

a). Inheritance.—The laws of intestacy are unequal. The widower is better placed towards the estate of his deceased wife than the widow to that of her deceased husband. The father is preferred to the mother, and so on right through.

b). Marriage Laws.—Though the home and children are supposed to be the special province of the mother, her wishes are (legally) subordinate at every point to those of her husband. He can choose (against her) the place and nature of the home, and how it shall be kept, the children are his children, and can be brought up as he pleases. Property built up by their joint labour (as, for instance, a shop), normally belongs to him alone; he can sell it or leave it by will away from his wife. Though she devote her whole time to looking after his home and his children, she can claim neither wages nor any share of his property, and in many countries cannot even enforce her own personal maintenance.

c). Employment and wages.—The nation excludes women from many lucrative employments, and where it employs men and women, pays women considerably less than men for identical work. This inequality, which has an important bearing upon the terribly low wages which women earn in all occupations, is generally one of the first things to be remedied in a country when women are enfranchised.

d). White Slavery.—No adequate protection is provided to women against the horrors of white slavery; and where the promoters of this vile traffic are caught red-handed they cannot be punished as severely as men or women guilty of trifling offences against property.

Finally, I believe in woman suffrage because I want each nation to have the benefit of women's point of view and the driving force of women's votes to

rectify many abuses and to bring about many reforms which are needed in the interests of men, women and children alike.

Women, it has been truly said, excel in the care of all living things. How foolish it is, then, to exclude them from any share of the management of the nation! It is no wonder that the last century, which witnessed such a romance of progress in machinery and material development, saw so little progress in the care of human life. Take a single instance: why is there such an appalling waste of child life? In England 110 out of every 1000 babies die in the first year of their life; that is, something like 100,000 babies die every year, nearly all from preventable causes. In Canada (according to the latest figures which I have) the proportion is still higher, being no less than 132 out of every 1,000, or more than one in eight. Compare these figures with those of Australia, where women have the franchise. In Australia the infant mortality is below 70 in every 1000, or only a little over half what it is in Canada. Nor is this a mere coincidence, for before women got the vote in Australia the infant mortality rate there was among the highest in the civilized world; but the enfranchised women at once took the matter up, they got pure food laws and pure milk laws passed, and they got other regulations enforced with such success that the mortality was reduced to its present figure.

In face of facts such as these, can men afford to do without women in the control of their national life?

PETITION WORK.

A very important meeting of the Victoria Branch of the Political Equality League was held at the office of the society on the 2nd inst., to plan for the circulation of a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly asking that the full suffrage be extended to the