

"torpedoed" the last private Member's Bill was archly recalled by A. J. Balfour, who had cold-shouldered the question when himself in office. So the jolly farce went on! Arthur Henderson urged the Government at least to pledge itself to responsibility for the proposed private Member's Bill when it had passed its Second Reading. Keir Hardie, with burning indignation, denounced the whole proposition as "chaff," scornfully informing Asquith that he had defended him against the charge of bad faith, but could do so no longer. The women, he declared, had no alternative save militancy.

I rushed to the House of Commons and hurled a stone at the picture of Speaker Finch, held in the chair by Members to force him to put through Sir John Elliot's resolution on tonnage and poundage in Cromwell's day. Mrs. Pankhurst declared the Government either "too ignorant of Parliamentary procedure, or too dishonest to be fit to occupy any position of responsibility."

Lloyd George was reminded of his promise to give another interview to the working women's deputation. He would only meet them privately. His offer was rejected; a pity, for it would have been interesting to hear what explanation he would have given. Mrs. Pankhurst and Christabel believed him undoubtedly a mere trickster. I thought him really disposed to help women to the vote, but reluctant to jeopardize his own position for it. I suspected that in the Cabinet struggle for influence he had been worsted by the anti-Suffragists as well as we.

Mrs. Pankhurst gave word for another march to the

House. I brought a mob of women from the East End, and was arrested with a crowd of others; we hunger-struck, but Mrs. Pankhurst paid our fines. The Annual Conference of the Labour Party met a few days later. A resolution was forced on the Executive from the floor, instructing Labour Members of Parliament to vote against any Franchise Bill which excluded women. Mrs. Fawcett received it with gratitude, but it did not mollify the W.S.P.U. A Committee of Members of Parliament, derisively termed the "Cabinette," sat in the House of Commons to devise a new Suffrage Bill. No one believed it had a chance of success; so long as the Government opposed it, and the Commons backed the Government, it must fail.