

have afforded a glimpse of possibilities which might at once settle woman's status in civic matters, and also account for the many conservative fears as to letting her vote.

As an instance, in South Orange, N. J., a referendum vote, including women, passed an appropriation of nearly \$200,000 for school purposes which had been unfavorably considered for a decade by the man government. Women have in many ways shown their contempt of a myriad of "considerations" that weigh heavily with professional and business men and politicians who have given American municipalities their unenviable reputation, and there is much to encourage the hope that they would disturb enough well-established precedents to make requisite an appendix to Bryce's history.

Municipal questions are essentially home questions, and as such essentially concern the women whose exclusive business is at home; woman's concentration is, therefore, in the direction of municipal affairs, while man's is in the direction of business, which in itself often disqualifies him for public service. The business man has pretty thoroughly proved his incapacity for public office, and has contributed his full share to municipal disrepute. This is the natural result, first, from preoccupation with money getting, but most important from his deep-seated bias toward private, personal, financial and business considerations when weighed against purely public interests; he of all others is most susceptible to ulterior influence.

Thus municipal governments are left largely to professional politicians, who legislate ruthlessly against the home and community, and make a business of government. Can we doubt that the real householders will work at least some improvement in this condition?

Woman's suffrage is not so vital a matter under existing voting methods, but with the various improved systems that are doubtless coming in the various guises of direct primary, short ballot, commission government, initiative, referendum and recall, and preferential voting, which will bring the people again in touch with their government, there will come an era of civic intelligence and progressiveness inconceivable from our present viewpoint; then will more democracy cure the present evils of democracy, and then will woman contribute her full share to real municipal government.

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THEODORE PARKER ON WOMEN IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

From Theodore Parker's Address on "The Public"
Function of Woman."

By nature woman has the same political rights that man has—to vote, to hold office, to make and administer laws. These she has as a matter of

right. The strong hand and the great head of man keep her down, nothing more. In America, in Christendom, woman has no political rights, is not a citizen in full; she has no voice in making or administering the laws, none in electing the rulers or administrators thereof. She can hold no office—cannot be committee of a primary school, overseer of the poor, or guardian to a public lamp-post. But any man, with conscience enough to keep out of jail, mind enough to escape the poorhouse, and body enough to drop his ballot into the box, he is a voter. He may have no character, even no money, that is no matter—he is male. The noblest woman has no voice in the State. Men make laws disposing of her property, her person, her children; still she must bear it "with a patient shrug."

Looking at it as a matter of pure right and pure science, I know no reason why woman should not be a voter, or hold office, or make and administer laws. I do not see how I can shut myself into political privileges and shut woman out, and do both in the name of inalienable right. Certainly, every woman has a natural right to have her property represented in the general representation of property, and her person represented in the general representation of persons.

Looking at it as a matter of expediency, see some facts. Suppose woman had a share in the municipal regulation of Boston, and there were as many Alderwomen as Aldermen, as many Common Councilwomen as Common Councilmen—do you believe that, in defiance of the law of Massachusetts, the city government, last spring, would have licensed every two hundred and forty-fourth person in the city to sell intoxicating drink? would have made every thirty-fifth voter a rum-seller? I do not.

Do you believe the women of Boston would spend ten thousand dollars in one year in a city frolic, or spend two or three thousand every year, on the Fourth of July, for skyrocket and fire-crackers; would spend four or five thousand dollars to get their Canadian guests drunk in Boston harbor, and then pretend that Boston had not money enough to establish a high school for girls, to teach the daughters of mechanics and grocers to read French and Latin, and to understand the higher things which rich men's sons are driven to at college? I do not.

Do you believe that the women of Boston, in 1851, would have spent three or four thousand dollars to kidnap a poor man, and have taken all the chains which belonged to the city, and put them round the court house, and have drilled three hundred men, armed with bludgeons and cutlasses, to steal a man and carry him back to slavery? I do not. Do you think, if the women had had the control, "fifteen hundred men of property and standing" would have volunteered to take a poor man, kidnaped in Boston, and conduct him

out of the State with fire and sword? I believe no such thing.

Do you think that the women of Boston would take the poorest and most unfortunate children in the town, put them together into one school, making that the most miserable in the city, where they had not, and could not, have half the advantages of the other children in different schools, and all that because the unfortunates were dark colored? Do you think the women of Boston would shut a bright boy out of the High School, or Latin School because he was black in the face?

Women are said to be cowardly. When Thomas Sims, out of his dungeon, sent to the churches his petition for their prayers, had women been "the Christian clergy," do not you believe they would have dared to pray?

If women had a voice in the affairs of Massachusetts, do you think they would ever have made laws so that a lazy husband could devour all the substance of his active wife, spite of her wish? so that a drunken husband could command her bodily presence in his loathly house? and when an infamous man was divorced from his wife, that he could keep all the children? I confess I do not.

If the affairs of the nation had been under woman's joint control, I doubt that we should have butchered the Indians with such exterminating savagery; that, in fifty years, we should have spent seven hundred million dollars for war; and now, in time of peace, send twenty annual millions more to the same waste. I doubt that we should have spread slavery into nine new States, and made it national. I think the Fugitive Slave Bill would never have been an Act. Woman has some respect for the natural law of God.

I know men say women cannot manage the great affairs of a nation. Very well. Government is political economy—national housekeeping. Does any respectable woman keep house so badly as the United States? with so much bribery, so much corruption, so much quarreling in the domestic councils?

But government is also political morality, it is national ethics. Is there any worthy woman who rules her household as wickedly as the nations are ruled? who hires bullies to fight for her? Is there any woman who treats one-eighth part of her household as if they were cattle and not creatures of God—as if they were things and not persons? I know of none such. In government as housekeeping, or government as morality, I think man makes a very poor appearance when he says woman could not do as well as he has done and is doing.

I doubt that women will ever, as a general thing, take the same interest as men in political affairs, or find therein an abiding satisfaction. But that is for women themselves to determine, not for men.

A SONG DOMESTIC.

Mary Brecht Pulver in the *New York Independent*.

I sing of my kitchen!

Sing you of cathedrals; of dim, purple crypt; of dimpling brook; of wind-swept grasses; of sun-pageants; of heav'n-kissing hilltops; of cities; of castles; of festal boards a-glitter with cheer of silver and crystal—

Sing you of the heart—of tears—of laughter—of love—But I sing of Life—of that whence emanates the sap of life; of the shrine of things domestic—the kitchen. For birth and death may be achieved without it, but it is life's necessity.

Into the fabric of my song are woven many things. Humble things! My tea-kettle!

A great plump-shouldered vessel singing its time-old bubbly chant.

(The day is gray without, with a plaintive, whining little wind fumbling at the window.) But my tea-kettle purrs softly on, humming quietly to itself.

What are you crooning, O tea-kettle?

"It is a lullaby I sing. Long ago I learned it—I and my brothers. The first tea-kettle sang it from the hob-corner—sang it to a little one sleeping in its cradle by the fire. The mother wrought at her spindle and pushed the cradle with her foot. She sang alone to the child and her song was of the gray sea outside, of the fishing vessels and the bleak winds. And while she sang the wind moaned in the chimney and the babe fretted, for her song came from a grieving heart. And the kettle, pondering, knew this, and at length commenced to sing this same little lullaby of mine, and the babe slept, and at length also the sad mother.

But of the song I cannot tell more save that it has in it peace—and comfort—and the whisper of Eternity."

(The little wind frets without and wails down the chimney.)

I look into my fire-box.

What a cheerful, ruddy mass! The glowing coals! They, too, murmur and sing and leap with vivid color-play:

"We burn. We burn. That you may have warmth to boil your kettle—to roast your meats—to bake your great loaves. We give our lives to be consumed for you.

Cheerfully. Cheerfully."

The ranks of shining tins and coppers! My willing servitors they.

Let the winds assail. Let the nip of November wait outside—whose heart can fail to be staunch here at the household shrine? For its voice is of peace and the goodness of things.

My stove, all radiant, invites alluringly. Sit with me here this gray afternoon and listen to the soft little life sounds. My old clock ticking the passing of the hours; my old cat breathing deep drafts of peace at my feet; my kettle bubbling—bubbling its sleepy lullaby—my fire chirring, whispering warmly, rebuking the wind, that tries to creep down to it.

Warm! warm! warm as Love—warm as Life—the very heart of God speaks here.