SPEECH BY MISS SCOTT
(PUBLIC MEETING AT NORTH SYDNEY, APRIL 2, 1890).

FROM THE NORTH SYDNEY.

Miss Scott said: We have been working and struggling for nearly seven years to obtain this one vote of simple justice for the women of South Wales, and we can feel at last that the day has arrived. The women of this country are (thanks to New Zealand) also beginning to look upon this question of suffrage as a business of great importance to the women of the world. When we discuss this question, and face the objections to it, that they either proceed from prejudice or from envy, I am not surprised to see men, reasonable in all else, governed in this case by a sentiment, wholly desperate of life, which can only serve as argument; and though they are constantly declaring that 'they never know what a woman will do,' now take to asserting most positively all the dread and evil things they will do when, forsooth, she has a vote. The virtue of women was proclaimed in the past by one man, and by another; and now, again, as these virtues enhanced by seclusion and slavery, else the Turkish women, who are not allowed to show their eyes in the street, is at a greater height of civilization than the freer and more independent women of the Western world. The evils in the world seem to come from men and woman (like the intellect and heart is as it were the organ of the world). And we are not surprised to see that the national housekeeping managed by men alone is not an unqualified success! Men are exceedingly clever at remedies, floating loans, and reconstructing, and the people who live with agreements, that, when we desire, a little more of that prevention which is better than care, and a little less of that political spirit which is graphically expressed in the Proverbs—'Famine and the devil take the hindmost.' We want less partyism and more patriotism; and I agree with the London and Provincial Congress in America when he declares that 'women will bring some experience to a country that is in need of it.' It is true that women will bring 'an overwhelming wealth of public spirit far greater than the men of the country now possess.' And the interest in public questions will be of inestimable value to the State. And lest you should consider this too flattering or presumptuous, I would point out that in Wyoming where women vote, there was in 1890 no public debt, but $49,000 surplus in the Treasury, and the state is not only self-supporting, and in only three insane—all men! What have been the accounts from New Zealand? They are as shining as in New South Wales, and as in Wyoming, voted for men of character; that the new Parliament is ahead of the old notwithstanding its small capacity, and yet for radical reform. These are facts, and I would ask you if the people of the world were to listen to you, how can you afford to ignore such facts? But you exclaim, Many women are so foolish, so unreasonable. Very true, and so are many men, and even saying, as Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence said, 'I doubt made them to match each other.' Do you deny a vote to wise and good men, because foolish and bad men exist? In the case of a man you would say taxation without representation is tyranny, and yet women are taxed and have neither the direct, or what is more important, the indirect, right to vote, and it is often argued that a woman can be represented by her husband, father, or brother. Passing over the objections to the idea of such relatives, I would point out to you that women differ very widely from men—even with respect to the same social classes. The subject of slavery, however kindly slaves are treated, because it is wrong in principle that the destitute of one man should be confined as the keeping of those that are rich. It is equally unjust that the rights of one sex should be granted or withheld alike at the will and pleasure of the other. Unjust principles give rise to unjust laws, and women suffer as the working classes suffered in times past from this absence of political power. Before the Reform Bill was passed in England, people were never weary of reproaching the working classes, and their interests were sufficiently guarded by noblemen and gentlemen. But the working people always said that they would rather have a hand themselves in choosing the law-makers, as and when they were tax'ed they would prefer to have a voice in disposing of their social, political, and moral welfare, and so we would prefer to have a voice in choosing those members of Parliament whose salaries we pay. In the same way, we have to suffer that is constantly brought before us, even by members of Parliament, is that women are not entitled to votes or their husbands to vote, or that they are disfranchised. One argument is that there are no women who have the mental capacity for the duties of the family. Another is that women cannot be soldiers, therefore they should not vote; but men, however small, weak, and silly are not disfranchised. The idea that the ignorance of women is another objection is advanced, which is advanced with just as much injustice in speaking of half the men in the country; and if it is an ad

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ou deny a vote to wise and good men, because foolish and bad men exist? In the