

**Our National Sin.**

Whether a government of men, by men, over all women be the best possible government may be debatable in a land where a government is openly founded on such a claim, but so long as it is professedly a government of the people founded on the right of self-rule, the question of whether half the people should or should not be recognized as rulers is removed from the region of debate. Under such conditions a masculine oligarchy becomes an immorality deeply dyed with hypocrisy, and it is the sacred duty of every lover of truth to denounce and resist it whether she wishes to use the ballot herself or not. An honest oligarchy may be deserving of respect; a sham democracy never, for if the very government itself be a hypocrite the moral sense of the people must be hopelessly confused. Therefore, every man and woman who strives to secure to the now disfranchised half of the people the rights and privileges the Constitution professes to confer upon them is working to draw the government up to a higher plane of morals. At present we behold a right accorded in strongest terms by the Constitution of a Nation deliberately and forcibly withheld by its Supreme Court; the inheritance given to both the daughters and the sons by the fathers, forcibly retained in the sole possession of the sons.

Whether any women or all women want their rightful share in this inheritance, what they would do with it if they had it, and whether it might prove to be the best, or the worst, possible thing for themselves, are all side issues which under our present Constitution it is unnecessary to consider. Besides, there is but one scientific method of settling such speculations and that is to accord women the political rights the Constitution promises to all its citizens, and await the results.

But if we are to have a true government of the people, if half the people are to be ruled not only without their consent but against their intelligent protest, why let us at least, in the interests of public morality, bring our professions into harmony with our practice. Our National sin is not in selling pinchbeck but in loudly proclaiming to all the earth that our miserable pinchbeck is pure gold.—*Ellen Battelle Dietrick.*

The night has a thousand eyes,  
The day has one;  
Yet the light of the bright world dies  
With the setting sun.  
The mind has a thousand eyes,  
The heart has one;  
Yet the light of a whole life dies  
When love is done.

**Federal Suffrage.**

Members of the Committee for the several States and Territories should present the matter to every State organization of men and women; should, as far as possible, urge auxiliaries and individuals to push the work in their respective localities, and see that at all rallies, assemblies, mass-meetings and picnics, the matter is presented.

The work need not be confined to members of the committee, but the chairman earnestly requests the co-operation of every person who favors this line of work. Send on individual or collective memorials, or memorials of organizations or meetings officially signed.

The following is suggested as a form of memorial.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress Assembled:*

WHEREAS, the right to vote for members of the House of Representatives is, by the Constitution of the United States, vested in the people of the United States without condition, limitation or restriction, and women are people: Therefore, we adult citizens of the United States, earnestly request your honorable bodies to pass a bill enabling women citizens of the United States to vote or members of the House of Representatives.

(If signed by a meeting or organization the following should be added:)  
The (name of Association or meeting) assembled on this—day of—1902, approved the above, and directed their officers to certify this fact, (Signatures)

Petitions and memorial should be sent to Clara Bewick Colby, Chairman of Federal Suffrage Committee, Washington, D. C.

**The Woman's Tribune**

Published Weekly at Washington, D. C.

Is the only Woman Suffrage Paper contributed to by ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.  
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CLARA BEWICK COLBY, Editor and Publisher.

**THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.**

*Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.*

Vol. 2

WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY, 1893.

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THE NATIONAL BULLETIN is to supply Woman Suffrage Societies with information and argument at a low price. Each month something of interest will be presented which should have a wide distribution.

**Report of Federal Suffrage Committee.**

Immediately after my appointment as chairman of the Committee on Federal Suffrage I published in the WOMAN'S TRIBUNE, and afterwards in the *National Bulletin*, the argument of Francis Minor, which having been published in the *Arena* of December, 1891, had engaged public attention. The bill as prepared by Mr. Minor was sent to Hon. Clarence D. Clark, of Wyoming, and was by him presented in Congress April 25th, and was referred to the Judiciary Committee of the House. It reads:

**AN ACT**

To protect the right of citizens of the United States to register and to vote for members of the House of Representatives.

WHEREAS, The right to choose members of the House of Representatives is vested by the Constitution in the people of the several States, without distinction of sex; but for want of proper legislation has hitherto been restricted to one half of the people; for the purpose, therefore, of correcting this error, and of giving effect to the Constitution:

Be, it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. At all elections hereafter held in the several States of this Union for members of the House of Representatives, the right of citizens of the United States of either sex, above the age of twenty-one years, to register and to vote for such representatives, shall not be denied, or abridged, by the United States, or by any State, on account of sex.

I then sent a copy of Mr. Minor's argument with the text of the act marked to every member of the House; and to every member of the Judiciary Committee, the same enclosed in a personal letter, stating that such a bill had been introduced, its number, and that it was now in their hands for consideration. I begged their early and favorable consideration of the matter, but no reply was received from any of them; so I have no means of knowing whether they deemed the privilege of voting for members of their body worthy of being exercised by women citizens or not.

The duty of securing members of the Committee from the States being laid upon

me, I proceeded to write letters to secure the intelligent co-operation of one woman in each State who would agree to present the subject before every organized body of men and women in the State. I sent each one a bulletin which explained the work, and the form of memorial to be used. I had much difficulty in finding women who were willing to even promise to undertake so arduous a work, while at the same time I could not give them even a postage stamp towards the expense. After writing many letters I obtained the following members for the Committee: Alabama, C. J. Hildreth; Arkansas, Fannie J. Chunn; California, Mary M. Bowman; Connecticut, Isabella Beecher Hooker; District of Columbia, Ella M. S. Marble; Georgia, H. Augusta Howard; Illinois, Emma Smith Devoe; Indiana, Helen M. Gougar; Iowa, Catherine M. Pierce; Kansas, Elizabeth F. Hopkins; Kentucky, Josephine K. Henry; Louisiana, Eliza C. Ferguson; Maine, Ann H. Greeley; Maryland, Dr. N. V. Mark; Massachusetts, Evalene L. Mason; Michigan, M. A. & M. E. Root; Missouri, S. M. Ford; Montana, H. C. Worthington; Nebraska, Helen M. Goff; New Hampshire, Marilla Marks Brewster; New Mexico, Mamie E. Marble; New York, Isabella Howland; North Dakota, Anna Giertsen; Ohio, Louisa Southworth; Oklahoma, M. H. Switzer; Oregon, Abigail Scott Duniway; Pennsylvania, Matilda Hindman; Rhode Island, Ellen Bolles; South Carolina, Virginia D. Young; South Dakota, Elizabeth Wardall; Tennessee, Lide Meriwether; Texas, Elizabeth Fry; Utah, Emmeline B. Wells; Vermont, Laura Moore; Virginia, Orra B. Langhorne; Washington, Mary J. Chamberlain; West Virginia, M. M. Holbert; Wisconsin, Rev. Olympia Brown; Wyoming, Theresa A. Jenkins.

In addition to securing these persons to have charge of the State work, I obtained by personal solicitation the local assistance of many persons who have sent in a goodly number of the petitions received.

Petitions have been received from twenty States as follows:

- Georgia, 2—State W. S. A. and Atlanta Citizens.
- Illinois, 4—Harvey Prohibition Club; E. S. A., 155 members; First Congressional District; State E. S. A.
- Indiana, 2—24 Citizens; Elkhart Federal Association, 320 members.
- Iowa, 2—Polk Co. W. S. A.; Newton E. S. S., 49 members.
- Kansas, 5—Bible Meeting of Salina Citizens; Beloit, Attica, Clay Centre, and Wichita Suffrage Societies.
- Kentucky, 2—State and Kenton Co. E. R. A.



Maine, 3—Citizens of Hancock Point, Stroudwater, and Ellsworth.

Michigan, 6—Suffrage Societies of Bay City 104; Grand Rapids, Lansing, 20; Zilwaukee; Political Equality Club of Grand Rapids, 62; State Convention W. C. T. U. and Citizens of Detroit, 558.

Minnesota, 2—Ellsworth W. C. T. U. and 102 Citizens.

Nebraska, 16—State W. S. A.; David City Union; Beatrice Inter-State Chautauqua; Mass Meeting of Citizens of Wayne; and 600 Citizens of Pender, Kearney, Crawford, Chadron, and Omaha.

New York, 16—Fredonia and Cherry Creek Granges; Sherwood I. O. G. T., 68 members; Suffrage Societies of Castle, Perry, Cassadaga, Easton; Dunkirk 120; Warsaw, 67, and Fredonia 22. The Unions of Fredonia, Mayville 35; Perry, Castle, Sherwood, and Scipioville 38; 19 Citizens of South Stockton.

Ohio, 13—State W. S. A.; Suffrage Societies of Toledo, Massillon, Warren 25, Willoughby, Ashtabula 32, Cuyahoga Falls, Talmage, Alliance 22, Canal Fulton 16, Celina, Akron and Canton 36.

Pennsylvania, 1—Swarthmore Woman Suffrage League.

Rhode Island, 15—Pawtucket W. C. T. U., and 324 Citizens of Providence, Little Compton, Pawtucket, Charlestown, Chepachet, Caroline and Pascoag.

South Carolina, 1—State Equal Rights Association, 66 members.

South Dakota, 2—State E. S. A. and A. L. I. U., Virginia, 1—Col. Daingerfield, Mrs. K. G. Paul, Lady Manager, and 8 other Citizens.

Vermont, 1—State Woman Suffrage Association. Washington, 1—State Woman Suffrage Association. Wisconsin, 1—State Woman Suffrage Association. United States, Federal Suffrage Association.

These petitions have all been properly filed, and sent to the Congressmen from whose districts they had been obtained. In every case when a petition was presented to a member for the first time it was accompanied by a letter calling special attention to it. From some of the members acknowledgments have been received, and in two cases cordial endorsement was given. Hon. Wm. Baker, of Kansas, in stating that he would present the petition, added, "I shall be very glad if I can do anything for the enfranchisement of the wives and mothers of our country." Hon. Robinson, of Pennsylvania, said, in acknowledging the memorial of the Woman Suffrage League of Swarthmore, Pa., that he would be obliged if I would notify the friends of Swarthmore that he had given the matter proper attention. Hon. McKem, of Nebraska, promised to present the petitions, but added that it was his opinion that they would produce no effect, for the reason that members are not certain how it would be received by their constituents.

Thinking to obtain some wise counsel that would help the N. A. W. S. A. to decide whether or not this is a wise line of work, I wrote a few weeks ago to nineteen

U. S. Senators, all of them known to be (mildly) friendly to our cause, and with all official formality, begged the favor of their opinions upon the merits of this line of work. I received only one reply, and therefore I conclude that these honorable gentlemen are all absent looking after their own interests in their respective legislatures. Senator Dolph, of Oregon, replied:

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
Washington, D. C., Jan. 7, 1893.

Mrs. Clara Bewick Colby, Chairman,  
Federal Suffrage Committee, 1325 10th St.,  
N. W., City.—Dear Madam: I am just in receipt of your favor of the 2nd inst. I have not critically examined the question as to the power of Congress to prescribe the qualifications of voters for Members of Congress; but my present impression is that it has not that power, that that power is not conferred upon Congress by the Constitution, but that the qualifications of electors for members of Congress are determined by each State in prescribing the requisite qualifications for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature.

Yours truly,  
J. W. DOLPH.  
As this seems the prevailing opinion, I will briefly state the argument on which our demand for Federal Suffrage is based.

The Supreme Court has decided that the right to vote for members of Congress is based upon the Constitution of the United States, Article I, Section 2.

"The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature."

In the case of Scott vs. Stanford the decision of the Supreme Court emphasized the fact that "people" and "citizens" are identical terms. In the case of Minor vs. Happersett it was held that women were citizens and while in this same case the Court held that the Constitution of the United States does not confer the right of suffrage upon any one, some years later, in 1884 in the Yarborough case, the Court decided that the right of federal suffrage does exist. The language used was explicit. The Court said:

"But it is not correct to say that the right to vote for a member of Congress does not depend on the Constitution of the United States. The office, if it be properly called an office, is created by the Constitution and by that alone. It also declares how it shall be filled, namely, by election."

The right to vote for members of Congress is thus vested in the people, women as well as men, but Congress allowed the States to fix the qualifications for the exercise of this right. That is, it said the United States would accept for voters for members of the House of Representatives the

qualifications that the States required for electors. The power to make regulations concerning the exercise of this right is reserved by Congress to itself in Section 4, Article I which provides

"The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators."

The necessity for having the paramount authority over the rights of citizens remain in the National Government was shown by Mr. Madison, one of the framers of the Constitution, in the debates in the Virginia Convention of 1788 which was called to ratify the Federal Constitution. Mr. Madison was asked to explain the meaning of the fourth section, particularly as to why Congress had an ultimate control over the time, place, and manner of holding elections of Representatives, to which he replied, that the power was reserved because "should the people of any State by any means be deprived of the right of suffrage, it was judged proper that it should be remedied by the general Government."

Thirty millions of people are deprived by their States of the exercise of their rights as citizens of those States, and because Congress has not exercised its reserved right of protecting citizens of the United States they have been deprived of all representation in the halls of Congress. Women without a State they have been by the wilful and wicked insertion of the word "male" into State Constitutions. Women without a Nation they have been by neglect of Congress to make such regulations that the States should not be able to overstep the bounds of their authority and prevent citizens of the United States from exercising this right of federal suffrage. Now we are asking Congress to remedy this neglect and exercise its reserved power for our protection. It is the sisters of the family appealing to the father to protect their relationship to him and to let them have speech and audience with him, and now we want Uncle Sam to say, "Yes daughters, while I cannot interfere with your quarrels among yourselves, I will certainly let you have a chance to tell me all about it, and will see that you have a voice in whatever concerns the general welfare of this great family of ours. I recognized your right to this in the first place, but I have been a little careless in leaving all the arrangements for providing for this to the big, strong brothers who pushed in ahead. Now that you have called my attention to it I am very glad that I have not deeded away all control of my household."

One who does not agree with this view of federal suffrage claims that it is apparent

that States do have control over elections for members of Congress from the fact that they have made qualifications for electors which are different from those made by Congress which require five years residence for U. S. citizenship while in many of the States aliens vote having been in the country only six months or a year. But two wrongs do not make one right. There is no doubt that the States have transcended their authority equally in presuming to let men vote for members of Congress who are not citizens and in prohibiting women from voting who are citizens. And the National Government has been equally negligent or indifferent in both cases and both errors have done it grievous harm.

Aside from the chances of securing the passage of such a bill the educational work is of great value. The pressing sharply home upon an age to which the principles of our Republican Government have largely become an "iridescent dream," the fact that women are citizens, part of the sovereign people, whose power has been wrested from them by the other half, must have its result in arousing men to their injustice, and women to the humiliation of their position. This insisting upon the power of the federal Government to protect its citizens is in the interest of national patriotism and national existence. As citizens of the United States with all the powers and dignities of sovereignty inherent in us and only waiting for an Act of Congress to bring them into activity, we do not feel ourselves to be without a country and we are encouraged to make more strenuous efforts to enter into possession of the inheritance bequeathed to us by the fathers. As we ask the States to amend their constitutions and give us full suffrage, but urge that they give us at once such measure of suffrage as it is plainly within their power to bestow, so we ask Congress to pass an amendment that the States may be prohibited from disfranchising women because of sex, and at the same time we ask it to apply this limited remedy which lies in its power to enact.

The special value of this form of agitation is that it recognizes women as part of the fountain-head of power, and while we ask—now for this, and now for that,—besieging the fortifications of injustice from many sides, we will not forget that the right of voting, and all right is ours; that our Magna Charta came straight from the Creator Himself when He made us human beings, and that in attempting to win men to concede the exercise of these rights we are educating them and ourselves, and are working in harmony with the eternal laws of justice and also in harmony with the equally inflexible and beneficent laws of social evolution.—  
Clara Bewick Colby, Chairman.



for men having made these laws, they show the high respect of men for women who are their political equals.

The property laws are as favorable as are found in any other of the States which have enacted advanced legislation in this line, but it is in the more important line of laws relating to person that Wyoming shows a marked difference. Although, in common with many other States, Wyoming fixes what is called the age of consent at 14 years, yet it does what no other State does—clearly defines the different offenses against the person of women, making them dovetail, and thus furnishing continual protection. It is a penitentiary offense for any person to exercise the arts of the procurer over any female under eighteen years, even with her consent, or over eighteen years of age without it; and the Statute omits those usual words of limitation which extend protection only to the virtuous, leaving exposed to the "tender mercies of the wicked" those who are in sorest need of the aegis of the law.

Seduction is in most States a civil offence laying the guilty party liable to damages, and I find no other State that makes the betrayal of a woman, less than 21 years of age, under promise of marriage, a well defined penitentiary offense. Colorado of this group of western States comes the nearest to it, but this limits the age of protection to 16 years.

Wyoming stands alone in considering the male and female habits of houses of prostitution as guilty of the same offence, but the man receives a double punishment, being liable to a fine of \$100 and imprisonment for 60 days, while the woman is liable only to a fine of \$50 and imprisonment for thirty days.

The Constitution of Wyoming marks very clearly the progress of the Commonwealth. It is a magnificent instrument, even aside from the woman suffrage clause, and it has certain provisions which are found in no other constitution, as far as I have had the opportunity of examination. They are in the line of education, prevention of crime, and reformation. No money is allowed to be given to any sectarian or religious society. The rights of labor are particularly recognized. Perpetuities and monopolies are prohibited.

In the article relating to suffrage it is enacted that no person shall have the right to vote who shall not be able to read the constitution of the state. The oath of office includes the affirmation that the officer has not paid or promised to pay directly or indirectly any money or valuable thing to procure the nomination or election and he is bound to promise that he will not receive anything for the performance of duties pertaining to office other than the compensa-

tion allowed by law.

These distinctive features are all in the line of protection, and embody that humane and elevated sentiment which we should hope and expect to find in a community where women are a factor in government, and having found them in Wyoming, and Wyoming only, may we not regard them as due to the influence of women.

Having thus shown that the twenty-two years of woman suffrage have been satisfactory to the citizens of Wyoming; that they have conducted to good order in the elections and to the purity of politics; that the educational system is improved, and that teachers are paid without regard to sex; that Wyoming stands alone in showing a decreased proportion of crime and divorce; and that it has elevated the personal character of both sexes, what possible good is there left to speak of as coming to the State from suffrage save its position as the vanguard of progress and human freedom.

Wyoming occupies the proud position of being the only spot in the United States which belongs to all patriotic and truly loyal women. To it they look as their star of hope. Every man of Wyoming is a hero, every woman a queen. Who may even dream of the sublime achievements that may follow to meet the expectations of womankind.

Not the Bartholdi Statue in New York Harbor, but Wyoming, the crest of the continent, the first true Republic, is "Liberty Enlightening the World."

### The Woman's Tribune

Edited and published by  
Clara Bewick Colby.

Washington, D. C.

This is the only Woman Suffrage paper in America to which

*E. ELIZABETH CADYSTANTON.*

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## THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.

Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

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### Hearing Before the United States Select Committee on Woman Suffrage.

REMARKS OF CLARA BEWICK COLBY, PRESIDENT OF THE NEBRASKA WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen of the Committee:

On the western border of the State in which I live there is an invisible line across which, if a woman passes, instead of a subject she becomes a law-maker, a sovereign. The political nonentity becomes a person, a citizen, a part of the people, impossible thereafter to be ignored; one who makes legislators, governors, United States Senators, and Presidents, and who has in herself the possibility of filling any of these offices when, in the judgment of her fellow-citizens, she is the person best fitted to do so.

If I can show you that the status of Wyoming has been materially benefited by the vote of women it will certainly be the best argument for your submitting to the States an amendment to the National Constitution which will prohibit the disfranchisement of women on account of sex.

In compiling the first volume of the laws of Wyoming, Secretary Lee said: "In the provisions of the Woman's Suffrage clause, enacted in 1869, we placed the youngest Territory on earth in the vanguard of civilization and progress." That this statement has been verified by practical experience the testimony is unanimous, continuous, and conclusive. Not a link is wanting in the chain of evidence, and, as a Governor of the Territory once said, "The only dissenting voice against woman's suffrage was that of convicts who had been tried and found guilty by woman jurors." Women exercised the right of jurors and contributed to the speedy release of the Territory from the regime of the pistol and bowie-knife. They not only performed their new duties without losing any of the womanly virtues and with dignity and decorum, but good results were immediately borne. Chief Justice Howe of the Supreme Court, under whose direction women were first drawn on juries, wrote in 1872: "After the grand jury had been in session two days the dance-house keepers, gamblers, and demi-monde fled out of the

Territory in dismay to escape indictment by woman grand jurors. In short, I have never, in twenty-five years of constant experience in the courts of the country, seen a more faithful and resolutely honest grand and petit jury than these." And there is no doubt that the superior conditions that exist in Wyoming are in a great measure due to the sitting of women on juries in these early days. The Territory was indebted to woman's suffrage for more economical and wisely administered courts of justice. Justice Kingman, of the Supreme Court, wrote in 1873: "Of the large number of cases tried in this Territory by women justices of the peace, only two have been appealed, and those two were sustained by the Appellate Court, and judgment ordered in accordance with the decision of the women justices. And the truth is, where there were men and women justices in the same town and at the same time, and where parties brought their cases before either, at their own selection, the women have had by far the greater number to try and have given the best satisfaction."

Women took this active part in laying the foundations of the jurisprudence of the Territory, and again it may well be that Wyoming owes much of its solid and orderly development to the impetus of this time.

In the official record of Governor John W. Hoyt, in 1878, he stated: "Attendance upon school is obligatory; teachers are equally paid, male and female alike, for the same service." Does not this indicate a favorable result from woman's suffrage when it was the first commonwealth to adopt compulsory education, and the first, and still the only one, to pay teachers equally without regard to sex? Governor Hoyt's testimony with regard to the direct benefit of woman's suffrage was also very strong in 1882. In his official report, he said: "Elsewhere objectors persist in calling this honorable statute of ours 'an experiment.' We know it is not; that under it we have better laws, better officers, better institutions, better morals and higher social conditions in general than could otherwise exist—that none of the predicted evils, such as loss of native delicacy and disturbance of home relations has followed in its train; that the great body of our women, and the best of them, have accepted the elective franchise as a precious boon and exercise it as a patriotic duty—in a word, that after twelve years of happy experience, woman's suffrage is so thoroughly rooted and established in the minds and hearts of the people that, among them all, no voice is ever uplifted in protest against or in question of it."

In 1879 the Speaker of the House, Hon.



N. L. Andrews, a Democrat, ratified what had been said by the Republican governors, saying publicly: "I came to the Territory in 1871, strongly prejudiced against woman suffrage. It has produced much good, and no evil that I could discern. In my opinion the real health-giving remedy that would counteract political degeneracy would be the ballot in the hands of women in every State and Territory."

In 1883 Chief Justice Joseph W. Fisher stated: "I have seen the effects of woman suffrage. Instead of encouraging fraud and corruption it tends greatly to purify elections."

In the same year Mr. Kingman said before a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature: "I have never heard of a lady being treated with disrespect at elections. Men are more respectful toward women in Wyoming than elsewhere."

Governor Francis E. Warren said in 1885: "I have seen much of the workings of woman suffrage. I have yet to hear of the first case of domestic discord growing therefrom. Our women nearly all vote. As the majority of women are good, the result is good—not evil." In the same year he reported to the Secretary of the Interior: "The men are as favorable to woman suffrage as the women are. Wyoming appreciates, believes in, and endorses woman suffrage."

In his official report the next year, he said: "Woman suffrage continues as popular as at first. The women nearly all vote, and neither party objects." And, in 1889, he reported: "No one will deny that woman's influence in voting has always been on the side of the Government. The people favor the continuance."

This official evidence as to the beneficial effects of woman suffrage is supported by the universal testimony of residents and the personal experience of visitors, including some of us. On the other side are only random statements born of a prejudice whose wish is father to the thought. We are, therefore, bound to believe that the status of Wyoming has been favorably affected by woman suffrage if we exercise the ordinary trust and credulity on which our other beliefs and daily transactions are based.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee, if woman suffrage be beneficial in the rougher and more difficult conditions of a mining Territory, what might it not be in the more settled and cultured communities?

With such an experience of twenty years it was not strange that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of July, 1889, the first framers of organic law ever elected by the votes of women, should embody the magnificent declaration which was quoted at the outset, and present to the world "the

first constitution adopted by man which gives each citizen the same rights guaranteed to every other citizen."

It was not strange that when the admission bill was trembling in the balance, and the women asked if they should telegraph Joseph M. Carey to allow the temporary disfranchisement of the women to secure the State's admission, "the reply came, as Mrs. Jenkins writes, 'No!' rang out from the lips of our husbands and fathers, brothers and sons. 'We will wait if need be. We will not go in as a State without the women.'"

The cap sheet of this column of testimony that woman's ballot had been a controlling factor in obtaining good government, that it had aroused the latent patriotism of women and increased the chivalry of men, was supplied by the great celebration of Statehood which was held at Cheyenne, July 23, 1890. Side by side with the Governor of the State sat Mrs. Post, the President of the Woman's Suffrage Association. Mrs. Esther Morris, the first woman to perform the duties of justice of the peace, presented to the State, on behalf of the women of the State, a silken flag, containing forty-five stars "in grateful recognition," as she said, "of the high privileges of citizenship." Mrs. Theresa M. Jenkins delivering the oration of the day from the steps of the Capitol, said: "We have never been compelled to petition or protest; we have ever been treated with a patient hearing, and our practical suggestions have been most courteously received. Happy are our hearts today, and our lips but sound a faint echo of the gratitude of our bosoms. Think ye our tongues can now be silent or that we have no need to sing our anthems of praise? History chronicles no such event on all its pages, and the bells of all the past ring out no such victory."

Compare the grand outburst of this occasion with the United States Constitution Centennial, where no woman's voice was heard and no woman was named, and is it not evident that woman suffrage, conferred at first in Wyoming from mere selfish motives, has awakened the sleeping justice of men, and enhanced the dignity of women, making them instead of the rejected and ignored humble petitioners that they are in other States, the acceptable compeers of men.

Although the verdict of the people of the Commonwealth, thus variously expressed, furnishes the best possible evidence of the value of woman suffrage, it is interesting to note how it is supported by figures, wherever it is possible to schedule conditions. In preparing the tables from which these facts are gathered, I made a comparison of the eleven States which form the Western group, and, since the only feature

of Wyoming that it does not share with others of these States is an exceptional experience of woman suffrage, it is fair to conclude that any marked difference in its status is due to this fact.

The population of the United States has increased in the last decade 24.6 per cent. That of Wyoming has increased 127.9 per cent. But while the number of criminals in the whole United States has increased 40.3, an alarming ratio—far beyond the increase of population—notwithstanding the immense increase of population in Wyoming, the number of criminals has not increased at all, giving a relative decrease which shows a law-abiding community, and constantly improving condition of the public morals. In 1880, there were confined in the jails and prisons of Wyoming 74 criminals, 72 men and 2 women. The Census of 1890 shows the same number of criminals, 74, as against an average number of criminals in the other Western States, of 645.3. This remarkable fact is made more interesting because the 74 in 1890 are all men, and thus the scarecrow of the vicious women in politics disappears. Wyoming being the only State in which the per cent. of criminal women has decreased it is evident that the morals of the female part of the population improve with the exercise of the right of suffrage.

The comparative statistics on the insane and idiot population could not be obtained from the last census when I prepared this statement, but in 1880 there were no idiots in Wyoming, an astonishing fact considering that at that time there were 29,049 idiots in the United States, of whom it may be casually mentioned 62 per cent. were male idiots, and only 38 per cent. female idiots. There were 189,503 insane in the United States but there were but three insane persons in Wyoming in 1880, all men. The preponderance of insanity among married women is usually attributed to the monotony of their lives, and since this is much relieved by their participation in politics, we should expect to find as a physical effect a decreased proportion of insane women where woman suffrage prevailed. Wyoming being the only western state in which no insane women were to be found in 1880 justifies our expectation.

The very small proportion among the men of Wyoming must be regarded as a moral effect, and verily, the peace of the people that have woman suffrage flows like a river, comparatively speaking. Try to realize what must be the placid and equable condition of a commonwealth that has only 3 insane persons to an average of 123 in each state of this western group.

The statistics of education show the highest regard for the education of children and the best results. As opponents of

woman suffrage have prognosticated the extermination of the home and the marriage relation as the result of woman being allowed to enter the political arena, it will be especially necessary to note the status of Wyoming in regard to marriage and divorce; and here again we find a striking difference in favor of Wyoming compared with its western neighbors, and even with the whole United States.

In the United States the number of married couples to one divorce, was, in 1870, 664; in 1880, 481. The number of undivorced marriages in the United States decreasing 138 per cent. In the western group, omitting Wyoming, the average decrease was 216 per cent. In Nebraska, Wyoming's neighbor, it was 179 per cent. In Michigan 150 per cent. In Minnesota, 154 per cent. while in Wyoming it had increased 140.7. Stating the result in another way, the rate of divorce has increased in the United States 79.4 per cent., three times the ratio of the increase of population, and in the group of western states, omitting Wyoming, it has increased 436.7 per cent., almost four times the average increase of population, while in Wyoming the increase in divorce is less than 50 per cent. that of the population.

Gentlemen, you will have to give us woman suffrage to save the home. How to prevent divorce, and maintain the sacred institution of the home is the problem of the day. Wyoming cares more about the marriage of its daughters than any other western state, requiring parental consent for the marriage of any girl under 21. The average duration of marriage before divorce, when persons have been married at 21 years or over is considerably longer in Wyoming than in the average of the western group and in the average of the whole United States, showing that the married condition of even the unhappily mated is more bearable in Wyoming than elsewhere. The per cent. of divorce granted to wives in the United States is very much larger than to husbands, while in Wyoming the difference is much smaller than the average. As it must certainly be for the safety of domestic relations that the bonds should be as bearable to one sex as to the other, this certainly is a point in favor of woman suffrage. We also find that of the few persons seeking divorce in Wyoming, a much smaller per cent. than is found in other western States are of persons who have married under these conditions of legal and political equality. Statistics show that the chances are on the whole nearly 50 per cent. better for your staying married if you marry in Wyoming. The testimony of the legislation of the State is especially valuable as showing the indirect influence of women,



—the property rights of the parties. A divorce relieves both parties from any right vested in each other's property, and places each in the same position that was held by each respectively in regard to such property before marriage, unless by statute the wife is given a dower, when the divorce is for the fault of the husband. If the husband is guilty of unfaithfulness, or is imprisoned for three years, the wife is entitled to dower in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Oregon; and in Michigan for the same reasons, with misbehavior and drunkenness added. In Missouri, Kansas, Ohio, Illinois, Maine, Connecticut, Tennessee and Arkansas the wife receives dower if the husband is answerable for the divorce. In the District of Columbia the court has power to decide. Until 1887, in Nebraska, the law was that in cases of divorce on the ground of adultery, if the husband were the guilty party, the wife was entitled to dower; if the wife were the guilty one, the husband was entitled to her personal property, as absolute owner, and to the use of her real estate as long as he lived.

The dower may be given immediately after the divorce is granted; but sometimes not until the death of the husband, which often complicates things, as he may by that time have another wife, and his property be subject to two dowers.

There is considerable difference of opinion upon the moral question involved in divorce, but, as Mark Twain says: "We can not all think alike. It's difference of opinion that makes us want to kill the umpire." Many hold to the old ecclesiastical idea that there should be no absolute divorce, but, if necessary, a legal separation. A divorce a mensa et thoro is a device of the civil law; for, while it does not break the chain of matrimony, it allows each to go free without the protection of each other's presence; then follows the commission of sins which would not occur if the sinners had been granted a full divorce with permission to marry again.

If these dogmatic moralists wish to reform this sociological evil, they must go far back of divorce, and begin with our boys and girls at home and in school. Instill into them a high conception of marriage, and lofty sentiments concerning the relation that man and wife bear to each other, to their children and to society; give them the definite moral instruction that virtue is not confined to the feminine half of humanity, that purity and courage know no sex; restrain them from reading the many disgusting, erotic novels that have lately been written—novels which give erroneous and pernicious views of life, and are incubators of immorality. Impress upon the mind of every young girl that to be married is not the chief end of woman.

Theodore Parker said: "Such a large, sweet fruit is a complete marriage, that it needs a very long summer to ripen it, and then a very long winter to mellow and season it. But a real happy marriage of love and judgment between a noble man and woman is one of the things so very handsome that, if the sun were, as the Greeks fabled, a god, he might stop the world and hold it still, now and then, in order to look all day long at some example thereof, and feast his eyes on such a spectacle."

But the sweetest and most entrancing description is given by Rev. W. C. Gannett in

#### THE DEAR TOGETHERNESS.

I dreamed of Paradise—and still,  
Though sun lay soft on vale and hill,  
And trees were green and rivers bright,  
The one dear thing that made delight—  
By sun or stars or Eden weather,  
Was just that we two were together.  
I dreamed of Heaven—and God so near,  
The angels trod the shining sphere,  
And each was beautiful, the days  
Were choral work, were choral praise.  
And yet, in Heaven's far shining weather,  
The best was still—we were together.  
I woke, and found my dream was true,  
That happy dream of me and you;  
For Eden, Heaven, no need to roam,  
The foretaste of it all is home.  
Where you and I through this world's weather  
Still work and praise and think together.  
Together weave from love a nest  
For all that's good and sweet and blest  
To brood in, till it come a face,  
A voice, a soul, a child's embrace—  
And then what peace of Bethlehem weather  
What song, as we go on together.  
Together greet life's solemn real,  
Together own one glad ideal,  
Together laugh, together ache,  
And think one thought—"Each other's sake!"  
And hope one hope—in new world weather  
To still go on and go together.

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## THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.

Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

Vol. 3.

WASHINGTON, D. C., JUNE, 1895.

No. 10.

### Divorce Laws in All the States.

(Address by Nellie V. Mark, M. D., of Baltimore, Md., before the Association for the Advancement of Women in Congress, at New Orleans, November, '95.)

For some years a movement has been on foot to readjust the marriage and divorce laws of the different States, more than half the States having appointed commissions upon uniform legislation on these important subjects, as the exceeding diversity of the laws of the forty-four States has given rise to many complications. But while the majority of the States have improved their divorce legislation there is one basal enactment that ought immediately and universally to become a law. For a citizen of one State to go to another to procure a divorce ought to be considered and punished as felony. This would at once do away with fraudulent divorces.

A marriage or divorce good in one State, as things now are, will not hold in another. A woman may be married in one State, divorced in another, and in a third, rejoice, or the reverse, in two better halves. The City of Chicago, a few years ago, was known as the "Divorce Mill," from the ease and rapidity with which a man could marry and divorce a succession of women. Divorce cases, at this time, under the lax administration of the law, were always referred to a master to be reported upon; and his report was always favorable. This practice has since been abolished, and the divorce laws of Illinois are now as good as those of any other State. Chicago now leads the rest of the world in virtue, as well as in all other respects; for I read not long ago in a paper published in that city that her police system has a department devoted to the promotion of domestic felicity, to the reclaiming of recreant husbands and wives, the re-establishment of broken homes, and the reunion of disintegrated families.

South Carolina stands alone in not allowing divorces for any cause; New York State gives an absolute divorce for only one cause, that of infidelity; but a divorce, a mensa et thoro, for "cruelty, such conduct as renders cohabitation unsafe or improper, abandonment, and refusal of husband to provide," for the wife. Such a separation, in the words of the song, "may be for years, and it may be for ever."

In complete divorce the defendant is prohibited from marrying again within the State; but he can be married in some other State, return to New York, and pursue the even tenor of his way, since, if he marries in accordance with the laws of that other

State, the marriage is good in New York.

I read a statement not long ago to the effect that "most men, no matter how selfish they may be in other respects, are too generous to keep more than one or two of the Ten Commandments," but there is one commandment which, if broken, will render any married person, in any State or Territory, liable for a divorce. That is the seventh. A breach of this commandment and proof of cruelty were the only causes for which a divorce could be granted under the old English law. Cruelty is a recognized cause everywhere, except in New Jersey, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina, in which States it is a cause for only limited divorce; while in Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee full divorce can only be claimed by the wife.

Cases against the wife are not nearly so numerous as those against the husband. Mr. Carroll D. Wright gives the number of decrees issued to the husband as 6122, while those to the wife were 45,721, in twenty years.

Desertion, drunkenness, conviction of a felony, and physical incapacity are a quartet of causes for the severing of the marriage tie, in all of the States, with a few exceptions. Desertion is a cause for limited divorce only, in North Carolina. Drunkenness is not a recognized cause for absolute divorce in the middle States, except Delaware, nor in Texas, North Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia. Physical incapacity at time of marriage is not a cause in Vermont, Iowa, Idaho, California, Louisiana, Texas, and New Mexico. In Iowa and California the courts will annul a marriage for that cause. In Texas and Maryland it renders a marriage null and void, ipso facto. In Vermont it is voidable. In Rhode Island, Kentucky, Alabama, and Arkansas it is a cause for limited divorce.

Conviction of felony is not a cause for absolute, but for limited divorce, in New Jersey, Maryland, District of Columbia, and Florida. In Maine the marriage is void, ipso facto. In Virginia, North Carolina, and Louisiana it is a cause, if the husband is indicted and runs away from the State. The supreme court of Wisconsin has lately decided that life imprisonment gives an absolute divorce, without legal proceedings. The Bible says "no man can serve two masters," and the law takes the same view of the matter, for in a few of the States a divorce may be granted where either party had a former husband or wife living. But most of the States declare such a marriage void, ipso facto, or null and void or voidable.



The law of Tennessee and Pennsylvania permits a woman to marry again if her husband deserts her and she believes him dead, and it will stand good even if the deserter returns, unless he desires to live with her, and if she refuses to live with him it is desertion. If he prefers he may secure a divorce; but if all parties are satisfied things may remain as they are at the time of his return. This law applies to the wife as well as to the husband. Permitting the deserter to resume or withdraw as he sees fit is unjust. The one left behind should, alone, be entitled to decide whether or no the marriage tie should remain in force. Possibly he or she might take the Irishman's view of Purgatory, and fear to go further and fare worse. All States and Territories give the privilege of marrying again, after the deserter has been absent a certain number of years; but if the husband returns he can claim his wife again. In Louisiana the court can validate the second marriage at its discretion. The time of absence varies from two years in Pennsylvania, when the death of the deserter is declared "upon false rumor, in appearance well founded," up to seven years in other States.

There are many other heterogeneous causes for divorce, thirty-three in all; but they are too numerous to mention, and nearly all come under the head of one of those already given. Kentucky, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire differ from other States in granting a divorce for joining a religious sex believing marriage unlawful. In nearly all the Western and New England States, also Delaware and Tennessee, "failure or neglect of the husband to provide," he having the ability to do so, is a valid cause. In Tennessee a divorce is obtainable if the husband turns the wife out of doors; in the same State a good cause against the wife is if she refuses to go into the husband's State to live. This last is a cause for limited divorce in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

A woman in Michigan was granted a divorce on account of her husband not providing the necessities of life, he having said that "he would not work his toenails off for any woman." The supreme court of Vermont has just decided that a specific disease is sufficient ground for a divorce. This cause is also good in Kentucky, as is the lewd or lascivious conduct of the wife. In Florida we find "habitual indulgence in violent or ungovernable temper;" in Rhode Island and Maryland, "any cause rendering the marriage originally void;" in the former "gross misbehavior in violation of the marriage covenant;" in the latter, "immorality of the wife before marriage." Virginia and West Virginia have also this cause, but in them the noted immorality of the husband before marriage is also a cause.

Missouri and Wyoming will give a divorce when the husband is a vagrant. Mississippi is different from any other State in granting a divorce "for habitual and excessive opium, morphine, or other drug habit."

In some States procurement of marriage by force, fraud, or duress, is a cause, and also marriage within the prohibited degrees of relationship.

Lunacy or idiocy is a ground for nullity of the marriage tie in all the States, except District of Columbia, Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia, and Wisconsin; in these it is a ground for divorce.

Marriage with a girl under the age of legal consent, without consent of parents or guardians, is invalid in most of the States. In Arizona, Delaware, and Idaho it is cause for divorce.

The grounds for divorce, a vinculo matrimonii, in some States is only cause for divorce, a mensa et thoro, in others, and vice versa. When the bill of divorce is filed in the proper court, if the defendant is a resident of the State a summons is served upon him; if not, a publication must be made in a newspaper in his county, and in some States the law requires a copy to be mailed to his last address. If this is not done the decree is void. A couple lived in New Jersey, of whom the wife moved to Michigan, and procured a decree there, giving service on her husband by publication. She returned to New Jersey, married again, and returned to Michigan with her second husband. The first husband had not any notice until after the decree was granted. The court in New Jersey pronounced the divorce obtained in Michigan a nullity.

The State of Washington in its statute, gives absolute divorce for "force or fraud in getting married, infidelity, physical incapacity, abandonment for one year, cruel treatment or personal indignity, rendering life burdensome, habitual drunkenness, neglect of husband to provide, conviction of felony, chronic mania or dementia for ten years, or for any other cause decreed by court sufficient, and the court is satisfied the parties can no longer live together."

A valid divorce cannot be obtained out of the State in which a man has his home; he must live a certain length of time in the place to entitle him to the use of the court. This time varies from three months in the Dakotas to five years in Massachusetts.

The statute is different in Louisiana, for all the various offenses for which an absolute divorce is given; a divorce a mensa et thoro and the lapse of a year without reconciliation must first be obtained in all cases, except for infidelity, and infamous punishment. The law of Massachusetts is somewhat similar, as a decree nisi is rendered, and if no reconciliation takes place this is made absolute in six months. Some

States grant no limited divorces; New Hampshire does not, but it has fourteen causes for absolute divorce. In these States the courts of equity will grant alimony to a wife who is separated from her husband on account of his bad conduct.

If a citizen of New York goes out of the State for a divorce, then returns and marries again in New York, he will be liable for bigamy, as the divorce would there be invalid. In Tennessee such a divorce and marriage is a statutory offense. Maine, Delaware and Massachusetts declare all divorces obtained in other States by people going thither for that purpose, for causes not valid in those States, or for any cause occurring in those States, shall have no validity.

There are three deductions concerning the validity of divorce which I will quote entirely from Mr. Whitney:

First—A divorce or sentence of nullity of marriage, procured in the domicile of the parties and valid there, is valid everywhere.

Second—A divorce or sentence of nullity of marriage procured in another jurisdiction than that of the parties' domicile, for a cause which does not arise or occur in the *lex fori* (place of action), is void everywhere else except in the *lex fori*, and sometimes void there.

Third—A person's domicile is "the established, fixed, permanent or ordinary dwelling place, or place of residence, of a person, as distinguished from his temporary or transient, although actual, place of residence." It is his legal residence as distinguished from his temporary place of abode; or his home, as distinguished from a place to which business or pleasure may temporarily call him.

Some years ago Indiana and Utah gave spurious divorces on the plea of "incompatibility of temper;" and actual residence was dispensed with; but after a number of cases had been declared fraudulent, and the divorce adjudged void, the law was repealed. The "lightning divorce factory" has now been changed to Dakota. These decrees are of the same kind, and the parties who obtain them are liable at any time, if married again, to be indicted for bigamy. This year, divorces granted by probate judges in Oklahoma have been declared illegal by the Supreme court. The harmful results of these divorces will appear if there are children of both marriages; as only the children of the first marriage can inherit as legitimate heirs; and they can prove the children of the second marriage illegitimate. The general impression seems to be that the number of decrees is increasing.

Our vice-president from North Carolina writes that there has been an increase of at least 50 per cent. in that State. In Minnesota the increase has been about 55 per cent;

in Nebraska 79 per cent. In Florida the increase is noticeable on account of the very marked growth in population. The report from Virginia states that few divorces have been granted, and those chiefly to colored people.

A complete system of registration of marriages and divorces, and of the publication of statistics, should be established in every State and Territory. This has been done this year in Michigan, by Mr. Melvin A. Root, who travelled through that State and procured the complete statistics in each county from the county clerks. I will give Mr. Root's tabulation:

Michigan—Population in 1884, 1,853,654; in 1894, 2,251,454. Increase in ten years, nearly 21 per cent.

Marriages in 1883, 17,078; in 1893, 19,197. Increase in ten years, 12.4 per cent.

Divorce suits begun in 1883, 1,935; in 1893, 2,586. Increase in ten years, 33.6 per cent.

Increase of percentage of suits for divorce over marriages formed, 21.2 per cent.

Divorces granted on suits begun in 1883, 1,259; in 1893, 1,691. Increase in ten years, 27.1 per cent.

Increase of divorces granted over marriages formed, 14.7 per cent.

While divorces have been on the increase in nearly all the States, especially the western, and in the whole United States have increased 38 per cent, we find that while in Wyoming the population is rapidly on the increase, the number of divorces granted has decreased 29 per cent, and but few of these decrees were given to old residents of Wyoming, but to persons who had married before removing to that State. This is thought to be owing to the beneficent effects of woman suffrage which obtains in Wyoming.

It has been said that "money is the root of all evil," but it is a very necessary root, and is always an incident in a divorce suit, in the shape of alimony; it plays the chief part in a divorce a mensa et thoro. It has been defined by Mr. Shelford, as the "allowance made to the wife for her maintenance, either during a matrimonial suit or at its termination, when she has proved herself entitled to a separate maintenance."

Alimony has been granted in Illinois even where the wife was guilty of bigamy. In Nebraska it is allowed in all cases except unfaithfulness. In Louisiana there is a statute by which it may not exceed one-third of the husband's income; and which says, also: "The alimony shall become revocable in case it shall become necessary, and in case the wife shall contract a second marriage."

In Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oregon, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia an allowance may be given as alimony to the husband out of the wife's separate estate.

This brings us to the final in divorce laws



the interest of the ruling classes has induced them to confer new rights on a subject class, it has been done with no effort on the part of the latter. Neither the African slave nor the English laborer demanded the right of suffrage. It was given in both cases to strengthen the liberal party. The philanthropy of the few may have entered into those reforms, but political expediency carried the measure. Women, on the contrary, have fought their own battles, and in their rebellion against existing conditions have inaugurated the most fundamental revolution the world has ever witnessed. The magnitude and multiplicity of the changes involved, make the obstacles in the way of success seem almost insurmountable.

The darkest page in the future history of New York will be the indifference of our fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons, to all woman's appeals for her civil and political rights for the last half century. The vast majority have stood silent spectators while leading men in the Nation, Congressmen, Judges of the Supreme Court, Legislators and Editors have all alike played foot ball with our most sacred rights.

The National Constitution says, "No State shall disfranchise any of its citizens on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude." But, say learned Judges, this does not include women, although our laws and customs show that their previous condition has been and still is one of servitude. Our immortal Benjamin Franklin said long ago, "They who have no voice in the laws and rulers under which they live are slaves."

When we ask Congress for a 16th Amendment for woman's enfranchisement in plain unmistakable terms our representatives refer us to our respective States. It is nearly fifty years since women were granted hearings for the first time before the Legislature of New York and from time to time some minor civil right have been conceded. Three Governors have recommended some mild attempts at suffrage for women.

When Alonzo B. Cornell was Governor he signed a bill for a limited school suffrage for women. In 1892 under Governor Hill another act was passed, extending the right to vote for school commissioners in the rural districts. Women registered by the thousand and hurried to the polls at the last November election, but there they encountered Judges of the Supreme Court, who declared the act of '92 unconstitutional, denying the right of the Legislature to extend the suffrage, although the Legislature has exercised that right both to extend and limit the suffrage, not only in New York, but in many other States. In 1801 and 1821 when all men, black and white voted on a property qualification the Legislature declared their right to vote for members to a Constitutional Convention. "In the revision of a State Constitution, said Judge Beach Lawrence, "the State is for the time being

resolved into its original elements and all the people have a right to vote for members who are to frame the fundamental laws under which they are to live." Although both Governor Hill and Governor Flower recommended that this right be extended to women, there was no action taken, and women, one-half the people, will have no representation in the coming Convention.

Now gentlemen we are tired running this gauntlet of pettifoggers in the National and State councils, in the courts and in popular elections. With united voice they say there is no law nor Constitution for such an innovation as the right of suffrage for women. And there with them the question rests. On the contrary with a fair interpretation of the principles of our government, there is no authority in law or Constitution for the disfranchisement of one-half the people. In a republican form of government we have all the authority we need for extending equal rights to all. "Universal Suffrage is the first truth and only basis of a genuine Republic." We have all the law and Constitution necessary to secure Justice, Equality and Liberty to every citizen.

All we need now is some liberal, clear-sighted statesman to arise, who will interpret our laws and Constitutions in harmony with the acknowledged principles of our government. "Any interpretation in favor of Liberty," said Charles Sumner, "is law and Constitution, when the letter and spirit of a document conflict the latter must govern."

When Chief Justice Mansfield in the Somerset case declared that no slave could breathe on British soil by the provisions of Magna Charta, he rose above the technicalities of his profession and with inspired vision saw the man through the black skin and the slave walked out of Court crowned with all the rights of a British subject.

Where and when shall we look for some great statesman to arise, who like Lord Mansfield, shall proclaim Justice, Liberty and Equality as the birthright of every human soul, black and white, man and woman.

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## THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.

Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

Vol. 2.

WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL, 1894.

No. 3

### Women do not Wish to Vote.

[BY ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.]

The patent answer opponents make to our present demand for political equality, is that the women themselves do not ask it; that they are happy and satisfied in their present condition.

In the old days of antislavery opponents jeered abolitionists in the same way. They said why make all this noise about emancipation, the slaves are contented and happy. When asked if they wish to be free, in the presence of their masters, they say no; we are well fed, clothed and sheltered, and all our wants supplied. And yet in the full enjoyment of all these blessings Sambo ran off to Canada the next day.

But, said the immortal Channing, if you could prove to me that the slaves were contented in their degrading bondage I should consider that the very strongest reason for their emancipation. If a human soul born with the love of Justice, Liberty and Equality, can be happy in a condition in which all affections are starved; all personal pride, dignity and self-respect withered; held in complete subjection to the will of another; if man made in the image of God can be so transformed, it is the most unanswerable impeachment of the system under which he has lived; for it shows that every element of manhood, every spark of the divine has been wholly obliterated. But it was never true, generations of bondage, centuries of oppression, never could blot out the love of freedom in the human soul.

And if it is true that the women of this republic, whose fathers sent forth that grand declaration, "All men created free and equal," who gave us that masterpiece of statesmanship, the National Constitution, which Gladstone pronounced the most wonderful document that ever emanated from the brain of man; whose fathers have given us a government and religion, based on individual rights, individual conscience and judgment, and maintained the republican principle in two prolonged eventful wars; if it is possible that the daughters of such ancestors, with such a heritage, can be satisfied in their present political status, in which every principle of our government is violated, this is the strongest reason for their speedy enfranchisement.

Have the women of the present day so far degenerated from their foremothers, who in the inauguration of the government protested against the disfranchisement of women and negroes? In both Massa-

chusetts and North Carolina, their names fill many a page in History. They saw at once that in the recognition of any privileged classes, the fathers stultified every principle of republican government. But in the deadly struggle for the life of the Nation they held their just claims in abeyance. Have all the glowing peans to Justice, Liberty and Equality, that have echoed down the century, had no significance for women? If it is true that they do not want to vote, with Channing we say, that is the strongest reason why they should do so. Because it shows the degradation of disfranchisement; not only crippling all woman's powers, narrowing her outlook in every direction, but endangering the State. If one-half the people do not believe in republican institutions, in the right of self-government and feel no interest or responsibility in public affairs, indifference will gradually creep over the other half. There are hundreds of men to-day who never vote and take no interest in political questions.

They do not believe in the first principles of a republican government. Talk with them on the suffrage question and you will find the vast majority of men in the educated classes believe in restricted suffrage, on a property or educational qualification. They travel in the old world and come back charmed with monarchical institutions, with royalty and nobility, the humility, the deference and respect of the masses for their superiors. This is the direct effect of imbuing women with the idea that they hold too exalted a position to exercise the suffrage. The only way we can get the Beaux Brummels of our fashionable world to take some interest in politics, to go to primary meetings, political conventions and the polling booth, is to encourage fair ladies to go with them. To this end we must urge the grave and reverend members of the Constitutional Convention to expunge the word "male" from Article 2nd Section 1st of the Constitution. If men believe what they say that "women do not want to vote," why bar the privilege against them? We do not fence the corn fields because we think the cattle will not eat the corn, but because we know they will. And the word "male" in the Constitution, is a standing admission that men know women would vote if the barriers were all down, no matter what they say to the contrary. We are not left to speculation on this point, women have uniformly exercised the right of suffrage as soon as it was granted them although the men of their households said, "no lady would go to the polls," "all the good women would stay away, I should be ashamed to



see you there." Women are too proud to admit that they want what they think they cannot get. They fear the ridicule of the men of their households, of the press, the disapproval of their clergyman who quotes Bible against larger liberties for their sex. They fear the sharp pens of literary women, who know all the most vulnerable points of their own sex and just where they can stab most effectively. The cowardice and treachery of this class has been the most pitiful phase of our movement. The seeming indifference among women to their own emancipation is philosophical. They have been trained for centuries to obedience to the powers that be, submission to established usages. They have been taught that their chief virtue is self-sacrifice, their chief duty to deny themselves. Hence women today are more interested in every reform great and small, than in their own emancipation. You can arouse more enthusiasm among them in a charity ball, a church fair, a yacht race or naval parade, a horse show, than in a hearing before Congress or a State Constitutional Convention that may decide their political status for twenty years to come. This one lesson of subjection and self-sacrifice has been taught by creeds, codes, customs and constitutions all through the centuries and no wonder that woman has learned it so well. The most powerful influence on the human mind is through the religious emotions, and all the leading religions on the earth teach the subjection of one sex and the domination of the other, thus enfeebling the love of liberty on the one side and stimulating the love of tyranny on the other.

If it were possible for woman to rise above her religious superstition of man's headship, what encouragement can she find in the State? None whatever, the laws and constitutions teach the same lesson. Lord Brougham in a burst of indignation declared long ago, the laws on our statute books for women are a disgrace to the christianity of the 19th century. Gentlemen, if women do not want to vote, behold in their indifference to their most sacred rights, their lack of self-respect, dignity and independence, your own handiwork. You have educated them to be satisfied, while deprived of rights you consider most sacred for every boy of twenty-one and every foreigner landing on our shores, who can neither read nor write the English language. And the most insidious influence you have exerted on woman, has been in making her believe that she was too good, too pure, too refined to take part in politics, that the science of government was beneath her consideration. Thus her degradation in the laws and constitution is made to appear as man's highest tribute to her exalted position. But in her conceit she has never noticed that idiots, lunatics and

criminals and Indians are on the same privileged platform. If you would fully appreciate the timidity of women in asserting themselves see what slaves they are to fashions. In spite of their desire to dress with good taste in a becoming manner; to bring out their good points and veil their defects, they hide the one and exaggerate the other. The succession of styles in the world of fashion, invented by the courtesans of Paris, is as regular as the seasons and one might as well resist the climatic effects of spring, summer, autumn and winter, as the fashions, that hold their votaries in absolute bondage. It is all in vain that sensible people invent a comfortable dress for women and urge its adoption with all the physiological argument so potent to the most casual observer, until some one can invent a new type of woman, to be more readily governed by reason than "custom"; "that tyrant," as Milton says, "who makes cowards of us all." Sedulously taught submission to existing conditions the ordinary woman cannot resist long established usages, and successfully combat the majority of people, who believe that any change involves the entire disruption of society. To propose a new step in progress is to encounter bitter prejudice that knows no reason; ridicule that stings like a wasp and to which there is no answer. And yet change is the law and each new fashion illustrates it and woman submits to it no matter how comical or unbecoming. At one time her garments are as tight as her skin and her drapery so limp that she looks as if she had been drawn through a knot hole and lost her pocket in the process; left to carry everything in her hands: purse, card case, watch, handkerchief, smelling bottle, umbrella, and ballot if on the way to the polls. Then gradually emerging from this compression she begins to expand, until each arm is larger than the main body, then wings spring from her shoulders until the receding head looks like that of the turtle taking his constitutional walk in the sunshine on the seashore. Imagine a man without a pocket; what would he care for his political status until he could find a place to put his purse, spectacles and handkerchief and his hands too when embarrassed.

If with all woman's love of beauty, all the pride she has in her appearance, she will thus obey the behests of custom in regard to dress, we need not be surprised that she so readily sacrifices her political rights for the same reasons. How vain to look for any independent, heroic action, any self-respect or self-assertion from these helpless crushed women, especially when the men of their households wish them to adopt every style fresh from Paris. Trained to submission in the State, the church, in society and the world of work, it would require

the strength of Sampson to rise above all such influences. It is vain to talk to women of comfort and convenience, so long as they believe that self-sacrifice is their highest virtue, self-development a minor consideration. But in spite of all these artificial characteristics, the outgrowth of false and unnatural conditions, in the depths of her soul woman, too, loves liberty and in her hours of solitude longs for emancipation from the petty restrictions of her every day life. The assertion that "women do not want to vote" has no foundation in fact, nor philosophy. The right to vote is the right to protect one's person and property; to govern one's-self; to have a voice in the laws and rulers; to enjoy all the advantages and opportunities of life of which one is capable.

This is citizenship in a republic. The natural right to life, liberty and happiness. Who seriously believes that woman is indifferent to all these blessings. No, no, these rights every intelligent woman desires. Like the slaves, women will say before their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons what they think will please those who give them food, clothes and shelter, or the lover who gives them flowers, diamonds, drives in the park, or a box at the opera. When all these gentlemen believe in woman's right of suffrage, they will have no difficulty in persuading women to go with them to the polls to vote. It is amusing to see how long men will speculate on a point after facts have settled it beyond a peradventure. Women have taken part in government since the first pair appeared on the planet, and voted in one way and another all through the centuries. "To go no farther back than our own day, women voted in New Jersey down to 1807." In 1869 Municipal Suffrage was granted in England to spinsters and widows and the London Times said "as large a proportion of women voted, as men on the same basis." About the same time full suffrage was granted to the women of Wyoming and they have voted ever since. For a long period the women of Utah exercised the right to vote. In 1887 Municipal Suffrage was granted to the women of Kansas and they have exercised it ever since. School suffrage has been extended to women in half the States of the Union and on educational questions women vote. A bill giving women the right to vote for school commissioners was passed in New York in 1892 and thousands of women registered and voted, not even deterred by opinions of Supreme Court Judges that the bill was unconstitutional. Many when challenged swore their votes in and many were rejected. Women have had full suffrage in the Isle of Man for years and faithfully exercised it.

A correspondent of the Birmingham

(Eng.) Daily Post, writing from Wellington, New Zealand, gives an entertaining account of the manner in which the women of that colony made use of their newly-acquired voting privileges. He says: "They registered in thousands, and throughout the whole election campaign displayed a most laudable desire to learn their new duties. Afternoon meetings for women only, at which the more social sides of politics were dealt with, and the new electors instructed how to use their votes, became part of every candidate's work. It is estimated that one-third of the total vote was cast by women, and the number of defective ballots was astonishingly small."

In Colorado which has just enfranchised women by a vote of 7,000 majority, the women will vote on all questions at the next election. A large body of intelligent respectable women, in New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Ohio Indiana, nearly fifty years ago held conventions in all these States and demanded the right of suffrage, and have continued to hold conventions and make this demand ever since and many other States have followed their example. Gentlemen did you ever hear of a large association of people contending half a century for a right they they did not want?

We have had conventions in Washington for a quarter of a century every year with hearings before Committees of the House and Senate and able reports by distinguished members on our appeals. Did not those clear-sighted statesmen know that we desired the rights for which we argued? How can any fair minded person in the face of all these facts, continue to sing that old refrain "women do not wish to vote."

How could intelligent women be so indifferent to a privilege that the most ignorant men appreciate so highly. Born of the same parents, reared under the same flag, reading the same national history, and arguments for Justice, Liberty and Equality; singing the same songs of freedom; worshipping the same God who created man and woman in his own image, simultaneously, and gave them equal dominion over every living thing, an equal title deed to this green earth; how could the daughters of this Republic with such education and experience differ so essentially from their brothers as to abjure all the rights, privileges and immunities that man holds most sacred for himself?

As we need the same atmosphere to breathe, the same food to sustain life, so we need the same liberty for our growth and development; the same justice to ensure our happiness.

In the history of the race there has been no struggle for liberty like this. Whenever



of maternity, of domesticity, are not persuasive enough to keep them in the truest sense women, it is the most serious defect yet discovered in the divine order of nature.

Are not women as much interested in good government as men? There is fraud in the Legislature; there is corruption in the Courts; there are hospitals, and tenement houses, and prisons; there are gambling-houses and billiard-rooms, and brothels; there are grog-shops at every corner, and I know not what enormous proportion of crime in the State proceeds from them, there are forty thousand drunkards in the State, and their hundreds of thousands of children,—all these things are subjects of legislation, and, under the exclusive legislation of men, the crime associated with all these things becomes vast and complicated. Have the wives and mothers and sisters of New York less vital interest in them, less practical knowledge of them and their proper treatment, than the husbands and fathers? No man is so insane as to pretend it. Is there then any natural incapacity in women to understand politics? It is not asserted. Are they lacking in the necessary intelligence? But the moment that you erect a standard of intelligence which is sufficient to exclude women as a sex, that moment most of the male sex would be disfranchised. Is it that they ought not to go to public political meetings? But we earnestly invite them. Or that they should not go to the polls? Some polls, I allow, in the larger cities, are dirty and dangerous places; and those it is the duty of the police to reform. But no decent man wishes to vote in a grog-shop, nor to have his head broken while he is doing it; while the mere act of dropping a ballot in a box is about the simplest, shortest, and cleanest that can be done. Last winter Senator Frelinghuysen, repeating, I am sure thoughtlessly, the common rhetoric of the question, spoke of the high and holy mission of women: What is the high and holy mission of any woman but to be the best and most efficient human being possible? To enlarge the sphere of duty and the range of responsibility, where there are adequate power and intelligence, is to heighten, not to lessen, the holiness of life.

But, the objectors continue, would you have women hold office? If they are capable and desirous, why not? They hold office now most acceptably. In my immediate neighborhood, a postmistress has been so faithful an officer for seven years, that when there was a rumor of her removal, it was a matter of public concern. This is a familiar instance in this country. It was held by some of the old English writers that a woman might serve in almost any of the great offices of the kingdom. And, indeed, if

Victoria may deliberate in council with her ministers, why may not any intelligent Englishwoman deliberate in Parliament, or any such American woman in Congress?

The capacity for making laws is necessarily assumed when women are permitted to hold and manage property and to submit to taxation. How often the woman, widowed or married or single, is the guiding genius of the family—educating the children, directing the estate, originating, counselling, deciding. Is there anything essentially different in such duties, and the powers necessary to perform them, from the functions of legislation?

But I am asked, would you drag women down into the mire of politics? No sir, I would have them lift us out of it. Now the science of government is not an ignoble science, and the practice of politics is not necessarily mean and degrading. If the making and administering of law has become so corrupt as to justify calling politics filthy, and a thing with which no hands can meddle without danger, may we not wisely remember, as we begin our work of purification, that politics have been wholly managed by men? How can we purify them? Is there no radical method, no force yet untried, a power not only of skilful checks, which I do not undervalue, but of controlling character? Mr. Chairman, if we sat in this chamber with closed windows until the air became thick and fetid, should we not be fools if we brought in deodorizers—if we sprinkled chloride of lime and burned assafoetida, while we disdained the great purifier? If we would cleanse the foul chamber, let us throw the windows wide open, and the sweet summer air would sweep all impurity away and fill our lungs with fresher life. If we would purge politics, let us turn upon them the great stream of the purest human influence we know.

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Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

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### EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN.

BY HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

[The following argument for Women Suffrage was made by Hon. George William Curtis before the New York State Constitutional Convention in 1867.]

In proposing a change so new to our political practice, but so harmonious with the spirit and principles of our government, it is only just that I should attempt to show that it is neither repugnant to reason nor hurtful to the State. Yet I confess some embarrassment; for, while the essential reason of the proposition seems to me to be clearly defined, the objection to it is vague and shadowy. From the formal opening of the general discussion of the question in this country, by the Convention at Seneca Falls, in 1848, down to the present moment, the opposition to the suggestion, so far as I am acquainted with it, has been only the repetition of a traditional prejudice, or protest of sentimentality; and to cope with these is like wrestling with a malaria, or arguing with the east wind.

From the theory of ancient society, that woman is absorbed in man, that she is a social inferior and a subordinate part of man, springs the system of laws in regard to women which in every civilized country is now in course of such rapid modification, and it is this theory which so tenaciously lingers as a traditional prejudice in our political customs.

If any one insists that there are no such things as natural political rights, and that no man is born a voter, I will not now stop to argue with him; but I will suggest that if no man is born a voter, so no man is born a man—for every man is born a baby. But he is born with the right of becoming a man without hindrance; and I ask whether, if every man is not born a voter, he is not born with the right of becoming a voter on equal terms with other men?

There are, as I think we shall all admit, some kinds of natural rights. The air is vocal with the traditional eloquence with which those rights were asserted by our fathers. The rights which they declared to be inalienable are what are usually called natural, as distinguished from political rights, but they are not limited by sex. A woman has the same right to her life, liberty and property that a man has, and she has consequently the same right to an equality of protection that he has; and this, as I understand it, is what is meant by the phrase, the right of suffrage. If I have a natural right to my life and liberty, I have the same right to everything that protects that life and liberty which any other man enjoys. I ask the same for every woman in the State. Long before James Otis, Lord Somers said

to a committee of the House of Commons, that the possession of the vote is the only true security which an Englishman has for the possession of his life and property.

Our fathers answered the question of the best and surest protection of natural right by their famous phrase, "the consent of the governed." That is to say, since every man is born with equal natural rights, he is entitled to an equal protection of them with all other men; and, since government is that protection, right reason and experience alike demand that every person shall have a voice in the government upon perfectly equal and practicable terms—that is, upon terms which are not necessarily insurmountable by any. Every one is degraded, whether aware of it or not, when other people, without consulting him, take upon themselves unlimited power to regulate his destiny. "No arrangement of the suffrage, therefore, can be permanently satisfactory in which any person or class is peremptorily excluded; in which the electoral privilege is not open to all persons of full age who desire it."

The Chairman of the Committee asked Miss Anthony, the other evening, whether, if suffrage were a natural right, it could be denied to children. Her answer seemed to me perfectly satisfactory. She said simply, "All that we ask is an equal and not an arbitrary regulation. If you have the right, you have it." The honorable Chairman would hardly deny that to regulate the exercise of a right according to obvious reason is one thing, to deny it absolutely and forever is another. If every person has a natural right to life, liberty, and property, and a co-existent claim to a share in the government which defends them, regulated only by perfectly equitable conditions, what are the practical grounds upon which it is proposed to continue the absolute and hopeless disfranchisement of half the adult population?

If I am told that women are virtually represented, I reply, with James Otis, that "no such phrase as virtual representation is known in law or Constitution. It is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd." If they are represented, when was the choice made? No consulted. It is a mere assumption to the effect that the interest and affection of men will lead them to just and wise legislation for women as well as for themselves. But this is merely the old appeal for the political power of a class. It is just what the British Parliament said to the colonies a hundred years ago. "We are all under the same gov-



ernment," they said, "our interests are identical. We are all Britons; Britain rules the wave; God save the King! and down with sedition and Sons of Liberty!" The colonies chafed and indignantly protested, because the assumption that therefore fair laws were made was not true; because they were discovering for themselves what every nation has discovered—the truth that shakes England to-day, and brings Disraeli and the Tory party to their knees, and has already brought this country to blood—that there is no class of citizens, and no single citizen, who can safely be intrusted with the permanent and exclusive possession of political power. "There is no instance on record," says Buckle, in his history of civilization in England, "of any class possessing power without abusing it." It is as true of men as a class as of an hereditary nobility, or of a class of property holders. Men are not wise enough, nor generous enough, nor pure enough, to legislate fairly for women. The laws of the most civilized nations depress and degrade women. The legislation is in favor of the legislating class.

We ask women to confide in us, as having the same interests with them. Did any despot ever say anything else? And, if it be safe or proper for any intelligent part of the people to relinquish exclusive political power to any class, I ask the Committee, to what class, however rich, or intelligent, or honest, they would themselves surrender their power? They know, as we all know, as our own experience has taught us, that the only security of natural right is the ballot.

If I am asked what women want the ballot for, I answer, What do men want it for? Why do the British workmen at this moment so urgently demand it? Look into the British laws regulating labor, and you will see why. They want the ballot because the laws affecting labor and capital are made by the capitalist class alone, and are therefore unjust. I do not forget the progressive legislation of New York in regard to the rights of women. Upon this point, one honorable gentleman asked whether the laws both for men and women were not constantly improving, and whether, therefore, it was not unfair to attribute the character of the laws about women to the fact that men made them. The reply is very evident. If women alone made the laws, legislation for both men and women would undoubtedly be progressive. Does the honorable gentleman think, therefore, that women only should make the laws?

It is not true that, in the ordinary and honorable sense of the words, women are represented. Laws are made for them by another class, and upon the theories which that class, without the fear of political opposition, may choose to entertain, and in

direct violation of the principles upon which, in their own case, they tenaciously insist. I live in the County of Richmond. It has a population of some 27,000 persons. They own property, and manage it. They are taxed, and pay their taxes; and they fulfill the duties of citizens with average fidelity. But if the committee had introduced a clause into the section they propose, to this effect: "Provided that idiots, lunatics, and persons under guardianship, felons, inhabitants of the County of Richmond, and persons convicted of bribery, shall not be allowed to vote," they would not have proposed a more monstrous injustice, nor a grosser inconsistency with every fundamental right and American principle, than in the clause they recommend; and in that case, what do you suppose would have been my reception had I returned to my friends and neighbors, and said to them, "The Convention thinks that you are virtually represented by the voters of Westchester and Chautauque?"

I have no superstition about the ballot. I do not suppose it would immediately right all the wrongs of women any more than it has righted all those of men. But what political agency has righted so many? Here are thousands of miserable men all around us; but they have every path open to them. They have their advocates; they have their votes; they make the laws, and, at last and at worst, they have their strong right hands for defence. And here are thousands of miserable women pricking back death and dishonor with a little needle; and now the sly hand of science is stealing that little needle away. The ballot does not make those men happy, nor respectable, nor rich, nor noble; but they guard it for themselves with sleepless jealousy, because they know it is the golden gate to every opportunity; and precisely the *hind* of advantage it gives to one sex, it would give to the other. It would arm it with the most powerful weapon known to political society; it would maintain the natural balance of the sexes in human affairs, and secure to each fair play within its sphere.

Or shall I be told that women, if not numerically counted at the polls, do yet exert an immense influence upon politics, and do not really need the ballot? If this argument was seriously urged, I should suffer my eyes to rove through this chamber and they would show me many honorable gentlemen of reputed political influence. May they, therefore, be properly and justly disfranchised? I ask the honorable chairman of the committee, whether he thinks that a citizen should have no vote because he has influence? Ability, intelligence, honesty. Are these to be excluded from the polls? Is it only stupidity, ignorance and race that which ought to possess political power?

Or will it be said that women do not want the ballot and ought to be asked? And upon what principle ought they to be asked? When natural rights or their means of defence have been immemorially denied to a large class, does humanity, or justice, or good sense require that they should be registered and called to vote upon their own restoration? It must be assumed that men and women wish to enjoy their natural rights, as that the eyes wish light or the lungs an atmosphere. Did we wait for emancipation until the slaves petitioned to be free? All our lives had been passed in ingenious and ingominous efforts to sophisticate and stultify ourselves for keeping them chained; and when war gave us a legal right to snap their bonds, we did not ask them whether they preferred to remain slaves. We knew that they were men, and that men by nature walk upright, and if we find them bent and crawling, we know that the posture is unnatural, whether they may think so or not. In the case of women, we acknowledge that they have the same natural rights as ourselves—we see that they hold property and pay taxes, and we must of necessity suppose that they wish to enjoy every security of those rights that we possess. So when in this State, every year, thousands of boys come of age, we do not solemnly require them to tell us whether they wish to vote. We assume, of course, that they do, and we say to them, "Go, and upon the same terms as the rest of us, vote as you choose." But gentlemen say that they know a great many women who do not wish to vote, who think it is not ladylike, or whatever the proper term may be. Well, I have known many men who habitually abstained from politics because they were so "ungentlemanly," and who thought that no man could touch pitch without defilement. Now what would the honorable gentlemen who know women who do not wish to vote, have thought of a proposition that I should not vote, because my neighbors did not wish to? There may have been slaves who preferred to remain slaves—was that an argument against freedom? Suppose there are a majority of the women of this State who do not wish to vote—is that a reason for depriving one woman who is taxed of her equal representation, or one innocent person of the equal protection of his life and liberty?

The amendment proposes no compulsion like the old New England law which fined every voter who did not vote. If there are citizens of the State who think it unladylike or ungentlemanlike to take part in the government, let them stay at home. But do not, I pray you, give them authority to detain wiser and better citizens from their duty.

But I shall be told that the proposition is

openly at war with the distribution of functions and duties between the sexes. Translated into English, this means that it is unwomanly to vote. I know that at the very mention of the political rights of women, there arises in many minds a dreadful vision of a mighty exodus of the whole female world, in bloomers and spectacles, from the nursery and kitchen to the polls. It seems to be thought that if women practically took part in politics, the home would be left a howling wilderness of cradles, and a chaos of undarned stockings and buttonless shirts. But how is it with men? Do they desert their workshops, their ploughs and offices, to pass their time at the polls? Is it a credit to a man to be called a professional politician? The pursuits of men in the world, to which they are directed by the natural aptitude of sex, and to which they must devote their lives, are as foreign from political functions as those of women. To take an extreme case: there is nothing more incompatible with political duties in cooking and taking care of children than there is in digging ditches or making shoes, or in any other necessary employment, while in every superior interest of society growing out of the family, the stake of women is not less than men's, and their knowledge is greater. In England, a woman who owns shares in the East-India Company may vote. In this country, she may vote as a stockholder upon a railroad from one end of the country to another. But if she sells her stock and buys a house with the money, she has no voice in the laying out of the road before her door which her house is taxed to keep and pay for. Why, in the name of good sense, if a responsible human being may vote upon specific industrial projects, may she not vote upon the industrial regulation of the State? There is no more reason that men should assume to decide participation in politics to be unwomanly than that women should decide for men that it is unmanly. It is not our prerogative to keep women feminine. Nature is quite as wise as we. Whatever their sex incapacitates women from doing, they will not do. Whatever duty is consistent with their sex and their relation to society, they will properly demand to do until they are permitted.

We cannot know what is womanly until we see the folly of insisting that the theories of men settle the question. We know now what the convenience and feelings of men decide to be womanly. We shall know what is womanly in the same sense that we know what is manly, only when women have the same equality of development and the same liberty of choice as men. The amendment I offer is merely a prayer that you will remove from women a disability, and secure to them the same freedom of choice that we enjoy. If the instincts of sex



increase of the population for the same period, and in the group of western States, above referred to, they have increased 376.3 per cent, while in Wyoming the increase in divorce is 61.5 per cent, only one-half as large as the per cent. of increase of the population.

To state the matter in terms that all can remember, the ratio of divorce in Wyoming is to that of the whole United States as 1 to 3; to that of the other States in the western group as 1 to 4.

Statistics show that contrary to the prevailing opinion, divorces are very largely granted where the marriage was celebrated, but of the few divorces obtained in Wyoming, almost all are of those married before going to that State. So while we can well conceive what a shock it must be to marry men immigrating to Wyoming, to find themselves for the first time in their lives, forced to see at their firesides a legal and political equal, it is a significant fact that men to the manner born find this condition conducive to domestic happiness.

That the conditions of a Society where women have political rights and privileges conduce to a tranquil state of mind and a high degree of intelligence, is shown by the statistics of insanity and idiocy, Wyoming being far below the average in these. Compare Wyoming with a typical Eastern State, Connecticut, where the latter has one insane person to every 363 of the population, Wyoming has but one to every 1497. Nor is this wholly a difference of East and West, for Idaho, its neighbor, shows one in every 1029 insane. The proportion of idiots is in Connecticut 1 to 616; Idaho 1 to 1534; and Wyoming, 1 to 4336. Especially would voting seem to increase the intelligence of women for in both Connecticut and Idaho there are over seven-tenths as many female idiots as there are male idiots; while in Wyoming there are only four-tenths as many.

A careful comparison of the laws of Wyoming with those of other States shows that they are exceptionally favorable and just to women. They clearly define, as do the laws of no other State, the different offenses against the person of women, making them dove-tail and thus furnishing continued protection. It is a penitentiary offense for any person to exercise the arts of the procurer over any female under eighteen years of age even with her consent or over eighteen years without it; and the statute omits those usual words of limitation which extend protection only to the virtuous, leaving exposed to the "tender mercies of the wicked" those who are in sorest need of the aegis of the law.

Seduction is in most States a civil offence laying the guilty party liable to damages and I find no other State that makes the betrayal of a woman, less than 21 years of

age, under promise of marriage, a well-defined penitentiary offence. Colorado of this group of Western States comes the nearest to it but this limits the age of protection to 16 years.

Wyoming stands alone in considering the male and female habitues of houses of prostitution as guilty of the same offence, but the man receives a double punishment being liable to a fine of \$100 and imprisonment for 60 days, while the woman is liable only to a fine of \$50 and imprisonment for 30 days.

The constitution of Wyoming clearly marks the progressive thought of the Commonwealth; and is a magnificent instrument even aside from the woman suffrage clause. It embodies unique provisions in the line of education, prevention of crime, and reformation that are the exponent of maternal as well as paternal thought in government. No money can be appropriated by the legislature to religious or sectarian uses. The rights of labor are recognized. Perpetuities and monopolies are forever prohibited. Two provisions preeminently mark the influence of woman's possession of political power; an educational qualification is found in the suffrage clause and a provision that in payment for labor for the State there shall be no difference in wages because of sex.

That all this wise legislation has been enacted by men only, shows that the good influence of women in politics will not be limited to direct results, but will quicken and inspire men to a higher standard of thought and action as they become truly the representatives of women in the legislative halls.

It thus appearing that the twenty-five years of woman suffrage have been satisfactory to the citizens of Wyoming; that they have conducted to good order in the elections and to the purity of politics; that the educational system is improved and that teachers are paid without regard to sex; that Wyoming stands alone in showing a decreased proportion of crime and divorce; and that it has elevated the personal character of both sexes, why should any State longer delay or fear to enfranchise its women? The women of other States are as ready for the ballot as were the women of Wyoming, and will prove as intelligent, as virtuous, as patriotic. Will the citizen of any State dare deny it?—*Clara Bewick Colby.*

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## THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.

Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

Vol. 2

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### Woman Suffrage in Wyoming.

Article 1. SECTION 2. In their inherent right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, all members of the human race are equal.

SECTION 3. Since equality in the enjoyment of natural and civil rights is only made sure through political equality, the laws of this State affecting the political rights and privileges of its citizens shall be without distinction of race, color, sex, or any circumstance or condition whatsoever other than individual incompetency or unworthiness, duly ascertained by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Thus reads the Declaration of Rights of the Constitution of the State of Wyoming, and these sections are enforced by the first section of Article 6 which says "The rights of citizens of the State of Wyoming to vote and hold office shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex."

If the status of Wyoming has been materially benefited by the vote of women, where it has prevailed for twenty-five years, it will certainly be the best argument for an amendment to the National Constitution which will prohibit the disfranchisement of women on account of sex, and for its adoption in every State in the Union.

In compiling the first volume of the laws of Wyoming, Secretary Lee said: "In the provisions of the Woman's Suffrage clause, enacted in 1869, we placed the youngest Territory on earth in the vanguard of civilization and progress." That this statement has been verified by practical experience the testimony is unanimous, continuous, and conclusive. Not a link is wanting in the chain of evidence, and, as a Governor of the Territory once said, "The only dissenting voice against woman's suffrage was that of convicts who had been tried and found guilty by women jurors." Women exercised the right of jurors and contributed to the speedy release of the Territory from the regime of the pistol and bowie-knife. They not only performed their new duties without losing any of the womanly virtues and with dignity and decorum, but good results were immediately borne. Chief Justice Howe of the Supreme Court, under whose direction women were first drawn on juries, wrote in 1872: "After the grand jury had been in session two days the dance-house keepers,

gamblers, and demi-monde fled out of the State in dismay to escape the indictment of women grand jurors. In short, he adds, "I have never, in twenty-five years of constant experience in the courts of the country, seen a more faithful and resolutely honest grand and petit jury than these." And there is no doubt that the superior conditions that exist in Wyoming are in a great measure due to the sitting of women on juries in these early days.

In the official record of Governor John W. Hoyt, in 1878, he stated: "Attendance upon school is obligatory; teachers are equally paid, male and female alike, for the same service." Does not this indicate a favorable result from woman's suffrage when it was the first commonwealth to adopt compulsory education, and the first, and still the only one, to pay teachers equally without regard to sex? Governor Hoyt's testimony with regard to the direct benefit of woman's suffrage was also very strong in 1882. In his official report, he said: "Elsewhere objectors persist in calling this honorable statute of ours 'an experiment.' We know it is not; that under it we have better laws, better officers, better institutions, better morals and higher social conditions in general than could otherwise exist—that none of the predicted evils, such as loss of native delicacy and disturbance of home relations has followed in its train; that the great body of our women, and the best of them, have accepted the elective franchise as a precious boon and exercise it as a patriotic duty—in a word, that after twelve years of happy experience, woman's suffrage is so thoroughly rooted and established in the minds and hearts of the people that, among them all, no voice is ever uplifted in protest against or in question of it."

In 1879 the Speaker of the House, Hon. N. L. Andrews, a Democrat, ratified what had been said by the Republican governors, saying publicly: "I came to the Territory in 1871, strongly prejudiced against woman suffrage. It has produced much good, and no evil that I could discern. In my opinion the real health-giving remedy that would counteract political degeneracy would be the ballot in the hands of women in every State and Territory."

In 1883 Chief Justice Joseph W. Fisher stated: "I have seen the effects of woman suffrage. Instead of encouraging fraud and corruption it tends greatly to purify elections."

Governor Francis E. Warren said in 1885: "I have seen much of the workings of woman suffrage. I have yet to hear of the first case of domestic discord growing therefrom."



Our women nearly all vote. As the majority of women are good, the result is good—not evil." In the same year he reported to the Secretary of the Interior: "The men are as favorable to woman suffrage as the women are. Wyoming appreciates, believes in, and indorses woman suffrage." In his official report next year, he said: "Woman suffrage continues as popular as at first. The women nearly all vote, and neither party objects." And in 1889, he reported: "No one will deny that woman's influence in voting has always been on the side of the Government. The people favor the continuance."

This official evidence as to the beneficial effects of woman suffrage is supported by the universal testimony of residents and the personal experience of visitors, including some of us. On the other side are only random statements born of a prejudice whose wish is father to the thought. We are, therefore, bound to believe that the status of Wyoming has been favorably affected by woman suffrage if we exercise the ordinary trust and credulity on which our other beliefs and daily transactions are based.

With such an experience of twenty years it was not strange that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of July 1889, the first framers of organic law ever elected by the votes of women, should embody the magnificent declaration which was quoted at the outset, and present to the world the first constitution adopted by man which gives each citizen the same rights guaranteed to every other citizen.

The cap sheaf of this column of testimony that woman's ballot had been a controlling factor in obtaining good government, that it had aroused the latent patriotism of women and increased the chivalry of men, was supplied by the great celebration of Statehood which was held at Cheyenne, July 25, 1890. Side by side with the Governor of the State sat Mrs. Post, the President of the Woman's Suffrage Association. Mrs. Esther Morris, the first woman to perform the duties of justice of the peace, presented to the State, on behalf of the women of the State, a silken flag, containing forty-five stars "in grateful recognition," as she said, "of the high privileges of citizenship." Mrs. Theresa M. Jenkins delivering the oration of the day from the steps of the Capitol said: "We have never been compelled to petition or protest; we have ever been treated with a patient hearing, and our practical suggestions have been most courteously received. Happy are our hearts today, and our lips but sound a faint echo of the gratitude of our bosoms. Think ye our tongues can now be silent or that we have no need to sing our anthems of praise? History chronicles no such event on all its

pages, and the bells of all the past ring out no such victory."

Compare the grand outburst of this occasion with the United States Constitution Centennial, where no woman's voice was heard and no woman was named, and is it not evident that woman suffrage, conferred at first in Wyoming from perhaps selfish motives, has awakened the sleeping justice of men and enhanced the dignity of women, making them the acceptable compeers of men, instead of the rejected and ignored humble petitioners that they are in other States.

Following the example of every Territorial governor, Gov. Barber, the first State governor says: "Woman suffrage does not degrade woman. On the contrary it ennobles her and brings out all the strong attributes of true womanhood. To their credit be it said, the women are almost a unit for ability, honesty and integrity wherever found, in high life or low life. A man must walk straight in Wyoming, for the women hold the balance of power and they are using it wisely and judiciously. They make the cause of education their first aim and are using it wisely and judiciously. They are making our schools the models of the country, and, too, they can make a dollar go much further than their husbands."

But perhaps the most conspicuous testimony from Wyoming was afforded by its last legislature which not only memorialized Congress to pass a woman suffrage amendment to the National Constitution but also adopted the following:

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION:

Be it resolved by the Second Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

That the possession and exercise of suffrage by the women in Wyoming for the past quarter of a century has wrought no harm and has done great good in many ways; that it has largely aided in banishing crime, pauperism and vice from this State, and that without any violent or oppressive legislation; that it has secured peaceful and orderly elections, good government, and a remarkable degree of civilization and public order; and we point with pride to the facts that after nearly twenty-five years of woman suffrage not one county in Wyoming has a poor-house, that our jails are almost empty, and crime, except that committed by strangers in the State, almost unknown; and as the result of experience we urge every civilized community on earth to enfranchise its women without delay.

Resolved, That an authenticated copy of these resolutions be forwarded by the Governor of the State to the Legislature of every State and Territory in this country, and to every legislative body in the world; and that we request the press throughout the

civilized world to call the attention of their readers to these resolutions.

The above passed the House but did not reach the Senate for want of time; whereupon Mr. Willcox wrote to every Senator to know if they would have concurred in it. All but one endorsed it heartily and so did Governor Osborn.

Woman Suffrage has never assumed a partisan attitude in Wyoming, and since the Democrats in Congress opposed as a party measure the admission of Wyoming, making its woman suffrage clause an excuse for their opposition, the Democrats of Wyoming have taken great pains to assure the women that they had always been favorable to woman's possession of the ballot. In 1892 when the Republican party elected women to sit in the National Convention, the Democratic party took pains to bring them into their State Convention and even urged one to become a candidate for a leading place on the State ticket.

Although the verdict of the people of the Commonwealth, thus variously expressed, furnishes the best possible evidence of the value of woman suffrage, it is interesting to note how it is supported by figures, wherever it is possible to schedule conditions. In preparing the tables from which these facts are gathered, I made a comparison of the eleven States which form the Western group, and, since the only feature of Wyoming that it does not share with others of these States is the exceptional experience of woman suffrage, it is fair to conclude that any marked difference in its status is due to this fact.

The population of the United States has increased in the last decade 24.6 per cent. That of Wyoming has increased 127.9 per cent. But while the number of criminals in the whole United States has increased 49.3, an alarming ratio—far beyond the increase of population—notwithstanding the immense increase of population in Wyoming, the number of criminals has not increased at all, giving a relative decrease which shows a law-abiding community, and constantly improving condition of the public morals. In 1880, there were confined in the jails and prisons of Wyoming 74 criminals, 72 men and 2 women. The Census of 1890 shows the same number of criminals, 74, as against an average number of criminals in the other Western States, of 645.8. This remarkable fact is made more interesting because the 74 in 1890 are all men, and thus the scarecrow of the vicious women in politics disappears. Wyoming being the only State in which the per cent. of criminal women has decreased it is evident that the morals of the female part of the population improve with the exercise of the right of suffrage.

A celebrated student of heredity has said

that material development in the nineteenth century has produced such a strain upon the Anglo-Saxon race that unless some influence can be brought to bear to raise it a degree or two in the moral scale to maintain the balance, it must degenerate.

The condition of affairs at this time with crime increasing nearly twice as fast as the population of the whole United States, and in a much larger ratio in all the Western States except Wyoming where it has not increased at all but has a relative decrease of about four-fifths, should make every student of sociology and every patriotic citizen give thoughtful attention to woman suffrage as the possible remedy for national deterioration.

If woman's ballot is the means whereby the moral strength of men can be reinforced and the race lifted a step higher on the moral plane, is there a woman who loves her country or humanity, who will refuse her help?

We shall have to have woman suffrage to save the home. How to prevent divorce, and maintain the sacred institution of the home is the problem of the day. Wyoming shields more the marriage of its daughters than any other western State, requiring parental consent for the marriage of any girl under 21. The average duration of marriage before divorce, when persons have been married 21 years or over is considerably longer in Wyoming than in the average of the western group and in the average of the whole United States, showing that the married condition of even the unhappily mated, is more bearable than elsewhere. The per cent. of divorce granted to wives in the United States is very much larger than to husbands, while in Wyoming the difference is much smaller than the average, and it must certainly be for the safety of domestic relations that the bonds should be as bearable to one sex as to the other. This certainly is a point in favor of woman's equality before the law.

In the United States the estimated number of married couples to one divorce was 664 in 1870, and 481 in 1880, the number of divorced marriages in the United States increasing 38 per cent. In the western group, the states, omitting Wyoming, which are beyond or partly beyond the Rocky mountains, the average increase was 50 per cent. In Nebraska, Wyoming's neighbor, it was 79 per cent. To take the statistics from two exceptionally law-abiding communities: In Michigan it was 50 per cent. and in Minnesota it was 55 per cent. while in Wyoming the number of divorced marriages had decreased 20 per cent. Stating the result in another way, divorces increased in the United States from 1870 to 1880, 79.4 per cent. nearly three times the per cent. of the



can do no wrong.' The right to perfect liberty is yours by reason of your humanity, and, if it were not, you have earned it by reason of your womanhood."

This is the "Chivalry of the Nineteenth Century," and it is the only utterance on the woman question that can consistently come from the lips of the political party that advocates "The largest individual liberty consistent with the rights of others."

In conclusion let me present two wise sayings for the benefit of all anti-suffragists:

"What is justice?" says Aristotle, "To render to every man his own."

We call this "The land of the free," but

"How can a people be free that has not learned to be just?"—*A Kentucky Woman.*

"The one Divine work—the one ordered sacrifice—is to do justice, and it is the last we are inclined to do."—*Ruskin.*

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## THE NATIONAL BULLETIN.

Governments Derive Their Just Powers From the Consent of the Governed.

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### Why Democratic Women Want the Ballot.

As a woman, and a Kentucky woman, I must say at the outset that it seems to me an impertinence for any man to require me to give a reason for wanting the ballot.

Men everywhere, and in Kentucky especially, pride themselves on their chivalry, their absolute devotion to woman. Now when a woman makes a request of a man, it is not chivalric to demand the reason for that request, whether it be for a new spring bonnet or the right to vote. It is not chivalric in the first place to allow her to ask for what she wants. *Real* chivalry would lead men to anticipate the wants of woman, and spare her proud, gentle spirit the pain, the humiliation of having to ask for what she wants.

"That comes too late which comes for the asking," says Seneca, and I have often wondered how a man could have evolved such a thought, for it is the perfect expression of that exquisite womanly dignity which, realizing its right to homage from men, is outraged by having to beg for that which should come without asking.

"Your wish is my law." "To anticipate your wish is my highest pleasure."—such is the language of chivalry. And so, when we women ask for the ballot, instead of gruffly demanding "Why do you want it?" chivalric man should say, "The ballot, my dear Madam? A thousand apologies for not having offered it to you before. If I had dreamed you wanted it, it might have been yours long ago. I doubt if it is a good thing for you to have, but your will is my law, so here it is." This would be proper conduct on the part of that chivalry whose theory is that woman is a "queen" and a "goddess" and man her loyal subject and abject worshipper.

However, as things are not as they should be in this "naughty world," since women have not only to ask but give a reason for asking and get generally a curt refusal for all their pains, it becomes them to descend from their "thrones" and "shrines," and meekly give thanks for merely the opportunity to ask and explain why they ask.

Such an opportunity is mine in attempting to explain why Democratic women want the ballot, or rather why Democratic women *ought* to have the ballot; for I regret to say that, in the South at least, few women who hold to the principles of this party have any desire to vote, and this fact is a matter of congratulation with the party itself.

A Kentucky editor commenting on the women delegates to the Minneapolis convention, said "Heaven be thankful that Democracy when it puts on its war-paint and feathers leaves the squaws and papooses at home." These felicitous words were certainly not dictated by the spirit of chivalry, let me say in passing, and a Kentucky woman hardly feels complimented at being called a "squaw."

According to my observation the women who want to vote are found mostly in the People's Party, or the Prohibition Party, or any other party that champions some moral or social reform. This means that women, as a rule, do not want to vote unless there is some palpable advantage to be gained by it. Expediency is the keynote of all woman's protests against disfranchisement. There is one all sufficient, all-embracing reason why women should vote, but in the extremity of their need, women have seldom been bold enough to urge this. They have taken refuge behind a score of minor reasons, and their appeals are more to the pity than to the reason of men.

I want prohibition, but that is not why I want to vote; I want a reduction of the tariff, but that is not why I want to vote; I want municipal reforms, but that is not why I want to vote; I want property rights, but that is not why I want to vote.

If every reform advocated by every party could be carried into effect tomorrow, I would still be a woman suffragist. There are two vantage grounds for a woman who wants to vote; one is on the shifting sands of expediency, the other on the solid rock of eternal justice. I choose the latter; and, standing here, I can always find a reason for the faith that is in me.

The Democratic Party prides itself on being the party of broad, liberal principles, the sole representative of Jeffersonian Democracy, consequently in giving a reason why a woman of that party wants to vote we must give one that is broad and comprehensive enough to suit the men who advocate "The largest individual liberty consistent with the rights of others."

I am not optimist enough to hope that the millenium will come as soon as women can



vote. Indeed I fear that even with the help of woman's votes it will be long, long before we bring to pass the reforms we so much desire. Nevertheless I want the ballot, because, as a citizen of a "representative government," and a republic that guarantees "universal suffrage," and as a member of a party that believes in "the largest individual liberty," the right to vote is *my* right of which I am defrauded.

This is my sole reason: I want this thing because it is my own.

Do these words seem absurd coming from an obscure woman whose life is bounded by the four walls of home and whose days are filled with the homely duties of wife-hood and motherhood?

"Taxation without representation was the wrong that moved our forefathers to a bloody war. Doubtless, in those troubled days there were some coward souls who preached peace and forbearance to the freedom-loving ones to whom Justice was so dear that they were ready to die in her cause. Why did they not drink their tea and be at peace with England? Was not the taxed tea of England cheaper than the un-taxed tea of any other country. What mattered a principle, so long as they got their tea?"

The blood of men who fought in that Revolution flows in my veins, and when I hear men and women say "Why should you want to vote? What difference can it make to you personally, whether you are allowed to exercise your right of suffrage or not?" the spirit of my ancestors rises in me, and I can scarcely curb the indignant words that rush to my lips.

Have women no sense of right and wrong, no love for freedom, no patriotism, no self-respect that they are expected to roll in injustice as a sweet morsel under their tongues?

Two years ago I heard from the lips of a lovely Southern woman a few words that I shall never forget. She was a typical Southerner, exquisitely dressed, fair of face, gentle and refined in voice and manner. We were speaking of the progressiveness of the women of the New South, and finally our conversation drifted to the ballot. I don't know that I am very anxious to vote," she said in her soft, musical tones, "but I don't exactly like being told that I cannot. This is the utterance of self-respecting womanhood, that will have right because it is right, that hates wrong because it is wrong, and chafes under even the shadow of a despotism.

"The largest individual liberty consistent with the rights of others ensures the highest type of American citizenship and the best government." Therefore it matters not whether the majority of women want the ballot or not, they should have in this mat-

ter the same "individual liberty" that men have. If an honest man by any chance comes into possession of property belonging to another he does not wait for the owner to ask him for it; he goes straight-way and restores it. It matters not whether women ever use this privilege, or not, it should be theirs just as it is man's. It is useless to tell me that I have enough rights without this, and that if I had it I would not put it to a good use. As well might the thief with his hands in the coffers of some wealthy man excuse his robbery by urging that the man he was robbing had enough money without that, which he was about to take, and that if he did not take it the lawful owner would probably put it to some bad use.

In "Looking Backward," Bellamy says "It seems to me that women were more than any other class the victims of your civilization. There is something which even at this distance of time, penetrates one with pathos in the spectacle of their undeveloped lives, stunted at marriage, their narrow horizon bounded so often, physically, by the four walls of home, and morally by a petty creed of personal interests. \* \* \* From the great sorrows, as well as the petty frets of life, they had no refuge in the breezy outdoor world of human affairs, nor any interest save those of the family. Such an existence would have softened men's brains or driven them mad."

Is not this a perfect picture of the average woman's life today? And what has been the consequence to herself and to man?

In the language of Shylock women may say "If you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

Wronged of her educational rights, her social rights, her political rights, condemned to be a "keeper at home," a hewer of wood and a drawer of water," she has revenged herself on man by her stupidity, by her childishness, by her frivolity, by her weakness of body, her weakness of mind, by the thousand and one frailties springing from a case of "arrested development."

The varied objections to woman suffrage when sifted and analyzed revolve themselves into this, "Women must not vote because they are women."

On the contrary, if I were asked to give a second reason, it would be "Women ought to vote because they are women," that is, human beings, part and parcel of that "whole creation," which "groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now."

Once more paraphrasing Shakespeare we may say: "I am a woman. Hath not a woman eyes? Hath not a woman hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heated by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter as a man is? If you prick us do we not

bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? and if you wrong us shall we not revenge?"

To hear the opponents of woman suffrage talk one would think woman some strange, unclassified creature, some rare exotic, foreign to this world, and utterly unable to exist under its stern laws.

A certain Kentuckian was some years ago appointed to a Federal office in Wyoming. Writing home to a Kentucky paper he tried to show that woman suffrage was a failure. The only point he made was that women had not purified politics there inasmuch as a large per cent. of a candidate's prospective salary was already mortgaged for campaign expenses: The writer did not assert that any of this money went into the pockets of the women voters, so I fail to see how his statement had any bearing upon woman suffrage. I think he must have realized this, for, facts failing him, he fell back upon metaphor and exclaimed poetically, "Would you purify a cesspool by throwing a rose into it?" "Why of course not," exclaim the opponents of woman suffrage. "A cesspool cannot be purified by throwing a rose in it, therefore women ought not to vote."

This, you will observe, is the sort of thing that passes for logic with the anti-suffragists whether they be "most learned judges" or ignorant clowns. But suppose we drop metaphor and come down to plain speech.

Women are *not* roses.

Politics is *not* a cesspool.

Politics is the science of good government.

Women are citizens of this country and subject to its government.

Therefore women ought to vote.

I defy any logician to take this syllogism and show me a shadow of falsity in either its premises or its conclusion. "The Rose and Cesspool style of argument is not the one I learned when I studied logic and somehow it is not at all convincing to my feminine mind."

In the course of his graduating oration I once heard a young man say: "Why should any woman want to vote in Kentucky, where every woman is a queen?"

"Every woman a queen?" There may have been some in that audience who were weak enough to feel flattered by such gallant words, but as for me, I had a vision of the "queens" who had gone from house to house begging their loyal subjects to consent to a petition that prayed the legislature of Kentucky to grant to married women the right to own and dispose of their own property. I saw the "queens" who had laid down youth, health, and beauty at the feet of their kings, who by reason of "Care and sorrow and child-birth pain" were but pale shadows of their former selves. I saw the wives of faithless husbands, the daughters of faithless fathers, the sisters of faithless brothers,

and my soul sickened at the sound of such hollow flattery.

Whenever I hear men calling women queens and goddesses I smile to think how utterly dumfounded they would be if we should arrogate to ourselves the prerogatives of royalty. A man was once talking to his minister about "woman's sphere." "Don't you think, Brother B," he said, "that God created woman to be company for man?" "Company!" snapped out a quick-witted little woman who was sitting by. "Then why don't you treat us like company? Who ever heard of putting company to cooking and scrubbing and patching old clothes?" If we are queens, why don't you treat us like queens?

The language of mediæval romance is not applicable to women of the nineteenth century. Women nowadays are not leaning from their casements, waving adieux to plumed knights. They are not sitting at castle windows listening to a troubadour's serenade and waiting to be crowned "Queens of Love and Beauty." The "doughty deeds" that please "my lady" of the nineteenth century are a lance-thrust against prejudices that hinder woman's free development, or a tournament against the injustice that robs her of the rights of humanity, and the crown she craves is the crown of a perfected womanhood won by the exercise of every talent that God has given her.

It is idiotically maintained by some that if women have justice they must relinquish chivalry. "Give me the luxuries of life and I will dispense with its necessities," said a witty Frenchman. Give women justice and they can dispense with chivalry. The chivalry of mediæval days was a disgusting sham, and much of our nineteenth century chivalry is open to the same objection. The chivalry that leads a man to give a woman a seat in a street car, but at the same time does not prevent him from looking on with apathetic indifference while she is defrauded of her property rights, is not the sort of chivalry that a self-respecting woman values.

"The profession of woman is a hard one," said Victor Hugo. Everywhere she is the life-giver, and as if maternity were not enough, the heaviest drudgery of domestic life falls to her share even in the most civilized countries. I once heard a good Methodist minister say with emphasis "There is not a comfort that man enjoys that women do not have to suffer for." In return for all this vicarious and unavoidable suffering so patiently endured by women, it would seem that men, from the depths of their tender chivalry, would have said long ago: "If there is anything in this wide universe that you covet, O Woman: name it and it is yours, if my effort can obtain it for you. Go where you will, do as you please, 'The Queen



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## The Matriarchate or Mother-Age.

[Address of Mrs. Stanton before the National Council of Women, February, 1891.]

Without going into any of the fine calculations of historians, as to the centuries of human growth, I would simply state that some agree on about 85,000 years. They assign 60,000 to savagery, 20,000 to barbarism, and 5,000 to civilization.

For my present purpose, these facts are only interesting to show for how long a period, in proportion, women reigned supreme; the arbiters of their own destiny, the protectors of their children, the acknowledged builders of all there was of home life, religion, and later, from time to time, of government.

All along from the beginning until the 16th century, when Luther eliminated the feminine element wholly from the Protestant religion and brought the full power of the church to enforce woman's complete subjection, we find traces of the matriarchate. Karl Pearson, in a series of deeply interesting essays gives us the result of his researches into the works of modern historians, and the startling facts they unearth, from what to most of us is the dead, unknown, eternal past, shadowed in mystery. The publication of "Das Mutterrecht," by Bachofen in 1861, of Morgan's "Ancient Society," in 1877, of Wilkeson's "Ancient Egypt," in 1836, with other lesser lights pursuing the same trend of investigation, all show the leading, independent position women held for ages.

What is often said, and repeated from time to time and never contradicted, is accepted as truth. Thus the assertion that women have always been physically inferior to men, and consequently have always been held in a subject condition, has been universally believed.

This view has furnished the opponents to woman's emancipation their chief arguments for holding her in bondage, and logically so, for if at all periods and in all latitudes and longitudes, woman had held the same subordinate position, men would naturally infer that what we choose to call Providence, for wise purposes, had made woman the slave of man. The worst feature of these assumptions is, that women themselves believe them, and feel that to strive for their own emancipation is simply an attempt at the impossible. Fortunately historical research has at last proved the fallacy of these assumptions, and all the arguments that grow out of them. Mankind may be traced by a chain of necessary inferences, back to a time when ignorant of fire, without articulate language, without artificial weapons, they depended like the wild animals upon the spontaneous fruits of the earth.

Through all this period woman was left to protect herself and forage for her children. Morgan, in his "Ancient Society," gives many remarkable examples of the superior position of women among different tribes in the latter part of the period of barbarism. Among the greater number of the American aborigines the descent of property and children were in the female line. Women sat in the councils of war and peace and their opinions had equal weight on all questions. Among the Winnebagoes that occupied the territory now known as Wisconsin, a woman was at the head of the nation. The same was true among the early tribes or gens in the Eastern Hemisphere. In the councils of the Iroquois gens every adult male or female member had a voice upon all questions brought before it. It elected and deposed its sachem and chief; it elected Keepers of the Faith, it condoned or avenged the murder of a *gentilis*, and it adopted persons into the gens.

At the epoch of European discovery,



the American Indian tribes generally were organized into *gentes*, with descent in the female line. Before *paterfamilias* was known, the family was nowhere considered a unit around which society centered. Nothing whatever was based on the family in any of its forms; because it was incapable of entering a *gens* as a whole. The *gens* was homogeneous and to a great extent permanent in duration, and as such the natural basis of a social system. A family of the monogamic type might have individualized and become powerful in society at large, but the *gens* did not and could not recognize the family as an integer of itself.

This is equally true of the modern family and political society. Although individualized by property rights and privileges, and recognized as a legal entity by statutory enactments, the family is not the unit of the political system. The State recognizes the counties of which it is composed, the county its townships, but the townships take no note of the family. So in the early periods the Nation recognized its tribes; the tribes its phratries; and the phratries its *gentes*, but the *gens* took no note of the family.

Thus Morgan flatly contradicts modern historians who assert that the social system of the early Greeks "was the home, the hearth, or family." Like our modern opponents, they cling to the idea of "the family unit" because on that is based the absolute power of the father over the property, children, and the civil and political rights of wives. It is worthy of note that our barbarian ancestors seem to have had a higher idea of justice to woman than American men in the 19th century, professing to believe, as they do, in our republican principles of government.

During these early periods the property of woman was in her own line and *gens*, and man's property was in his own line and *gens*. The following case at the Pueblo of Oraybe shows that the husband acquires no rights over the property of the wife, or over the children of the marriage. A Zunian married an Oraybe woman, and had by her three children. He resided with them at Oraybe until his

wife died, when the relatives of the deceased wife took possession of her children and her household property; leaving to him his clothing, horse and weapons. As was the custom he returned to his own people at Zuni. A similar case occurred at another of the Moqui Pueblos. A woman died, leaving property, children, and husband. The deceased wife's relatives took the property and children, and all the husband was allowed to take was his own clothing, with the privilege of going whithersoever he desired. From these cases, it appears the children belonged to the mother, not to the father, and that he was not allowed to take them even after the mother's death. Such, also, was the usage among the Iroquois and other Northern tribes, and among the village Indians of Mexico.

The growth of the idea of property, and the rise of monogamy, which in a measure assured the paternity of children, formed motives sufficiently powerful to bring children into the *gens* of their father and a participation in the inheritance of his estate. But this invasion of the mother's rights was a slow process and for long periods resisted.

Mr. Morgan shows, too, that the early tribes in Greece, like the American aborigines, were essentially democratic in their government. Historians, accustomed to monarchical governments, would naturally interpret words and actions in harmony with their ideas. Thus Mr. Grote has a memorable dictum of Ulysses in the Iliad to prove that the Greeks had a one-man government: "The rule of many is not a good thing; let us have one ruler only—one king—him to whom Zeus have given the sceptre with the tutelary sanctions." But this saying has no significance, as applied to government. Ulysses, from whose address the quotation is taken, was speaking of the command of an army before a besieged city. There was no occasion for Ulysses to discuss or indorse any plan of government; but he had sufficient reason for advocating obedience to a single commander of the army before a besieged city.

As thus we have seen that Grote, in his



history of Greece, writing from his own true inwardness, mistook the spirit of the times of which he wrote, it behooves us women to question all historians, sacred and profane, who teach by examples or precepts any philosophy that lowers the status of the mothers of the race, or favors the one-man power in government.

As far back into the shadowy past as human thought has penetrated, and been able by a process of reason to substantiate the facts of primeval life, we behold woman in all her native dignity, self-poised and self-supporting, her own head and hands her guidance and protection. The instincts of motherhood gave her the first thought of privacy and seclusion, and led her to make a home for herself and children in the caves of the earth, safe from the wild beasts of the forests, and the wily hunter, who lived on uncooked food and slept on the ground, wherever night found him. While his rude activities developed but few of his faculties the woman, in solitude, was learning the great lessons of life. A new birth! What a mystery for her to ponder! What love and tenderness helpless infancy calls out; what intelligence and activity its necessities compel; what forethought and responsibility in providing for herself and children it involves. Sex relations being transitory and promiscuous, the idea of fatherhood was unknown. As men naturally have no sense of paternal responsibility, no one knew nor cared about the father of a child. To know one's mother was deemed all-sufficient for a legitimate name and an abiding place.

The period of woman's supremacy lasted through many centuries—undisputed, accepted as natural and proper wherever it existed, and was called the matriarchate, or mother-age. It was plainly traceable among the Aryans, the Germans, the Persians, and indications of it are still seen among uncivilized tribes and nations.

Careful historians now show that the greatest civilizing power all along the pathway of natural development has been found in the wisdom and tender sentiments growing out of motherhood. For

the protection of herself and her children woman made the first home in the caves of the earth; then huts with trees in the sunshine. She made the first attempts at agriculture; raised grain, fruits, and herbs which she learned to use in sickness. She was her own physician; all that was known of the medical art was in her hands. She domesticated the cow and the goat, and from the necessities of her children learned the use of milk. The women cultivated the arts of peace, and the sentiments of kinship, and all there was of human love and home life. The necessities of motherhood were the real source of all the earliest attempts at civilization.

Thus, instead of being a "disability," as unthinking writers are pleased to call it, maternity has been the all-inspiring motive or force that impelled the first steps towards a stable home and family life. Clearly the birth of civilization must be sought in the attempt of woman at self-preservation during the period of pregnancy and lactation.

What man achieved at that period was due to the contest for food with his fellows and the wild beasts. He simply invented and improved weapons of warfare; but the woman, handicapped as she appeared to be by child-bearing, became on this very account the main factor in human progress. The man's contributions at this early period are nothing as compared to woman's. Her varied responsibilities as mother, bread-winner, protector, defender of a group of helpless children, raised her to intellectual and inventive supremacy and made her the teacher and ruler of man.

"Perhaps more interesting for us to-day is the actual existence of the matriarchate in the north of Africa among the Touaregs. 'The matrix dyes the child' is one of their proverbs. The child belongs to the mother and not to the father; it is the blood of the mother, and not that of the father, which confers on the child the rank he is to take. Formerly, when there was a question of territorial distribution, the lands granted to each family were inscribed in the name of the mother. The Berber law gives to women the administration of their property; at Rhat, they



alone dispose of houses, gardens—in a word, of all the landed property in the country. Among the Touaregs, not only is woman held as the equal of man, but she enjoys a preferable condition. she disposes of her hand, and in the conjugal community she administers her own fortune, without being forced to contribute to the expenses of the household. Thus it happens, that as productions accumulate, the greater part of the wealth is in the hands of the women.

“The Targui (which is the adjective for Touareg) woman is monogamous; she has imposed monogamy on her husband, although the Mussulman law permits him several wives. She is independent in regard to her husband, whom she can repudiate on the slightest pretext: she comes and goes freely. These social customs have produced extraordinary developments in the Targui woman. Her intelligence and her initiative spirit are astonishing in the midst of a Mussulman society. She excels in bodily exercises; on the back of a dromedary she travels a hundred kilometers to attend a soiree; she competes in races with the boldest cavalier of the desert. She is distinguished by intellectual culture; the ladies of the tribe of Ymanan are celebrated for their beauty and their musical talent; when they give concerts the men come eagerly from the most distant parts, adorned like male ostriches. The women of the Berber tribes sing every evening to the accompaniment of their violin; they improvise; in the open desert they revive the *cours d'amour* of Provence. The Touaregs are the descendants of the Lybians spoken of by Herodotus. This historian tells us that ‘in the valley of the Nile the women go to market and traffic, whilst the men, shut up in houses, weave the linen. The male children are not compelled by law to maintain their parents; this charge is incumbent by law upon the daughters.’ The imposition of such a duty on the daughters sufficed to establish the rule that the wealth of the family should belong to the women, and wherever the woman possesses this economic position, she is not under the guardianship of her husband, but is the head of the family.”

The Rev. Samuel Gorman, a missionary among the Taguna Pueblo Indians, remarks in an address before the Historical Society of New Mexico that “the right of property belongs to the female part of the family, and descends in that line from mother to daughter. Their land is held in common, as the property of the community, but after a person cultivates a lot he has personal claim to it, which he can sell to one of the community. \* \* Their

women generally have control of the granary, and they are more provident than their Spanish neighbors about the future. Ordinarily they try to have a year's provision on hand. It is only when two years of scarcity succeed each other that Pueblos, as a community, suffer hunger.”

Of the Senecas of North America, the Rev. Arthur Wright wrote in 1873: “As to their family system, when occupying the old long-houses, it is probable that some one clan predominated, the women taking in husbands, however, from other clans. Usually, the females ruled the house. The stores were in common; but woe to the luckless husband or lover who was too shiftless to do his share of the providing. No matter how many children, or whatever goods he might have in the house, he might at any time be ordered to pick up his blanket and budge; and after such an order it would not be healthful for him to attempt to disobey. The house would be too hot for him; and unless saved by the intercession of some aunt or grandmother he must retreat to his own clan, or go and start a new matrimonial alliance in some other. The women were the great power among the clan, as everywhere else. They did not hesitate, when occasion required, ‘to knock off the horns,’ as it was technically called, from the head of a chief and send him back to the ranks of the warriors. The original nomination of the chiefs also always rested with the women.”

‘The account we find given by the Portuguese navigators of the Nairs, a people inhabiting the coast of Malabar in the fifteenth century, is another proof of the superior condition of women under previous family systems. The Nairs were then in a state of actual civilization; they had a marine and well organized army; their towns were wealthy and the inhabitants courteous in manners. But the previous notions of the European visitors were strangely upset by what they saw of the social position of the women. There were large families, we are told, consisting of several hundred members bearing the same name. The real estate belonged in common to all members of the gens; the most complete equality reigned among them. The husband, instead of living with his wife and his children, lived with his brothers and sisters in the maternal house; when he left it, he was always accompanied by his favorite sister; at his death his personal property did not go to his children, but was distributed between the children of his sisters. The mother, or in case of her death, her eldest daughter, was the head of the family; her eldest brother, named the foster father, managed the estate; the husband was a guest; he



only entered the house on fixed days, and did not sit at table with his wife and children. 'The Nairs,' says Barbosa, 'have an extraordinary respect for their mother; it is from her they receive wealth and honors; they honor equally their eldest sister, who is to succeed the mother and take the management of the family. The children belong to the mother, and she takes their support on herself.' The Nair family system was maintained among the Malabar peoples till the invasion of Hyder Ali in 1766."

Strabo says of the primitive people of Spain: "That they suffered a most foolish governance by women; that the women possessed the property, and it passed from mother to daughter; that the latter gave away their brothers in marriage; that the men took a dowry with them into the houses of their wives; that the women performed all the agricultural work, and were as hardy as men."

The women at a later period were not only the rulers of the home, but they were priestesses; the deities were in a great part goddesses. All there was of learning and tradition was in the hands of the women, and folk custom long recognized their superiority to men.

The woman being the source of traditional religion, the care of the gods was essentially hers. About the hearth arose the first conceptions of the altar and sanctuary and the immortality of the soul. She was essentially the wise, and wrote with her staff in the ashes, the will of the gods. Her pots and kettles re-appear in every witch trial in the middle ages. The safety of mother and child, in the solitudes of the vast primeval forests, was due in no small measure, to the superstition that woman was in communion with the gods, who would avenge her wrongs. Her spirit is supposed to linger around the hearth after death, and to-day the solitary student sitting over the fire, or the peasant when his family are out, will tell you they have been alone at the hearth with their mother soul. As woman forms the religion and tradition of this period, the goddesses, not gods, are the more numerous and most worshipped. The oldest, the wisest, the most mysteriously powerful, of the Teutonic deities are female.

Jacob Grimm said of the German goddesses years before modern investigations had brought the mother-age to light:

"In the case of the gods, the previous investigation could reach its goal by considering them separately. It seems advisable however to consider the goddesses collectively, as well as individually because a common idea lies at the basis of them all, and will thus be more clearly marked. They are conceived of peculiarly as divine mother, (gottermutter) travelling about and visiting mortals. From them mankind has learned the business and the arts of housekeeping, agriculture, cattle raising, spinning, weaving, sowing, reaping, as well as watching the hearth. These labors bring peace and rest to the land and the memory of them remains firmer in pleasing traditions, than war and fighting, which like women, the majority of the goddesses shun."\* Karl Pearson says: "a truer although unconscious tribute to the civilizing work of women, can hardly be imagined. If we add to the arts mentioned by Grimm, the art of healing, the elements of religious faith as a tradition, and the runic art of writing, we have a slight picture of what woman accomplished in the centuries which intervened between the promiscuous period, and the complete establishment of the father-age."

With such personal independence and superiority, such authority in the national councils, in religious faith, and at the fireside, with the absolute control of her own home, property and children, how did it come to pass that the mother was at last dethroned and womanhood degraded in every nation on the globe.

The mother's labors had from an early period been re-enforced by those of her sons—whose tastes led them to agriculture, and the herding of cattle, to domestic life rather than that of the wandering nomad existence of the wily hunter, but this class was proportionally small. However in process of time as the home with its increasing comforts and attractions, fire, cooked food, and woman's tender care in old age sickness, and death, the innocent prattle of children, the mother's songs and stories, her religious faith and services, all appealed to the better feelings of the wily hunter also, and men began to think when weary of the battle and the chase, that they would like a



permanent foothold in some family group beside the one into which they were born.

As soon as monogamic marriage appeared with property and descent in the male line, and men found themselves comfortably ensconced in a home of their own, they began little by little to make their aggressions, and in time completely dominated woman, leaving her no remnant of authority anywhere, neither in the home, nor at the altar, nor in the councils of the nation.

Having no paternal instinct, no natural love for children, the devices of men to establish the rights of paternity were as varied as ridiculous. It was the custom at one time when the mother gave birth to a child, for the acknowledged father to take to his bed to pretend that he had shared in the perils of labor, and thus prove his identity, while the wife waited on him, for the women, accustomed to agricultural work, were so hardened by it that they did not suffer in child birth.

"On this point Karl Pearson tells us, the transition from the mother to the father-age was marked by the appearance of women of gigantic stature. The old legends of contests between men and women for supremacy are not such idle fancies as some would have us believe. Very dark shadows indeed do such figures as those of Ildico, Fredegunde and Brunhilde cast across the pages of history. Such women were only paralleled by the Clytemnestra and Medea of a like phase in Greek development. Among the Germans, too, the poets represent the contest between men and women for the mastery. Wuodan replaces Hellja; Siegfried conquers Brunhilde; Beowulf, the offspring of Grindel and Thor, fights with Gialp and Griep, the daughters of Geirrod. One great element of physical and mental vigour is freedom, which women have never enjoyed except under the Matriarchate.

The Amazons, the present body guard of the King of Dahomey, the astounding powers of endurance exhibited by domestic servants and the peasant girls of southern Germany and Italy, the fish women at Boulogne, all point to the great strength when once the physique has been developed.

The victory of man over woman was not easily accomplished. It took long cen-

turies to fully confirm it, and traces of the mother age remain throughout the Mediæval times. The permanency of sex relations among the agriculturists and the necessity for organization in matters of defence, which must be entrusted mainly to men, were the beginnings of the father age.

For though women had been compelled to fight for their own protection, and were abundantly able to maintain the contest, yet wars for territory and conquests over other tribes and nations, were opposed by all the tenderest sentiments of their nature. Hence they naturally of their own accord would withdraw from the councils of war, and the battle field, but as angels of mercy to minister to the wounded and the dying. Thus man became ruler, tribal organizer, tribal father, before his position of sexual father was recognized. While the mother still ruled the house, "the Alvater" ruled the fight, though oftentimes guided by the woman.

Driven from the commanding position of home mother, and deprived of her rights to property and children, the last fortress of the Teutonic woman was her sacerdotal privileges. She remained holy as priestess. She had charge of the tribal sacrifice and the tribal religion.

From this last refuge she was driven by the introduction of the Christian religion with its narrow Pauline doctrine, which made woman mentally and physically the inferior of man, and lawfully in subjection to him.

The spirit of the church in its contempt for woman, as shown in the scriptures, in Paul's epistles and the Pentateuch, the hatred of the fathers, manifested in their ecclesiastical canons, and in the doctrines of asceticism, celibacy and witchcraft, destroyed man's respect for woman and legalized the burning, drowning and torturing of women by the thousand†.

Women and their duties became objects of hatred to the Christian missionaries and of alternate scorn and fear to pious ascetics and monks. The priestess mother became something impure, associated with the devil, and her lore an infernal incantation, her very cooking a brewing



of poison, nay her very existence a source of sin to man. Thus woman, as mother and priestess, became woman as witch. The witch trials of the middle ages, wherein thousands of women were condemned to the stake, were the very real traces of the contest between man and woman. Christianity putting the religious weapon into man's hand made his conquest complete. But woman did not yield without prolonged resistance and a courageous final struggle. Driven from the home, an outlaw and wanderer everywhere, ostracised by the State, condemned by the courts, crucified by the church, the supreme power of the mother of the race was conquered only by the angel of death, and the dark ages tolled her funeral knell.

It was this wholesale, violent suppression of the feminine element, in the effort to establish the Patriarchate, that, more than any other one cause, produced the dark ages. ‡

Morgan, in his "Ancient Society," attributes the premature destruction of ethnic life, in the societies of Greece and Rome, to their failure to develop and utilize the mental and moral conservative forces of the female intellect, which were not less essential than those of men, to their progress.

In closing, I would say that every woman present must have a new sense of dignity and self respect, feeling that our mothers, during some periods in the long past, have been the ruling power and that they used that power for the best interests of humanity. As history is said to repeat itself, we have every reason to believe that our turn will come again, it may not be for woman's supremacy, but for, the as yet untried experiment of complete equality, when the united thought of man and woman will inaugurate a just government, a pure religion, a happy home, a civilization at last in which ignorance, poverty and crime will exist no more. Those who watch already behold the dawn of the new day.

"Night wanes—the vapor round the mountains curled,  
Melts into morn, and light awakes the world.  
Mighty Nature bounds as from her birth;  
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth:  
Flowers in the valley, splendor in the beam,  
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream."

*Elizabeth Cady Stanton.*

\*Deutsche Mythology.

† See Lecky's History of Rationalism, Chapter I.

‡ For the details of woman's persecutions during centuries down to our own times see History of Woman Suffrage, Vol. 1, Chap. 15, by Matilda Joslyn Gage.

### Voluntary Motherhood.

[Address of Mrs. Stanton-Blatch before the National Council of Women, February, 1891.]

"The truth is we are in the midst of such terrible errors on the subject of woman and her veritable rights that it is frightful to think of"—Tolstoi's "Kreutzer Sonata."

The difficulty of approaching the subject of the relation of the sexes is tenfold, if the prerogatives of the dominant sex are challenged. It is because of its attack upon men, that Tolstoi's Kreutzer Sonata has raised so much opposition. To decry this last publication of the Russian novelist as immoral is merely a little dust-throwing to blind women to the truths in the book, and it is to be hoped that neither this abuse, nor the author's own religious beliefs and eastern philosophy will obscure for his readers the gospel set forth. True, Tolstoi is extreme; but humanity has been so misguided by the average man's thought, or rather passion, that it is scarcely ground for wonder that a sensitive thinker should regard as an ideal, entire continence.

Tolstoi aims to reach a solution of life for men; as to the feelings of women, he admits he is not informed. In this object he resembles most writers who deal with the relation of the sexes; for all look at this matter from the man's point of view, and seldom if ever from the side of the rights and duties of the mother, and the interests of the child. These weighty considerations are buffeted about according to the opinions upon other subjects held by the persons handling them. The political economist of the Mill school tells the working-man that his trouble does not come from unequal distribution of wealth, but his large family.\* The labor market is overstocked and poverty results. The Malthusian, while foretelling terrible consequences if human increase is not limited, advocates various artificial checks, not to human license, but to race productivity. Many a socialist denies all these forebodings, and proclaims that even England now "has too small a population for a really high civilization." †

Now these contradictory theories resemble one another in one particular; those who propound them think that eco-



conomic considerations should alone settle this matter of population. In contrast to this, the man's commercial view of race production, stands the woman's intuition backed by reason. She asks first, will the child be welcome? second, what will be its inheritance of physical, mental, and moral character? third, can the child be provided for in life? Every conscientious mother replies to the socialist, to the Malthusian—that satisfactory answers must be given to the woman's first and second demand, and that with satisfactory answers to those questions the third consideration may safely be left to take care of itself.

In animal life, as soon as we get conscious motherhood, the strides in evolution become greater and more rapid. Below the birds "the animal takes care of himself as soon as he begins to live. He has nothing to learn, and his career is a simple repetition of the careers of countless ancestors."‡ Among higher birds and mammals a great change takes place, the life of the creature becomes so varied and complex that habits cannot be fully organized in the nervous system before birth. The antenatal period is too short to allow of such development. So we get a period of infancy, a time of plasticity, of teachableness. Of this time Fiske truly says, "the first appearance of infancy in the animal world heralded the new era which was to be crowned by the development of man."§ From this point in evolution the period of infancy lengthens, indeed this is the condition of progress. To reach a higher stage of development a longer time must be given to immaturity or growth, and that period will be one of greater or less dependence according as the adult being is of higher or lower species. What chiefly distinguishes the human being from the lower animals is the increase in the former of cerebral surface and organization, and the necessary accompaniment of this development, a lengthened period of infancy.

Now this increased time of immaturity is a direct tax upon the mother in any species; so to her is due each step in evolution. Men talk of the sacredness of

motherhood, but judging from their acts it is the last thing that is held sacred in the human species. Poets sing and philosophers reason about the holiness of the mother's sphere but men in laws and customs have degraded the woman in her maternity. Motherhood is sacred—that is, voluntary motherhood; but the woman who bears unwelcome children is outraging every duty she owes the race. The mothers of the human species should turn to the animals, and from the busy caretakers, who are below them in most things, learn the simple truths of procreation. Let women but understand the part unenforced maternity has played in the evolution of animal life, and their reason will guide them to the true path of race development. Let them note that natural selection has carefully fostered the maternal instinct. The offspring of the fondest females in each animal species having of course the most secure and prolonged infancy, are "naturally selected" to continue their kind. The female offspring gains by inheritance in philo-progenitiveness, and thus is built up the instinct which prepares the females of a higher species for a more developed altruism. Through countless ages mother-love has been evolved and been working out its mission; surely women should recognize the meaning of the instinct, and should refuse to prostitute their creative powers, and so jeopardize the progress of the human race. Upon the mothers must rest in the last instance the development of any species.

In this work, women need not hope for help from men. The sense of obligation to offspring, men possess but feebly; there has not been developed by animal evolution an instinct of paternity. They are not disinherited fathers; they are simply unevolved parents. There is no ground for wonder that this is so; for in but a few species among the lower animals is even a suggestion of paternal instinct found. The male bird often occupies itself with the hatching and feeding of the brood; and the lion is a pattern father, but usually we find no hint of paternal instinct in the male, and sometimes antag-



onism towards the young of the species. Evidently nature tried her hand on paternity, it did not fulfil the hopes she had of it, and she turned a cold shoulder upon its development. The paternal instinct is not a factor in evolution.

If then the law of natural selection is of weight, we should expect to find very little if any instinct of paternity in the male of the human species. Not only by such *a priori* reasoning is this conclusion reached, but *a posteriori* reasoning emphasises the same truth. Men like to accumulate, and hand down their accumulations with their name. This is a method of securing some sort of immortality; and gives rise to the neglect of illegitimate children, the preference of male to female offspring, the law of primogeniture, and the selection in case of male heirs failing, of some distant relation to inherit the property provided he will adopt the name of his benefactor. The masculine tendencies which have crystallized themselves in these customs bear no resemblance to paternal love. A woman does not discriminate between her legitimate and illegitimate child; and had mothers been instrumental in making legal codes there would not have been a law of entail. But perhaps the strongest proof of the feebleness of philoprogenitiveness in men, is the existence of their system of prostitution, with the accompanying thoughtlessness in which parenthood is risked, and the indifference with which rich fathers leave their children to a life of hardship, if not of crime. When Henry Ward Beecher made his famous assertion, in the presidential campaign of '88, that if all the men who, like Grover Cleveland, had carried on illicit relations with women, voted for him, the Democratic candidate would sweep New York by an overwhelming majority, his words called forth no resentment. But does not such a statement, if it be a fact, imply a more vital truth? It means that but a handful of men could solemnly swear that they are certain no child of theirs is rotting out its life in some tenement or gutter. Could there be a more unanswerable argument against the existence of paternal feeling than the brief statement, that of the

seventy thousand illegitimate children born each year in France, only five thousand are acknowledged by the fathers. And our very attitude towards men of the type of the other sixty-five thousand, shows that we do not expect strong paternal feeling in men. No one feels that George Eliot drew an abnormal creature in Godfrey Cass. When he fails to acknowledge his child and leaves it with the despised weaver, the author does not describe his conduct as that of a brutal man. Again, no thoughtful person could fail to be struck in reading Darwin's *Life and Letters*, by the fact that the greatest student of heredity of our time, though himself the victim of an incurable and hereditary disease, never questioned his right to become the father of many children. And yet he was fully aware of the probability of ill health for his offspring; for in letters to friends he pours out his fears: "My dread is hereditary ill health. *Even death is better for them.*" || Is it only a woman's logic that would lead to the opposite conclusion: *Better had they never been born?* Now no one could say that Darwin was a bad man; on the contrary, if report speaks truly we may look upon him as exceptionally good. The conclusion then forces itself upon us that even the best of men are lacking in that nice conscience which recognizes the sacredness of life and the responsibility of its creation. But humanity would suffer the minimum of evil from this cause, were not laws based upon the extraordinary assumption that "by the law of nature and the law of God," ¶ the father is the sole guardian of the child, and the suicidal custom followed of giving the power of legislation and the social dominance, in all sex matters, into the hands of that half the race, which is unfitted by nature for any just comprehension of these questions.

Ever since the patriarchate was established there has been a tendency to cramp the mother in her maternal rights; so we see no race improvement comparable with our advance in material science. Those who could improve humanity have been hindered by those who prefer to improve steam engines. The sex which has been laboriously evolved by nature for the ardu-



ous work of race-building is handicapped; so more and more the best women turn from the work of motherhood and join the ranks of competitive labor, or seek in society and politics a field for the free play of their ambitions. And now certain of our thinkers forebode evil for a people whose women turn from the home to the frivolities of fashion and the excitement of the political arena. Their forebodings are not without foundation; but the remedy does not lie in depriving women of public freedom, but in according them absolute domestic liberty. The world must act, as well as talk, as if motherhood were important and sacred, before women will give full allegiance to that office. But so to act requires a complete right-about-face.

Frances Galton says: "It seems to me most essential to the well-being of future generations that the average standard of ability of the present time should be raised. We are in crying want of a greater fund of ability in all stations of life; for neither the classes of statesmen, philosophers, artisans, nor laborers are up to the modern complexity of their several professions. Our race is over-weighted, and appears likely to be dragged into degeneracy by demands that exceed its powers."\* The need is that the race be lifted up. But how is a species raised? Always by lengthening the period of infancy. And at whose expense must this be done? At the mother's; more and more of her thought, more and more of her time must be given to the period of immaturity in her offspring; later and later should the child be brought into contact with the practical demands of life. This work requires as its first condition voluntary maternity; for the unwelcome child is mentally and physically below the average; and it is a direct drag upon the mother in the efficient performance of already assumed maternal duties. The evolution of humanity and enforced maternity are antagonistic.

A second condition of race-improvement is a broader education for women. It is amazing that the nineteenth century holds that any sort of education is good enough

for girls. It indicates, too, how low an opinion we have of motherhood; that when a woman does receive superior training it is considered lost, unless she enters upon a competitive career. In a recent speech before a girls' school, Mr. Gladstone, commenting on the success women had achieved in education, said that as a result places of work would have to be thrown open to them; that "of course they could not be given the training, and then be debarred from the use of that training." But surely, is it not equally a matter *of course* that even if women were debarred from public life, they would not be debarred a very important use for all the knowledge of the universe in their sphere of race-builders? The fact is, few women and fewer men regard maternity in its true light; traced down to finalities, the birth of most human beings is a sexual accident. Of course, the person playing the chief role in this game of haphazard is neither self-respecting nor respected; for a matter of chance is never held as holy, however much poets and philosophers, popes and bishops may declare the reverse.

A third condition of race progress is that women should divide with no other person authority over the child. When the work of race-building is left wholly to women, we may look for better results; for then the ambition of the best mothers will find a congenial field for action in their so-called "sphere." As the human being is always of more real value than the work; so to rear an astronomer is perchance a higher labor than to discover a comet. Who would not rather know the work of old Frau Goethe, viz., Goethe himself—than the child of his brain—Faust? If nature has intended women for a special career, the way to defeat the object is to limit their responsibility and authority so completely that they turn to freer fields of work. May the time come when women, fully educated, will be left free to use their creative powers as a lever for raising humanity to a nobler type.

The first steps towards making maternity voluntary, is to secure for all women financial independence. There are those



who think this can be done by women entering the world of competitive work. Now there is no doubt that the female of the human race could win her way, if free of artificial hindrances. The female among the lower animals supports herself and her offspring, she is competent both as bread winner and mother. Under present sex relations women have been enfeebled in two ways; they have lost the mental training gained in bread-winning, and have been physically depleted by playing the double role of mother and mistress. But undoubtedly in freedom women could again be self supporting and efficient mothers, just as they were in the time of the matriarchate; but we may well doubt whether in our dire need for the elevation of our species, it would be economy to make the mothers of the race enter the field of competition to gain their bread and cheese. However, if the choice lies between this and the financial dependence of one woman upon one man, then every well wisher to the race must say, let the woman be self-supporting. But educated thought upon this subject will desire to make better terms with women, and the latter will finally make better terms with civilization. Undoubtedly the tendency at present is to seek independence by undertaking competitive work, rather than to demand that work done in the home shall be recognized and command money return. Just where this tendency is to lead is not plain; but if with self-support should come an increasing neglect of maternal duties, the result will be race decadence; but if self-support leads women to the conditions in some co-operative form, of life in the time of the Mutterrecht, human improvement may be carried to a high point of perfection. But the field of race production is so fundamental in its importance, so broad in its possibilities, it opens an arena so wide for the play of the loftiest ambitions, and of the most varied talents; that time and leisure to be secured, on honorable terms, to those cultivating this field, seems but justice the most meagre, and wisdom the most evident.

The solution most often offered for our social difficulties is divorce. But it is a

solution which does not touch the real source of the trouble, and its agitation diverts attention from more vital questions. It is because divorce merely shifts the disease from one home to another, because it in no way lessens our trouble—the financial dependence of women, and enforced maternity—that the carrying of legislation upon the lines of easier dissolution of the marriage contract proves but a barren victory. Any one visiting the States of the American Union where the freest divorce laws have been passed, will be forced to the conclusion that in Indiana and in Illinois people suffer from the same social evils as in England, for there, as here, no solution of the knotty problem of the money independence of women has been attempted, and the child of the West as seldom as in Europe receives its birthright of a hearty welcome to the world. Divorce does not overcome these two difficulties, difficulties which, until they are met and overcome, will destroy peace in domestic relations, and progress in race development. As public opinion grows upon our two great needs, legislation will probably take more the line of securing to the woman her fair share of the family income, and giving her absolute right to her children.

What the final relation of man and woman may be, it is futile to prophesy; but we may be sure if there is an ideal relation, it is to be reached by honesty, not by pretence. As a race we talk much of monogamy, and practice it very little. Monogamy implies one marriage and no more. And that means no prostitution, no divorce, no second marriage. A second sex-relation is just as promiscuous, physiologically speaking, whether the first partner is literally buried in the graveyard or only figuratively so in the far West of America. But yet every Christian church sanctions second marriage, most civilized States grant divorce for some cause, and in every nation society winks at prostitution. It would be becoming in us then, to claim to be no more than agnostics in the philosophy of the true relation of the sexes. But while we hesitate to foretell finalities, we must take cognizance of the



undeniable fact that, each day is adding to the number of thoughtful men and women who see the discrepancy between our theories and human needs and practices; each day the birth rate of girls is rising in England upon that of boys,\* and already the number of women exceeds that of men by one million, and yet each day adds to the number of free, self-supporting women, women too who have lost none of their strong maternal instinct. We need not stop to prophesy the sex-relation of the future, we can only hope that an enlightened humanity may see that we must be true

"To higher allegiance, higher than our love,"  
and that we could have no more inspiring religious motto than the words of Froebel,

"Let us live for our children."

—*Harriot Stanton Blatch.*

\*Principles of Political Economy. J. S. Mill. Vol. 1, Book 1, Chap. XII, Sec. 2.

†Modern Socialism: The Co-operative Commonwealth. Laurence Gronlund, Chapter V.

‡Man's Destiny. John Fiske, Page 39.

§Man's Destiny. John Fiske, Page 51.

|| Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, Vol. 1, p. 382.

¶Speech by Lord Salisbury in House of Lords on Infant's Act (1886) as reported in "The Record of a Three Years' Effort for Legislative Reform," by Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy.

\*Hereditary Genius. Chapter 20,

\*Fifty-first Annual Report of the Registrar General, p 8

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