

## The Roundabout Club

### An Anti-Woman's Suffrage Letter.

[Essay submitted in Literary Society Study No. IV.]

Should the suffrage be extended to women? After years of conflict between aristocratic governing classes and the champions of equal rights and privileges before the law, we now have almost everywhere under the British constitution complete manhood suffrage; that is to say, that every male having reached the age of twenty-one years, excepting a few who may be legally debarred, may exercise a unit of elective power equal to that exercised by any of his fellows, and may, if elected thereto, sit in the governing bodies of the country.

Thus the privilege and responsibility of government rests entirely upon the male section of the population; women, except for a few cases in the municipal governments, where their property rights may be especially involved, exercising no elective power.

The question which is now before us for consideration is one as to whether women should also be permitted to participate in the government of the country, a question which has been brought particularly to the front in political controversy during late years by a movement on the part of a faction of women who demand the enfranchisement of their sex. Although side issues may present themselves in the discussion of this question, the one all-important consideration is whether the enfranchisement of women would in the long run be of benefit to society.

Women may, as free citizens of the country, have a perfect right to a voice in its government, a right which it would be folly to deny them should they as a body demand it. They may be, and few men will dare to say that they are not, possessed of ability that would render them very useful as co-workers directly engaged in the government of the country. But, after all, is this woman's proper sphere of duty? Have they not been given a work entirely distinct from and yet quite as important as the making of laws and the ruling of empire? Have they not been given thrones of power which, although from the outside may not seem so alluring as the thrones of political power, are destined to exercise a far greater power over society than any political influence ever could; thrones which would inevitably be undermined should their occupants presume to encroach upon the kingdom of man.

There are two old maxims: First, "A man is what his wife makes him"; and, second, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." The sphere in which a woman can use her influence to the greatest and most far-reaching advantage is that of her home. Here every true woman ruleth her own family, and here she may serve her country in ways beyond the power of those possessed of political influence. So, lest in the attempt to gain direct political power women should lose, and they certainly to a large extent would lose the greater powers which have long since been vouchsafed to them, may they forever abandon the idea that it would be possible for them to increase the scope of their influence in the field of social service by exercising the franchise.

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## Some Old Time Echoes.

THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.  
IV.

I cannot quite recall how many weeks I was detained in Cassel by the exigencies of war, but they are vividly remembered as weeks of almost unbroken excitement, and of breathless interest. The streets were filled with soldiers, immense squads of whom, with their horses and artillery or forage wagons, camped in the squares. In my brother's house were billeted five or six soldiers, all of whom behaved in

is now on his way to Cassel via Belgium as a prisoner of war," the question on the lips of nearly every one being, "Who now represents the Government of France?"

There are many still living who can record the black cloud which hung over the one-time gay, but now unhappy Paris, when the "unhinged elements of the Commune" raged in its midst.

History records the capitulation of Napoleon, and the downfall of the nation which had brought about that cruel war. "A Napoleon on the throne of

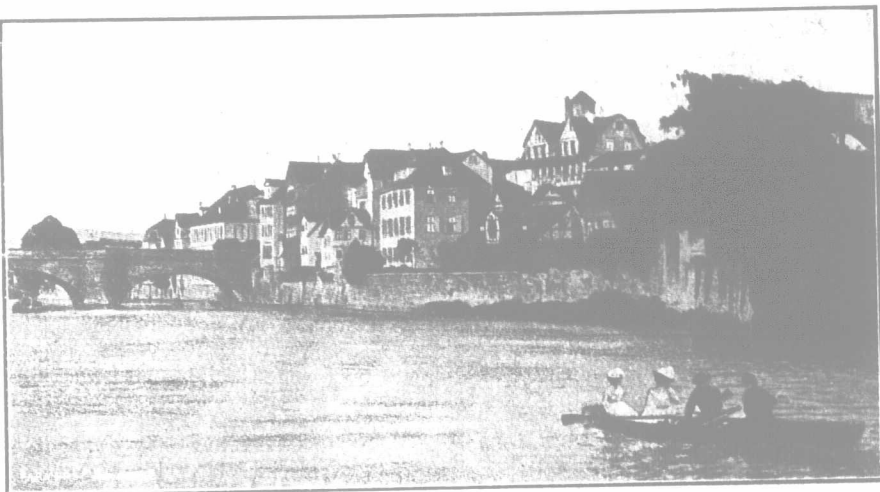
Hercules, which dominated the largest of them; I had sat at one of the hundreds of marble-topped tables enjoying my coffee and milk-bread, whilst others, who knew the language, could talk and listen, that was before the thought had entered the mind of any of us that the castle of the Wilhelmshohe near by was so soon to become the temporary abiding-place of the captive Emperor of France.

After our return to England, my brother, at my request, and for a purpose I had then in hand, contributed the little sketch which I will hand on to you as rounding out my story of certain reminiscences of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871.

### ON THE WILHELMSHOHE.

September 7th, 1870.

"The Wilhelmshohe has perhaps scarcely ever had so many visitors as this autumn. Except on Sundays and Wednesdays, when the waterworks play in the afternoon, it is generally very quiet and still here at this season of the year. And, nevertheless, how beautiful! The variegated foliage of the magnificent forests which meet the eye in every direction, can nowhere be surpassed. Green, yellow, brown and red, in every gradation of color, as if a painter's hand had wrought the charm. It is as if the leaves before they fall and take an everlasting farewell, wished to show themselves to us once more in all their imitable beauty so that we may still more deeply regret their loss. The hotel at the Wilhelmshohe, a first-class house in every respect, is, with the exception of the castle, the only large building there, and being in its immediate vicinity, very naturally plays a premier role under the existing circumstances. In and before the same there is any amount of "life," and the magnet which exercises its powers of attraction is—Napoleon! To see Napoleon! That is the watchword. It is, therefore, no wonder, when the conversation chiefly confines itself to the queries: "Have you seen him, or when is he to be seen?" It is difficult to give a positive reply to the last question, for the hours when the Emperor takes his walks or drives are regulated by the weather and the state of his health. There are days on which he does not stir out. At other times, on the contrary, as for instance yesterday, one has opportunities of seeing him repeatedly. It was a splendid autumnal morning, and the fine frosty air invited to a stroll. About 10 o'clock it began to get lively in the immediate precincts of the castle, a carpet was laid down by a couple of footmen on the steps leading down from the grand entrance, and shortly after, Napoleon appeared, leaning on the arm of Prince Murat, and followed by the Duke of Muscovy and General Castleman, the three gentlemen of his suite who usually accompany him. As he took the path which leads to the grande promenade at the back of the castle, the spectators who were present had a capital opportunity of imprinting his features on their memory. The Emperor looks much better than he did three weeks since. Is it the wholesome air of the Wilhelmshohe, or is it the quiet and regular life which he leads in contradistinction to the days of mental and bodily toil which he had undergone before his surrender? Enough. He has perfectly recovered his health, and, as Mr. Campbell, the Emperor's "grand piqueur," and an old acquaintance of mine, observed to me yesterday, "His Majesty, sir, was never better in his life!" His appearance astonishes all those who, in consequence of the manifold descriptions of him which have been given within the last few weeks, had pictured him to themselves quite differently. His appearance in plain clothes is also



Cassel, Waterfront, on the River Fulda.

a most exemplary manner, always trying to help rather than to hinder in the increased domestic arrangements which their presence involved.

When my travelling companion was at last able to join me, preparatory to our return to England, he had stores of adventure to tell; he, with his friend, an old brother officer, having followed, as near as they were permitted to do, the trail of the armies. They had narrow escapes from capture, as possible spies,

France was bound to establish his rights to the same by political and military successes, so one day the nation was informed by its representatives that it desired war with Germany, and because of this mandate, which it dared not disobey, war with its horrors, war bringing death and desolation to the homes of two countries, was proclaimed and fought to the bitter end. The comment of General Von Moltke, uttered over forty years ago, is as applicable now as



Archway, Cassel.

which they decidedly were not, their being known as Englishmen whose nation was somewhat held in disfavor just then, adding to the difficulties of travel common to all in the time of war.

History tells us that on the 3rd of September, 1870, the message from headquarters of the Prussian army read as follows:

"In two hours' time we leave this place (Donchery), and then for Paris!" and then "The Emperor Napoleon III., under escort of two squadrons of Hussars,

it was then. "To-day," he said, "the question, 'Is a nation strong enough to make war?' is of less importance than 'Is its Government strong enough to prevent war?' A weak Government is a standing menace to peace."

During my stay in Cassel I had several opportunities of visiting beautiful Wilhelmshohe, with its old palace and lovely park, with its many natural features artistically retained. I had seen the Cascades and fountains, and had gazed wonderingly at the gigantic figure of