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Votes for Women : For and Against.

FOR. By A WOMAN.



I HAVE been asked to state as good a case as possible for the extension of the "last" franchise to women. The "last" or Parliamentary suffrage is the most important of all, and gives reality to all.

All the reasons which made working-men demand representation are making women demand it. The very word representation suggests that those who are not represented will be left out of account. It was so with the working-classes in the days when Old Sarum sent two representatives to Parliament, and Birmingham and Manchester none. Women demand the vote as citizens. They bear their share of the burdens of citizenship. They are not exempted from these burdens on the score that they are women. Only when they ask for a voice as to what shall be done with their money are they reminded that they are women.

There is one argument, however, which a Democrat ought to blush even to hint at—that women will vote on the wrong side. This is what the Lord of the Manor says about his tenants when he turns them out for voting Liberal. The idea that opinions give a right to a vote, or take that right away, is the death of representative government, the death of liberty. It is a very old doctrine, and wherever accepted it has led straight from reform to despotism. Packed juries, packed councils, packed parliaments, are packed to make sure that they will vote on the right side.

As for women wanting the vote, let Hyde Park on July 26 answer.

A great deal of horror has been expressed at the truly deplorable outrages committed by the Militants. But in the past a persistent refusal to extend the suffrage has invariably led to disorders—disorders infinitely worse than anything that we have seen. When constitutional means have been long tried in vain, when we have been tauntingly invited to do something to show that we are in earnest, and when women are exasperated by a *mal a propos* suggestion that though their demand for the vote cannot be granted,