

SOURCE 7

Extracts from an article in the Suffragette newspaper *Votes For Women* June 1913

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HOW TO USE THIS SOURCE TO HELP YOU ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION :

Study this source carefully and consider what it tells you about why people thought women should get the vote. You should consider:

ASK YOURSELF:

- What sacrifices have women made to get the vote?
- Why do women need the protection of the vote?
- What is wrong with much of the legislation (laws) passed recently?
- In what ways are women stigmatised?

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

The great demonstration in Hyde Park next Saturday of law-abiding Suffragists belonging to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies will cause many a man and many a woman to ask, "What is it all about?"

why women think the acquisition of the Parliamentary vote so important that they are prepared to carry out on its behalf an agitation involving the sacrifice of time and money, and in some cases of liberty and health and even life itself, women give three answers. Firstly, they need the vote for the protection of themselves and other women under the law and the administration of the country. They point to the unequal treatment of women in the Insurance Act, to the exclusion of women from the better-paid posts in the Civil Service, to the sweating of women in Government employ, to the laws relating to divorce, the guardianship of children, inheritance, and many other matters as showing that a voteless section of the population does not obtain fair consideration at the hands of Parliament. In the second place, they claim that in all legislation affecting the interests of the country as a whole, and the men and women and children in it, the women's point of view is not given adequate weight. They say that the improvement of housing, the better protection of child life, the purification of food, and many other questions do not command the attention they deserve because the women who care most about these things have not the driving power of the vote to force them to the front. And they say that in consequence many thousands of little children die annually from preventable causes, and that the health and life of the country is gravely deteriorated. Lastly, they say that the Parliamentary vote is a symbol of citizenship, that the exclusion from the vote of the whole female sex is a stigma of inferiority which no glib talk about the "differing spheres of men and women" can obliterate.