

IX

Maid old or young, or spouseless wife or widow,
 We earn our bread, i' faith, as fair as you;
 We, whom the Service you would early rid o',
 To match your virtuous, Rooseveltian view.
 Aye, marry! Ergo, bear eftsoon a kid o',
 With lusty encores every year or two;
 To spend, on Chance, our balance in Life's bank,
 And draw in Hymen's lottery—a blank.

X.

Who will not marry when she meets *the man*?
 Love springs maternal in a woman's breast.
 Thrice happy she for whom the gods will plan
 Love, and love's loyalty that stands the test!
 Think you, O man, mere marriage fills the span
 Of woman's hopes and longings unexpressed?
 I'd rather single die, hearth-desolated,
 Than doubly live misunderstood, mismated!

XI.

We who, through intercourse official daily,
 See much of "man," hear much of "marriage," too.
 The "cares of office" are considered gaily
 Compared with those a "married man" must rue.
 He knows "just what"—though knowing naught avail—he,
 Were he but singly blest again—would do;
 While gratefully *we* kiss the hand of Fate
 That still holds fast for us our single state.

XII.

We, who "serve Mammon"—at eight hundred per—
 Have much in such sad service to regret.
 Could each of us, instead of being 'her'
 Be 'he,' how much of Mammon we might get!
 Man's own man-made prerogatives; the spur
 To pleasures even pledges fail to fret;
 The joys—beyond our feminine addition—
 Of clerically casual imbibition.

XIII.

Alas! *We* may not know the gains that are
 Derived from ex-officio stimulation;
 The mental solace of some neighbouring bar
 Divine we dimly in imagination.
 Our woman's wits—not sharpened so—were far
 Too dull to more than envy such elation;
 Our senses—the first three—are chiefly stirred,—
 And first and chiefest of the three—the third.