

WOMAN'S WEEK IN WASHINGTON.

For several days prior to the opening of the intellectual carnival, at the nation's capital, in which press, pulpit, people and congress have freely participated, there had been a noted gathering of the feminine clans. They came from all parts of the union and from over the Atlantic seas. There were tall women and short; old women and young; ugly ones and handsome ones; wise ones and silly ones; fashionably attired and oddly arrayed ones. There were women of the colored race who once were slaves, and women from the sunny southland who were their former mistresses; women from the rock-ribbed shores of New England; from the alluvial valleys of the Mississippi; from the prairie uplands of Kansas, Nebraska and the two Dakotas; from the Rocky mountain states of Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Nevada; from the territories of Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona; from the sundown seas of the Pacific slope, "where rolls the Oregon;" from British America; from the grandmother-land of Hispaniola; from the Indian territory of our own country; from "farthest India;" from Australia, and from the Cuban isles. There were women of every imaginable shade of religious and political belief, representing every ism under the sun in their individual capacity, but all united under the banners of the National Council of Women and the National American Woman Suffrage Association of the United States, to devise ways and means to secure to themselves and their successors the divine blessings of such governmental power as can only be obtained in any country "through the consent of the governed." The pious rant which discolors so many weaker gatherings of women, where the orthodox clergy are supposed to rule, was almost wholly absent here, though there was through all a strong, sensible display of religious sentiment, based upon the "fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man."

The central figure of the Woman's Council was its president, Frances E. Willard, of whom let whatever may be said in derogation of her methods or beliefs by the vast voting multitudes, as well as the great hosts of women who are not prohibitionists, there is no denying that she has no superior as an organizer and no peer in the great work of leading the women of orthodox churches toward a higher, grander and exceedingly broader plane of thought than the servile, meek and mock-heroic spirit peculiar to the plane in which she found them. Her smart, womanly and intensely "taking" way of saying the right thing on the spur of the instant keeps her audiences on the alert, and her co-workers in gay, good humor, and is inimitable. For instance this: A lady rose in the body of the house when a proposition to enlist the various churches in the cause of freedom for women was being discussed and said, "I am an Episcopalian, and this rule is not in conformity with the church canon. What can I do?" "Melt your canon and mold it into a bell!" was the quick and sweet retort, which convulsed the house with repeated bursts of laughter. The meetings were held at Albaugh's grand opera house, the finest in the city, but not so fine as our Marquam grand at Portland.

Among the speakers at the council were many who also had unlimited time on the programme at the woman suffrage meetings, showing that women are not superior to men; that they are not above favoritism; that they are not earning their right to the ballot by reason of extra "goodness," but are proving that, among themselves, as among their brothers, eternal vigilance always is to be the price of liberty. I am exceedingly happy to chronicle this fact, since many of my gentleman readers openly oppose the enfranchisement of women because of our alleged excessive "goodness"—an imaginary attribute of our sex existing only in their own fancy, as they would speedily learn if they could put themselves in women's place for a little while and hear some of the uncomplimentary earnestness we indulge about each other when men are not supposed to be listening.

The opening address of the council by Miss Willard was a practical, thoughtful and thoroughly digested symposium of a proposed plan of practical work for the future. She suggests the organization of council centers in every county of the different states, with a higher body composed of delegates from local centers, to meet at the state capitals in two houses—an upper and lower one—like men's legislatures, with a congress also, of two houses, to meet in Washington. This idea, though not new or originating with Miss Willard, seems ready to take definite shape under her touch, inspired, as all woman's movements are at present, by the coming Columbian Exposition at Chicago, where the women of the nation, with Mrs. Potter Palmer at their head, are already marshalling their hosts for the continuation of the work which Susan B. Anthony and her coadjutors inaugurated on the Fourth of July, 1876, at the World's Fair in Philadelphia.

It is impossible, in the brief space at my command, to more than mention a few of the leaders of the national council, of whom the chief originator was, of course, its venerable and venerated captain, Susan B. Anthony, who,

when traveling in Europe some years ago, conceived the plan of an international council of women, of which this national council is an auxiliary. The international council held its first great conclave here three years ago, and intended to convene next year in London, but will meet, instead, at the forthcoming Columbian Exposition in Chicago, by international consent, with the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1893.

Mrs. May Wright Sewall, of Indianapolis, and Mrs. Rachael Foster Avery, of Philadelphia, who were Miss Anthony's chiefs of staff in the organization of the international council, are central figures in the national council, and are retained as officers for the ensuing three years, while Frances Willard abdicates the chair for Mrs. Clymer, president of the Sorosis, who will wield the gavel at the next triennial meeting. Among the most notable speakers were Julia Ward Howe, of Boston, Anna Nathan Meyer, of New York, a handsome and highly educated Jewess, and Miss Balmorie, of London, a wholesome, happy and logical woman, whose eloquence in behalf of the laboring classes was at once an inspiration and a surprise. Mary Seymour Howell, of New York, is another highly gifted lecturer, of much more than local fame, and Mesdames Lease and Diggs, of Kansas, whom Senator Ingalls accuses of having beaten him for re-election and of "scalping those they have killed," deserve special mention.

The council adjourned at midnight of Wednesday, and the next morning, February 26, the twenty-third annual convention of the Woman Suffrage Association began its labors, under auspices in no way dimmed by the brilliant display of wit, wisdom, wealth, elegance and eloquence of which its leaders had formed a conspicuous part at the council, augmented after the opening session by Lucy Stone and her venerable husband, Henry B. Blackwell and their charming daughter from Boston, and Mrs. Lide Merrivether, the witty orator from Tennessee, whose speech, entitled the "Silent Seven," was one of the best of the week, and calls for repetition everywhere. As we have hope that this talented southern woman and her patriotic coadjutors, Josephine K. Henry and the Clay sisters of Kentucky, will soon visit the northwest, I will only say of them here that if our people wish to be convulsed with laughter, melted to tears and exalted with patriotism they will hear these women, not once but many times. Then there was Isabella Beecher Hooker, strikingly like her venerable brother, Henry Ward Beecher, whom Oregonians never can forget; Rev. Anna Shaw, the plump, pleasing, vivacious Methodist preacher whom Dr. Houghton may subdue into silence if he can—but everybody knows he can't; Rev. Olympia Brown, of Wisconsin, whose masterly mind goes out in sympathy for the "rights of the American man;" Clara B. Colby, of Nebraska, who brings the *Woman's Tribune* to Washington every winter; Ella Manton Marble, the fashionable head of a young ladies' school for physical training in Washington; Lillie Devereux Blake, of New York—but I've got to chop the names of illustrious women off right here, or there will be no room for men, and it is not the province of the equal rights movement to crowd the men from mention in its conventions, but quite the contrary.

Foremost among these was Henry B. Blackwell, of Boston, whose masterly speech was more than matched by his ready assistance in the formulation and dispatch of resolutions and general parliamentary business, in all of which women are sublimely, if not ridiculously, irregular. Then we had an address by Rev. F. A. Hinckley, of Massachusetts, whose polished utterance was only outranked by his depth of thought; and from Senator J. M. Carey, of Wyoming, whose speech was on "The True Republic," whence he hails, the only really free state in the union, because Wyoming is the only state where men and women enjoy absolutely equal rights. Senator Carey is a large, handsome man, a republican and a patriot, who openly prescribes woman suffrage as a sure specific for his party's ills. And I confess that I now feel doubly ashamed of Washington state's so-called patriots of the republican party, whose cowardice, when carpet-bag judges from the slavery-blighted south had blighted women's ballots there, so tied their tongues while their wives were being bound and gagged and whipped that they failed to utter even an audible remonstrance when the state came in without them. "We'll stay out of the union till doomsday unless our women can come into statehood with us," was the party cry of Wyoming's republican leaders. It was by this they conquered, and in all America there are no other men so proud of their state as they are today. A ringing speech was also given by Major Pickler, member of congress from South Dakota, the only man in his party who ran ahead of his ticket when the woman suffrage amendment was pending last November, and the only man who dared to advocate the principle at the hustings in spite of the protests of the feeble-kneed of all parties. William Lloyd Garrison, the honored son of an illustrious father, and brother-in-law of Henry Villard, was the last of the gentlemen speakers; and to say that he fully sustained the reputation of his family in the grand effort he made