

A Talk on Woman's Franchise

How London's Female Voters Have Turned Out at Polls During Last Four Years.

[By M. H. Coyne.]

The question of franchise for women just now and for some time past has disturbed the world, has been argued from cottages and mansions to halls of legislature. It is being settled in her favor, and, dear sisters of Canada, I fancy our own indifference, more than any reluctance on the part of Canadian men, has thus long withheld the full franchise from us. The Canadian man, he who can, without any ifs or doubts, sport the maple leaf as his badge, is usually a hearty fellow, and out of his own strength and energy gives of his sympathy and help to the weaker ones he meets on his journey through life. To wife and family he is kind, probably the most kindly husband and father of any countryman in the world. Who lights the fires on cold mornings, where the income does not provide a lady help? Who carries the heavy baby or any other domestic load? Who has over the larger share of the joint income to his partner, and asks no questions regarding its outlay? Who says, when together they chance to go shopping, "Say, Sarah, that will just suit you. Hang the price; see, I've got enough to get it. Get a good article while you are about it?" The Canadian husband, of course.

We do, unfortunately, get those from other lands who are not up to this mark, but by the third generation at the furthest, that will naturally be burned out by the freedom and generosity-bearing oxygen of Canadian air—and other causes.

Now let us give the men their due, and take our own. I find women without husbands were given the right to vote for school trustees in 1850. This right of widows and spinsters to vote in certain municipal matters was seldom exercised, and in 1903 we find subsection one of the Municipal Act states: "The right of voting at municipal elections shall belong to the following persons, being men or unmarried women or widows at the full age of 21 years being rated on the assessment roll for real property in their own right or for income: First, all persons who are freeholders of the municipality and assessed for \$400; second, all residents who have resided therein for one month next before the election, tenants of property assessed for not less than \$400; third, all residents who are rated on the last revised assessment roll for not less than \$400."

Section 59 of the Public School Act, 9, Edward VII, declares: "That every ratepayer of the full age of twenty-one years, who is assessed as a public school supporter, shall be entitled to vote at the election of school trustees."

Summary:

1. Unmarried women and widows assessed for real income or business, may vote for all municipal purposes.

2. Unmarried women, widows, or married women assessed for any sum for real business, or income, may vote for school trustees.

Page 53, Acts of the regular Department of Education states: "Any ratepayer of the full age of twenty-one years, a British subject, resident in the municipality, not disqualified, may be elected school trustee."

Now, though this is apparently the first step in being recognized by the vote of one's fellow-citizens as a person to whom they are willing to trust the conduct of public affairs, it is far from an unimportant one. It is not evidence of our indifference to our legal rights and privileges that it is only at this late date a London woman is spoken of as a candidate for this important office.

No duty more imperatively calls to our Canadian women than anything that relates to the well-being of their

children. The care and education of children most unmistakably belongs to woman's sphere of duty, and in the ordinary Canadian home is almost entirely delegated to the mother. The man who, inspired by the old-time idea of woman's unfitness for public action, would argue against her ability to judge of what is best for the welfare of school children would render himself the laughingstock of his fellow-citizens.

Dear mothers of our future Canadians, do not indefinitely delay tackling this duty. Give our citizens a chance of seeing more than one woman seated at the Board of Education in 1913. You will surely find the school officials of London kindly men, and agreeable to deal with. I assure you greater courtesy no one could have shown me than I have been met with by School Inspector Edwards and City Clerk Baker.

They have put themselves to some trouble to aid me in securing data for this article, to which, I ask you to give your serious attention.

Allow me to copy from an exceedingly interesting and useful booklet, prepared by the city clerk's office. It is styled the Municipal Year Book, 1912.

Year	Voters at Election.		School Only	
	Entire Vote	Women	P. C.	P. C.
1909	6,421	60	719	25
1910	5,997	57	623	18
1911	5,842	42	383	11
1912	6,598	54	475	14

City Clerk Baker informs me they do not discriminate between the widows, spinsters and married women who vote, therefore the entire vote of the women may be a better percentage than appears on the surface. In 1912 it was found that 46 out of 1,988 school voters, or 2 per cent. voted; 476 out of 3,460 women voters, or 14 per cent. voted; and 6,508 men out of 12,456, or 54 per cent. voted.

Just why mothers of our city should take a less interest in school matters than the fathers is beyond comprehension; surely they should show at least equal interest in every phase of the well-being of their offspring.

It would, however, be interesting, if one could note the effect it would have on the voting of the men of a municipality, if the power to do so came to them so late in life and hampered with such restrictions as it does to the women.

It is to be remembered in apology for women that so late as the middle Victorian period it was not thought desirable to educate them more than to read and write, and cast up a small account, just sufficient to see that her household money was not wasted, as the compliments filled in the remainder of the average clever school girls' time; to learn to play the piano until she could execute the *Battle of Prague* thereby and to work squares and octomans in that abominable cross-stitch, counting the pattern until eyes ached, and muscles grimly called for a change, was considered a liberal education for a woman. What more could she want? Reading fairly well, she could follow the cooking recipes handed down by grandmothers, and writing, she could even copy them when needed. As for thinking, had not Paul bidden women to ask their husbands what to think when returned from the church, they could do so in the privacy of their own homes. Poor Paul! Little did he dream how often the narrow teachings of his land, naturally imbibed by him, would be quoted by those who, utterly regardless of noble Christian truths, misused the opinions uttered by the Jew, and that, for many reasons, were suitable to the times in which this Christian Jew lived, taught and suffered for the Master's sake. Lacking, as western women often do, that useful appendage, a husband, she, unlike her eastern sister, could question any male relative, and their being chock full of learning,

M. Massenet



Author of the new opera, "Roma," whose order that the chorus men in his production shall be smooth-shaved has contributed much to the agitation for and against the moustache in France.

as their tutor had been able to thrash into them, willingly, out of their lordly superiority, taught her to think as they themselves did.

Those days have all gone by, and the boy who sets sport entirely in the foreground of his school education is now regarded as somewhat of a degenerate, and it is only women who cling to old and obsolete fashions, who, today, look askance at a sister woman noted for mental ability.

The pretty clinging "vine," though robbed in fashion's latest caprice, now requires to give some attention to the cultivation of her brains, or she finds herself out of date and very lonely among the clever, intelligent women of this our day.

Gordale, I agree with Roosevelt, in his recent article about women's franchise, that to marry, bear and rear children is woman's greatest duty. I would just wish to use qualifying words not used by him, to marry worthily—that is, one who has lived purely—bear healthy children and rear them to the service of their God is woman's greatest duty, and holiest, deepest joy. It sorely tries one's patience to hear a mother grumbling about the trouble the care of her children is to her; as to the one who marries and refuses to bear children, one can feel but contempt for any person so dead to the great issues of time and eternity, so forgetful that the ephemeral pleasures of time will soon, with youth, and their grass, and the awful realities of eternity confront them. Roosevelt and others like him make little allowance for the vast army whom the world could ill spare, whose hands, brains and hearts are so generally employed in some unobtrusive kindness, and who ask the full ballot for themselves and their married sisters.

Were they foreigners, though, the men who recently so rudely treated a respectfully worded petition in our own city, because it came from an organized society of women? However, it is not chivalry women ask, it is justice, the simple justice that you do away with "taxation without full representation." Do not make our women pay as much tax for a partial privilege as the men pay for a full one.

This struggle for woman's enfranchisement is not confined to the British alone, nor to those so like them in government and modes of thought, the people of the United States, but from the secluded sisterhood of the far eastern countries the cry is echoed. Everywhere some measure of success is being gained and few doubt that soon women will stand on the same legal ground as that occupied by men. The man will no longer be lord and master, but co-worker with her in all that advances humanity's interests. I for one do not plead that she will not sometimes err, or that she will always be on the side of the good and just, but I do ask why should woman be made to suffer from "taxation without representation" in this twentieth century, while those who vote that she shall do so, commend the American colonies that they would not submit to so great a wrong. Then, too, their patience is commended for striving, for ten long years, in every legal way to obtain a righting of their wrongs, while through long ages woman has suffered the same wrong almost in silence, and is laughed at, now she feels patience has ceased to be a virtue. It seems strange, though, that ancient Rome, heathen Rome, should have enfranchised her women, and very modern Canada, fair play loving and dealing Canada, withhold it from her.

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[To Be Continued.]

According to recent discoveries it appears that nursing bottles were used even in prehistoric times. This is true at least for the age of polished stone, inasmuch as a French archaeologist, M. Nicaise, when exploring a neolithic funerary deposit, found a small clay nursing bottle, and this was quite in-

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In fact, this is not the only specimen of long and aged poor persons. This being the kind which comes from the early quest, however, has been declared void under the laws of Pennsylvania, which provide that charitable bequests by deed must be made thirty days prior to death. Admiral Melville survived only twenty-four days after making the bequest. Mr. Carnegie's plan of doing one's good deeds while one is alive seems the surer method.