

LETTER FROM HON. JNO. A. COLLINS.

READ BEFORE THE LATE CONVENTION OF THE STATE SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

SAN FRANCISCO, February 5, 1881.

E. F. Heroy, Esq., President Oregon Woman Suffrage Association—Dear Sir: Many thanks for your invitation to be present at your suffrage gathering on the 8th inst.; but that being impossible, permit me to tender to yourself and co-laborers in the great work of human emancipation my felicitations for the results already achieved, the high hopes with which you are inspired of an early victory, and for the noble example you have presented to the friends of woman's political enfranchisement in every State by your unity of sentiment, oneness of purpose, harmony of action, and patient, determined, persevering labors for nearly a decade of years.

Oregon is at the present time, to the friends of equality before the law, the brightest star in the constellation of American States. Multitudes of earnest and anxious friends of the cause that convenes you for the purpose of charting out a plan of action, and for the direction of your forces in the great battle soon to be fought, will watch your deliberations and future movements with a mixed feeling of hope and fear. To the new converts to the principles of Woman Suffrage, the position of the cause in Oregon is very hopeful; but to the elder members of the movement the outlook has its shady aspect. Of the many States from 1868 to the present time, from Kansas to Colorado, including among others Nevada, Vermont and Michigan, which have submitted constitutional amendments for the political enfranchisement of the women of their respective States, each failed to secure the object desired; and with that failure, coupled with the exhaustion incident to a protracted and expensive canvass, discouragement occupying the chair of hope, the weak became disheartened and the active weary, while the strong and self-poised persevered in the good work as opportunity offered; but seeming indifference has held the reins for a lengthy season.

Oregon, however, mounts this dangerous height under more favorable conditions, and her prospects of success are more and better than those of any of her predecessors. With her the sentiment in favor of woman's political emancipation has been a growth, and not a sudden creation, generated by the hope of local party triumph, as in Kansas, or of the eloquence and personal magnetism of a few leading minds, as in Nevada.

Oregon is fortunate indeed in having one of the disfranchised sex as the acknowledged leader of this great reform movement—one whose pluck, patience, perseverance, capacity for territorial locomotion, physical endurance and unselfish devotion to the object of her mission are only equalled by the breadth and grasp of her mind and the marvelous versatility of her genius; one whose every inspiration, sentiment or movement is continuously directed to and permanently focused upon that one grand object, to-wit, the elevation of the race through the political emancipation of her sex; one who has an intuitive perception of the habits of thought and methods of action of the people with whom she has been reared, and is thereby able to skillfully and favorably impress upon their minds the thoughts in favor of freedom that constantly well up in her fruitful soul, either by voice or pen, prose or verse, humorous, fanciful, didactic or logical, as best adapted to subserve the one grand purpose of her high mission; one who can reason and instruct without fatiguing, charm by her romance, and criticize without giving unnecessary pain or offense; one whose varied journeying over many of the States and Territories reminds me of the travels of Saint Paul through Asia Minor with his numerous epistles to the churches, the product of his ceaseless labors, with this advantage in her favor: that Paul neither owned nor controlled a printing press, nor had her railroad and steamboat advantages for personal locomotion, nor her telegraph, telephone or post office facilities for ready correspondence; besides, the spirit of mobocratic violence was greater then and there than now and in Oregon, Jacksonville excepted.

Fortunately for this movement, there is no dearth of great and noble women whose voices and pens and daily lives are everywhere potential for good; and new candidates for popular favor rapidly augment the grand army of women of influence and power. California, in common with most other States, is rich in the moral and intellectual wealth of her women, who take a lively interest in the work of the enfranchisement of their sex; and this State will not lag far behind the lead of her web-footed sister, whose present noble attitude before the people and States of the Federal Union challenges both our pride and admiration.

Governor Perkins, in his annual message, recommended the Legislature of California to abolish the present system of probate robbery of widows and orphans, and of murdering the family estate at that trying and bitter hour when its head has been removed by death, and when all the resources of the estate should be sacredly preserved for the benefit of the bereaved widow and orphans. Eight years since, the lower House of the California Legislature adopted a similar law by a vote, if my memory serves me correctly, of 45 to 13, but the measure failed to reach the Senate in time for action therefor.

One word more in regard to your constitutional amendment, and I will close these hasty pen-

ings, and that is: Your position is both hopeful and dangerous. Many of the representatives of the people will vote for a reference of the question, under strong influence, to the people, who would not, under the influence of party, ecclesiastical or local influence, vote for the measure if there is a prospect of the same becoming a part of the organic law of the State. Your movement now is in a condition to invite the open or secret hostility of the cunning, crafty and unscrupulous of all parties, sects and cliques opposed to the severance of the links of the chain of sex domination. From the present to the day of election, a continuous agitation should be maintained. The State should be thoroughly organized, even to wards in cities and school districts in the pastoral sections, to be under the immediate direction and control of county societies, which should be auxiliary to the State Association. As money is indispensably necessary to successfully carry forward a movement of this magnitude and character, an earnest and systematic effort should be made to raise funds equal to the needs of the occasion, not only from the friends in Oregon, but of those in the several States and Territories of the Federal Union, as your fight now assumes the character and importance of a National movement. To this end a financial committee should be appointed, which should, in an address to the societies and leading friends of Woman Suffrage throughout the Nation, ask for financial co-operation and assistance, and the eloquent women and friends of the movement should be invited to assist you in your conventions and local gatherings; and fail not to have your friends at the political caucuses, primaries and gatherings everywhere in the State, that no schemes in the interest of the opposition can be secretly sprung upon you.

With an earnest hope that your efforts and labors will crown your movement with victory, I am  
Yours fraternally, in haste,  
JNO. A. COLLINS.

SWEET THING IN GIRLS.

There is an idea common among young girls which ought to be combatted by every intelligent woman; it is that in becoming a house-keeper, and especially if called upon to do the greater part of the work, she might just as well be uneducated; that her acquirements at school, if not unfitting her for it, are of no value. If this were true, it would indeed be lamentable; but it is not true. Because we can point to notable instances of educated women who are untidy and disorderly is no proof of the proposition. So far as my own observation goes—and I have kept my eyes open for several years—I have found that those women who have had the benefit of a thorough education are the best house-keepers. A woman who has been taught accuracy by a course in chemistry, who has had her eyes enlightened by the study and practice of painting, who has learned the necessity of precision by long hours at the piano, will make her house the richer and the better ordered for this training. If she brings to her work the right spirit, she is certain to find a use for all that she has ever learned, besides having the aid which her habits of order and perseverance will constantly give her. The coming house-keeper ought to be a very happy woman; she will have so much to think about when her hands are busy with work which does not demand much direction. She will not be disturbed about so many things as her mother was; moths and beetles will mean more to her than to the old-time house-keeper, to whom everything that crawled or flew was a "bug," an object of detestation, to be stepped on or put into the stove as quickly as possible. Our modern wise woman knows better; she quietly brings out her bottle of benzine or ether, a paste-board box, captures the insect, puts him to sleep, and soon has a collection which, when mounted and put in a simple frame, is a handsome ornament for her home. If it was ever true that a little learning is a dangerous thing for a woman, that day has passed.—The House-keeper.

MARRIAGE CONTRACTS.—Civil marriage is becoming more common in New York, not only among recently arrived immigrants, who are accustomed to it in Europe, but among Americans. To step up to the Mayor's office and settle the matter in a few minutes costs nothing for white dresses, veils, gloves, flowers, presents and fees. There is no necessity for bridesmaids and groomsmen, or for a clergyman, and there is a reliable public record kept, which is not always secured by marrying before a minister. In any case, it is the mutual consent of two persons legally entitled to wed which constitutes the marriage, and a ceremony is wisely instituted by law to provide evidence of that consent. The true course to be pursued in this most important matter is that common in European countries; to have the same law of marriage for the whole nation, and local civil officers competent to decide on the legal capacity of the parties to contract marriage, and to keep a public record of each marriage, duly attested. When this most necessary civil contract has been completed, the parties, having their certificate, can be married, without any further investigation, by priest, minister or rabbi, as they may see fit, and with all the ceremonies, festivities and expense they may desire.—N. Y. Witness.

POETRY.—We are occasionally consulted on the subject of poetry. Not long since, some "youth to fortune and to fame unknown," but who will not be a stranger to either after this, we trust, communicated his design of composing an ode "To the Ocean," commencing, "Prodigious Dampness," and requested our opinion of the expression. We reply that, for a maiden effort, "Prodigious Dampness" is good; but would not it be a happy idea to carry out the personification, beginning each verse after the same fashion? Thus, for the first, you have "Prodigious Dampness;" then for the second, say "Stupendous Moisture;" for the third, "Gigantic Mildew;" for the fourth, "Incalculable Pickle;" for the fifth, "Tremendous Slop;" for the sixth, "Enormous Suds;" for the seventh, "Colossal Puddle;" for the eighth, "Immensity of Sweat;" and so on to the end of the chapter. And long may its author wave.—Morrow's Monthly.

"Sing me the old songs," pleads a poet. About four hours' warbling of "Old Dan Tucker" and "Doo-Dee" would cure him, perhaps.

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