

he will become as eloquent as a young author trying to persuade a Magazine-editor to accept his first story. The very first question that the Council was called upon to deal with, was, if I remember correctly, of a judicial character. A pig had broken into a field and the owner of the animal was sued for damages by the proprietor of the field. This matter called forth such a lengthy discussion, that it required fully two days to settle it. My informant alone spoke four hours on this subject, and as he confided to me later, he had by no means exhausted it. Of course, such a state of affairs is possible only among our Indians, whose patience and stoicism are proverbial. His speech was listened to with interest and received with a peculiar sound, "Hm-m-m", uttered by every chief, as a sign of approval. The speeches of the other chiefs varied in length according to the degree of eloquence possessed by the individual speakers. A peculiar feature of the debate was the fact that no speaker asked for the floor. A chief signified his intention of speaking by rising. If two or more legislators arose at the same time, the oldest among them was given priority. At about five o'clock in the afternoon an adjournment was taken until the next day, without any vote having been cast by the Assembly. The casting of votes is entirely unknown to these primitive legislatures.

Owing to the tendency of the chiefs to address the Council in lengthy speeches, the Assembly has to meet very often and for long periods, lasting from two to five days. This is so much more the case, as the Council is vested with legislative, executive and judicial powers. Every chief is therefore reimbursed for the loss of his time, receiving from the general funds of the council \$1.50 per session. The compensation has the quite natural effect that every Iroquois strives hard to attain to the position of chieftianship.

There are in all eighty-eight chiefs and sub-chiefs, representing the Onondaga, Seneca, Moahwk, Cayuga, Oneida and Tuscarora tribes. The sub-chiefs take the places of chiefs in cases of illness or absence, and they are then entitled to the usual compensation. A chief is elected for life and cannot be deposed. It is, however, an unwritten law among the chiefs to resign at the age of seventy. As soon as such a vacancy occurs, a new chief is elected. And here comes the strangest thing of all! The election of chiefs does not lie in the hands of the male members of the tribe or clan. It is the weaker sex alone that participates in this important function. As soon as a vacancy occurs, either through death or resignation, all woman of the clan, to which the former chief belonged, assemble and elect a man of the same clan, who is to fill the vacancy. The name of the newly-elected chief is, as a matter of form, submitted to the oldest man of the clan for approval. I do not know of any case, where such an approval was refused. This custom whereby only the female members of a clan may participate in the election of chief, although of a totally different origin, may be nevertheless quoted as proof that our Indian brothers have settled the question of "Votes For Women" long before we ever dreamt of the importance of that problem.