

*To the Officers and Members of the Oregon State Woman Suffrage Association, greeting:*

Since last we met in this deliberative body, the most important progress ever yet attained in the prosecution of the Association work has been made.

Washington Territory, which has from the beginning of the agitation of the great question that convenes us shared equally with Oregon in all that has been done to enfranchise one-half of the people, no longer figures among existing powers as a suppliant. The ban of disfranchisement has fallen from the shoulders of her women, representatives of whom are among us to-day, clothed with the equal political power which came to their sons unasked as soon as they had reared them to the age of 21 years.

In struggling to secure the final recognition of political rights to the women of Washington, I found it necessary to canvass the Territory over and over for upward of twelve years, holding meetings everywhere, traveling by stage, rail, steamer, and often afoot among the people, holding meetings in cities, precincts and villages, speaking sometimes in churches, sometimes in school-houses, sometimes in court-houses and public halls, and when, as occasionally happened, all these were closed against me because of existing prejudices against the cause, addressing the public in bar-rooms and offices of hotels, meeting discouragements often, but encountering a goodly degree of kindly assistance in all parts of the country, and in every case circulating the *NEW NORTHWEST* and "writing up" the different localities in editorial letters, that the paper and its contents would be sought for and read and commented upon long after I had gone to other fields. To one who has not traversed these vast regions thus hurriedly alluded to, no brief outline can convey an idea of their magnitude, nor can such a person imagine the hardships connected with the work. But the cause grew and prospered, and each succeeding session of the Legislature showed marked progress among the people's representatives, until at last the work was finished by the assembly of 1883; and the immortal act that enfranchised the women of the State that is to bear the name of Washington, and thus make her the "mother of her country," reached its climax when Governor Newell signed the suffrage bill amid the mingling hallelujahs of booming guns and ringing bells. In Oregon the work has kept more than even pace with Washington, though, by virtue of her State government, she has a longer road to travel, and we can only reach the goal of our ambition by a more circuitous route.

The same long, laborious, patient canvass has been made here as there, and the same obstacles have been met and overcome in carrying on the work. Distributing my own labors abroad equally on both sides of the Columbia River, I have traveled each year many thousands of miles, and spoken in each geographical division an average of seventy times per year, during a period of twelve and a half years' duration, making, at a low estimate, 1750 public speeches, or nearly five years' steady work, counting 365 days to the year and making no discount for Sabbaths.

I need not tell you of the able work of our worthy President, who has so graphically spoken for herself, except in corroboration of her utterances. We have had from the first no fund to back us, but have gone forth from post to post in pursuance of our duty, relying for support on the merits of our growing cause.

Some months ago I conceived a plan for raising a fund for the coming campaign, which, though not yet ready for general publication, is satisfactorily explained to all who will aid it. And, although the plan is thus far flatteringly successful, it is comparatively in its infancy, and cannot reach fruition till after my return from Washington City, where I am to go at once to attend the sixteenth annual convention of the National Woman Suffrage Association, which meets March 4th, 5th and 6th at the federal capital. Immediately after my return (about April 1st), the campaign will begin in earnest. We must hold meetings in every precinct, and literally snow the country over with campaign documents.

We are more than gratified at the success attendant upon our work thus far. Leading politicians of all parties are in perfect accord with our movement, and are working with and for us with the intent to win. The movement stands alone upon its own merit. The question with us is not one of expediency, but of right. We do not ask any man to give up his political or partisan bias, his religious or non-religious views, or his temperance or anti-temperance ideas. All we ask is that when he casts his vote next June he will vote "Yes" upon the Woman Suffrage Amendment, which says, simply, grandly and explicitly, "The right of suffrage shall not hereafter be prohibited in this State on account of sex." Our neighbor women across the Columbia are watching us from their vantage ground with mingled feelings of hope for us and exultation among themselves. We believe that our fathers, husbands, brothers and sons are quite as chivalrous and progressive as their own; and we believe they will prove that our faith in them is well founded when the ballots are counted after election, and that we shall find ourselves invited to stand with them upon the broad platform of freedom, equality and justice, now jointly occupied by themselves and the men and women of Washington Territory.