

fence against the rules of the House and the rules of good breeding."

The Speaker said the same thing had happened in the House before, but he hoped when it was understood that any applause from outsiders was forbidden the offence would not be repeated.

Mr. MacDonald's Plea.

On the resumed debate on the second reading of the bill introduced by Mr. William MacDonald (Centre Bruce) to extend the Provincial franchise to women entitled to vote at municipal elections, that is widows and spinsters, Dr. James A. McQueen (North Wentworth) said the whole question of extending the franchise to women in Ontario was in the air. One of the factors which had contributed to bring about a high standard in public life was the high status that women occupied in social life. Cynics might say that the place for women was in the home, but he thought if a comparison were made in this regard between the men and the women, the much larger proportion of men would be found absent from their homes, spending the leisure time in clubs and other places of amusement and recreation. It was quite true, said Dr. McQueen, that many women indulged in social excesses. The suffragette movement in England was largely detrimental to the cause of the enfranchisement of women.

Women Use the Ballot.

Dr. McQueen answered the criticism that women would not exercise the vote if they had it by referring to figures compiled in New Zealand. The first election in which women voted 85.16 per cent. of those on the list used the franchise. The next election the number went up to 91.88 per cent. In Colorado the number of women voting was 80 per cent., and in Wyoming 90 per cent. The better class of women were better qualified to vote than men who qualified under present registration conditions. The great mass of men who registered were the purchasable element in the elections in Ontario.

Referring to women's influence on social questions, Dr. McQueen pointed out that the conditions affecting the employment of women and children in factories had been greatly improved through the influence of women, and largely through their instrumentality had the bars been abolished in places where local option was in force.

Position Indefensible.

Mr. Proudfoot (Centre Huron), who followed Dr. McQueen after waiting some time for a Government speaker to take up the cudgels, said he had hoped a question of such importance would have received some consideration from the Government side of the House. Either the silence of Government members was an assent to the principle of the bill or it would be voted down for reasons so indefensible that no excuse was to be offered. He had always doubted if members on the Conservative side would make good their pre-election pledges to support a measure to give votes to women when brought up. There was no possible reason for the discrimination against women, and in municipal elections candidates for County Councils were glad enough to get the votes of the widows and spinsters to put them in office.

Government Are Slow.

The Government, he said, were so chockfull of prejudice and their old Conservative ideas that it would take them a long time to make up their mind to extend the franchise to women.

Still there was no sign of any desire on the part of Government members to discuss the matter, and the debate was continued by Mr. H. Munro (Glengarry). He felt that it was a very important question. If he had his way the bill would go further, but if it passed the House in its present shape it would be a great gain, and the beneficial effect on the legislation of the Province would soon become apparent. Many women with whom he had had business dealings had displayed superior ability to some men he had had to do with. Women would not vote for an undesirable candidate. The Government were very slow in matters of the kind in question. They had not even the courage to get up and oppose the bill under consideration. He

appealed to the common sense of the members to see that the bill was given a substantial majority.

Not yet did the Government make any attempt to reply, and Colonel T. R. Atkinson (Norfolk North) scored a few more points on behalf of the Opposition. He thought the provisions of the bill before the House

were quite moderate, and saw no reason why the proposed legislation should not be advanced a stage.

Government Silence Broken.

Then the silence of the Conservatives was broken. Sir James Whitney said his own kindness of heart would not permit him to allow Mr. Proudfoot to suffer longer over the silence on the Government side of the House. So far no member who had spoken had addressed himself to the question before the Chair. Hon. gentlemen had talked platitudes and high abstract opinions on the general question of woman suffrage.

"I would ask the Prime Minister if I did not confine myself pretty well to widows and spinsters," interrupted the mover of the bill, amid laughter from Treasury and Opposition benches.

Sir James thought that remark at any rate would identify the intentions of his hon. friend. But the question of woman suffrage was much more important than the provisions of the bill before the House.

Not on Property Basis.

Referring to the provisions of the bill, the Prime Minister said that the municipal franchise had been given to widows and spinsters who owned property, because it was desirable that the property they owned should be represented. The Parliamentary franchise did not rest upon that basis; therefore, if it was a good thing, as it might be, to give women the municipal vote in respect of property they held, was that any reason why they should be given the Parliamentary vote, with which property had nothing to do? It was well understood that legislation was enacted at this time in response to public demand, but, while there were a few individuals in Toronto asking for the vote, there was no general feeling throughout the Province that the Parliamentary franchise should be extended to women. On the other hand, if there was a demand for adopting the principle of the bill, no reason had been given by hon. gentlemen opposite, and from that standpoint the passage of the bill would be an illogical act. In view of that circumstance, there was no duty upon the House to pass any bill into law "with reference to which there is no public demand whatever." The division was sixty-eight to eighteen.

Liberals Support Principle.

In the absence of Mr. J. C. Elliott (West Middlesex), who wired that his train was late, Mr. Rowell moved the western Ontario member's bill to amend the consolidated municipal act, which was defeated by 70 to 18. Mr. Rowell felt that no handicap or disability should be placed upon married women. The bill of Mr. Elliott was designed to remove the disability of coverture, and to give every married woman the same right to vote as widows and spinsters. The bill placed married women on the same basis as male persons, widows and spinsters with respect to the right to vote in Provincial elections. Mr. Rowell pointed out that throughout the Province in voting for the Board of Education both husband and wife were entitled to vote. He gave the analogy that if a farmer owned sufficient land to qualify himself and his son both might vote in municipal elections. If sufficient land was owned to qualify the farmer and two sons, all three might vote in municipal elections. He thought that was a good thing. He was in favor of anything in the nature of a bonus to the farmer. In appealing for votes for married women he pointed out that if two strangers were joint owners of property they were both entitled to vote, and he saw no reason why two members of the same family, if they were joint owners, should not be accorded the same privilege.

Different Bill.

Referring to the bill introduced by Mr. Macdiarmid (Elgin West), Mr.