

SUFFRAGISTS ASK FOR THE BALLOT

WOMEN PLEAD BEFORE COM-
MITTEES OF CONGRESS.

MANY ARGUMENTS URGED

Women's Interests Would be Furthered if They Were Permitted to Vote for Representatives in Congress—To Appear for Bill Again

Washington, Feb. 15.—Two or three hundred women, members of the National Equal Suffrage Association, made their annual plea to-day to the Senate Committee on woman's suffrage for the right to exercise the franchise. Senator Bacon presided and with him sat Senators Perkins, Wetmore and Beveridge. Rev. Anna H. Shaw presented the various speakers and brought to the committee a message from Miss Susan B. Anthony, the originator of the movement, in which she said the woman had done as much as the man to develop the country—a country the government of which is of the people for the people, not for the men by the men, and expressed the hope that women as well as men might be free.

Elizabeth Bacon, of Connecticut, made a plea for suffrage largely on the ground of property right.

Mary Bentley Thomas, of Maryland, asked for her sex the right to assist to their full capacity in promoting the interests of the race. She said Maryland protected its terrapin, but not its women.

Rev. Antoinette Blackwell, 80 years old, who was introduced as the first ordained woman minister of the country, made an especial plea for purity in the press.

Senorita Huidobro, of Chile, pleaded for "the beautiful rest of the ballot," and warned the committee that if the United States was not expeditious the women of Chile and Argentina would assert their rights in advance of the women of this country, as their Constitution contained nothing to prohibit equal suffrage.

Miss Anne Mills, of Geneva, N. Y., said the women wanted to be placed on an equality with men, but not on a pinnacle above them. Like Josh Billings's wasp, she said women had a business end, and many of them had had a stinking experience in business affairs, due to discrimination because of sex.

Mrs. Susan Fessenden, of Massachusetts, said that "God never intended that there should be any especial use in being a man."

Mrs. Shaw closed the presentation of the case with an argument for the passage of the bill giving women the right to vote for members of the House of Representatives. If compelled to go to each of the states, a long time would be necessary to secure results. She said that foreigners in the United States were far more prejudiced than natives, and expressed the opinion that the end sought would soon be attained if only native Americans were to be dealt with. As going to show that women are intellectually equal to men, she said that 85 per cent. of the prizes offered by twenty-two co-educational institutions last year had been awarded to female students, despite the fact that only 33 per cent. of the total attendance were women.

In closing the meeting Senator Bacon expressed the hope that the committee might see the ladies again, and Mrs. Shaw replied that unless the bill was passed they certainly would have that pleasure.

Fifty delegates attended the hearing before the House Committee on Judiciary. Mrs. Florence Kelley, secretary of the Consumers' League, New York, was in charge of the hearing. Arguments were presented by various speakers that women should be permitted to exercise the franchise, one being on the ground that they may better protect the home product—children.