NOT WANTED IN MARYLAND

Women Are Not Permitted to Practice Law in the Courts of That State.

Maryland is almost the only state in the union in which women are not permitted to practice in the courts of law. Chief Justice McShervey, of the supreme court, lately handed down his opinion upon the application of Miss Eta II. Maddox for admission to the bar of the state, says from a report of the next section.

The opinion denies that the right to practice law is natural or inherent. This court has already held that it is a matter entirely regulated by the legislature, which can "designate the class of persons who may be admitted." And this court held that this was not in conflict with the fourteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States, as the regulation was one of the police powers particularly reserved to the states.

Another question decided involved an interpretation of the act of 1895 regulating admission to the bar. The law previously to that had expressly limited admission to male citizens. The act of 1895 uses the masculine pronoun or adjective throughout in referring to the applicants. Under this can be interpreted to include the feminine gender, then the court can find no legislation upon which to base a right to admit the present applicant.

By common law no woman can take part in public affairs. It is clear that the act mentioned did not intend to enlarge the class allowed to practice law and no forced interpretation of it should be allowed to overthrow the specific common law rule.

The court took no ground against the admission of women, but held itself without the power to admit.

State Senator Moses, of Baltimore, will introduce a bill in the next legislature to give women a chance to practice law in Maryland. The refusal of the court of appeals to permit Miss Maddox to take the bar examination has decided him to remove the obstruction of the law from the path of women's advancement. He says:

"I expect to introduce a bill which will give women the same right at the bar that men have. I think they should have full access to all the avenues of commercial activity that men possess. I have talked with several members of the bar on the subject and not one of them has expressed himself as against the admission of women to practice law. There are many cases which require the peculiar delicacy of a woman to handle. Many domestic cases are of such a nature that they cannot be handled by a man with them and suffer great hardship often rather than humiliate themselves. I do not think that there would be any great number of them take up the profession, and to open the door can do the profession no harm."