

way? Because, whenever the experiment has been tried of putting Esquimaux dogs into a single combined harness, the trouble was, they turned around and ate each other up.

That is the trouble with reformers. If you try to make them think alike and act alike, destruction follows. Each for himself, each approaching his movement in his own way, and we have strength. I myself have tested the ability of the woman suffrage reformers to recognize this individuality of opinion; and those who know the recent history of this reform know it is a proof of the catholicity of this meeting that I have been invited to stand here among the speakers.

I believe myself that the woman suffrage reform has many points of view, and that in some points of view it is almost perilous to approach it. I believe that we never can safely rest the enfranchisement of any large number of people upon any attempt to predict with precision the specific or even the general tendency of the votes which they shall cast. I dread all prediction of that kind for the woman suffrage movement. I rejoiced to hear the first speaker [Mrs. Haggart] say this evening that if she knew that every bad woman in the country would be first at the polls, she still should advocate woman suffrage just the same.

If it were only mere policy, if it takes its chance of success only on the chance of a prediction, it is unsafe. It must rest on a principle to establish its permanent work and value.

I dare say that in many respects woman's voting would afford a better class of voters than the voters we have now, but I do not wish to enfranchise her for this reason. It might be a question then how long she would stay a better class after she had voted. I knew a man once who advocated woman suffrage on the ground that voting was necessarily

demoralizing; that we had had men voting for a great while and they had brought the country to the verge of ruin; that women would unquestionably, in the course of fifty years, if enfranchised do the same thing, but that there would be fifty years in the meanwhile and that the country would last his time, which was all he cared for.

I distrust that line of argument. How do we know, it might be said, how much of the present virtue of women comes from the absence of voting? The argument proves to my mind too much. I believe that the majority of women would vote well. So we believed when we enfranchised the blacks, that the majority of them would vote well. But the thing we absolutely knew was and the only thing we knew, that whether they would vote well for the country or not the difference between their having the ballot and not having it meant for them freedom or slavery, and it was for that reason that we enfranchised them.

We took the chances of all the rest. Have they voted well? It is hard to say. They half ruined South Carolina financially. We know that. They voted against prohibition in Texas. We know that. That they would vote against civil service reform is exceedingly probable if they once knew clearly enough what it was. What we know is that because we enfranchised them they are still free, and that is enough for us to know. That stamps success upon their enfranchisement, although a thousand Senator Ingallses rise with their little voices at this late hour to protest against it and say it was a mistake.

So it is in regard to women. I believe and hope that the majority of women would vote as my friend, Mrs. Howe, thinks, for peace. But I know on the other hand that a Southern statesman said to me that the war was prolonged

two years after the men would have given up, because the women of the South would not let them. That same man told me that in his opinion the practice of duelling at the South was sustained to this day not by the voices of the men but of the women.

Thus, while I believe that the vast majority of women would throw their influence for peace, I yet know the possibilities of a minority and I do not wish to rest their enfranchisement on that ground. I believe that the great majority of women would vote for honest government if they only understood it, if they would study it so as to understand it; but I cannot forget that all the ingenuity of Wall Street has never devised so perfectly ingenious and successful an instrument of fraud as the Woman's Bank of Boston, entirely the product of a woman's brain; and I do not wish to rest the demand for suffrage on the superior honesty of women.

I believe that women would be the custodians of public property, as they are the custodians of private property. You know that almost every young married man if he succeeds in making both ends meet on his limited income at the end of the first year owes it to his wife; and commonly ends in confessing that he lived more economically the first year of his marriage than the last year of his bachelorhood.

We may claim therefore that women are good, practical custodians of property; and yet I cannot forget that the Association of Collegiate Alumnae has just published from the educated daughter of a member of Congress, a Pennsylvania woman, one of the most determined and desperate pleas in favor of German socialism that I have ever seen in print. And I cannot forget that it was a woman, Louise Michel, who uttered the other day the wish that on the day of the execu-

tion of the Chicago anarchists every court of justice in the world might have dynamite put under it and be exploded forever.

I do not therefore wish to claim woman suffrage on any basis of absolute prediction of what will be. In this I do not represent all of those who are with me. I may belong to a more conservative class of woman suffragists. I am sometimes told I am too conservative. I do not even dare to rest it on the ground as many do that the superior insight of women will make them better judges of public characters and enable them to penetrate more keenly the devices of scoundrels. I willingly believe that women may often have a good eye for a demagogue. The women of Kansas seem to have proved that when they disposed of Senator Ingalls.

But I am one of those who believe that in Massachusetts a service was rendered to the nation when we finally laid General Butler on the shelf; and I am not at all sure that the women of Massachusetts would have done it. I think we did a good thing, irrespective of party, when we put President Cleveland into the presidency, and I have been repeatedly told that if it had been left to women he never would have been chosen.

I do not venture therefore to rest the argument for woman suffrage on the ground that women are a race of perfectly ideal saints, who are to step up to our voting-places and vote a millennium as soon as we enfranchise them. I do not know any speaker for woman suffrage who goes so far as that, though some might go further in that direction than I should. When George Eliot made one of her characters say, "I am not denying that women are foolish; God Almighty made 'em to match the men," I recognize the truth

of it, and I recognize that those women, to match the men, have got to be enfranchised like the rest.

I believe, as I said, that every great extension of the franchise brings its dangers. Has there been a moment since the inauguration of our government that there has not been somebody to declare the failure of universal suffrage among men and say that our voting list was too large already? It is the price we pay for democratic government. We might have recognized it beforehand; indeed, it was recognized beforehand. Fisher Ames in comparing a monarchy and a republic, said: "A monarchy is a fine, well-built ship; it is beautiful to look at; it sails superbly. The difficulty is that sometimes it strikes a rock and then it goes down. But a republic," he said, "is a kind of a great clumsy raft. You can float anywhere on it; it will never sink but your feet are always in the water."

I have no expectation that the admission of women to the ballot will enable us to keep dry shod upon the raft, and I am as sure as I can be of anything in the future that when women are enfranchised they will have some of their own sins to answer for, and not be able to devote themselves entirely to correcting the sins of men.

So surely as you have women statesmen you will have women politicians; you will have women bosses, women wire-pullers, women intriguers. The talent that devised the Woman's Bank will be brought to bear, as far as its power goes, upon the bank of the nation. The power that advocates socialism now in the abstract would advocate it then in the concrete. All this is in the future. It is to be expected. No great extension of the suffrage, and there never was any so great as this, ever failed to bring with it risks and drawbacks on the way; but the result of those risks and

drawbacks is a true republic, the result is a consistent democracy. The result is a nation in which a man can hear the glories of the republic sung, and not blush, as he has to now, at the thought that those boasts are built upon the disfranchisement of half the human race.

Why, in view of these incidental uncertainties, should women be enfranchised? That is the point where all suffragists, however they may differ as to methods or processes, come together at last. No matter how we may differ in details upon the platform you will find if you venture to take advantage of those differences that we are a good deal like those old-fashioned fighting Highlanders in Sir Walter Scott's story, of whom Bailie Nicol Jarvie declares that no matter how they may quarrel among themselves they are always ready to combine at last against "all honest folk that hae money in their pockets." Our combination is a mild one so far as the pockets go. It is incarnated in Miss Cora Scott Pond, the only person whom I have ever encountered in my long experience of reformers who could make a speech and ask for a little contribution and then take it up and make the audience feel grateful to her.¹

That part of the duty we do well. We do well also the more strenuous and difficult parts, if, indeed, there is any part of a reform more difficult on the whole than raising money to carry it along.

I believe in woman suffrage for the sake of woman herself. I believe in it because I am the son of a woman and the husband of a woman and the father of a prospective woman. I remember that at one of the first woman suffrage meetings I ever attended one of the first speakers was an odd fellow from the neighboring town, considered

¹ Miss Pond's collection was being taken up during the speaker's remarks.

half a lunatic. That didn't make much impression in those days when we were all considered a little crazy, but he was a little crazier than the rest of us. He pushed forward on the platform, seeming impatient to speak and throwing his old hat down by his side, he said, "I don't know much about this subject nor any other; but I know this, my mother was a woman." I thought it was the best condensed woman suffrage argument I ever heard in my life.

Woman suffrage should be urged in my opinion not from any predictions that amount to certainty, that claim anything like certainty as to what women will do with their votes after they get them, but on the ground that by all the traditions of our government, by all the precepts of its early founders, by all the axioms that lie at the foundation of all our political principles, woman needs the ballot for herself, for self-respect on the one side and for self-protection on the other.

There was a time when whatever woman studied in school the idea of teaching her the principles of government, of her studying political economy, would have seemed an absurdity; it was hardly thought of. Her path lay outside of it. She was not brought in contact with it. There was no loss of self-respect in those days to her in finding that in every great system of government she was omitted, and that, as Tennyson says in his "Princess," in every great revolution

"Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights;
No woman named."

How is it now? Go into the nearest grammar school tomorrow and what may you happen upon? A mixed class of boys and girls reciting the constitution of the United States, or some one of the various manuals upon the history of politics or the organization of our government—reciting it to-

gether, side by side, perhaps reciting it to a woman. Or you may go even into a college sometimes and find a whole class of young men reciting to their teacher in political economy out of a handbook written by a woman, Millicent Garrett Fawcett.

After those boys and girls have attained their maturity and voting day comes, then they separate as they come near the voting-place, and every boy goes inside the door to put what he has learned in the school, of that teacher, into practice; and the girls and their teacher pass along, powerless to express in action a single one of the principles they have been so studiously learning. I have watched that thing and wondered how women could bear it as they do; and at last I encountered one woman who seemed to me to take on the whole the most sensible view I ever encountered in the matter, who told me that again and again on election day she had gone out and walked up and down opposite the voting-place in her ward with tears streaming from her eyes to see every ignoramus and every drunkard in the neighborhood going in there to cast his vote, and she, a woman, unable to do anything to counteract it.

This is what I mean by a woman needing the ballot for self-respect. She comes to the centennial celebrations here—I forget just which the last one was that they had in Philadelphia but they have them every few years—she hears the great names cited, the great authorities, she goes home and she looks up what those authorities said, how they defined civil government or how they defined freedom. She takes Benjamin Franklin for instance, "that eminent Philadelphian," as he is called in Philadelphia; "that eminent Bostonian who temporarily resided in Philadelphia," as they call him in Boston. She looks in his writings and she finds

that great statesman saying, about 1770, so distinctly that words cannot make it clearer, that "they who have no voice nor vote in the electing of representatives do not enjoy liberty but are absolutely enslaved to those who have votes and to their representatives." And what is the woman to think of that?

Fifty years ago the man who was long considered the leading jurist of the West, Judge Timothy Walker, of Cincinnati, when asked "What is the legal position of woman in America?" said, "Write out as best you can the definition of legal slavery and when you have done that you have the legal position of a woman." The woman finds that; she sees such statements as that earlier or later. How can she feel? How can she help feeling that same loss of self-respect which a Jewish woman of the Jewish faith in old times could hardly help feeling when she heard men giving thanks to the Lord that they were not born women and heard women with humble voices saying, "I thank thee, Lord, that thou hast made me according to thy will?"

How could she help feeling as she would feel in a Mohamadan country when she found that in the great and most sacred mosques the edict was that no idiot, lunatic, or woman can enter here. The woman of old times who did not read books of political economy or attend public meetings could retain her self-respect; but the woman of modern times with every step she takes in the higher education finds it harder to retain that self-respect while she is in a republican government and yet not a member of it. She can study all the books that I saw collected this morning in the political economy alcove of the Bryn Mawr College; she can read them all; she can master them all; she can know more about them perhaps than any man she knows; and yet to put one

thing she has learned there in practice by the simple process of putting a piece of paper into a ballot-box—she could no more do that than she could put out her slender finger and stop the planet in its course. That is what I mean by woman's needing woman suffrage for self-respect.

Then as to self-protection. In what does protection consist for us Americans? In the power of writing a remonstrance in the newspaper when the conductor of a train does not stop as he promised or when an ash barrel is not taken at the proper moment from before our back door? Is that the power that we have for self-protection? It is indeed the beginning of power. It is power because it has the ballot behind it; because the street department and the railroad department know that they have to do with that part of the community who have votes to back up what they say. Take away those votes and how little is the power.

The woman has the voice but not the vote. We know that there have been great changes in the position of woman, great improvements in the law in regard to women. What brought about those improvements? The steady labor of women like those on this platform, going before legislatures year by year and asking those legislatures to give them something they were not willing to give, the ballot; but as a result of it to keep the poor creatures quiet some law was passed removing a restriction. The old English writer, Pepys, in his diary, after spending a good deal of money for himself, finds a little left and buys his wife a new gown because he says, "It is fit the poor wretch should have something to content her." I have seen many laws passed for the advantage of women and they were generally passed on that principle.

I remember going before the legislature of Rhode Island
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once with Lucy Stone, and she unrolled with her peculiar persuasive power the wrong laws that existed in that Commonwealth in regard to women and after the hearing was over the chairman of the committee, a judge who has served for years on that committee, came down and said to her, "I have come to say to you, Mrs. Stone, that all you have said this morning is true, and that I am ashamed to think that I who have been chairman for years of this judiciary committee should have known in my secret heart that it was all true and should have done nothing to set those wrongs right until I was reminded of it by a woman."

Again and again I have seen that experience. Women with bleeding feet, women with exhausted voices, women with worn-out lives have lavished their strength to secure ordinary justice in the form of laws, which a single woman inside the State House, a single woman there armed with the position of member of the legislature and representing a sex who had votes could have got righted within two years.

Every man knows the weakness of a disfranchised class of men. The whole race of women is disfranchised and they suffer in the same way. It is not that men are so selfish. It is not that they intend to do so much wrong to women; but any of you who have served in a legislative body as I have know how difficult a thing it is to get attention for anything or any class of persons not represented on the floor; while a single person who stands on the floor clothed with his rights, with the other persons who have rights behind him, can command attention though he be in the smallest minority. A single naturalized citizen in the legislature can secure justice for all naturalized citizens. A single Roman Catholic member can secure justice for all Roman Catholic

citizens; because though he may have been personally in the minority he represents votes behind him.

The woman represents no votes and she is weak. The best laws that are made for her in any State in the Union are no sure guarantee for her. They may be altered at any time so long as she is not there to speak for herself. Some Russian emperor, when he was told by an admirer, "Your Majesty, what do your people need of a constitution? Your Majesty is as good as a constitution to your people," said, "Then I am but a happy accident; that is all."

The best legislation women can get is nothing more than a happy accident unless women are there to defend it after they have got it. Again and again things have been given to them after the labor of years, and, perhaps, those same things have been taken from them.

In the legislature of New York women were vested with the power a few years ago to control their own offspring as against the will of a dead father. A year or two passed by, the law was revoked and the power was lost. For several years back in Massachusetts a married woman has had the right under the law to dispose by will of five thousand dollars' worth of real estate if held in her own name. The woman who had saved up her own earnings, who had made her own investments, who held real estate in her own name, could, to the extent of five thousand dollars, dispose of it by will.

The last legislature, as that keen observer, Mr. Sewell, tells us, by striking out a single word in a single statute, the word "intestate," took away that power and the woman no longer can dispose of her five thousand dollars. No attention was attracted, no agitation came because there was no woman there to take it up and call attention to it.

I served two years in the Massachusetts legislature and I remember that during one of those years there came up a bill which attracted very little attention in regard to the right of settlement in our towns. The point seemed a little complicated and I passed it by, being busy with other matters; but an official at the State House, Mr. H. B. Wheelwright, an official of the Board of State Charities, a man of great experience, came to me and said, "Do you understand that bill?" I said, "No. I was engaged on other matters and paid but little attention to it." He said, "Let me explain it to you." He sat down and explained it to me and showed me that should that bill pass hundreds of women in our factory towns in Massachusetts would fail of obtaining, as they had heretofore obtained under certain conditions, a settlement in those towns.

I asked those around me if they had noticed it. They had not. I found on investigation that the bill had come from the representatives of a certain town and that the whole bill was got up to meet a certain particular case. It was to relieve the overseers of the poor in that town from the duty of disposing of a single family; and for the sake of that, by this bill, thus quietly introduced, hundreds and perhaps thousands of women would suffer.

I took the points that he gave me, I made the statement, becoming simply his mouthpiece in the matter, and the bill was easily defeated. But had a single woman been on the floor herself to take note of the bills that came up that concerned her sex do you suppose a bill like that would have come as it did near to passage? If there is anything that is sure in public affairs it is that we can trust people to look after themselves.

I remember I was speaking of the ignorance of the men

recently naturalized who had been before the Bureau of State Charities, and another State House official said to me, "There is not an emigrant however ignorant he may be who after he has lived six months in Massachusetts, fails to understand three sets of laws as well as you or I do; the settlement laws, the pauper laws, and the penal laws. They understand it whether we do or not." Self-interest is what sharpens. When you get women voting and not till then will you have women substantially and permanently protected.

It is for the self-respect and self-protection of women that I want woman suffrage. If they vote for good temperance laws, so much the better. If they make property secure, so much the better. But the real need of the suffrage is for women themselves. Self-respect and self-protection, these are what the demand rests upon; and in proportion as we concede to that demand we shall have a nation that also has for its reward self-protection and self-respect.

How long will women have to point out these things? How long will men with feebler voices, because less personal and less absorbingly interested, have to aid them in pointing them out? It is not enough to have our material successes. It is not enough to have the magnificent record of our long civil war and of the period of reconstruction that has followed. This nation won the respect of the world by its career in war. What it has now before it is so to legislate for equal justice as to retain the world's respect during coming centuries of happy peace.