived the importance of the British male rulers and how they could manage countries which were not their own. They had to be the sole political leaders without the intervention of women. Moreover she believed that granting the suffrage to women would mark female domination over men because women outnumbered men. She told Lord Grey, the British colonial ruler of South Africa, that "adult suffrage means a majority of women voters and I ask myself if that is going to make for the good government of the nation and the empire".²

The second imperial lady Gertrude Bell enjoyed education in the University of Oxford where she came into contact with other conservative women. Like Violet Markham, Gertrude Bell admired Lord Cromer and his mission as a colonial ruler in Egypt. His writings on imperialism awoke in her the interest in imperialist incentives since he was a British colonial ruler in Egypt. In 1910, Lord Cromer sent Gertrude Bell his essay entitled 'Essay on Imperialism'. His essays and writings on imperialism sustained her anti-democratic principles which were portrayed through opposing the parliamentary vote being granted to women.³ She confirmed that suffragism had to be resented and women anti-suffragists needed to be rallied to support their anti-suffrage

¹ E.L.Riedi, op.cit., 192.

² Ibid., 213.

³ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 124.

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cause. She asserted that “suffragism needed to be opposed because it threatened to interfere with more important imperial matters”.¹

Ethel Colquhoun was the third imperial lady chosen as an example for this research. Like the other female anti-suffrage acolytes, she shared the idea that women could participate in the building of the empire through an array of fields such as educational and employment opportunities. Politics, in turn, was not their concern. As an imperial lady, she believed in the control of the strong over the weak. She believed that women are weaker than men. For this reason, women had to be controlled politically by men. She asserted that “I don’t want to see more so-called political women.....”²

Ethel Colquhoun, in her book *The Vocation of Women* published in 1913 and was addressed mainly to women readers, she shed light among the folding of her book the glitches that complicated women’s lives and she explained the different ways the British women could contribute to the advancement of their empire. Added to this, she expounded the devastating effects of political participation for women on the one hand and for the British Empire on the other hand.

The female anti-suffragists organized their anti-suffrage campaign through their reliance on numerous tactics to reflect their oppositionist incentives. Their methods differed to accomplish a single aim which was the denial of the vote for women and the prevention of their sex to enter politics. The anti-suffrage women diversified their anti-suffrage methods to better strengthen their anti-suffrage cause.

4. The Female Anti-Suffrage Tactics

The opposition to women enfranchisement in England under the forward policy was expressed through numerous tactics that enabled women antis to air out their anti-suffrage protest. The female opponents of the vote diversified their anti-suffrage

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,124.

² Ibid.,129.

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strategies to better strengthen their claim and to confront the supporters of the female suffrage movement. The reliance on anti-suffrage tactics¹ aimed at persuading the parliamentarians not to grant women the franchise and to convince women in the English society not to demand the vote. In 1889, when the anti-suffrage campaign began, women antis relied on anti-suffrage appeals and petitions as means of opposition. With the extension of the female anti-suffrage protest in the twentieth century, appeals were not the sole tactic to oppose the vote. Anti-suffrage tactics were characterized by diversity to unite women antis together and to bring their opposition on the public level.

4.1. The Establishment of Anti-Suffrage Leagues

One of the focal tactics that women antis resorted for strengthening their anti-suffrage campaign and defeating the suffrage movement was the formation of anti-suffrage organizations. The first anti-suffrage league was established in 1908. It was led solely by women antis. The second league established in 1910 was the merger between women's and men's leagues.

4.1.1. The Establishment of the W.N.A.S.L (1908-1910)

The female anti-suffrage league was not formed in 1908, but its establishment was preceded by a series of preparations and negotiations between women antis. Those women antis² who established the league were experienced ladies since they had already launched their anti-suffrage protest in the nineteenth century.

The anti-suffrage league came as a way to shore up the female anti-suffrage campaign in fear of the parliamentary support to the suffrage cause. Additionally, there

¹ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy, 1908-14", op.cit., 433.

² Among these women, it was listed in books of history : Miss Humphrey Ward, Margaret Jersey, Miss Milner, Miss Lonsdale, Miss Taylor, Mrs Simon, Ethel Harrison, Violet Markham, Gertrude Bell, Miss Beatrice Chamberlain and others. J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit. 172.

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were several pro-suffrage petitions in the House of Commons for enfranchising women in 1908. The advancement in the suffrage cause paved the way for establishing an anti-suffrage league to air out women opponents' anti-suffrage protest in an organized way.

The second reason for establishing the W.N.A.S.L. was Mary Humphrey Ward's visit to America from March to June 1908. Her meetings with the female leader of American anti-suffrage campaign Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) and her interactions with American anti-suffragists inspired her and encouraged her to establish a league with the purpose of defeating the suffrage movement, uniting women antis together and bring the anti-suffrage protest into a public level.

After the arrival of Mary Humphrey Ward from America to Britain on June 30, 1908, she organized a meeting with women antis at Lady Haversham House. In the same day, she published a letter in the *Times* Newspaper that summarized the inspirational ideas that she got from American female anti-suffragists. She wrote "...the women of America...have defeated the woman suffrage movement. The same result ...has to be achieved in England and can be achieved, if only the women of this country will rouse themselves to the danger before us".¹ The third factor which motivated women antis to establish the league was the surge of the suffragettes' militant and violent actions throughout the country.

The first step to establish the W.N.A.S.L. was the formation of a committee composed of a group of women antis to draft an anti-suffrage petition in 1907. The petition aimed at collecting anti-suffrage signatories from those women who did not desire the vote. It was reported that 37,000 signatures were collected that year.² In 1908, a committee composed of 20 women anti-suffragists³ set a proposal that stated the establishment of the W.N.A.S.L. It dictated also the structure of the league and the

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit, 173.

² Ibid., 170.

³ Ibid., 172.

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organization of local branches all over the country. Until 1910, 104 local branches of the league were set up.¹

The W.N.A.S.L. was officially formed in London on July 21, 1908 with a meeting presided by Mary Humphrey Ward at the Westminster Palace Hotel where the constitution of the league was drafted. 18 ladies² were chosen to serve in the executive committee including Margaret Jersey as the president of the W.N.A.S.L. alongside Edith Massie as the Vice-president and Mary Ward as the chairman of literature committee. On the same day, Mary Ward delivered a speech through which she shed light on the reasons behind opposing the vote and she publicly announced the establishment of her league.

The core principles of any organization were the objectives to be accomplished. The W.N.A.S.L., as any organization, had objectives to fulfill. It had a couple of goals. The first goal was the defeat of the female suffrage movement and the prevention of women from gaining the parliamentary vote. Furthermore, the second objective of the W.N.A.S.L. was the support and the encouragement of women's role in local government as an alternative for full political engagement with men. To pursue the aim of women's participation in local government, the W.N.A.S.L. set up the Local Government Advancement Committee in July 1910.³

The female anti-suffrage protest, under the W.N.A.S.L., enjoyed a series of successes in its first years. In this vein, it was reported that by 1910, the league had more than a hundred female-led local branches, had employed more than 16,000 members. Moreover, in the course of two years of its existence, women anti-suffragists' efforts inside the league led to the collection of 400,000 anti-suffrage signatures.⁴

It is worth noting that not only women opposed the extension of political rights to women, even male oppositionists resented the vote in their own anti-suffrage

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 189.

² M. Witwit, op.cit., 41.

³ J. Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy", 1908-14", op.cit., 443.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 439.

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campaign. Men's League for Opposing Women's Suffrage was established in December 1908 under the leadership of Lord Cromer to be joined by Lord Curzon (1859-1925)¹ in 1909. Men's League for Opposing Women's Suffrage lasted from December 1908 to August 1910 when it was merged with women's league. The men's league was presided by Lord Cromer. In May 1909, he was joined by Lord Curzon for the manipulation of the Men's League for Opposing Women's Suffrage.

By July 1910, Lord Cromer and Lord Curzon became convinced that a fruitful opposition was the one determined by collaboration between men and women. Opposing the vote separately might be to no avail. They persuaded women leaders of the W.N.A.S.L. to join them in a mixed-sex league called the National League for Opposing Woman's Suffrage (N.L.O.W.S). The female leaders of the W.N.A.S.L. accepted Cromer's idea and supported the amalgamation for several reasons.

4.1.2. The Establishment of the N.L.O.W.S. (1910-1918)

The launch of the N.L.O.W.S. in 1910 signaled the collaboration of female and male antis to better pursue a full opposition organized by men and women under one organization. The amalgamation process which took place in 1910 came as a step to secure the continued activities and the avalanche of tactics which required financial support.

The collaboration of men and women antis could be a remedy for financial plights. More fundamentally, women allowed the merger of their league with the men's league to reflect one of their conservative principles which was the persistence of the male control. They allowed to be led by men (Lord Cromer and Lord Curzon) in their own organization. Margaret Jersey, the previous president of the W.N.A.S.L, wrote to Lord Curzon in September 21,1910 "We anti-suffragists should be perfectly

¹ George Curzon (1859-1925) was a British conservative statesman. He served as a viceroy of India from 1898 to 1903. New World Encyclopedia
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/George_Nathaniel_Curzon (June4,2016 at 12:25)

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content to leave the hegemony to the men and to act as auxiliaries behind the scenes....”¹

To financially support the league and the local branches scattered in England, fund-raising was vehemently required. To guarantee the persistence of their league, women antis wanted male collaboration and support. The collaboration of men and women antis against women suffrage paved the way for the emergence of a mixed – sex league led by women and men antis known as N.L.O.W.S.

The first meeting to merge the two leagues was chaired by the Liberal politician John Massie (1842-1925)². After a series of negotiations, the N.L.O.W.S was finally established in December 1910. It was presided by Lord Cromer with Margaret Jersey as the Vice-president. The league was led by men and women with an equal number of seven men and seven women in the executive committee.³

The mixed-sex league was financially supported by men. It is important to point out that some male members of the men’s league were Members in Parliament. For this reason, women antis showed their enthusiasm for male leadership in their league to gain parliamentary support on the one hand. On the other hand, to cement anti-suffrage propaganda with the collaboration of men and women opponents of the vote under one league. Accordingly, every single tactic after 1908 was pursued under the name of the N.L.O.W.S. such as petitions, pamphlets, political speeches and political cartoons.

The collaboration of both male and female antis encountered some obstacles which ended in the resignation of the president of the N.L.O.W.S. Lord Cromer in 1912. The issue which represented the bone of contention between male and female leaders was the female support of women’s role in local government. The W.N.A.S.L.

¹ Lady Jersey to Lord Curzon in *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed.J.Bush,op.cit.,202.

² John Massie (1842-1925) was a British academic, educationalist and Liberal Party politician who served as Member of Parliament (MP) from 1906 to 1910. http://www.everipedia.com/john_Massie/ (accessed on November 19, 2016 at 14:43)

³ Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer: Victorian Imperialist and Edwardian Proconsul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004),376.

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before the merger of both leagues, put forward clause B in their league's constitution. This clause stated the necessity of women's role in local government and municipal elections as an alternative for the parliamentary vote.¹

The male leaders of the N.L.O.W.S resented this support to women's involvement in public affairs because the nucleus of the anti-suffrage campaign, whether male or female, was to exempt women from the political responsibilities even if they were local. The participation in local government was a key that would open the gate of political participation for them. For Lord Cromer, the leader of N.L.O.W.S, it was a contradiction to resist the vote on the basis that it would guarantee female political participation and support women's political engagement on the local level at one stroke. Women's role in local government would inevitably lead them to climb the ladder of full parliamentary political participation.² In the light of supporting women's role in local government by female members in the league, Lord Cromer resigned in 1912 letting his position to Lord Curzon as the president of the N.L.O.W.S.

In the pre-World War I era, both leagues the W.N.A.S.L. and the N.L.O.W.S. under the female and the male leadership relied on a surfeit of tactics to propagate their anti-suffrage incentives under the sponsorship of both leagues. Women antis, under the umbrella of both leagues, hinged on numerous other tactics to make their voice heard to parliamentarians and women in the English society on the one hand. On the other hand, to influence the minds of female readers of not demanding the vote. Due to their leagues, they published leaflets, pamphlets, reviews and they delivered speeches. The impetus of those published materials was the call for denying the parliamentary enfranchisement of women.

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,199.

² R.Owen.op.cit.,377.

4.2. The Female Anti-Suffrage Written Tactics

Establishing anti-suffrage organizations was not the sole strategy relied on by women antis to air out their anti-suffrage revulsion. They used even their pens and papers as vehicles that would quench their thirst for defeating the suffrage movement. The written tactics that women non-suffragists hinged on for their political propaganda were the publication of anti-suffrage petitions, leaflets, pamphlets, and political cartoons.

4.2.1. *The Anti-Suffrage Review* (1908-1918)

Before 1908, women antis hinged on newspapers and magazines edited by anti-suffrage editors such as the daily newspaper the *Times* edited by Moberly Bell¹ and the *Spectator* Magazine edited by St Leo Strachey². The *Times* was a daily newspaper which started publication in 1785, whereas the *Spectator* was a British weekly magazine that started publication in 1828.

In 1908, those women who established the W.N.A.S.L, introduced the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in December 1908 with Mary Humphrey Ward as its editor. This did not mean that they refrained from publishing their anti-suffrage written protest in other newspapers, but the *Anti-Suffrage Review* offered them ample opportunities to double their anti-suffrage publications in their own journal sponsored by their own organization.³

The *Review* played a crucial role for women antis to publish every single issue about female anti-suffragism. Furthermore, the journal enabled women antis to encourage readers to oppose the vote through the publication of anti-suffrage articles. The *Review*, therefore, was created as a liaison between the members of the

¹ Moberly Bell, the anti-suffragist editor of the *Times* newspaper. His widow served for a short time as the secretary of the N.L.O.W.S J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,171.

² Leo Strachey was also an anti-suffragist editor of the *Spectator* Magazine. He was the friend of the prominent female antis Violet Markham and Gertrude Bell. Ibid.

³ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy", 1908-14", op.cit.,439.

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W.N.A.S.L., N.L.O.W.S. and the members of local branches in England. Among its folding, the *Review* would shed light on all the news about the advancement of the campaign and picture every single issue taking place in both leagues and the local branches.

The first publication of the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in December 1908 was devoted for explaining that women were not qualified for the vote because they could not assume responsibilities which were the business of men. It was written in the first page of the first publication of the journal in December 1908 that “Men who have built up the state, and whose physical strength protects it, must govern it, through the rough and ready machinery of party politics. Women are citizens of the state no less than men, but in a more ideal and spiritual sense”.¹ The *Anti-suffrage Review* was not the sole anti- suffrage written method to air out the arguments and the calls for the denial of the parliamentary vote for women. The draft of appeals and petitions contributed also in the female oppositionist process.

4.2.2. The Publication of Anti-Suffrage Petitions and Appeals

To confirm that not all women in society desired the vote, women antis drafted petitions and appeals. The draft of those petitions and appeals aimed at collecting signatures from those people who resented the vote to be presented to Parliament for not enfranchising women and quashing any pro-suffrage petition introduced. The role of petitions was to facilitate the collection of signatures not solely for resenting the vote, but even as a way to agree on doing something between women antis concerning their mission of anti-suffragism.²

¹ *The Anti-Suffrage Review* (December 1908) in “The National and the Transnational in British anti-suffragists’ views of Australian Women Voters”, ed. Sharon Crozier De Rosa, (University of Wollongong: *Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts Papers*(2013):54 .

² J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*,op.cit.,215.

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As an illustration for the above-mentioned idea, women antis drafted a petition in 1908 to collect signatories for the establishment of the W.N.A.S.L. In 1909, another anti-suffrage petition was drafted. Gertrude Bell, a prominent female anti-suffragist, assumed the responsibility of the signatures' collection. She collected 250,000 male and female anti-suffrage signatures for the 1909 petition.¹

Besides petitions, appeals were also of great pivot for fuelling the wheels of the anti-suffrage campaign. The introduction of pro-suffrage appeals in the House of Commons and the fear of a sudden enfranchisement of women forged women antis to keep drafting appeals as repeated reminders of the dangers of the vote. In 1910, Anti-Woman Suffrage Appeal was drafted.² It listed the perils of the vote and shed light on the drastic measures that should be taken to keep opposing the vote. The appeal was published in the *Times* on July 21, 1910 and in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in August 1910. The appeal was published with 123 anti-suffrage male and female signatories.³ Besides the appeals, women antis resorted to the publication of anti-suffrage leaflets and pamphlets to reflect their anti-suffrage arguments and protest.

4.2.3. The Publication of Anti-suffrage Leaflets and Pamphlets

One of the crucial written means that carried among their folding the ideas of female anti-suffragists were the anti-suffrage leaflets and pamphlets. The common point discussed in leaflets was the real responsibilities of men and women. Through leaflets, women antis always reminded that politics was not a female concern. One of the leaflets which were published in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in 1908 was the one written by a female anti-suffragist Edith Massie. This leaflet was entitled "A Woman's Plea against Woman Suffrage".⁴ This leaflet discussed the reasons behind opposing the

¹ M. Witwit, op.cit., 28.

² J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 201.

³ M. Witwit, op.cit., 322.

⁴ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 168.

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vote. She shed light, precisely, on the physical weakness of women and their nature which made them unfit for political responsibilities alongside men. She wrote in her article “.....in the distribution of the world’s work, it is an intelligible and consistent principle that public concerns should be directed by men and domestic concerns by women”.¹

Not all the anti-suffrage leaflets, published in newspapers or the *Anti-Suffrage Review*, were provided by the name of the writer. Some leaflets were published anonymously and sometimes were published solely with the name of the league whether the W.N.A.S.L. or the N.L.O.W.S. As an example, a leaflet entitled “AGAINST WOMAN SUFFRAGE” was published in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* under the name of the N.L.O.W.S.²

Leaflets were not the sole written materials used to oppose the vote. Women antis relied on pamphlets to mirror their anti-suffrage incentives, to explain the reasons of their opposition and to negate the principles of women suffragists. As an illustration of anti-suffrage pamphlets, Emily Simon’s pamphlet was entitled “Positive Principles for Anti-Suffragists” is taken as an example.. It was published in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in April 1908.³ In her pamphlet, she defined the real meaning of women’s power because women suffragists and women anti-suffragists perceived the meaning of being powerful differently. For women suffragists, women’s power was ingrained in their political participation, whereas women antis, however, linked the female power with the performance of their domestic and social duties .⁴

In addition to the series of anti-suffrage petitions, leaflets and pamphlets, women anti-suffrage acolytes relied on writing letters. The latter were addressed to the Members of Parliament and the Prime Ministers to persuade them that not all women desired the vote. The Parliamentary vote should be denied for women.

¹ E.Massie, “A Woman’s Plea Against Woman Suffrage” in *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain* , ed. J.Bush, ,op.cit.,168.

² For more details, see Appendix Three, 149.

³ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*,op.cit.,167.

⁴ Ibid.

4.2.4. The Exchange of Letters

Women antis resorted also to the exchange of letters either privately or corresponding with the parliamentarians or female leaders through newspapers. The roles that the letters played in the course of female anti-suffragism were different. The first one was to convince the Prime Ministers and Members of Parliament to keep quashing the suffrage proposals. In this case, the letters were sent under the name of their leagues provided with their signatories.¹ As an example of a letter, a group of women antis sent a letter to the Prime Minister asking him to deny women the vote. It was written in the letter “Dear sir.....I am too thankful to pay my taxes in return for your protection, if only you will leave me to look after my home and my child....”.² The signatories of women, who sent the letter, as shown in appendix four, were placed at the top of the page.

Letters were not solely sent to parliamentarians, but even women antis sent letters to each other privately or exchanged letters through newspapers and magazines such as the *Times* and the *Spectator* for the sake of discussing any issue before dealing and realizing it. As an example, women antis exchanged letters on the pages of the *Times* to pave the way for the establishment of their first league the W.N.A.S.L. in 1908 and to acquaint female members with details about their nascent organization. Letters, in turn, played a seminal role for women antis since they resorted to them to elucidate things and to prepare for the realization of any plan they decided to accomplish. The ubiquity of letters’ exchange as an anti-suffrage tactic and the ceaseless resort to letters, they were called “the flood of anti-suffrage letters”.³

Before the merger of women’s league with men’s league in 1910, a number of letters were exchanged between women leaders of the W.N.A.S.L. and the male leaders of Men’s League for Opposing Woman’s Suffrage. Through these private

¹ For more details, see Appendix Four ,150-151.

² A National Archives: The National Education Service Britain 1906-1918

Gallery Three: Early 1900’s Women’s Suffrage

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/britain1906to1918/pdf/gallery-3-suffrage-case-studies.pdf>

(January30,2016 at 14:24).

³ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*,op.cit.,167.

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letters, male antis could have an idea about how the women's league worked before joining them.¹ One of the roles that letters fulfilled was that they used them to blame the suffragettes for their violent actions which resulted in chaos in England. These letters which were addressed to the suffragettes were published in newspapers in order to be read by the suffragettes. One of the letters addressed to the suffragettes was the one written by the women anti Edith Milner in the *Times*. She wrote "I feel that I'm voicing the sentiments of many hundreds of thousands when I say I'm satisfied with my present situation. I have no need of a solitary vote, and I should not use it if I had it"²

Women antis, to better diversify their anti-suffrage tactics, relied on a variety of written products to show that the parliamentary vote should remain an impossible issue for women. As another written method, women antis resorted to political cartoons and postcards that pictured the negative aspects of the female enfranchisement.

4.2.5. The Resort to Postcards and Political Cartoons

Women antis relied on every written means that could reflect an idea about the dangers of parliamentary enfranchisement of women or mirror what dwelled in their minds concerning their anti-suffrage ideology. Even cartoons and posters contributed to the propagation of anti-suffrage principles. The postcards and cartoons³ played a pivotal role in conveying the reasons behind opposing the vote and showing the circumstances men and women would have undergone if the vote would be vouchsafed to women. They inserted political cartoons in their *Anti-Suffrage Review* or other newspapers and magazines to cement their anti-suffrage propaganda.

¹ Lord Cromer to Margaret Jersey in *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed. J.Bush, op.cit.,176.

² J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,167.

³ The term "cartoon" was firstly coined in the *Punch* magazine in 1841. Punch Magazine Cartoon Archive <http://www.punch.co.uk/about/> (September19,2016 at 15 :22)

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Three examples of postcards and cartoons were selected. The first postcard, as shown in the picture, portrayed what happened if women gained the vote. The traditional role of women would disappear. It showed a father with an apron washing clothes and caring for the children when the mother was outside sharing political responsibilities with men.

Picture 01: I Want to Vote but my Wife Won't Let Me



Source: Lisa Hix, "War on Women, Waged in Postcards :Memes from the Suffragist Era"(November1,2012) <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/war-on-women-waged-in-postcards-memes-from-the-suffragist-era/> (April28,2016 at14:57)

The second cartoon is entitled "No Room for me". It was published in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in April 1912. It portrayed the idea that women, after being enfranchised, would neglect their maternal duties and become obsessed with all that was political. Her room, as shown in the picture, was filled with political books about how to make laws and set decisions.

Picture 02: No Room for Me



Source: E.Thomas Ewing et al. "Using Cartoons to Teach the Suffrage Campaign in European History: Should Women Vote?". *Journal of Women's History*, Vol.20. No.3

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Another example of anti-suffrage cartoons is entitled “Another Militant” which was published in *Punch Magazine* (1841-2002)¹ in March 19, 1913. As shown in the picture, there was a mother, her young son and another young girl. The young son attempted to take the girl’s hoop from her. The girl had beaten the young boy. The latter told his mother that he did not know that she was a suffragette. Through this cartoon, women antis expressed their outrage against the militant suffragettes.

Picture 03: Another Militant



Source: E.Thomas Ewing et al.op.cit., 158.

Any person who was violent or aggressive became known as suffragette. The word suffragette became synonymous with violence and aggressiveness.

The written strategies to oppose the vote such as petitions, pamphlets, appeals and political cartoons were not the lone method used to express the hostility to the female acquisition of the parliamentary franchise. The derision to the female enfranchisement was expressed also orally through public speeches by women antis.

4.3. The Delivery of Anti-Suffrage Speeches

Women anti-suffragists, to cement their anti-suffrage cause, did not lonely establish anti-suffrage organizations, publish anti-suffrage written materials, but they proved themselves also as anti-suffrage orators. Hence, they delivered several speeches which served as mirrors that reflected their anti-suffrage ideas. The content of the speech differed from one occasion to another. Those speeches played numerous roles. They were published either in newspapers or in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* to

¹ The *Punch Magazine* was a British weekly magazine set in 1841 by the English journalist and playwright Henry Mayhew (1812-1887) and the English illustrator and the magazine proprietor Ebenezer Landells (1808-1860) . The magazine was concerned solely with the publication of cartoons of all kinds until 2002. Punch Magazine Cartoon Archive <http://www.punch.co.uk/about/> (September19,2016 at 15 :22)

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enable those who were not present during the delivery of the speech to read the text of the speeches through newspapers.¹

Women antis hinged on oral propaganda through speeches to announce anything new they inserted in their campaign. As an example, Mary Humphrey Ward delivered a speech for the anti-suffrage meeting at the Queen's Hall in March 1909 to announce publicly about the establishment of the W.N.A.S.L.² Another speech was delivered by the female anti-suffragist Violet Markham on February 28, 1912 at Albert Hall.³ She devoted her speech to highlight the place of each gender in society making it clear that since men and women are different, their responsibilities and duties should be also different. So, politics remained a male responsibility. In her speech, Violet Markham stated:

We believe that men and women are different, not similar being, with talents that are complimentary not identical, and that they ought to have different shares in the management of the state.....we do not depreciate by one jot or little women's work and mission. We are concerned to find proper channels of expression for that work....⁴

There were several ways to convince the parliamentarians that the majority of women in England did not desire the vote. One of these ways was the reliance on opinion polls to gather women's opinions about the acquisition of the vote and provide the parliamentarians with those opinions that stated the denial of the vote.

4.4. The Reliance on Opinion Polls

One of the crucial anti-suffrage methods that women antis resorted to for confirming that the majority of women in England did not want the vote was opinion

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote : Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,190.

² Ibid., 181.

³ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy",1908-14", op.cit.,443.

⁴ "Miss Violet Markham's Great Speech at the Albert Hall" in "Votes for Mothers", ed. Tanya Claire Pohl, (Honors Thesis, Boston College: Department of History,2005),77.

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polls. Women anti-suffragists got in touch with women in England to ask them about their opinions about the parliamentary vote and to make sure that the majority of women did not want the vote.

Surveys with women in England contributed to the consolidation of the female anti-suffrage protest and revulsion. In 1911, an opinion poll was organized in England to find out whether women supported or resented the vote. The results of the poll showed that 16% of English women supported the enfranchisement of women whereas 35% of English women opposed the vote. The remaining 49% were neutral.¹

In the light of the diversity of anti-suffrage tactics which aimed at cementing the anti-suffrage cause, the ceaseless opposition for the parliamentary vote through the aforementioned tactics whether written or oral aroused in women suffragists and suffragettes the will to strengthen their suffrage movement and guarantee their success. One step to cement the suffrage movement and respond to the female renewed hostilities was the resort to violence under the umbrella of militancy.

5. The Suffragettes' Militant Strides and the Female Antis' Response

With the surge in the anti-suffrage tactics to defeat the female suffrage movement, women suffragettes doubled their efforts to cement their militant campaign overshadowed by the violent demand of the vote. The female suffragettes, under Emmeline Pankhurst and her organization the W.S.P.U., diversified also their tactics to call for the parliamentary vote.

In the years leading to World War I, women suffragettes' militant actions reached their peak. The militant and the violent demand of the vote came as an efficient tactic to confront the governmental authority on the one hand.² On the other hand, they strengthened their militant campaign as a reaction to the advancements in the anti-suffrage cause. Women antis condemned the suffragettes for their chaotic way

¹ Jo.C.Miller, "Never A Fight of Woman Against Man: What Textbooks don's Say about Women's Suffrage", *The History Teacher*, Vol.48, No.3 (2015):460.

² L.E.Nym Mayhall,op.cit.,10.

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of demanding the vote and they expressed their criticism to the suffragette's response differently.

5.1. The Suffragettes' Violent Demand of the Vote : The Struggle Continued (1908-1914)

The militant suffrage campaign was led by Emmeline Pankhurst and her eldest daughter Christabel . The suffragettes demanded the vote tyrannously through the use of force. Thus, the process of demanding something through resort to violence was known as “civil disobedience”¹. In this case, the parliamentary vote was demanded by the suffragettes through the use of violent tactics. They found themselves performing a civil disobedience.²

The female militant protest did not flare up in 1908, but women suffragettes resorted to militancy early in 1905 through a number of tactics. After 1908, their militant rebellion for acquiring the parliamentary vote was cemented. They resorted to more violent actions as a way to oblige the Members of Parliament to enfranchise them. This chaotic struggle to gain the parliamentary vote was called by the leader of the militant suffrage campaign Emmeline Pankhurst a “civil war”.³

It is worth noting that the suffragettes' violent reactions were not directed to women antis, but they were directed to government. The latter worked in collaboration with women antis to keep opposing the vote. By the same token, with the emergence of the organized female anti-suffragism in 1908, parliamentary support of the female antis increased especially during the administration of the anti-suffragist Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Asquith (1908-1916).⁴

¹ L.E.Nym Mayhall,op.cit.,98.

² Civil disobedience is the disobeying or breaking of law...either by an individual or an organized group. Examples of civil disobedience include refusing to pay taxes, blocking roads or government offices, striking or refusing to work in the offending government, and marching in demonstrations without state permission. (*Encyclopedia of Political thought,op.cit.,60*).

³ Emmeline Pankhurst, “When Civil War is Waged by Women” in “The Achievement of Female Suffrage in Europe: On Women's Citizenship” , ed.R.Rubio.Marin,op.cit.,12.

⁴ Henry Herbert Asquith (1852-1928) was a British Liberal Prime Minister from 1908 to 1916. He entered politics through the Liberal Party. He supported women anti-suffragists and represented the parliamentary

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The militant actions, to gain the vote, took a multiplicity of forms. The suffragettes resorted to a series of arsons, bombings, and the destruction of governmental buildings and stone throwing. Their violent protest led to their imprisonments and tortures. In 1909, the suffragettes resorted to other militant tactics in their campaign such as hunger strikes¹. The latter served as a protest against female imprisonments to be released and they resulted in forced feedings in prisons.

From 1909 to the outbreak of World War I , the suffragettes escalated their militant strategies to frighten the parliamentarians who would be obliged to enfranchise women. The suffragettes returned to direct attacks on the Members of Parliament and the Prime Ministers. These attacks were either on governmental buildings or on political leaders. They threw stones on them or interrupted their meetings and speeches in public halls. In the light of breaking the laws and resorting to force as a strategy to gain the vote, Christabel Pankhurst described the militant campaign as “terrorism”.²

With the continued parliamentary rejection of pro-suffrage petitions and appeals in the House of Commons and the repeated rejection of suffrage conciliation bills by the Prime Minister Herbert Asquith , the suffragettes kept being violent in their demands. The refusal of the Conciliation Bill of 1910 in the House of Commons led women suffragettes to send 300 suffragettes³ to the House of Commons in November 1910. Their clashes with the police resulted in a series of assaults of the suffragettes. The violent treatment of the suffragettes by the police, preventing them from entering Parliament, lasted for six hours⁴. These confrontations between the suffragettes and the police in a single day came to be known in the history of the female suffrage movement in England as “the Black Friday”.⁵ Sylvia Pankhurst (1882-1960), one of

support to female anti-suffragism. Carl Cavanagh Hodge, *Encyclopedia of the Age of Imperialism 1800-1914* (London:Greenwood Press,2008),49.

¹ The first hunger strike was done by the female suffragette Marion Wallace Dunlop (1864-1942) in July 1909. (H.L.Smith,op.cit.,49.)

² L.E.Nym Mayhall,op.cit.,107.

³ Harold L.Smith,op.cit.,49.

⁴ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,49.

⁵ Ibid.

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Emmeline Pankhurst's daughters, described the way the suffragettes were tortured and humiliated in that day. She narrated "...women were beaten, kicked and stripped almost naked. The hair of the women was torn out in handfuls".¹

By 1913, the suffragettes returned to a new way of breaking the stability in England. They resorted to the destruction of not solely the governmental buildings, but they resorted to the destruction of public institutions such as telegraph, telephone wires and the fire of public buildings like shops and postal boxes. Put simply, a series of arsons of tea-houses, empty houses, schools, stone-throwing at windows in different streets and the burning of churches.² In the light of this surge in militant actions to gain the vote, the suffragettes' efforts aimed at spreading anarchy in the country. The series of damages were carried on until the outbreak of World War I when the suffragettes halted their activities to take part in the war.

The involvement of the suffragettes in violent protests to gain the parliamentary vote represented an occasion when the female opposition reached its pinnacle on the one hand. On the other hand, militancy generated the anger of women opponents of the suffrage movement. Women Antis resented even the peaceful campaign, let alone the resort to violence which was not related with women's virtues and character. Women antis, on the other side, condemned the suffragettes of their militant tactics and their condemnation was reflected through several ways and occasions.

5.2. The Impact of Militancy on the Female Anti-Suffrage Cause

The female anti-suffragists' perspectives towards the suffragettes' resort to violent methods was twofold. The suffragettes' militancy, for women antis, was a double-edged sword. It had positive and negative impact on the course of the female anti-suffrage question. The positive aspect of militancy upon female anti-suffragism was that the suffragettes' resort to violence increased the number of supporters to anti-

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 181.

² Ibid.

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suffragism.¹ The negative aspect of militancy was that it would impinge negatively women's status in society and spoil their reputation.

First and foremost, women opponents of the vote portrayed militancy as being positive for their anti-suffrage cause because the violent demand of the vote would decrease the parliamentary support to women's enfranchisement. This was seen through the parliamentary rejection of passing the suffrage Conciliation Bills of 1910-1911 and the nullification of pro-suffrage resolutions from 1910 to 1913. Thus, even those members who supported the suffrage Conciliation Bill of 1911 quashed it later simply because the vote would be never won by force.² Furthermore, the Conciliation Bill of 1911 failed because the liberal government did not favour it on the basis that women voters would support the Conservative Party.³

The second fruitful impact of militancy was that it acquainted women antis with more supporters who were previously suffrage supporters.⁴ Hence, women antis won thousands⁵ of new supporters. This meant that the opposition to the suffrage movement would be strengthened through the mutual collaboration among women antis, political administrators in Parliament and the new female supporters of anti-suffragism. It was reported that by the summer of 1910, the number of anti-suffrage supporters increased. This led to the collection of 400,000 anti-suffrage signatories.⁶

Although militancy was advantageous on the female anti-suffrage cause, this did not mean that women antis favoured the suffragettes' violent protest to gain the parliamentary vote. They expressed their outrage against the militant protest for a number of reasons through a number of ways. Women opponents opposed the female suffrage movement from its dawn, but their outrage against the militant campaign overshadowed by violent protest represented another dimension for condemnation.

¹ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy", 1908-14", op.cit.,440.

² H.L.Smith, op.cit.,52.

³ Martin Roberts, *Britain 1846-1964: The Challenge of Change* (UK:Oxford University Press,2001),126.

⁴ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy", 1908-14", op.cit.,440.

⁵ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,227.

⁶ J.Bush, "British Women's Anti-suffragism and the Forward Policy,1908-14", op.cit.,439.

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One of the negative aspects of militancy was the rising hostilities between men and women. Militancy, in this case, provoked sex antagonism or as it was called “sex war”.¹ The violence of the women suffragettes resulted in the male violence against them. The suffragettes were humiliated, beaten, imprisoned, tortured and sexually abused by men. In the light of the deterioration of women’s feminine virtues, women antis condemned the suffragettes that they were responsible for harming the image of women in general. They described the suffragettes’ behaviours as “unfeminine”² and the suffragettes themselves were described as “wild women”³ for their demand of the vote in a violent way.

It is important to note that the core principle of female anti-suffragism was to preserve gender conventions, to secure the status of women, to protect women from the perils of politics and, above all, to preserve women’s feminine virtues. The suffragettes’ actions spoiled what women antis endeavoured to defend. The suffragettes lost their dignity through their humiliation under male violence towards them. The suffragettes’ violation of laws and the propagation of chaos in England gave birth to what was referred to as “female hysteria”.⁴ Through their violent demand of the vote, the suffragettes proved themselves unfit for assuming political responsibilities. Since they were able to generate anarchy through their militancy, they would be, if enfranchised, able to destabilize the political management of the country through resort to violence whenever needed.⁵

Women antis expressed their outcry against the suffragettes’ militancy through a multiplicity of ways. They hinged on propaganda to condemn the suffragettes publicly and to increase peoples’ awareness that militancy was a wrong thing that would harm not solely the suffragettes, but every single English woman. The *Anti-Suffrage Review* served as a mirror that reflected their anger. In the January 1909 edition of the journal,

¹ S.Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990*, op.cit.,262.

² J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,227

³ Rosamund Billington, “Ideology and Feminism: Why the Suffragettes were ‘Wild Women’”, *Women’s Studies Int.Forum*, Vol.5, No.6 (1982):672

⁴ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,228.

⁵ Ibid.

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women antis described the militant protest of the suffragettes as “ugly violence”.¹ In addition, women antis confessed that the suffragettes, through their violent protest, fell under male humiliation. It was written in the *Review* in August 1909 “Once let loose the wild beast, which the law holds in chains ...who are likely to fall the quickest and easiest prey”.²

One of the female antis who used their pens to condemn militancy publicly through the written propaganda was Ethel Colquhoun. From 1912 to 1914, she published several written attacks against the suffragettes’ militancy. For her, the militant protest of the suffragettes triggered men to confront them badly, disrespect and humiliate them. She wrote in 1914 “women must refrain from awakening the sleeping savage in man, individually or collectively...”.³ Moreover, Marie Corelli (1855-1924), an anti-suffrage writer and novelist, claimed that violence and aggression were not female qualities and were not aspects of femininity. The suffragettes’ militancy showed that they behaved against their nature and they could live better without the suffrage. She wrote “the suffragette seeks to be what woman naturally is not....she....has the whole game of life in her own hand, without the ‘suffrage’...”.⁴

Women antis kept condemning the suffragettes’ violent and militant methods until the outbreak of World War I. During the war, the suffrage movement was suspended and the suffrage activities were annulled for the female involvement in the war. Women suffragists and suffragettes participated in the war which served as a springboard for the suffrage success.

¹ *Anti-Suffrage Review* (January 1909) in *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, ed. J. Bush, op.cit., 228.

² *Anti-Suffrage Review* (August 1909) in *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, ed. S. Kingsley Kent, op.cit., 188.

³ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 228

⁴ Marrie Corelli, “Woman, or Suffragette” ,in “Unequal and Unethical : The Campaign Against Woman’s Suffrage in 19th Century Britain”, ed. Stacie Beach, *Tau Stigma: Journal of Historical Studies*, Vol. XX , 77.

6. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the forward policy whose objective was the defeat of the suffrage movement did not negate the social duties that would bolster women's role in society. Women antis, through their anti-suffrage campaign, did not oppose the advancement of female educational and employment opportunities offered to them, what they really resented was the political equality between men and women.

Women antis strove to prevent the enfranchisement of women because they believed vehemently that the vote would jeopardize women's lives, reverse gender roles and, above all, it would result in a state of instability and disorder in the British Empire if the process of decision-making would be placed in female hands. Any single reason for the opposition confirmed the female unfitness for political participation.

It is also concluded from this chapter that women antis' conservative nature and their vehement belief in traditional gender roles forged them to oppose not lonely the peaceful suffrage campaign under women suffragists, but they launched their outrage against the suffragettes' militancy. They repeatedly reminded the suffragettes that violence would not be a vehicle for reaching their desired dream. Thus, the suffragettes' escalation in their militant protest went in tandem with the persistence of female opposition and condemnation until the outbreak of World War I.

So, how did women suffragists and suffragettes react to the outbreak of the war? How did women antis react to the suspension of the female suffrage movement during the war? Did women antis succeed in preventing women from being enfranchised? How did the war impact the anti-suffrage cause? These questions will be answered in the third chapter.



Chapter Three

The Seeds of the Female Anti-Suffragism in the Wartime Era (1914-1918)

Chapter Three: The Seeds of the Female Anti-Suffragism in the Wartime Era (1914-1918)

1. Introduction

The disruption of World War I represented a watershed on the destiny of the female suffrage and anti-suffrage cause. During the wartime years, the parliamentary support to female enfranchisement replaced the former parliamentary opposition due to women's unconditioned support to war efforts. The support to women's franchise inflicted a change on the course of female opposition to the vote.

To support war efforts, women suffragists and suffragettes ceased their suffrage campaign and suspended their suffrage activities in 1914. They strove to support the government in time of war through a web of activities and enhance pro-war propaganda. The female suffrage seekers were not the lone contributors to war efforts, women antis appeared also as patriots. They rallied to support war efforts through a surfeit of voluntary works and a bulk of pro-war propaganda. The female anti-suffrage campaign, indeed, was suspended in 1914 with the outbreak of the war.

The suspension of suffrage and anti-suffrage activities marked the contribution to war efforts. When the war ended in 1918, the destiny of suffrage and the anti-suffrage campaigns took another turn. Women suffragists realized what they sought whereas women antis failed. Women, over the age of 30, gained the partial enfranchisement.

The limited suffrage vouchsafed to women and their allowance to enter Parliament as MPs marked the defeat of the female opposition to the vote. Being defeated, women antis ceased their opposition since what they endeavoured to prevent came true. This chapter sheds light, therefore, on the seeds or the outcomes of the female opposition to the parliamentary enfranchisement. It elucidates whether women antis reaped the fruits of their opposition or they encountered the failure of their cause.

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2. World War I and the Suffrage Question

The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 marked a watershed in the history of the female suffrage and anti-suffrage movements. The suffrage movement was brought into an end by its leaders. Women suffragists and women suffragettes stopped their political campaigning for the vote to contribute to war efforts. Both suffrage campaigns, the non-militant campaign under the leadership of Millicent Garrett Fawcett through the N.U.W.S.S. and the militant campaign under the leadership of the Pankhursts (Emmeline and her daughter Christabel Pankhurst) through the W.S.P.U were suspended.¹

With the cessation of the suffrage movement in 1914, the anti-suffrage movement took another turn. In this vein, since women suffragists and suffragettes decided to contribute to war efforts and stop their suffrage campaign, women opponents of the vote emerged also contributors to war efforts.² They stopped their political campaign for opposing the parliamentary franchise and supported their country in time of war and chaos.

2.1. The Suspension of the Female Suffrage Campaign (1914)

With the outbreak of World War I which went in tandem with the declaration of war on Germany by Great Britain, the militant and non-militant suffrage campaigns were stopped by the leaders of both campaigns Millicent Garrett Fawcett and the Pankhursts (Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel) for the sake of contributing to the war effort. They shifted from fighting the government into supporting it. The suspension of the suffrage movement was preceded by discussions

¹ S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,355.

² J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 257.

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and negotiations between the suffrage female leaders. The shift to support the government aimed at paving the way for governmental support of the enfranchisement.

The suspension of the suffrage activities of the non-militant organization the N.U.W.S.S. under the leadership of Millicent Garrett Fawcett was confirmed through a meeting held in Kingsway Hall in London. The meeting took place on August 4, 1914 when Great Britain declared war on Germany and it was chaired by Millicent Fawcett. The meeting was attended by middle-class and working class women.¹ In the Kingsway Hall Meeting, it was announced by Millicent Fawcett that the suffrage activities of the N.U.W.S.S had to be ceased. Instead, they would devote their efforts to defend their country and exhibit their patriotic sentiments. Millicent Fawcett stated “let us show ourselves worthy of citizenship whether our claim to it be recognized or not”.²

On August 5, 1914, one day after the declaration of the war on Germany, Millicent Fawcett announced publicly the intervention of her organization and its members to defend their country and resort to war work instead of demanding the parliamentary vote. She wrote to the members of the N.U.W.S.S the same day in their *Common Cause Journal* (1909-1918)³ “We have another duty now...now is the time for resolute effort and self-sacrifice on the part of every one of us to help our country...”⁴

Millicent Fawcett was not the sole suffrage leader to end her political campaign for demanding the suffrage. Even the Pankhursts (Emmeline and her daughter Christabel) halted their pre-war militant activities and devoted their militant organization the W.S.P.U for supporting the war efforts. They brought their militancy

¹ Carol F.Cini, “From British Women’s WWI Suffrage Battle to the League of Nations Covenant: Conflicting Uses of Gender in the Politics of Millicent Garrett Fawcett” *UCLA Historical Journal* (1994):83.

² Rubinstein, “A Different World for Women : the Life of Millicent Fawcett” in *The British Women’s Suffrage Campaign 1866-1928*, ed. H.L.Smith, op.cit.,73.

³ The *Common Cause* was a weekly journal edited by the N.U.W.S.S. It was firstly published on April 15, 1909. It supported the policies of the N.U.W.S.S and was firstly edited by Helena Swanwick. It ceased its publications in 1918 when the partial franchise was granted to women over the age of thirty. The *Common Cause* <http://spartacus-educational.com/Wcommoncause.htm> (September 10, 2016 at 14:19)

⁴ C.F.Cini, op.cit.,83.

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and their violent protest for the vote to an end. The W.S.P.U shifted from demanding militantly the vote to supporting peacefully the government and participating in the war.

The W.S.P.U's militancy was transformed into militarism. Militancy and militarism were not synonymous. Militancy hinged on demanding something violently by one person or a group of people or seeking a given purpose through the use of force. Militancy, in this research, was performed by the female suffragettes in their violent demand of the vote. Militarism, in turn, was the maintenance of military forces in times of wars and chaos as a means of defense on the national level.¹

The policy of the female suffragists and suffragettes' contribution to war efforts came to be known as the "Pro-war Policy".² Emmeline Pankhurst perceived the importance of defending the country first then keep seeking the right to vote in a peaceful land. She elucidated that "what would be the good of a vote without a country to vote in!"³

The Pankhursts believed that carrying out militancy during the war would be fruitless since their demand would be to no avail in time when the government was busy with the war. Christabel Pankhurst, in her speech delivered in Carnegie Hall in New York on October 24, 1914, claimed that the suffrage had to be vouchsafed to them when the war would be over because their suspension of the suffrage activities did not mean that they neglected what they were seeking. The suspension was not pertinent with the downfall of the suffrage movement and the decline of the suffrage question. Christabel Pankhurst claimed that "we don't believe that we shall remain disfranchised at the end of the war".⁴

¹ <http://www.yourdictionary.com/militarism> (September 10, 2016 at 14:17)

² H.L. Smith, op.cit., 78.

³ "The Movement for Women Suffrage 1850-1928" (Cults Academy History Department), 12. <http://www.edubuzz.org/plhs-socsubs/wp-content/blogs.dir/919/files/2012/02/votes-for-women.pdf> (December 25, 2015 at 13:31),

⁴ Christabel Pankhurst, "America and the War" in "The Women's Corps: The Establishment of Women's Military Services in Britain", ed. Jennifer Margaret Gould (PhD Thesis, University College London, 1988), 33.

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As a matter of fact, the Pankhursts had officially declared the suspension of their pre-war militancy on August 13, 1914 after the release of all the suffragettes who were in jail for their violent protest. The suffragettes were imprisoned for their violent deeds. Their protest was described as “unladylike protest”¹ since it contributed to the spread of chaos and instability. Even in the prison, the suffragettes did not cease demanding the vote. They resorted to hunger-strikes. From 1905 to the beginning of the war, it was estimated that 1000 suffragettes² were imprisoned. The government responded to hunger strikes with force feeding of the suffragettes. In April 1913, the British government passed the “Cat and the Mouse Act”³ as a step to decrease the hunger strikes. The act stated the release of the hunger strikers to be arrested again after being recovered. The outbreak of the war halted all the forms of militancy and paved the way for the release of the suffragettes.

The sole reason behind the suspension of pre-war suffrage militant and non-militant female suffrage movements was the devotion of suffrage organizations and members of these organizations to the support of war efforts and the promotion of war work. The suffragists and the suffragettes’ contribution to war efforts took a multiplicity of forms.

2.2. The N.U.W.S.S. and the Female Suffragists’ Contribution to War Efforts (1914-1918)

The suspension of the non-militant suffrage campaign under the leadership of Millicent Garrett Fawcett did not take place solely because the war flared up, but women suffragists found the outbreak of the war a viable occasion to prove their capability of delving into public affairs and exhibiting their patriotic sentiments

¹ June Purvis, “Force-feeding of Hunger-striking Suffragettes”, Covenant University (April 26, 1996) <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/force-feeding-of-hunger-striking-suffragettes/93438.article> (September 10, 2016 at 14:28)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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towards their country.¹ Thus, under the N.U.W.S.S, women suffragists contributed voluntarily² to war efforts through a surfeit of activities. Their will towards contribution was reflected through their cessation of the peaceful non-militant suffrage movement.

It is of great significance to note that the female suffragists' contribution to support the war did not mean that they lost sight of their suffrage cause. They did not neglect the right they battled for namely the parliamentary franchise during the war. The members of the N.U.W.S.S kept demanding the vote after the disruption of the war; they kept holding meetings, drafting petitions and organizing demonstrations.

The female suffragists contributed to war efforts as the first step that would guarantee their undisputed enfranchisement. More fundamentally, since women would participate in the defense of their country during the war, they would be qualified for its defense in times of peace under the umbrella of political participation. When men joined the armed forces, women expressed their readiness to support their country through their war work.

To support war efforts, Millicent Fawcett devoted her pro-suffrage organization the N.U.W.S.S and the propagandist initiatives for attracting men and women to support the war efforts. To exhibit their patriotic incentives during the war years, Millicent Fawcett and the leading members of the N.U.W.S.S launched several pro-war activities sponsored by the organization itself and financially supported via the N.U.W.S.S.'s and its local branches' funds.

When men were away fighting Germany during the war, the N.U.W.S.S played a vital role in calling for men to join the armed forces and women to hold the vacant jobs previously done by men. Those calls for women to hold male jobs aimed at decreasing the shortage of the labour-force during the war. Due to the calls of the N.U.W.S.S, women performed several jobs such as workers in munitions factories,

¹ C.F.Cini,op.cit.,94.

² Ibid., 91.

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nurses, ambulance drivers, cooks, knitters and other jobs.¹ Both suffrage organizations, the N.U.W.S.S and the W.S.P.U encouraged more men's military conscriptions through calls in both organizations' journals.

Put simply, war propaganda was of great importance to support the war effort and reflect the women suffragists' patriotism. Instead of battling for their suffrage cause, the female suffragists devoted their pro-war propaganda to support war effort. The N.U.W.S.S's pro-suffrage journal the *Common Cause* (1909-1918) played a pivotal role in attracting more men and women to take part in the war.²

One of the wartime activities, the N.U.W.S.S undertook at the beginning of the war, was the devotion of a register for subscribing male and female workers. It was the responsibility of the N.U.W.S.S to guide those new war-workers to the jobs suitable for them.³ It was estimated that during war years and due to the N.U.W.S.S's calls for workers, two million women replaced men in their jobs during their absence fighting Germany.⁴

The recruitment of the male and female workers was not achieved at one stroke. The first step was the formation of Women's Service Bureau in 1915. The goal of forming this recruiting body was the recruitment of more women when men were called to join the armed forces. The bureau carried on its recruiting activities until 1918. It was estimated that during 1918 solely, 15.000 women were recruited.⁵

Furthermore, as a voluntary activity to support war efforts, the N.U.W.S.S established a number of workshops to help those unemployed women to get a job. The first workshop was set in Whitehall⁶ near the N.U.W.S.S's office.¹ Those workshops

¹ C.F.Cini,op.cit.,82.

² Ibid.,90.

³ S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,353.

⁴ "Suffrage in Wartime" <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/overview/suffragetteswartime/> (June4,2016 at 12:01)

⁵ S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,354.

⁶ Whitehall is a road in the city of Westminster in central London which forms the first part of the A3212 road from Trafalgar Square to Chelsea. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitehall> (June12,2016 at 11:53).

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included canteens for the sake of helping those poor people to have meals. Another tactic to support war, the female members of the N.U.W.S.S became voluntary members in some relief agencies such the Red Cross, the Belgian Relief Committee (B.R.C) and the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association.²

Millicent Fawcett, under the N.U.W.S.S, cared for the welfare of women and children. In this vein, several infant and women's welfare agencies were formed. The N.U.W.S.S. established baby clinics and maternity centres.³ Moreover, among the crowning achievements of the N.U.W.S.S was also the care for soldiers in the front. The N.U.W.S.S. members' patriotic sentiments forged them to help those soldiers who joined the armed forces. Accordingly, it was reported that by 1915, the N.U.W.S.S. established a number of hospitals for soldiers in the front⁴ in France, five hospitals in Serbia and one in Salonika.⁵ The N.U.W.S.S paid the salaries of nearly 150 trained workers.⁶ Two other hospital units were set for the Russian refugees in 1916. They were named The Millicent Fawcett Hospital Units.⁷ In that year, the N.U.W.S.S sent the Millicent Fawcett Unit to Russia to work among the Polish refugees. It devoted its efforts for maternity nursing and the care for children.⁸

As a liaison between the N.U.W.S.S and those newly recruited women, Women's Interests Committee (W.I.C) was established by the N.U.W.S.S. The aim of this committee was to deal with the industrial, economic and the social interests of women. This committee was formed for the sake of discussing the hurdles women

¹ Joe Vellacott. *Pacifists, Patriots and the Vote : The Erosion of Democratic Suffragism in Britain during the First World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan,2007),22.

² S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,353.

³ J.Vellacott,op.cit.,23.

⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵ Salonika is located in Northeastern Greece. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/Salonika.html> (June12,2016 at 11:45).

⁶ Peter Grant, *Philanthropy and Voluntary Action in the First World War: Mobilizing Charity* (New York: Taylor and Francis Group,2014), 51.

⁷ S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,354.

⁸ P.Grant, op.cit.,51.

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encountered in their workplaces and the industrial problems that women might face in factories.¹

The N.U.W.S.S. was not the sole suffrage organization devoted to support the war efforts. The female members of the N.U.W.S.S were not the lone women suffragists to strengthen their patriotism towards their country. The female suffragettes, under the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel, emerged also as patriots. Their patriotism was exhibited through an array of activities launched under the sponsorship of their militant organization the W.S.P.U.

2.3. The W.S.P.U. and the Female Suffragettes' Contribution to War Efforts (1914-1918)

Like the N.U.W.S.S, the W.S.P.U's suspension of the militant suffrage campaign went in tandem with supporting their country during the war. The members of the W.S.P.U. proved their capability of assuming public responsibilities through their pro-war activities and services. Through their readiness to support war efforts, the suffragettes did not lose sight of their suffrage cause. To cement their patriotic mission of supporting their country during the war, they resorted to their organization and their propagandist work through their journals which were previously used to demand the suffrage.

For the Pankhursts, participation in the war would increase their readiness for an unchallengeable involvement in public affairs. Besides, they would prove themselves as being qualified for political responsibilities. Emmeline Pankhurst , the leader of the W.S.P.U, believed that the support of war efforts was another way of demanding indirectly the parliamentary vote. She claimed that when World War I would be over, the female enfranchisement had to be a reality. Otherwise, the struggle for the vote would be launched all over again. She confessed that “.....the struggle for the full

¹ P.Grant, op.cit.,355.

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enfranchisement of women has not been abandonedwhen the clash of arms ceases...the demand will again be made. It is not quickly granted, then one more the women will take up the arms they today generously lay down...”.¹

Like the female suffragists, the suffragettes devoted their pro-war propaganda to support war effort instead of demanding the parliamentary vote. The W.S.P.U'S weekly Journal *The Suffragette* played an important role in attracting more men and women to take part in the war. There were calls for women to subscribe for holding jobs previously done by men since the latter were away. Calls were also directed to men to join the armed forces. On October 4, 1915, the *Suffragette Journal* became entitled *Britannica*². The latter ceased the publications about the suffrage, but it was devoted to publications about war efforts. During the war, women suffragettes' efforts were not solely to acquire the right to vote. Emmeline Pankhurst added another important aim to be accomplished. It dictated the necessity of contributing to war efforts. She encouraged women's "right to serve".³

The role of women as war-workers was glorified by Emmeline Pankhurst. She elucidated through the papers of the *Suffragette Journal* that women's war work gave them an equal chance with men in the defense of their country. It was written in the journal on April 16, 1915

.....the war , and the consequent recruiting of women's labour should teach the public and the politicians what they have not all of them learnt in time of peace, that women as wealth producers, enrich and do not impoverish their country. We are told that after

¹ Emmeline Pankhurst , " My Own Story" in "Emmeline Pankhurst and the Great War: Radical Suffragist, Conservative Patriot or Political Opportunist", ed. Mona Ann Kaiser (Master Thesis., Simon Fraser University, 1995), 41.

² The word Britannica was the Latin word for Britain. It was chosen to be the name of the suffragettes' journal simply to reflect the idea that the suffragettes were cooperating with the government rather than fighting against it. They chose the Latin word of their country's name to relate themselves with patriotism. The change of the name reflected that women could defend and could contribute to war efforts. M. Ann Kaiser, op.cit., 53-55..

³ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 258.

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the war, there will be a great need of building up the wealth that has been destroyed and wasted in the course of it...¹

As a tactic followed by the Pankhursts to support the war effort was the delivery of speeches. They travelled to America and they moved in every corner in Great Britain to urge men and women to support the war. The delivery of speeches was another outlet through which women suffragettes sustained their patriotic principles. The speeches were devoted to either urging people to keep supporting the war or expressing their outrage against the Germans. Christabel Pankhurst, in her speech delivered in July 1917, reminded the British people of the necessity of destroying Germany. She insisted “we must merely crush Berlin militarism”.²

The suffragettes’ propaganda work played numerous roles. It was devoted mainly to call men for conscriptions, to publish work announcements for women to endorse war works. Furthermore, it aired out their hatred to Germany. To urge women to perform war works and replace men in their vacant jobs, the W.S.P.U organized a march in the beginning of 1917. The slogan of this march was “the right to serve”.³

The W.S.P.U’s thirst for national defense of their country forged them to behave differently with those men who refused to join the armed forces. In this vein, the members of the W.S.P.U organized what was called “the White Feather Campaign”.⁴ The aim of this campaign was to hand a white feather on any men they met in the streets as a notice of shame. This campaign was launched to blame those men who refused to participate in the war.

In addition to the W.S.P.U’s propaganda work, its members undertook a set of voluntary and charitable activities to strengthen their wartime activism. Among the

¹ *The Suffragette* (April 15, 1915) in “Emmeline Pankhurst and the Great War: Radical Suffragist, Conservative Patriot or Political Opportunist”, ed. M. Ann Kaiser; op.cit., 73.

² Christabel Pankhurst, “No Compromise Peace” in “The Pankhursts and the War: Suffrage Magazines and First World War Propaganda”, ed. Angela K. Smith, *Women’s History Review* (2003): 109.

³ M. Ann Kaiser, op.cit., 55.

⁴ Ibid.

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charitable activities of the W.S.P.U was the assistance of those poor families. Furthermore, it acquainted work and housing for those displaced women. The members of the W.S.P.U strove to provide those poor families with low-cost meals and milk for children.¹

It is worth noting that not all the female suffragists and suffragettes supported war efforts in their country's time of disarray. Some members from the N.U.W.S.S and W.S.P.U resented the support of war effort and the support of government which denied them their political rights in time of peace. This led to the emergence of anti-war efforts by some female suffragists and suffragettes.

2.4. The Emergence of Female Anti-War Movement (1914)

In the light of the aforementioned female suffragists' and suffragettes' support to war efforts through the reliance on pro-war propaganda and a set of pro-war activities, it is important to point out that not all the female suffragists and the suffragettes supported the war efforts and cooperated with the government during the wartime era. In this vein, the supporters of suffrage, when the war disrupted were divided into pacifists and patriots.²

The female pacifists, previous members in the N.U.W.S.S and W.S.P.U, were those women suffragists who refused to support the war efforts and to support the government in time of war. Instead, they rallied to call for an end to the war and the restoration of peace. The female patriots, in turn, were those women who supported the war efforts. As examples of female members in the N.U.W.S.S , who supported the

¹ Laura E.Nym Mayhal, "Suffrage and Political Activity" *GALE Digital Collection* http://gdc.gale.com/assets/files/wws/GML40207_Suffrage.pdf (June4, 2016 at 11:29)

² Nicoletta F.Gullace, "Citizenship(Great Britain)" in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War* (Freie Universitat Berlin,2014). http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/pdf/1914-1918-Online-citizenship_great_britain-2015-12-15.pdf (June 4,2016 at 11:29).

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anti-war movement, it could be listed Helena Swanwick, Catherine Marshall, Isabella Ford and Maude Royden.¹

Those female pacifists who resented the war and started calling for peace launched another movement. The latter dictated the call for peace and the avoidance of war's support. For this reason, the movement was called the "peace movement".² It was organized by those women who were members in the pro-suffrage organizations mainly the N.U.W.S.S and the W.S.P.U. They broke away from their pro-suffrage organizations to spur an anti-war campaign.

The female pacifists, who were fighting for the suffrage in the pre-war era, resented the war in general and women's involvement in war in particular for several reasons. They put forward a number of reasons that dictated an urgent call for peace and women's unfitness for taking part in wars. One of their arguments was that war was a male concern. The war was declared by men without the consult of women. Men did not inform women that a war would be declared on Germany.³

Another reason for the emergence of the female anti-war sentiments was the refusal to support the government during war because the government repeatedly rejected women's calls for the parliamentary vote in the pre-war era. Women pacifists rejected the contribution to war efforts based on the fact that they were still voteless. In this vein, the female peace movement was described as an "anti-government movement".⁴

Besides, women's anti-war leaders believed that the woman's physical structure did not allow her to be involved in wars and war works because war-works would harm women especially mothers who would neglect their families. Their anti-war

¹ Helen Rappaport, *Encyclopedia of Women Social Reformers*, Vol.01(Library of Congress in Cataloguing and Publication Data,2001), 693.

² Stanislav Tumis , "The British Women's Peace Movement during World War I. A Contribution towards the Study of British Appeasement",pp.309 <http://usd.ff.cuni.cz/?q=system/files/tumis+british.pdf> (June12,2016 at 12:55)

³ S.Tumis,op.cit.,311.

⁴ Ibid. 310.

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campaign was called by a female pacifist Frances Hallows “a crusade against war”.¹ Women anti-war attitudes forged them to encourage even men to avoid fighting in the war. They resented the male military conscriptions. For this reason, the No Conscription Fellowship (N.C.F) was established in November 1914. They believed that militarism would cost them their lives.

The anti-war female members of the N.U.W.S.S, who used to serve in the executive committee Isabella Ford, Margaret Hills, Ethel Snowden, Helena Swanwick, Catherine Courtney, Ethel Williams, Maude Royden² and Kathleen Marshall³ resigned and joined the Union for Democratic Control (U.D.C).The latter was an anti-war organization established in August 1914 by four⁴ male pacifists who were against the involvement of Britain in war against Germany. Other female resignations from the N.U.W.S.S were followed in the coming years.⁵ The resignation of those women from the N.U.W.S.S was seen by its leader Millicent Fawcett as a *coup d'état* against her organization. She commented “I entirely fail even now to guess the real causes of the *coup d'état* in our NU⁶...”⁷

The anti-war women contributors resigned from the executive committee and devoted their efforts to denounce the British involvement in World War I. A group of women pacifists made the move to the Netherlands to attend the Hague Conference held from April 28 to May 1, 1915. In April 1915, three women delegates⁸, Macmillan, Catherine Courtney and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, made the move to the

¹ Frances Hallows, “Women and War: An Appeal to the Women of All Nations” in “The British Women’s Peace Movement during World War I. A Contribution towards the Study of British Appeasement”, ed., S.Tumis,op.cit.,311.

² Maude Royden was the editor of the N.U.W.S.S.’s weekly journal the *Common Cause*. S.Holton,op.cit.,359.

³ S. Holton, “Feminism and Democracy: The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies 1897-1918”, op.cit.,358-359.

⁴ Those four men were [David Lloyd George](#) (Chancellor of the Exchequer),[Charles Trevelyan](#) (Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education), [John Burns](#) (President of the Local Government Board) and [John Morley](#)(Secretary of State for India) “Union for Democratic Control” <http://spartacus-educational.com/FWWudc.htm> (September 10, 2016 at 14:49)

⁵ J.Vellacott,op.cit.,79.

⁶ N.U is the short form of N.U.W.S.S. Instead of mentioning the whole name of the organization , just the National Union is used. J.Vellacott,op.cit.,79.

⁷ Ibid.,80.

⁸ S.Tumis,op.cit.,316.

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Netherlands to attend the International Women's Congress (I.W.C) at Hague (Netherlands). Those three delegates joined other women suffragists from all over the world who came to the Netherlands to discuss and negotiate the end of the war and the restoration of peace.

One of the W.S.P.U's members, who encouraged pacifism rather than patriotism, was Emmeline Pankhurst's daughter Sylvia Pankhurst (1882-1960). She resented the contribution to war efforts and renounced the support of government which, in time of peace, corroded their way of being enfranchised. Through her periodical entitled *Woman's Dreadnought* (1914-1924), she expressed her arguments against supporting government in time of war and kept calling for the female franchise. It was written in the *Woman's Dreadnought* on March 8, 1914 "the essential principle of the vote is that each one of us shall have a share of power to help ...herself and us all...".¹ Sylvia's refusal to pursue patriotic incentives through supporting war efforts led her to be expelled from the W.S.P.U. by her mother Emmeline Pankhurst in January 1914. Emmeline Pankhurst believed those women who would deserve the vote after the war were the ones who worked for their country in time of war. She stated that "if women couldn't fight, they could not vote".²

Since women suffragists and suffragettes committed themselves to support their country in time of crisis, women opponents of the vote emerged also as female patriots. Their defense of their country was reflected through their voluntary work and the web of philanthropic activities undertaken by them. Unlike the minorities of female suffragists and suffragettes who launched their anti-war movement, women antis rallied together to support war efforts without any resort to the renouncement of wartime patriotic deeds.

¹ *The Woman's Dreadnought* (March 8, 1914) in "Sylvia Pankhurst, the First World War and the Struggle for Democracy", ed., Katherine Connelly, *Revue Francaise de Civilisation Britannique* (2015):03.

² Byles Joan Montgomery, "Women's Experience of World War One: Suffragists, Pacifists and Poets", *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol.8, No.5 (1995):473.

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3. Women Anti-suffragists' Social Action during World War I

With the suspension of the suffrage movement for the sake of supporting war efforts, women antis suspended their anti-suffrage political campaign since the movement which was opposed stopped. Women antis, similarly as the leaders of the suffrage movement, appeared as patriots who cared for the defense of their country. They cemented their patriotic response to war efforts. Resenting the vote and being rallied to prevent women from entering the male domain of politics did not mean that they remained far from supporting their country in time of war. Their patriotic incentives were reflected through a set of voluntary and charitable activities under the umbrella of the social action.

3.1. The Promotion of Wartime Voluntary Work

The commitment to social action and the support to war efforts relied on an array of means and tactics to fulfill the wartime needs. The female antis resorted to the N.L.O.W.S for financial support. Besides, they relied on their *Anti-Suffrage Review* to bolster their pro-war propaganda and strengthen their public support to war. The N.L.O.W.S, therefore, served as a vehicle for recruiting men and women. What overshadowed their contribution to war efforts was the reliance on charitable activities for the sake of helping people during the war. Most importantly, women opponents of the parliamentary franchise halted their anti-suffrage campaign and embarked on a patriotic defense of their country similarly as the female suffragists and suffragettes.

Based on the fact that women antis belonged to the upper-class and they were wealthy women¹, their war work was voluntary, they did not serve as paid workers because they believed that their employment would decrease work opportunities for those poor women who really needed it for the support of their families. Instead, they undertook voluntary work to help men, women and children. Ethel Colquhoun, a

¹ Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000),12.

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female anti-suffragist, urged women antis not to take part in the paid war work. She said “It is not advisable for well-to-do- women to increase or even create unemployment among those who must work for living”.¹

Women antis’ support to war efforts was overshadowed by their resort to charitable activities. The aim of these charitable practices was to promote the welfare of women, children in time of destitution and even those male soldiers and sailors. They endeavoured to put forward entertainment programs for children. These activities were funded from the N.L.O.W.S and the financial support of its local branches.

One of their charitable activities was the establishment of two associations in 1914². The first one was called the Soldiers’ and Sailor’s Families Association under the presidency of Margaret Jersey, the previous leader of the W.N.A.S.L, in Oxfordshire³. The second association, with the same name, was set in Berkshire⁴ and it was presided by Elizabeth Benyon (1880-1911). The aim of these associations was to help those women whose fathers and husbands were away in the battlefield as soldiers or running the navy as sailors.

Another charitable practice by women antis was the distribution of buffets for the travelling soldiers at different stations. In 1915, Ethel Colquhoun provided a 24-hour⁵ buffets’ distribution for hungry soldiers at Paddington Station.⁶ Furthermore, some women antis became voluntary members in patriotic leagues and corps. Violet Markham became a voluntary member in Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps which was established in France in 1917. Gertrude Bell devoted herself also as a voluntary

¹ Phillipe Vervaecke, “‘Doing Great Public Work Privately’: Female Antis in the Interwar Years” in *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender and Politics*, ed. Julie V. Gottlieb and Richard Toye (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 113.

² J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 265.

³ Oxfordshire is a county in Central England. <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/oxfordshire> (November 19, 2016 at 16:19)

⁴ Berkshire is a county in South East England. It located in the West of London. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berkshire> (June 12, 2016 at 11:50).

⁵ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 266.

⁶ London Paddington is one of Great Britain’s railway stations. <https://www.thetrainline.com/stations/london-paddington> (June 12, 2016 at 11:48).

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member in the Red Cross in France.¹ The aim of this organization was to help the poor people who were in state of destitution during the war. Among other philanthropic activities, women anti-suffragists kept helping those families whose breadwinners (fathers or husbands) joined the armed forces overseas. They helped the unemployed women and the refugees.

In addition to the array of philanthropic activities performed by women antis as voluntary supporters to war, the role of their pro-war propaganda was also enhanced. The *Anti-Suffrage Review* was devoted to the support of war rather than opposing the parliamentary franchise for women. To cement their propagandist rehearsals for supporting the war efforts, women antis hinged on the *Review* and other newspapers to urge women for war work. As a part of their propaganda, women antis blamed some practices done by women suffragists and suffragettes as an outlet of their patriotic mission. The *Review* was also used to condemn those suffragists and suffragettes' minorities who embarked on an anti-war movement and refused to support their country in wary situations.

Women anti-suffragists were ready to express their enthusiasm for contributing to war efforts. Moreover, they criticized some deeds of the women suffragists and suffragettes during the war. Women antis did not support every single action by women suffragists and suffragettes. Although women suffragists and suffragettes undertook several deeds as components of their support to war efforts, Women antis portrayed them as not good things to be done.²

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,261.

² *Ibid.*, 268.

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3.2. Women Antis' Resentment of some Women Suffragists' and suffragettes' Wartime Deeds

Women antis did not favour some practices of women suffragists and suffragettes during the war. They rejected these practices because they believed they would undermine women's maternal status and spoil their reputation in society.

One of the women suffragists' wartime efforts, women antis renounced, was the care for the illegitimate babies or as they were called "War Babies".¹ Women anti-suffragists saw this step as not fitting with womanly virtues. For them, the encouragement of those women who gave birth to illegitimate babies would decrease the value of marriage.

The continued care for the illegitimate babies would encourage women to keep giving birth to illegitimate babies since the female suffragists, as care-takers, would be ready to look after them. The care for those women who gave birth to illegitimate babies during the war was reflected through the establishment of maternity and infant centers. On this point, it was written in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* in June 1915 "The whole question of marriage is closely bound up with the treatment of the unmarried mother".²

Another issue which represented the condemnation of women antis was the emergence of female anti-war sentiments during the war. What worsened matters was that those who supported pacifism had been already members in suffrage organizations mainly the N.U.W.S.S and the W.S.P.U. They battled previously for the parliamentary franchise.

Women antis' resentment of these unpatriotic deeds was dictated on the papers of the *Anti-Suffrage Review*. What pushed them to condemn the anti-war initiatives by those suffragist minorities was that all the women antis supported the war efforts. There were no minorities of them who deviated from supporting the war or resigned

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,269.

² Ibid.

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from the N.L.O.W.S. Since the N.L.O.W.S was a mixture of male and female membership, the efforts to support the war were doubled. On this point, it was written in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* “Suffragists have closely identified themselves in connection with this war with every variety of peace movement”.¹

Women antis’ suspension of the anti-suffrage movement and the devotion of their deeds to support war effort did not reflect the neglect of the opposition to the parliamentary vote. They supported war efforts and criticized some actions performed by the female suffragists and suffragettes such as the care for illegitimate babies. The female opposition to the vote vanished in the concluding years of the war because the suffrage cause underwent fruitful results through the partial enfranchisement of women over the age of thirty in 1918.

4. The Female Partial Enfranchisement: The First Step Towards Political Equality

First and foremost, women antis endeavoured to make the parliamentary franchise an impossible issue that would never be vouchsafed to women. Throughout the course of their anti-suffrage campaign, women anti-suffragists elucidated that political participation was not a female concern and they kept resenting political equality between men and women. This political equality would be guaranteed by the female possession of the parliamentary vote.

During the war years, those female suffrage seekers proved their capability of assuming public responsibilities. They halted the suffrage campaign and launched another patriotic campaign whose goal was to support war needs. During World War I, the British politicians changed their minds on the suffrage question. The pre-war governmental opposition was transformed into a governmental support to women’s enfranchisement for several factors. The governmental support to women’s

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit.,264.

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enfranchisement did not emerge from scratch, but the suffragists and the suffragettes' continued persistent calls for the franchise forged the politicians to consider the suffrage question.

The promising period of time which marked the dawn of hope for women suffragists and suffragettes came in 1917. In that year, suffrage reforms were set up to re-enfranchise those soldiers who were away running armed services outside Britain since one condition to vote was to reside in Britain the day of any election. Debates about franchise reforms started in 1917 in the Speaker's Conference (1916-1917).¹ Women suffragists strove to seize the opportunity and convince the government to consider women's suffrage in this conference.

One of the points under discussion, in the conference, was the enfranchisement of women. The outcome of the conference was a bill passed in 1917. As a remedy for the female suffrage question, the Representation of the People Bill was passed in 1917 to become an act in 1918. This act enfranchised women who were over the age of thirty. The passage of this act signaled the first step toward women's political involvement in the process of decision-making. Although not all women were enfranchised, the Representation of people Act of 1918 carried among its folding new trends of political equality that women antis previously strove to prevent. The passage of the 1918 Act signaled the parliamentary support to the female suffrage cause on the one hand. On the other hand, it marked the downfall of the female anti-suffrage cause.

4.1. The Rising Parliamentary Support to Women's Suffrage (1916)

The female suffragists and suffragettes were accustomed to parliamentary opposition to their enfranchisement from the first time they launched their campaign in 1866. Members of Parliament repeatedly denied the vote for women through the

¹ S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit.,375.

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rejection of any pro-suffrage resolution. Even the opposition they encountered from other women antis was cemented through the collaboration between Members of Parliament and those female opponents of the vote. The war years represented a relief for the female suffrage seekers.

The change in political circumstances during war years represented the first step towards the accomplishment of suffrage. Besides, the victory of the pro-suffrage Prime Minister¹ David Lloyd George² in December 1916 marked new promising trends for the female suffrage cause. Lloyd George, as a pro-suffrage Prime Minister, was preceded by the anti-suffragist Prime Minister Herbert Asquith who repeatedly quashed any suffrage proposal.

Women's contribution to war efforts prompted a change in parliamentary perspectives towards the enfranchisement of women. The partial enfranchisement was seen as a governmental reward for women's services during the war. World War I was an occasion for women to prove their capabilities of performing men's work and assuming public responsibilities. When men left England to fight Germany, women replaced them in their jobs which were previously held solely by men. Women's war work played a pivotal role in the nullification of one argument put forward by women antis which was female physical weakness. "Participation in war stood in the way of women making suffrage a common front and a clear priority".³

The remarkable support to women's enfranchisement was revealed through the passage of the Representation of the People Bill in 1917. It enfranchised all men over the age of 21 and all women over the age of 30. The parliamentary support to women's franchise, although it was a limited franchise, did not take place at one stroke. Thus,

¹ H.L.Smith, op.cit.,85.

² David Lloyd George (1863-1945) was one of the great reforming British chancellors of the 20th century. In 1908, he was appointed as the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1915, he became the minister of munitions. In 1916, he became the British Prime Minister from (1916-1922) after his victory in the general election of December 1918. He was preceded by Herbert Asquith as a Prime Minister (1908-1916). http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/george_david_lloyd.shtml (June12,2016 at 11:12).

³ R.Rubio Marin, op.cit.,14.

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there were numerous reasons that empowered the parliamentarians to involve women in the franchise reform undertaken in 1917.

The first reason behind the partial enfranchisement of women was the fear of the renewed militant protest by the suffragettes.¹ The latter, under the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel, repeatedly warned the government after the suspension of their militant campaign in 1914 that if the suffrage would not be granted to women after the end of the war, they would launch their militant protest again.

The government's fears of the renewed violence of the suffragettes that would threaten the social order in England spurred politicians to grant women the vote. The anti-suffragist Member of Parliament Walter Long² ascertained that the government returned to supporting the female franchise to put an end to those chaotic demands of the vote by the militant suffragettes. He suggested that Parliament, through the partial enfranchisement of women, attempted in one way or another "to avoid the renewal of those bitter controversies over which we have wasted so much time in the past".³

The renewal of militancy, after the war, was not the sole factor behind the parliamentary support to the franchise. The continued insistence of Millicent Fawcett, the leader of the N.U.W.S.S on new reactions, was another reason behind the governmental support to women's suffrage. By 1916, Herbert Asquith, as a previous anti-suffrage Prime Minister, started also supporting the suffrage cause. Millicent Fawcett sent him many letters in 1916 asking him to consider the suffrage question for

¹ Alessandro Rizzeri and Nicola Persico, "Why did the Elites Extend the Suffrage? Democracy and the Scope of Government, with Application to Britain's 'Age of Reform'" *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (May2004):708.

² Walter Hulme Long (1854-1924) was a British unionist politician.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Long,_1st_Viscount_Long (June12,2016 at 11:38).

³ Susan Kingsley Kent, "The Politics of Sexual Difference: World War I and the Demise of British Feminism" *Journal Of British Studies*, Vol.27,No.3 (July1988):235.

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women. He replied that “The considerations set out in your letter would be fully and impartially weighed without any pre-judgments from the controversies of the past...”¹

Even those anti-suffrage parliamentarians changed their minds over the enfranchisement of women. One pivotal example of those politicians who embarked on a fierce opposition to women’s franchise was the Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. His opposition did not last forever; he resorted to support female parliamentary franchise after their patriotic involvement to support the war efforts. He clarified

How could we have carried on the war without women? bearing arms in the field.....what I confess moves me still is the problem of reconstruction when the War is over. The questions which will necessarily ariseare questions in which I find it impossible to withhold from women the power and the right of making their voices heard.²

Another factor which forged Members of Parliament to consider the female enfranchisement was women’s contribution to war efforts. Women’s devotion of their time and energies to support war efforts attracted political attention towards women’s enfranchisement. Women replaced men, who joined the armed forces, in their jobs. Women appeared as munitions workers, coal miners, nurses, police-women, drivers and other jobs previously held only by men. To glorify the role of women and their wartime services, women were described as “soldiers”.³ The soldiers were not solely those men joining the armed forces and fighting Germany in the battlefields, even women were fighting in their country as soldiers through their war work.

Historians differed in their views whether women’s war work was a reason behind their limited enfranchisement. Since the Representation of the People Bill of

¹ S. Holton, *Feminism and Democracy : Women’s Suffrage and Reform Politics in Britain 1900-1918* in *The British Women’s Suffrage Campaign 1866-1928*, ed. H.L.Smith,op.cit.,82

² Herbert Asquith Speech in 1917 in “Why were some Women given the Vote in 1918” , 312.
<http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/AssetsLibrary/SECTORS/Secondary/SUBJECT/HistoryandSocialScience/PDFs/OCRCSEBMWHWomengiventhevote1918samplepages.pdf> (June12,2016 at 12:41).

³ Patricia E. Chu, *Race, Nationalism and the State in British and American Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,2006),92.

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1917 and later as an Act of 1918 enfranchised solely women over the age of thirty. Those young ladies under the age of thirty who served in munitions factories remained disenfranchised. One of the historians who argued that women's war work was a reason behind their partial enfranchisement was Alasdair Gray. He stated

.....by August 1914, Britain was at war....millions of women became a key part of the war effortIn January 1918, women were rewarded when the war time government passed the Representation of the People Act giving the vote to all women over 30 years of age...¹

Some other historians expounded that women's war work was not a reason why they were partially enfranchised in 1918 since the young women under the age of thirty who contributed to war efforts were excluded from the parliamentary franchise. The historian Paul Bartley shared this idea. He pointed out that "it must be remembered that only women over the age of thirty were given the vote ...the very women who had helped in the war effort.....were actually denied the vote".²

It is worth mentioning that the partial enfranchisement of women was not discussed and considered as a single issue. Politicians did not start debates and discussions over the franchise as a separate dimension. The political debate over female enfranchisement was a single point among several points that framed the franchise reforms in 1916. Those reforms went in tandem with reforms of electorates and the passage of legislations that dictated the extension of suffrage to men. As a step to reform suffrage legislations in 1916, the Speaker's Conference took place in 1916.

¹ "Why did Women Get the Vote in 1918"

http://cgshistory.weebly.com/uploads/1/6/9/9/16994998/why_did_women_get_the_vote_in_1918.pdf
(June4,2016 at10:58)

² Ibid.

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4.2. The Speaker's Conference (1916-1917)

The Speaker's Conference was a conference held on October 12, 1916 under the chairmanship of the speaker of the House of Commons James.W. Lowther (1855-1949)¹ with Willoughby Dickinson (1859-1943)² and John Simon(1873-1954)³.

The conference aimed at setting reforms of the franchise, pursuing the distribution of seats and putting forward the rules and the ways elections would take place. One of the perspectives to be undertaken was the negotiation about the female enfranchisement.

The origin of the Speaker's Conference was traced back to September 1916. There was a need to hold an election, but there was a problem. The majority of men were outside England joining the armed forces. Since the vote was conditioned by two criteria namely residence and property ownership, soldiers, in this case, could not vote because they lacked the residence requirement. As it was propounded in the 1884 Reform Act, men could vote if they proved their residence a year before the year of the election⁴. The impossibility of elections by those soldiers forged the government to set new franchise reforms.

To solve the problem of the soldiers' vote, the Member of Parliament in the Conservative Party Edward Carson (1854-1935) proposed a bill in 1916 to re-enfranchise all the soldiers who would not be able to vote since they lacked the residency requirement. To seize this opportunity of enfranchising the soldiers, the

¹ James William Lowther (1855-1949) served as the speaker of the House of Commons from 1905 to 1921. <https://www.parliament.uk/about/art-in-parliament/online-exhibitions/historic-events/first-world-war/parliamentarians-in-the-first-world-war/speaker/james-william-lowther-1855-1949/> (November 19, 2016 at 16:06)

² Willoughby Hyett Dickinson (1859-1943) was a British progressive party member of the London county council elected 1889, 1892. He served a Deputy Chairman (1892-1897) http://london.wikia.com/wiki/Willoughby_Dickinson,_1st_Baron_Dickinson (November 19, 2016 at 16:13)

³ John Allsebrook Simon (1873-1954) was a British Statesman and politician; held high office in Liberal Governments up to 1916, resigned on conscription issue; formed Liberal National Party (1931); Foreign Secretary (1931-5); Home Secretary (1935-7); Chancellor (1937-40). <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp05756/john-allsebrook-simon-1st-viscount-> (November 19, 2016 at 16:16)

⁴ S.Kingsley Kent, *Sex & Suffrage in Britain 1860-1914*, op.cit., 229.

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issue of female enfranchisement was considered at that time. For women suffragists and suffragettes, the possession of the parliamentary vote would be a necessity since it would empower them to take part in the decisions that governed their country.¹

The conference aimed at setting decisions about the female enfranchisement. Till 1917, the members of the conference kept meeting twice a week² to discuss all that concerned the parliamentary franchise. With the introduction of this franchise reform conference, Millicent Fawcett seized this opportunity to ask the government to consider the female parliamentary franchise in this conference.

After many discussions with the organizers of the conference, the final report of the conference was revealed in January 1917. It contained a set of proposals to be put forward into legislations. On what concerned the issue of female enfranchisement, it was decided that women would not be granted the parliamentary suffrage on the same terms as it was granted to men. By the same token, the members of the conference rejected the full franchise for women based on a handful of reasons.

Not all women would enjoy the parliamentary vote, only those women aged 30 and above. The age requirement was left for the Parliament to decide about it. To guarantee the limited suffrage for women, the proposals of the conference had to be propounded in a bill. In this vein, all the requirements that would govern the partial enfranchisement of women were included in the Representation of the People Bill of 1917.

4.3. The Representation of the People Bill (1917)

The Representation of the People Bill was passed by the House of Commons on June 19, 1917. The House of Commons voted 385 to 55³ to agree on the clause that stated the partial enfranchisement of women. This bill was passed to confirm what was

¹ Brian Williams, *Women win the Vote 6 February 1918* (Evans Brothers Limited, 2000), 9.

² J. Vellacott, *op.cit.*, 143.

³ H.L. Smith, *op.cit.*, 87.

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achieved in the Speaker's Conference. The bill was called also the "limited suffrage bill"¹ because it enfranchised only women who aged 30 or above. In this case, the bill denied women under the age of thirty the parliamentary franchise.

There were several conditions that dictated the vote for women after they were partially enfranchised. The first criterion was to reach the age of thirty and above. Another requirement for women, who reached the age of thirty and above, was that they had to be previous electors in local elections or married to men who had already taken part in local elections.²

The second one was the property ownership. In the light of holding a property as a condition to vote, the bill enfranchised those women householders or those women whose husbands were householders. It also enfranchised women who were occupiers of property of £5³ and graduates from the British Universities.

4.4. The Representation of the People Act (1918)

The Representation of the People Bill became a law on February 6, 1918 after being passed by the House of Commons. The act guaranteed the partial enfranchisement of women who reached the age of thirty and above. It was called the Fourth Reform Act⁴ because the aim of the previous franchise reform acts of the nineteenth century was the extension of suffrage to those people who were previously disfranchised. This act was called the Fourth Reform Act because it extended suffrage to women who attained the age of thirty and above. The Three previous reform acts were passed in 1832, 1867 and 1884⁵. All of them extended franchise to men.

¹ P.E. Chu, op.cit.,93.

² L.E.Nym Mayhall,op.cit.,3.

³ June Purvis, "Emmeline Pankhurst in the Aftermath of Suffrage, 1918-1928" in *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender and Politics*,ed. Julie V.Gottlieb and Richard Toye,op.cit.,19.

⁴ Charles More, *Britain in the Twentieth Century* (Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited, 2007),49.

⁵ For more details, see Chapter One, 24.

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It was estimated that the Representation of the People Act enfranchised 8.400.000 women who comprised a percentage of 39, 60% of the electorate in 1918.¹ As mentioned before, one of the requirements for the new female voters was that they should be local electors or wives of local electors. This requirement forbade many women from voting although they met the other conditions. Although those women attained the age of thirty and above, they could not vote because they were not local electors before their partial enfranchisement. It was reported that five million women (5.000.000)² who accounted 22%³ of those women who attained the age of thirty and above in 1918. It was pointed out that the Representation of the People Act did not enfranchise women due to their war work because those young women who supported the war efforts as workers in munitions and coal mines were still excluded from the vote.⁴

As stated before, the historians differed in their views whether women were partially enfranchised due to their war work or not. It was reported that the vote was granted not as a reward for women's war work, but it was granted as a governmental reward for those mothers and wives who sent their husbands and sons to join the armed forces. For Millicent Fawcett, this act guaranteed "motherhood franchise"⁵ since 83%⁶ of the newly enfranchised women were married women. The act, therefore, excluded the single women and working-class women. Equal franchise for all women, whether married or single, was still an elusive dream to be determined.

It is of great significance to point out that the Representation of the People Act granted partial and limited franchise for women aged thirty and above because an equal franchise, on the same terms as men, would lead to women's political domination over men since women outnumbered men. Indeed, the number of men

¹ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,88.

² Mary Hilson, "Women Voters and the Rhetoric of Patriotism in the British General Election of 1918", *Women's History Review*, Vol.10.No.2 (2001):327.

³ Ibid.

⁴ J.V.Gottlieb and Richard Toye , op.cit.,01.

⁵ H.L.Smith,op.cit.,89.

⁶ Ibid.

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decreased due to male casualties in the battlefields when fighting the German forces during World War I. It was estimated that 740.000 men died during the war.¹ The age requirement was put forward, on purpose, to avoid women's majority over men in the electorate.² The first opportunity when the newly enfranchised women voted came in the National Election of 1918.

Another argument which was put forward not to enfranchise all women on the same terms as men was that young women under the age of thirty were not mature enough to assume political responsibilities. The young women who remained disenfranchised were described as "flappers".³ The term flapper was used by newspapers' editors and politicians to describe the young and the single women and to justify the unfitness of young women under the age of thirty for taking part in elections.

The partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 was considered the first step towards female political participation. Their limited suffrage opened new horizons for women to strengthen their political emancipation and achieve fully their political rights. The vote served as a key that would open the gate of politics for women and guarantee their unchallengeable participation in the process of decision-making.

After the possession of the limited franchise, women were offered another opportunity to better guarantee their presence in politics. This new political breakthrough was reflected through the passage of another act in November 1918. It allowed women, over the age of 21, to stand as Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. In this case, women would shift from voters to Members of Parliament (MPs).

¹ M.Boussabha- Bravard, op.cit.,86.

² Patricia E. Chu, op.cit.,94.

³ Bob Whietfield et al, *The Extension of the Franchise, 1832-1931*(Heinemam Educational Publishers, 2001), 174.

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4.5. The Parliament Qualification of Women Act (1918)

After the partial victory women had realized under the Representation of the People Act of February 1918, another act was passed months later. This act widened women's political integration and conveyed their fitness to hold public roles in the political arena. Thus, the Parliament Qualification of Women Act came to strengthen women's roles as political participants alongside men. It allowed women, over the age of 21, to stand as Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. As its name stated, the act portrayed the view that women were qualified for assuming political responsibilities.

The Parliament Qualification of Women Act was passed few weeks before the national election of December 1918 to guarantee women's candidacy as Members of Parliament. Women, in this case, would appear voters and candidates to be elected in parliamentary elections. The act, in its introductory lines, stated that women should not be excluded from political participation based on their sex. Besides voting, they had to be qualified as Members of Parliament to better acquaint them with an opportunity to participate not solely in the process of decision-making, but also to take part in the process of decision-making as MPs. The act stated "a woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage for being elected to or sitting or voting as a member of the Commons House of Parliament".¹

The origin of the Parliament Qualification of Women Act dated back to October 23, 1918 when the Liberal Member of Parliament Herbert Samuel (1870-1963)² proposed, in the House of Commons, to enable women to become Members of Parliament since all women at the age of thirty and above were enfranchised. This act was an extension of the political breakthrough propounded in the Representation of the

¹ Qualification of Women Act (1918) in "Parliament and Women, c.1900-1945", ed. Mari Catherine Takayanagi (PhD Thesis., King's College London), 16.

² Herbert Louis Samuel (1870-1963) was a British statesman and philosopher. He was elected to the House of Commons as a liberal in 1902. In January 1916, he became home secretary in Herbert Asquith ministry. He resigned in December 1916 when Lloyd George formed his government. <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Herbert-Louis-Samuel-1st-Viscount-Samuel> (June 12, 2016 at 11:41).

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People Act of February 1918. His resolution stated that “In the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a bill be passed making women eligible as Members of Parliament
.....”¹

Herbert Samuel’s resolution, stating the idea to allow women as MPs, was not welcomed in the House of Commons because the members of the House feared that the integration of women in politics as MPs would lead to female domination in the house. They believed that the House of Commons would be placed under women’s management since they might hold several positions previously held solely by men. Among these positions, women could become speakers of the House.

It is worth noting that women’s physical weakness represented another factor behind opposing women to stand as MPs. Women’s physical weakness did not qualify them for their job as MPs. Hedworth Meux (1856-1929), a member of the Conservative Party, explained that women’s physical weakness did not enable them to hold a tiring job as MPs. He claimed that “We go on till eleven or twelve at night. Is that a thing for any woman to do...?”²

Despite the parliamentary opposition to the resolution allowing women as MPs, Herbert Samuel’s proposal became a bill which was supported by government. It was passed on November 21, 1918 few weeks before the general election of December 1918. Unlike the Representation of the People Act which granted a limited suffrage to women over the age of thirty, the Parliament Qualification of Women Act did not take into account the age requirement. It allowed women over the age of 21³ to stand as candidates to be elected as MPs. In this vein, the majority of young women could stand as candidates to be elected and would set foot in Parliament as MPs.

The limited enfranchisement of women in 1918 and their allowance to stand as Members of Parliament represented the success of the suffrage movement. The

¹ HC Deb 23 Oct 1918 vol. 110 c813, Herbert Samuel (Liberal) in “Parliament and Women,c.1900-1945”, ed. M.C.Takayanagi,op.cit.,18.

² HC Deb 4 Nov 1918 vol 110, c1877, Sir Hedworth Meux (Conservative) in “Parliament and Women,c.1900-1945”, ed. M.C.Takayanagi,op.cit.,29.

³ Giles Bayliss, “First World War Law : Find out more”, *A.Level Law Review*, Vol.10,No.3 (April 2015):2.

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extension of the franchise for women over the age of thirty enabled them to enjoy political participation and take part in the process of decision-making. The female opposition underwent a fiasco since women won a channel to participate politically alongside men through the parliamentary vote.

5. The Downfall of the Female Opposition to Women's Parliamentary Franchise (1918)

The outcome of any campaign, whatever its goal, was either a failure or success. Women antis launched their anti-suffrage campaign in the nineteenth century (1889) to oppose the female suffrage movement on the one hand. On the other hand, they strove to nullify the suffragists and the suffragettes' principle of political equality. In the light of the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 and the enactment of an act that allowed women to become MPs, the anti-suffrage campaign underwent a defeat since the limited franchise was granted to women.

5.1. The Reasons behind the Female Anti-Suffrage Debacle

It should be pointed out that the repeated rejection of pro-suffrage petitions and resolutions in Parliament cemented the female anti-suffrage cause. The parliamentary opposition empowered the female antis to double their anti-suffrage endeavours and resulted in the collaboration with the female antis. This was revealed through the mixed-sex N.L.O.W.S' strong ties with the Parliament since its male members were Members in Parliament.¹

One of the reasons behind the failure of female anti-suffragist was the parliamentary shift from opposition to the support of the female enfranchisement. When World War I disrupted, the female contribution to pro-war effort increased.

¹ J.Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 198.

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Women's war work attracted the attention of politicians to grant women the franchise, but in a way that would not lead to female domination over men. "...the revival of the suffrage issue in Parliament during the final years of the war gave the antis further incentive to drive home".¹ Hence, the support to the female suffrage question in Parliament during war years signaled the dawn of the female anti-suffragists' defeat. Furthermore, politicians spurred women's entry to politics as a way that would lead to male –female collaboration in the government. The female efforts besides men's ones would double the fruitful managements of the country.

The first step to enfranchise women was pursued by those Members of Parliament who were previously anti-suffragists. The Speaker's Conference (1916-1917), which was considered the first occasion when female enfranchisement was taken into account, was initiated by male anti-suffragists. Millicent Fawcett claimed that those who were responsible for enfranchising women were anti-suffragists. She explained in her speech delivered in February 1918 in the Queen's Hall that the outcome of the suffrage movement relied on the approval of those anti-suffragists. In her own words:

The result of the Speaker's Conference was an illustration of the deathless energy and vitality of the suffrage movement. The conference had been initiated by an anti-suffragist, presided over by an anti-suffragist, and consisted at first 50% anti-suffragists; yet though the brew seemed distinctly anti-suffrage, when the tap was turned, suffrage came out...²

Another reason which resulted in the defeat of female anti-suffragism was the changing perspectives over opposition towards the franchise. Women antis like Mary Humphrey Ward, Louise Creighton and Violet Markham became convinced that the female enfranchisement was an important factor towards the enjoyment of democracy.

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 264.

² S. Holton, "Feminism and Democracy: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, with Particular Reference to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies 1897-1918", op.cit., 382.

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The male oppositionists in the N.L.O.W.S. ceased campaigning for opposing the vote for women. Since the N.L.O.W.S. was governed by a male leader Lord Curzon, the female antis found themselves betrayed. Lord Curzon, the leader of the House of Lords, was one of those who enfranchised women.

Julia Bush described women antis as “gullible”¹ because they were betrayed by those Members of Parliament and by those male leaders in the N.L.O.W.S. The story of the male betrayal to women antis dated back to 1917 when the Representation of the People Bill reached the House of Lords to be either accepted or rejected. Mary Humphrey Ward urged Lord Curzon not to pass the bill until the results of a national referendum would be reported. Mary Ward wanted to organize a referendum to find out whether women really wanted the vote or not. George Curzon, as the leader of the House of Lords and the male head of the N.L.O.W.S., answered Mary Ward in a speech held on January 10, 1917. He announced that he had to give up opposing the vote because the rejection of the bill would spoil the reforms of the House of Lords.²

Being betrayed by male antis, Mary Ward complained to Millicent Fawcett that her failure was the outcome of the betrayal of men antis in N.L.O.W.S. Fawcett replied that one of the reasons of the defeat was the continued trust in men antis to keep opposing the vote. Millicent Fawcett claimed “That’s what comes of trusting to your men friends”.³

The defeat of the female anti-suffragism was portrayed through a number of factors that served as preludes to the downfall of the opposition. Those factors dictated the success of the women suffrage seekers and signaled the vain attempts of women antis to prevent the enfranchisement of women.

¹ J. Bush, *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffragism in Britain*, op.cit., 290.

² Helen Andrews, “Women Against Suffrage” (March 2015) <https://herandrews.com/2015/03/01/women-against-suffrage/> (June 4, 2016 at 12:31)

³ Ibid.

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5.2. The Symptoms of Defeat

There were some occurrences before 1918 and in that year itself that reflected the end of the female anti-suffrage campaign. These occurrences served as symptoms which conveyed the failure of female opposition to the female parliamentary enfranchisement.

The first symptom that reflected the defeat of the female opposition was the dissolution of the N.L.O.W.S in 1918 and the end of all publications against granting women the franchise. Moreover, the enactment of the Representation of the People Act in 1918 was another symptom of defeat. Although the enfranchisement of women was not granted on the same terms as it was granted to men, it allowed women to participate in the process of decision-making and choose their representatives in Parliament. The women's political participation alongside men in Parliament was what women antis endeavoured to prevent. Indeed, it was accomplished by women suffrage seekers in 1918. It could be said that the efforts of women antis to stand in the way of suffrage success were futile attempts.

One of the focal consequences of the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 on the expansion of their political breakthroughs was their ability to stand as candidates in elections and to become MPs. This was another symptom that signaled the defeat of the female anti-suffrage cause. After the grant of the limited franchise to women, they were offered another opportunity to strengthen their political participation through the Parliament Qualification of Women Act. The first election, in which women voted and stood as candidates to be elected, came in December 1918.

On December 14, 1918, a General Election was held in Great Britain which resulted in the victory of the coalition government of David Lloyd George (1863-1945) over those liberals who supported Herbert Asquith. The voters in this election were a mixture of men and for the first time women. The election, therefore, was the first election in which women appeared on the scene not solely as voters, but as candidates, similarly as men, to be elected. In this election, women who were

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enfranchised voted for the first time in their lives. Women, over the age of 21, stand as candidates to be elected as MPs. Due to the passage of the Parliament Qualification of Women Act in November 1918, it was estimated that 17 women among 1600 candidates¹ stood to be elected as MPs in the general election of December 1918. A woman among those 17 was elected. She was called Constance Markievicz², however, she did not take her seat.³

The women's candidacy to be elected as Members of Parliament gave them the green light to set foot in Parliament unfettered by any kind of opposition. Those newly female elected MPs in the coming elections would represent other women. Women in society, previously represented by men in Parliament, would be represented by their own sex. "The most important of all the women MPs contribution is the fact that they entered a men's house and succeeded there".⁴

The aforesaid political stances for women to be illegible as voters and candidates pursued the submission of women antis. The political equality they resented became a reality in 1918. Although the Representation of the People Act of 1918 encouraged partial franchise of women, it encouraged the role of women in politics in one way or another. The limited franchise granted to women would open new horizons for the accomplishment of the universal suffrage. The latter would become a reality in 1928 when all women would be granted the parliamentary vote on the same terms as men.

Although women antis resented political participation, some of them became involved in local and national government. As an example, Violet Markham political experience during the war led her to change her view about women franchise and

¹ B.Williams, op.cit.,07.

² Constance Georgine Markievicz (1868-1927) was an Anglo-Irish countess and political activist who was the first woman elected to the British Parliament in 1918 though she refused to take her seat.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Constance-Markievicz> (November19,2016 at 15:59)

³ "The Eligibility of Constance Markievicz", *The History of Parliament* (December 2015).

<https://thehistoryofparliament.wordpress.com/2015/12/14/the-eligibility-of-constance-markievicz/> (June12, 2016 at 12:53).

⁴ Brian Harrison, 'Women in a Men's House' in "Parliament and Women, c.1900-1945", ed. M.C.Takayanagi,op.cit.,37.

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perceive it as pivotal for women.¹ Since she battled for the denial of the political participation for women, Violet Markham appeared as an Asquithian liberal candidate to be elected, but she was unsuccessful.²

6. Conclusion

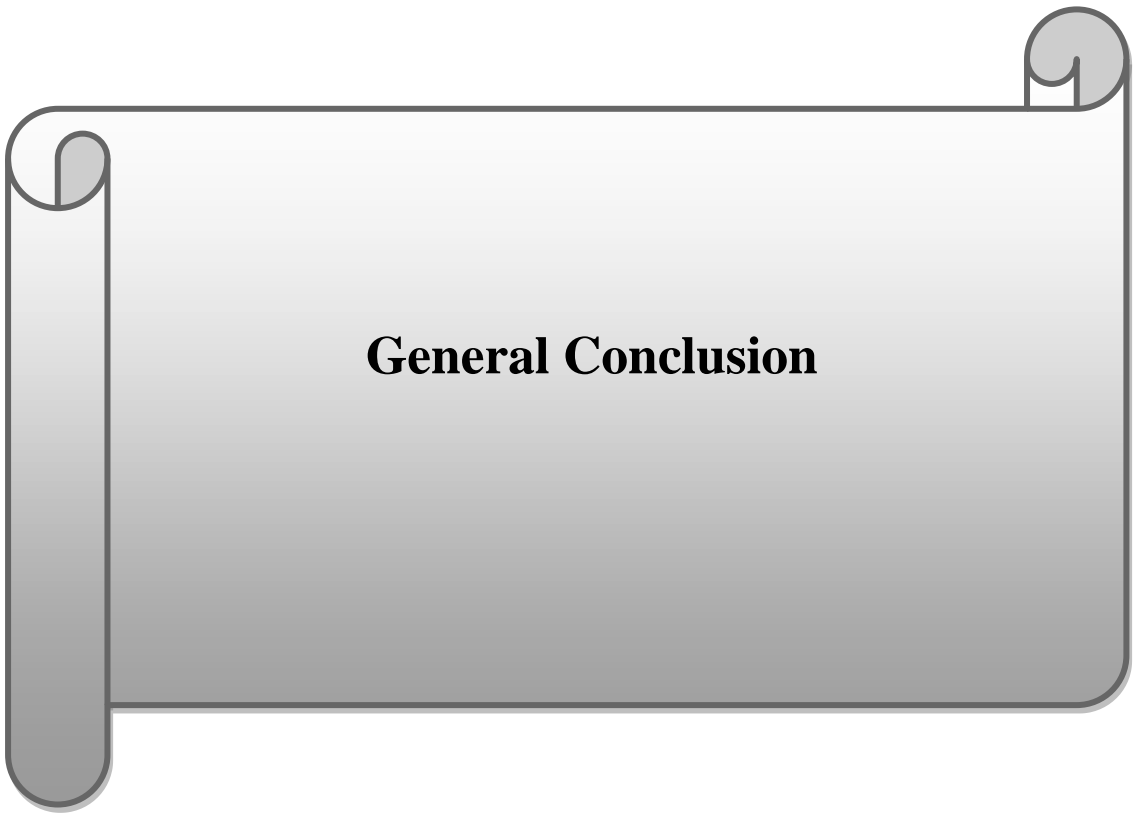
In a nutshell, World War I opened new horizons for women suffrage seekers to climb the ladder of political participation. Women's war works and their support to war efforts offered them ample opportunities to be recognized as unchallengeable voters and as participants in the process of decision-making.

The suffrage success in 1918, though it went in sync with limited franchise, was considered the first step that would cement women's political emancipation. In that year, women suffragists and suffragettes reaped the fruits of their labour. Their movement in the pre-war era served as a vehicle for reaching politics through the parliamentary franchise.

The partial enfranchisement of women over the age of 30 and the empowerment of women over the age of 21 to stand as MPs reflected the debacle of the female anti-suffrage question. Women anti-suffragists, despite their efforts to oppose the vote, underwent the failure of their cause. The ideology of female anti-suffragism proved to be a futile attempt that stood in the way of female suffragism. The failure of the female anti-suffragism in England in 1918 did not take place from scratch, but its fiasco hinged on a set of preludes that paved the way for the disappearance of the organized female anti-suffrage campaign.

¹ Brian Harrison, 'Women in a Men's House' in "Parliament and Women, c.1900-1945", ed. M.C.Takayanagi, op.cit., 37.

² Helen Jones, *Women in British Public Life, 1914-1918: Gender, Power and Social Policy* Pearson Education Limited, 2000), 158.



General Conclusion

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The acquisition of the parliamentary vote was a key that opened the gate of politics for voters. It enabled voters to choose their representatives and have a hand in the process of decision-making in general. It would, if granted to women, empower them to participate in the process of decision making alongside men. To guarantee political emancipation for women, the suffrage movement came as a step to climb the ladder of political participation through the demand of the right to take part in parliamentary elections. The female suffrage-seekers battled peacefully and violently to gain the vote. What empowered the female suffrage seekers and strengthened their will to keep demanding the vote was their ceaseless attempts to gain the vote. They never lost hope and halted their campaign despite the opposition they encountered from Parliament and other opponents outside Parliament.

The female opposition did not arise out of vacuum, but there were ample arguments that dictated the denial of the vote for women. All of those arguments shared the idea that politics as a public issue was not a female concern. Women anti-suffragists believed that the enfranchisement of women on the national level would harm women and even the political management of the country. Women antis' conservative nature forged them to oppose the vote not because they resented the female advancement and the enhancement of their role in society, but they resented the involvement of their sex in politics alongside men for the sake of preserving women's virtues. They encouraged women, in turn, to climb the ladder of emancipation through a web of social duties such as employment and access to education.

For women antis, women's share of political responsibilities that were previously confined to men would reverse the traditional gender roles. The enfranchisement of women would allow them to reach the male public sphere of politics. The latter did not fit women for several reasons. Accordingly, the gain of the parliamentary vote would inevitably pave the way for women to become political participants alongside men.

The political management of the country would become, if women were enfranchised, a mixed-sex issue. In this vein, the political participation of England, as

General Conclusion

a case study for this research, would be placed at female hands since women outnumbered men.

Despite the female opposition which went in tandem with the female calls for the parliamentary suffrage, the opposition tended to be a fruitless attempt to prevent women from gaining the parliamentary vote. The early marks of defeat were traced back to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. The latter represented a watershed in the history of the female suffrage in England. As a reward for the female suffragists and suffragettes' contribution to war effort, a limited franchise was granted to women who aged 30 and above.

The partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 through the enactment of the Representation of the People Act enabled women over the age of thirty to participate in parliamentary elections. This parliamentary enfranchisement was an extension for the local enfranchisement women determined in the nineteenth century (1869). The 1918 Act marked the defeat of women antis and the downfall of the anti-suffrage cause. What they strove, to prevent, became a reality. They endeavoured to reflect the unsuitability of the parliamentary vote for women. They resented the parliamentary vote based on the fact that women could participate in the management of their country through the local franchise on the local level. Women should not compete with men on the national level.

What women antis endeavoured not to happen came true in the General Election of 1918 in Britain. In this election and for the first time, women appeared as voters and candidates to be elected due to the enactment of The Parliament Qualification of Women Act in 1918. The political emancipation of women did not encapsulate solely the partial enfranchisement of women. The latter paved the way for more political opportunities for them. The British government did not solely grant the limited franchise for women over the age of thirty, it extended the political participation for women through the allowance of women to stand as candidates to be elected to Parliament.

General Conclusion

The limited franchise, granted to women over the age of thirty, was not seen as enough for guaranteeing full political participation. The call for equal franchise continued until 1928 when all women, regardless their age, would become qualified for an unchallengeable participation in parliamentary franchise on the same terms as men. Despite the arguments which dictated women' unfitnes to political responsibilities, women suffragists determined what they desired and they were partially enfranchised in 1918. Women antis, in the light of their failure, neglected their cause.



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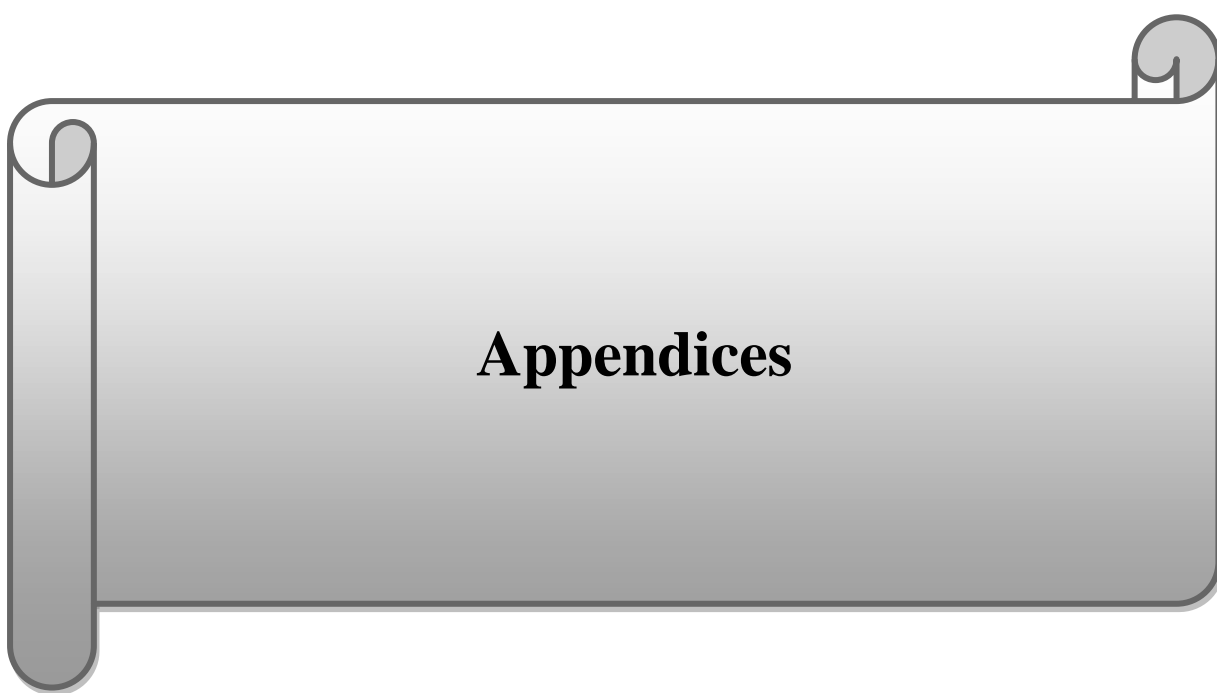
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Appendices

Appendix One

“Votes for Women Speech” by John Stuart Mill at the Great Meeting in Favour of Women’s Suffrage held in Music Hall, Edinburgh on January 12, 1871.

“If there is a truth in politics which is fundamental—which is the basis of all free government—it is that when a part of the nation are the sole possessors of power, the interest of that part gets all the serious attention. This does not necessarily imply any active oppression. All that it implies is the natural tendency of the average man to feel what touches self of vastly greater importance than what directly touches only other people. This is the deep-seated and ineradicable reason why women will never be justly treated until they obtain the franchise. They suffer, assuredly, much injustice by the operation of law. But suppose this changed; even then—even if there were no ground of complaint against the laws, there would be a break-down in their execution as long as men alone have a voice in choosing and in removing the officers of Government.

All our recent constitutional reforms, and the whole creed of reformers are grounded on the fact that the suffrage is needed for self-protection. All experience proves that if one part of the community is held in subjection by another part, it is not trusted with the ordinary means of self-defence, but is left dependent on the good-will and pleasure of those who are more privileged, the most vital interests of the subject-portion are certain to be, if not recklessly trampled upon, at least postponed to almost anything else.

The treatment of women is certainly no exception to the rule. They have neither equal laws, nor an equal administration of them. The laws treat them as they could not long be treated if they had the suffrage; and even if the laws were equal the administration of the law is not. Police magistrates and criminal judges cannot be exceptionally bad men; they are not chosen for their bad qualities ; they must be thought, by those who appoint them, to represent fairly, or better than fairly, the moral feelings of average men. Yet, what do we see? For an atrocious assault by a man upon a woman, especially if she has the misfortune to be his wife, he is either let off with an admonition, or he is solemnly told that he has committed a grave offence, for which he must be severely punished, and then he gets as many weeks or months of imprisonment as a man who has taken five pounds' worth of property gets years.

We are told that the good feelings of men are a sufficient protection to women. Those who say so can never, one would suppose, look into the police and law reports. If good feeling does not protect women against being beaten and kicked to death's door every day of their lives, and at last beaten and kicked to actual death by their special guardians and protectors, can we expect that it will secure them against injuries less revolting to humanity ? Most men, it will be said, are incapable of committing such horrible brutality. Perhaps so ; but it seems they are quite capable of letting it be committed. If women who are maltreated by their husbands found a defender in every other man who knew of it, they might have some chance of protection without the weapon of the suffrage. But it is never so ; slaves did not find it so ; serfs did not find it so ; conquered nations do not find it so ; and neither do women.

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There are many men who would not consciously do them any wrong ; but there must be a great moral improvement in human nature before most men will exert themselves to prevent or to redress wrongs committed by others under the sanction of law. And of these two things—the suffrage for women, and a grand moral improvement in human nature—the suffrage, to my thinking, is likely to be the soonest obtained. (Cheers.) I could afford to stop here. I have made out an ample case. There is portion of the population, amounting in number to somewhat more than half, to whom the law and its administration do not fulfil their duty, do not afford even the bodily protection due to all—this half happening to be that which is not admitted to the suffrage. Their most important interests are neglected—I do not say from deliberate intention, but simply because their interest is not so near to the feelings of the ruling half as the ruling half's own interest. The remedy is plain ; put women in the position which will make their interest the rulers' own interest. Make it as important to politicians to redress the grievances of women as it is to redress those of any class which is largely represented in Parliament.

If nothing more than this could be said in support of their claim to the suffrage, no claim could be more fully made out. (Cheers.) And if the claim is just, so also is it strictly constitutional. One of the recognized doctrines of the British Constitution is that representation is co-extensive with direct taxation. The practice, of the Constitution, it is true, for a long time did not correspond with the theory ; but it has been made to conform to it at last, in cities and boroughs, provided the tax-payer is of the male sex ; but if a woman, she may be the largest tax-payer in the place, and the person of greatest practical ability besides ; no matter, she has no vote. This is something very like punishing her for being a woman. The conditions which in the eye of the law and of the Constitution confer a title to a voice in public affairs are all fulfilled by her, with the single exception of having been born a male. This one deficiency, which I humbly submit she cannot help—(laughter)—is visited on her by the privation of a right as important to her as to any man, and even more important, since those who are physically weakest require protection the most. This is not an injury only, but an indignity. I grant that those who uphold it are in general quite unconscious of its being so ; but this comes from the inveterate habit of having one rule and measure for all that concerns women, and another for everything else.

Men are so much accustomed to think of women only as women, that they forget to think of them as human. (Hear, hear.) It is not only for their own sake that women ought to have the suffrage, but also for the sake of the public. It is for the interest of us all, both men and women, and of those who are to come after us. The reasons that may be given for this are many, but I may content myself with two. One, and the strongest, is what we sometimes hear unthinkingly urged as an argument on the other side—because women have so much power already. (Laughter.) It is true they have much power. They have the power which depends on personal influence over men. They have the power of cajolery—(laughter)—and often that of a petted favourite; power sadly inadequate to their own just and necessary protection against wrong, but sufficient at times to produce only too much effect upon the public conduct of the men with whom they are connected. But as this power, instead of being open and avowed, is indirect and unrecognised, no provision is made for its being rightly used. As it is conventionally assumed that women possess no power outside the domestic department, the power which they do and always will possess is exercised without the necessary knowledge, and without the proper responsibility.

It having been decreed that public matters are not a woman's business, her mind is carefully turned away from whatsoever would give her a knowledge of them, and she is taught to care nothing about them—that is, until some private interest or private likings or dislikings come in, when of course these private feelings have it all their own way, there being no public

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principles or convictions to control them. The power, therefore, which women now have in public affairs is power without knowledge. It is also power without responsibility. A man's wife is very often the real prompter either of what he does well and nobly, or of what he does foolishly or selfishly ; but as she gets no credit for the one, so she is not held accountable for the other ; if she is selfish, a very little art suffices to exempt her from censure though she succeeds in compassing her ends ; if she is simple and well meaning, she does not feel bound to inform herself, so as to have a reasonable opinion on what is solely the man's business, though all the while her ignorant prepossessions or her natural partialities may be acting as a most pernicious bias on what is supposed to be his better judgment.

From this combination of absence of instruction and absence of responsibility, it comes to pass that, though women are acknowledged to have, as a rule, stronger conscientious feelings than men, it is but a very small minority of women who have anything that deserves the name of a public conscience. How great an evil this is, there needs no argument to show. What is the greatest obstacle which the friends of political and social improvement have to struggle with—the drag which is constantly obstructing their efforts and disappointing their hopes ? Is it not the weakness of the average citizens' political conscience? Is not this the special danger and failure to which popular institutions are exposed—that the elector does not sufficiently feel his obligations to the public, and either stays away from the poll, or goes there and votes on the prompting of some private interest? And how can we hope that he will learn to postpone private interests to public, while he has beside him, in the person of his closest intimate, one who has been trained to have no feeling whatever of his duties to the public, but who has the keenest feeling of his duties to his family, and who, even without intending it, cannot but sway his mind strongly in the direction of the only interests which she understands and appreciates? (Applause) It must be remembered, too, that this is a growing evil. Time was when the wife was very little a companion of her husband—their lives were apart; the associates of his leisure and of his recreations were other men. But now the home and its inhabitants are so much to a man, that no other influence can, as a rule, compete with theirs. The time, therefore, is come when, if we would have public virtue in our men, we must have it in our women. (Hear, hear and applause.) And how can a woman have a conscience about the public good, if she is told, and believes, that it is no business whatever of hers? Give women the same rights as men, and the same obligations will follow. Instead of hanging a dead weight on men's public conscience, their greater susceptibility of moral feeling will make their habitual influence a most valuable support to the honest performance of public duty. (Loud applause.) This, then, is one of the reasons why it is for the good of all that women should have an admitted right to take part in public affairs. Another is the vast amount of brain power and practical business talent which now runs to waste for want of an outlet into those great fields of public usefulness, in which no one, I suppose, will pretend that such qualities are not very much wanted. Few men, I suspect, are sufficiently aware of the great amount of administrative ability possessed by women ; for want of considering that the essential qualities which lead to practical success are the same in what are called small things as in great. It is my belief that, in all those parts of the business of life which depend on the vigilant superintendence and accurate estimation of details, women, when they have the necessary special knowledge, are better administrators than men. And I am now speaking, not of women as they might be—not as some improved mode of education would make them—but of women as they now are, and of the capacities which they have already displayed. If an example is wanted of what women's powers of organisation can accomplish in public life, I appeal to one of the most striking facts of modern times, the Sanitary Commission in the late American War. The history of that Commission ought to be as well known all over the world as it is in America. From the beginning, and throughout, it was women's work. It was planned.

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organised, and worked by women. The Government was jealous of them at first, but the hopeless inferiority of its own arrangements made it soon glad to make over the first place to them. Not only had such work never been so well done, but nobody had ever supposed it possible that it could be so well done. I am aware that this argument would carry us much further than the suffrage : but I suppose it will be acknowledged that those who are themselves eminently capable of practical business, must be fit to take a share in the choosing of those to whom practical business is to be entrusted. The ability which is specially required for the exercise of the suffrage—that of selecting the persons most capable for the work that is to be done—is one of the qualifications for business in which women have always excelled. Great queens have in nothing shown themselves greater than in their choice of Ministers. When the ladies of the Sanitary Commission wanted men to help them, they knew the right men and how to use them; and they distinguished themselves not less by the work which they caused to be done, than by that which they did in their own persons (Applause.) These are some of the reasons which make it equally just and expedient that the suffrage should be extended to women. It must, at the same time, be borne in mind that, by admitting them to the suffrage, no other question is in the smallest degree prejudged.

Supposing it true, what some people are so fond of affirming, that women have nothing to complain of, and that the vast majority of them do not desire any change ; if so, giving them the suffrage can do nobody harm, and would afford them an opportunity of showing their perfect contentment with their present lot, in a manner beyond the reach of dispute. (Applause.)

If what we are told is true, that women ought to be, and always must and will be, in a state of domestic and social subordination to men, why, then, they require the suffrage so much the more, in order that the sovereignty of men over them may be exercised under the fitting responsibility. None need political protection so much as those who are in domestic dependence, since none are so much exposed to wrong. On every possible supposition, therefore, they have a claim to the suffrage. And we live at a period of human development, when the just claims of large numbers cannot be permanently resisted.

The whole movement of modern society, from the middle ages until now, greatly accelerated in the present century, points in the direction of the political enfranchisement of women. Their exclusion is a last remnant of the old bad State of society—the regimen of privileges and disabilities. All other monopolies are going or gone. The whole spirit of the times is against predetermining by law that one set of people shall be allowed by right of birth to have or to do what another set shall not, by any amount of exertion or superiority of ability, be allowed to attain. (Applause.)

I do not know how long a time it may require to get rid of women's disabilities. Great changes in the habits and opinions of mankind are always slow. But of one thing I am certain—that when once they have been got rid of—when their true aspect is no longer disguised by the varnish of custom and habit—they will appear in the retrospect so devoid of any rational foundation, and so contradictory to the principles by which society now professes to guide itself, that the difficulty which will be felt will be to conceive how they can ever have been defended, and by what possible arguments they can ever have been made to appear plausible. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) **VACHER & SONS, Printers, Westminster.**

Source: Men in Support of Women Suffrage

<http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/4517/Men%20in%20support%20of%20women's%20suffrage.pdf?sequence=1> (accessed on January 30, 2016 at 15:11)

Appendix Two

An Appeal Against Female Suffrage

[Nineteenth Century 25(June 1889)]

We, the undersigned, wish to appeal to the common sense and the educated thought of the men and women of England against the proposed extension of the parliamentary suffrage to women.

1. While desiring the fullest possible development of the powers, energies, and education of women, we believe that their work for the state, and their responsibilities towards it, must always differ essentially from those of men, and that therefore their share in the working of the state machinery should be different from that assigned to men. Certain large departments of the national life are of necessity worked exclusively by men. To men belong the struggle of debate and legislation in parliament; the hard and exhausting labour implied in the administration of the national resources and powers; the conduct of England's relations towards the external world; the working of the army and navy; all the heavy, laborious, fundamental industries of the state, such as those of mines, metals, and railways, the lead and supervision of English commerce, the management of our vast English finance, the service of that merchant fleet on which our food supply depends. In all these spheres women's direct participation is made impossible either by the disabilities of sex, or by strong formations of customs and habit resting ultimately upon physical difference, against which it is useless to contend. They are affected indeed, in some degree, by all the national activities; therefore they ought in some degree to have an influence on them all. This influence they already have, and will have more and more as the education of women advances. But their direct interest in these matters can never equal that of men, whose whole energy of mind and body is daily and hourly risked in them. Therefore it is not just to give women direct power of deciding questions of parliamentary policy, of war, of foreign or colonial affairs, of commerce and finance equal to that possessed by men. We hold that they already possess an influence on political matters fully proportioned to the possible share of women in the political activities of England.

At the same time we are heartily in sympathy with all the recent efforts which have been made to give women a more important part in these affairs of the community where their interests and those of men are equally concerned; where it is possible for them not only to decide but to help in carrying out, and where, therefore, judgment is weighted by a true responsibility, and can be guided by experience and the practical information which comes from it. As voters for or members of school boards, boards of guardians, and

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other important public bodies, women have now opportunities for public usefulness which must promote the growth of character, and at the same time strengthen among them the social sense and habit. All these changes of recent years, together with the great improvements in women's education which have accompanied them, we cordially welcome. But we believe that the emancipating process has now reached the limits fixed by the physical constitution of women, and by the fundamental difference which must always exist between their main occupations and those of men. The care of the sick and the insane; the treatment of the poor; education of children: in all these matters, and others besides, they have made good their claim to larger and more extended powers. We rejoice in it. But when it comes to questions of foreign or colonial policy, or of grave constitutional change, then we maintain that the necessary and normal experience of women speaking generally and in the mass does not and can never provide them with such materials for sound judgment as are opened to men.

To sum up: we should give them their full share in the state of social effort and social mechanism; we look for their increasing activity in that higher state which rests on thought, conscience, and moral influence; but we protest against their admission to direct power in that state which does rest on open force—the state in its administrative, military, and financial aspects—where the physical capacity, the accumulated experience and inherited training of men ought to prevail without the harassing interference of these who, though they may be partner with men in debate, can in these matters never be partners with them in action.

2. If we turn from the right of women to the suffrage—a right which on the grounds just given we deny—to the effect which the possession of the suffrage may be expected to have on their character and position and on family life, we find ourselves no less in doubt. It is urged that the influence of women in politics would tell upon the side of morality. We believe that it does so tell already, and will do so with greater force as women by improved education fit themselves to exert it more widely and efficiently. But it may be asked, on what does this moral influence depend? We believe that it depends largely on qualities which the natural position and functions of women as they are at present tend to develop, and which might be seriously impaired by their admission to the turmoil of active political life. These qualities are, above all, sympathy and disinterestedness. Any disposition of things which threatens to lessen the national reserve of such forces as these we hold to be a misfortune. It is notoriously difficult to maintain them in the presence of party necessities and in the heat of party struggle. Were women commonly admitted to this struggle, their natural eagerness and quickness of temper would probably make them hotter partisans than men. As their political relations stand at present, they tend to check in them the disposition to partisanship, and to strengthen in them the qualities of sympathy and disinterestedness. We believe that their admission to the suffrage would precisely reverse this condition of things, and that the whole nation would suffer in consequence. For whatever may be the duty and privilege of parliamentary vote for men, we hold that citizenship is not dependent upon or identical with the possession of the suffrage. Citizenship lies in the participation of each

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individual in effort for the good of the community. And we believe that women will be more valuable citizens, will contribute more precious elements to the national life without the vote than with it. The quickness to feel, the willingness to lay aside prudential considerations in a right cause, which are amongst the peculiar excellencies of women, are in their right place when they are used to influence the more highly trained and developed judgment of men—but if these quickness of feelings could be immediately directly translated into public action, in matters of vast and complicated political import, this risks of politics would be enormously increased, and what is now a national blessing might be easily become a national calamity—on the one hand, then, we believe that to admit women to the ordinary machinery of political life would inflame the partisanship and increase the evils, already so conspicuous, of that life, would end to blunt the special moral qualities of women, and so to lessen the national reserves of moral force; and, on the other hand, we dread the political and practical effect which, in our belief, would follow on such transformation as is proposed, of an influence which is now beneficent largely because it is indirect and gradual.

3. Proposals for the extension of the suffrage to women are beset with grave practical difficulties. If votes be given to unmarried women on the same terms as they are given to men, large numbers of women leading immoral lives will be enfranchised on the one hand, while married women, who, as a rule, have passed through more of the practical experiences of life than the unmarried, will be excluded. To remedy part of this difficulty it is proposed by a large section of those who advocate the extension of the suffrage to women, to admit married women with requisite property qualification. This proposal—an obviously just one if the suffrage is to be extended to women at all—introduces changes in family life, and in the English conception of the household, of enormous importance, which have never been adequately considered. We are practically invited to embark upon them because a few women of property possessing already all the influence which belongs to property, and a full share of that public protection and safety which is the fruit of taxation, feel themselves aggrieved by the denial of the parliamentary vote. The grievance put forward seems to us wholly disproportioned to the claim based upon it.
4. A survey of the manner in which this proposal has won its way into practical politics leads us to think that it is by no means ripe for legislative solution. A social change of momentous gravity has been proposed; the mass of those immediately concerned in it are notoriously indifferent; there has been no serious and general demand for it, as always the case if a grievance is real and reform necessary; the amount of information collected is quite inadequate to the importance of the issue; and the public has gone through no sufficient discipline of discussion on the subject. Meanwhile pledges to support female suffrage have been hastily given in the hopes of strengthening existing political parties by the female vote. No doubt there are many conscious supporters of female suffrage amongst members of parliament; but it is hard of a temporary nature. It is, we submit, altogether unworthy of the intrinsic gravity of the question that should be determined by reference to the passing needs of party organization. Meanwhile we

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remember that great electoral changes have been carried out during recent years. Masses of new electors have been added to the constituency. These new elements have still to be assimilated ; these new electors have still to be trained to take their part in the national work; and while such changes are still fresh, and their issues uncertain, we protest against any further alteration which involves a new principle of extraordinary range and significance, closely connected with the complicated problems of sex and family life.

5. It is often urged that certain injustices of the law towards women would be easily and quickly remedied were the political power of the vote conceded to them; and that there are many wants , especially among working women, which are now neglected, but which the suffrage will enable them to press on public attention. We reply that during the past half century all the principle injustices of the law towards women have been amended by means of the existing constitutional machinery; and with regard to those that remain; we see no signs of any unwillingness on the part of parliament to deal with them. On the contrary, we remark a growing sensitiveness to the claims of women, and the rise of a new spirit of justice and sympathy among men, answering to those advances made by women on education, and the best kind of social influence, which we had already noticed and welcomed. With regard to the business or trade interests of women; here again, we think it safer and wiser to trust to organization and self-help on their own part, and to the growth of a better public opinion among the men workers, than to the exercise of a political right which may easily bring women into direct and hasty conflict with men.

In conclusion: nothing can be further from our minds than to seek to depreciate the position or importance of women. It is because we are keenly alive to the enormous value of their special contribution to the community, that we oppose what seems to us likely to endanger that contribution. We are convinced that the pursuit of a mere outward equality with men is for women not only vain but demoralising. It leads to a total misconception of woman's true dignity and special mission. It tends to personal struggle and rivalry, where the only effort of both the great divisions of the human family should be to contribute the characteristic labour and the best gifts of each to the common stock.

Source: Carolyn Christensen Nelson, *Literature of the Women's Suffrage Campaign in England* (Broadview Press,2004),25-30

1937. 2 1 (3)

Appendix Three
Against Woman Suffrage

No. 57.

AGAINST WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

WOMEN do not want Votes. The people of Great Britain have been saying this for a long time, but Suffragists have been trying to persuade Parliament to give women votes against the wishes of the electors.

The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage has voiced the opposition to votes for women and since 1911 all Women Suffrage Bills before the House of Commons have been defeated.

Now the Suffragists think that by holding a sufficient number of meetings they will be able to claim that the country supports them.

The country does not want votes given to women. Therefore, whenever the Suffragists hold a meeting, let them realise this and do not let them pretend that they have met with any real support.

Remember, Votes will not raise wages. The Suffragists promise many things, but Votes will not enable them to carry out a single thing they promise. A seat in Parliament must follow the Vote. Adult Suffrage, which is the only possible outcome of women being given votes, would mean the handing over of the Government of the British Empire to

11,500,000 women and 10,000,000 men.

Is this what we want done ?

And what of the suffrage movement? All that it has led to so far is militancy, the destruction of property and the general annoyance of the whole country.

Join the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage.
Headquarters: 515, Caxton House, Westminster, London.
270 Branches in England and Wales.

Read the "ANTI-SUFFRAGE REVIEW." 1d. monthly.

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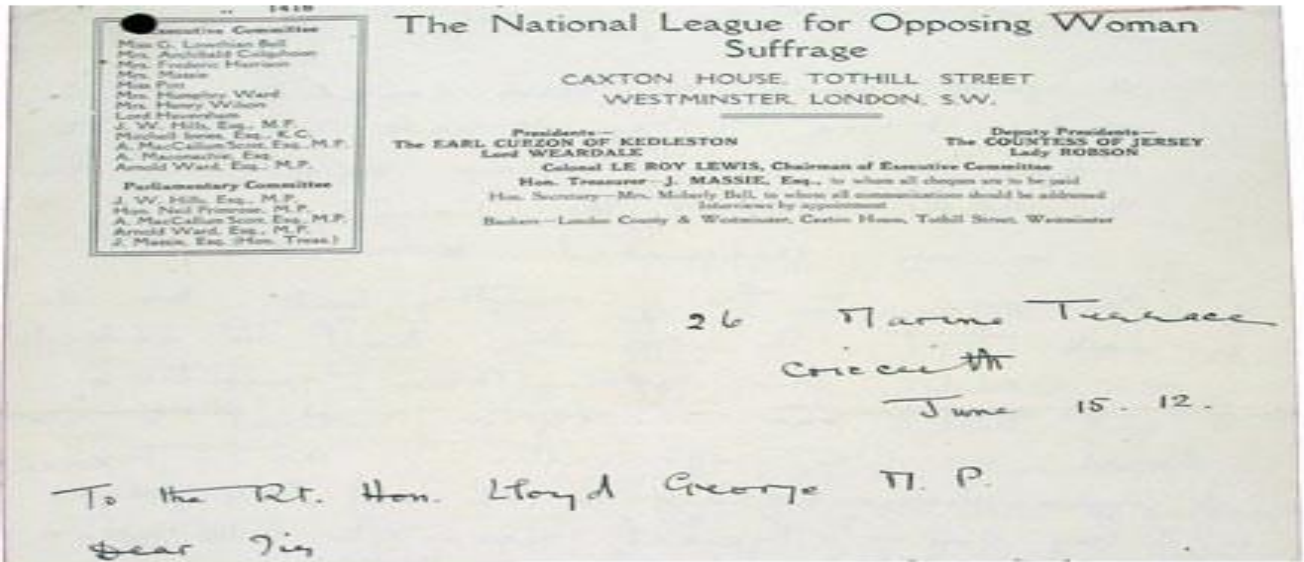
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Source : A Guide Cause: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Scotland , Arguments for and Against Women's Suffrage (National Library of Scotland)

<http://sfpl.org/pdf/libraries/main/sfhistory/suffrageagainst.pdf> (April28,2016 at 16:35)

Appendix Four

Letters to Parliamentarians



as a typical

woman householder & rate and tax payer I beg you - a typical man - to take upon your stronger shoulders the burden of responsibility for the safety of the Empire, the Army - Navy, Trade, Shipping, Mining, Railways etc. I am too thankful to pay my taxes in return for your protection, if only you will leave me to look after my home and my child. It is true that I am in the unfortunate position of having to earn a livelihood as well

Transcript

To the Rt Hon Lloyd George MP

Dear Sir

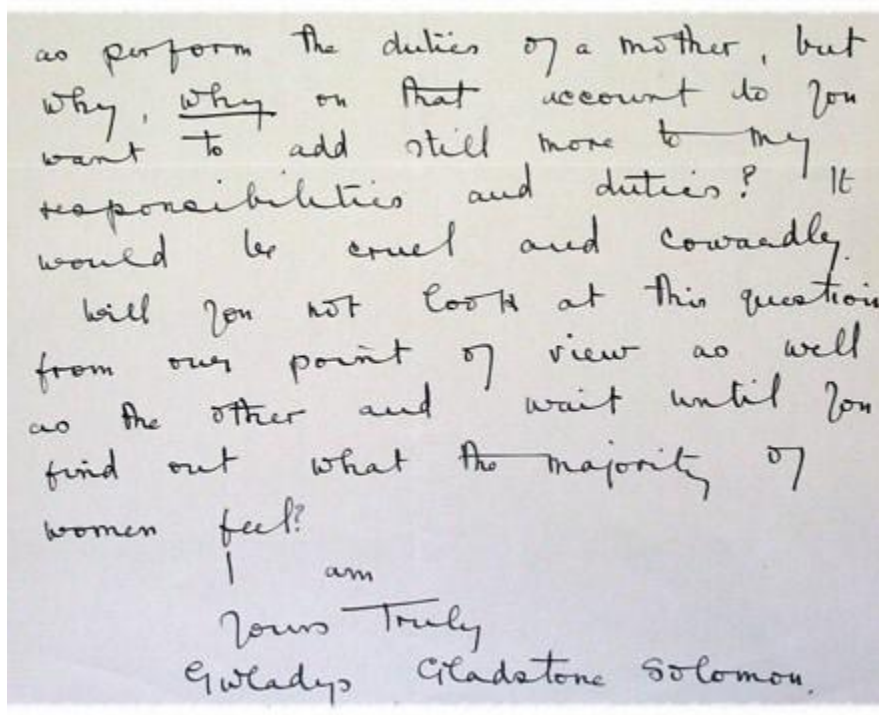
..... As a typical women householder and rate and tax payer I beg you - a typical man - to take upon your stronger shoulders the burden of responsibility for the safety of the Empire, the Army, Navy, Trade, Shipping, Mining, Railways etc. I am too thankful to pay my taxes in return for your protection, if only you will leave me to look after my home and my child. It is true that I am in the unfortunate position of having to earn a livelihood as well...

Source: A National Archives: The National Education Service Britain 1906-1918

Gallery Three: Early 1900's Women's Suffrage

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/britain1906to1918/pdf/gallery-3-suffrage-case-studies.pdf> (January30,2016 at 14:24).

Appendix Four

A photograph of a handwritten letter on aged paper. The text is written in cursive and reads: "as perform the duties of a mother, but why, why on that account do you want to add still more to my responsibilities and duties? It would be cruel and cowardly. Will you not look at this question from our point of view as well as the other and wait until you find out what the majority of women feel? I am Yours Truly Gwladys Gladstone Solomon." The signature "Gwladys Gladstone Solomon" is written in a larger, more formal cursive script at the bottom.

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I am
Yours Truly
Gwladys Gladstone Solomon.

Transcript

as perform the duties of a mother, but why, why on that account do you want to add still more to my responsibilities and duties? It would be cruel and cowardly.

Will you not look at this question from our point of view as well as the other and wait until you find out what the majority of women feel.

I am

Yours Truly

Gwladys Gladstone Solomon

Source: A National Archives: The National Education Service Britain 1906-1918

Gallery Three: Early 1900's Women's Suffrage

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/britain1906to1918/pdf/gallery-3-suffrage-case-studies.pdf>(January30,2016at14:24)

الملخص

انعكست معارضة الإناث لحركة الاقتراع بإنجلترا من خلال الحملة المناهضة له التي شرع فيها العام 1889 وبدأت على نحو منظم سنة 1908. وقاد الحركة المناهضة لاقتراع الإناث هؤلاء النسوة المناهضات (antis) اللاتي كافحن لمنع اكتساب حق الانتخاب البرلماني للنساء لأنهن اغتظن من المساواة السياسية بين الرجل والمرأة. وتمثل المبدأ الأساس لحركتهم في أنّ المشاركة السياسية ليست بالشأن الأنثوي، لتبقى السياسة مجالاً ذكورياً. وقد أثبتت المعارضة النسوية فشلها بسبب أنّ النساء اللواتي بلغن سن الثلاثين فما فوق مُنح لمن، جزئياً، حق الاقتراع في عام 1918 من خلال سن قانون تمثيل الأشخاص.

الكلمات المفتاح: المعارضة - الانتخاب البرلماني - نساء - نساء مناهضات (Antis) - فشل.

Résumé

L'opposition féminine au mouvement de suffrage en Angleterre se reflète par la campagne anti-suffrage qui est née en 1889 et commença d'une manière organisée en 1908. Le mouvement féminin anti-suffrage a été dirigé par ces femmes antis qui ont essayé d'empêcher l'acquisition du vote parlementaire pour les femmes parce qu'elles leur déplurent l'égalité politique entre hommes et femmes. Le principe fondamental de leur mouvement était que la participation politique n'est pas une préoccupation féminine. La politique restait un domaine masculin. L'opposition féminine s'est révélé un échec car les femmes qui atteignaient l'âge de trente ans et plus ont été partiellement affranchies en 1918 grâce à la promulgation de la loi sur la représentation des personnes.

Mots-clés: opposition, vote parlementaire, femmes, femmes antis, échec.

Summary

Female opposition to the suffrage movement in England was reflected through the anti-suffrage campaign which began in 1889 and started in an organized way in 1908. The female anti-suffrage movement was led by those women antis who strove to prevent the acquisition of the parliamentary vote for women because they resented the political equality between men and women. The main principle of their movement was that political participation was not a female concern. Politics remained a male domain. The female opposition proved to be a failure because women who reached the age of thirty and above were partially enfranchised in 1918 through the enactment of the People Representation Act.

Keywords: opposition, parliamentary vote, women, women antis, failure.