

"VOTES FOR WOMEN."

Sir,—I find there seems some misunderstanding of the present agitation for "Votes for Women." Such misunderstanding, the brevity of this battle-cry and of sundry "resolutions" may not tend readily to remove.

Therefore, may I be permitted to say through your columns that I am in the "Women's Social and Political Union" because, according to the words of its constitution, it is an endeavour to secure for women the Parliamentary vote "as it is or may be granted to men"—i.e., a plain demand that Government shall not leave unenfranchised certain of its citizens on the score of sex only.

This is quite apart from all "sentiment," all "hysteria," all mere party politics, and all those vexed questions of "rights" and "wrongs, many of which can never be reached by any legislation. No other matters—past, present, or future—should be allowed to obscure the sheer injustice of the existing position of certain unenfranchised citizens—i.e., tax-paying women.

The so-called "opposition" to the present Liberal candidate for the constituency of South Aberdeen is but an inevitable protest against strengthening the hands of a powerful Government, which, while professing the creed of "No taxation without representation," persists in refusing to remove the present disability of tax-paying citizens.

To me, the position of all Women's Liberal Associations, Primrose Lodges, Labourist Committees, and Socialist "Comrades," seems, under existing conditions, to resemble that of poor stray cats whom a heartless householder lures indoors to catch his mice and as soon as this business is done, kicks out to shift for themselves as they may.

I may remark that the older "Aberdeen Women's Suffrage Society" has seemed to many, even of its own members—of whom I have never been one—to be singularly effete in its operations. The society can easily defend itself from this charge by giving a detailed record with names and dates—of any active protest or propaganda in which it has engaged, say, during the last seven years. Its executive, too, is so entangled with that of the Aberdeen Women's Liberal Association as to limit its movements, practically, to women of one shade of political opinion.

Mrs Fawcett's name has been rather unnecessarily imported into this matter. This gives me opportunity to say that she and the majority of the actively-interested suffragists of the older school have openly signified their perfect accord with the constitution of the newer "Women's Social and Political Union" in its effort (stated in its own words) "to secure for women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men."—I am, etc.,

ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

9th February, '907.

[Mrs Mayo's letter contained other matter, but as that matter referred to a letter appearing elsewhere, we must be excused not giving it.—Ed., "A.D.J."]