

THE UNION ADVOCATE

Established 1867

Issued every Wednesday morning

The Advocate Publishing Co., Limited

H. H. STUART, - - - EDITOR.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

If paid in Advance, \$1.00; End of Year, \$1.25; American (in advance)

ADVERTISING RATES:

One inch, one insertion, 25 cents. Each subsequent insertion, 25 cents Professional and Hotel Cards, 10 per year, \$3.00

NEWCASTLE, N. B., NOVEMBER 8, 1911

WOMAN'S RIGHTS

Woman, who long ago was forced by the requirements of the capitalist system to leave her home in large numbers and enter into competition with man on the economic field, driving him together out of certain lines of industry and seriously cutting his wages and crippling his enterprise in many others, has lately taken another step. Having to earn her living under the same conditions as man and having to obey the same laws as man, she has lately demanded political equality with man. In Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, and Utah, Finland, Norway, Washington and California, she has obtained the full recognition of her political rights and is, in all those states and countries, not only a voter but eligible to a seat in all legislative bodies from the municipal council to the state or national parliament. In New Zealand and Australia woman has the municipal, state and national franchise, but has not yet entered the national legislature of New Zealand or the state or national legislatures of Australia. In the British Islands woman has for several years had equal voting and representative rights with man in city, town and county councils, and now, in Ireland, she is demanding that in the constitution of the autonomous government proposed for the Green Isle females shall have the same rights as males in regard to voting for members of, and sitting in, that Irish legislature.

A Dublin despatch of the third instant says that the executive of the Irish Women's Franchise League—a non-partisan organization composed of women of all shades of political belief—and whose opinions and desires as to franchise are said to be shared by the Women's Social and Political Union, have issued the following manifesto, the demands of which are quite reasonable and ought to be granted:—

"The Irish Women's Franchise League, believing that, in the interests of the country as a whole, women ought to be admitted to a share in the government of Ireland, demands that the proposed home rule bill shall provide for the election of the members of an Irish parliament upon the local government register, which includes women as well as men, and bases this demand upon the following among other considerations:—

"1. That should self-government be granted to the Irish people, the imperial government are not entitled to discriminate between the men and women of Ireland to the disadvantage of the women by leaving them politically helpless.

"2. That since the claim for home rule is supported by the argument that the mass of the Irish people have shown, through the system of local government, their ability, efficiently and economically to manage their own affairs, it is unjust and inexpedient to deprive the women of the people of that share in national government which they are admitted to have taken so well in local government.

"3. That any postponement of the enfranchisement of Irish women until after an Irish parliament is constituted, besides being insulting to the women and a denial that their claim is as urgent as that of their countrymen, involves a needless and inevitable re-opening in the future of a constitutional issue which can most conveniently and most honorably be dealt with as part of a home rule bill.

"For these and other reasons, the Irish Women's Franchise League declares its determination

to seek by every means in its power to secure the election of the first Irish parliament upon the local government register, and calls upon the members of the Irish party and the Liberal government to include a provision to this effect in the promised home rule bill."

We wish complete success to the Irish women in their struggle for equal rights. Paying the same rate of taxes on property and income as men, women should have their say as to the imposition and spending of such taxes; having to obey the same laws as men they should have their say in the making and enforcement of those laws; having to reside in the same country as men they should have a voice in all matters relating to the acquisition of land or the session or sale of the same; and even in matters of peace and war the opinion of the sex that bears the children is certainly entitled to as much consideration as that of the sex that bears the arms.

Let there be equal rights for all and special privileges for none. Let no person be compelled to accept an inferior position, socially or politically, because of sex, race, color, religion, language or lack of property. The only qualifications necessary to distinguish between those who are fit to vote and hold office and those who are not, are moral and educational ones. Let the criminal, the ignorant and mentally incapable—and those only—be denied the full exercise of all rights pertaining to citizenship. And to keep down the number of the unfit to the minimum let our laws and customs be changed so as to stop the production of criminals and the encouragement of crime, and let our school system be such as to freely and compulsorily provide to all children capable of instruction the minimum education necessary for good citizenship.

OUR SCHOOLS

A good move was made by Kent County Teachers' Institute at its meeting in Buctouche on the 27th ultimo, when it was resolved:

"To place on record its opinion of the desirability of introducing a text book for teachers on Canadian Civics."

Every child in our schools should be thoroughly taught how Canada and each part thereof is governed. The chief aim of Education is to make, not merely well-informed people, polished gentlemen and elegant ladies, or highly efficient workmen, but good citizens in every sense of the word. We trust that this suggestion of the Teachers of Kent County will be endorsed upon by the Educational authorities.

Very important resolutions, substantially the same as those presented last year but which have not yet been acted upon, were unanimously adopted by the Northumberland County Institute at its annual meeting in Chatham on September fifteenth last. They are as follows:

"1 That in the opinion of this Institute the teaching of Latin and Algebra should be eliminated from grades VII and VIII and the time saved thereby devoted to English and Arithmetic, the latter study to be finished in Grade VIII."

"2 That in the opinion of this Institute the Compulsory Education Act should be amended so as to render it obligatory and completely effective in all districts, and that any clauses of the Factory Act in any way conflicting therewith should be repealed.

"3 That in the opinion of this Institute Consolidation of Schools in rural districts should be made obligatory in all cases where practicable.

"4 That in the opinion of this Institute Manual Training, School Gardening and Household Science should be made obligatory in all schools of the Province."

The advisability of these resolutions will readily be seen by anyone who studies them closely.

As most of our children leave school at or before the completion of the work of Grade VIII, it would be better to postpone Latin and Algebra to Grade IX, enabling the common school pupils to finish Arithmetic and do more work in English than is possible according to the present curriculum.

The Compulsory Education Act is largely rendered a farce through its enforcement being optional with each district, and through the loopholes in the Factory act which allow children under age to leave school and go to work.

About two hundred of the smaller and poorer schools in this province are closed, and the educational facilities in hundreds of others is of the most meagre kind. This state of affairs can only be remedied by compulsory consolidation of districts. Consolidated central schools would give the country child as good a chance educationally as the children of the town possess.

If Canada is to keep up in the forefront of civilization her children must have the best training possible, hence Manual training, School Gardening and Household science are necessary and should be free and compulsory for all schools.

We hope that the Provincial Government, on the second presentation of these resolutions, will give them a more careful consideration than they did last year.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

The recent general elections in Sweden have tested the Swedish system of Proportional Representation that system by which in an election each political party, no matter how many parties are in the contest; is enabled to elect about the same proportion of the total number of members of the legislature as the number of votes all its candidates received bears to the total number of votes cast.

The Swedish second chamber consists of 230 members, about the same number as our House of Commons. In 1908 the total vote cast at the Swedish general elections was 306,455 of which the Conservatives polled 130,037 electing 93 members, the Liberals 121,308 securing 104 members, and the Socialists 55,110 votes electing 33 members. In September, 1911, with Proportional Representation and a greatly increased electorate—manhood suffrage with, however, the necessity of having all taxes paid in order to have the right to vote—the total vote cast was 603,154, of which the Liberals polled 242,127 electing 101 members, a loss of three; the Conservatives, 188,247 votes, electing 65 members, a loss of 28; Socialists 172,780 votes, electing 64 members, a gain of 31.

From the above it will be seen that in 1911 the Conservatives elected a member for about every 2900 votes, the Socialists one for every 2700, and the Liberals one for every 2400. While the plan did not work perfectly, the results were much more just than when in 1908, the Liberals with a smaller vote elected 8 more members than the Conservatives. In Canada, in 1908, the Liberals WITH LESS THAN HALF THE TOTAL VOTE POLLED elected about two-thirds of the members, and the disparity between the proportion of votes polled and the proportion of members elected at the election of 1911, while not so great as three years ago, the new government polling a clear majority of the total vote, is still far too great.

The system of Proportional Representation, which has been championed by Hon. F. D. Monk, and which, we trust, he will continue to agitate for until he sees fit the law of the land, is the only fair system of a portioning parliamentary representation among the different political groups. Let every political party have exactly the same influence in parliament as is warranted by its fraction of the popular vote.

THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY

In stating the Conservative policy at the great banquet in his honor in Halifax on the second

inst. Premier Borden said that. "Among some of its principal items are such encouragement of the great basic industry, agriculture, as will enable those who till the soil to receive the highest return for their produce, to turn out their products in the highest form, and at the same time preserve the fertility of the land. Hand-in-hand with this are the aid and encouragement which we propose for the purpose of establishing and maintaining permanent highways of a character suitable to our conditions. Some such effort is needed in the interest of that effective scheme of transportation which ought to be the aim of any progressive government. The regulation of our tariff upon reasonable business principles is an important article of our policy that is to be carried out by the establishment of a permanent Tariff Commission, which will ascertain all necessary facts in connection with the conditions and the cost of production, and which will advise as to the conclusions which ought to be drawn from the facts so ascertained. We propose also to extend that reform of the civil service which we initiated while in opposition, and which the late administration carried out in part upon our initiative. So far as trade relations are concerned, we believe that the true idea of reciprocity can be found within the vast dominions of this Empire, with its wonderful variety of natural and other products, which can be exchanged to the mutual advantage of all.

THE FINANCE MINISTER'S VIEWS

In his speech in Massey Hall, Toronto, on the second instant, Hon. W. T. White, Canada's new minister of Finance, frankly declared himself on several very important questions, as follows:

"With regard to the great principle of public ownership, I am not only not opposed to it, but its earnest supporter, and I look forward to a development on its part commensurate with the growth and progress of Canada."

"I have always believed in a policy of reasonable protection for Canada, including protection for the farmer. Especially is such protection desirable for him during the constructive stage of a nation's development. Now we are in the midst of these prosperous conditions, and I need not counsel how careful we should be of taking any step or doing any act that might tend to change these conditions. Trade questions are exceedingly intricate and complex. They require the most careful study. Changes in the tariff in times such as these should not be lightly considered. Assurance stability is required to give confidence to our manufacturers, our commercial men and our farmers. I think I am safe in saying that there is in contemplation no immediate change in the tariff."

"As to labor, the first essential is employment, and plenty of it, with good wages. The policy of protection for our industries is the best policy for labor, as for capital, during the critical stage of the development of our country's resources and the building up of its industries."

NO FEDERAL ISSUES

IN N. B. POLITICS

Provincial Premier J. K. Flemming was on the third instant the principal guest of the most successful banquet ever held in Woodstock. Among the guests of honor were many distinguished Federal and Provincial leaders from other points in the province.

In reply to the toast of the guest of the evening, Premier Flemming said he intended to run the government entirely independent of Federal issues. He would continue to do all he could towards furthering the completion of the St. John Valley Railway. Special attention would be directed toward the working of the crown land department and all the other departments of the government, and special efforts would be made to prevent any further reduction of New Brunswick's representation at Ottawa.

SCOT ACT CASE

Percy Lebans, Blackville, conviction before Justice Maltby Nov. 2nd, 1911.

D BALDWIN, Inspector.

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