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"Maine" (excerpt from the Proceedings of the National Woman Suffrage Association Convention) 1903

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am glad of this opportunity to place on record the fact that the credit for the successful culmination of these preparations is very largely due to the indefatigable efforts of our president, Miss Jean M. Gordon. That the results of the convention may be great and far-reaching is the wish of us all. Respectfully submitted,

EVELYN W. ORDWAY, State President.

MAINE.

At no time in the history of our association has there been such active effort to promote suffrage propaganda as during the twelve months which have elapsed since our last report was written.

The suffrage clubs in the State have increased in membership and we have enrolled eighty new names on our list of members.

The clubs have kept up their regular meetings through the year, and in order that the interest in the work may not wane during the summer months, some of them have instituted a "field day," combining business and pleasure in a highly satisfactory manner.

On August 27 we observed our regular suffrage day at Ocean Park. This day has become a part of the regular program of this summer assembly, and last year, as formerly, was of great interest and profit. Rev. Anna Howard Shaw was the guest and principal speaker of the day.

Mrs. Fannie J. Fernald, superintendent of literature, has distributed about forty-five hundred suffrage leaflets and papers during the year. These articles have been sent to the agricultural fairs, suffrage clubs, members of the Legislature, debating societies, etc.

Some of the literary societies in the colleges have accepted our invitation to debate the question of suffrage, and in two instances have reported that the affirmative side won the debate.

Miss Vetta Merrill, superintendent of press work, has kept the papers supplied with suffrage articles and a large amount of educational work has been carried on through the press, by voluntary contributions from able writers on suffrage.

The Lewiston Journal has been a tower of strength to us, and we have realized press power through the able advocacy of its associate editor, Prof. L. C. Bateman. A large part of our advance is due to this fearless promoter of woman suffrage, and his earnest editorials have gone into thousands of homes, which we could not have reached otherwise.

Our twenty-second annual convention was held at Saco, October 1-3 inclusive. Speakers on the program were Dr. Abby Fulton, of Ellsworth; Miss Helen Knowlton, of Rockland; Miss Margaret Koch and Mrs. Etta H. Osgood, of Portland; Miss Laura A. DeMeritte, of Ocean Park; and Prof. Bateman, of Auburn.

The crowning event of the convention was the evening address by Mrs. Catt.

In conjunction with our regular State work we have endeavored to enlist the sympathy and co-operation of the Maine State Grange in our legislative campaign.

We have sent letters to every local and county Grange in the State, asking their endorsement of our movement for "municipal suffrage for the tax-paying women of the State."

Twenty-three local and three Pomona Granges responded in favor, and the State Grange, at its annual convention in December, not only accorded us a place on its program (at which time Mrs. Catt was the speaker) but also unanimously adopted a most comprehensive resolution, recommending that the next Legislature grant our request.

The legislative work itself has taken precedence of everything else during the year.

We secured the names of fifteen thousand tax-paying women to each of whom we sent a letter stating our plan of work and asking their co-operation.

These women represented every county and 239 of the cities and towns in the State, and the approximate valuation of the property on which they pay taxes is twenty-five million dollars. We received over eighteen hundred letters in reply to our request for endorsement, representing every county and 237 of the cities and towns—constituting a solid phalanx of suffrage sympathizers, the most of whom were entire strangers to us.

This has been a colossal undertaking culminating in a brilliant "Hearing" before the committee on legal affairs at Augusta on January 29. The suffragists were represented by many of the strongest women in the State, reinforced by Mrs. Catt. The antis also appeared with two speakers, who left their homes to tell us our place was at home. These ladies were Mrs. I. V. Woodbury and Mrs. A. J. George.

The committee eliminated the tax-paying qualification and gave in a majority report giving "municipal suffrage to all women" instead of to tax-payers only.

The bill as re-drafted was made a special order, and assigned to come before the House for discussion on February 13.

The debate, which was devoid of excitement, resulted in a large majority vote against the granting of suffrage to women.