

First Hand Account #3

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The Suffragettes: Deeds not words

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Article from 'The Times', 1st May 1913.

SEIZURE OF SUFFRAGIST HEADQUARTERS.

SIX WOMEN ARRESTED.

A WARNING TO THE PUBLIC.

Shortly after 11 o'clock yesterday morning the police entered the offices of the Women's Social and Political Union in Kingway and made six arrests. The defendants, who are charged with conspiracy, were afterwards brought up before Mr. Curtis Bennett at Bow-street Police Court and remanded in custody, bail being refused. Mr. Bodkin, who appeared for the prosecution, made an important statement. He said that the *Suffragette* newspaper must be put a stop to, and he gave public warning that if any printer after that warning printed and published the literature of the union he might find himself in a very awkward position. Proceedings would be taken immediately against any person who made a speech in encouragement of the union's course of conduct, and any persons who subscribed to the union's funds might also find themselves in a very awkward position.

Mr. Bodkin conducted the case on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions. He said that the proceedings were taken with a view to putting down what had become a danger to the civilized community. The defendants were all active members of the Women's Social and Political Union, under whose auspices and by means of whose encouragement an enormous number of crimes, involving damage to property, risk to life and limb, and a vast amount of inconvenience to the public, had for months past been brought about almost daily. The defendants were among the ringleaders of that organization, which had continued to carry on its nefarious practices notwithstanding repeated warnings. The seriousness of the crimes he had referred to had increased. The organization had furthered its unlawful objects in three ways—first, by means of violent and inflammatory speeches addressed to large numbers of emotional females; secondly, by an organ known as the *Suffragette*, which week by week contained articles approving and praising those who fortunately had been detected by the police in the act of committing crimes; and, thirdly, by money, which was necessary for an extensive organization of this kind. The *Suffragette* newspaper must be put a stop to, as the dissemination of writings of the kind it contained was a danger to society. Large sums appeared to have been obtained from sympathizers with the criminal objects of the union.

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