

able person for the position of conductor. There is no intention of reinstating him.

#### NEW CHANNEL AT GRAND ETANG.

Mr. FRASER asked, Does the Government propose to open a new channel at Grand Etang, Cape Breton? If not, what is the reason? Has any promise been given by the Government, at any time, that such new channel would be opened?

Mr. OUIMET. The Department of Public Works proposes to open a new channel at Grand Etang, Cape Breton, so soon as the road which crosses the entrance to the Grand Etang has been diverted by the municipal authorities. I am not aware that any promise was given at any time by the Government, but the opening of the channel in question is part of the work required to make Grand Etang a harbour of refuge for the fishermen of the district.

#### ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.

House resumed adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Davin:

That in the opinion of this House, the privilege of voting for candidates for membership therefore should be extended to women possessing the qualifications which now entitle men to the electoral franchise; and the motion of Mr. Laurier in amendment thereto.

Mr. DUPONT. (Translation.) I have listened, the other day, to the speech delivered by the hon. member for West Assiniboa (Mr. Davin), in reference to the enfranchisement of women. I could not help admiring the ingenuity of the hon. member in trying to show that the female portion of humanity had a natural right to vote; that is to say, to mix up with politics, on an equal footing with the male portion. The rights of the two sexes are quite different and they have been long since defined by the wisdom of the most civilized nations on earth. At all times, it has been admitted that a woman is a queen in her home, a queen in the family and that she has an absolute right to direct the family's domestic and intimate education; that according as that education is good or bad, the individual receiving it bears the traces of it during his life-time. On that early education, indeed, depends the part that will later on be played in the community by the citizen receiving it. On that early education depends the qualities, good or bad, that will develop in the individual who was its object. And lastly on that education and on those qualities often depends the future of the family and even the future and prosperity of nations. It is allowed on all hands, Mr. Speaker, that a woman reigns supreme in the family realm and I cannot conceive what service my hon. friend will render her by claiming for her the right to take a hand in the terrible conflicts of politics. I cannot see there

any advantage to her, but I rather see an onerous burden for her in a contest in which man himself often leaves his good repute. If my hon. friend's motion would give to womankind a new device by which humanity could be made happier, which he has not shown, I would think it the duty of this House to take it into its earnest consideration. But, on the contrary, I only see in it the fulfilling of a painful duty which the men wish to get rid of by drawing the fair sex into the political arena. For this reason, I do not think it generous on the part of a citizen, or a member of this House, to attempt to throw upon woman's shoulders one of the heaviest burdens that bears on those of men, the burden of politics, the burden of electoral contests, the burden of representation. For, if it be admitted that one day or another women are to be called upon to take part in the elections and to give their votes, we will have to admit them likewise to the responsibilities of representation. It would be an amusing. I was going to say a queer sight, that of the mother of a family having under her charge a dozen children, some of whom would yet be in their infancy, receiving canvassers in her house, during the absence of her husband, who would inculcate to her political principles, give her a political direction and induce her to the polls, there to give a vote sometimes hostile to that of her husband, the two representatives of the family. This proposal of the hon. gentleman should be rejected for many other reasons. For, besides paying a poor compliment to women, it throws upon their shoulders too heavy a burden for them—a burden which is exclusively ours. This has been acknowledged since the origin of the representative government and I think our sex should have the courage to fill in the community the portion of obligations that were assigned to it, without allowing any encroachment upon this department. We will have the courage of our ancestors who showed themselves to be true friends of their country, by reserving to themselves alone the political duties and we will leave the woman, that guardian angel of society, that good directress of the family, within her sphere and her sanctuary, to the duties which were assigned to her by the wisdom of the people, the legislators and the clergymen of the various religions. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, for all these reason and for many others, I understand the hon. member for Assiniboa (Mr. Davin) should not press the passing of his resolution. To invite the fair sex to take part in our political contests seems to me to be as humiliating and as shocking a proposition as to invite her to form part of our militia battalions organized for the defence of the country, for, Mr. Speaker, the military profession does not belong to that sex. Not that I would say that no honour attaches to that profession likely to tempt