

## Truth's Contributors.

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

BY A. R. CARMAN, D. A.

No. 3.

There is one phase of this woman suffrage question that I have hitherto deemed unworthy of notice, but it crops up so persistently and constitutes the stock-in-trade of so many petty supporters of this movement, that I must crave space to expose its network of fallacy. It is the hackneyed but ever confident assertion that if a woman pays taxes, she certainly has a right to say how they should be expended. This is gratuitously juggled into a reason why tax-paying women should vote on all questions, utterly regardless of the fact that our legislators are supposedly elected for many other purposes than the disposal of the revenue. (Late developments at Ottawa, however, might seem an excuse for this mistake.) This reasoning would show that such women have a right to vote only on purely financial questions, but if the advocates of woman suffrage are pleased with such arguments they need not step for want of them. They are plentiful, as for instance:—If a woman must obey laws, surely she has a right to say how these laws shall be made; or if a woman is affected by the rays of the sun, or must be subservient to the laws of sickness and health, it is outrageous to hinder her from having a voice in deciding when "old Sol" shall shine, or as to what will be the effects of late hours and bad air and so on, *ad infinitum*. Hence it is evident that it does not always follow that because a person is affected, financially or otherwise, by certain laws that they can rightfully claim a hand in the framing of these laws.

Again, this argument rests on the supposition that the property qualification is an essential element of the franchise; while it is freely conceded by all the ripe thinkers of the age that it is merely accidental, a means to reach an end. If the possession of property or the reception of income were the *sine qua non* of voting, a certain amount of property, (or income,) would be made the unit of the franchise. That is, a man representing, say, 200 acres of land would have one vote, while he, who held the deed for 400 acres, could cast two votes; the property (or income) possessing the vote, the man being simply a highly complicated automatic machine for depositing the ballot.

But this is not the case. The unit of the franchise is the MAN, and the great Republic to the south freely recognises this principle in manhood suffrage. I do not intend to defend, nor even to discuss, this problem of manhood suffrage; it has its advantages and it has its faults, and it is solely to avoid one of these faults that we tack the property qualification as a test on to our system of franchise. We wish to escape the "frame vote," as it is called, an uninterested, irresponsible and purchasable element; and hence, while admitting the principle of manhood suffrage by making man the unit, we effectively shut out this obnoxious influence by requiring a qualification that they do not possess. Other means might have been used. To demand a certain length of residence would have been equally effectual; making a certain status of education the standard would have barred, not only this vote, but a proportioned ignorant vote with which we are now cursed; and these precautions to purify the ballot would not have constituted the vital essence of the franchise, but simply outside helps to render its

operations more effective. And so it is with the qualification of property. It is the man that votes; and in so doing he exercises his legitimate, God-given privilege.

Women, in some instances, because, without their natural protectors, may possess an accidental, artificial qualification of the franchise, but they lack the essential element, the Divinely-ordained prerogative of manhood. As well might a woman claim the suffrage because, forsooth, she is not insane nor an alien, or on the ground that she escapes any of the barriers that are raised to protect the dignity or purity of the franchise.

I fancy that I have earned the right to say a few words anent the noble work of our women through the centuries without expelling myself to a charge of flattery. History is replete with their achievements, and when we look for their lightest work it is not to Semiramis and Joan of Arc but rather to Esther and Florence Nightingale; their duty lies nearer the hospital than the front of the charge, rather at the hearthstone than on the hustings. From their homesthey nerved Roman valor and, defying the barbarism of the middle ages, made a beautiful chivalry possible. How many of the foremost men of our planet, when asked the secret of their success, have crystallized it all in the word "mother!" Ah!

"The hand that rocks the cradle moves the world." And if I were to write a panegyric upon "woman, her work and her influence," I should not seek my ideal on the lecture platform or among the corridors of the Capitols, but in the humble homes of the people where Martha Washingtons are rearing deliverers of the future, and Susannah Weyleys are training minds to mould the masses. There is true devotion, true heroism, true nobility, true woman.

In closing, I venture to state that women are truer to their sphere than many suppose. As a class they do not desire the franchise, and would repudiate it as a semi-insult if it were offered. They recognise that God has given them a grand work to do, equal if not superior to that allotted man; and they are in no haste to barter their womanliness, their sceptre of love, for a chance to jostle with man as he sweats amid the dust of his sordid struggle for pelf and position.

PRESBURY, ONT.

## PASTORAL ENGLAND.

BY E. R. BIGGAR, MONTREAL.

I am now revelling in the pure and bracing air of these glorious Surrey hills, in whose breezy, buoyant atmosphere one feels as if one could not die. The author of "The Battle of Dracula" has made the name of this upland part of the great chalk ridge familiar to every reading man in Europe, but it is surprising how few, even among travelled Englishmen, have actually seen it. I myself knew nothing whatever about it till last Thursday beyond what could be gathered from a hasty glimpse through the window of a car while flying toward the south coast in an express train. And yet there are few districts in all England which are better worth seeing, especially in this merry month, when every Spring is just ripening into glowing Summer. Thus, May-Day has not lost nearly all its observances, and the sturdy little apple-cheeked fellows who are flourishing bunches of primroses upon sticks in front of our window, and singing the old chorus of "Maypole, Maypole," with all the power of their tiny voices, are the real commemorators of the great festival which our Saxon ancestors celebrated with many a grim heathen rite amid the

gloomy forests of Merca 1,000 years ago. But what need of rites and observances for a day which is celebrated by the whole creation and hailed with joy by everything that lives and moves between earth and sky? May-day is the holiday of all nature, and well worthy of the sweet old German fancy that it was the day upon which "God rested from all His Work that He had made," and looked down in blessing upon His complete universe.

This quiet little village of ours, cradled in the lap of the Surrey Hills, would have been a perfect paradise of repose to the ill-fated heroine of that famous epitaph recently quoted so effectively by Sir John Lubbock, beneath the grotesque humor of which lurks a homely pathos that any one who knows what it is to be habitually overworked will fully appreciate:

"Here lies a poor woman who always was tired. For she lived in a world where too much was required; 'Don't weep for me, friends,' (thus she said,) 'for I'm going To where there's no reading, nor writing, nor sewing; Do not weep for me, friends, for when life's thread shall sever, I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever.'"

The distant hills that rise blue and shadowy along the northern sky seem to shut out the noisy, bustling world of busy life from this "enchanted ground," in which the stanchest of Bunyan's pilgrims might have sat down to rest without shame to his manhood. Beyond these hills, barely 20 miles away, the great whirlpool of London roars and eddies in its eternal unrest. Down here in this "happy valley" of ours the quiet little English villages lie slumbering in the cloudless sunshine amid a stillness as deep and reposeful as that of the first moment of creation, when the peace of God that passeth all understanding still brooded over a new-born world which had never known sin or sorrow.

These charming little nooks are certainly a vast improvement upon the filthy, tumbledown, poverty-stricken hamlets which we saw not long ago at the opposite corner of Europe, where the hot, dusty uplands of Bulgaria slope westward from the Black Sea. As a rule the ordinary Slav village of the Balkan Peninsula has all the squalid misery of the East without any of the picturesque. When you enter one of them—provided you are not eaten up alive by a pack of yelling dogs before you can do so at all—you find yourself amid a group of wretched, crumbling hovels, built of mud and thatched with rotting reeds, at which (as a soldier of the Irish Brigade justly remarked on seeing them in 1854,) any respectable man would turn up his snout. Here, as in Switzerland, large stones are piled upon the roof to prevent the wind from tearing it badly away, which would certainly be no difficult matter. Above the crazy, half-decayed rail fence that surrounds every hut rises a nondescript building very much like a Noah's ark on stilts, in which the sallow, beetle-browed, gray-frooked master of the house stores the little hoard of wheat or Indian corn which he keeps his family alive during the long, dreary months of the cruel Winter. Add to these "properties" a wooden plow that might have served Cain in his first attempt at tilling the ground, a few other tools equally primitive, a rude ladder, a clumsy cart without springs, a pile of split logs, two or three dismal turkeys and a few starving chickens looking in vain for something to eat—and you have a fair idea of the "Bolgar" at home.

Little better as regards comfort, and

infinitely more picturesque in outward appearance, are the quaint little fortress-like Persian villages which stud the vast plain that stretches southeastward from the great mountain wall of the Caucasus to the western shore of the Caspian Sea. One glance at these miniature strongholds tells you that you are in a region where war in its most pitiless form is man's natural state of existence, and where for centuries past the only government has been that of the strongest arm and the sharpest sword. The tiny gardens attached to the houses are shut in by massive inclosures of stone or baked clay seven or eight feet high. The houses themselves, with their thick walls, flat roofs, and two or three small, narrow, loophole-like windows, are suggestive of casemated batteries rather than domestic habitations. The deep, dusty, crooked street that winds between these toy forts is much more like the moat of a castle than an ordinary thoroughfare. The lean, swarthy, wolfish faces that peer out at you from the low dark doorways with the half-cunning, half ferocious look of prowling wild beasts in those keen black eyes that watch you so closely (doubtless to see whether you intend robbing others or are likely to be worth robbing yourself) carry you back at the first place through many a dark and bloody age to those wild days when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," and wrong in those of all his neighbors.

Far different are our present quarters in the "chalk region" of merry England. The doorways of Hollowood Village are filled with ruddy, flaxen-haired children, the seat of swooning robbers bristling with knives and pistols. The doors open with a simple thumb-latch, and any one who covets his neighbor's goods has only to go and borrow them, on condition of lending his own in turn when required. The dogs, instead of yelling and biting like their half-starved Eastern brethren, wag their tails drowsily, while lying outstretched on the warm smooth turf, as though quite disposed to be friendly if it were not too much of an exertion. The cows look your hand in place of trying to horn you, and the tiny black pigs come running to meet you with affectionate though somewhat irreverent familiarity.

The inhabitants of this quaint little spot are as primitive as itself. Floods, fires, doctors, lawyers, newspapers, epidemics, and other public calamities are almost unknown among them. Even those troublesome social (though certainly not scoldable, doctrines which (like famine, pestilence) and one of the newspapers) have "the largest circulation in the world" fail to smother the innocent eggs and bacon of these worthy oldhoppers, who are not civilized enough to be dishonest and not educated enough to be discontented. The one daily mail which connects us with the outer world is engineered by a queer, little, bright-eyed, fatty-haired old man in a brown coat, who looks as if he had been a squirrel in a prelate's cage of his existence, and who, when you put yourself into his hands, is sure to get you for postage stamps, letters, looking-glasses, horn-rimmed spectacles, forgotten books, and a host of other things.

But what is the use of all this? It is all so good, so comfortable, so pleasant, so full of life and joy, that one is sure to be sure of it.