

## JUTTA BOJSEN- MØLLER'S SPEECH, JUNE 6 1915, ON 'HIMMELBJERGET', DENMARK

Now – when in a short while we will be going to the mountain [Himmelbjerget] to plant an oak in commemoration of the day, the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1915, when women were given the same rights as men – one recalls the little trees in Bjørnson's story, trees which in the face of great adversity, most strikingly from the mountain itself, finally – through small steps forward – covered the mountain, and when they at length lifted their heads over the top of the mountain and look around, exclaimed "Ah! It is a gift to arrive."

In the same way have we women fought for half a century under adversity, ridicule and insult – almost the worst from women themselves – but still with the advancement brought about by taking small steps, until we have now finally reached our goal, and now like the little trees must exclaim "Ah! It is a gift to win the victory."

It is probably the women who are the happiest with the new Constitution; for the men it is merely an expansion, but for us it is the totality.

When in 1849 the King shared his power with the people, women were not considered [part of the people], but we still rejoiced over it [the Constitution], as you can see in the poem by Mads Hansen from that time: "This day shall never be forgotten; it will be celebrated by the blue flowers of the field and by the Danish women."

Only when a young girl of 18 years, Mathilde Fibiger – like the child in "The Emperor's New Clothes" – cried out: "Yes, but it is entirely unjust!" – did we begin to reflect, and we took to covering the mountain.

Yes, I have been here on Himmelbjerget many times, and rejoiced over "the twelve-year-old boy in canvas trousers and a home-spun shirt, a simple citizen of peasant descent, but with a sunbeam in his eye."

The sunbeam was the right to vote, no difference made between poor and rich, and I have been ashamed like others were, that we did not better guard King Frederik's gift, but allowed them to take away that sunbeam – at least in one Parliament, so that my father, who had been part of drafting the old Constitution, could no longer go and participate in the celebration of the new [Constitution] from 1866.

But now, now we must rejoice, now the sunbeam has returned, and with greater truth than the first time, since now all women and all servants have been included, so that we now in truth can sing: This day – the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1915 – will be celebrated by the blue flowers of the field and by the Danish women."

Yes, it was a great day that day in Parliament, when the new Constitution was ratified by all parties. We had to cheer, and for that day we thank the men, for without them we would not have had it [this day].

But now that we have arrived at the mountain, and look around as the little trees, what do we see: The entire world is an inferno of fire, horrors and misery. Claudius, in 'Wandsbecker Bote', says: "War, war – thankfully I am not to blame." Yes, we can also say that thankfully we are not to blame, and yet I must say – like Bjørnson – "For we would rather that the land burned down than that it fell."

But it should not lead to its fall, and we hope that now – now that we are included, and also will have a part in what happens in the country – that there will be another way to settle strife than to kill each other and burn the land.

Bjørnson once said to me: "Mrs. Møller, the women must join us if goodness is to triumph in the world." So help us God, we are sinners just like the men, but we have something that the men lack, and that neither the little nor the big homes of Denmark can do without, and that is our femininity, motherhood, the 'majesty of kindness' as Grundtvig calls it. It is a present from the great majesty of kindness, the hero, the friend, and only when we include him can goodness triumph. "King of kings, only you can guard the land of our fathers]."