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## EDITORIAL.

### A TRUCE OF GOD.

The noble letter addressed by the Bishop of Winchester to *The Times* and published in the issue of October 24th, making an appeal to "men and women of goodwill in the present position of the Women's question" merits the careful consideration for which it pleads. Dr. Talbot's experience of the Church Congress at Southampton leads him to infer that there is upon the part of the more "conservative" and less emotional forces in the religious world to-day, which a Church Congress represents, a recognition of the reality, meaning and importance of the Women's movement in our time, and a condition of opinion favourable to a frank and sympathetic treatment of practical proposals for the betterment of women's position, and that this is true not only of the religious world, but that the position of eminent public men on both sides of politics shows that it would be equally true on the larger field.

The Bishop claims that the matter is now before the nation, a first-rate political question for solution outside controversies of political party, and on this he grounds an appeal to clear the slate and to begin a new chapter. In the view of the advocates of the franchise this, he thinks, is all that they need desire. The franchise is, in their view, the first and indispensable expression or result, itself the way to many others, of the Women's movement. If the movement be fairly recognised, the franchise is, they believe, inevitable.

This, Dr. Talbot believes, would be accepted at once by the non-militant section, and he hopes also by the militants. Of the latter he writes "I have never disguised my opinion that they did, and do gravely wrong; though it was wrong

which had in it a large element of chivalry, and beneath it deep roots of conviction and purpose."

He believes that they themselves cannot regard their methods as other than anti-social expedients justified by temporary and extreme necessity, and continues: "To them, then, I address an appeal for a 'Truce of God' for the blessing and benefit alike of men and women, and for the relief of an inflamed and most unwholesome condition of our common life."

With their opponents he pleads for the promise of a fair and full consideration; "that goes without saying." But, more particularly, for a recognition, such as the Church Congress gave, of the reality, depth, and strength of a movement among women asking for a "fuller life, greater honour, and worthier treatment by men."

"But," continues the Bishop, "I go further. We shall not (I speak for the men) come to a just judgment, nor, therefore, win back the attention and respect of those whom this matter kindles to passion, unless we recognize the bitter crop of a long and cruel sowing. What is put in as poison comes out as fever. The fever in the blood of our body politic, and particularly in those who should be its gentler part, comes from all the long and bad record, not merely of what men have done in passion or weakness, but what they have defended as natural, or condoned as inevitable. But it is not all fever. There is a fervour too, not morbid, but righteous and generous: a desire to lift and to serve even through self-sacrifice those whom the 'social evils' moral and economical, oppress. Without recognition of this, our best intended denunciations of folly and crime, however fully justified, will be ineffective."

An amnesty, the Bishop imagines, would not be too difficult to arrange, but "the one

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