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# The Wrong and Peril *of* "Woman Suffrage"

MADE IN  
NEW YORK  
1909

By  
JAMES M. BUCKLEY, LL. D.



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*Dedicated to  
Men and Women who  
look before they leap*





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# The Wrong and Peril of Woman Suffrage

## I

### PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

The proposal to extend the suffrage to women imposes upon men the duty of deciding whether to retain power where it was lodged by the founders of existing governments, or to make women eligible to vote and hold office upon the same terms as men.

1) **I** F woman ought to have the suffrage, she has been, with inconsiderable exceptions, grievously oppressed in every period of time, and in every part of the world. Another consideration accentuates the situation: if Woman-Suffrage is essential to the welfare of society it is of vast importance to all classes that it be conferred; for society needs all possible advantages, especially all safeguards. Besides if woman has been wrongfully deprived of the right to vote, as it is man, claiming it as his prerogative, who has monopolized this mighty lever of influence, every husband, father, brother and son, should as speedily as possible remove his iron heel from the neck of wife, mother, sister and daughter.

2) If woman is better off without the franchise, and the responsibilities it entails, and if it would diminish

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rather than increase her power for good, it is important that she should be fully aware of that fact and equally so for man to see clearly how to vindicate himself from the charge of oppression and tyranny.

This subject drew my attention when in college and interest therein was intensified a few years later when I was in attendance upon the "May Meetings" in Boston, at that time famous throughout the country. There Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Abby Kelly Foster, Wendell Phillips, Lucy Stone, Mrs. Livermore, Julia Ward Howe, and others of note, at white heat with zeal, were at their best in argument, eloquence, satire and wit.

Certain individuals whom I greatly respected avowed themselves favourable to Woman Suffrage. Desirous to promote any true reform, I examined the proposal in all its aspects and relations and have studiously followed its varying phases with the result of a settled conviction that to impose upon woman the burdens of government in the state would be a "~~Reform against Nature~~" and an irreparable calamity.

## II

### IF EVER—FOREVER

**I**N considering this proposition, it should be constantly borne in mind that an act investing woman with the duty of voting, with all that it implies, once passed, can never be repealed.

Most constitutional and legislative changes,—if found injurious or useless,—can be revoked ; but extensions of suffrage do not belong to that class. England cannot to-day disfranchise the various classes to which during the last century it gave the power of voting. Although at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, property qualifications for voters were general, and these or others may still be maintained by states if they so decide, no citizen can imagine that a law restricting suffrage to property holders could now be passed.

It is equally true that were suffrage to be extended to woman in the whole country, or in any state, it could never be repealed ; for the reason that the persons to be disfranchised would have the power of voting against the proposition to disfranchise them.

This proposal therefore is by far the most important ever made since the founding of a limited monarchy or a republic. It is a scheme not only to double the

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number of voters, but (as the late Senator George F. Hoar, though in favour of the proposition, declared) it is a scheme "to change a relation which has existed from the foundation of the earth."

Before taking up the subject on its merits it will be illuminating to review, in brief, the history of this agitation in three great nations in important particulars most closely resembling one another: France, England, and the United States.

**NOTE.**—After I began to collate extracts from constitutions and legal decisions, I fell in with "The Rights of Women," exclusively devoted to the history and legislation of this subject. This work was first published in France, then translated into English and published by Swan Sonnenschein and Co., London, and Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Several of the most important decisions I added to my collection, and here recognize my obligations to M. Ostrogorski, the author. It is a veritable *mutuum in parvo*.

### III

#### WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN FRANCE

**O**N the eve of the first French Revolution, Condorcet gave his adherence to Woman Suffrage, saying, "Either no individual member of the human race has any real rights, or else all have the same; and whosoever votes against the rights of another, no matter what his religion, his colour or his sex may be, has henceforth abjured his own."

The pamphleteers took up the subject. One of those brochures contained the statement, "All male and female citizens being equal in the eyes of the law ought to be admissible to all dignities, posts, and public appointments, according to their capacity, and with no distinctions other than those of their virtues and their talents. . . . Woman has the right to mount the scaffold,—she should equally have the right to mount the tribune."

Mirabeau in a great speech on public education, which he had written and was going to deliver when struck by death, April 2, 1791, expressed himself as follows: "Man and woman play an entirely different part in nature, and they could not play the same part



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in the social state ; the eternal fitness of things only made them move towards one common goal by assigning to them distinct and separate places. . . . To take these modest beings, whose maidenly reserve gives a charm to the domestic circle, where all their lovable qualities expand to perfection ; to place them among men and affairs ; to expose them to the perils of a life which they cannot learn to support except by distorting their physical constitution ; this is but to obliterate that exquisite sensibility which, so to speak, constitutes their essence and becomes the guarantee of their aptitude for the fulfillment of those private functions which a good social scheme has assigned to them. It is to confound everything ; it is by vain prerogatives to flatter them into losing the sight of those advantages by which they might beautify their existence ; it is to degrade them in our eyes and in their own ; it is, in a word, to promise them sovereignty and rob them of their empire. . . .”

M. Ostrogorski thus describes the progress and end of women's public activity in the French Revolution :

“The grotesque and somewhat dismal part played by woman under the Terror only too well justified the language of Mirabeau. Having flung themselves into the Revolution with an ardour and an enthusiasm not devoid of grandeur at the outset, they soon lost all balance, intellectual and moral. The Terrorists

themselves were disgusted in the end, if not by their excesses, at least by the habit into which they fell, of exciting the people, of remonstrating with the men in office, and of promoting disorder in the streets. . . . On the 28th Brumaire, 1793, when a band of red-capped viragoes forced their way into the lobby of the Communal Council-chamber, Chaumette, the *procureur général*, apostrophized them in the severest terms. 'What! shall these degraded beings, who have shaken off and violated Nature's laws, be suffered to enter a place entrusted to the guardianship of citizens? Since when have women been allowed to abjure their sex and turn themselves into men?' . . . The convention thereupon decreed the suppression of female clubs and societies, and subsequently prohibited any public assemblies of women."

In 1830 a powerful agitation for "woman's rights" began, but soon failed. In 1848 the advocates of the change appeared in force; but their return to the conflict met with disaster.

In 1880, certain women in Paris went to the polls and asked to be registered. When the municipality refused, the applicants retorted by declining to pay taxes, "leaving to the men, who arrogate to themselves the right to govern, to make laws, and to make up the budget, the privilege of paying those taxes which they vote and impose as they choose."

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The *Conseil de Prefecture* threw out that plea by laying down in its judgment that "the obligation to pay taxes was in no way correlative to the enjoyment or the exercise of political rights; that the law of April 21, 1832, had determined that taxes had to be paid by every French inhabitant and by every foreigner of both sexes enjoying his rights; . . . and that the words 'enjoying his rights' were only used in a special and restricted sense."

In 1885, women presented themselves and, being rejected, made an appeal to the Court of Cassation. Their claim was based upon a comprehensive nature of woman suffrage; based upon the ancient Latin formula, signifying "a reference in speech to the male sex is generally applied to both sexes." And, further, that the government proviso of March 8, 1848, had given so ample a meaning to the term "universal suffrage" that it could not be intended to exclude women from it, when its exercise had even been conferred upon freed slaves.

The Court delivered a judgment containing the following:

"Whereas, in accordance with the terms of Article VII of the Civil Code the exercise of civil rights is independent of the qualification of citizen, which alone confers the exercise of political rights, and is only acquired in conformity with constitutional law; whereas if women enjoy civil rights in the mode de-

terminated by law, according to whether they are married or single, no constitutional legal provision confers upon them the enjoyment, and, consequently, the exercise of political rights; whereas the enjoyment of these rights is a condition essential for enrollment on the electoral lists; whereas the constitution of November 4, 1848, in substituting 'universal' for 'partial' suffrage from which women were excluded, only intended to confer on citizens of the male sex who hitherto alone had been invested with such right, the right of electing representatives of the country to the several elective offices established by the Constitutions and statutes, etc., etc.

"Women not being expressly named in electoral legislation which 'speaks of *Français*, not of *Françaises*, of *citoyens*, not of *citoyennes*' are *eo ipso* debarred from the electoral franchise."

The orator of the Constituante, speaking on the subject, said that exclusion of woman from political power was one of the principles "*preëxistent in the minds of all French people.*"

#### IV

### WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN ENGLAND

**S**IR EDWARD COKE (1557-1633), the great authority of English jurisprudence, said: "In many cases multitudes are bound by acts of Parliament which are not parties to the elections of knights, citizens or burgesses: as all they that have no freehold, or have freehold in antient demesne, and *all women* having freehold or no freehold."

The Chief Justice in 1739 said: "I do not know that it has ever been determined that women had not a right of voting, and whether they have not anciently voted for members of Parliament, either by themselves or by attorney, is a great doubt.

"But the courts unanimously decided that women had no longer the right to vote if they had ever possessed it."

The French Revolution came near convulsing England, and—until it became a frenzy in France—its principles and spirit, like an infection, fevered many. William Goodwin, in "Political Justice," reproduced the ideas of Rousseau—perhaps carrying them beyond their original intent,—while his wife, Mary Wollstonecroft, wrote one of the strongest arguments

for Woman Suffrage ever made, in her "Vindication of the Rights of Woman."

"Revolutionary Clubs," such as those in France, were started in England, and some of them invented the word "citizeness" as an equivalent for "citoyenne." But the French Revolution exploded, and all English sympathizers with it, and its principles encountered an overthrowing reaction. But in popular movements in the more recent organizations which abounded in England after 1816, women were very active.

In 1867 appeals were made to the highest courts of England against more than 5,000 women who had appealed against the decisions of the revising barristers. The Lord Chief Justice declared that the Act of 1832, which confined the franchise in boroughs to male persons, had sanctioned the exclusion of women; that if the legislators of 1867 wished to introduce so important an alteration as the extension of the franchise to women, it is difficult to believe that they would have done it by using the word "man." The Lord Justice declared therefore that he (the legislator of 1867) used the word "man" in the same sense as "male persons" in the former act; that it amounted to the express provision in conformity with Lord Brougham's Act, that every *man*, as distinguished from *women*, possessing the qualification, was to have the franchise. The other judges concurred with His

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Lordship's opinion, but further affirmed "*that the exclusion of women from the suffrage was not on account of their intellectual inferiority but from a desire to promote decorum ; in this way it was rather a privilege and a homage paid to the sex, ' honestatis privilegium,' as the great Selden remarked.*"

A bill for granting Woman Suffrage was introduced into Parliament in 1870. The affirmative was ably maintained and the negative also. But the measure was rejected. Several similar attempts have been made since that date, but the project has not met with success.

## WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN THE UNITED STATES

**T**HE effort to add to the number of legal voters women born in the United States, twenty-one years of age, and to make all women born in foreign countries and domiciled in the United States, eligible to vote on the same conditions required of male foreigners under similar circumstances, has experienced many vicissitudes.

It may be said to have begun in earnest and with considerable support in the middle of the last century, in connection with the anti-slavery agitation, with which it at first identified itself. The first conventions were held at Seneca Falls and Rochester in 1848, the principal figures being Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Amelia Bloomer, and Frederick Douglas. Lucretia Mott, Paulina Wright Davis, Ernestine L. Rose and Frances D. Gage early affiliated themselves with the movement.

In 1851 Susan B. Anthony, supported by Lucy Stone (afterwards Lucy Stone Blackwell), and Antoinette L. Brown, presided at a convention in Syracuse, N. Y. Annual conventions were held at New York from 1852 until 1861. Susan B. Anthony organized the *Loyal Woman's League* in 1863, and several



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other organizations arose, chiefly in New England. Mary A. Livermore and Julia Ward Howe were the principal organizers of the American Suffrage Association. The National Woman's Suffrage Association was founded in 1865. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was elected president at its ninth annual meeting. Vice-presidents were chosen representing every state in the Union. Among the other officers were Susan B. Anthony, Laura Curtis Bullard and Lillie Devereux Blake.

After the Civil War, negroes, whether they had been slaves or not, obtained the legal right to vote in all the states and territories. Immediately, women desiring the franchise, and their supporters among men, demanded with renewed zeal and confidence similar privileges and rights; but did not attain their object.

On the ground that they were not allowed to vote certain women refused to pay taxes. In several states, in fact, persons refused to pay their taxes before as well as after 1865. As the constitutions of all the states reserved the franchise to male citizens, under the presidency of Grant the advocates of Woman Suffrage claimed that the provisions of the several states should be considered null and void, on the alleged ground that they were contrary to the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment, which prohibited the states from "passing laws which restricted the privilege and immunities of citizenship,"

and that the right of suffrage is one of these privileges. The text of that article is :

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States, and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States ; nor shall any state deprive any person whatsoever of life, liberty or property, without due process of law ; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

Also the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution gives Congress power to reduce the representation of any state in the House of Representatives “when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, representatives in Congress, executive and judicial officers of the state, or the members of the legislature thereof is denied to any of the *male* inhabitants of such state, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion or other crime.”

Further limitation upon the power of the states over suffrage is found in the Fifteenth Amendment, which provides “that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the

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United States, or by any state, on account of race, colour or previous condition of servitude."

Prof. Paul S. Reinsch, professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, in his "American Legislatures and Legislative Methods" (page 10), states, "It will be noted that this provision is worded in negative terms and does not refer to any class of persons, such as women who have not previously enjoyed the elective franchise, nor to discriminations by a state not based on race, colour or previous condition of servitude, such as an educational or property qualification."

The first legal decision on the question was on the act organizing the District of Columbia of February 21, 1871. This placed women precisely in the position that the constitution of the states gave them. It also reserved the franchise for male citizens. "The supreme court of the district had to examine the appeals preferred against decisions refusing women enrollment on the electoral lists and admission to the ballot." The court dismissed the appeal, and in giving judgment, said: "We do not hesitate to believe that the legal fiction of the natural right of all citizens to vote at this stage of popular intelligence involves a destruction of civil government. As to the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment, we admit that women are clearly citizens in so far as citizens are opposed to foreigners, and that every

**Woman Suffrage in the United States 25**

citizen is capable of being invested with the right of suffrage, but that that can only be done by the legislative power. As this power in the Columbia District has not conferred the suffrage on women, they cannot be considered as possessing it."

## VI

### WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN THE UNITED STATES (Continued)

**I**N 1868, Congress established in the Great American Desert, the territory of Wyoming, then consisting of about 5,000 people, gathered in a few towns along the Union Pacific Railway. In the first session of the legislature, it was moved to give the suffrage to all women of eighteen years or more. It was treated as a joke. The amendment proposed by one legislator was to insert "coloured women or squaws." Another moved to insert the word "ladies" in place of *women*; and a third suggested to alter the limit of age from eighteen to thirty, and explained that, if this amendment carried, Woman Suffrage would remain a dead letter.

The bill was carried amidst laughter by both Houses. Finally it received the approval of the governor on the 12th of December, 1869.

"Every woman of the age of twenty-one, residing in this territory, may, at every election to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote. And her rights to the elective franchise and to hold office shall be the same under the election laws of the territory, as those of electors."

## Woman Suffrage in the United States 27

The second legislature voted to repeal the act, but the governor vetoed it. One of the Houses gave the two-thirds majority necessary to overcome the veto but the other did not. So the original act remained intact. Twenty years afterwards, when the territory of Wyoming was admitted as a state, in the draft of the future constitution drawn up at a convention, it was submitted, and became a part of the constitution. The Congress of the United States ratified this constitution, and as it made no objection to the clause relating to Woman Suffrage, its action was an important precedent for the principle that women's voting, if granted by the constitution of any state, is not incompatible with the Federal Constitution.

In 1869, as the Gentiles were bidding fair to overrun Utah, the Mormons secured an act passed in the local legislature admitting all women to suffrage. "Every woman of the age of twenty-one years, who had resided in this territory for six months next preceding any general or special election, born or naturalized in the United States, or who is the wife or widow or daughter of a native born or naturalized citizen of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election in this territory."

As a large number of the Mormons were practical polygamists, many of them having several wives, this law caused a struggle between the federal authority

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and the act permitting Woman Suffrage. By the first Act of March 22, 1882, passed by virtue of sovereign control of the territory, Congress decided that "no polygamist or bigamist, or any woman cohabiting with such, could take part in any election whatever, or be elected in any territory or in any other place under the jurisdiction of the United States." The wives of monogamists and single women were not affected by this act.

But a new bill of the 19th of February, 1887, withdrew the suffrage from *all* women in Utah, without exception. The act, called the Edmunds-Tucker Bill, provided that "it shall not be lawful for any female to vote at any election hereafter held in the territory of Utah, for any public purpose whatever, etc." And it also annulled any and every act of the legislative assembly colliding with the said act.

Some time after the presidential election of 1872, several women presented themselves at the polls in the state of New York, under cover of the Fourteenth Amendment. Their claim was admitted, and they gave their votes for President and Vice-President of the Union, and for the representatives of the state in Congress. The federal authorities arrested all the women who had voted, to the number of fourteen, and put them in prison, along with the inspectors of election who had received their votes.

The bill against these women was thrown out, ex-

## Woman Suffrage in the United States 29

cept in the case of Susan B. Anthony. She was committed to appear before the Federal District Court of the United States of America for the Northern District of New York, which sat May 30, 1870, on the charge of having "knowingly voted without a legal right to vote." The inspectors were charged with having deliberately and willfully accepted votes of persons who had not the electoral franchise. Miss Anthony and the inspectors of election were found guilty and fined.

In 1874, the right of women to vote was brought before the Supreme Court of the United States with an appeal made by a woman from Missouri. The Supreme Court decided that "citizen of the United States" conveyed the idea of "membership of the nation and nothing else ; that it applied as much to women before the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment as since ; that the qualification of citizen in no way implied the enjoyment of electoral rights ; that the Union had no electors of its own creation ; that its electoral body was only composed of electors in the states ; that suffrage was not coextensive with the citizenship of the states, neither at the time of the formation of the Constitution of the United States nor since the adoption of Amendment Fourteen ; that this Amendment did not add to the privileges and immunities of a citizen ; that it simply furnished an additional guarantee for the protection of such as he



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had already ; that the suffrage not being one of civic privileges and immunities, over which a state has no control, a provision in the state constitution which confines the right of voting to 'male citizens of the United States' was no violation of the Federal Constitution ; that in all states where this provision exists, *women had not the right to vote.*"

In Iowa, in 1876, a constitutional amendment guaranteeing Female Suffrage was adopted by the House, but defeated in the Senate.

The territory of Washington, by an act passed November 22, 1883, confirmed in 1886 by a law concerning electoral registration which speaks of electors of the male and female sex, provided that the term "he" was always to be understood "he" or "she." And after it had been in force for three and a half years, the Supreme Court of the territory declared the act null and void, because it violated the rule which required the contents of each act should be stated in the title at the head of the text. In 1888 the territorial legislature passed another act, with the proper heading ; but the court declared the new law null and void because the territory had had no right to confer the suffrage on women. The Act of Congress of March 23, 1853, which organized the territory, did not in the opinion of the court include women among the "citizens" of the United States of whom the electoral body of the territory ought to

consist, for in respect to the exercise of the suffrage men only at this time were held to be citizens. This question was brought before the court in consequence of an appeal presented by a convict, who based his appeal on the presence of a woman on the jury where, according to the law, only "electors" could sit.

In 1887 Municipal Suffrage was granted to the women of Kansas, but efforts to extend the full franchise have failed.

In 1889, when the territory of Washington was about to become a state, the draft of its constitution was submitted to the voters of the territory, who rejected the provisions concerning Female Suffrage.

The history of the struggle for Woman Suffrage in Oregon is substantially as follows :

In 1900, the legislature passed a constitutional amendment in favour of Equal Suffrage. Twenty-eight thousand, four hundred and two votes were cast against it, 26,265 in its favour. Soon after that, the provisions of the Act of Initiative and Referendum which Oregon adopted, gave the advocates of Woman Suffrage in 1906 the right to simply file a petition with the Secretary of State, for a constitutional amendment, appealing to the legislature. A vigorous campaign was waged in every county of the state. Forty-seven thousand, eight hundred and seventy-five votes were registered against the amendment and 36,902 for it, making a majority of 10,173 ; twenty-three

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counties opposing and ten counties favouring. June 4, 1908, the question was again tested. The amendment polled 36,858 affirmative votes; 58,670 were recorded against it; but four counties were carried in favour.

In 1892 Woman Suffrage was legitimized in Colorado by a majority of 5,000 out of 200,000. In 1906 the result was so close in Idaho as to be referred to the Supreme Court for decision.

In the new constitution of Michigan, women who own property are entitled to vote upon questions of appropriations; but the proposition to admit women to full suffrage was defeated in the constitutional convention.

In 1896 the voters of California defeated a constitutional amendment for Woman Suffrage, and in 1898 a similar measure was defeated in South Dakota.

The constitutional convention of the new state of Oklahoma refused to embody a provision granting woman the ballot. Besides Colorado, the states in which Woman Suffrage is now legal are Wyoming, Utah and Idaho. *and Washington & California*

## VII

### SO-CALLED DISFRANCHISED CLASSES

**W**ITH inconsiderable exceptions, the judgment of the human race, as expressed in civil government, has confined its prerogatives to men. When necessary to preserve an unbroken line in hereditary monarchies, women have been invested with sovereignty. In some communities, where property qualifications exist, they possess a limited right to vote, and to hold minor executive offices.

In every country having a large population, many electors as well as others have but a superficial idea of the full meaning and rational application of the franchise.

Nearly two decades ago a cartoon was widely circulated, which portrayed vividly an idiot, a criminal in prison garb, an Indian in barbaric finery, a lunatic with a wild stare of frenzy, and a woman whose features indicated intelligence and refinement. This artistic work was entitled "The American Woman and Her Political Peers." At first glance, —and many never give a second,—this spectacle would evoke indignation, and create a short, sharp

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and decisive determination to speak and vote for Woman Suffrage.

But thinkers will stop long enough to ask, "Does this picture include all classes not having the franchise, and is the exclusion of the four classes from the suffrage represented in the picture for similar reasons?" It certainly does not include all. To complete the picture, might be added a portrait of Alexander Hamilton, who, at the appearance of trouble between Great Britain and the colonies, when he was still a schoolboy barely eighteen years of age, wrote a series of papers in defense of the rights of the colonies which were at first taken for the production of John Jay; and who, when only twenty,—and consequently not allowed to vote,—was aide-de-camp to Washington.

Resident in this country are several distinguished plenipotentiaries, representing England, Germany, France and many other countries: some ambassadors have remained in the United States for many years; yet if after a study of the Constitution of this country they should decide to resign their high position and also citizenship in their native lands and become citizens of the United States, with all their ability, learning, and standing, they would be kept without the franchise for five years; there are also in this country at the present time many thousands who do not expect ever to make any other part of the world their residence,

but having neglected to take the steps provided by law for naturalization, they cannot vote to-day nor within five years.

These may at least be worthy of a subordinate place in "American Woman and Her Political Peers."

Whatever their abilities, and whatever they may confer upon the country when they domicile themselves within its boundaries, why are foreigners compelled to remain unfranchised for a period of time? They are deprived of the privilege of voting for a time assumed to be long enough for men of average ability to comprehend the institutions and interests of the United States and to identify themselves with them sufficiently "to have a stake in the country." And this law is impartially enforced.

Criminals are not allowed to vote because,—being foes to society and of government,—they have forfeited the claim to personal and political liberty; lunatics and idiots are debarred, because they are incompetent to understand, or to remember, or to distinguish, or to decide;—voting is a great responsibility; these are irresponsible.

Indians cannot vote on account of their tribal claims and independent sovereignty and other causes peculiar to themselves. Chinamen cannot vote because they are forbidden naturalization.

The cartoon should also have a representative of

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a fine young man perhaps just graduated, son of parents themselves born in this country, not permitted to vote, because not twenty-one years old. It is indisputable that there are hundreds of thousands between eighteen and twenty-one years better qualified to vote intelligently than many, who are thirty years, are ever likely to become.

Young men under twenty-one years of age are not permitted to vote because it is assumed that the *average* male has not the knowledge and stability of character wisely to exercise the franchise until he has been twenty-one years of life in the land of his birth, or having been in the world twenty-one years, five of which have been in the land in which he wishes to acquire the elective franchise.

In this country it is agreed that the majority of voters shall rule. What fundamental principle gives to two millions the absolute right to rule over two millions less one? As at the age of *seventeen* some are better qualified for the suffrage than many at *forty*, what absolute natural right decrees that none shall exercise the franchise until twenty-one years old? These, and many other provisions, are compromises to which the people submit for the sake of the results. Should a citizen desire to change his residence from one state to another, he must remain there a specified time before he can vote; nor could he, one day after legally changing his residence, re-

turn and cast a ballot where he had lived all his life. If born in Canada, though brought over the line when an infant, he could never become President. Also, every citizen must vote at such times and places as the law prescribes. Nor can one unavoidably detained from his legal residence, even in the service of the country, as in the army and navy, or in the Federal Congress, demand a subsequent opportunity, or be permitted to deposit a sealed ballot in advance of the time, forward the same, or vote by proxy.

Woman is without the suffrage on none of these grounds. Criminals are disfranchised. Woman is left unfranchised. The pictures, books, articles in periodicals, resolutions and petitions, which characterize her as disfranchised, are misrepresentations; and the ideas, which they are designed to suggest, confuse, rather than elucidate, the question whether woman should be allowed to vote and hold office upon the same terms as men.

This phase of the subject is referred to elsewhere.



## VIII

### THE NATURE OF WOMANHOOD IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

**A** CELEBRATED advocate of Woman Suffrage declares that its opponents "must show that it is incompatible either with the best conception of the state, or with the nature of womanhood."

Though the burden of proof should rest upon those who would change the universal practice, I hold, and will present the grounds for the belief, that to impose upon women direct responsibility for civil government is incompatible with the nature of womanhood, and with the highest conception of the state. In doing so I must disperse the clouds thrown over the nature of womanhood by those who ask or demand Woman Suffrage. John Stuart Mill, author of "The Subjection of Woman"—a book abounding in doubtful theories and contradictory assertions, has furnished the staple of many speeches and articles in periodicals. A few instances may suffice to confirm this estimate of the errors of a great man. Thus he describes the marriage relation: after saying that he is "far from pretending that wives are in general no better treated than slaves," he proceeds: "*no slave is a slave to the same lengths and in so full a sense of the*

*word as a wife is.* Hardly any slave except one immediately attached to the master's person is a slave at all hours and all minutes ; in general he has, like a soldier, his fixed task, and when it is done or when off duty, he disposes within certain limits of his own and has a family life into which the master rarely intrudes." Another of his propositions is such that if true it would condemn him for attempting to discuss the nature of woman at all. He says that "Women have always hitherto been kept, as far as regards spontaneous development in so unnatural a state, that their natures have been greatly distorted and disguised ; and no one can safely pronounce, if woman's nature were left to choose its direction as freely as men's ; if no *artificial bent* were admitted to be given to it except that required by the conditions of human society, and given to *both sexes alike, there would be no material difference or perhaps no difference at all* in the character and capacities which would unfold themselves" (pages 104-105).

The foregoing is the same as to say that men and women, undistorted and disguised, *might be the same in characteristics and capacities!* A third passage is the same as to say that no man can understand *woman*, no woman can understand *man*, and that no man can understand himself and no woman can understand herself. "Standing on the grounds of common sense and the constitution of the human mind, I deny *that any*

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*one knows, or can know, the nature of the two sexes, as long as they have only been seen in their present relation to one another. If men had ever been found in society without women, or women without men, or if there had been a society of men and women in which the women were not under the control of the men, something might have been positively known about the mental and moral difference which may be inherent in the nature of each. What is now called the nature of woman is an artificial thing,—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others."*

Yet, in such confessed and unfathomable ignorance, Mill addressed the public in favour of Woman Suffrage, thus violating an ancient maxim, "A nation that knows not what to do should never do it knows not what." Against such "great whims of a great mind," and the variations played upon them, I maintain that there is a feminine, as well as a masculine, soul; a spiritual sex, as well as a corporeal.

Frederick Harrison, in contrasting men and women, justly says, "Not one man in ten can compare with the average woman in tact, subtlety of observation, in refinement of mental habit, in rapidity, agility, and sympathetic touch; in sudden movement, in perseverance, in passive endurance, in dealing with the minutest surroundings of comfort, grace and convenience."

He predicates of man, as distinguished from woman, "a greater capacity for prolonged attention, intense abstraction, wide range, extraordinary complication, immense endurance, intensity, variety, and majesty of will."

From these differences arise the virtues and vices, respectively, of the sexes, modified by different degrees of physical strength.

The relation of the sexes is the most fundamental problem of society. The domestic life of its individual members turns upon it, and the increase, and consequently the very existence of population on the earth. Were the race separated into units,—universal prostitution, with little or no care or training of children, would be the result. In the civilization represented by Europe and the civilized parts of America, the foundation of society is the family, consisting of one husband and one wife; the contract between them being for life, never to be broken except for extraordinary causes and by due processes of law.

As marriage is the general law for the race, and is a life partnership "for better or for worse," how is it made to cohere? A vital question, for wedlock is a partnership indeed imposing mutual rights, and equal, though not identical, responsibilities.

Upon these principles and facts I assume that the family is the foundation of the social organization; that it could not cohere without certain intellectual

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and moral differences between husband and wife; that nature, in the constitution of woman, has made the permanency of the marriage relation possible and actual; and that a training different from that of man, and in harmony with the different tendencies, realm of action, and mode of influence which distinguish woman is essential to her highest usefulness and happiness in the family and the state. This training in large part is provided in the family from childhood.

While the individuals who form the state are constantly being removed by death, the state endures, being replenished by the offspring of the families into which society is divided. Their parents are their rulers, responsible for their support, and exercising the prerogatives of government, issuing mandates, requiring submission; permitted to chastise and to direct their actions in numberless ways. It depends upon the parents to train them in such a manner as to qualify them for the duties of citizenship, according to the statutes and laws of the land. Only when parents are incapable or unwilling to discharge the responsibilities does the state take cognizance of the situation. As children increase in age and reach a degree of self-control and self-protection, the state provides schools, but leaves to the parents the prerogative of choosing whether the required education shall be procured in the public or private schools, or under

individual tutors. In proportion as the family, practically a state within a state, is maintained in its integrity is the nation strong, happy and prosperous. The family also is the fountain of private, and the source of public, morality.

Whatever may be said of a few minds of a peculiar structure, lifelong partnerships for better or worse could not be maintained by two natures of the same kind, debating all questions in the same plane, with no natural predominating tendency. There is abundant evidence that, except in very rare cases, it would be impossible. The socialistic experiments of men alone have failed, as have the very few attempts of women to live together permanently, except where powerful religious organizations control the experiment.

The permanence of the marriage tie depends upon the difference in the mental and emotional constitutions of men and women. The family is a union of two different manifestations of a common human nature;—moulding, governing and guiding the children, each after its own manner, and diffusing through society the blended influence of wife, mother, daughter, sister, and husband, father, son and brother. Such an institution involving two distinct personalities of the same kind, requiring lifelong living together, day and night, would break down under the strain if there were no natural and

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spontaneous predominating tendency. When the warmth of passion had subsided, the novelty of the relation disappeared, the imperfections of each had become apparent, and the struggles and disappointments of life accumulate, discord would soon arise and each will refusing to bend, the breach would widen and secret aversion or open rupture ensue.

But the marriage relation does hold together, and by what means? Tennyson answers thus :

Woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse. *Could we make her as the man*  
Sweet love were slain, whose dearest bond is this :  
*Not like to thee, but like in difference.*

Man reasons, debates, decides, and the tendency is to his headship. Woman, if she approves, conforms ; but if she does not approve, endeavours to modify,—not in an authoritative, imperative spirit, but gently, tenderly, persuasively.

In the perfect family, the husband would never be actively conscious of his headship, or the wife of her natural tendency to regard it; and since no one proposes to reform the masculine characteristics, the feminine must be maintained. This creates the necessity for a development from childhood of the woman, peculiar to her in distinction from man, even as his training is peculiar to him as distinguished from her. This she early manifests in the

capacity of daughter and sister, and later as wife. Her sons, self-reliant, soon assert their independence. The daughter clings to her father and brothers, and if poverty does not compel a different course, receives support and protection from them, which, if a true woman, she returns in her own way. The sons meanwhile are learning what each needs to know, to enable him to assume the position which awaits him in the family to be set up in its season. Thus the influence of husband and wife in the family is equal but not identical. On this the institution of marriage rests. The woman may be more intellectual than her husband, or she may be less so. She may have quicker perception and more tact; but she takes his name, and her sons and daughters after her.

The bearing of these principles upon the relations of wives and mothers to the suffrage is that to govern in the state would unfit woman for her position in the family.

It is mere sophism to say that the simple dropping of a piece of paper into a ballot-box could not produce such a result.

Unless women are to be treated like children, and furnished with the ballot by men, it is not the mere dropping of a piece of paper, for it implies the whole mode of thinking, feeling, and acting, of which a vote is the concentrated expression. "The vote is the expression of government; voting is governing."



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To vote intelligently is to think and act in the imperative mood; and to be qualified as voters, girls must be trained to think, feel, and act in the spirit of men. To avoid the force of this statement it would be necessary to show that women will not be affected by this training, or that, should they be, no harm will result. Mill admits that it will produce this very effect and asserts that women are held "in subjection" in the family, and should be emancipated. Wendell Phillips said, "No one can foresee the effect; therefore the only way is to plunge in." On an important issue "plunging in," without a high probability almost equal to a certainty, is another way of spelling recklessness.

Others affirm that "under all circumstances feminine instincts will preserve woman."

To assume that either men or women will remain unchanged in their intellectual, moral, and emotional susceptibilities, whatever their situation, is contrary to the facts of evolution, environment, and culture. In countless individual cases, and even in nations, woman has shown a capacity to rise or fall, a susceptibility to moral and intellectual modifications not surpassed, if equalled, by men.

Not only would the governing spirit become a part of her character, greatly obstructing the discharge of the duties of home, but it would make her position there an insupportable restraint. Man is naturally

self-reliant; woman may, in an emergency, develop self-reliance and complete independence; but is naturally disposed either to coalesce in the determining tendency of her husband, or to control it by persuasion. Imbued with the governing spirit, she will become as restive in her position as would he if similarly placed. This is avowed by many advocates of Woman Suffrage, and held up as a result to be desired. The more consistent go fearlessly to the end, and define marriage as a civil contract to be terminated at the will of either party, and society as a collection of independent units instead of an assemblage of families.

That there are exceptions to the ideal family, here assumed as the nucleus of society, is true. Some women rule their husbands; a larger number through the misfortune, weakness, or wickedness of the husband are obliged to support the family, and there are many single women and widows. These exceptions to the general law often have much to bear; but not so much as to justify the overthrow of the whole structure with a view to rebuild upon exceptions. Every female child must be presumed eligible to wifehood and motherhood; therefore the whole sex should be left to the exercise of that kind of influence for which their nature and relation to the family qualify them, and which is required in the interest of society.

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An argument drawn from exceptions may be very plausibly affirmed.

Ancient philosophers thought that children should be brought up by the state. Suppose, then, a movement to enact a law requiring the training of all children in public institutions. In its support it might be maintained that there are numerous orphans, that many children have lost one parent, and that many parents are cruel, intemperate, incompetent, or unfaithful ; that relatively few feel, and conscientiously and intelligently discharge, their responsibilities. These propositions are indisputable : how then shall the scheme to require all children to be educated by the state be shown to be untenable ? Only by affirming that the general law of nature is that parents must be responsible for their offspring. To remove the children of those willing and able to train them, because of these exceptions, would be cruel and unjust ; and such a wholesale destruction of home life is not necessary, because the general rule is that parents, with all their imperfections, do train their children in a manner better adapted to promote the public weal than is any institutional training. Individual exceptions must be cared for by private philanthropy, or by special statutes which are compatible with the effectual working of the general law.

The same reasoning vindicates the conclusion that the general law necessary for the preservation of the

family should not be overthrown in order that unmarried women and widows might be introduced into political life.

Nor would a specific statute admitting single women to the suffrage, and excluding married women therefrom, be expedient or right; for then another evil of stupendous proportions would result, namely: the *pulling of a premium upon the unmarried or childless condition*, since such women would have much more time and strength for the political arena than wives and mothers, and could gain many more personal, pecuniary, and political advantages.

## IX

### NOTABLE REVERSALS OF OPINION

**A**FTER having been strongly in favour of Woman Suffrage, or inclined to espouse it, some of the most influential men have been led—by a deep and serious consideration of the nature of womanhood and its relation to society—to reverse their opinions. I select from many the following names:

Horace Bushnell (when it was asserted that the principles of Progress which he had adopted required him to advocate Woman Suffrage) reopened the question. After protracted thought, he expressed in memorable words this conclusion: "It is a reform against nature."

John Bright, the patriot, the tried and valued friend of every movement for the general benefit of woman, accustomed to equality of women in Friends' meetings, was one of those who, on May 20, 1867, voted in favour of Mr. Mill's amendment to strike out of a reform bill the word *man* and insert *person*, so as to authorize Woman Suffrage. Nine years afterwards, namely, in March, 1876, he spoke against the enfranchisement of women. When charged with having changed his opinions, he declared that he had had great doubts, but gave Mr. Mill the benefit of the doubt because he sympathized with him in taking so

courageous a stand. In a letter published in "The Woman Question in Europe," by Theodore Stanton, he wrote :

I cannot give you all the reasons for the view I take, but I act from the belief that to introduce women into the strife of political life would be a great evil to them, and that to our own sex no possible good could arise. When women are not safe under the charge or care of fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons, it is the fault of our non-civilization, and not of our laws. As civilization founded on Christian principles advances, women will gain all that is right for them to have, though they are not seen contending in the strife of political parties.

To this he adds personal testimony :

In my experience I have observed evil results to many women who have entered hotly into political conflict and discussion. I would save them from it.

I am, respectfully yours,

JOHN BRIGHT.

Also in the House of Commons, in a debate on the parliamentary question of "Female Voting," Mr. Bright said : "The bill seems to me based upon a proposition which is untenable and which, I think, is contradicted by universal experience.

"It is a bill based upon an assumed hostility between the sexes. Now, I don't believe that any man in this house entertains that view ; but if honourable members were accustomed to hear the speeches of the principal promoters of this bill out-of-doors—if they had had the opportunity I have had of familiar con-

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versation with the promoters of the measure with regard to this question, I think they would admit that the bill as offered to us is a bill based upon an assumed, constant and irreconcilable hostility between the two sexes. . . . Nothing can be more monstrous and absurd than to place women—who are our mothers, our sisters or our daughters, whose whole existence is wrapped up in our own, who are near and dear to our hearts—as a separate class, and it is a scandalous and odious libel to say that they are a separate class and that they are, therefore, excluded from our sympathies and that Parliament cannot and will not do justice to them.

“I do not believe that women suffer by not being represented in Parliament, and I do not believe it would be an advantage to them if they were so represented.”

Herbert Spencer, in “Justice,” renounces his former position, and maintains that there are fundamental reasons for keeping the spheres of the sexes distinct. He had formerly argued the matter “from the point of view of a general principle of individual rights,” but he finds that this cannot be sustained, as he “*discovers mental and emotional differences between the sexes, which disqualify women for the burdens of government and the exercise of its functions.*”

Mr. Gladstone, who had sometimes spoken as though he thought the change might have more to be

said in its favour than against it, was appealed to eighteen years ago in the most desperate crisis of his life by those women in England who demand the suffrage, offering their support if he would avow himself in favour of the principle. He sat down to investigate it in the light of the bill then proposed in Parliament, "Extending Parliamentary Suffrage to Women," but confined to unmarried women, and after pointing out the impropriety of that proposal says :

"I speak of the change as being a fundamental change in the whole social function of woman, because I am bound in considering this bill to take into view not only what it enacts, but what it involves. . . . It proposes to place the individual woman on the same footing in regard to parliamentary elections as the individual man. She is to vote, she is to propose or nominate, she is to be designated by the law as competent to use and to direct, with advantage not only to the community but to herself, all those public agencies which belong to our system of parliamentary representation.

"She—not the individual woman marked by special tastes, possessed of special gifts, but the woman as such—is by these changes to be plenary launched into the whirlpool of public life, such as it is in the nineteenth century, and such as it is to be in the twentieth century. . . .



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"A permanent and vast difference of type has been impressed upon woman and man respectively by the Maker of both. Their differences of social office rest mainly upon causes not flexible and elastic like most mental qualities, but physical and in their nature unchangeable. I, for one, am not prepared to say which of the two classes has the higher, and which the other, province, but I recognize the subtle and profound character of the difference between them. . . . I am not without fear lest, beginning with the state, we should eventually have been found to have intruded into what is yet more fundamental and sacred, the precinct of the family, and should dislocate or injuriously modify the relations of domestic life. . . . As this is not a party question, or a class question, so neither is it a sex question.

"I have no fear lest the woman should encroach upon the power of the man; the fear I have is lest we should invite her unwittingly to trespass upon the delicacy, the purity, the refinement, the elevation of her own nature, which are the present sources of its power.

"I admit that in the universities, in the professions, in the secondary circles of public action, we have already gone so far as to give a shadow of plausibility to the present proposals to go farther; but it is a shadow only, for we have done nothing that plunges the woman as such into the turmoil of masculine life."

Upon Bishop John H. Vincent, the founder of Chautauqua, the consideration of this subject has naturally been forced, and to it he has given years of reflection, closely following the influence of modern general and higher education upon society, and in particular upon the home.

In former years he was an advocate of Woman Suffrage; but though enthusiastically devoted to the spread of knowledge, and having distributed diplomas to thousands of women who have pursued the extended course of reading of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, he has been compelled to reverse his attitude. In response to a request for a concise statement of the grounds which led to the change of his views, I received the following letter, written fifteen years ago :

When about thirty years of age I accepted for a time the doctrine of Woman Suffrage, and publicly defended it.

Years of wide and careful observation have convinced me that the demand for Woman Suffrage in America is without foundation in equity, and, if successful, must prove harmful to American society.

I find some worthy women defending it, but the majority of our best women, especially our most intelligent, domestic, and godly mothers, neither ask for nor desire it. The instinct of motherhood is against it. The basal conviction of our best manhood is against it. The movement is at root a protest against the representative relations and functions by virtue of which each sex depends upon and is ex-

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alted by the other. This theory and policy, tending to the subversion of the natural and divine order, must make man less a man, and woman less a woman.

A distinguished woman advocate of this suffrage movement says, "We need the ballot to protect us against men." When one sex is compelled thus to protect itself against the other the foundations of society are already crumbling.

Woman now makes man what he is. She controls him as babe, boy, manly son, brother, lover, husband, father. Her influence is enormous. If she use it wisely, she needs no additional power. If she abuse her opportunity, she deserves no additional responsibility. Her womanly weight, now without measure, will be limited to the value of a single ballot, and her control over from two to five additional votes forfeited.

The curse of America to-day is in the dominated partisan vote—the vote of ignorance and superstition. Shall we help matters by doubling this dangerous mass? Free from the direct complications and passions of the political arena, the best women may exert a conservative and moral influence over men as voters. Force her into the same bad atmosphere, and both man and woman must inevitably suffer incalculable loss. We know what woman can be in the "commune," in "riots," and on the "rostrum."

Woman can, through the votes of men, have every right to which she is entitled. All she has man has gladly given her. It is his glory to represent her. To rob him of this right is to weaken both. He and she are just now in danger through his mistaken courtesy.

JOHN H. VINCENT.

The foregoing reversals or modifications might be duplicated many times.

## X

### ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE

**I**T has been taken for granted by many that Abraham Lincoln held to his early proclamation of adherence to Woman Suffrage throughout his subsequent career. Others wonder if he changed his opinion.

Absolute proof is not forthcoming, but there is strong circumstantial evidence that he did reverse his opinion. This evidence I place before the reader without argumentation.

In preparing a paper entitled "Washington and Lincoln Compared and Contrasted," I reviewed the contemporary history of President Lincoln; consulting all his standard biographies, records of debates, messages and speeches; also his "Letters" and wise and witty sayings. Supposing, from the frequent use made of President Lincoln's name in public advocacy of Woman Suffrage, that I should find many references to his relation to the subject; but the only allusion was in Lincoln's letter to the *Saugamou Journal*, Springfield, Ill., under date of June 13, 1836, when for the second time he announced himself a candidate for the legislature. His platform was this:

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"I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens, consequently I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females)."

At that time he was but twenty-seven years and three months old. From then till his death no one has been able to find a letter, a speech, a message, or a reference to the subject, attributed to him, nor did those nearest to him ever hear him mention Woman Suffrage. William O. Stoddard, one of the private secretaries of President Lincoln for several consecutive years, informs me that he never heard the President mention the subject. John G. Nicolay, secretary to President Lincoln and author of the "Biography of Abraham Lincoln," and coadjutor of John Hay in the great biography previously mentioned, sent me the following note :

I know of no allusion or reference by Mr. Lincoln to the question of femal suffrage, except that made in the card printed in the *Saugamon Journal* under date of June 13, 1836 (and which is reprinted in Lincoln's "Complete Works," Vol. I, p. 7).

So far as I know, the topic is nowhere else mentioned in his writings, speeches, or letters, nor did I ever hear him refer to it in conversation either directly or indirectly.

JOHN G. NICOLAY.

The name of Abraham Lincoln does not appear in

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- the index of the three volume "History of Woman Suffrage," edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, though hundreds of names of adherents now forgotten are found therein.

Dr. Henry W. Bellows, the president of the Sanitary Commission, records that "the earliest movement for army relief was begun by the women of the nation, and their zeal and devotion no more flagged through the war than did that of the army in the field. The barriers of sect, caste and conventionalism, which had heretofore separated them, were burned away in the fervid heat of their loyalty."

President Lincoln—according to Mrs. Livermore—disapproved at first of the coöperative work of women for the relief of the army and declared that "it would prove a dreadful fifth wheel to the coach"; but when the war was over, speaking of this subject, he said that "*if all that had been said by orators and poets among all nations since the creation of the world in praise of women were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during this war.*"

But President Lincoln had reached the profound conviction that the temperament of women is such as to make it more difficult to compose public feuds among them than among men. When the possibility of carrying out his conciliatory methods of reconstruction was under consideration, he remarked to the

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same distinguished Dr. Bellows that he "*expected more trouble from the women than from the men,*" and closed the conversation with these words: "Bellows, you take care of the women and I will take care of the men."

Under these circumstances no one can longer exclaim with confidence that "Abraham Lincoln is the highest star in the galaxy of the champions of woman's demand for the ballot."

## XI

### ARGUMENTS FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE REFUTED

**T**HE previous considerations, if well founded, will be sufficient to deter every thoughtful citizen who believes the family to be the foundation and safeguard of all that is valuable in civilization from attempting an experiment so dangerous ; yet an examination of the popular phrases relied upon to prepare the way for the plunge seems necessary.

In order to avoid confusion or repetition, I have selected as the chief representative in defense of Woman Suffrage the writings and public addresses of the late Hon. George F. Hoar, for many years senator from Massachusetts, and a publicist in the unlimited sense of the word. I had the pleasure of his acquaintance and the opportunity of discussing this question with him in the *Century Monthly Magazine*. In his rejoinder to my contribution he said :

“The reading of the paper has given me great pleasure. It is, in my judgment, the strongest argument ever made on that side.

“All patriotic persons, whatever their present opinion, must desire that this great step should not



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be taken without seriously weighing everything that can be said against it. Dr. Buckley has discussed powerfully and clearly what seem to me the true points of the controversy :

“ ‘Will it be a bad thing for woman that woman should help govern the state ?

“ ‘Will it be a bad thing for the state that woman should help govern it ? ’ ” <sup>1</sup>

Some of the arguments of permanent force then employed are introduced into the present discussion.

Senator Hoar considered the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 “ as perfect a system of government for its purposes as was ever devised by man for mankind,” and added, “ I am almost tempted to say there was never a good amendment to it. At any rate, there never was nor will be a good amendment made to it except to carry into practical effect the logic of its fundamental principles. But if there were to be anywhere a conflict between the principle and the mechanism, there, as everywhere, the principle must abide, and the mechanism must be changed. This constitution, like every constitution of that day, was framed by men for men. But the inexorable logic of its principles demands of us a constitution framed, adopted, administered by the whole, men and women alike, for the whole people. If it had been attempted to deny to a woman any right declared in the constitu-

<sup>1</sup> *The Century Monthly Magazine*, August, 1894, p. 623.

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tion, except the right to vote and the right to be tried by a jury of her peers, the answer would have been that the constitutional terms, 'the people,' 'every subject,' 'every citizen,' of course and beyond question include women as well as men. What I have said in regard to the constitution of my own state applies equally to the constitution of every free state."

Whatever view Senator Hoar had as to the general spirit of the members of that convention and of the constitutional conventions of other states, a large number seem to suppose that the framers of those constitutions were blinded by the ideas which had prevailed for many ages, and had made a declaration of independence and federal and state constitutions without realizing that they were guilty of great inconsistencies; that they "mouthed *universal suffrage*" with great zeal, inadvertently leaving out half the population. But certainly those founders of constitutions in this particular have been unwittingly misrepresented. They knew what they were doing and why they did it as clearly when they left woman unfranchised, as when they invested themselves with it.

One who looks into the "Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife," given to the public by Charles Francis Adams, in 1876, may find a letter from Abigail Adams to her husband, John Adams—the man

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who, perhaps, with all his peculiarities, was next to Washington in real value to the Revolution.

The reader will note that the letter of Mrs. Adams was written but three months prior to the Declaration of Independence. The extract given below covers the whole subject as found in the letter, which contains other matters. It is plainly jocular in manner, and how much seriousness if any underlies it cannot be accurately estimated.

*Braintree, March 31, 1776.*

. . . . I long to hear that you have declared our independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute; but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why, then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity? Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex; regard us then as beings placed by Providence under your protection, and in imitation of the Supreme Being make use of that power only for our happiness.

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This is the response :

(Extract of letter from John Adams to his wife.)

April 14, 1776.

. . . . Your description of your own *gaieté de cœur* charms me. Thanks be to God, you have just cause to rejoice, and may the bright prospect be obscured by no cloud. As to declarations of independency, be patient. Read our privateering laws and our commercial laws. What signifies a word ?

As to your extraordinary code of laws, I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our struggle has loosened the bonds of government everywhere ; that children and apprentices were disobedient ; that schools and colleges were grown turbulent ; that Indians slighted their guardians, and negroes grew insolent to their masters.

But your letter was the first intimation that another tribe, more numerous and powerful than all the rest, were grown discontented. This is rather too coarse a compliment, but you are so saucy, I won't blot it out. Depend upon it, we know better than to repeal our masculine systems. Although they are in full force, you know they are little more than theory. We dare not exert our power in its full latitude. We are obliged to go fair and softly, and, in practice, you know we are the subjects. We have only the name of masters, and rather than give up this, which would completely subject us to the despotism of the petticoat, I hope General Washington and all our brave heroes would fight ; I am sure every good politician would plot as long as he would against despotism, empire, monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, or ochlocracy. A fine story, indeed ! I begin to think the ministry as deep as they are wicked. After stirring up Tories, land-jobbers, trimmers, bigots, Canadians, Indians, negroes, Hanoverians, Hessians, Russians, Irish Roman Catholics, Scotch renegades, at last they

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have stimulated the —— to demand new privileges and threaten to rebel.

The correspondence reveals delightful relations between husband and wife and shows a side of this stern statesman's nature not often so unequivocally exhibited. Also it proves that the subject "was up."

Not only did "Our Revolutionary Fathers" talk about Woman Suffrage, they discussed it in the convention held in 1778, at Newburyport, for the purpose of taking into consideration the constitution and form of government proposed by the convention of the state of Massachusetts. And more momentous than the discussion they expressed their conclusions in unmistakable terms.

"In every free state, the persons of every member and all the property in it, ought to be represented, because they are objects of legislation. All the members of the state are invited to make the election, unless they have not sufficient discretion, or are so situated as to have no wills of their own. Persons not twenty-one years of age are deemed in the former class from their want of years and experience. . . .

*Women,—whatever age they are of—are also, as not having a sufficiently acquired discretion,—but not from a deficiency in their mental powers,—but from the natural tenderness and delicacy of their minds, their retired modes of life and various domestic duties. These concurring, prevent that promiscuous intercourse with*

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*the world which is necessary to qualify them for electors."*

In that short paragraph those Revolutionary fathers cover the whole case. After recognizing an equality of woman's "mental powers" with those of man, they base their action on

1. Woman's distinctive constitution, "the natural tenderness and delicacy of their minds."
2. Their "retired modes of life."
3. Their place in the family.
4. "These concurring," prevent "that promiscuous intercourse with the world, necessary to qualify them for electors."

## XII

### ARGUMENTS FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE REFUTED (Continued)

**I**F the foregoing principles and facts are weighed they should be enough to deter every citizen, who believes the family to be the foundation and safeguard of civilization, from attempting an experiment so dangerous as a total revolution in the status of woman. Yet an explanation of the popular phrases and arguments relied upon to prepare the way for the plunge into the unknown is necessary. I shall be as impartial as possible in the presentation of the essence of everything worthy of argument by those in favour of Woman Suffrage.

*It is said* that "it is obviously fair and right that those who obey the laws should have a voice in making them; that all who pay the taxes should have a voice in levying them; and that men cannot represent women until women shall have legally consented to it, and this they have never done."

Another way of stating this claim is: "A woman is a human being and has all the rights of a human being, and the most inalienable of these rights is the right to govern."

*It is not "so obviously fair and right."*

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"Abstract rights," "No taxation without representation," "Governments draw their just powers from the consent of the governed," are phrases that may contain true principles or be used to float the wildest delusions. In the early days of the French Revolution, a great change was in part brought about by the cry, "One nation, one king, one chamber," but, as a historian observes, "They might have seen that *uniformity* is not always desirable, if some one had raised the cry, "One mouth, one nose, one eye, one ear."

On a desert island a person might do as he pleased, but two would be obliged to compromise; neither could plead "abstract" rights as against another without an annihilating war. The product of their mutual concessions and pledges would be their government. If a third person arrived, he would have to join the confederation or war would be inevitable.

In every government there are mutual concessions and impositions which restrict "abstract" right. A man may have an "abstract" right to his house, but society will pull it down to stop a devastating fire, or search it if, however innocent, he is suspected of crime, or drag him from it if the inmates are attacked by infectious diseases, or remove or destroy it for public improvements. To say that woman has an "abstract" right to vote and say nothing more is to say nothing to the purpose. One man has the same



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“abstract” right to the land that another has ; for who could give any one man the “abstract” right to preëempt a square inch of the crust of our common earth ? If ownership of property turned on “abstract” right, the dying man would have no right by a will to control his property after his death. What jurisdiction should he have when he is dust ?

The proposition that men cannot represent women until they have legally consented to it is specious, but not sound. Who has ever been asked whether he consents to the government that exists here ? That government was established before the present inhabitants were born. Under it the supreme power inheres in adult male citizens. The consent of the governed is and must be taken for granted, changes are made by constitutional methods.

“No taxation without representation” as an “abstract” principle is just, but it does not follow that representation must be identical. If it be necessary to exempt women from the responsibilities of government, in order that the influence which they are naturally qualified to exert, and which is essential to the well-being of society, may be ensured, it would not be “fair and right” to give women the same kind of voice in making laws that men have. To restrict the suffrage is a just and beneficent modification of “abstract right.”

Should it be said that this principle, if admitted,

would justify slavery, it may be fairly replied that the motive of slavery with a few exceptions was self-aggrandizement by individuals, its method the violent restraint of personal liberty.

But the motive which relieves woman from government is the belief that *the exercise of the suffrage by her, will work an injury to herself and to the family, and thereby to the state.*

I adduce the testimony of Senator Hoar, whose experience and observation in advocating Woman Suffrage for fifty years gives weight to his judgment. This is his opinion :

“Nor am I one of those who think that the right to vote is denied to women by men because of a tyrant’s desire to keep to themselves the rule of the state. There are some exceptions ; but I think it is chiefly an honest desire for the good of the state, and an honest desire for the welfare of women, that we have to deal with.”

### XIII

#### ARGUMENTS FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE REFUTED (Continued)

*I*T is said that "Capacity indicates sphere. Woman has a capacity to vote intelligently, therefore she should be empowered to do so."

No one will deny that many women are competent to estimate the character of candidates, to pay taxes, have a just opinion of proposed measures, and none can doubt that some women are qualified to fill certain offices as well as men ; but there is an important difference between the "capacity" of men and women. Women do not have the capacity *to bear arms on land or sea in the country's defense, to serve on the police force, or in the public protection against fire.*

The only attempted answer to this defect is that there are many old men, and others who are encumbered by various disabilities, who cannot take up arms in defense of the country, yet *they* have votes. Why, then, should women be deprived of them ? There is this difference : Old men, half invalids and boys (not ordinarily considered fit for the army or navy) can be drafted in an emergency. The whole male population able to serve at all can be drawn upon ; but the whole female population are disqualified to serve in the army or navy.

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It is true that nurses are needed, and have served as voluntary adjuncts to the army, and many have won everlasting honour for heroic courage and self-sacrifice. And some women, disguised in masculine dress, have enlisted. But such service does not fulfill the meaning of "*taking up arms in defense of the nation.*"

Nor would the common sense of either sex expect or approve the voluntary or involuntary enlistment of women, in the army or navy, or their appointment to the police force, or to service in the fire department. *It is said that "Women who want to vote should have the privilege. Reluctant women need not vote if they don't wish to."*

This will not bear scrutiny; for if the franchise were conferred, in the exigencies of politics (such as the proposal of controverted moral issues, public education, and the character or reputation of candidates to high office), it would be certain that a large number would vote and thus perhaps ensure a result which would shock the conscience of the best women. This would make it imperative for such women generally to vote.

This would not be a legal compulsion of women who did not wish to have the franchise at all to vote, but a moral and personal compulsion. Therefore those who say, "Oh, let all the women vote that want to; the others need not," are deceiving themselves and others.

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The question does not turn altogether, nor chiefly, on the desire of women to vote or not to vote, but on whether women ought to have the franchise. If that question be decided either way minor arguments disappear.

*It is said, "Women will always vote against war, and thus put an end to it in the world. They will not send their husbands, brothers, fathers and friends to the slaughter." History does not support that statement.* Wherever there has been a war involving principle, national prejudice or any form of patriotism, women have been as much interested as men. They have even encouraged their husbands, fathers, brothers and lovers to enlist, and would have despised them if they had not cheerfully taken up arms. In the Civil War in this country, the women on both sides were more intense and irreconcilable than the men.

*It is said that "to confer the ballot upon woman would greatly increase her influence, give her dignity and authority." On the contrary, the probability is that it would lessen it.* The influence of women,—not the dynamic power,—is greater than ever before. In 1851, Wendell Phillips presented to a convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, a series of resolutions.

"Resolved, That so far from denying the overwhelming social and civil influence of women, we are fully aware of its vast extent; aware with Demos-

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theses that measures which statesmen have meditated a whole year may be overturned in a day by a woman."

He made this concession as a ground for giving her the ballot "since only then will she exercise this mighty influence under the just sense of her duty and responsibility" ("Ecce Femina," p. 173).

Not so; for to involve her in the conflicts of party politics might, and in many instances would, circumscribe her influence. If the population of the globe consisted exclusively of men or women, to confer the ballot upon those who had been without it would increase their dignity and authority. But since it is composed of both, and woman's influence is not derived from authority, or her true dignity symbolized by the ballot, the clenched fist, or the drawn sword, it would add nothing to her power.

## XIV

### ARGUMENTS FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE REFUTED (Continued)

*I* *It is said* that "the property rights of women, would be better protected if they had the power to vote." *Instead of this it should be said that the property rights of women in most of the states are protected as well now as they would be if women were actually engaged in politics.*

On that proposition I submit as evidence, first, an incident communicated to me by the principal personage connected with it. A lady of rare intelligence, being engaged in arguing in favour of the suffrage for women, said that it was proposed to pave the street on which she lived, contrary to the wishes of the property holders, most of whom were widows and single women. She attributed the scheme to recklessness on the part of certain men, most of whom paid no taxes, and declared with vigour that had she and her "women friends been able to vote, no such thing would have been attempted."

When I asked concerning the outcome, the response was that she and "a few other interested women went to the leaders of each party, some of

## Arguments for Woman Suffrage Refuted 77

whom had previously advocated the scheme, and *easily persuaded them to defeat the proposition.*"

She did not appear to perceive that had she been a voter her influence would have been confined chiefly, if not wholly, to members of her own political party.

*Direct proof that woman's property and person are, to say the least, as well protected as man's is at hand, as is seen by the following :*

June 14, 1898, Senator Wadleigh, who was a member of the Committee on Privileges and Elections, made a report to the United States Senate concerning a proposed constitutional amendment forbidding the United States or any state to deny or abridge the right to vote on account of sex. In that report was the following :

"The adoption of this amendment would make several millions of female voters totally inexperienced in political affairs quite generally dependent on the other sex ; all incapable of performing military duty and without the power to enforce the laws which their numerical strength may enable them to make ; and comparatively few of whom wish to assume the irksome, responsible political duties which this measure thrust upon them."

The committee added that "without female suffrage, legislation has constantly been improving the condition of woman. The disabilities imposed upon her by the common law have one by one been swept



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away, until in most of the states she has the full right to her property, and all, or nearly all, the rights which can be granted without impairing or destroying the marriage relation. Nor can women justly complain of any partiality in the administration of justice. They have the sympathy of judges and particularly of juries to an extent which would warrant loud complaint on the part of their adversaries of the sterner sex. Their appeals to legislators against injustice are never unheeded."

So far as the protection of property, etc., is in question, the testimony of Senator Hoar is, "The admission of married women to control their own property which has come to pass within a generation is *due to the lawmaking sex*, and I think there was quite as much hesitation and opposition to it on the part of women as on the part of men. Miss Alice Stone Blackwell said in my hearing the other day that 'the various successive changes which have taken place in regard to persons and property, and the educational and professional liberties of woman during the last fifty [now sixty-four] years were made before a majority of the women asked for them, and even in spite of the disapproval of the majority of women.'"

*If the foregoing be not satisfactory proof that woman's property is protected as well as, if not better than it would be if she entered politics, one may consider the*

*immunities and legal privileges which, by most of the states of the Union, have been granted to women, but not conferred upon men.* With the aid of one of the ablest and most erudite lawyers in the city of New York, whose legal works are read and used as text-books on both sides of the Atlantic, I find the following laws guaranteeing the protection given to woman in the state of New York with respect to her property, real and personal. The references deal chiefly with the wife, who is represented by some extreme suffragists to be a slave, owned in mind, body and estate by her husband. Unmarried women, including widows, are practically in property protection under laws similar to those made for men.

This examination of the laws of the state of New York with reference to women gives a fairly accurate conception of the protection extended to them generally throughout the United States. The object is not to give all the laws relating to the subject, but the most pertinent and important.

*Dower Rights.* A widow is entitled to one-third of the income of the real estate of which her husband died possessed or of which he was the absolute owner at any time subsequent to their marriage, even though he parted with the ownership immediately after he acquired it. Her dower right attaches to the land the instant that it becomes her husband's. It is not conditioned upon the birth of children and can-

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not be taken away or controlled by any acts of the husband.

*Courtesy*, or the right of a husband to share in the estate of his deceased wife, is conditioned upon the birth of a living child and may be cut off by the wife by deed (since 1862) or by her will (since 1867) without the husband's consent.

*Descent of Land.* Since 1813 or earlier, where a person possessed of property dies without leaving a will, all of the decedent's children, male and female, share and share alike. If there are no descendants the father takes (and if there is no father, the mother) before brothers and sisters. This is in direct opposition to the English law, which gives preference to the eldest male child to the exclusion of all other children.

*The Property of the Wife.* A wife's property since 1848 and her business earnings since 1860 are in her exclusive control. From 1860 to 1896 she was liable as her husband's agent for supplies for herself and family but that liability has been removed, and her estate is not now liable even for her own funeral expenses.

*The Wife's Contracts.* Since 1848 she has been able to contract—without the joinder of her husband—and to bind her property as she chooses, and to convey her property to her husband since 1880 and to make contracts with him since 1892.

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*The Wife's Suits.* Since 1862 the wife has been permitted to bring and maintain suits in her own name when they relate to her separate property, business or personal rights.

*Distribution of an Intestate Decedent's Personal Estate.* The wife, at least since 1867, receives one-third of her husband's personal estate, if there are descendants, and one-half if there are no descendants. If there are neither descendants nor parents, the wife receives two thousand dollars and one-half of the balance absolutely. If there are no descendants, parents, brothers, sisters or their children, the wife receives the whole of the personal estate. Where there are descendants, in 1867 the husband's right to all of the personal property of his deceased wife was reduced to one-third.

*Wills.* Since 1867 women have been able to make valid wills after reaching sixteen years of age (and men after reaching eighteen) of both their real and personal property, wills of married women having the same force and effect as those of single women.

*The Statute of Limitations.* Formerly the period during which suit might be brought for a wife's rights did not begin until after her marriage had been dissolved by death or otherwise, but since 1869 and 1870 when she was given power to sue in her own name, this right was taken from her, because she had been placed on an equal footing with man in

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the power to contract and it was felt that she should bear the same burdens.

*Taxation.* Women pay no poll tax and in effect probably 90% of the personal property held by women escapes taxation altogether. If there is a taxable man in the house the names of women domiciled therein are very seldom placed on the assessment list. If they were given the right to vote and their names were put on the poll lists they would inevitably find their way to the tax lists. It is not uncommon for a man's wife to hold in her name her husband's property as well as her own and a lavish household to pay nominal taxes levied against the man. If a single man earns one thousand dollars a year, he probably pays taxes on an estimated personal assessment of five hundred dollars. A single woman may earn twice as much and pay no personal tax.

Many of the Western states have, without the aid of women's votes, given to the wife the same rights in her deceased husband's estate as a husband has in his deceased wife's estate, with these rights not subject to being cut off by the will of the decedent. New York has not done this except so far as it protects all family relations by the statutory curb adopted principally in 1848 and 1860 in regard to gifts to charity and in 1829 on gifts for more than two existing lives.

*Support of Children.* Mothers having property are not chargeable with the support of their children dur-

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ing the lifetime of the fathers and are (probably) not liable for such support even after the father's death.

*Alimony in Divorce.* In actions for divorce alimony is allowed only to the wife and may be ordered by the court in spite of the fact that she has independent means.

*Liability for Wrong-doing by Children.* Such liability is confined to the father, whatever may be the wealth of the mother.

These improvements have been made from year to year without women having the suffrage and show that they have no cause to complain. Instead of the facts constituting an argument for Woman Suffrage, their weight is against it.

*In some of the states of the Union the laws are so extraordinarily protective of women that it is hazardous to do business with them otherwise than by cash payments or bankable securities or notes indorsed by responsible men.*

## XV

### ARGUMENTS FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE REFUTED (Continued)

**I***T is said* "Women are better than men, and therefore would make better laws, and would reform politics."

This is by no means certain. To show that women are better than men it is customary to present statistics of the number of the sexes respectively in prisons and in churches. Undoubtedly more than two-thirds of the imprisoned criminals of the country are men, and probably more than two-thirds of the communicants of the churches are women. But that this indicates that women are naturally better than men it is easier to assert than to prove. The majority of women are shielded and protected, while most men lead adventurous lives, away from home. Men have excessive physical energy, which frequently involves them in fierce conflicts. When they commit crimes they are more likely, under the present *régime*, to be convicted; for juries dislike to convict women, especially of crimes punished by long terms of imprisonment or death. Men's crimes are generally of violence, the result of excess, or distortion of those natural characteristics which in

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normal degree and legitimate use give them the power of defense and aggression. Women's abstention from crimes of violence is due to those characteristics which fit them for the persuasive influence which in their normal condition they exert.

With these general views of men and women in respect to crime, etc., Frances E. Willard agrees, for in an article entitled "The Woman's Cause is Man's Cause," in the *Arena* for May, 1892, she says: "We do not claim that this is because woman is inherently better than man (although his voice has ten thousand times declared it); we are inclined to think it is her more favourable environment."

The same differences affect their attendance at church. The majority of churchgoing women spend their lives during the week at home, so that to attend religious meetings is a pleasant variety. Most men spend their lives away from home in laborious exercises, for which they find little relief in attending church, except when sustained by high religious motives. That under ordinary circumstances the instincts of women would be in favour of good laws, there is no doubt; but how far their temperaments would affect the character of special enactments, and how far their personal prejudices and prepossessions would affect their political action, are practical questions of moment.

Kate Gannett Wells was on the Board of Educa-



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tion in Massachusetts. Senator Hoar, quoting her as one of the most important women he could name, said that she would "carry to all political questions which her votes would affect quite as wise and safe and intelligent an understanding for their solution as any of her masculine associates in these public functions." But *she* says: "Women, as a rule, will vote on the side of pure moral issues, but they will also vote for illogical, inexpedient measures to secure some narrow present good which should be outweighed by the larger issues of legal stability, validity of order, constitutional and state rights, which are also involved in the immediate settlement of any question."

Dr. John Todd wrote a book against Woman Suffrage. Gail Hamilton reviewed it with such severity that it was supposed by many that she was in favour of the movement; but when she came to express her own feelings and opinions, she said:

"Without in the least degree impugning motives or decrying the character of Woman Suffragists, I hope that their cause will be unsuccessful in so far as it would impose the ballot upon women. In their desire for the better education of women they have my warmest sympathy, though we might not always agree as to what the better education is. But my earliest instinct and my latest judgment combine in maintaining that women have a right to claim ex-

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emption from political duty and responsibility, and that men have no right to lay the burden upon them.

“If the public work is ill done by men, the remedy is to do it better, not to shift the weight to shoulders already heavy-laden and whose task they do not propose in any respect to lighten.”

✓ “I regret to see women engage in the movement because it indicates a failure to discern the natural place of woman in the order of creation,—the place of eternal superiority and supremacy.”

## XVI

### RESULTS OF TRIAL OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE

*I*T is said that "Woman Suffrage wherever tried has worked *beneficially*, so as to secure the approbation of all political parties. Look at the four states in the Union that have legalized Woman Suffrage. Governors, senators, representatives, all commend it. Look at Australia and New Zealand."

The inhabitants of the respective states in Australia and the United States having both male and *full* female suffrage are so situated as not to have to grapple with the problems of vast populations. A traveller unfamiliar with the history of Australia will be astonished at its vastness and the comparative scantiness of its population. In territory it surpasses in extent three-fourths of the whole area of Europe. But Australia, including Tasmania,—though it has grown in some respects faster than did the territory occupied by the United States in a similar period of time,—had on the first day of 1908 but 4,197,037 population, only a little more than that of the city of New York and much less than that of London. Such a situation is not one which can afford light upon the problem as to the adaptation of Woman Suffrage to large and congested areas. This is true notwithstanding that South

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Australia, Victoria and New South Wales have an unusual proportion of urban population. New Zealand has less than one-tenth of its population in cities. The shortness of the period since Woman Suffrage was introduced in these communities also has a strong bearing upon the question.

The testimony of governors, senators, premiers, and of all persons who owe their elevation to elections must be taken with many grains of allowance. The complacency with which legislatures and congresses unanimously praise themselves in speeches and resolutions can hardly be regarded as the best testimony of which the case admits. When a large extension of the suffrage has been granted few candidates for office would dare to declare the extension to be a failure, for they would know that those enfranchised would vote against them ; and what is true of a single candidate is true of a party, unless it be sure of a large majority.

*This mode of intimidation is already attempted by suffragists.* The testimony of public functionaries voluntarily retiring from office, or for various considerations unable or unwilling to become candidates for any office, is frequently very different from that given by those in office hoping to be retained or elevated. Some of the highest of them declare that "Female Suffrage" confers no benefits on the state, and risks great evils. Any class, male or female, the

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commendation or condemnation of whose characteristics may be under consideration, contains a majority who would execute vengeance at the polls, if they could, upon those who should venture to denounce them as unworthy of the suffrage.

He who travels in the states having Woman Suffrage and converses with the people indiscriminately will find that many, and sometimes the best citizens, both male and female, believe that no benefits have been derived by the innovation.

There is also a principle laid down by a distinguished professor of jurisprudence in University College, London, author of "The Science of Law," which should be taken into account when a great experiment in legislation is proposed. He observes that "A bad law, like some poisons when taken into the human system, at once changes the nature of the medium into which it is introduced; and *therefore the apparent success of the law may only mean that what in a healthier condition of society would work badly and be resisted, does in a depraved condition of society meet general approval.*" This means that an experiment so lately introduced, and not where the greatest strain would come, cannot be a model for great nations.

The following is an account of the first trial of Woman Suffrage in the United States :

"On July 2, 1776, the provincial assembly of New

Jersey conferred the suffrage upon women; in 1797 seventy-five women voted, and in the presidential election of 1800 a large number availed themselves of the privilege. At first the law was construed to admit single women only, but afterwards it was made to include females eighteen years old, married or single, without distinction of race. In the spring of 1807 a special election was held in Essex County to decide on the location of the court-house and jail. Newark and vicinity struggled to retain the county buildings, Elizabethtown to remove them. The contest waxed warm, and, according to a paper on 'The Origin, Practice, and Prohibition of Female Suffrage in New Jersey,' read by the Hon. William A. Whitehead, corresponding secretary of the New Jersey Historical Society, and author of the 'Judicial History of New Jersey,'

“It was soon found—though only women of full age, possessing the required property qualification, were permitted by judges of election to vote—that every married woman in the country was not only of “full age,” but also “worth fifty pounds proclamation money clear estate,” and as such entitled to vote if they chose. And not only once, but as often as, by change of dress or complicity of the inspectors, they might be able to repeat the process. . . .

“In Acquackanonk township, thought to contain about three hundred voters, over *eighteen hundred*

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votes were polled, all but seven in the interest of Newark.'

"One woman voted three times. Her real name was Mary *Johnson*, and she cast her first vote under that name. Afterwards, as a somewhat stouter-looking woman, she voted as Mary *Still*, and later in the day as a corpulent person whose name was Mary *Yct*.

"The legislature set aside the election as fraudulent, and the whole state was so disgusted that an act was passed restricting the suffrage to white male citizens twenty-one years of age."

The foregoing history was the culmination of thirty-one years of Woman Suffrage in New Jersey. The advocates of suffrage for women endeavoured to weaken the testimony by stating that the women were generally federalists and also that "they were said to have given the electoral votes of the state to John Adams against Thomas Jefferson in 1800." The Democratic party was bent upon enfranchising the poor white men who were excluded by property qualification. It is affirmed that the women opposed that extension of suffrage. In 1807 the Democrats carried the state and "put out the women and coloured men and introduced the poor white men."

From any point of view the issue was not a political one and the warning is not less pertinent. For at this election the Newark interests found no difficulty in

inducing women in astonishing numbers to vote, and with the aid of such surprising facility of disguise.

This could be paralleled to-day in any corrupt ward or district of a large city, governed by a conscienceless central organization. It has been surpassed in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco within the memory of men not forty years old, and in two of those cities within ten years. Who can doubt that if Woman Suffrage existed, the political leaders and grafters who accomplish such feats of iniquity would often be able to utilize women by hundreds of thousands, while at the same time retaining their majority of male constituency ?



## XVII

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

*W*OMAN Suffrage cannot achieve what its advocates expect. They maintain that it will reform public morals, close the saloons and other places of evil resort and realize absolute prudence, honesty and economy in management. But it is a dream.

Laws that do not command the votes of the majority of the men of a community cannot permanently be executed. Law-abiding citizens require no force to secure their obedience to the law ; but those disposed to break it can be compelled to keep it only by force. In man there is a natural instinct which leads him to submit to persuasion by woman and to resist if she resorts to force. This instinct cannot be eradicated by philosophy, refinement or religion and in every generation reappears with undiminished vigour. Were women admitted to political life (if analogy can be trusted), after the enthusiasm had declined, a strong tendency would arise in both great parties to pass all kinds of laws to please women ; many of which would be dead letters unless they carried the judgment of a majority of male citizens. In the ab-

sence of this support, to enforce such laws effectually would involve a change in the character of the government in the direction of despotism.

Women do not need the ballot to bring about great changes. Yet we hear constantly that it is necessary to have woman's vote in behalf of the temperance cause and allied reforms. As an example we are told to "look at the Crusaders, what they accomplished in a short time." They achieved much, but *they did it without a ballot*. Had the Crusaders at that time acted in the spirit and after the manner of men, Ohio and Pennsylvania would have been covered with bloodshed. It was because they were women, trained and refined as women, that the rum-seller fell before them.

In 1874 I was an interested spectator at the meetings of the General Convention of Crusaders,—the local body consisting of women in different towns and cities who by entering saloons and appealing to the sellers of intoxicating liquor, and by other means, had created a wide and deep interest in the temperance cause. They also endeavoured to lead those who gave up drinking to become Christians. The convention sat in Cincinnati. The addresses were impressive and the prayers fervent.

Finally, a woman both intelligent and refined arose and said: "I, and those who were with me, entered a saloon and began to sing. The keeper asked us to

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go out. He said, 'I own the place, and if you don't go out I will put you out.' We continued to sing and were about to pray, when the barkeeper again savagely ordered us to leave. I lost my temper, and said, 'My husband is a lawyer and if you use such language to me as that I will have you arrested.'

"At this, several frequenters of the barroom sprang up and threatened to throw us out. We promptly retired and realized that we had made a mistake.

"That evening we held a meeting and prayed an hour that God would forgive us for our unchristian spirit and conduct.

"The next morning we returned to the saloon with tears in our eyes. I apologized to the man and I and the others pleaded with him. When we had finished, he said in a broken voice, 'You came here yesterday and badgered me like a man, and I treated you like a man, but if you come back in this way, I will stop this business.' And he did."

*The recent extraordinary wave of successful anti-saloon efforts was largely the work of women and wherever local option prevails the influence of woman is one of the most effective factors, and in some cases it is the principal agent; and that conspicuously in states where women do not vote.*

## XVIII

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

(Continued)

**R***ELIGIOUS feuds would affect political life much more than under present circumstances.* It is the sentiment of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, the leading minds in Protestant communions and the most sagacious statesmen that it is of immense importance to the welfare of this country that the separation of church and state be complete. John Bright in one of his most important speeches on this subject exclaimed: "Of one thing there is no doubt; the influence of priest, parson and minister will be greatly increased if this measure is passed." The kind of influence which he referred to is not the specific work of the "priest, parson or minister," but that which is used to consolidate votes and voters in a compact to use all their political force specifically for the carrying of some measure which will benefit a particular religious body.

The feelings of women upon the subject of religion are so intense that the franchise in a large majority of instances would be exercised under the power of religious prejudice. It is a sign of security that the

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most numerous body bearing the Christian name in the United States recognizes the danger to the family and to fidelity to the Church of introducing those who are practically the spiritual teachers of the household into the boiling sea of party politics, and that an immense multitude of Christian women of every denomination are non-sympathetic with a movement so hazardous.

## XIX

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE (Continued)

*To invest her with the responsibility of voting will diminish the real power of woman in speech.*

An unreserved utterance of woman's intuitions, imaginations, moral perceptions, predilections and presentiments is a contribution to the capital of thought possessed by the human race, the value of which cannot be overestimated.

At present hers is actual "free speech"; she may say what she will; men hear and, without subjecting her words to too close a scrutiny, are influenced by her spirit. Require her to vote, to identify herself with a party, in some instances she will become timid; and when at the other extreme she refuses to restrain herself, she may become an impediment to party success and be ignored. When women shall oppose women their party conflicts will deprive them of that power by which they now frequently leaven and control public sentiment.

Rufus Choate delivered an oration in Salem, Mass., in 1848, in which he pronounced a noble eulogium upon the collective womanhood of people like ours :

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“I do not suppose I enter on any delicate or debatable region of social philosophy, sure I am that I concede away nothing which I ought to assert for our sex, when I say that the collective womanhood of a people like our own seizes with matchless facility and certainty on the moral and personal peculiarities, and character of marked and conspicuous men, and that we may very wisely address ourselves to her to learn if a competitor for the highest honours has revealed that truly noble nature that entitles him to a place in the hearts of a nation. We talk and think of measures; of creeds in politics; of availability; of strength to carry the vote of Pennsylvania, or the vote of Mississippi. Through all this, her eye seeks the moral, prudential, social, and mental character of the man himself—and she finds it!”

This indeed women can do when the balance of their swift moving mental and emotional scales swings true. Those women were not enfranchised. They had developed those high qualities the great orator eulogizes under the old *régime*. But should the collective womanhood be constrained to divide its force between political parties, “to think and talk of measures; of creeds in politics; of availability; of strength to carry the vote;” or of how important members of the party could be kept from seceding; or of how to induce some brilliant orator to renounce his present political affiliations, or to persuade wealthy

## Vital Objections to Woman Suffrage 101

members of the party to subscribe liberally to the party treasury, there is reason to believe that the vision of the "collective womanhood" of the country would be dimmed or distorted by the partisan medium through which "the eye of the collective womanhood" surveyed the scene.

In an argument in favour of giving the suffrage to woman, Senator Hoar brought forward, as an example of intellectual and moral fitness for the franchise, Mrs. Clara Leonard, whom he justly characterized as "the highest living authority on private and public charities." Mrs. Leonard about the same time thus expressed her estimate of the ballot to woman :

"It is the opinion of many of us that woman's power is greater without the ballot, or possibility of office-holding for gain, when, standing outside of politics, she discusses great questions on their merits.

"Much has been achieved by women for the anti-slavery cause, temperance, the improvement of public and private charities, the reformation of criminals, and by intelligent discussion and influence upon men.

"Our legislators have been ready to listen to women and carry out their plans when well formed."



## XX

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

(Continued)

**C**HIVALRY with its refining influence upon men, and the protection which it guarantees to women must diminish greatly or pass away when women become politicians. 7  
7

It is not a favourable portent that of late it has become customary for the advocates of Woman Suffrage to disparage that chivalrous feeling which causes normal men, wherever modern civilization exists, to treat women with deference and to be ready to extend them needful aid. At present one of the chief refining elements of society is the respect felt for womanhood by men.

Even those who voluntarily form evil associations still esteem the ideal woman. The passing or decline of this sentiment is equally unfavourable to both ; for it will accustom men to resist the influence of women.

This chivalrous spirit will surely be diminished when the women of the country are involved in personal, public and political conflicts.

All special courtesy shown to woman as such flows from a quality and amount of influence peculiar to

woman and her spirit uttered or unexpressed of a certain dependence on man. To imagine that chivalry will not be lessened when men and women contend in the political arena, is to treat with contempt the teachings of history. Reports and interviews in the papers, as well as personal conversations, show how quickly woman loses her delicacy and man his self-control and courtesy when engaged in a public controversy, or in court proceedings when women are engaged in a peculiarly aggravating contest of any kind. The scenes at recent sessions of the legislature of New York, enacted by educated women arguing for an increase of the salaries of women in the public schools of the metropolis, their exclusion from the floor of the house, the bitter articles and interviews later, and the stormy hearings before the mayor confirm the conviction that such situations are to be dreaded. And it is significant that whenever women lose self-control and modesty in public, the men interested almost invariably become angry, with the usual result of treating women as they would treat men.

Though women occasionally in conversations and on the platform claim both masculine rights and feminine privileges for themselves, the combination cannot long continue; the "rights" once gained may be retained, but the "privileges" will prove evanescent.

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There are many indications that courtesy lessens in proportion as women come forward to compete with men in public life and in business. In the latter case it may be an incidental result of a necessity ; but when women appear in politics, and chivalry disappears, it will be the natural consequence of an unnatural condition.

That women, however much excited, do not conduct themselves more reprehensibly than men, and that in public there is no more disorder in their assemblies or elsewhere than sometimes is seen even in clerical assemblies, is a melancholy fact ; but such men disgrace themselves, and weaken the influence of their profession. Nevertheless it furnishes all the more reason for women to maintain the standard of decency and courtesy which they seldom fall below, unless when suffering from wounded feelings in excited contests or the epidemic of disorder which publicity and crowds engender.

There is now in England a revelation of the depth to which previously respectable women will descend when under excitement almost equal to monomania. The suffragettes have left decency behind. Their deeds as yet do not equal the atrocity of those women whose actions gave additional terror to the first French Revolution, but their spirit is much the same, and their methods so exaggerate the least admirable traits of women that they become an army of termagants,

throwing stones and slates, breaking windows, screaming in public meetings, violating every law of courtesy, and slapping the police (one woman striking the premier three times), in hope of being struck in return, so as to be crowned martyrs or imprisoned, and appeal to the chivalric to denounce a government that will "strike a woman."

The more leniently they are treated the more reckless and intolerable they become. When sentenced to hard labour, in the hope of raising such a protest that the authorities would be compelled to release them they refused to eat. When fed with the stomach pump a great cry arose ; but they have convinced many that chivalry and rowdyism are not congenial.

Another revelation of character is made by certain women in influential circles who in *public* hold up their hands in horror at such excesses, but in *private* rejoice at their work, and expect to profit by it.

## XXI

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

(Continued)

**I***T will place a new and terrible strain upon the family relation.*

The ratio of marriages relatively to the number of the population is diminishing, and the augmenting number of divorces has long been a cause of alarm to lovers of their country. The invasion of political disputes and party work into family life will develop and increase incompatibility, the most prolific cause of separations, infidelity to the marriage contract and divorce. To this it has been responded :

“There has always been more contention over religion than over politics, yet often the wife is a member of one church, and the husband of another or of none ; and yet the family is not disrupted, and it is evident from the seeming concord of the household that the two have agreed to disagree.”

This proposition needs modification. That as yet there has been more contention over religion than over politics arises from the fact that women do not vote ; but the proposition that families are not disrupted and that the general situation is that the

“two have agreed to disagree” is an exaggeration. A devout Christian cannot refrain from exhibiting his or her principles and spirit. The Roman Catholic Church advises and by every means enforces upon its people marriage only with members of that communion. It is consistent with its principles. The marriage of Catholics with Protestants, and the reverse, sometimes proves happy, but more frequently, especially when children appear, unhappy. A devout Christian may live in peace and in hope of a change of faith with an unbeliever, but more frequently difficulties arise. A difference of religion accentuated by a positive character, clinging with tenacity to doctrine and habit especially if the household be without the spirit of Christianity, has been the predisposing cause of many divorces and separations.

That the family relation can bear existing strains does not prove that it could endure all it has, plus another divisive element.

There is a radical difference between political excitement and any other.

A political difference between husband and wife means that the most intense feelings will be excited and kept at fever heat for weeks or months, with the liability to culminate in a direct active opposition. The husband and wife may be going to the polls to work and vote against each other. The wife may work and vote against her husband's most intimate

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business or personal friends and try to secure the passage of laws especially obnoxious to him. On the other hand he may feel himself obliged to bring all his influence to bear against her party and her plans, and herself.

Where there are children, in cases of disagreement, each parent would endeavour to surpass the other in capturing recruits, at the table and the fireside. At the end the defeated parent would be left without the sympathy of the other ; and not only without sympathy, but in many cases would have to endure the taunt and sneer of the victors.

These possibilities should not be considered merely, or chiefly, with respect to established families "united by the reciprocal ties of friendly intercourse" through many years. The strain will be most severe whenever and wherever the tie is weakest, whether the cause be the inexperience and impulsiveness of early married life or the accumulated incompatibilities which test self-control in the course of a long married career.

To meet this assumption some superficial thinkers glibly say : "Women will generally vote as their husbands do." But this is practically to renounce most of the considerations advanced in favour of the movement.

There is another aspect of importance to the family. When women become active in political campaigns

and in the administration of the government, religion will suffer. Their exemption from these absorbing responsibilities has secured to women the time, and matured in them the disposition, to support the institutions of religion ;—to attend upon its services, receive its sacraments, teach it to their children, and to maintain a close connection with its members.

Opponents of religion and those indifferent to it see that when they become involved in politics women in large numbers will lose their interest in religion and devote their days and nights to other things. The active opponents of all religion in Europe, and to a considerable extent in this country, advocate Woman Suffrage for this very purpose. One of the large parties into which modern socialism is divided avows this, undisguisedly, in tracts and speeches advocating Woman Suffrage as the liberator of woman from "man's tyranny and the *shackles of religion*."

The business and political activity of men in this busy age, the competitive struggle for a maintenance and when that is secured, for a steady accumulation, consumes their time and strength, so that the moral and religious training of children is left chiefly to the mother. *Hence to annex the political realm to the domestic burdens and religious habits of women will diminish the moral and religious training of children more than any other draft upon their best, and often their only teachers.*



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Nor does this exhaust the dangerous elements in the scheme. The movement contains dynamite sufficient to break up families, and to prevent marriages. In the West, while attending a state convention of advocates of Woman Suffrage, I heard a refined married woman read from a carefully prepared essay a passage which contained the declaration that she longed for the time when single women would have their rights, and that she believed that "many of them would have greater honour than the mother of the Gracchi."

Mrs. Celia Burleigh, speaking in behalf of Woman Suffrage in Brooklyn, said: "One of the things that I most covet for every woman is pecuniary independence. When she earns her own bread she has also earned the right to think her own thoughts and live her own life.

"I believe that womanhood is a greater fact than wifehood or maternity; that we should aim at being good women rather than good wives and mothers. . . . *I honour the single women and predict that the time is not distant when they—rather than the married women—will be the distinguished and honoured class.*"

Many single women have won immortal honour; but the hopes of a nation are built upon its mothers, and to place any class above them is to weaken both the family and the state.

## XXII

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

(Continued)

*(THE introduction of women into political life will greatly increase its bitterness.*

That politics kindle violent feuds in many communities and often in states and the Union is too evident to be questioned. At present they are often modified by the undisturbed relations between the wives, mothers, daughters and sisters of the combatants. When the struggle has been decided at the polls these social relations serve to bring about a calm and the resumption of personal harmony.

I do not suppose that any one will deny that woman's distinctive qualities culminate in an exquisite sensibility, the source of her charm in private, family and social life ; or that she feels more deeply and absorbingly towards friend or foe ;—and especially towards the foes of her friends. An advocate of Woman Suffrage asks, " Does any man claim that in whatever other respect he may excel woman, that in the capacity of affection she is not his superior ?" To this as a general rule every reflecting man will consent. Woman could not be all that a true wife and mother

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is if it were not so. But the author of the question adds to those definitions statements which I can but think imperfect in each case: "Man values the objects of his affection for the comfort and dignity and benefit that come to him from them." Surely the ideal man can reach a higher plane than self-interest exclusively. "Woman," he says, "values herself only for the comfort which she can be to the objects of her affection." Were this all, no other argument against Woman Suffrage would be needed, for *it would imply absolute incapacity for impartial judgment of persons or measures.* Certainly woman loves and hates more intensely than man. She will go further in defense of one she loves, and join with greater zeal in overthrowing an enemy of herself, her family, her bosom friend, than most men. This is a predisposing cause of too great excitement, too intense love, or hate, or interest, which prepares for the greatest joy in victory and almost unbearable disappointment in defeat. Such results do not follow unless an exciting cause ignites the sensibilities. But what can stir the feelings more effectually than a political campaign which contains the elements of competition, jealousy, envy, pride and, most stimulating of all, uncertainty? The most disinterested of men often lose their heads for a time and utter wild words when they see their leader, honoured, beloved, and fascinating, borne down in defeat.

## Vital Objections to Woman Suffrage 113

I have heard it stated on a Woman Suffrage platform, by a woman said to be the most eloquent advocate in the state, that she had no disposition to disguise the fact that when women have the right to vote they will expect to have the offices of the country, both federal and state, in proportion to their number. If the suffrage be granted there is no reason to object to that proposition, but it is obvious that a fearful stress would be put upon political conventions when as many women are aspirants for office as there are offices. The dispute will not be only between women and *men*, but between women and *women*.

To take from woman the qualities which make her more intense than man, would be a loss to universal humanity; and to expose her to greater stress and strain than she now bears is an extreme of folly.

Acknowledging this as a possibility, it is suggested that if Woman Suffrage should go into effect, such consequences may appear; but after a little while "women will tame down and be as self-contained as men." The comparison signifies little, for most men are far from being self-controlled, and no one wishes women to reach the ideal masculine self-possession.

Horace Bushnell thus characterizes the past and compares it with the condition which Woman Suffrage would create.

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"Hitherto it has been an advantage to be going into our suffrages with a full half, and that (when left to its normal environment and habits) the better half morally, as a corps of reserve left behind, so that we may fall back on this quiet element, or base, several times a day, and always at night, to recompense our courage, and settle again our mental and moral equilibrium.

"Now it is proposed that we have no reserve any longer, that we go into our conflicts taking our women with us, all to be kept heating in the same fire for weeks or months together, without interspersings of rest, or quieting times of composure. We are to be as much more excited, of course, as we can be, and the women are of course to be as much more excited than we as they are more excitable.

"Let no man imagine that our women are going into these encounters to be just as quiet or as little nerved as now, when they sit in the rear, unexcited, letting us come back to them often to recover our reason. They are to be no more mitigators, but instigators rather, sweltering in the same fierce heats and commotions, only more fiercely stirred than we."

Not willing to involve persons or societies by name or reëxcite passions now inactive, ignoring the numerous and multiplying examples, I have selected the following illustrative facts :

I

The closest approximation to political life on a national scale ever made in this country was the National Board of Lady Managers of the World's Fair, in Chicago. These were women of high character and social influence, most of them accustomed to various forms of public life, selected because of their standing in the states whence they came. *A certain proportion of them at all times spoke and acted in such a manner as to command universal respect.*

But the Board had honours to confer, awards to make, and patronage to distribute. Discord arose between the secretary and the president, the former being a lawyer and a noted advocate of Woman Suffrage. This controversy lasted for months, threatening to embroil the country.

Jealousy on account of the president's failure to introduce some of her colleagues to the Duchess de Veragua caused a stormy scene. Later, a member charged a woman in higher office with instructing the presidents of the various meetings to exclude her from participation in the speaking.

The president was a woman of consummate tact and rare ability as a presiding officer but owing to various bitter quarrels among the members, and factional opposition, she intimated her intention to resign. On one day, after a long altercation, accompanied by many personal contradictions, the Board

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stopped business, and the members left the hall in confusion without adjourning. A sectional war broke out, when a lady exclaimed with reference to the nomination of jurors: "New York has eight representatives and North Dakota none. I want to know the reason why. There is something crooked going on here, and I am going to find it out."

Subsequently several of those commissioners appealed to the National Commission against alleged injustice. And later, in open debate, one delegate charged another with being "an arrogant, malicious, injurious, and vindictive woman," which caused intense general excitement accompanied by ejaculations and tears. For several days the disturbance was renewed; but peace was finally restored, and the account of the controversy was expunged from the records.

The manner in which a final adjournment of the Board was effected was unique and illuminating. For some time Mr. Carlisle, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, had been observing the proceedings of the World's Fair Board of Lady Managers with astonishment if not alarm. He was shocked not only by the lack of adherence "to parliamentary law, but of the courtesies of life" which marked so many meetings of the Board. As the weeks passed he concluded that the Board was not doing much of importance and constant wranglings were disgracing those

responsible for the Exposition and the Board itself, besides eating up the funds of the government at the rate of six dollars per day for each manager. Meantime the press throughout the Union was spreading the situation before the people.

A historian of the event, one of the editors of the *Chicago Tribune*, described the method adopted by Secretary Carlisle for compelling an adjournment.

“Had the members of the Lady Board of Managers been men he would have told them bluntly to quit and be gone. Being ladies, he adopted more diplomatic methods for their dispersal. . . . He put the burden upon his assistant secretaries, auditors and controllers, and set them to entreating, begging and threatening, so that the ‘lady managers might be persuaded to go home.’ They worked faithfully, but it is doubtful whether they could have succeeded ‘had it not been for the suave firmness and the managing skill of the talented president.’ . . . ‘They had patronage. They had the selection of a certain number of jurors.’ ‘Those ladies wrangled over their patronage with more vehemence and bitterness than men politicians would have displayed.’ . . .” Speaking of public sentiment, the editorial says that “the women were sterner critics than the men, for the latter laughed and the former blushed.”

*Such was the effect of these scenes that some of the*



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*members of the Board and many spectators of the wranglings reversed their opinion on the desirableness of woman's entering political life.*

### II

About that time a widely circulated paper, published in Chicago and edited by women incensed by the apathy of American women towards Equal Suffrage, editorially attempted to portray the average woman in the following cruel words :

“The mediocre woman has but one reply for those reformers who would help her up the heights. She says invariably, ‘I have all the rights I want.’ She has a narrow pride that forbids the admission that she has fewer rights than men ; that she is in any wise under control.

“*Like any other slave she hugs her chains and kisses her master's hand.* She secures by indirection what braver and stronger women win by straightforward work. She calls her circuitous route to the end she has in view by the *false name of ‘womanly tact.’* She is apt to dwell on people's faults rather than their virtues. She has greatest sympathy with the most distant causes and is remarkably near-sighted concerning reforms in her own town and at her door. Her range of vision is narrow and her sympathies are ditto. She has that infallible proof of mediocrity that never dares to say ‘I've changed my mind.’

She utterly fails to keep in touch with the movements of her age, and dwelling 'on the good old times' in contrast to 'these radical, degenerate days,' she holds her empire over husband and children by catering to their weaknesses, rather than by developing their strength.

"Take her for all in all, we should be glad no more to look upon her like in any world."

### III

Further illustrations appeared a few years ago during a canvass of the state of New York for petitions to strike out the word "male" from the constitution. These petitions were generally circulated by women connected with the suffrage societies. A counter-movement was begun by women opposed to the project. The protesters were characterized by educated and presumably refined members of their sex in public assemblies as "*traitors to their sex*;" "*copper-heads*;" "*betrayers of the cause of woman*," and in their assemblies such was the intensity of feeling that these terms and phrases evoked general applause.

The women who presumed to resist the innovation were stigmatized, in a contribution to an important periodical, by one of the most learned and distinguished women of America, as "*parasites who have mentally retrograded*."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a brilliant woman, a de-

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bater for many years, could not restrain herself when excited. At the meeting of the Women's Council at Washington, in March, 1888, she burst forth with this threatening blast :

“ I have often said to men of the present day that the next generation of women will not stand arguing with you as patiently as we have for half a century. The organizations of labour all over the country are holding out their hands to women. The time is not far distant when, if men do not do justice to women, the women will strike hands with labour, with socialists, with anarchists, and *you will have the scenes of the Revolution of France acted over again in this republic.*”<sup>1</sup>

These facts are not introduced to impeach the character, lower the respect for, or speak lightly of, the nature of woman, but to show that the rancour of political life will not be cooled or sweetened, but rather inflamed by their entrance upon it. While many women may be able to preserve a reasonable degree of equanimity, many will succumb to untoward influences, and some, for purposes of their own, or their party, will so spread the contagion as to increase the already pernicious bitterness.

A restraint not inherent in intellect, conscience, or affection often checks man's utterances. That re-

<sup>1</sup>The *Chicago Tribune* of March 30, 1888, is responsible for the quotation.

straint is the fear of a blow or a bullet—a not infrequent reply to hot words. Such a consequence of free and even blistering speech is rarely experienced by women, and from such, while chivalry lasts, all men will protect her.

*Women in general—on their own testimony—take disappointment harder than men, and ally themselves to congenial persons in defeat with more passionate attachment than average men, and are more likely than men to utter their feelings in words that scald.*

## XXIII

### VITAL OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

(Continued)

*I*T may reasonably be expected to deteriorate the moral tone of most of the women who become political leaders, and affect unfavourably all who take an active part in politics ; and it will introduce dangerous elements of corruption. The principal causes of political immorality are the desire for power, for "spoils" in money and office, bribery, craft, party and personal prejudice. Is it reasonable to believe that women who become party leaders, and intensely excited in political campaigns, will escape the influence of these demoralizing elements ?

Certainly it will not be maintained that women are destitute of ambition, that they are above the influence of prejudice or prepossession, that personal favouritism can never warp their judgment, that money, or what it procures, has no charm for them. While some—in the aggregate, many—would resist every temptation, preserve their womanliness, and illustrate in high places all the virtues, is certain. But to subject the entire sex to such influences would inevitably lower its moral tone.

When women vote generally,—and if they are not

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to vote generally the agitation is useless,—all classes will need to be instructed and led to the polls. As it is now among men there must be women leaders for different classes ; and women who aspire to be leaders, or are made such by their constituents, will be compelled to associate for political purposes with other women similarly related to the party. At present the morals of society are largely preserved by the fact that a woman of doubtful character is not admitted to the society of women of unspotted reputation. It is easy to maintain such an attitude now ; it might be impossible in a general participation of women in politics. That leading political women will be brought into confidential relations with men occupying similar relations in the same party is a consequence of the proposed revolution which would not long be delayed.

“Log rolling,” now disgraceful, will probably become doubly so, for though many are the women who win the coöperation of men by normal and legitimate means, there are not a few who fascinate men and will stop at nothing to accomplish their purposes. Should this be the case, the evil effect upon domestic peace and private and public morality would be incalculable.

## XXIV

### MY CREED

**A**S the suffrage is but one of several subjects related to woman's rights and privileges it is due to the writer, as well as to the reader, to state his creed concerning woman.

*I believe* that for many ages woman has been grievously oppressed and that in various parts of the world she is still oppressed.

I believe that woman's intellectual powers are equal to those of man ; that the same faculties and tendencies exist in both sexes, and that some of them are the same in strength, while others differ in strength and rapidity of action : that nature gave to woman as one of her most important functions that of refining man : And that as woman is the chief guardian and teacher of children from their birth, she is naturally endowed with greater quickness of the senses, of thought, speech, and watchfulness.

I believe in coeducation for some young men and women and in separate education for others,

the selection depending on the special characteristics of each : And in the higher education of woman and rejoice to promote it—provided that the normal dissimilarity in the constitution of the sexes—“ a difference but not a scale of inferiority or superiority ”—is not ignored or underestimated. If that be not recognized, the proper characterization of such culture is the *lower* education.

*I believe* in woman's right to enter and practice the professions ; and see no incongruity in her speaking in any assembly which gives her the right so to do ;—provided she preserves her womanly delicacy.

I believe in woman's being athletic, and that it is wise for her to use all healthful exercises in preparation for her numberless burdens. But should she become as strong as the legendary Amazons, I would not have her join the army or the navy. On similar principles I would have her cultivate and enrich her mind to the highest degree compatible with her situation and responsibilities ; but for the reasons given in this book, I believe that neither the state, the family nor woman herself would be benefited, but on the contrary would be injured, if she were invested with the suffrage.



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*I believe* that there are two objects in nature alike obnoxious—a mannish woman and a womanish man; also in the wisdom as well as the wit of the toast offered at a banquet, a day after Woman Suffrage went into effect in one of the states of the Union.

“The Ladies: *Our superiors yesterday, our equals to-day.*”

## XXV

### CONCLUSION

**S**HOULD the duty of governing in the state be imposed upon women, all the members of society would suffer; children, by diminished care from their mothers; husbands, from the increase of the contentions, and the decline of the attractions of home; young men and maidens, from the diminution or destruction of the idealism which invests the family with such charms as to make the hope of a home of one's own, "where in the contrast of the sexes life may be ever a delight, an impulse to economy and virtue—but the greatest sufferer would be woman."

Often those who recollect her genuine freedom of speech, "the might of her gentleness, the almost resistless potency of her look and touch and voice, would long for the former proud dependence of woman on manliness, reciprocated by man's reverence for womanliness;" while "the new generation, to whom such sweet recollections will be unknown, will blindly rave against their fate or despondently sink under it, as women have never done (from similar causes) under the old régime." Meanwhile the

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office-holding, intriguing, campaigning, lobbying, mannish woman would celebrate the day of emancipation,—“which, alas, would be the day of degradation,—when, grasping at sovereignty, she lost her empire.”

*The true woman needs no governing authority conferred upon her by law.*

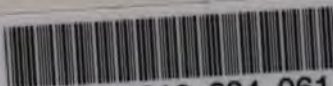
In the present situation the highest evidence of respect that man can exhibit towards woman, and the noblest service he can perform for her, is to vote NO to the proposition that would take from her the diadem of pearls, the talisman of faith, hope, and love, by which all other requests are won from men, and substitute for it the iron crown of authority.

Her might is gentleness, she winneth away  
By a soft word and a sober look,  
Where she, the gentle, loving one hath failed,  
The proud, the stern might never yet succeed.  
Strength, power, majesty belong to men;  
They make the glory native to his life;  
But sweetness is a woman's attribute.  
By that she has reigned, by that she will reign.  
There have been some who, with a mightier mind,  
Have won dominion, but they never won  
The dearer empire of the beautiful; sweet sovereigns  
In their natural loveliness.

—SCHILLER.

*God Save the State and the Home*





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