

In march this year an Amendment to the "Public Schools Act" was passed by the Provincial Government, called "The Public Schools Amendment Act, 1913," in which one Section—Section 38—is of especial interest to women and offers food for thought to all those who lightly put their confidence in the political powers that be.

Section 38, paragraph 2, read as follows:

"In district municipality school districts, any person **being a male British subject**, . . . and being otherwise qualified by this Act to vote at an election of school trustees in the said school district, shall be eligible to be elected or to serve as a school trustee in such district municipality school district."

We have italicized the words "being a male British subject," because in them lies the crux of the matter. In the "Revised Statutes of British Columbia, 1911," Section 38, paragraph 2, those words did not occur, **any** person who was a British subject, apart from the question of sex, and fulfilling the conditions otherwise imposed, being eligible for office as a school trustee in country districts. The "Amendment" of this year, therefore, by a method closely suggesting, in the words of an ancient writer, "sleight of hand and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive," has expressly deprived women in country districts of the only practical power they possessed in connection with the education of their children. And this "Amendment" has been enacted in the face of a situation with regard to school morality in country districts so appalling that instead of curtailing the influence of the women of this Province, the aim of the education authorities should have been to confirm and extend it. The names of those immediately responsible will be published next month, and we hope to publish then an article dealing particularly with the very serious problem of Child-immorality in this country, and would therefore to-day merely place this one

point before our readers and leave it to them for consideration.

We referred in a previous issue to the "Guardianship of Infants" Act and its Amendment this year. These two instances of the manner in which men deal with legislation affecting women and children—even after the opinions of the women have been distinctly and forcibly urged—should surely convince any thinking mind that "womanly influence," **unbacked by votes**, is less all-powerful in politics than certain politicians and their "Anti" friends would have us suppose. That much-quoted "womanly influence" over our male relatives will not unfortunately turn out a Government which so sublimely ignores the wishes of one half the community on a vital question. **But the vote would.** And, knowing this, such a Government would not risk giving grave offence to the women of the land.

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A Pitiable Exhibition of Ignorance.

In Vancouver on June 1st, Father O'Doyle of the Roman Catholic Church preached a sermon against Woman Suffrage. An excellent letter in reply to his peroration was published in the "Victoria Times" a few days later, and will be found on another page of "The Champion." Miss Gladys Shrapnel has gone to the very root of the matter, and her reply could not be improved upon. The amount of crass ignorance that prevails still among people supposed to be educated, and whose profession specially requires breadth of mind, foresight, and a humanist outlook more perhaps than any other characteristics not essentially spiritual, is "enough to make a saint weep," and shows how much water there is still to flow under the bridge before public opinion generally stands on the side of the angels.

On the other hand the number of clergy of all religious persuasions who support Woman Suffrage strongly and consistently is daily increasing, and in B. C. particularly, as far as our plebiscite in their ranks has revealed, about 75 per cent. are "sound."