

Noted Suffragist Tells Why Women Should Have the Vote

Clad in a black costume with touches of white at the neck and sleeves, gray hair, short stature, radiating kindness and force of conviction and character, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, the National honorary president of the Women's Franchise League of America, held an audience of sympathetic and interested hearers for an hour and a half last evening at the Men's Gymnasium with a talk on "Americanism."

Dr. E. H. Lindley introduced the speaker. Dr. Shaw said that all failures are attributed to women and all successes to men. Women's suffrage has not been a real success due to the many set-backs but that in every set-back something was won. One of the strong points of attack brought out by the anti-suffrage element is the allegation that women won't vote when they have the opportunity, yet millions of women voted at the recent presidential election. Other reasons are based on curiosity and sentiment. Dr. Shaw alleged that women don't know what real curiosity and sentiment is. She said, when a young country girl coming to the city desirous to see the sights of the cities, the shop windows and the displays, she was never able to do so because of the rows of men in front of her gazing into the window. The speaker visited the national convention of the Republicans, the Progressives and the Democrats and saw displayed a sentiment there, that should a body of women show the same, they would have been called fit objects for a lunatic asylum.

At the Republican convention the cause of much sentiment was a paper-mache elephant, carried about the hall by a delegate; at the Progressive convention it was men, some 250 pounds in weight, standing on chairs, waving their arms in unison to the tune, "We Want Teddy, We Want Teddy," and at the Democratic convention it was a man carrying a banner about the hall on which was inscribed, "Georgia Was His Mother's Home." Dr. Shaw said that if women exhibited sentiment over such trivial things, they would be subject to ridicule. The real trouble and obstacle in the way is the fact that the basic principle is not understood, there is no real conception of "Americanism." The arguments often employed have nothing to do with woman's suffrage.

Women are human beings the same as men and should have something to say about the conditions under which they shall toil, the environment in which they are placed, the work they are forced to earn a livelihood by, the education of their children. Shall they be deprived of this simply because they are not men?

Recently a state in drawing up a platform, had the three planks, protection, preparedness and Americanism as its important issues, when the discussion of Americanism came up, it was not fully Americanism without the enfranchisement of women. People of America have ideas and ideals much broader than they realize. For instance we call this nation a Republic or a republican form of government when a republican form of government is enacted by representatives elected by the people, not half of the people, but all of the people. If a certain portion is taken out and a certain portion left to rule it is a rule of the aristocracy, yet we think we are living in "the home of the brave and the land of the free."

Our forefathers, the Pilgrims, came to this country because of religious persecutions, for freedom of religion and yet before they were here very young they excluded from office Jews and Roman Catholics and burned at stake religious fanatics, doing that very thing, which they had sought freedom from.

The first basis on which representation was placed was a church basis, followed by the amendment that any person owning a certain amount of property might have the right to vote. The speaker cited a very humorous case from the court records where a man who did not have a poll tax, but paid a dog tax had secured the right to vote. Suppose that canine had have died, the man would have been denied the privilege of voting. Later it was decided to let all white men have the privilege of voting which was later amended to read, any male, and we read in the bible that God found it was not well for man to stand alone, and woman was created for a helpmate, yet women are denied this privilege. The constitution reads that every citizen shall have the right to vote, to have a right in the government of the people and by the people, yet women do not have the right of citizenship.

At the present time there are 46 states where women have the privilege of voting and not until recently has it been possible to get the federal amendment before the two houses, which requires a 2/3 vote before it can be submitted to the state legislatures where it requires a 3/4 vote for passage and the recent campaign waged by these women workers, resulted in enfranchisement being passed in 12 states and one territory. It is the fundamental principle that is hard to

impress upon the people. "Americanism" simply means that all citizens deserve the right of citizenship on equal terms.

Dr. Shaw said that American women are subjected to the most humiliating circumstances of any nation on the face of the earth; that now American women are placed as the subjects of America's former slaves. A foreigner only has to be here a certain length of time, until allowed to help make the laws which govern our American mothers, wives and children, have no voice in the laws which govern them. France, Germany and all foreign nations, are governed by their own people but no so in America where we are supposed to live in the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

A man's attitude in talking to a man is much different from that when talking to a woman. When talking to a man he is fair and square and usually talks with reason but when it comes to a woman, it is because she is related and he must look after her interest. Our grandmother's jobs have been taken from the home and placed in the factories where the grand-daughters must find employment. Women naturally shrinks from the publicity of her task, without protection and also from the knowledge of the antagonism against women workers. Miss Shaw cited a case in New York, where the Governor was asked to appoint a certain woman as fire inspector, but on account of good political work on the part of some man, the latter was rewarded with the position. In a building where girls were employed, fire broke out and it was discovered that every single law regarding fire protection had been violated. The doors opened the wrong way, the passages were obstructed, fire escapes were not

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ten and as a result 143 girls were dead, yet a working girl has no say so in the environment in which she is forced. Dr. Shaw said she thought it would be nice to have a big public park, beautiful in surrounding, where men who have been successful in political work could be rewarded for their efforts and then let the government be conducted on a business-like principle.

In regard to anti-suffrage workers, Dr. Shaw said they always answered their own argument. The antis aver that they would not use the ballot if the privilege were granted. If they didn't then what harm to grant it to them?

They also claim that they would vote just as their husbands wished them to vote. If men really believe this they would only be too willing to grant enfranchisement to women, for they spend much time in getting men's votes. It is said that in case women voted, their families would be neglected. Miss Shaw recently went to Denver, where women have the ballot, to see if the families were neglected. She learned that men have to neglect their business to go and vote, while women can take her "job" with her. They pushed the go-carts to the polls and kept their babies interested and quiet. The candidates are always on hand to take up this responsibility.

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