

to do so would be "folly, weakness and wickedness," a betrayal of her "sacred trust."

The Government resolved to stop these rebels from escaping their sentences by the hunger-strike. In September it became known that the Birmingham prisoners were being forcibly fed by the stomach-tube. Eminent medical authorities denounced the practice as injurious to health, dangerous to sanity and life itself. Attacked by Keir Hardie, the Under-Secretary to the Home Office defended the expedient as "hospital treatment." Hardie retorted: "A horrible, beastly outrage!" Members on the Government benches roared with laughter. He wrote to the *Times*.

"Had I not heard it I could not have believed that a body of gentlemen would have found reason for mirth and applause."

Henry Nevinston and H. N. Brailsford resigned their positions as leader writers on the *Daily News*, protesting: "We cannot denounce torture in Russia and support it in Britain, nor can we advocate democratic principles in the name of a Party which confines them to a single sex." Brailsford's wife was arrested and hunger-struck in Newcastle, but the Government preferred to release her as medically unfit for forcible feeding. Lady Constance Lytton had the same experience, but she got herself rearrested in Liverpool as "Jane Watton," a poor seamstress. She was forcibly fed till the authorities discovered her identity. The result was a series of paralytic seizures, ending in death.

CHAPTER VIII

MALICIOUS INCITEMENT

1909-1913

Mrs. PANKHURST was preparing to sail for America when her son was suddenly stricken by inflammation of the spinal cord and brought to London completely paralysed from the waist downwards. The Glasgow builder had failed at the end of 1907, and sent the lad "home"; he arrived at my lodgings penniless. His mother, unable now to cope with family affairs, sent him to study at the British Museum and the Chelsea Polytechnic, but appeals to him by all and sundry to do odd jobs for the Union were a disturbing influence. His lecturing to I.L.P. branches on the land question suggested the advisability of practical experience. She placed him on the Essex farm started by the American Henry Georgite soap boiler, Joseph Fels, as part of his Single Tax propaganda. Too delicate for heavy toil under hard conditions, the boy contracted acute inflammation of the bladder. The necessity for an examination under chloroform caused his mother to fear a fatal termination, but as soon as he began to recover, her volatile temperament swung to the opposite pole; he was sent back to the farm with this tragic result. She steelled herself to persevere with her journey, declaring that he would recover as before. Her mission must