

TALE FOR THE TIMES

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journals, and throughout the country women were clamouring to contest the oncoming General Election.

The old place didn't seem the same somehow, the Cabinet Ministers remarked to one another, as they strolled along the carpeted corridors, giving a wide berth to the spraying fountain. They'd been devoted to the place where they'd spent so many uneventful sessions, but perhaps they wouldn't bother to contest the General Election. And most of the other M.P.'s felt the same way.

COMPARATIVELY few male candidates stood in the General Election, and when Parliament assembled, there were only three male members, all of whom, fortunately, played croquet. Selina became the Dominion's first woman Prime Minister. Her first step was to introduce a bill whereby the existing Parliament was empowered to hold office for the duration of the peace and one year after, and she then settled down to put through her programme of enlightened social legislation.

Meanwhile, the members of the old Parliament realised that it was useless for them to do anything to get back their power by constitutional means, so they began an Underground Movement to extract from the cellars of the Houses of Parliament, where they had been carelessly bundled, all the old red carpets and horsehair furniture which had decorated the House in their younger and happier days. By private subscription they raised enough money to purchase an old, half-stone, half-wooden building rather similar to that which had housed their triumphs and defeats, and, forming themselves into a club, they prepared to spend the rest of their lives rather as they had spent them before the triumph of the Feminist Movement.

AND what of Selina? After 10 years of office, she was forced to realise that a Parliament composed entirely of women was no more likely to be completely efficient and completely disinterested than a Parliament composed entirely of men. In spite of the triumph

of her life's dream, she was not completely contented. Her children had been something of a disappointment to her, for in spite of her careful fostering in them of a Sense of Civic Responsibility, none of her six daughters had seen fit to follow her into Parliament. Instead of being interested in Society as a whole they had interested themselves in one particular section of it, and their mother's position had given them the entrée into the most exclusive of racing circles. All six of them had won international fame as jockeys, and though Selina realised that she ought to hail their achievement as another outpost gained for Feminism, she rather regretted that they could not have joined

something that demanded a less blatant uniform.

So at the conclusion of her Premiership, Selina resigned and went back to the Canterbury Plains. Her husband was very pleased to have her back, because the cooking hadn't been the same since she left, and he had been beset by hordes of women journalists who had wanted photos of the living room and details of his domestic life. And Selina herself was very glad to be back, because in spite of all the new carpets and cheerful chintzes she knew that the House of Representatives could never be as pleasant a place to work in as her own kitchen.

—M.B.

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