

equal suffrage was elected, and framed a constitution excluding women. A friend of the present writer talked with many of the members while the convention was in session. He says almost every lawyer in that body acknowledged, in private conversation, that the decision by which the women had been disfranchised was illegal. "But," they said, "the women had set the community by the ears on the temperance question, and we had to get rid of them." One politician said, frankly, "Women are natural mugwumps, and I hate a mugwump."

Later, in 1889, the question was submitted to the voters, and lost, the same elements that defeated it in the convention defeating it at the polls, with the addition of a great influx of foreign immigrants, consequent upon the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Dr. Abbott and our Eastern Antis say that the wish of the majority of women ought to settle the question. Not one of them had a word of rebuke for the dishonorable and illegal methods by which the women of Washington were prevented from voting as to whether they should continue to vote or not. When Wyoming was admitted as a State, after twenty years' experience of equal suffrage as a

Territory, there was no doubt that the majority of its women wished to vote. Nine-tenths of them were in the habit of voting; a constitutional convention, chosen by men and women together, had incorporated woman suffrage in the new State constitution by a large majority; and the constitution had been submitted to the voters, men and women together, and had been approved by them. Yet when it came up for ratification in Congress, the opponents first tried to have the equal suffrage clause struck out bodily. Failing in this, they moved to have it submitted again to the voters of Wyoming; and how submitted? To the women alone, in order to make quite sure that the majority of the women really wanted it? By no means; but to the men alone, the women to be allowed no voice in the matter; and this precious proposition actually came within a very few votes of carrying Congress. Dr. Abbott and our Antis had not a word of blame; they would have been glad to see the women of Wyoming disfranchised against their will. In short, they believe that the wish of the majority of women ought to decide the question if the majority are opposed, but that it ought not to be counted at all when the majority are in favor.

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## The Case of Washington.

BY ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, in the *New York Outlook*, lately referred to the fact that equal suffrage prevailed in Washington for a short time many years ago, and was abolished there. He says that the people of Washington had experience of women serving on juries, etc., and "retraced the step" they had taken,—a statement calculated to give uninformed readers of the *Outlook* the impression that equal suffrage worked badly. Dr. Abbott had probably forgotten the facts in the case. Opponents of equal rights do not like to remember them.

Women voted in Washington for the first time in 1884, and were disfranchised by the Supreme Court in 1887.

Equal suffrage was granted to women by the Legislature of Washington Territory in October, 1883. The women at once began to distinguish themselves there, as they have done in Wyoming and elsewhere, by voting for the best man, irrespective of party. The old files of the Washington newspapers bear ample evidence to this fact.

The first chance that the women had to vote was at the municipal elections of July, 1884. The *Seattle Mirror* said:

The city election of last Monday was for more reasons than one the most important ever held in Seattle. The presence of women at the voting-places had the effect of preventing the disgraceful proceedings usually seen. It was the first election in the city where the women could vote, and the first where the gambling and liquor fraternity, which had so long controlled the municipal government to an enormous extent, suffered defeat.

The *Post-Intelligencer* said:

After the experience of the late election it will not do for any one here to say the women do not want to vote. They dis-

played as much interest as the men, and, if anything, more. . . . The result insures Seattle a first-class municipal administration. It is a warning to that undesirable class of the community who subsist upon the weaknesses and vices of society that disregard of law and the decencies of civilization will not be tolerated.

Quotations might be multiplied from the papers of other towns, testifying to the independent voting of the women, the large size of their vote, the courtesy with which they were treated, and the greater quiet and order produced by their presence at the polls.

Next came the general election of November, 1884. Again the newspapers were practically unanimous as to the result. The *Olympia Transcript*, which was opposed to equal suffrage, said:

The result shows that all parties must put up good men if they expect to elect them. They cannot do as they have in the past—nominate any candidates, and elect them by the force of the party lash.

The *Democratic State Journal* said:

Any one could not fail to see that hereafter more attention must be given at the primaries to select the purest of material, by both parties, if they would gain the female vote.

Charles J. Woodbury visited Washington about this time. In a letter to the *N. Y. Evening Post*, he said:

Whatever may be the vicissitudes of woman suffrage in Washington Territory in the future, it should now be put on record that at the election, Nov. 4, 1884, nine-tenths of its adult female population availed themselves of the right to vote with a hearty enthusiasm. What is the result so far?

He goes on to say that he arrived in Seattle on Sunday, and was surprised at the quiet and order he found prevailing,



and at the general Sunday closing of the places of business:

Even the bars of the hotels were closed; and this was the worst town in the Territory (except Ainsworth) when I first saw it. Now its uproarious theatres, dance-houses, squaw-brothels, and Sunday fights are things of the past. Not a gambling house exists.

Women served on the jury, and meted out the full penalty of the law to gamblers and keepers of disorderly houses. The Chief Justice of the Territory at that time was Hon. Roger S. Greene, a cousin of U. S. Senator Hoar, a man of high character and integrity, and a magistrate celebrated throughout the Northwest for his resolute and courageous resistance to lynch law. In his charge to the Grand Jury at Port Townsend, August, 1884, Chief Justice Greene said:

The opponents of woman suffrage in this Territory are found allied with a solid phalanx of gamblers, prostitutes, pimps, and drunkard-makers—a phalanx composed of all in each of those classes who know the interest of the class and vote according to it.

It is to be hoped that the Rev. Dr. Abbott and our Eastern Antis like the company in which they find themselves. In his charge to another Grand Jury later, Chief Justice Greene said:

Twelve terms of court, ladies and gentlemen, I have now held, in which women have served as grand and petit jurors, and it is certainly a fact beyond dispute that no other twelve terms so salutary for restraint of crime have ever been held in this Territory. For fifteen years I have been trying to do what a judge ought, but have never till the last six months felt underneath and around me, in the degree that every judge has a right to feel it, the upbushing might of the people in the line of full and resolute enforcement of the law.

Gamblers and other bad characters, finding Washington too hot for them, crossed the border into British Columbia in such numbers as caused prominent men there to declare that British Columbia would have to adopt woman suffrage too, in self-defence. Hon. John D. Robson, in introducing a woman suffrage bill in the Parliament of British Columbia, said: "The women of Washington are voting all the gamblers and blacklegs out of

the Territory, and they are coming over here."

Naturally, the vicious elements disliked "the full and resolute enforcement of law." The baser sort of politicians also disliked the independent voting of the women. The Republicans had a normal majority in the Territory. But they nominated for a high office a man who was a hard drinker. The Republican women would not vote for him, and he was defeated. Next they nominated a man who had for years been openly living with an Indian woman and had a family of half-breed children. Again the Republican women refused to vote for him, and he was defeated. This brought the enmity of the Republican "machine" upon woman suffrage. The Democratic women showed equal independence, and incurred the hostility of the Democratic machine.

Then the ever-present liquor question became involved. Dr. Abbott is careful to remind his readers that woman suffrage has not led to prohibition, either in Wyoming or Colorado. (This ought to be a recommendation in Dr. Abbott's eyes, since he is himself opposed to prohibition.) Neither did it lead to prohibition in Washington; but a Legislature elected by men and women together passed a local option law which was extremely unpopular with the liquor interest.

Not long after, a change of administration at Washington led to a change in the Territorial Supreme Court. The newly appointed Chief Justice and a majority of the new judges of the Supreme Court were opposed to equal suffrage, and were amenable, it is said, to the strong pressure brought to bear upon them by all the vicious elements to secure its repeal. A gambler who had been convicted by a jury composed in part of women contested the sentence on the ground that women were not legal voters, and the Supreme Court decided that the woman suffrage bill was unconstitutional, because it had been headed "An Act to Amend Section So and So, Article So and So of the Code," instead of "An Act to Enfranchise Women." The Organic Act of the Territory, which stood to it in the place of a constitution, provided that

every bill must be fully described in its title. Nineteen other bills passed by the same Legislature had been headed in the same way as the suffrage bill, without being therefore declared unconstitutional, including the bill that authorized the sitting of the court which pronounced this decision. But no account was taken of that fact. The object was to get rid of woman suffrage; and the vicious elements rejoiced greatly.

But this decision was rendered a good while after the members of the next biennial Legislature had been elected by men and women together; and it did not invalidate the election, because according to law no member's election could be contested after a certain time had elapsed. When the Legislature met, in 1888, it re-enacted the woman suffrage bill, giving it a full heading, and strengthening it in every way possible.

Washington was about to be admitted as a State, and was preparing to hold a constitutional convention to frame a State constitution. There was no doubt that the majority of the women wanted to vote. Chief Justice Greene estimated that five-sixths of them had voted at the last election before they were deprived of the right. Two successive Legislatures elected by men and women jointly had re-enacted woman suffrage (for its continuance had been made a test question in the choice of the first Legislature for which the women voted, and that Legislature had been careful to insert the words "he or she" in all bills relating to the election laws). It was admitted on all hands that if the women were allowed to vote for members of the constitutional convention, it would be impossible to elect a convention that would wipe out woman suffrage. It was therefore imperative to deprive the women of their votes before the members of the convention were chosen. A scheme was arranged for the purpose. On the ground that she was a woman, the election officers at a local election refused the vote of Mrs. Nevada Boomer, a saloon-keeper's wife, who was opposed to suffrage. They accepted the votes of all the other women. She made a test case by bringing suit against them.

In the ordinary course of things, the case would not have come up till after the election of the constitutional convention. But cases for the restoration of personal rights may be advanced on the docket, and Mrs. Boomer's ostensible object was the restoration of her personal rights, though her real object was to deprive all women of theirs. Her case was put forward on the docket and hurried to a decision.

The Supreme Court this time pronounced the woman suffrage law unconstitutional on the ground that it was beyond the power of a Territorial Legislature to enfranchise women. The Organic Act of the Territory said that at the first Territorial election persons with certain qualifications should vote, and at subsequent elections such persons as the Territorial Legislature might enfranchise. But the court took the ground that in giving the Legislature the right to regulate suffrage, Congress did not at the time have it specifically in mind that they might enfranchise women, and that therefore they could not do so. The suffragists wanted to have the case appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States. If that court had sustained the decision of the Washington Supreme Court, it would have been a "ten-strike" for the opponents of equal rights, since it would have wiped out woman suffrage not only in Washington, but in Wyoming, and in all the other Territories that had granted full or partial suffrage to women. But Mrs. Boomer refused to let the case be appealed; her friends knew perfectly well that legally the decision had not a leg to stand on; and none of the women who favored suffrage could make a genuine test case and take it up to the U. S. Supreme Court, because none of them had had their votes refused. It was an adroitly combined conspiracy to keep the women from being allowed to vote as to whether they should retain the suffrage.

The women themselves being prevented from voting, their friends were not able to overcome the combined "machines" of both political parties, and the intense opposition of all the vicious and disorderly elements, at that time pretty large on the Pacific Coast. A convention opposed to



## ARE WOMEN TOO IGNORANT?

By Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker.

An excellent young woman, who believes fully in the true democracy that can only be had when women as well as men are responsible voters, said to me lately: "But women are so ignorant on public affairs, it does seem as if they ought to be educated before they are allowed to vote. It is dreadful to double the ignorant vote; and, besides, women might be bribed just as men are." To this I replied: "First, as to bribery, there would not be money enough to go around when you double the constituency. Second, and if there were, you couldn't find the women. They are all either at home, taking care of their children and working for their husbands, or at work in shops and private families, and not loafing in the streets and hanging around saloons as men are and it will be years and years before they could get into the Legislatures if they wanted to. Third, and when found, they will know too much to be bribed." Here is a specimen:

Some years ago, a young Catholic woman who had served in our family a long time as cook, asked me if I would attend one of her club meetings some evening, and give them a little talk. She had, it seems, been a member some time, but I had not heard of it before. I asked her about the club, and she handed me a little book, entitled "Constitution and Rules of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, Hartford, Conn., Organized August, 1887—Constitution Revised, 1891."

I went to a meeting in our City Mission Hall, a large and charming room which the club rented by the year. I found some two hundred women attending to the usual business, under the leadership of the president, a woman of forty perhaps, who showed herself an excellent parliamentarian, though her occupation was that of tailoress, and she went to work in a shop at 8 A. M., taking her lunch and returning home at 6 P. M. I made them a little talk, to the effect that, when our brothers of the republic should condescend to admit women to their counsels and the ballot-box, they would be astonished at the help they would receive from such women as themselves, and, until that time came, I saw little reason to hope that intemperance and licentiousness, poverty and starvation, would cease to afflict the body-politic. So I begged them to go on

with their good work, and wait patiently for the day of recognition. I found there were no restrictions in regard to religion, occupation, or nationality; only good character was requisite for membership. The main sections of the Constitution and By-Laws might serve as a model for the other societies which are being formed in towns and villages all over our country. The membership is now over four hundred, and there is no diminution of interest at the end of the eleven years of the club's existence.

So much for the education that the so-called lower classes are giving themselves. There are many similar clubs, I find, in our own little city; and only last winter I was invited to speak at a Fair given by a society of colored women of Hartford, who were working for the purpose of founding a State home for aged colored people of both sexes. Now, add to this the education that society women are giving themselves in the innumerable literary, scientific, and political clubs of the whole country, and what becomes of the fear of doubling the ignorant vote?

In regard to these clubs, Carroll D. Wright, in his late statistical report upon "Women's Clubs and Societies," has this to say of the number and variety of benevolent societies established and conducted by women:

Many secret benevolent organizations, more or less after the pattern of Masonry, have been formed, chiefly by American women, and, to a lesser degree, by Jewish women. Mutual benefit unions have been founded by Germans, Americans, English, Scandinavians, and Hebrews. Irish women have established house visiting, sick visiting, and beneficent societies. All nationalities have joined forces in forming women's auxiliaries to hospitals, asylums, refuges, and sanitariums. The training of girls to be servants, and the education of servants, have called many clubs into existence. Societies in aid of schools and poor scholars are another prominent feature. One of them, the Vassar Students' Aid, has nearly 3,000 members. Free kindergartens and day nurseries have been endowed and conducted by special societies formed for the purpose. Another phase of philanthropy is represented by boys' reading rooms, college settlements, nurses' settlements, and homes for unemployed girls. The number of these new institutions is surprising. It is said that at the present rate of progress, one-third of the women of New York will be organ-



ized within the next five years into societies whose aim is the betterment of the individual and the community.

Add to this the number of women now studying the higher branches (including always political economy) in our high schools, normal schools, and colleges, many of whom will become teachers in our public schools. On this point we have the testimony of no less a person than Prof. Harris, National Commissioner of Education at Washington. On my writing to him for accurate information as to the number of women compared with men who are now students at these institutions, he wrote me as follows:

I find, on making the actual calculation, that the women in secondary and higher education, added together, number 287,162, and the men number 235,296, equal to 54.9% of the former, and 45.1% of the latter. This, you see, is almost exactly 55% women to 45% men for the entire education higher than the elementary schools.

And President Capen, of Tufts College, said in a recent address: "Our colleges have doubled in numbers within ten years, and the number of women who are getting ready for college is astonishing. When all the women now preparing for college are educated and begin studying the social questions of their time, what may we not hope for in the solution of the difficulties that now confront us?"

Let us take courage, dear sisters, and not allow ourselves to be deluded by the fear that we are not sufficiently educated to take part in public affairs. Responsibility is all the education we need to-day, and when put to the test we shall not be found wanting.

#### PROGRESS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

It is often asserted by opponents that the movement for equal suffrage is losing ground. On this point, let the "hard facts" speak for themselves:

Sixty years ago women could not vote anywhere. In 1838, Kentucky gave school suffrage to widows. In 1861, Kansas gave it to all women. In 1869, England gave municipal suffrage to single women and

widows, and Wyoming gave full suffrage to all women. School suffrage was granted in 1875 by Michigan and Minnesota, in 1876 by Colorado, in 1878 by New Hampshire and Oregon, in 1879 by Massachusetts, in 1880 by New York and Vermont. In 1881 municipal suffrage was extended to the single women and widows of Scotland. Nebraska gave school suffrage in 1883, and Wisconsin in 1885. In 1886 school suffrage was given in Washington, and municipal suffrage to single women and widows in New Brunswick and Ontario. In 1887 municipal suffrage was extended to all women in Kansas, and school suffrage in North and South Dakota, Montana, Arizona, and New Jersey. In the same year, Montana gave tax-paying women the right to vote upon all questions submitted to the tax-payers. In 1889 municipal suffrage was granted to single women and widows in the Province of Quebec. In 1891, school suffrage was granted in Illinois. In 1893 school suffrage was granted in Connecticut, and full suffrage in Colorado and New Zealand. In 1894 school suffrage was granted in Ohio, a limited municipal suffrage in Iowa, and parish and district suffrage in England to women both married and single. In 1895 full suffrage was granted in South Australia to women both married and single. In 1896 full suffrage was granted in Utah and Idaho. In 1898 municipal and county suffrage have been granted to the single women and widows of Ireland, the women of Minnesota have been given the right to vote for library trustees, and the tax-paying women of Louisiana have been given the right to vote upon all questions submitted to the tax-payers.

Years ago, when equal suffrage was much more unpopular than it is to-day, some one asked Bishop Gilbert Haven if it were true that he had been speaking at a woman suffrage meeting.

"Yes," answered the Bishop, "I don't want to fall in at the rear of this reform; I mean to march with the procession!"

There can be no doubt as to which way the procession is moving.

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# Equal Suffrage Promotes Good Order.

Previous to women's voting, polling places were often located in untidy and most unsuitable places. Since the advent of women in politics, polling-booths are erected in cleaner and respectable localities, and profanity in and near the booths has disappeared. This improved environment we believe to be an external expression of cleaner political methods, for primaries, conventions, and legislative halls are more orderly, personal abuse of opposing candidates is less frequent, and the machine politician is far less in evidence than formerly.—*Mrs. Susan Riley Ashley, Denver, Col.*

In Colorado, equal suffrage has reformed the polling-places. If half the bad things that used to be told us about the polls were true—that drunken men stood there in rows, and that two-dollar bills flew to and fro between the politicians and the voters—the polls certainly were no place for decent women; but neither were they any place for decent men. Now they are fit for either decent men or decent women.—*Mrs. Mary C. C. Bradford, Denver, Col.*

The improvement that women's presence has made in the localities of primary meetings and polling-booths is characteristic of Western chivalry. In many precincts where formerly they were held in stables or drinking saloons, primaries are now convened in home parlors, and polling-booths are arranged in respectable buildings, and voting is invariably conducted with decorum.—*Mrs. Susan M. Hall, Denver, Col.*

Woman's influence is seen in the more orderly conduct of primary and caucus, and the improved condition of polling places, which are now never located in the vicinity of saloons. When the new voters discovered that the booths were often located in demoralizing neighborhoods, they petitioned the committees for suitable accommodations. The request was speedily granted. In one place, a church was opened for this novel service. In another, a poor woman was induced by the reward of ten dollars to convert her humble parlor into a polling booth. With removal from the vicinity of saloons, the temptation to clandestine treating is greatly lessened. A case of intoxication is rarely seen. Election day is as quiet as Sunday. A woman feels no more sense of publicity in going to the polls than in going to church or post-office.—*Mrs. Helen Gilbert Ecob, Denver, Col.*

Instead of rough or vicious men, or even drunken men, treating women with disrespect, the presence of a single good woman at the polls seemed to make the whole crowd of men as respectful and quiet as at the theatre or at church. To the credit of American men be it said that the presence of one woman or girl at the polls, the wife or daughter of the humblest mechanic, has as good an effect on the crowd as the presence of the grandest dame or the most fashionable belle. The difference in American and European deference to woman I have never seen so strikingly illustrated as in these throngs of people at the polls of this exciting and most serious election. The American woman is clearly as much of a queen at the polls, in her own bearing and the deference paid her, as in the drawing-room or at the opera.—*Hon. James S. Clarkson, of Iowa, after witnessing Denver election.*

The astonishment of strangers at the order and respectability of a Denver election has been noted in other visitors. One of these, after careful observation, remarked, "Why, is this all? I can't see anything out of the way. Where is the mob?" Election day is more quiet than Sunday.—*Mrs. Katharine A. G. Patterson, Denver, Col.*

Some results of equal suffrage in Colorado are generally conceded: (1) The improved moral quality of candidates nominated for office by the various parties; (2) a decidedly increased observance of the courtesies and decencies of life, at the different political headquarters, previous to election; (3) better and more orderly polling places; (4) a general and awakening interest, among both men and women, in matters of public health, comfort, and safety.—*Mrs. Ione T. Hanna, Denver, Col.*

The experience we have had in Colorado ought to demonstrate to every one that woman suffrage is not only right, but practical. It tends to elevate. There is not a caucus but is better attended, and by better people, and held in a better place. I have seen the time when a political convention without a disturbance and the drawing of weapons was rare. That time is past in Colorado, and it is due to the presence of women. Every man now shows that civility which makes him take off his hat and not swear, and deport himself decently when ladies are present. Instead of women's going to the polls corrupting women, it has purified the polls.—*U. S. Representative Shafroth.*



At our first election, before women voted, we had a perfect pandemonium. At the next election women voted, and perfect order prevailed, and has prevailed ever since. In caucus discussions, the presence of a few ladies is worth more than a whole squad of police.—*Hon. John W. Kingman, of Wyoming Supreme Court.*

Our polling places are as quiet and respectable as any other place at which women are expected to congregate, and in the general election machinery the improvement over methods that would be in vogue in the absence of women is very marked.—*Hon. John W. Lacey, of Wyoming Supreme Court.*

During my eight years of experience, I have never witnessed any misconduct or disturbance at the polls.—*Mrs. Vivia A. B. Henderson, of Cheyenne, president Wyoming Volunteer Aid Society.*

Equal suffrage has had the effect of making our elections the most quiet and orderly I have ever seen anywhere. Any woman may go to the polls unattended, with the same assurance of safety, respect, and courtesy as if she were going shopping or to prayer-meeting. A man would incur personal danger who should violate the rule of uniform courtesy to all women under such circumstances.—*Hon. Samuel T. Corn, of Wyoming Supreme Court.*

As a result of the new order of things, our caucuses and primary meetings are conducted with due regard to decorum, our conventions are more deliberative, and the kindly consideration which the American man always shows to woman has induced even the rougher type to consider that political gatherings in which women take part should be conducted in a decent and orderly manner. Woman entered upon the enjoyment of her new privileges with that ready adaptation which distinguishes American women. The State at once adopted an improved system of the Australian method of voting, and women, when they went to the polls, found that the disagreeable features which they had been taught to expect did not in reality exist.—*Hon. Martha Hughes Cannon, Salt Lake City, Utah.*

In Kansas, women have had municipal suffrage since 1887. A few years ago an inquiry was addressed to the Chief Justice and the judges of the State Supreme Court, asking how it had worked. All concurred in substance with Judge W. A. Johnston, who wrote: "In consequence,

our elections are more orderly and fair, a higher class of officers are chosen, and we have cleaner and stronger city governments."

In Idaho, equal suffrage was granted in 1896. The women of Idaho took part in a State election for the first time in November, 1898. The *Daily Statesman* of Boise says:

"The election passed off very quietly in this city, with no disturbance anywhere. The voters came and went, depositing their ballots quietly. There was even a dearth of challenges, usually a fruitful source of controversy, and the absence of active electioneering gave a Sunday school aspect to the polls. The saloons were closed, and the absence of private bottles was noticeable. No drunken men swagged about the polls, and the explanation was found in the presence of the women. The tidy appearance of the voting-places, which usually accumulate loads of filth before the polls have been opened more than a couple of hours, is also attributable to the presence and participation of the fair sex."

The *Wood River Times*, published at Hailey, Idaho, says editorially:

"While the campaign has not been entirely devoid of obnoxious features, it has been quite free of attacks upon the personal character of the candidates, and no personal collisions between candidates or their mutual friends have occurred. This is largely due to the accession of the women to the ranks of the voters."

Since the enfranchisement of women, most of the boisterousness and horseplay that formerly characterized elections has disappeared. Since September, 1893, I have witnessed two elections in New Zealand, and one in England, and I must say that, for quiet orderliness, the former compared greatly to the disadvantage of the latter.—*Mrs. K. W. Sheppard, Christchurch, New Zealand.*

After the passage of the Education Act in New Zealand, I had difficulty for some time in appearing on platforms without being pelted.\* That is one side reason why I believe in woman suffrage. No one is pelted now. Women attend all the political meetings, and it has done an immense deal of good. The men behave a great deal better.—*Hon. Hugh H. Lusk, ex-member New Zealand Parliament.*

\*The Education Act, which Mr. Lusk was instrumental in passing, established secular public schools. This aroused the wrath of the various denominations, which before that had divided the public school funds among their denominational schools.

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