

Letters to the Editor

Correction

Unfortunately one paragraph was incompletely printed in J. Graham Jones' article 'Lloyd George and the Suffragettes at Llanystumdwy' in the last issue of the Journal – our apologies to readers and to Dr Jones. The full paragraph, the last one on page 5 of issue 34/35, should have read as follows:

As the new year – 1912 – dawned, feelings ran high and passions intensified. Persistent conjecture ensued that suffragette-inspired assassinations were being planned against both Asquith and Lloyd George. The former, it was rumoured, had only narrowly escaped death after a hatchet had been flung into his carriage at Dublin. By the spring of 1912 intense disillusionment and mounting exasperation prevailed in the suffragette camp because of the perpetual postponement tactics employed by Asquith's government from year to year: 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick'.¹⁶ Increasing suffragette violence was in turn countered by retaliatory violence on the part of the state. In February Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst impressed upon the WSPU that the argument of the broken pane of glass was the most valuable argument in politics, and hammers were indeed duly issued to 150 suffragettes who were despatched to smash the windows of selected shops and offices in London's West End. Within days Mrs Pankhurst had been arrested, and sent to join hundreds of other suffragettes in prison, while her daughter Christabel chose to take refuge in Paris. Hunger strikes and forcible feeding ensued in a number of British prisons, while those suffragettes who remained free intensified the campaign of vandalism. Regular window-breaking was compounded by occasional arson attacks. As yet another Conciliation Bill was debated in the Commons chamber during March 1912, an exasperated Lloyd George, still one of the ministers more sympathetic to the Suffragette cause, wrote dejectedly to his brother William:

¹⁶ Cited in Rover, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

Michael Meadowcroft

One small inaccuracy in the excellent essay on Roderic Bowen (*Journal* 34/35).

Graham Jones states that Sir Rhys Hopkin Morris' success in Carmarthen-shire in 1945 was 'the only Labour loss in the whole of the United Kingdom'. It was actually one of three such losses.

One, Eddisbury, was an artificial gain in that it had been long been a Liberal, then Liberal National seat, until it became the first 'Common

Wealth' by-election victory during the war. At the 1945 election the retiring Common Wealth MP stood as the Labour candidate and was defeated by a Liberal National.

The other seat, Mile End, in what is now Tower Hamlets, was a genuine loss, with the Communist candidate Phil Piratin gaining the seat from the sitting Labour MP, Dan Frankel, who was a local GP and local government worthy.

Queries

In 1859, the celebrated Hungarian nationalist, Louis Kossuth, visited Britain and on 25 May addressed a meeting of Liberals in Bradford. Our enquirer wanted to know if Kossuth had been invited to England by the party nationally or on local initiative.

Kossuth published *Memories of my Exile* (translated by Ferencz Jausz), in London in 1880. On p. 241, he writes:

'The inhabitants of Bradford have always shown great kindness to me. Mr. J. Mitchell, managing partner of the Bradford branch of the large Manchester firm of Henry ... lived in Bradford. Mr. Mitchell was one of my truest and most active English friends. Whenever I delivered a lecture, it was he who always secured me a sympathetic audience at Bradford. And whenever it was necessary, in the interest of my country, to carry on political agitation, a simple word to him was sufficient to organise, within two or three days, one of those monster

public meetings which form so distinctive a feature in the active life of free England. It so happened, also, on this occasion, that, in accordance with a wish expressed by me in Bradford, as in other towns, the Town Council first passed a resolution in favour of neutrality, and then I received an invitation to be present at a meeting to be held on May 25th.'

It emerges from this that Kossuth may have set the whole thing up himself and, reading around, we find, on p. 181, that Napoleon III had, as a condition of assistance, asked Kossuth to ensure the neutrality of Britain in his forthcoming war with Austria. Pages 188–91 detail Kossuth's strategy in Britain, including his belief that, in spite of the British government's unprompted declaration of neutrality, he would have to campaign to strengthen the government's resolve, 'remembering that the Emperor Napoleon had decidedly declared that he did not think he could trust to England's neutrality while the ministry of Lord Derby was in power'. (p. 191).