

whether I am on debateable ground (laughter)—I am not speaking of this year—I am going back several years—I remember that my hon. friend, who led the Opposition, found fault with the bill of fare because it was meagre; but no person who heard the bill of fare to-night can find fault with it on the ground that it is meagre. It will compare well, I think, with any bill of fare that even so august an assembly as the Parliament on the hill has presented to it in any year; and it will not be far from the truth if I say that the measures noted as having been begun, as being partly finished, and as under progress, will do as much or more for the good of the body-politic of Canada than the measures which may be passed by even the Canadian Parliament in any one of its best years. (Applause.)

In the first place then I feel that I may congratulate myself upon having the opportunity of so agreeable a transition from the noisy scenes of parliament to the quiet and peaceful, and I am bound to say this evening, more thoughtful atmosphere, of this your Parliament of Women. (Applause.)

Your Excellency remarked that the Ottawa Local Council of Women was not dead yet. No, indeed! If on an evening like this, I had been going to attend any men's meeting that I can conceive of, I should have gone with the feeling that the audience would be far more sparse than the audience that I see here to-night; and it is an indication—I will say an earnest—not only of what your Women's Council has done, but of what it will do in the future, judging from the persistence and ardour of purpose which will bring out for the review of the year so many on so uncomfortable and inclement a night. (Applause.)

Your Excellency made a remark with references to many of the branches of work with which the Local Council of Women here and the Women's Councils throughout Canada have been engaged during the year. I had the pleasure of reading the report of last year, and of knowing something of the work which has been performed, and I am certain that all the work of the Council must commend itself to the honest thought and attention of every man in this room. I do not believe that this room contains any men who do not approve of women's work which was outlined here to-night. I am certain that those remarks were made for some recalcitrant persons outside this room, whom Your Excellency hoped to reach through the medium of the press. (Laughter.)

I think I observed a slight intimation that possibly a wife (that wife being the Women's Council might make a request from her husband (the husband being the parliament on the hill). (Hear, hear.) Now it is always said that a man is in the best of humors after he has had a good dinner. (Laughter.) I am quite sure that if a request is to be preferred to the parliament on the hill, the best time to make that request will be directly after an election, for most certainly the Government at that particular period of time will be in the very best of