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SUFFRAGE FOR WOMAN.

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THE REASONS WHY.

BY LOIS WAISBROOKER.

Adjust the balance-wheels if you would have harmony.

“It is not good for man to be alone.”

“The son of the bondwoman is not heir to the promises, but the son of the freewoman.”

ST. LOUIS, MO.

CLAYTON & BABINGTON, PRINTERS, No. 204 N. THIRD ST.

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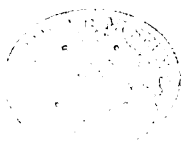
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SUFFRAGE FOR WOMAN.

SOME OF THE REASONS WHY.

That this is an age of investigation, of analysis, of criticism, of change, is evident to every thinking mind; and, further, we have no need to look beneath the surface of things to trace the tidal currents, for they are so apparent that none but the wilfully blind, or the selfishly absorbed in their own petty schemes, can fail to perceive their drift; to see that they are all setting in one direction, all flowing toward the grand ocean of freedom, of the universality of human rights.

There never was a time when the cry, "What shall," not I, but *we*, "do to be saved?" has gone forth as it is going forth now; and so far from being satisfied with past answers, that cry will become louder, deeper, and more persistent, until an answer is given that brings practical satisfaction. The salvation that is called for to-day is for the *whole* people instead of a *part*. This being the case, beggars and kings, saints and devils, starvation and excess, will not much longer be tolerated. The world has enough for each, and enough for all, and the wants of all must be met.

Must be met; but how? Ah! that's the question! How? And that is what this age is determined to learn. To this end all existing institutions, all time-honored customs, are being weighed in the balance, and proving deficient, must be thrown aside or have that which is wanting added thereto.

Some of them must be eradicated root and branch, for their fruits have been but as the Upas of bitterness, and among these is the institution of slavery. This has been partially destroyed; one prominent branch has been lopped off, one main root dug out; but so long as woman is counted out, is allowed no share in our legislative councils, freedom can give us but a side view of her fair face. If we would behold the full radiance of her features, if we would enjoy the direct sunshine of her smile, woman must be recognized as an equal in all of the institutions that are demanded by the needs of humanity. In a word, we must have a moral side to politics; or, if it pleases you better, a feminine side.

I do not mean by this that man is destitute of moral sentiment. Not at all; but I do mean to say that Infinite Wisdom makes all to depend upon each, and each upon all—that he does not give all his good gifts to any one person, class, or sex, but the rather, divides them around, thus making the strength of the one to minister to the weakness of another—the refinement and delicacy of one to soften down and polish the rough diamond of worth in the other.

This diversity of talent gives diversity of duties. Mind, I say diversity, not separation. Diversity in the

same sphere, and not the separation that indicates different spheres; not even like to two half spheres touching at all points; but like to warp and woof, distinct, yet blended and interblended through the entire web.

The physical, the intellectual, the moral, and the religious are the four grand elements of the sphere in which humanity moves onward in the track of the ages, are the *summum bonum* of the powers that need cultivation, development in just and harmonious proportions in order to the true equilibrium of society,—to the highest welfare of the race.

Saying nothing at present of the intellectual and the religious, it is evident that man has the preponderance in the physical, and woman in the moral; and by just so much as woman needs man in the physical for the perfection of their mutual work, does man need woman in the realm of the moral. Woman has physical strength, still it is but weakness when man perverts his by turning it against her; man has moral strength, but it is weakness when woman tempts; and for this cause woman despises the man who uses his strong arm to crush instead of protecting her, and man as naturally looks with contempt upon the woman who uses her power to drag him down morally. This is natural, it is legitimate. True, there are exceptions to the above, but the principles involved are so general in their application as to amount, almost, to axioms.

Perhaps you will point me to the multitudes who throng our cities as outcasts, and to the fact that they are mostly man's victims at the commencement of their career, as evidence against woman's moral strength, but a close

analysis will show a balance in woman's favor, even here ; for she nearly always yields from love, for the sake of another, and man from selfishness, for the sake of himself ; beside, man's physical strength may be so crippled, hedged in, that he can use it but at a disadvantage ; woman's moral strength is thus crippled, hedged in. It is only when men stand side by side as equals and engage in fair contest that you can judge of their relative physical strength.

If one of two opponents has but one arm, or has one tied behind him and still is victor one-third of the time, we should very naturally infer that with equal chances he would be the stronger party. Woman is thus bound ; still, in the moral struggle, she is more often the victor than man ; therefore, it is evident that he *needs* her in the realm of the moral more than she needs him. This is one of the reasons why so much greater condemnation is meted out to her for a moral offense than to him, while we laugh the man to scorn when she is the victor physically. Is it not plain, then, that one is the equivalent of the other, and both in order to a perfect whole ?

"True," says the objector, "therefore let woman use her influence ; let her be content with that, with her moral power, without trying to take part in governmental affairs. These belong to man's more rugged nature."

Hold, my friend. Does it need man's superior strength of muscle to enable him to cast a vote ? If man makes his physical strength a greater blessing through the use of the ballot, may not woman increase her influence, her moral power through the same means ? Should not the

two meet here on common ground and be made one, be truly wedded? Is it not the lack of this, the true marriage of these specialties, that makes society the one-sided, the illegitimate thing that it is?

The Bible Allegory of the bondwoman and the free-woman has a deeper meaning than has generally been supposed, and the rule of the old Hebrews, that a "bastard" should not enter into the congregation of the Lord, finds a wide realization. "Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" has long been the prayer of christendom; a prayer that is ever met with the stern response, "The son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

Man uses his physical strength as lord and master, woman her influence as a bondwoman, a subject, and, as there can be no true marriage only between equals, society in its present form is the child of a false, an illicit union, and as such cannot enter into the congregation of the Lord, into the kingdom of heaven to come upon earth.

When woman is made man's equal before the law, equal so far as the law has the power to equalize, then, and not till then, will society be the child of the freewoman, heir not only to the promises but to their actualization. Thus much to the deep underlying principles of nature as shadowed forth in the allegories, rites, and customs of the past, and now let us come to the practical of to-day.

The Family, the Community, the Church, and the State, are four modes of action that have grown out of human needs, and just so far as woman is human does she need these modes of action for her more perfect development;

just so far, also, do these need her for their more perfect action. Man has his choice as to the place he will fill therein, with the exception only of that which nature makes impossible for him, has his choice even to the minutest affairs of domestic life, should his taste lead him in that direction.

He chooses his own field of labor, his own mode of action, but presumes to limit woman in hers; though not without assigning his reasons, some of which have a show of right, and some have not. In examining the reasons he assigns I shall pass no sweeping condemnation, shall use no harsh terms, for I recognize in my brother the same human nature that I myself possess, and, as I have erred in the past through ignorance and imperfection of judgment, and must continue to do so in the future, in a greater or less degree, even with the best of intentions, therefore, will I attribute his mistakes to well meant ignorance, rather than to intentional wrong.

No, my brothers, I do not believe there is one among you, no matter how opposed to suffrage for woman, who would not sustain the movement, once convinced that its tendency would be to bless humanity. The heart, then, is in the right, and if I can only convince you that the head is wrong, it will be all that is needed to win you to my views.

One of the objections made to woman having the elective franchise is, that it will degrade her, will drag her down from the high position she now occupies, should she mingle in the turbid stream of politics. This objection proceeds from the better part of man's nature, to-wit:

that which recognizes the priceless value of womanhood; and, were it true that equal rights would have this tendency, it would of itself be sufficient to forever bar the way to such rights; would be the flaming sword, guarding us, not from the tree of life, but of death.

Womanhood is above all price. There is no crime so great as that which destroys woman; no ruin so deep as that wrought upon society by ruined woman. Man, blinded by passion and interest, as he too often is, instinctively feels this, feels the worth of womanly purity and refinement, hence I say that the above protest comes from the better part of his nature.

He may deceive and degrade the individual woman, but to degrade the sex, to bring it down to the level to which he sees the individual woman capable of descending, or even to the condition in which he finds so large a proportion of his own sex—to have his wife, his mother, his sister or daughter thus brought down—the very thought of it is horrible, and he shrinks from it as though hell had moved from beneath to meet him.

But is it true! Will the right to stand before the law as man's equal tend to drag woman down as a moral being? With precisely the same rights and immunities as a citizen, will woman naturally assimilate to man's vices instead of brightening up her own virtues, and teaching him by leading him gently upward when she can, and restraining him with her added power, when she must? What does history say: what is the experience of the past upon this subject?

Taking it in our own times; not going back, even be-

yond the memory of the oldest inhabitant; has not woman more rights, are not more privileges guaranteed to her now than she had thirty or forty years ago, and what has been the result! Has it been evil; has it made society worse than formerly? Has woman become less womanly through the abundance of concessions made in her favor?

I know that men are prone to talk of what their mothers and grand-mothers did, as though this was a degenerate age, but if these same individuals would look at what their fathers and grand-fathers did, I opine that they would find full as much difference between them and themselves; a difference that they would be slow to acknowledge as evidence of degeneration.

Difference of manifestation is not the point at issue, for different conditions call forth different needs; consequently, different acts, both from man and woman. The question is, is woman less womanly now than then; is she less noble, less self-denying, less inclined to make sacrifices for those she loves? In reply to this, I hear the accusation of extravagance, that she spends so much more on dress and other kindred luxuries than formerly. Well, who is to blame for this? Does she make a display to please your eye or her own?

Mrs. Willard says in her *Sexology*, "that all seek recognition, and if they cannot get it in one way they will have it in another." Man takes the lead in society, and woman gets recognition only through him. She is not in a condition to demand it, therefore she must seek it, must win it through her *influence*, and in order to influence she must please, and to do this, if she cannot reach him through

his better sense, she appeals to his fancy, strives to reach the heart through the eye. And, alas! it is too often the case that she remains unrecognized only as she appeals to your sensual instead of your spiritual natures.

Men may say what they please about the economy of their mothers, or their grand-mothers, they know very well that they would not wish to see their wives and daughters changed to the exact counter-part of what women were fifty years ago, even in dress; neither do they believe that woman is less moral, less virtuous, even with her increased privileges.

I can remember when our district schools were taught in winter by men only, because women, they said, could not manage the big boys. But woman has found her way into our winter schools, and the big boys have not been excluded. They are there still, and better managed by her smile than formerly by the master's ox-whip and ferule; and is she less womanly now, as a teacher, than then with the wheel and distaff?

Does carding, spinning, and weaving the fabrics that are to clothe the child's body tend more to the development of womanly qualities, than does the use of the intellect in imparting the knowledge that is to expand the child's mind? And will the money that she thus earns, though unjustly deprived of equal compensation with her brother for the same work, will that money purchase less of the comforts and refinements of life, or will she be less inclined to spend it judiciously than though earned by hard physical labor?

A few years since female physicians were unknown;

woman might act as nurse, but man must take the responsibility of the case, and if the patient recovered he received the credit thereof; if not, perhaps the nurse was to blame. Now, how does the matter stand? Why, we have thousands of female physicians, and just as womanly taking care of the sick in that capacity, as when acting as nurse.

In the lecture field, also; well, notwithstanding my present position, it is not many years since I, myself was so prejudiced against woman's speaking in public that I would not go out to hear her, and what, suppose you, cured me of this folly? I will tell you. My early advantages were few. I did not come of a literary stock of ancestry. My parents worked hard for daily bread, had but little education, and less time to use it; consequently I grew up with about as little idea of the world's great literary riches—I was going to say, as a Hottentot, but I hardly think it was as bad as that.

At the age of twenty-six I resolved to add to my little stock of education that I might be able to teach instead of working in other people's kitchens; for, be it remembered, I was the same as a childless widow, as poverty and broken health had forced me to give my darlings to the keeping of others. In carrying out this my determination, I came in contact with intellectual culture such as I had before known nothing of. It took me two years, with poor health and working my own way, to acquire what, with other conditions, I might have acquired in six months, but I had the advantage, the while, of listening to men of scholarly attainments, both in the pulpit and the lecture-room.

But when I went to teaching, it was in a back neighborhood, and I must sit Sabbath after Sabbath under the ministrations of an ignorant man, or stay at home; and if the latter, should gain the reputation of being irreligious, and thus lose my influence with the people. I was a teacher of children, he of men and women; but while listening to the platitudes that fell from his lips, the conviction would force itself upon me that I was better qualified to teach that people than he was, with the question, "Why should the fact that I am a woman be a reason that I should not?"—and the result of that summer's experience, of that questioning, is before the world.

But could I for a moment believe that I had retrograded, that I was less a woman in the high and holy sense of that term, I would never stand before an audience again. Nay, I would leave this my chosen field of labor, and sitting in sack-cloth, would throw dust upon my head and cry, woe is me, woe is me—would weep tears of blood, were it possible, even till I had regained that which I had lost. But it is not so, my friends. I have not belied my nature as woman by cultivating my talents, and lifting up my voice in behalf of justice, liberty and human fraternity.

Yes, woman has entered the lecture field, and the pulpit also, and she stands there to-day as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. If, then, she has come up, step by step, into all of these positions, and more, and has not been hurt thereby, why should we fear for her if she be permitted to stand as man's equal before the law.

God made her woman, not man; and may not that womanhood be trusted, even as manhood, to be faithful to

itself and the God within. The fact is, my brothers, the assumption that God's chariot-wheels will not run in their track without a restraining hand—that one class of his creatures cannot keep their places without being held therein by another class, is practical atheism.

Look, too, at the egotism of your position. You say in effect, that you are capable of double work; that of keeping your own place and making us keep ours.

But enough on this point. There are other objections urging themselves upon our notice, one of which takes the following form: Woman's place, woman's mission is at home; her highest, truest work is within its sacred precincts, therefore, she does not need the ballot. True in point of fact, but not in its application, not as an objection against equal rights. Amended, it would stand thus:

God has given to woman the highest and holiest work ever committed to mortal, one that has the greatest bearing upon the direct welfare of the race. That work is wrought out mostly at home, therefore she should have every power that law can give to enable her to protect that home; and this from the fact that the work being hers, she knows better than another can know, what protection, what help she needs therein. This must be true in the eternal fitness of things, or we charge the Infinite with folly, such folly as we ourselves would not be guilty of, that of putting the choicest piece of work into the hands of those least capable of knowing what is needed for its successful accomplishment.

It is for this very reason that woman should have the

ballot; that she may protect her home, that she may have the power to shield it from all influences that defile. She knows better than another can know what is needed in that home, what safeguards must be thrown around it, that it may become what it must be ere humanity can be redeemed.

"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

This salvation must come from her, must be wrought out through her own being, from her own heart's blood; and being the most sensitive, the most susceptible of all organized life, her pulses beat, her heart-throbs quicken with all the influences that are brought to bear upon her, be those influences good or evil, and they go forth in the persons of her children to bless or curse humanity. Oh, holy mission of motherhood! It is to guard thee from pollution, that we ask the ballot for woman.

I know it is looked upon as man's work to protect home, and so it is in a measure; and so he does in a general sense, that is, just so far as he knows how; but he has fallen into the mistake of supposing that protection includes control.

This being the case, his home and his wife must be protected of course, but it is as *his* home, and *his* wife, because they are his, and for this reason only. He does not protect her as woman, and the home as hers; if he did, he would not claim the right to *control*.

"But why should not man control the home; does he not earn it, does he not provide for the wants of its inmates? It is a poor story if man has not a right to that which he earns—to the products of his own labor. I

should like to know what you woman's rights people want!"

We want justice, good friend; for with all your excitement, with all your fear of being unjustly dealt by if woman has an equal chance before the law, I must still call you friend; justice is what we want; nothing more, nothing less. But carry out your idea of justice and I fear that you would be worse off than we. True, nearly all the productive labor is carried on by man, he earns the material wealth; but allow me to ask you a question or two before you prefer your claims too strongly. First, who controls the wealth of the world now? Is it those of your own sex who earn the most of it? Again, if man's right to control the home is founded on the fact that he most generally earns it, should not woman upon the same principle control him?

Parentage is an incident to man; it is of so little moment to him that it need not interfere with his general business at all, but to woman, oh, how different! The portion that man furnishes toward building that wonderful superstructure the human body is so minute that it needs a microscope to distinguish it from the surrounding mass; all else woman supplies; it is wrought out through the mysterious chemistry of her own being, the foundation timbers laid in her heart's blood.

If, then, he has a right to the control of his work because it is his, she by the same rule has a right to the control of her work, consequently, a right to control him: through him she could control all, and thus man instead of woman would be under subjection. But this is not

the true criterion, not the correct basis upon which equal partnerships (and man and woman should be equal partners) should be founded.

As partner, woman should have an equal *right* to the possession of the wealth of which man earns so much the most, and man should have an equal right to the control of those bodies, those living temples of which bodies social and bodies politic are composed, and from which governments proceed; an equal right to the control of those temples for which woman furnishes by far the greatest proportion of material.

This would be simply justice; but as things now stand, man has the control of his work and woman's also, and with this control he protects the home from every one but himself. Look at the wife when the busy cares of the day are done; the little ones are in bed, and she sits by the fireside listening with longing ear for the footstep of her husband. He comes, not sooner than she wishes, but too soon for her peace, for the saloon and the social glass have aroused the lower and deadened the higher, the better impulses of his soul. In this condition she must take from him the elements of future being and become the mother of one who, shapen in sin, in sensuality, grows up a life-long sorrow to both parents, and a curse to society, for she is his wife, and man-made laws—laws that she has had no voice in framing—protect her from all men but her own husband; and man-made theology reiterates, "Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands in all things."

Home should indeed be pure and holy, and woman

should preside there as its guardian angel, for her work is very great. A work that man but partially understands, though he feels its sacredness, and does not violate it from a wish to do so, but ignorantly—from attempting to do too much; and, in turn, asking too much of woman. He tries to do her work, and his also, in the affairs of State, and then expects her to do her work in the home that is under his control, and remedy the mistakes consequent upon that control.

Her work in the State he cannot do. His mistakes, or the consequences thereof, she cannot reach so long as her arms are tied by his one-sided laws—and yet, hear him talk! Listen to him in the person of an Honorable Senator from New Jersey:

“There is hope for the country and its future so long as the firesides of the land continue to be guarded by the presiding genius of true womanhood.” Had he paused right here he would have done well enough, but he adds, “as I have endeavored to portray it,” thus making his estimate of woman a true one; and, yet, he shows in the very next sentence that he fails utterly to understand us. Hear him again: “There is nothing, there can be nothing but woe wherever the social fires are extinguished by the gorgon breath of the advocates of woman’s rights.”

Great heaven! The plea of woman for the right to guard the fireside, called the breath of desolation by this exponent of womanhood! “The domestic altar,” he continues, “is a sacred fane where woman should be the pure and undefiled priestess.” True, Sir; true—thus proving what I have already asserted, to-wit: that the heart is

right, and only the head is in the wrong; and it is not at all strange, after supposing himself the rightful lord and master of woman for so long a time, that man should be a little heady.

"And he would protect us forever," he says, "from the poisonous exhalations that infect all the air wherever the Upas tree of American politics sheds its baleful light." A high estimate he places upon womanhood; but not half high enough. In the midst of his laudations he shows distrust, and in his attempts to honor he dishonors, else he would never have uttered the above.

Politics a Upas tree, is it? Well, who has made it so but man? He has the whole control thereof. Man takes charge of politics and it becomes vile; shall he, therefore, take charge of woman, of her dearest interests that she may be kept pure and undefiled?

Thank you, gentlemen; we beg to be excused. You honor us with your tongues, but say by your acts that we cannot be trusted. You acknowledge that your attempt to do without us in the affairs of government has been a failure; yea, worse than a failure, a poison that infects the very air, and yet object to our help lest the home sphere should be defiled.

Pray, what is our Government for, if its influence is not felt in all our homes? Did I not well say that we need a moral side to politics? We need it as a disinfectant to this poison; yea, and woman must furnish this disinfectant for the very purpose of making and keeping the home pure. Can we have pure, healthy homes physically, when the very air is laden with disease? Can we

have pure homes morally, when the great body politic is an Upas tree of sin and death?

Oh, my brothers, give us the right to protect our homes and yours, and then trust to true womanhood to do it. And I know that you will, when you see the matter in its true light, when you learn that it is not ambition, but the love of right, of justice, that prompts us to action.

Not long since, in a neighboring town, an advocate of the Temperance cause filled the capacious church night after night with those who came to listen to his eloquence as he portrayed the ruin wrought by the demon of Alcohol. Oh, how he plead with them to use their means, their influence, their votes to put down the accursed traffic, and hundreds of dollars were pledged for that purpose. But, the while, one-half of that audience were too poor to own even a vote.

They could not wield the voice of power, but only that of pleading. How helpless they were. The destroyer at their doors, desecrating the homes that true womanhood would guard, and they could only beg of him to stay out. My God, what guardians these! Without arms, bound hand and foot, and then told to be content with their position for they wield a greater influence now than man does.

It sounds very fine, I know, to talk of the faithfulness of woman, of her devotion, of her soft hand upon the brow of the sick, of her maternal love, stronger, often, than death itself,—all this is very fine to talk of, but would it not be better to 'have less occasion for lacerating her tender heart—better to give her an opportunity to remove some of the causes of all this suffering?

Woman is tired of picking up those that man knocks down; tired of tending babes that will grow up and sting her with a sharper than a serpent's tooth, because poisoned at the fountains of existence from before birth; tired of feeding and caring for wives and children, where husbands and fathers have been made drunkards by another's love of gain; tired of taking an occasional outcast from the ditch, while man pushes thousands in, either directly through his love of pleasure, or indirectly by making her work for next to nothing, that his coffers may be filled, till, driven to desperation, she takes the gold that is offered to tempt her necessity.

Woman is tired of all this. A few still keep up their efforts it is true, but the masses are appalled at the amount to be done. They know too well that they cannot dip out with a spoon what is being thrown in with a shovel, and with the despairing cry, "It is of no use," they fold their hands to patient endurance, or turn away to the diversions of dress, fashion and folly, shutting up their sympathy till it changes to bitterness and gall in their bosoms, and they become even harder than man himself.

The constant call upon us from misery that we cannot alleviate, naturally has this tendency, and the keener the sensibility the sooner is the end accomplished from the very necessity of the case. True, there are some hearts so perennial in their nature that they cannot become calloused; such suffer on and work on till death shuts the scene from mortal eyes. And there are others who are asking, "Is there not a cause?—and being such, can we not reach it, and so effect a cure?"

You may think that in all this I am unjust to man, that I am painting him as one destitute of all the finer feelings, a very brute in nature. Not at all, my brothers. I have no such an idea; I know full well that we cannot do without you, any better than you can without us. I am only reiterating what you have so often asserted, but with the intention of making an entirely different application thereof. You assert that there is an essential difference between man's work and woman's. I agree with you most fully. You claim this difference as a sufficient reason for excluding her from the ballot-box, from having a voice in those laws by which she is to be governed: I, on the contrary, claim this difference as one of the strongest reasons why she should have the ballot and all its attendant rights. If her work was the same as man's she could easily be represented by him; as it is not, of course she cannot be thus represented; and, as to carrying on any work whatever without the balance power of the positive and negative, the male and female forces, God himself has never attempted it, as the sexuality of all nature abundantly proves. Is it a wonder, then, that man does not succeed, does not inaugurate perfect governmental relations so long as he excludes woman therefrom?

It is not because he is intentionally cruel, that man's work has produced such dire results, but, wanting the proper check, it has been carried to extremes, and sin and death are the natural results of unbalanced, of one-sided conditions. It is a principle in nature that two equal forces, one acting as a check upon the other, produces an equilibrium; for instance, the centrifugal and centripetal

forces in the planetary system, one drawing to the centre and the other projecting into space, these in their joint action upon the planet bring it circling around the central sun and keep it there.

The first of these forces, unrestrained, would send this little world of ours beyond the bounds of space, landing us, perhaps, in the theological heaven of which our Methodist friends sing—

“Beyond the bounds of time and space
Look forward to that heavenly place,
The saints’ secure abode.”

The other, unchecked, would precipitate us into the sun; and if it is indeed a ball of fire, and they should happen to have plenty of brimstone there, then we should all go bodily to the theological hell; and just in proportion as these forces varied from an equilibrium would the oscillations and irregularities of our planet be. Now, what would be true of unequal action here, has been true of the centrifugal and the centripetal; the masculine and the feminine forces of the political world. Man is organized the provider, the accumulator, the father of the family; the mother takes care of what is provided, watches over the little ones, and is careful that his accumulative power does not generate into a love of gain for its own sake, thus encroaching upon their rights, their higher interests.

But suppose man undertakes to do both; to act as father and mother too? True, the mother may influence the children what she can, but she has no power to enforce;

and even her influence must be used to sustain *his* ideas of things; not *hers*, for he is the ruler. She can only act, when allowed to act at all, under his direction; he makes all the laws, gives every specific regulation for parlor, kitchen, nursery and school room, and, in the meantime, must provide for all, must earn the means of support. Do you not suppose, under such conditions, that one department or the other must suffer; and would it not naturally be the one belonging to woman?

Now, this is precisely what is done in the national family, in the national house keeping. Man is not only the accumulator here,—he not only makes laws to protect industrial pursuits, and bring national glory; enforcing them to secure both; but he legislates for every department—for wives and little ones, for the poor and needy, both mentally and physically; and is it any wonder that in the department peculiarly his own he flies off in a straight line toward the, to him, heaven of wealth; forgetting, the while, to exercise the tender, the maternal, the central power of love? Is it any wonder that the little ones of the nation, the wronged, the suffering, the weakly erring, are crushed; are left to starve and freeze?

The wonder is that they are as well cared for as they are. The wonder is that man does as well as he does under the circumstances. Still, this does not do away with the fact, that we as a nation are motherless; or, rather, that our mother is but a servant; a petted one, to be sure, but none the less a servant; is forbidden to act, is unrepresented, is not one of the firm, and man, in trying to be father and mother, too; in trying to do the work

of both, has done both poorly, but the maternal part the most poorly.

The fact, then, that woman's work is different from man's, so far from being an argument against her having the right of suffrage, is one of the strongest in its favor. We want woman's motherly tenderness, not merely as an influence to plead with, but as a power to restrain; to command man's love of gain to hold, when it would walk over the weak and defenceless to the accomplishment of its object. I know it is said that woman loves to spend what man earns; to spend it lavishly, irrespective of consequences, and it is too often true; but not so often as he would have us believe. This outcry is as often caused by wounded love of gain on his part, as by prodigality on hers, and when she does go to excess it is generally caused by undue restraint in other directions.

Woman must do something with her faculties; her powers must find vent somewhere, and this is the only method left her whereby she can restrain man's inordinate love of gain, that is gain for the sake of possession, irrespective of use. Blindly, it is true, yet really she thus becomes one of nature's dissolvents to the hardness that his work has a tendency to create. Nature is a true mother, and if prevented from doing the best thing, she is sure to do the very best that she can; and even lavish scattering is better than unprincipled accumulation.

No need to repeat the assertion that there are ways enough for woman's spare energies. I have told you already that she is tired of lifting up for man to knock down again; and, besides, she loves to enjoy as well as

he, and her acute sensibilities are too severely taxed in beholding so much misery with only the chance to alleviate, and hardly that. Give her the power to work to some purpose, and then see.

There is another objection, one that is hardly worth noticing, but since it is sometimes made I will not pass it by. I have been amused when I have heard woman object to those little attentions that man so readily bestows upon her, claiming that they were given as an equivalent for the rights of which we are deprived; but when a man says that if woman has the ballot she should be subject to military duty, should be made to hold the plough, drive stage, build railroads, etc., etc.—when a man makes the fact that woman has not the strength for such work equal with himself, a reason why she should not be his equal before the law, he gives cause for such an accusation.

There are thousands of men who do not perform one-half the physical labor that many women do; still, they vote, while the latter do not, are not allowed to—not because they are weak, but because they are women. It is mind, intellect, heart, culture, that should decide this question, and if we had more of these at the ballot-box we should have less need for bullets, and less need for bullet-headed people; people whose brains are so opaque that they prize themselves in exact proportion to its lack of development. We have many women who write books, edit papers, etc., and do their work well, too; women who have no families to neglect, and if they had, would not neglect them; but when such ask for the ballot, some ignorant boor of a man, who may be able to read what

she writes—and he may not—such an one will stick his thumbs into the armholes of his vest, straighten himself back and say “Oh, yes, let her vote; let her be a man if she wants to.”

Woman, in the first place, does not wish to be man, nor to do man's work, but only her own; but she desires the privilege of deciding for herself what that work is; and, in the second place, she has too much sense to think that she can be successful where he has so signally failed, to-wit: in trying to do the work of both; and, further, the man who measures himself by his physical strength instead of his mind, such a man demonstrates thereby his total unfitness for so sacred a trust as that of the ballot.

Again, he who makes the mistake of supposing the little attentions that man bestows upon woman as such, are the price of the ballot, are the compensation made in virtue of its being withheld from her, and that if she has the latter, the former must be withdrawn, such a man does not understand his own nature, much less woman's. When I have heard such an accusation brought forward by my own sex, I have felt like defending my brother from it; but I find that there are some who call themselves *men* who need defending from themselves, who need to be shown that the masculine nature is nobler than they suppose. It is not so, my brothers. You are not so meanly selfish as to try to cover up a wrong by flattering attentions bestowed in the stead of rights willfully withheld.

No, indeed! These attentions are the spontaneous tributes that *civilized* man pays to woman in virtue of her motherhood. It is because she is the mother of all

beings. These are among the natural compensations for the pangs of maternity, and the sufferings consequent upon her possessing an organization fitting her to become such.

Nature gives her own compensations by making the rightful action of any faculty a pleasure, and man would lose as much in withholding these attentions, in being deprived of the opportunity of bestowing them, as we should. I acknowledge their value; I should not like to be deprived of them; but, at the same time, claim that they are reflex blessings.

No, no; don't spite yourselves for the sake of spiting us; don't threaten to withdraw your attentions and leave us to ourselves; continue to call us angels, if you like, but, in the meantime, don't clip our wings; don't bind us down lest freedom, equal rights, should change us into brutes, or something worse; but rather give us all the power that human angels can possess, that we may help you to make earth like unto heaven; help you to make it fit for angels to dwell in.

Yes, you would lose equally with us in throwing us back upon ourselves, by forcing us into the coarser avocations of life, and the generations of the future would lose immeasurably more. Among savages, where physical strength is the measure of excellence, nature intimates the true mode of obtaining it. Man for the chase, and hard physical labor for woman; fleetness and strength combined, but where is the God-like mind? Cultivate him, if you will, but the savage is a savage still.

"And is not strength desirable?" you ask. Health is;

but the healthiest persons are not always the strongest. The delicate workmanship of a lady's watch is far inferior in actual strength of parts to the mammoth town clock; still, it may be more perfect, may run truer and longer than the other. The greater the development of mind the less need of physical strength, but the greater need of health to sustain the harmonious action of the mind; but excessive physical labor imposed upon the mother will deteriorate the child either in mind or body; perhaps in both.

The harmonious, and of course happy, exercise of all of woman's powers, both of mind and body, produce the best results in her highest work, that of maternity; and in this respect the nation loses in the statesmanship of her sons when the mother is allowed no part in national affairs; is taught to look upon political power as something unworthy of her notice, for she transmits only passively, only in a less degree, those powers that are not active within herself.

Is it to be wondered at that we have political intrigue instead of political honor, when we remember the unerring action of this law? Mother-love is stronger than all others; the strongest feelings of the mother are transmitted to the child, and that through the action of her own heart's blood entering into, and forming its very being, and if she feels that politics is something that is calculated to degrade, her sons will be very apt to make it such.

"But woman does not desire the elective franchise," says another. Well, suppose she does not, what then?

Will she be obliged to vote if she has it? If I do not wish to leave my room, shall that be a good and sufficient reason for having the door locked and the key put in the keeping of another to keep me from going out? But some women do want this right, and all will when they see that there is, or should be, a feminine side to politics; when they see that there is woman's work there. She has been accustomed to look upon politics as it is, and not as it should be; and, being woman and not man, and true to her womanhood, she necessarily shrinks from man's work. It is the feminine nature, that nature which man is afraid to trust, asserting itself.

I was amused, as well as instructed, by the course taken not long since by a Minnesota lady who does not believe in woman's voting. There was an object that she wished to have accomplished, and she went to work with her influence, and her round-about way of using it was really worth noting. She said that "she believed in woman's rights; not that they should sit bold-faced in public assemblies; she would rather rock the cradle"—bless her woman's heart for that—"but she did think that when a woman worked hard to make a garden, she, instead of some neighbor's long nosed hog, had a right to it."

She said this through the columns of the county paper, and she promised the editor the largest head of cabbage she could raise, some choice flowers, and I have forgotten how many other nice things, if he would use his influence with the voters of the county to induce them to pass a law making it obligatory upon every one—I was going to say every man, but women sometimes own hogs, if they

don't vote—she urged the importance of a law that should oblige everyone to shut up their hogs. A very good law, by the way; but it would certainly have taken less time to vote than to write the article in question, to say nothing of raising the cabbage, flowers, etc.; and, further, she would have made herself far less conspicuous quietly casting a vote, than in appealing to the public through the press.

Another lady, one whose white hairs made her venerable, came to me at the close of a lecture on another subject than this, and said, "The Lord sent you here." "I suppose the most of the people think the devil sent me," I replied, and so she would have thought a few years previous; but, though liberal here, she was still conservative in reference to the question of suffrage. She said that she would not vote if she had the right—that woman had no business with questions of government.

"Oh, yes, you would vote," said I.

"Indeed, I would not."

"Ah, but you would," I replied.

"No I would not; there is nothing that could induce me to," was her reiterated assertion.

"Yes you would vote, madam," I continued, "and I can show you that you would. It is only just now that I heard you mourning over the condition of things in your little town since the railroad came through; saloons springing up on every hand, and your youth contracting habits that lead to degradation and misery. Now, if the question was to be decided by the ballot as to the continuation of these saloons, and you knew that by voting

you could so decide the matter as to shut them up, you would do it."

The old lady drew a long breath and faltered out, "Well, I don't know but I would, in that case." And there spoke the true woman; no desire to fill man's place, or to do his work; but when the moral welfare of the young was involved; when man's love of gain spread their pathway with snares, then the maternal, the loving, protecting instincts respond readily.

If man wishes to legislate for the establishment of railroads, make appropriations for bridging rivers, or tunneling mountains; for the peaceable and just acquisition of territory, for national honor and prosperity, why, she does not care. She will not interfere with him, unless, in his God-appointed work of provider, of sustainer, he forgets the central law of love; but if she sees him flying off in a tangent toward the accomplishment of his object, crushing that which lies in his path, then, with her mother love for humanity, she will check and bring him around in the beautiful circle of a just equilibrium. True, she would be pretty sure to object to the appropriation of thousands of dollars to be burned up in powder at a fourth of July celebration, or to be drunk up in choice liquors in honor of some distinguished foreigner, or of some home celebrity, even till the participators made themselves more like brutes than men. Woman would be very likely to object to having the public funds wasted thus, just so long as there were widows and orphans who needed assistance, even as she would object to having the money that should buy her children's bread spent in making their father

drunk; woman would do this, and some men would count it a very great interference with their *rights*, but I opine that the community would be none the worse for it.

"But it is contrary to the genius of the christian religion," says another, flying, like those of old, to the horns of the altar as a last resort. "The Bible defines woman's position, and what is the use of saying anything further on the subject?"

If the Bible, if the genius of christian religion contradict the known laws of nature, they must be set aside, that is all. But are the rights of woman really contrary to the genius of christian religion, or only to man's interpretation thereof? To the latter, of course; for, "let God be true, though every *man* liar."

Religion, like all things else, must be both masculine and feminine to be complete. It must be this, or be an anomaly in the order of the universe.

We have had only the masculine side, as yet, and true to the law of his nature he has gone off in a tangent; has gone to the extreme here as elsewhere. Woman, in the order of nature, has been found worthy to be the mother of prophets and apostles, and shall she be counted unworthy to stand beside her son as an equal; unworthy to become the channel of inspiration as well as they? I know Paul says that man is the head of the woman; that she must be subject to him, even as the church is subject to Christ; that is, married women must, and if all men were Christ-like this might do.

If man is indeed the head of the woman, then women are headless, and men are bodyless before marriage. It

is a common saying that, "Man and wife are one," but if so, it is evident that man is that ONE and the woman *nothing*; for, politically speaking, and indeed in law generally, a man is as much of a man before marrying as after, and as much so after the death of his wife as before; and that which becomes no greater has certainly had *nothing* added thereto, and that which becomes no less has had *nothing* taken away therefrom. But even this illustration, even the idea that man is woman's legitimate head, is fatal to non-equality, for the body is just as necessary to human economy as is the head. Shall we wonder, then, that governments should stagger and reel, when they are all head, or so nearly so, that they have bodies that possess only *influence* instead of power.

It seems to me that if a woman had been permitted to take Paul's place, she would hardly have been guilty of the logical solecism that he has, by thus continuing in the new dispensation this distinguishing feature of the old. In the first book of Moses, called Genesis, it is distinctly stated that woman was made subject to man through disobedience, thus plainly showing that it was not so from the beginning; and, if the christian religion is what it claims to be, its work is to reinstate us, to place us back upon the ground upon which we originally stood.

Why then is it, after so much praying for the incoming kingdom of righteousness, that woman is still held in subjection; still under tutors and governors, differing in no wise from a servant? It seems to me that she has about outgrown her probationary stage, and this brings me back to the point from which I started, to-wit: that

we are in an age of investigation, of criticism, of analysis; and, I might add, of experiment.

“We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime.”

Mankind have talked about and prayed for the redemption of the race long enough, and now they are going to work for it; and, to this end, they will leave no means untried that brings with it a promise of success. Neither will they long continue the use of that which has hitherto failed, no matter how antiquated, nor how high its claims. Deeds, not words; facts, not claims, is the watchword of to-day, and under this watchword the causes of failure will be sought for and found, and if within the reach of remedies, the remedies will be applied; otherwise, useless antiquity, however hoary, however sacred it may have been deemed, will be cast aside.

The son of man is in the judgment seat, but the daughter of woman must take her place there too, ere the scales of justice will be evenly balanced.

“Cast your bread upon the waters, and it shall return unto you after many days.”

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