

WOMEN WHO DISSAGREE.

Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women.

The Illinois association opposed to the extension of suffrage to women believes that in commencing organized anti-suffrage work it is proper to give to the public the reasons for so doing. We publish one of the arguments in opposition sent out by the association:

TO THE HON. HENRY W. BLAIR, U. S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE:—

DEAR SIR,—During the last week of the last session of Congress I received, under cover of your own frank, a copy of your Report of the Select Committee on Woman Suffrage, delivered to the Senate of the United States, December 8, 1886. In it you make a lengthy quotation from a pamphlet of mine, entitled "Letters from a Chimney Corner." It appears to me that in the argument drawn from this quotation you mistake utterly the point at issue, and it is my purpose in this letter to direct your attention to this mistake, and to put the argument upon its proper basis. I will also comment on certain other considerations put forth therein.

The quotation referred to is too long for the limits of a letter like this. The argument briefly is, that neither the man nor the woman is individually the representative of the "genus homo," but that, according to nature and revelation, the two united make one, and that to each constituent of that union certain distinct powers and properties belong, each dependent upon the other, in a minor way, for the proper fulfillment. You say, "If upon this account woman is to be denied suffrage, then man equally should be denied the ballot, or his highest and final estate is to be something else than a mere individual."

Now, marriage is that partnership upon which the right order of society and the right perpetuation of the species depends. The question is, whether each partner shall keep to that line of labor which Nature has marked out, or whether of woman shall be demanded, not only her own share of the labor, but also a large part of that which belongs to man. For, let us notice, that while it may be granted that woman has the physical capacity to cast a ballot, man has not the physical capacity to bear and nourish children. Nature has made it forever impossible that he should perform that office. If, therefore, he demands of her that she shall participate in those external and general duties, such as labor for the support of the home and for the direction of the State, which his natural constitution, physical and intellectual, fit him for, while he cannot by any possibility relieve her of those most necessary offices and duties which Nature demands of her, he commits a palpable and monstrous injustice.

Nor does it help the matter to say, as you do, that, because woman's nature is purer and nobler than man's, the state would be benefited by her participation in political affairs of the state according to the highest and best ideas of the race, that is, of both men and women, will you permit me respectfully to inquire what proper and adequate share of the world's work they can perform? What is their natural place in the order of society? Are they mere heavers of the wood and drawers of the water? They cannot bear citizens; they cannot care for them in infancy and rear them to manhood. If they cannot govern them with wisdom or justice when they are produced ready made to their hands, what is their reason for being? When a man stands up in the United States Senate and makes such a statement as that, in regard to the men of this republic, it appears to me that he compromises his own self-respect, and the respect due to the dignified and honorable body to which he has been elevated.

You say that you have only proposed the measure because women have asked you to do it. The same plea was made by your great progenitor in the Garden of Eden; but it did not avail him. Moreover, in the case of Adam, it was true. In the present instance the plea contains but the minimum of truth. There are fifteen millions of women in this country (I quote your own statistics) of voting age. Will you kindly inform us what proportion of that fifteen millions you have heard from? You say that these women are being governed without their consent. Is it possible that you can sincerely believe that fifteen millions of American women could be governed without their consent? Do you not rather feel assured that if a bare majority of that number did not consent, for what appears to them and sufficient reasons, to be governed by indirect rather than direct representations, there would be a revolution within twenty-four hours? With every right of agitation at their command which man possesses—free speech, free assembly, the right of petition, a press ever ready to disseminate their views, and many privileges of courtesy besides, that men lay no claim to—what power would withstand the moral force of any demand which these fifteen millions should unitedly make?

With what show of reason do you compare free-born American women to the degraded and ignorant slaves on Southern plantations, and speak of men as their masters? As a matter of fact the power of men over women is not greater than that of women over men. Nature lays the infant man a helpless creature in the lap of his mother. He is in her

power for life or for death, and for the first ten or fifteen years of his existence, and that during the forming and determining period of his career, a period, too, in which he is answerable to no other law than that of his home, her power over him, physical, intellectual, and moral, is so nearly supreme that no power which he can arrogate over her in later years can overbalance it. Under ordinary circumstances the faithful, intelligent mother may make of her son, in all the essentials of manners and morals, whatsoever she will. If American men were today the narrow-minded, tyrannical, vicious creatures they are charged with being by the woman suffragists, unaffiliated to be legislators for the whole nation, it could only be because their mothers misunderstood or neglected the opportunities which Nature puts into their hands. Such a charge is a tremendous indictment against the motherhood of the nation, and, if it could be sustained, ought of itself to bar women from all legislative functions until they can better fulfill that which Nature demands of them in child-bearing and rearing. Moreover, it is the function of slaves to labor; but it is the nation's pride and boast that in no other country that the sun shines on are there so many homes supported by the loyal and untiring industry of men, where women are kept in ease and comfort, in order that they may give their time to the higher duties of rearing children and planning and carrying on enterprises of charity, philanthropy, and reform; and irresistible power in American social and political life. Plainly, if any portion of the American people are slaves, it is not the women.

But let us return to the question of the physical adaptability of women to the duties of voters. If women vote, they must also hold office and assume the working duties incident to political campaigns. It appears from the published record of your life that you commenced your political career at about the age of thirty. For the next ten or fifteen years you were actively in politics. Now, will you tell me if you think it would have been convenient or agreeable during those years, when you were laying the foundations of your political success, to have been also engaged in bearing and rearing a family? Could you have done what you found it necessary to do politically, and at the same time attended properly to your duties as wife and mother? You will say that the very suggestion is indelicate, and I agree with you, but the fault is in the situation as supposed by you. The duties and offices of motherhood are all sweet, and pure, and holy when kept within the sacred precincts of the home. Brought out into the garish light of publicity, what do they become?

Nor will it avail you to say that some part of these offices may be delegated to servants. There are too many mothers of that sort in the country now; no political measure can be a wise one which tends to increase their number.

You say in your Report that there are many women who are not wives and mothers. Very true, and when women vote and hold office, there will be more of them. A true regard for the best interests of society demands that their number shall be reduced by all natural and reasonable means; but when political rewards are offered as the price of services in public life, do you not believe that many, and those not of the weak and ignorant, but of the more gifted and intellectual, will be tempted to forgo marriage and motherhood for the sake of winning them? Woe betide the land which thus offers its political trusts as premiums for childless women! The morals of society are corrupt enough now. What do you suppose they will become when not to be married, not to be a mother, is the prerequisite for a woman's success in a choice and tempting career? History gives abundant evidence that women are not naturally of purer instincts or more capable of self-control than men. It is only as they are subject to men as in heathen countries, or yield themselves to the elevating and purifying influence, of Christian teaching concerning marriage and the home, that they rise to a higher moral level. Emancipated from these restraints, the intensity of their nature often betrays them into surpassing depths of depravity. I speak advisedly, therefore, and in the light of thirty years' profound and prayerful study of social problems, when I say that the direct tendency of woman suffrage would be to form a class of women such as held high court in Greece in the days preceding its downfall; women brilliant and intellectual, but wholly wanting in that steadfast faith and abiding virtue which characterize the Anglo-Saxon ideal of womanhood. I may say the Christian ideal as well—the wife and mother. Are American men prepared to relegate the wives and mothers of this republic to a secondary and subservient place, and share the political leadership of this great and free country with an oligarchy of Aspasias?

You say that the passage of the proposed resolution would not commit any person to the support of woman suffrage in the end. But what does it do if passed by both houses? It sends the discussion of this question, backed by the authority of Congress, into every State of this Union. A score or two of the professional advocates of woman suffrage will beat up the entire territory, and, by their noisy persistence, will necessitate either

that women shall take the field upon the other side, or else let the question go by default. Home-loving women—the women who stay in their homes and fulfill the duties of their vocation, and these women are in the great majority in all our States and Territories—have little taste for public strife, and few gifts with which to win battles in the public arena. Still, if needs must, they can and will defend their homes; but, believe me, they will not exonerate from blame those legislators who, by the advocacy of measures like this which you propose, have thrust the hard necessity upon them.

Do you ask me, then, what shall men do, in regard to this cry, which is coming up all over the land, for purer politics, a worthier conduct of affairs? Men know very well what they ought to do about it. They ought to live daily and hourly in the fear of God and for the honor of good women. They ought steadfastly to practise those principles of purity, honor, uprightness, and patriotism which it is the duty of every Christian home to inculcate. It is very true that the duty is now too often imperfectly performed in our homes; but, believe me, the remedy for this evil does not lie in the direction of woman suffrage. It is by inciting and helping woman to the more faithful discharge of her own duties that legislators will honor her far more than by dragging her out of the quiet of her own domain, and setting her to perform their neglected and unfulfilled tasks.

Instead of fifteen millions of women voters vainly trying to do the work which God demands of men, there should be fifteen millions of happy homes in this broad, fair land; homes supported by the fathers' labor, made to glow with heaven's own light by the mothers' tender love and care; homes where children are being reared who shall become just and upright men, and faithful, conscientious women where those virtues are being taught which are the only enduring bulwarks of a free, republican government. It is to build up such homes, not to break down their walls, and quench the light upon their hearthstones, that legislation ought to be directed.

There are others and weightier arguments against woman suffrage, but these are such as are suggested by the text of your Report. I commend them to your earnest consideration before you can again address the United States Senate as the Champion of Woman.

Very respectfully yours,
CAROLINE F. CORBIN,
Author of "Letters from a Chimney Corner."

The Craze for "Dozing."

There is a great and growing craze in this country for the taking of drugs, especially drugs whose nature and effects are to the taker wholly unknown.

A man or a woman has a qualm. Instead of asking himself, "What have I eaten? What have I drunk? Have I been sitting in a draught?" he or she—he no less than she—casts about for some drug which he or she has heard about or read about, no one knows where. And having found one with a sufficiently friendly name, odor or taste, he or she pours it into his or her helpless interior and with a sublime faith and courage awaits the results.

Usually the drug is harmless and passes ineffectually away, leaving nature free to pursue its task of curing the cause of the qualm. But only too often the drug, worthless for curing the disorder at which it was aimed, strikes and injures some other part of the delicate internal economy.

Of course it would be a waste of words to ask people to take care of their health, to defend their stomachs against their greedy palates, to exercise as much prudence in the care of their bodies as they exercise in the care of their horses, dogs or birds. But is it equally useless to ask them to let the drug bottles alone after they have made themselves ill by over-eating or the other common imprudences, and to give nature a fair chance to nurse the injured part back to health?—N. Y. World.

Women and Practical Jokes.

That species of humor sometimes described as "rollicking," which men complain that women cannot see, is often more or less in the nature of a practical joke; that is to say, it lies in the matter rather than in the manner. It appears, for instance, in much (by no means all) of the humor of "Pickwick," or in the farcical situations on which the dramatists of the restoration rely so largely, strong as they are also in humor of a different kind. The point, if we must say so, is not unfrequently exhibited in a more or less undignified position. It may be freely and at once conceded that women are not amused by humor of this class. They think it silly undignified and often coarse; and, so far as the last indictment is concerned, the practical jokes that amuse a boy are often enough not only coarse, but cruel, and it may very well be that a woman refrains from laughing at them, not so much because her perceptions are dull in one direction as because they are keen in another. To see a human being made a fool of is too painful to be amusing. Moreover, she often finds that the joke consists of some time-honored criticism against her own sex, supported rather by observation, and if she has any spirit she naturally resents it.

It is a curious evidence of the strength of custom, by the bye, this naivete with which women are expected to join in jokes against themselves "by men," as has been well said in a different connection, "incapable of deliberate insult." But because a woman does not laugh it does not always follow that she does not see what she is supposed to laugh at. A brother once complained of his sister that she could not see a joke, and the criticism was, of course, duly conveyed to her. "No, I don't see any joke," was the reply. "There isn't any joke. I see what amuses him, but really you don't expect me to laugh at that?"

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New Banjo With a Magnet.

The door of the saloon opened and two men pushed in a tall, bulky arrangement covered with canvas.

"It doesn't look like a coffin a little bit," said one of the steady company, "or I'd think I had 'em again."

The two men pushed the thing up beside one of those automatic nickel-in-the-slot banjos that make life melodious nowadays. The patrons of the place kept up a running fire of comment, but the men made no reply. Finally they took off the canvas, and, behold, it was another banjo exactly like the other.

"What's the matter with the old one?" asked the barkeeper. "Worn out?"

"No," said one of the men, "but some of the loafers that hang out here have been feeding the old machine iron washers. And it don't go no more, see?"

"Is that so?" said the barkeeper with ready sympathy. "That ain't right."

"Well, iron washers are no good with this machine," said the man. "It's got a magnet in it that just clamps on to everything but nickels." Here the man took from his pocket a piece of iron just the size and thickness of a nickel and held it up.

"Here's one of the washers some of your customers pained off on the unsuspectin' old machine. Just watch it." He dropped it in the slot, but never a move did the claws of the banjo make. Then he put a nickel in the slot and the machine began to grind out a rag-time waltz. Whereupon the man grinned superior and covered up the old one, and he and his companion pushed it out the door.

"Let this be a warning to you, gentlemen," said the barkeeper, "that there ain't no good in ringin' a cold deck in on anybody, not even a slot machine. Gustave, git the wire and we'll hit her up a bit."

Thereupon one of the waiters produced from its hiding place a long, thin, straight wire, and stuck it in the slot. And the new machine that was proof against iron washers struck up with great gusto, "Oh, I Don't Know; You Ain't So Warm."

WHEN it is remembered that the body is made up very largely of water, it will readily be understood how important to health is a constant supply of this fluid. Many people have the idea that to drink water in any amount beyond that which is actually necessary to quench thirst is injurious, and acting on this belief they drink as little as possible. The notion, however, is wide of the truth. Drinking freely of pure water is a most efficacious means not only of preserving health, but often of restoring it when falling. All the tissues of the body need water, and water in abundance is necessary also for the proper performance of every vital function. Cleanliness of the tissue within the body is as necessary to health and comfort as cleanliness of the skin, and water tends to ensure the one as truly as it does the other. These waste materials are frequently poisonous, and many a headache, many rheumatic pains and many a sleepless night are due solely to the circulation in the blood, or deposit in the tissues, of these waste materials which can not be got rid of because of an insufficient supply of water.

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