

# FORCIBLE FEEDING DENOUNCED.

## SIR V. HORSLEY PROTESTS ON CASTLE STREET.

Outspoken views on the question of women's suffrage, particularly with reference to forcible feeding, were heard at a largely-attended open-air meeting held in Castle Street, Aberdeen, last night, which was addressed by Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.S., the well-known surgeon, and also by Lady Horsley. The meeting was under the auspices of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and was described as non-militant and non-party. Professor Trail and Professor J. Arthur Thomson were on the platform.

Professor Trail introduced Sir Victor Horsley, and stated that he (Sir Victor) supported what was for the good of the country and of the people.

### JUSTICE FOR WOMEN.

Sir Victor, who was received with applause, at the outset read the following resolution:—

That inasmuch as the enfranchisement of women is a measure of justice and of civilisation long overdue, this open public meeting of citizens of Aberdeen calls upon the Government to administer justice equally to women as to men, and to redeem the unfulfilled pledges of the Prime Minister by introducing into the House of Commons a Franchise Bill which shall include the provision of women's suffrage.

He said that that was what they wanted them to pass that night. If it was important for everyone that he or she should be a free man or woman, was it not infinitely more important that every worker in the country should have a vote? No politician had any right to talk about the voice of the people until every man and woman could express their voice, if they wished, at the ballot-box.

Proceeding, Sir Victor stated that the most interesting point in connection with the wage-question at the present time was the stopping of the sweating system. What was going to stop sweating? The regulation of the minimum wage. No Government ever took up the subject of the minimum wage on its own, but the present Government had taken the matter up on the movement of the miners, so that the whole question of wages did, as a matter of fact, depend on the vote, and always would do so. Lord Curzon had said that giving the vote to women would not add a halfpenny to their wages. He (the speaker) said that Lord Curzon was wrong in making that statement. He was not concerned with that, however, but with a much more serious assertion made by Lord Curzon. It was to the effect that "even if having the vote would increase their wages, that would be the strongest reason for preventing them from getting it." It was that feeling which they sought to destroy by a meeting such as that, and it was that feeling which they hoped would be annihilated by their voting for their resolution that night. (Applause.)

### OUTRAGE OF FORCIBLE FEEDING.

With regard to the question of forcible feeding Sir Victor said that it was an outrage on the prisoner, and it was not therefore surprising that, if the Government began by outrage, the prisoners when released would try to revenge themselves by more outrage. Most people thought that the Cat and Mouse Act was instituted with humane motives, and in the House of Commons Mr M'Kenna claimed that the Act would do three things. In the first place it would prevent the necessity of forcible feeding, in the second, it would compel the prisoners to serve their sentences; and, in the third, it would stop outrages. He could confidently assert that it had done none of these things. The only alternative was to give women the vote. Forcible feeding was originally called medical treatment by Mr M'Kenna. For three years Mr M'Kenna had called it medical treatment, but two years ago he had given it up because those members of Parliament who were connected with the medical profession had shown, by hard work and by a report which they published in the medical journals, the horrors inflicted on the prisoners. One day in the House of Commons Mr M'Kenna had said that forcible feeding was a most objectionable practice. They could not have it both ways, and to say that it was medical treatment was an insult to his profession. (Applause.) They objected to forcible feeding on medical grounds and on grounds of humanity, but above all because it was a form of coercion which was cruel and unjust. (Applause.)

In conclusion, Sir Victor spoke of the unequal treatment which was meted out to women postal employees and civil servants as compared with their male colleagues. All that the women asked was an equally fair start in the world and equally fair treatment with the men, and he asked them to signify their approval of that by voting for the resolution. (Loud applause.)

The resolution was then put to the meeting, and enthusiastically carried.

Lady Horsley afterwards addressed the gathering, giving several instances, of which she had been informed, of the unequal treatment meted out to women workers as compared with men.

### VOTES OR JUSTICE?

Questions were then invited, and a member of the audience asked Sir Victor whether it was votes or justice that he wanted.

Sir Victor—If we get women the vote we will also get justice. (Applause.)

Votes of thanks to the speakers and the chairman terminated the proceedings.