

Irish would vote for the Government Bill to a man, because if the Government were defeated they would lose Home Rule. The Labour party would also support the Bill for the sake of labor legislation promised by the Government. The Welsh members would support it because on its existence depends their hope of Welsh Disestablishment. Mr. Asquith knows perfectly well that a Government measure including Woman Suffrage would pass, and that is his reason for refusing to make Woman Suffrage a government measure."

"Why do you oppose Mr. Lloyd George? Is he not a great democrat and friend of your cause?"

"We are opposing Mr. Lloyd George because we consider him an even more dangerous enemy than Mr. Asquith. Mr. Asquith is an open foe. Mr. Lloyd George has again and again betrayed our movement under the guise of friendship."

"That is a very grave charge to bring against any man. Can you give me a definite example of his tactics?"

"Yes. I must explain that the demand of suffragists has always been that the Government should be responsible for introducing a measure. But in 1910 suffragists were approached by politicians who wished to see the question settled. A Parliamentary Conciliation Committee was formed in the House of Commons, drawn from the suffragists of every party in the House. These men were of the opinion that the Bill could be dealt with as a private member's bill, on a non-party basis, in view of the fact that there were so many supporters of political equality among the Conservative Party. I must explain that the male franchise is built upon a household qualification. Every man who pays rent for a house, however small, or even for a room, is a tax-and rate-payer and therefore a voter. There are between seven and eight million men on the parliamentary register at the present time. It was

found that to admit women on an equal footing, that is to enfranchise all women householders, would add a million women to the register. This was considered an extension of the franchise sufficiently moderate not to alarm Conservative support, while it was entirely democratic and carried out the principle of political equality, in a way that satisfied the Liberals and even the extreme wing of the Labour Party. All suffragists, including the Militant, were prepared to give this solution a fair trial, and a truce was proclaimed to militant tactics. This Bill was introduced in 1910, and secured an enormous majority, although Lloyd George spoke against it and used all his influence to defeat it. It was blocked by the Government of which Mr. Lloyd George is so influential a member. The following year it was brought in again, and secured the overwhelming majority of 167, a greater majority than any attained by the Government for any item of legislation. It was again blocked by the Government, but the position had become embarrassing to them, and facilities were promised for 1912. The Government saw that the non-party measure was going to succeed. As a desperate move they brought in a Manhood Suffrage Bill, for which there has been no demand whatever in the country. Mr. Lloyd George then said that he had "torpedoed" the non-party bill."

"Can you explain exactly how this works out?"

"To put it briefly, he has destroyed the possibility of the question being carried on a non-party basis and yet refuses to treat Woman Suffrage as a Government party question, so that between the two stools the movement may fall to the ground."

"But what becomes of that great majority of 167?"

"That majority was made up of Conservative suffragists as well as Coalition suffragists. A Woman Suffrage Amendment to the Manhood Suffrage