**Women’s Suffrage Campaign in England**

**On Women’s Subjugation:**

J. S. Mill and Harriet Taylor, from “The Enfranchisement of Women” (1851):

“We are firmly convinced that the division of mankind into two castes, one born to rule over the other, is in this case, as in all cases, an unqualified mischief; a source of perversion and demoralization, both to the favoured class and to those at whose expense they are favoured…”

“In all things the presumption ought to be on the side of equality. A reason must be given why anything should be permitted to one person and interdicted to another.” [The burden of proof should be on those who deny freedom and liberty to others, not on those to whom these are denied.]

“We deny the right of any portion of the species to decide for another portion, or any individual for another individual, what is and what is not their ‘proper sphere.’ The proper sphere for all human beings is the largest and highest which they are able to attain to.”

“The real question is, whether it is right and expedient that one-half of the human race should pass through life in a state of forced subordination to the other half.”

“When we ask why the existence of one-half the species should be merely ancillary to that of the other—why each woman should be a mere appendage to a man, allowed to have no interests of her own, that there may be nothing to compete in her mind with his interests and his pleasure; the only reason which can be given is, that men like it. It is agreeable to them that men should live for their own sake, women for the sake of men…”

Lydia Becker, from “Female Suffrage” (1867):

“It has been assumed that the male sex, by a sort of divine right, has the exclusive privilege of directing the affairs of the community; and any serious claim made by the other half of the human race, to a share in controlling its destinies, has been met, not by argument showing the groundlessness or inexpediency of the demand, but by a refusal to entertain it, as if it were something intrinsically absurd.”

**On Militancy:**

Millicent Fawcett, from *Women’s Suffrage* (1912):

“The National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies…never weakened in their conviction that constitutional agitation was not only right in itself, but would prove far more effective in the long run than any display of physical violence…”

Teresa Billington-Greig, from *Suffragist Tactics: Past and Present* (1913):

“The pioneer Suffragists assumed that argument and reason would finally triumph, and strong in this belief, devoted their powers to the presentment of an irrefutable case…. The policy of pleading for privilege continued for twenty years after events called for change. The insulted Suffragists clung tenaciously to their doctrine of decorum.”

“Every agitation for liberty has won success by revolt and sacrifice…The seeker after liberty must suffer for it. Our highest worship is given to those who made the history of the past glorious and became law-breakers for the freedom of the people.”

Mona Caird, from “Militant Tactics and Woman’s Suffrage” (1908):

“It is for the State which refuses legitimate means of expression to consider the possible consequences of such a policy. When women possess full human and civic rights, they may justly be called upon to confine themselves to constitutional measures, but since quiet appeals of forty or fifty years duration failed to obtain a hearing, it can hardly be said that constitutional measures of any efficacy are really open to them…. A State which refuses the ordinary constitutional means of expression and self-defence to half its members must not be surprised if sooner or later they resort to unauthorized ones.”

Emmeline Pankhurst, from *My Own Story* (1914):

“The militancy of men, through all the centuries, has drenched the world with blood and for these deeds of horror and destruction men have been rewarded with monuments, with great songs and epics. The militancy of women has harmed no human life save the lives of those who fought the battle of righteousness. Time alone will reveal what reward will be allotted to the women.”

“In October, 1903, I invited a number of women to my house in Manchester for purposes of organization. We voted to call our new society the Women’s Social and Political Union, partly to emphasize its democracy, and partly to define its object as political rather than propaganda. We resolved to limit our membership exclusively to women, to keep ourselves absolutely free from any party affiliation, and to be satisfied with nothing but action on our question. Deeds, not words, was to be our permanent motto.”