

WOMEN PLEAD FOR VOTES

**Suffragists Make Brave Showing At
Legislative Hearing.**

REV. ANNA SHAW LEADS THEM

**Rev. Dr. Straton Declares Ballot
Box Should Rank Next To The
Altar In Holiness.**

[Special Dispatch to the Baltimore Sun.]

THE SUN Bureau, Annapolis, Feb. 23.—
Advocates of woman suffrage made a brave
showing in the hall of the House of Dele-
gates this afternoon, when they were ac-
corded a hearing by the Committee on Con-
stitutional Amendments. Over 400 ladies
came down from Baltimore, headed by Rev.
Anna H. Shaw, president of the National
Woman Suffrage Association; Mrs. Emma
Maddox Funck, president of the Maryland
Woman Suffrage Association, and Miss Et-
ta H. Maddox, of Baltimore, upon whom
devolved the duty of presiding over the
meeting.

Members of the committee seemed rather
shy of appearing. While the meeting was
called for 3 o'clock only one of the commit-
teemen made his appearance at the desk,
where such committees usually sit, up to
3.30, when speaking began. Mr. Pairo,
who helped the ladies organize the meeting,
espied Mr. Benson in the rear of the hall
and called him to the desk. Mr. Benson
came forward rather bashfully and took a
seat upon the Speaker's rostrum, but re-
mained alone for a while when two other
committeemen mustered up courage to join
him.

Mr. Pairo called the meeting to order,
read the Woman Suffrage bill and made a
few remarks that pleased the ladies. He
aroused enthusiasm by stating that he was
the first man to introduce a woman suf-
frage bill in the Maryland Legislature. He
then turned the meeting over to Miss Mad-
dox, who called upon Rev. Dr. J. B.
Straton, pastor of Seventh Baptist Church,
of Baltimore, for the first address.

Rev. Dr. Stratton's Address

Rev. Dr. Stratton said there are 7,000,000 women wage-earners in the country today, 1,000,000 of them being widows. "They have been forced out of their homes into business life by existing economic conditions," he said. "For the safeguarding of their rights they should be given equal political rights with male wage-earners.

"Woman ought to be given the ballot also because she will do the country a tremendous service; her splendid and pure influence will elevate our politics. Next to the altar of God the purest and holiest spot should be the ballot place and the ballot box."

The speaker closed with an eloquent tribute to womanhood and the refining, elevating influence of woman.

Dr. Flora Pollack, of the Johns Hopkins University, who followed, made the point that throughout nature it is the female, the mother, who protects her young. "Under our system," she said, "the mother is powerless to protect her children, and the law does not."

She argued that unfortunate and diseased children would be cared for better, resulting in a higher type of citizenship in time, if women could express their opinions and influence legislation at the ballot box.

Mrs. Funck told of the work of the Maryland association and said the meeting was an evidence of the fact that the work had borne fruit. "The position of woman today," she said, "is out of harmony with modern conditions—is an anomaly and should be changed. The large class of wealthy unemployed women need the ballot to give them responsibility, as well as women in active life, who should have it for their protection. Many persons say that women should not have the ballot because they don't want it. That is the very reason they should have it, why it should be forced upon them. They should be aroused to a sense of responsibility."

Rev. Peter Ainslie was introduced as a man who had lent valuable aid to the suffrage movement at a time when the movement was not nearly so popular as now. "At one time," he said, "it was argued that higher education was not for women, but no one, outside of China or India, makes such an argument now. Abraham Lincoln espoused the cause of woman suffrage. U. S. Hayes did so in Ohio and Theodore Roosevelt in New York. President Garfield predicted that women, in time, would have equal suffrage with men. It is not a question of whether it's a man or a woman, but intelligence ought to rule this age. In the States where woman suffrage now prevails humane legislation has greatly increased and has lifted those States far above those in which male suffrage alone prevails."

"Forty Years On The Way."

Rev. Anna H. Shaw said she had been 40 years "on the way—just as long as the children of Israel wandered in the desert. At the end of that time they saw the promised land," she said. "We see it ahead of us today. This is not at present a question of what the women want; it's a question of what the men of Maryland want—whether they shall be permitted by this Legislature to decide by their votes whether the right to vote shall be extended to women. After that it will be time enough to ascertain what women will do with the ballot.

"Now that women have to go out into the world and hustle for a living the old poetic, chivalric ideas about the sex don't work at all. It's all right to be a clinging vine, but you have got to have something to which to cling. If you ever notice the ivy and the oak in nature you will nearly always find that the oak to which the ivy clings most tenaciously is dead at the top.

"Men speak of protecting women, yet women are now unprotected by the only power that can protect them, which is the power of the ballot box. We hear that women can't fight. We can if we want to, but we do not want to. We hope to make fighting a thing of the past and help men make a better and happier world. Surround us with sixteenth century conditions and then give us poetry and chivalry; with twentieth century surroundings give us the ballot in order that we may meet modern conditions. A woman cannot be a Democrat, Republican, Prohibitionist or Socialist. She is only a woman. Only a man can be any kind of a political institution in Maryland, and any kind of a man can be that."

Following the afternoon hearing, a general meeting was held in the House chamber in the evening, which was addressed by Miss Belle Kearney and Rev. Dr. Shaw.