

and Mrs Cecil Hall, in Douglas. It would, indeed, increase considerably and improve still more the constituency of the Isle of Man. It would serve to counterbalance any evil resulting from extending the franchise in a downward direction to extend it thus laterally,—we might even say in an upward as well as a sideward direction. We venture to say that if this change were made in "the House of Keys Election Act, 1880," it would soon tell for good in the Tynwald Court. Steadily needed reforms in sanitary matters, in the dwellings of the poor, and in similar directions would be gently but firmly pressed to the front. All good and wholesome measures would receive greater support, while, as a consequence, measures that are not either good or wholesome would be proportionately left behind in the race—for acceptance with the public and its representatives in the Legislature.

There is much to be said in favour of a "House of Keys Election Act" such as that now virtually before the Legislature. It might well be modified in some of its provisions, and it perhaps might well go farther than it does and include the Bailor. The working of the Ballot in England is certainly not encouraging—indeed it has been a conspicuous failure, but it is just possible that the differences between the law of Man and England, between membership of the House of Commons and membership of the House of Keys may be such as to make the Ballot far more expeditious here than in England; and such also as to make the exercise of it less liable to abuse—and less liable to the charge of dishonesty—here than in England. We are not sorry to see that the Bill does not include any proposed changes as to property qualification for membership of the House. That had much better be let alone. Not that we think the law perfect in that respect as it is, but that the tendency of the day is to make things worse in that respect instead of better. If it could be enacted that property to qualify a candidate for the House of Keys should be in every respect real property—not deeply mortgaged and heavily incumbered—that would be a change for the better. And if an Educational test were proposed to be added so that a Member must be entitled on some other grounds than mere property to the representation of the people in a Legislative Assembly we would be the last to object. But we trust the day is far distant when the door of the House of Keys will be opened to men who have no stake in the property of the Island, whose only recommendation to a constituency is what ought to be an insuperable bar against them—their being noisy agitators and troublesome talkers on subjects about which they are only a degree less ignorant than the lowest dregs of the people—or still worse their being clever enough but sufficiently unscrupulous and dishonest to utilize the ignorance of others to their own aggrandisement and the public harm.

But that the franchise should be lowered must be admitted on all hands. There is a real grievance at present throughout the Island. To lower the franchise down to what is proposed in the present Bill would extend it to hundreds of well qualified and deserving householders who would be on the whole a real and solid gain to

the anomalous consistency of the island, that we venture to say that a truer policy and a more intelligible reform would be to give the franchise to all householders who are rated to the Lunatic Asylum. That is the principle of the English Constitution which was affirmed as such by an enlightened Conservative Ministry that carried the last Reform Bill against Earl Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and others, who would have left the franchise sticking at the 20 householders, though why there no one could tell. Perhaps it was in order to have some excuse for future agitation to lower it a little more and a little more till it came down to manhood suffrage.

We venture to suggest that the present opportunity should be taken of introducing *FRANCHISE REFORM*. There is no considerable reason why a woman—in widow or a spinster who pays the rates, and who has all the requisite qualification as regards occupancy, &c.,—should be deprived of a vote, or why large property, perhaps, and considerable influence should be left unrepresented. The principle of Female Suffrage has been commended by the leaders of all parties in England—more especially by those Conservative statesmen who are most cautious with reference to changes in the Electoral status of the country. The Isle of Man ought to set the adjacent kingdom the good example of putting admitted principles into practice. The addition that would be made to the constituencies in the Island by the admission of the Franchise to female householders might not be very large, but we feel sure it would be very valuable. It would, let it be remembered, include ladies of such influence and intelligence as Mrs. Gawn, of Kermageh,