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AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 9TH, 1885.

MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

For better or for worse society in England, the United States, and Canada, seems tending towards a fuller recognition of the right of woman to a larger measure of freedom in her pursuits, a larger measure of power in the state, and a larger measure of legal control over her property and her offspring. In England and Canada, a married woman can now retain her separate ownership of any property she may have possessed before marriage, and also of any that she may acquire in her own right after marriage. In many states of the Union a similar condition of the law obtains, though in others a married woman is, in the matter of ownership, in no better position than the negroes of the South were in before emancipation. Such variations in the status of married women are quite possible under a federal system which leaves the control of property and civil rights to be regulated by state constitutions and state legislatures.

Just as one must look at the furthest up water mark on the shore to ascertain the height of the rising tide, so we must look to the most liberal of the state constitutions to ascertain the furthest advance made by public opinion in the direction above referred to. Not long ago Washington territory adopted a new constitution, or an amendment to its old one, which permits women to vote, compels them to serve on juries, and in other respects places them before the law in a position of perfect equality with men. Here are some of its provisions:—

The rights and responsibilities of the parents (in the absence of misconduct) shall be equal; and the mother shall be as fully entitled to the custody, control, and earnings of the children as the father.

A married woman dwelling with her husband has the same right and liberty to acquire, hold, enjoy, and dispose of every species of property, and to sue and be sued, as if she were unmarried.

All laws which impose (or recognize) civil disabilities upon a wife, which are not imposed (and recognized) as existing as to the husband, are hereby abolished.

There are many other provisions in the constitution inserted for the same purpose, the full enfranchisement of women, under one of which the wife may select a homestead if the husband neglects or refuses to choose one, while another puts husband and wife, living together, on an equality as regards individual property, rights and liabilities, with the exception that an advantage is given to the wife regarding her personal earnings.

A Washington Territory lawyer of good standing and large practice recently gave the following as his view of the scope of the enactment above referred to:—

Married ladies, with and without separate property, as well as spinsters, are undoubtedly, in this territory, citizens. They can do, and must endure, as citizens. Wives and mothers may at any time be returned by the sheriff as qualified jurors. This invasion is possible any time in our own homes. Only the good sense, or good taste, or sense of propriety, which may or may not be present, may prevent it. In the home, all contemplation of the wife as in any way the agent or servant of, or even secondary to, the husband, is done away with. She is no longer under such civil restrictions as compel her to act in any capacity inferior to him. She is not subject to his authority, or even restraint, and such property and rights as were formerly alienated by marriage are now restored. Why, a woman may be the absolute manager if not proprietor of the home, and regulate the whole premises, including children and husband, the very servants being hired by her and subject to her dictation.

The Chief Justice of Washington Territory happens to be a firm believer in the advantage of mixed juries for the trial of criminal cases, and he succeeded in getting women chosen as jurors in his recent circuits. His testimony is very strong as to their capacity for discharging the duties imposed on them, and as to the improvement wrought by the change. "The result," he says, "is plainly to be seen in the unprecedented orderliness of our community and the exceeding promptness and severity with which crimes, especially those against the home, are punished." A correspondent of the New York Post, writing from Seattle, which a short time ago was one of the worst places in the Territory, describes it as one of the most orderly places to be found anywhere, "its uproarious theatres, dance-houses, squaw-brothels, and Sunday-fights," being things of the past, while there is not a gambling house left in the city. He gives a grand jury of women credit for the improvement, but admits that the enfranchisement of women has not done so much in the same directions elsewhere. In one county the women even voted with the whiskey interest.

It is interesting to read the same correspondent's description of the effect on the male voters of the admission of women to the franchise.

In spite of the mist and mud, election-day was a pretty spectacle here. The ways to the polling places were fenced in, and the election precincts adorned with green shrubs and flowers. The rooms were tastefully arranged, and garlanded in some cases, reminding one of church pulpits where the religious sentimentality of women is given full expression. Many ladies were present, offering tickets and electioneering, generally, as it seemed to me, for principles, not men. It was pleasant to see the sailors, longshoremen, raftsmen, and loggers—many of whom had not felt enough interest to come out at the June election (and so were ignorant of the new order of things) exhibit their surprise when they found what the ordeal of voting meant. They would stop, step on one side, shake out their clothes, turn down the bottoms of their pants regardless of the mud, throw away their quids, and wipe off the brown traces before approaching the ballot-box guarded by its new divinities.

ONLOOKER.

Selected Articles.

THE DRUNKARD, THE ORPHAN, AND THE WIDOW.

The land is full of the wretched, made so by the rum-fiend. Drunken fathers, captured by the allurements of the saloons and by the seductive influences of the devilish draughts that nobody but a fiend could have invented, and unable to resist the spell that habit has settled upon them, are breaking the hearts of thousands of loving wives, and keeping their little ones in beggary and want. They appeal to us in tones of anguish to step in between them and the destroyers of their welfare to stay the hand of the slayer—to close the grog-shops their natural protectors have no longer power to keep out of, and which consumes their bread and raiment. Shall we pass by, as did the "Priest and Levite," or shall we imitate the Samaritan and bind up their wounds? Remember they are perishing now, and now is the hour in which we should come to their aid. May our better thoughts lead us to the work promising something for their relief and protection.—*Western Wave.*