

Lady Henry Somerset.

An English Noblewoman on Sex Discrimination—The Future of Woman Discussed in an Able Manner—What Home, Country, and the Race Demand.

(Lady Henry Somerset in the North American Review.)

What has changed woman's outlook so that she now desires that of which her grandmother did not dream? This is the question that is asked today from pulpit and platform, in magazine and newspaper, with fatiguing reiteration. Is the woman of our time less feminine in her instinct, less domestic in her tastes, or less devoted to the interests of her family? As well might we ask whether the man of our time is less courageous because he no longer buckles on a coat of mail to wage an endless war with his near neighbor; less honorable because he does not avenge insult in a duel, less devout because he no longer believes that by conquering a distant land and planting the cross instead of the crescent on the heights of Jerusalem he is doing God's work in the world. Times have changed, and with the years the standard of social custom changes also. Woman, like man, is adapting herself to her environment. In ancient days her home was a great domestic manufactory of which she was the head. The flax was spun, the linen woven, by her deft fingers; the bread was baked in a glowing oven under her watchful care; and by her perfume was distilled from summer flowers. She was the artist whose embroidery decked the cathedral and the palace, for home was not only the factory that supplied domestic wants, but the studio whence came the choicest objects of skill and beauty. But with the birth of applied science the marvelous invention of man robbed her one by one of her employments. The steel fingers of machinery replaced her skillful and ingenious hand; the city bakeries provided food; the sweet perfumes of flowers were discreetly imitated in a thousand chemical laboratories; and tapestries and silks were woven to the tune of steam while the roomy old homesteads disappeared and rows of little houses took their place where operatives eeked out a monotonous existence. The school with kindergarten attachment undertook to educate her children's powers; trained nurses watched over the pillows of the sick, and woman with folded hand looked out upon the world, her employment well-nigh gone. In view of such a situation, the reasoning mind must ask, Is not woman to adjust herself to these far-reaching changes, even as man has suited himself to the new environment that steam, electricity, and the printing-press have brought to him? The arts and crafts that centered for centuries in the home have expanded until they have become the possession of the world, and man has taken them under his supervision. Why, then, should not woman keep her native place in the world's economy by the regulation of that wider home which has now spread outside the four walls of her own house, and which we call society and government, and take her place with man in framing laws that affect the well-being of those who formerly worked within her kingdom, but who now dwell outside, in that larger family circle that we call a nation?

WHAT RETARDS WOMAN'S INFLUENCE. The arguments used by those who oppose woman's entrance to public life are in these days usually based on the line that woman is too sacred, her influence too pure and precious, to be frittered away in the sordid quarrels and mean ambitions entailed by party politics; that her presence has ever been the magnet of the home; and that the nation will be wisest and best that preserves the sanctity of its womanhood and the influence of its mothers. It is precisely because I believe in the truth of this argument that I maintain that to debar woman from any one single right, to exclude her from any prerogative, is to create for her not only a disability by reason of her sex, but to build up a barrier that must ever effectively hinder her widest influence. It is well to talk of the mother guiding the son in life, but from the hour that the boy understands that his mother's prerogatives end at the garden gate, that she has no voice whatever in the moulding of the nation's laws, that her precepts are good for the fireside but unavailing at the hearthstone of government, there insidiously creeps into the boy's thought a realization of the fact that his mother is classified by the rulers of the land with the lunatic and the idiot; and I maintain that this discovery has done more than sons are themselves aware of to undermine the influence that is deemed so precious and yet which is sedulously preserved for "home consumption" only. Moreover, to deprive a government of the keen moral sense that is native to women as a class (though, to the great hindrance of humanity, they have too long admitted that their moral standard must necessarily be higher than that of man), is to rob the nation of a strong support by which it would undoubtedly benefit. Another argument that is brought forward to prove that woman does not need to have a share in government is that her interests are ably represented by men. If this be so, women are the only class "ably represented" by those who have in many instances a wholly separate interest

physical strength goes, woman, at any rate in a savage state, is as capable of bearing hardship and fatigue as a man. Anyone who has seen the Indian squaw carrying the baggage of the family on her back while the man leisurely sits on his horse smoking his short pipe, cannot feel the slightest doubt as to a woman's equality in physical strength; at any rate the Indian has realized it and made practical use of his knowledge.

This whole outcry of "one vote, one sword," is founded on a fallacy. It is true that the barbarous tribes who were wont to put their women in the van as fighters have all died out. To what is woman's exemption from military duties owing? To the desire of men to represent her on the battlefield? Not at all; it is owing to natural selection. The mothers who are the makers of men had to be guarded for the benefit of the tribe or the nation; otherwise that nation would suffer in its survival.

A GREATER ROLE THAN THAT OF A WOMAN.

Women have a greater role than that of fighting; they are the fountain of the race, at which it recruits its losses, perpetuates its hopes, and conserves the results of victories already gained; and I maintain that if service to the nation is to count as a chief article of faith for the voter, the service—aye, and the dangerous service—that woman renders every nation is far greater than the occasional facing of a Maxim gun or the remote contingency of a bursting shell. There is hardly a woman who is not called to come face to face with death; who does not go down into the great Gethsemane of suffering, and with the dew of eternity on her brow give to the world its sons and daughters. It is woman's fight for the race, the fight in which she too often gives her life. It is a greater service to bear soldiers than to bear arms.

WHY ON A LOWER LEVEL THAN MAN.

I now revert to the fact that there is a severe loss to the nation in the disability of women to vote, because it places her, in the estimation of the citizenship, on a lower level than men, and it leads to the degrading belief that man can afford to have a lower standard of morals than woman. It leads, also, to the demoralizing idea that woman was created for man's pleasure, and from this conception is recruited that great army, sad and sorrowful, that has for long ages trodden the stony way of shame. There is no class of women who can ever be justly set aside to fulfil purposes of evil because it is necessary that men should sin; but it is from this immeasurable indignity that has sprung, undoubtedly, the idea that women are inferior to men, and, therefore, must be debarred the rights of citizenship. If it be true that a certain class of women must be appointed to fulfill the duty that Lecky terms "the mission of the sad priestess of humanity," I believe that the middle ages took a far more logical view of this question than we do now, for then such women were recognized among the guilds that paraded the towns on hey-days and holidays, a class whose existence was a necessity, and who, therefore, carried on no dishonorable calling. We naturally shrink from such morality as that, but the existence of any class of women who are degraded by doing that which does not unfit man morally or socially for the duties of citizen and of a future husband honored and beloved, is far more debasing in its effects upon the nation than the crude brutality of the medieval times.

THE HOME SAFE.

There is another argument that I believe to be, if possible, more fallacious than any yet examined; namely, the right to assert her political individuality will cause the disruption of the home. The age is too far advanced for such arguments. Woman has discovered herself; she has realized that she possesses a soul with all that the word implies, a soul fraught with that mysterious loneliness which envelops every human being that looks up to the great beyond, not knowing whence it came nor whither it is going. Shrouded in that inner recess which no man can touch, no human being approach, lies the consciousness that is always lonely save as it realizes the presence of God. And unless the marriage tie respects this individuality, instead of being the dearest and the best bond that can brighten any human life, it will become the detestable chain from which woman will pray to be released. The only way in which the tie of home can ever be destroyed will be by endeavoring to chain the woman who has as much right to be free as the husband at her side.

WOMAN'S DIVINE TASK.

I believe that woman should vote because she is a different being and always will have a different work to do in life from that of man. She has a divine task to accomplish. You intrust her with the most sacred duty on earth; you ask her first to give the nation her children; you ask her to nurture and care for them; you ask her to instill into their minds the holiest aspirations that are to be their guide in after life, you ask her, with all her experience and her judgment, to look upon the world with its many social evils that her mother's eyes are swift to see while yours are blinded, and then you ask her to believe that it is "justice" that her voice should be silent, her action powerless to guard the interests of her girls whom you declare that men, and men alone, must represent. You ask her to sit through

long weary nights rocking the cradle, but when the child grows up to manhood you say that she has no right to deal with those questions that make for the weal or woe of his future life. You do not deny that in many cases women maintain the home by their own labor, that by the "sweat of their brow do they eat bread," that the children owe their education, their clothing, the roof over their heads, to the work of their mothers' hands; you do not ask the men of the State to "represent" the women when they have no one to earn a living for the children who are deprived by death of a father or deserted by a worthless husband; but only when you come to the edge of the Rubicon, where toil is merged into privilege, and penalties pass over into power, do you say to the woman, Stand back; thus far and no farther!

IS IT RIGHT OR WRONG?

"The broadest and most far-sighted intellect," Wendell Phillips has truly said, "is utterly unable to foresee the ultimate consequences of any great social change; but ask yourselves on all such occasions if there is no element of right or wrong in the question, no principle of clear, natural justice that turns the scale; and if so, as in the past so in the future, the men of this country will take their part with perfect and abstract right, and they will see the expediency of it hereafter."

It is possible that woman may not take the same view of imperial politics as has been taken in the past by man; but man's views are changing, and it may be that woman's influence on politics has had some effect in bringing about that change. Suffice it to say that should women take a different view it may not be that it is less wise, less just, less true, but rather in this dawning day when the nations are beginning to understand the brotherhood of the race, men may learn that real brotherhood can never exist so long as one-half of humanity is ignored by the counsels of the world. For eternally it will be true that "man and woman, dwarfed or god-like, fall or rise together."

The world has seen the renaissance in art and literature; the renaissance in religion; it has watched the slow dawning of the renaissance of human brotherhood: are we not now entering the epoch of the renaissance of woman? ISABEL SOMERSET.

Difficulties of Children.

In using words to a child, the question is, not what is meant by a word, but what the child understands by that word. Many a word has come into a child's vocabulary only in a special or applied meaning, and the child supposes that there is no other meaning to the word. A little Boston boy, whose sisters had gone on a visit, was told to ask God, in his evening prayer, to bring them back in safety. He had heard of "a safety bicycle" as a means of locomotion, and he had no other idea than that in connection with the word.

There is such a thing as a physical obstacle to moral progress. But it is often an obstacle for which some one near at hand is responsible. Children are reprobated for sluggishness, self-will, and disobedience, when they are, perhaps, in doubt and confusion as to what is expected of them, or as to how the will that is set above them is to be carried out. Two little girls were overheard in their conversation by one of their caretakers. One child told the other that her mother did not want her to go to school and her father did, and she added, "I would mind them both if I could, but I can't." No spirit could be truer and finer than that, in young or in old. There are a good many things that children would do for us, but they cannot. There are ways in which we could aid them to do what they would, if they could. But do we?—[Sunday School Times.

A Test Case.

The Woman's Journal says: A fund of \$12,000 is being raised by the Prohibitionists of Indiana to prosecute the Government officers if Mrs. Helen M. Gougar is not allowed to vote. She has announced from her home at Lafayette that at the coming fall elections she will walk to the polls, and if denied, as she expects to be, she will go into court, to know why she, a citizen of the United States and a taxpayer, is not allowed the right which men have. In this step she is aided by the State central committee, and instead of giving the State ticket so much attention, they will make Helen Gougar the issue of their campaign. They go on the theory that the Constitution of the United States guarantees the rights of American citizens. Other states are to rally round the Indiana Prohibitionists. They have been assured of the support of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and Populists are interested in the matter.

The Rothschilds.

It is said that owing to the close intermarrying of the Rothschilds there is no one of the rising generation of the family who is considered capable of succeeding to the management of the vast wealth now controlled by the house, whose total fortune is estimated by competent authorities as being over \$2,000,000,000. The Paris Rothschilds alone being set down at \$350,000,000, of which the Baron Alphonse, the head of the French branch, is credited with \$200,000,000. This enormous fortune, if it goes on increasing at the same rate as hitherto, will double every fifteen years, and it

is appalling to think of the sum to which it would amount a century hence. Under the circumstances, the blight upon the younger generation of Rothschilds must be regarded in the light of a wise dispensation of Providence.—[New York Herald.

Beware of desperate steps. The darkest day, Live till tomorrow, will have passed away. —[COWPER.

A Doctor on Alcoholic Remedies.

Recently Prof. Murdoch Cameron, of Glasgow, was amongst the speakers at the National Temperance League breakfast to the officers and members of the British Medical Association, when, in the course of an interesting address, he said: We doctors are blamed a good deal for the drink. Our patients blame us. I remember a man whom I wanted to give up drinking who did not know that I was a doctor. I spoke to him as a friend. He said, "It is no good; my doctor ordered me to take drink." I said, "If the doctor had ordered you strychnine would you go on taking it as you have gone on taking the drink? Would he have let you have gone on taking it when you were having the jumps? If he had ordered you landanum, and your wife said you had been sleeping for sixteen hours, would he have ordered you to continue it? My advice to you is to see if the doctor intended it merely for a temporary prescription." He said, "My doctor is a very clever doctor." "Well," I said, "I know all the doctors in Glasgow; will you give me his name?" He gave me the name of a man who had been seven years in his grave. (Laughter.) That is the way we are blamed. And then you know

THE PATIENTS LIKE IT.

I have seen a little disappointment come across the face of a lady when I said she had better take no claret. She said, "I am needing something to make blood." (Laughter.) I said, "Claret will never make blood," and as I did so a shade of disappointment came over her face. I knew a case in Glasgow where there was one of those old fellows who go about and never give a disease a name, but who say, "I will give you a powder or a pill," or "Take this," or "Take that," but never venture to say anything more. This old fellow dropped in and looked at the tongue of his patient and felt her pulse. He said, "You need a tumbler of toddy every day at 12 o'clock." After the doctor went away, of course, the neighbors came dropping in and asked what the doctor had said. She told them, and added, "That is the first doctor who ever took up my trouble." (Laughter.) You have the appetite to contend against, and you have to set your faces against it, and never prescribe alcohol unless it is in certain rigid cases. Speaking for myself, I remember, when I was a student, it was a matter of a gill or two of brandy after certain operations, but my experience is that I get

FAR BETTER RESULTS

by giving a teaspoonful of water every quarter of an hour in certain surgical cases for 24, 36 or 58 hours after the operation, and nothing else. I am convinced if I give brandy instead of water my patients would go down without any question. I do not take up the position of dictating to medical men what they should do, and as regards pneumonia and fever, I leave those cases to specialists; but I say that in obstetrics alcohol is not necessary. (Cheers.) In the maternity hospitals we never use it, out and in, we have nearly 3,000 cases in the year. Some people think, of course, that a baby cannot come into the world unless there is a bottle of whisky to receive it, outside we have a good deal of difficulty in keeping our patients right. Indoors we have no difficulty whatever, and the patients make good recoveries. I look to women largely to help in this work, but if we are going to be reformers in this matter we cannot ask others to do what we have not the courage to do ourselves. (Cheers.) I am quite convinced of this, that whilst I would welcome the shutting up of public houses, the shutting up at 9 o'clock at night alone would save thousands of our working men. (Applause.)

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THE TWO BABIES—First Youngster—I've got a new baby brother, came from heaven last night.

Second Youngster—That's nothin'. My little baby brother went to heaven yesterday.

First Youngster (reflectively)—Pete, I bet it's the same kid.

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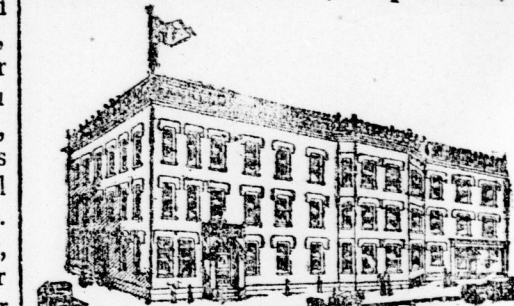
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