

humor. (Laughter.) Now I am not sure that I have not introduced a subject of grave doubt, and which will require a great deal of thought, namely, as to whether you will have to prefer that request to my hon. friend who sits there, or to some one who represents the party that I belong to and that is at present in power. (Laughter.) When the request comes, whether the one be there or the other, may I express the thought that such a request, preferred by such a representative body as the Council of Women, ought to be most carefully considered (applause and laughter)—almost as diplomatic a remark as His Excellency made about the disposal of his purse. (Renewed laughter.)

For my own part I do not need to have come to this meeting to-night to have been converted to belief in women's work in any one of its phases. Since I began to read and think I cannot recollect the time when I was not a complete and thorough advocate of the greatest possible freedom for women, as well as of the greatest possible duty incumbent on women to work in applying the golden rule to society, custom and law. No one who reads the early Bible literature and the literature of Greece and Rome and of all countries since, can fail to gather from the pages of history the worth, the beneficent influence, and the value of women's work in the world (hear, hear); and if there ever was an age of the world in which that work and that influence is in the first place higher or in the second place more diffused than it is to-day, I do not know of it, and I have not read of it. (Hear, hear.)

There are certain things which might be said with reference to the National Council of Women which would be certainly congratulatory. I do not think that the sensible, strong-hearted, whole-minded ladies who are engaged in any phase of work for the benefit of society would thank a man for coming and speaking of that work in a merely complimentary way, simply because it is a work in which women are engaged. I think that the same measure should be applied to work whether it be done by men or women, and that measure must be the method, the force, and the tact which underlies and which is put into the work which is carried forward. (Hear, hear.) The coolest possible criticism can apply itself on that line to the work which has been outlined to-night, and can come to no other conclusion than that the work is laudable and, better than that, that the work has been well executed and show, decidedly good results. (Applause.)

If there were no other result than the gathering together of thoughtful and active women from one end of this country to the other, that would be a sufficient excuse for the existence and for the continued work of this organization. I hold that there is no influence more effective in the direction of binding the country together and tending more to elevation and growth than the simple common knowledge that one person obtains of another in the course of joint work and joint enterprise. The very fact that a lady living in Victoria has met a lady who lives in Halifax and has exchanged views with her about some public