

be found filling important positions in almost every trade, business and profession. He must, indeed, be blind to the signs of the times who cannot perceive a great cosmic and irresistible force working in our midst. We are witnessing the transition from one stage of evolution into another. Each successive age is characterized by the alternate predominance of a tendency to destruction or construction. These tendencies, by their interaction, constitute the process of evolution in the social organism, and are equivalent to waste and repair in the human body. It is everywhere apparent that, after a long period of *laissez faire* and disintegration, we are now definitely entering upon an epoch of social reconstruction. Physiologists tell us that, throughout creation, the tendency of the male is towards variation and divergence, while the female inclines to conformity to type and solidarity. An age, therefore, in which the ties of relationship are being drawn ever closer, as in the present age of co-operation and conciliation, is especially favorable to the genius of women. Plato and the Ancient Philosophers, in a vein more poetic than that of modern scientists, called the cosmic forces which draw together and put asunder—Love and Hate. Surely when the evolutionary forces are thus designated, it is easy to see the side on which the powers of womanhood must be ranged. The manifestation in our daily life of the gentler influence of the fruits of the spirit provides the opportunity for the exercise of woman's special gifts. The advent of women is the chief sign of a synthetic age.

In one respect the result of the vote beyond the seas has been surprising to those who take a surface view. Australia and New Zealand have of late years shown themselves more keenly alive than ever to the requirements of National Defence. From the

only British Possessions in which women vote, and from them alone, came the offer of Dreadnoughts in time of need. They only have made provision for universal military service. Does this mean that the vote has turned the Angels of Peace into Zealots for War? By no means. Rightly viewed, the only safeguard of Peace lies in adequate means of defence. The love of women for the home compels them to take steps for efficient National Insurance against the horrors of war, and ungrudgingly they pay their share of the heavy premium necessary for immunity. Thus, while attending to the needs of industrial and social legislation, women voters have not been unmindful of the weightier matters which pertain to the salvation of their country. Their sound common-sense in this respect is well set forth in the following resolution, carried in both the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth Parliament:—

"That this House is of opinion that the Suffrage to the Women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliament has had the most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last Federal election the women's vote in a majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a Greater Prominence to Legislation particularly affecting Women and Children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of Defence and Imperial Concern they have proved themselves as farseeing and discriminating as Men. Because the Reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would