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WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND THE LEGISLATURE

Mrs. W. F. Hatheway's Proposed Address.

(From the St. John Globe)

To the Editor of the Globe: Sir,—At a meeting of the Woman Suffrage Association of this city, Mrs. E. S. Fiske, president, held last evening, to receive a report of the fate of their bill sent up to the Legislature this month, and presented by Mr. W. B. Dickson, I was authorized, as secretary, to ask if you will publish a portion of the address which I had prepared to give, before being informed by the Attorney General that it is against the rules for anyone other than a member to address the whole House.

The bill was supported by five petitions from various parts of the province, and eleven resolutions from as many W. C. T. U. Unions. The letter being endorsed by the men's Provincial Temperance Federation, as well as by that of St. John county.

"The woman suffrage movement the world over, has broadened and intensified during the past year. In no one way is this shown more than in the growing demand from women that they shall no longer be regarded by men as sex beings, but as human beings; that they shall be recognized, politically and economically, as persons, not as females merely. This note has been struck by writers and speakers alike, men and women, and is the keynote of ultimate success."

Only the woman who is vitally interested in her own full citizenship recognizes and can comprehend the extent to which, as a sex class, we are set apart in a secondary position—in the community, in the church, in the home, everywhere. Daily, in a hundred ways, she feels this secondary place. Now she is rising to an appreciation of herself, and with her new self-respect she is demanding recognition as a human being.

I speak of this because an incident occurred in connection with this subject of sex while our bill was under consideration in 1909. The question had been brought before the House late in the afternoon, and was not finished when adjournment was made at 6 o'clock. A number of ladies had come up from St. John by the morning train to be present at the hearing, but were obliged to return in the evening. Three of us remained, and, after escorting our friends to the station to see them off, we returned to this building. It was early, only a few members were about, and we decided to examine more closely those portraits which we had been speaking of in the afternoon. As we entered, we noticed a small group of men gathered around the desk of one of their number, who was scattering writing. They were intent upon what he was doing, but as we approached, they looked up and immediately burst into loud laughter. This continuing for the few seconds we remained in their vicinity and growing rather embarrassing, we moved away, and went up into the Speaker's gallery, to await the evening session. We had not been seated many minutes when one of the men left the group, and, coming toward us holding up a folded paper or letter in his hand, said: "This is for you." As we could not reach it, he said: "Well, I will send it up—I will see that you get it." But it did not arrive.

Our bill was received that evening in the manner we expected. Until very recently legislators everywhere have treated the subject of woman suffrage as a light, good natured way by those unopposed or indifferent, and by a rude, invective or ridicule or sarcasm by those opposed. We had samples of all these that evening, and the bill was lost, the vote standing 24 to 14.

"Of course our demand is a small one, but we are suffragists, and

look forward to the accomplishment of our object eventually, even in New Brunswick.

It was rumored that a written paper was passed around in the lobbies that evening, causing much merriment amongst the members. My two friends took the morning train for St. John. I remained in Fredericton. Upon the arrival of one of them at her home she found awaiting her a communication, mailed in Fredericton, bearing the seal or coat-of-arms of the House of Assembly—a communication which I hope is unique. I did not see it nor hear of it until about a year afterward, and then only accidentally, as my friends had been pledged to keep me in ignorance of it.

It was in the form of a verse, so base, so vile in its suggestion that only the lowest kind of man could have written it—a pot-house joke, and, of course, its reference was to sex.

The English suffragists have borne many indignities in their fight for a righteous cause—an act of simple justice too long delayed; a cause which is being upheld all over the world, even in countries which we consider not quite up to our wonderful civilization. But I doubt if even the English suffragists could receive from the hands of any members of the British Commons just this sort of contempt. I think it has been reserved for the New Brunswick Legislature to show that it can furnish members capable of insulting a woman's society, and incidentally provide an item for the history of woman suffrage in New Brunswick.

It was the kind of thing that stamps itself upon the brain—that sticks in the mind like a filthy poison.

We know three of these men who composed the group referred to—one of them is no longer a member of this House; the other two are in their places here today. Whether others were connected with them we do not know—but if it was this coarse joke which was passed around in the lobby that evening, then every man who found it so amusing was of the same type morally as those who perpetrated it—perhaps only lacking their effrontery to present it.

Probably the wives and daughters of these men look up to them as model husbands and fathers, probably in their own homes they are kind and good; but I often wonder how they would feel if we should show this paper to their families.

One might easily think this incident an impossibility in this age of the world, and even in crude New Brunswick, but there are two reasons for it: One is the double standard of manners and morals for men and women; the other is the valuation by men of women as a sex class.

It is this attitude which still keeps men from dealing with the equal enfranchisement of women fairly and seriously as they would deal with any other world question.

CHILD LABOR

Judge Laurendeau's decision that any corporation which employs boys or girls younger than the law allows, cannot, in case one of them is injured, escape its responsibilities by the comparatively easy provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, is one which appeals to the layman as having virtue as well as wisdom.

It is notorious that the Child Labor provisions are not in force in many factories of this Province. When the parents of the children co-operate eagerly with the foreman of the different manufacturing institutions to accomplish this, it is difficult to bring such a state of affairs to an end, but it is not impossible. Such decisions as that of Judge Laurendeau's will help greatly by making the question one of finance rather than of morals, for the treasury of many a corporation is much more quickly responsive than its conscience.

It may satisfy the factory inspectors, but it will not satisfy the average jury to plead ignorance of the fact that some little victim of the deadly belts, or cog-wheels, or cylinder was a year or two younger than the very liberal limits set by law for the employment of children. It is the business of some one in the factories to be reasonably sure of such matters although the machinery for making this fact plain is very inadequate. Judge Laurendeau's decision ought to clear away some of the doubts as to whether or not it pays to obey the law.—Montreal Star.

It would surprise you to know of the great good that is being done by Chamberlain's Tablets. Darius Downey, of Newburg Junction, N. B. writes, "My wife has been using Chamberlain's Tablets and finds them very effectual and doing her lots of good." If you have any trouble with your stomach or bowels give them a trial. For sale by all dealers.

sent members will be returned at the next election, and we demand—in the name of your mothers, sisters, wives and daughters; of all women, whether they stand for or against their own political freedom—that you discuss this bill whenever it shall be presented, and the question of woman suffrage, whether in part or as a whole, seriously, with deliberation, dignity and decency. If we are human beings, then we are entitled to the rights of human beings."

ELLA B. HATHEWAY, Secretary, St. John, N. B., April 12th, 1912

Lame back is usually caused by rheumatism of the muscles of the back for which you will find nothing better than Chamberlain's Liniment. For sale by all dealers.

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Synopsis of Canadian Northwest Land Regulations.

Any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years old, may homestead a quarter section of available Dominion land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. The applicant must appear in person at the Dominion Lands Agency or Sub-agency for the district. Entry by proxy may be made at any agency on certain conditions, by father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of intending homesteader.

Duties: Six months residence upon and cultivation of the land in each of three years. A homesteader may live within nine miles of his homestead on a farm of at least 80 acres, solely owned and occupied by him or by his father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister.

In certain districts a homesteader in good standing may pre-empt a quarter section alongside a homestead. Price \$3 per acre.

Duties: Must reside upon the homestead or pre-emption six months in each of six years from date of homestead entry including the time required to earn (homestead patent) and cultivate fifty acres extra.

A homesteader who has exhausted his homestead rights cannot obtain a pre-emption. A homesteader may purchase homestead in certain districts. Price \$3 per acre. Duties: Must reside six months in each of three years, cultivate fifty acres and erect a house worth \$500.

W. W. CORY, Deputy of the Minister of the Interior. N. B.—Upon the first publication of this advertisement no entry will be accepted.

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