

Keir Hardie, who was speaking for the fifty other nominees of the Labour Party, and only appeared in Merthyr, well-nigh voiceless, the day before the poll. She rejoiced with him in the victory of twenty-nine Labour candidates; Labour was a power to be reckoned with at last!

I was back again at College. Annie Kenney joined me at Park Cottage with two pounds, advanced by Mrs. Pankhurst, "to rouse London." We organized for the opening of Parliament, on February 16th, 1906, a procession of women and a meeting in the Caxton Hall. Keir Hardie found a donor to pay the cost. Alfieri, of the then new *Daily Mirror*, W. T. Stead, and others, kept the movement in the news; already the *Daily Mail* had christened us "Suffragettes."

On the day of the meeting, four hundred poor women from East London marched to the Caxton Hall. Already it was thronged; Suffragists, nobodies, somebodies, were there to see those extraordinary Suffragettes. Emmeline Pankhurst stood before them, appealing, compelling, wearing the dignity of a mother who has known great sorrow; her habitual elegance of dress and manner told with them as women. With scarcely a gesture, phrases of simple eloquence sprang to her lips, her eye flashed lightnings. Her wonderful voice, poignant and mournful, and shot with passion, rose with a new thrill. Deeply she stirred them; many silently pledged their faith to her for life. News came that the King's Speech was read, that it promised to democratize the men's franchise by abolishing plural voting; but to women offered nothing. She swept them out, and on with her to the Commons. The

rain was pouring in torrents; that was the least of it; they were following her into the militant movement, and knew not whither the step might lead. For the first time in memory the great doors of the Strangers' Entrance to Parliament were closed during the session of the House. The Commons police were on guard to prevent the admittance of any woman. The militant and her following stood at the door defiant; Parliament buzzed with interest. At last the Speaker agreed to permit relays of twelve women within the Lobby. Hour after hour, in the rain, they waited their turn to interview legislators who promised nothing! The experience stoked the spark of militant impatience she had lit.

Within the citadel, Keir Hardie, replying to the King's Speech, as leader of the new Labour Party, demanded the removal of the "scandal and disgrace" of treating women no better than the criminal and insane. Had the Party been ready to second him vigorously in that demand, there might have been a different history to write, for the Liberals were then keenly susceptible to the competition of the rising Labour movement. In this, as in much else, however, his colleagues failed to support him. They had fought the election on a programme of immediate demands, for which their constituents expected them to fight. Votes for Women had scarcely figured in that programme. It is true the Trade Union Congress had been pledged to Adult Suffrage for both sexes since its formation, and specifically to Votes for Women since 1884, but the Suffrage had not been made a vital question. Just before Parliament assembled, a resolution to support Votes for Women on the existing terms