

of much force and point, and concluded by saying that we must have a Maine Law—we demand it as a right, and we will have it.

The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

A Committee of Ladies waited on the Legislature with a petition for the Maine Law, signed by 28,000 of the women of the empire State.

At the afternoon session, several ladies spoke very eloquently, and asserted their right to do so in the present instance, and under their present circumstances. The evening session was addressed by Mrs. Albrow, of Rochester, who concluded by urging all to assist them in carrying forward the banner, on which was inscribed, "No compromise with Rum."

At another meeting held at the Assembly Chamber, an address, written by Mrs. E. C. Stanton, was read by Miss Susan B. Anthony. It will be found worthy an attentive perusal, even though, in some particulars, it will have dissenters. We give the document in full, omitting only one short paragraph not material to the main argument:—

*To the Honorable the Legislature of the State of New York.*

This is, I believe, the first time in the history of our State, that Woman has come before this Honorable Body to state the legal disabilities under which, as women, we have thus far lived and labored. Though our grievances are many, and our causes of complaint, if set forth, would be numerous; yet, in behalf of the women of this State, I appeal to you at this time, for the redress of those only growing out of the legalized traffic in ardent spirits. We come not now to tell you of orphan's tears, widow's groans, and the blasted hopes of wretched wives and mothers. We come not with statistics to prove to you the enormity of this traffic, its pecuniary loss to state, family and individual. Nor the amount of crime and misery it brings with it. No! oceans of eloquence have already been poured out, and volumes of statistics written on this question. You all know the wretchedness and poverty produced by this traffic; therefore we come not to reiterate what has been said a thousand times before, but we come to propose to you to do for us one of two things, either so remodel your State Constitution that woman may vote on this great political and social question, and thus relieve herself of the terrible injustice that now oppresses her, or, be in fact what, as men, you now claim to be, her faithful representatives, her legal protectors, her chivalrous knights.

If you wisely choose the first proposition, and thus relieve yourselves of the burden of all special legislation for one million and a half of disenfranchised subjects, giving us equal rights, as citizens, with all "white male citizens," then we have nothing to ask.—Our course, under such circumstances, would be clear and simple. We should not long stand gaping into the heavens as our Temperance saints now do, voting run into high places and then praying it to walk out. But if you still hug the delusion, that you can legislate for us far better than we could for ourselves, and still insist on looking after our best interests, and protecting us in our sacred rights, at least permit us, from time to time, to tell you of our wants and needs. For, is it not fair to infer that, in the progress of the race, as man is continually demanding for himself more enlarged liberty, that, as his whole being develops, he requires new modes of action, and new laws to govern him, that woman too, following in the wake of her liege lord, may in the course of human events require some new privileges and immunities?

1st. Then, as our "faithful representatives," we ask you to give us the Maine Law, which has been so glorious in its results in those States where it has been fairly tried. Now that we see a door of escape open from the long line of calamities that intemperance has brought upon the head of woman, we would fain enter in and be at peace. We have long and patiently waited for you to take some effective action on this abominable traffic, and now feeling that the time has fully come, we pray you to act promptly and wisely. Let the work of to-day tell on all coming generations,—that each one composing this august body may be enshrined, with a grateful remembrance, in the hearts of thousands, and thus form a more glorious era on the pages of future history than even the revolution of 1776. But if you are not prepared to give us the Maine Law, and thus suppress this traffic altogether, then, as you love justice, remove from it all protection.

Do not legalize it in any way. Let the trade be free, and then let all contracts in which rum is involved be null and void. A man cannot come into court with his gambling debts, neither let him with his rum debts; for what better is rumselling than gambling, or the rumrunner than the gamster? Then, do away with all license laws, and take no cognizance of the monster evil; for what a government licenses, it does not condemn. Now, this traffic is either right or wrong. If right, let it be subject to the same laws as all other articles of commerce; if wrong, let those who carry it on be treated as criminals by the Government, throwing on them the responsibility of all the pauperism and crime they directly or indirectly produce.

The present position of our Government on this subject is most discouraging to the friends of temperance, and shows a lamentable want of high moral tone in those who make our laws, or those who make our law-makers. To make provisions as to how or by whom this traffic shall be carried on, is to recognize, in a certain class of men, the right to take the lives and property of their fellows. Upon what principle do our rumrunners and distillers form themselves into a great monopoly in our midst, to work all manner of evil, to sow death and destruction on all sides? Because they are a majority must we, a virtuous minority, submit to all kinds of imposition? Shall an apothecary be required to label his poisons, while the stamp of the Empire State shall recommend those of the rumrunner? Shall one pig in a respectable sty, because, forsooth, he is an offence to some lordly nose in the neighborhood, be removed by law as a nuisance, while these pestiferous distillers are allowed to remain in our midst, infecting the atmosphere for miles around with their loathsome, disgusting odor—a stench in the nostrils of whole communities? Verily are these distillers and rumrunners special pets of this government. No other class of men could make themselves so disgusting to a community without being voted a nuisance at once, and disposed of as such. Now, we ask you as our representatives, to divorce yourselves wholly from this abominable traffic. If you have not the strength to cut off the head of the giant, and kill him outright, then turn your backs upon him and refuse to shake hands with him in the market place.

2d. As our legal protectors, we ask you to release us from taxation. Under the present system, the drunkard's wife is doubly taxed. As she has no right to what she has helped to earn, the rumrunner can take all she has for her husband's debts, and leave her to-day, houseless, homeless and penniless. If, then, as a widow, she have the energy to earn for herself and children a home of her own, then comes the State, and taxes her to support prisons, jails and poor-houses. Thus do you permit the rumrunner, first to strip her of her legal protector, and then tax her to support the pauperism and crime produced by this traffic. Verily, "no just government can be formed but by the consent of the governed." If you, gentlemen, were all afflicted with drunkards for your wives, your substance, your daily wages could not be swept away by the rapacity of the rumrunner. You have in your hands the means of self-protection. Not so with us. The law gives to man the right to all he can get, and to what we can get too. The new property law protects what we inherit, but not what we jointly earn, hence you see how hopeless is the condition of the drunkard's wife. Look but one moment at her legal position. If she have inherited nothing, she owns nothing, no matter how intelligent, virtuous and industrious she may be; and if the joint property be wholly of her own earning, by your laws, it is her husband's, be his character what it may, whether a tippler, a drunkard, or a sot. If she go out to work by the day, she has no right to her wages, and if given to her, by your laws, the husband may collect them again of her employers. Then he may abandon her for years,—making no provision for her or her children. And, if he return and find them in comfortable circumstances—by your laws, he may make that home desolate, and spend their scanty earnings in riotous living. If the wife refuse to receive the vagrant as her liege lord, then, by your laws, he can rob her of her children—and, no matter how tyrannical, loathsome, and utterly disgusting he may be, by your laws, he is still her husband. And if found guilty of the only crime which gives just cause of divorce, of which your laws take cognizance—she must, even then, pay some thirty dollars, or more, to put asunder what some Priest bound together—for God hath joined those only who are one in spirit and united by love. Now, I ask you, as men, are those laws just? Are they such as you would like for yourselves? The first object of Government is to protect the