

## Hearing of the Woman suffrage association ... January 18, 1892

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### **HEARING OF THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION BEFORE THE 201 U.S. COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY, MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 1892.**

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Committee of the Judiciary, *Monday, January 18, 1892.*

The committee met, Mr. Culberson in the chair.

The committee having under consideration House resolution 14, proposing an amendment to the Constitution extending the rights of women to vote at all Federal elections, this day heard argument in regard to the same.

#### **ADDRESS OF MRS. ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.**

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, president of the National Woman Suffrage Association, addressed the committee. She said.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: We have been speaking before Committees of the Judiciary for the last twenty years, and we have gone over all the arguments in favor of a sixteenth amendment which are familiar to all you gentlemen; therefore, it will not be necessary that I should repeat them again.

The point I wish plainly to bring before you on this occasion is the individuality of each human soul; our Protestant idea, the right of individual conscience and judgment—our republican idea, individual citizenship. In discussing the rights of woman, we are to consider, first, what belongs to her as an individual, in a world of her own, the arbiter of her own destiny, an imaginary Robinson Crusoe with her woman Friday on a solitary island. Her rights under such circumstances are to use all her faculties for her own safety and happiness.

Secondly, if we consider her as a citizen, as a member of a great nation, she must have the same rights as all other members, according to the fundamental principles of our Government.

Thirdly, viewed as a woman, an equal factor in civilization, her rights and duties are still the same—individual happiness and development.

Fourthly, it is only the incidental relations of life, such as mother, wife, sister, daughter, that may involve some special duties and training. In the usual discussion in regard to woman's sphere, such men as Herbert Spencer, Frederic Harrison, and Grant Allen uniformly subordinate her rights and duties as an individual, as a citizen, as a woman, to the necessities of these incidental relations, some of which a large class of women may never assume. In discussing the sphere of man we do not decide his rights as an individual, as a citizen, as a man by his duties as a father, a husband, a brother, or a son, relations some of which he may never still. Moreover he would be better fitted for these very relations and whatever special work he might choose to do to earn his bread by the complete development of all his faculties as an individual.

Just so with woman. The education that will fit her to discharge the duties in the largest sphere of human usefulness will best fit her for whatever special work she may be compelled to do.

The isolation of every human soul and the necessity of self-dependence must give each individual the right to choose his own surroundings.

The strongest reason for giving women all the opportunities for higher education, for the full development of her faculties, forces of mind and body; for giving her the most enlarged freedom of thought and action; a complete emancipation from all forms of bondage, of custom, dependence, superstition; from all the crippling influences of fear, is the solitude and personal responsibility of her own individual life. The strongest reason why we ask for woman a voice in the government under which she lives; in the religion she is asked to believe; equality in social life, where she is the chief factor; a place in the trades and professions, where she may earn her bread, is because of her birthright to self-sovereignty; because, as an individual, she must rely on herself. No matter how much women prefer to lean, to be protected and supported, nor how much men desire to have them do so, they must make the voyage of life alone, and for safety in an emergency they must know something of the laws of navigation. To guide our own craft, we must be captain, pilot, engineer; with chart and compass to stand at the wheel; to watch the wind and waves and know when to take in the sail, and to read the signs in the firmament over all. In matters not whether the solitary voyager is man or woman. Nature having endowed them equally, leaves them to their own skill and judgment in the hour of danger, and, if not equal to the occasion, alike they perish.

To appreciate the importance of fitting every human soul for independent action, think for a moment of the immeasurable solitude of self. We come into the world alone, unlike all who have gone before us; we leave it alone under circumstances peculiar to ourselves. No mortal ever has been, no mortal ever will be like the soul just launched on the sea of life. There can never again be just such a combination of prenatal influences; never again just such environments as make up the infancy, youth, and manhood of this one. Nature never repeats herself, and the possibilities of one human soul will never be found in another. No one has ever found two blades of ribbon grass alike, and no one will ever find two human beings alike. Seeing, then, what must be the infinite diversity in human character, we can in a measure appreciate the loss to a nation when any large class of the people is uneducated and unrepresented in the government. We ask for the complete development of every individual, first, for his own benefit and happiness. In fitting out an army we give each soldier his own knapsack, arms, powder, his blanket, cup, knife, fork and spoon. We provide alike for all their individual necessities, then each man bears his own burden.

Again we ask complete individual development for the general good; for the consensus of the competent on the whole round of human interests; on all questions of national life, and here each man must bear his share of the general burden. It is sad to see how soon friendless children are left to bear their own burdens before they can analyze their feelings; before they can even tell their joys and sorrows, they are thrown on their own resources. The great lesson that nature seems to teach us at all ages is self-dependence, self-protection, self-support. What a touching instance of a child's solitude; of that hunger of the heart for love and recognition, in the case of the little girl who helped to dress a Christmas tree for the children of the family in which she served. On finding there was no present for herself she slipped away in the darkness and spent the night in an open field sitting on a stone, and when found in the morning was weeping as if her heart would break. No mortal will ever know the thoughts that passed through the mind of that friendless child in the long hours of that cold night, with only the silent stars to keep her company. The mention of her case in the daily papers moved many generous hearts to send her presents, but in the hours of her keenest suffering she was thrown wholly on herself for consolation.

In youth our most bitter disappointments, our brightest hopes and ambitions are known only to ourselves; even our friendship and love we never fully share with another; there is something of every passion in every situation we conceal. Even so in our triumphs and our defeats. The successful candidate for the Presidency and his opponent each have a solitude peculiarly his own, and good form forbids either to speak to his pleasure or regret. The solitude of the king on his throne and the prisoner in his cell differs in character and degree, but it is solitude nevertheless.

We ask no sympathy from others in the anxiety and agony of a broken friendship or shattered love. When death sunders our nearest ties, alone we sit in the shadow of our affliction. Alike amid the greatest triumphs and darkest tragedies of life we walk alone. On the divine heights of human attainments, eulogized and worshipped as a hero or saint, we stand alone. In ignorance, poverty, and vice, as a pauper or criminal, alone we starve or steal; alone we suffer the sneers and rebuffs of our fellows; alone we are hunted and hounded through dark courts and alleys, in by-ways and highways; alone we stand in the judgment seat; alone in the prison cell we lament our crimes and misfortunes; alone we expiate them on the gallows. In hours like these we realize the awful solitude of individual life, its pains, its penalties, its responsibilities: hours in which the youngest and most helpless are thrown on their own resources for guidance and consolation. Seeing then that life must ever be a march and a battle, that each soldier must be equipped for his own protection, it is the height of cruelty to rob the individual of a single natural right.

To throw obstacles in the way of a complete education is like putting out the eyes; to deny the rights of property, like cutting off the hands. To deny political equality is to rob the ostracised of all self-respect; of credit in the market place; of recompense in the world of work; of a voice in those who make and administer the law; a choice in the jury before whom they are tried, and in the judge who decides their punishment. Shakespeare's play of Titus and Andronicus contains a terrible satire on woman's position in the nineteenth century—"Rude men" (the play tells us) "seized the king's daughter, cut out her tongue, cut off her hands, and then bade her go ca for water and wash her hands." What a picture of woman's position. Robbed of her natural rights, handicapped by law and custom at every turn, yet compelled to fight her own battles, and in the emergencies of life to fall back on herself for protection.

The girl of sixteen, thrown on the world to support herself, to make her own place in society, to resist the temptations that surround her and maintain a spotless integrity, must do all this by native force or superior education. She does not acquire this power by being trained to trust others and distrust herself. If she wearies of the struggle, finding it hard work to swim upstream, and allows herself to drift with the current, she will find plenty of company, but not one to share her misery in the hour of her deepest humiliation. If she tries to retrieve her position, to conceal the past, her life is hedged about with fears lest willing hands should tear the veil from what she fain would hide. Young and friendless, *she* knows the bitter solitude of self.

How the little courtesies of life on the surface of society, deemed so important from man towards woman, fade into utter insignificance in view of the deeper tragedies in which she must play her part alone, where no human aid is possible.

The young wife and mother, at the head of some establishment with a kind husband to shield her from the adverse winds of life, with wealth, fortune and position, has a certain harbor of safety, secure against the ordinary ills of life. But to manage a household, have a desirable influence in society, keep her friends and the affections of her husband, train her children and servants well, she must have rare common sense, wisdom, diplomacy, and a knowledge of human nature. To do all this she needs the cardinal virtues and the strong points of character that the most successful statesman possesses.

An uneducated woman, trained to dependence, with no resources in herself must make a failure of any position in life. But society says women do not need a knowledge of the world; the liberal training that experience in public life must give, all the advantages of collegiate education; but when for the lack of all this, the woman's happiness is wrecked, alone she bears her humiliation; and the solitude of the weak and the ignorant is indeed pitiable. In the wild chase for the prizes of life they are ground to powder.

In age, when the pleasures of youth are passed, children grown up, married and gone, the hurry and bustle of life in a measure over, when the hands are weary of active service, when the old armchair and the fireside are the chosen resorts, then men and women alike must fall back on their own resources. If they cannot find companionship in books, if they have no interest in the vital questions of the hour, no interest in watching the consummation of reforms, with which they might have been identified, they soon pass into their dotage. The more fully the faculties of the mind are developed and kept in use, the longer the period of vigor and active interest in all around us continues. If from a lifelong participation in public affairs a woman feels responsible for the laws regulating our system of education, the discipline of our jails and prisons, the sanitary condition of our private homes, public buildings, and thoroughfares, an interest in commerce, finance, our foreign relations, in any or all these questions, her solitude will at least be respectable, and she will not be driven to gossip or scandal for entertainment.

The chief reason for opening to every soul the doors to the whole round of human duties and pleasures is the individual development thus attained, the resources thus provided under all circumstances to mitigate the solitude that at times must come to everyone. I once asked Prince Krapotkin, a Russian nihilist, how he endured his long years in prison, deprived of books, pen, ink, and paper. "Ah," he said, "I thought out many questions in which I had a deep interest. In the pursuit of an idea I took no note of time. When tired of solving knotty problems I recited all the beautiful passages in prose or verse I had ever learned. I became acquainted with myself and my own resources. I had a world of my own, a vast empire, that no Russian jailor or Czar could invade."

Such is the value of liberal thought and broad culture when shut off from all human companionship, bringing comfort and sunshine within even the four walls of a prison cell.

As women oftentimes share a similar fate, should they not have all the consolation that the most liberal education can give? Their suffering in the prisons of St. Petersburg; in the long, weary marches to Siberia, and in the mines, working side by side with men, surely call for all the self-support that the most exalted sentiments of heroism can give. When suddenly roused at midnight, with the startling cry of "fire! fire!" to find the house over their heads in flames, do women wait for men to point the way to safety? And are the men, equally bewildered and half suffocated with smoke, in a position to do more than try to save themselves?

At such times the most timid women have shown a courage and heroism in saving their husbands and children that has surprised everybody. Inasmuch, then, as woman shares equally the joys and sorrows of time and eternity, is it not the height of presumption in man to propose to represent her at the ballot box and the throne of grace, to do her voting in the state, her praying in the church, and to assume the position of high priest at the family altar?

Nothing strengthens the judgment and quickens the conscience like individual responsibility. Nothing adds such dignity to character as the recognition of one's self-sovereignty; the right to an equal place, everywhere conceded; a place earned by personal merit, not an artificial attainment, by inheritance, wealth, family, and position. Seeing, then, that the responsibilities of life rest equally on man and woman, that their destiny is the same, they need the same preparation for time and eternity. The talk of sheltering woman from the fierce storms of life is the sheerest mockery, for they beat on her from every point of the compass, just as they do on man, and with more fatal results, for he has been trained to protect himself, to resist, to conquer. Such are the facts in human experience, the responsibilities of individual sovereignty. Rich and poor, intelligent and ignorant, wise and foolish, virtuous and vicious, man and woman, it is ever the same, each soul must depend wholly on itself.

Whatever the theories may be of woman's dependence on man, in the supreme moments of her life he can not bear her burdens. Alone she goes to the gates of death to give life to every man that is born into the world. No one can share her fears, no one can mitigate her pangs; and if her sorrow is greater than she can bear, alone she passes beyond the gates into the vast unknown.

From the mountain tops of Judea, long ago, a heavenly voice bade His disciples "Bear ye one another's burdens," but humanity has not yet risen to that point of self-sacrifice, and if ever so willing, how few the burdens are that one soul can bear for another. In the highways of Palestine; in prayer and fasting on the solitary mountain top; in the Garden of Gethsemane; before the judgment

seat of Pilate; betrayed by one of His trusted disciples at His last supper; in His agonies on the cross, even Jesus of Nazareth, in these last sad days on earth, felt the awful solitude of self. Deserted by man, in agony he cries, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" And so it ever must be in the conflicting scenes of life, in the long, weary march, each one walks alone. We may have many friends, love, kindness, sympathy, and charity to smoothe our pathway in everyday life, but in the tragedies and triumphs of human experience each mortal stands alone.

But when all artificial trammels are removed, and women are recognized as individuals, responsible for their own environments, thoroughly educated for all positions in life they may be called to fill; with all the resources in themselves that liberal thought and broad culture can give; guided by their own conscience and judgment; trained to self-protection by a healthy development of the muscular system and skill in the use of weapons of defense, and stimulated to self-support by a knowledge of the business world and the pleasure that pecuniary independence must ever give; when women are trained in this way they will, in a measure, be fitted for those hours of solitude that come alike to all, whether prepared or otherwise. As in our extremity we must depend on ourselves, the dictates of wisdom point to complete individual development.

In talking of education how shallow the argument, that each class must be educated for the special work it proposes to do, and all those faculties not needed in this special walk must lie dormant and utterly wither for want of use, when, perhaps, these will be very faculties needed in life's greatest emergencies. Some say, Where is the use of drilling girls in the languages, the sciences, in law, medicine, theology? As wives, mothers housekeepers, cooks, they need a different curriculum from boys who are to fill all positions. The chief cooks in our great hotels and ocean steamers are men. In our large cities men run the bakeries; they make our bread, cake and pies. They manage the laundries; they are now considered our best milliners and dressmakers. Because some men fill these departments of usefulness, shall we regulate the curriculum in Harvard and Yale to their present necessities? If not, why this talk in our best colleges of a curriculum for girls who are crowding into the trades and professions; teachers in all our public schools, rapidly filling many lucrative and honorable positions in life? They are showing, too, their calmness and courage in the most trying hours of human experience.

You have probably all read in the daily papers of the terrible storm in the Bay of Biscay when a tidal wave made such havoe on the shore, wrecking vessels, unroofing houses, and carrying destruction everywhere. Among other buildings the woman's prison was demolished. Those who escaped saw men struggling to reach the shore. They promptly by clasping hands made a chain of themselves and pushed out into the sea, again and again, at the risk of their lives, until they had brought six men to shore, carried them to a shelter, and did all in their power for their comfort and protection.

What special school training could have prepared these women for this sublime moment in their lives? In times like this humanity rises above all college curriculums and recognizes Nature as the greatest of all teachers in the hour of danger and death. Women are already the equals of men in the whole realm of thought, in art, science, literature, and government. With telescopic vision they explore the starry firmament and bring back the history of the planetary world. With chart and compass they pilot ships across the mighty deep, and with skillful finger send electric messages around the globe. In galleries of art the beauties of nature and the virtues of humanity are immortalized by them on canvas and by their inspired touch dull blocks of marble are transformed into angels of light.

In music they speak again the language of Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, and are worthy interpreters of their great thoughts. The poetry and novels of the century are theirs, and they have touched the keynote of reform in religion, politics, and social life. They fill the editor's and professor's chair and plead at the bar of justice, walk the wards of the hospital, and speak from the pulpit and the platform; such is the type of womanhood that an enlightened public sentiment welcomes to-day, and such the triumph of the facts of life over the false theories of the past.

Is it, then, consistent to hold the developed woman of this day within the same narrow political limits as the dame with the spinning wheel and knitting needle occupied in the past? No! no! Machinery has taken the labors of woman as well as man on its tireless shoulders; the loom and the spinning wheel are but dreams of the past; the pen, the brush, the easel, the chisel, have taken their places, while the hopes and ambitions of women are essentially changed.

We see reason sufficient in the outer conditions of human beings for individual liberty and development, but when we consider the self dependence of every human soul we see the need of courage, judgment, and the exercise of every faculty of mind and body, strengthened and developed by use, in woman as well as man.

Whatever may be said of man's protecting power in ordinary conditions, amid all the terrible disasters by land and sea, in the supreme moments of danger, alone woman must ever meet the horrors of the situation; the Angel of Death even makes no royal pathway for her. Man's love and sympathy enter only into the sunshine of our lives. In that solemn solitude of self, that links us with the immeasurable and the eternal, each soul lives alone forever. A recent writer says: I remember once, in crossing the Atlantic, to have gone upon the deck of the ship at midnight, when a dense black cloud enveloped the sky, and the great deep was roaring madly under the lashes of demoniac winds. My feeling was not of danger or fear (which is a base surrender of the immortal soul), but of utter desolation and loneliness; a little speck of life shut in by a tremendous darkness. Again I remember

to have climbed the slopes of the Swiss Alps, up beyond the point where vegetation ceases, and the stunted conifers no longer struggle against the unfeeling blasts. Around me lay a huge confusion of rocks, out of which the gigantic toe peaks shot into the measureless blue of the heavens, and again my only feeling was the awful solitude.

And yet, there is a solitude, which each and every one of us has always carried with him more inaccessible than the ice-cold mountains, more profound than the midnight sea; the solitude of self. Our inner being, which we call ourself, no eye nor touch of man or angel has ever pierced. It is more hidden than the caves of the gnome; the sacred adytum of the oracle; the hidden chamber of eleusinian mystery, for to it only omniscience is permitted to enter.

Such is individual life. Who, I ask you, can take, dare take, on himself the rights, the duties, the responsibilities of another human soul?

Miss Susan B. Anthony, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I now wish to introduce to you Mrs. Lucy Stone, of Boston, one of the pioneers of our movement, and one, I believe, who has not yet spoken before the Judiciary Committee of the House, although Mrs. Stanton and myself have been here for the last twenty-five years. We are very proud to present to you Mrs. Lucy Stone.

### **ADDRESS OF MRS. LUCY STONE.**

Mrs. Lucy Stone, of Boston, next addressed the committee. She said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I arrived in town only last night and did not even know of a hearing he to-day, so I have not any speech prepared. Nevertheless I am glad to be here, and I am glad to see this committee, and—I suppose I have the right to say it—I am glad to see you are the kind of looking men I see before me. It is something on our side to have you be the men you seem to be. I come before this committee with the sense which I always feel, that we are handicapped as women in what we try to do for ourselves by the single fact that we have no vote. This cheapens us. You do not care so much for us as if we had votes, so that we come always with that infinite disadvantage.

But the thing I want to say particularly is that we have our immortal Declaration of Independence and the various bills of rights of the different States (and George Washington advised us to recur often to first principles), and in the Declaration of Independence nothing is clearer than the basis of the claim that women should have equal rights with men. It is that those that are to obey the laws should make them. A complete government is a perfectly just government. Now it is easy to say that our fathers announced that principle but did not apply it. Of course they were in no condition to do so, and they could not. In the white heat of the struggle of the war of the Revolution these men

declared better things than they could do. They saw the great truth that a complete government must be a just government; but they were too near the throne; they had the idea of the one man power, and so they were unable to carry out the principle of a just government. In my own State of Massachusetts they allowed none but church members to vote. Then property holders alone had the right to vote; and then the Democratic party came in and said that the poor man had as much right to vote as the man of property, and abolished the property qualification. Then the Republicans came and abolished the disfranchisement of the negroes; and to-day every human being in the United States except woman has the right to vote.

Now, what I want particularly to impress upon this committee is the gross and grave injustice of holding forty millions of women absolutely helpless under the Government. The laws touch us at every point. From the time the little girl baby is born until the time the aged woman makes her last will and testament, there is not one of our affairs which the law does not control. It says who shall own property, and what rights the woman shall have, and it settles all her affairs, whether she shall buy or sell or will or deed; it settles all that a woman has to do; and so, except in the single State of Wyoming—how glad I am you have two Senators from Wyoming—women are in a helpless position. Mrs. Stanton has told you about the solitude of the individual, but think what it is to be in the power of others in such a way that in nothing that concerns you have you any voice! If you are a woman and happen to have property and wish to rent it, somebody decides what you shall have for rent, how much you shall pay for taxes, etc., and in not a single solitary thing are you allowed to have a voice for yourself. Persons are elected by men to represent them in Congress and the State legislatures; and here are forty millions of women, with just the same stake in the Government that men have, with a class interest of their own, and with not one solitary word to say or power to help settle one of the things that concern them.

Men must know the value of votes and the value of the possession of power, and I look at them and wonder how it is possible for them to be willing that their own sisters, mothers, wives, and daughters should be debarred from the possession of like power. We have been going to the legislature in Massachusetts—we have been going there longer than Mrs. Stanton has been coming here—and we asked that when a husband and wife made a contract with each other as, for instance, if the wife loan the husband her money, the contract should be considered valid just as it would between any other parties, for now, in case the husband fails in business, she can not get her money, and the legislature very kindly gave us leave to withdraw. Then we asked that when a man dies and the wife is left alone, with no man to help her and she has to bear the whole burden of life on her shoulders, the law might give the widow more than forty days in which to stay in the house without paying rent.

But we could not defeat one of our legislators, and they cared not a cent for our vote and less than a cent for our opinion; and so when we went there and asked this they gave us leave to withdraw. But when some voters wanted about 6 inches of mud out of a river, the legislature passed it unanimously. They respect the wants of the voter, but they care nothing about the wants of those who do not have votes. So, when we asked in Massachusetts for protection for wives beaten by their husbands, that there might be a committee to stand between such wives and their husbands, and that the husband should be made to give a portion of his earnings to support the minor children, again we had leave to withdraw. Of course we have obtained many concessions, and I am happy to say that in the legislatures of the different States the laws have been modified very greatly since the old common law which prevailed everywhere, which took away from the wife everything, even the right to herself, even the right to her children, even the right to her money and her real estate. The daughters of Cassius Clay are here to-day; and in Kentucky this same question is being considered, and they are trying there to get property rights for wives. As Mrs. Stanton says, we believe in the rights of the individual, hence this efforts is being made to secure the right of married women to their property.

Now you see, gentlemen, the helplessness of our position. I can think of nothing so helpless and humiliating as the position of a disfranchised person. I do not know whether I am treading on dangerous toes when I say that after the late war the Government in power wished to punish Jefferson Davis, and it considered that the worst punishment it could inflict upon him was to take away from him the right to vote. Now, the odium which attached to him from his disfranchisement is just the same that attaches to women from their disfranchisement. The only persons who are not allowed to vote in Massachusetts are the lunatics, idiots, and felons, and people who can not read and write. In what a category is that to place women, after one hundred years, and at the close of this nineteenth century! And yet that is history. In Massachusetts we are trying to get a small concession—the right to vote in the cities and towns in which we live in regard to the taxes we have to pay. In 1792, in the town of Newburyport, Mass., it was not thought necessary to give women education. At that time there were no schools for girls; the public money was not used for girl's schools, and when one man said that he had five daughters, and paid his taxes like other men, and his girls were not allowed to attend school, and that they ought to give the girls a chance, another man said, "Take the public money and educate shes? Never!"

Remember, this was one hundred years ago. One of the fathers urged that the girls should be educated in the public schools, and the men—God forgive them!—said this: "We will let the girls go to school in the morning between 6 and 8 o'clock, before the boys want the schoolhouse." Just think of the time those girls would have had to rise in order to get a little education before the boys got there! This plan did not work well, and the teacher was instructed not to teach females any longer.

Every descendant of those men in the town now feels ashamed of them; and I think that in one hundred years the children of the men who are now year, pleading for suffrage, will feel ashamed. Men would rather lose anything than their votes; they would fight for their right to vote, and if anybody attempted to deprive them of the suffrage, it would be war to the knife and the knife to the hilt. We come here to carry on this bloodless warfare, year after year, asking and praying that the privilege granted in the foundation of the Government should be applied to women.

What I wish, gentlemen, this winter, is for you to recommend a sixteenth amendment with an educational qualification in it. I believe you should never put obstacles in the way of anybody's right to vote. Everybody should have the right to vote who cares to vote, but anyone who does can learn to read. What I think you should recommend is a sixteenth amendment with an educational qualification. I do not suppose there is a State in the Union that would adopt it, not one; but the fact that you put it forward as a thing which ought to be adopted is a part education of the great public mind. What we look forward to is part of the eternal order. It is not possible that forty millions of women should be held forever as lunatics, fools, and idiots. It is not possible, as the years go on, that each person should not at last have the right to look after his own interests. As the home is at its best when the father and mother consult together in regard to the family interests, so it is with the Government. I do not think it possible for a man to see from a man's point of view all the things that a woman needs, and I do not think a woman from her single point of view sees all the things that a man needs. Now, I think men have brought their best, and also brought their worst, into the Union, and it is all here, but the thing you have not in the Government at all is the qualities that women possess, the feminine qualities. It has been said in regard to this matter that women are more economical and peaceful and law-abiding than men, and all those qualities are lacking in the Government to-day.

How much do we spend for war, and how much should we save if this peace element were only represented in the Government? If the peaceful sex can have their way it will go toward helping peace. It will be the same way in regard to the economy of the Government. The part that a woman does in the family no man can do. When she brings up her children who are to be Senators and Representatives, or farmers or ranchmen, that woman, who has given twenty years to bringing up that family, has rendered a service to the Government that no man can render. She does not get compensation for it in money; there is no compensation in money that can buy such labor, and she does not ask for that. At the same time, women who earn a compensation (and I am sorry to say it is very much less than the wages of men), when they get a dollar do not go and spend it on carriage hire, etc., but they get the things they need, for they have learned economy. If women came into the Government, they would bring with them that economy and those traits which the Government needs.

But whether this would be so or not, it is right that every class should be heard in behalf of its own interests. When the common law was being indited, if there had been one single woman there, and the question had come up as to when a baby was born who should own that baby, would it have been decided that the man should own the baby? Not at all. The woman would have said, "I had an equal share in this child's life, and I have an equal share in its future." Suppose a woman had been there when the question was raised as to when a woman married who should own that woman. Would a law have been passed that the custody of her person shall belong to the husband, who may give her mild correction and use gentle restraint, and that if she breaks her leg and damages are awarded, he shall receive the damages? Not at all. The woman would have said, "My legs are my own, and I shall have the custody of my own person, and if I break my leg and get damages, the money shall be my own."

Now, gentlemen, I hope you will try and make this case your own. It is simple justice and fair play, and it is also a fundamental principle of the Government. Here are we trying to have a complete government, and yet there are forty millions of disfranchised people. I believe, among the great people—and by the people I do not mean men, but men and women, the whole people—that nothing that makes such disrespect for the fundamental principle of our Government as not to apply it. The Government was founded upon the principle that those who obey the laws should make them, and here it shuts out a full half. As long as that is done and continues to be done, it certainly tends to create disrespect for the principle itself. Do you not see it?

What I wish to impress upon you is that you should present a sixteenth amendment, with an educational qualification, and strongly support it, and as far as in you lies, try to get rid of this odious class distinction, this oligarchy of sex which is more hateful than the oligarchy of wealth or the oligarchy of color. This Government gives to a criminal taken from the State's prison and pardoned higher privileges than it grants to Mrs. Stanton, and makes her his political inferior. I have seen a man who was so drunk that he had to be helped to the polls, yet who in the eye of the law the political superior of Miss Anthony. Why not reach out a hand to woman and say, "Come and help us make the laws and see fair play."

I wish I had the power to impress you with the fact that greater than the free coinage of silver, or the tariff, or anything you have before you, is the question whether the people shall have the right to govern themselves, irrespective of whether they are men or women.

Miss Anthony. We have with us one not so old in our cause as Mrs. Stone—I never call myself old because I shall be young until the crack of doom—and that is Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker, a sister

of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher. The world has always made special place for the family of Beechers.

#### **ADDRESS OF MRS. ISABELLA BEECHER HOOKER.**

Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker next addressed the committee. She said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I want to speak to you, gentlemen, as a grandmother. Miss Anthony speaks of me as if I was young; well, I am young in spirit. I have simply this to say: You all know those old Jewish words we read in the Decalogue, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee." If we want to help the Republic, and if we want to perpetuate the institutions our fathers brought across the water, we have got to honor the mothers equally with the fathers in the Government; and for this reason, that to-day our law compel our sons the moment they are twenty-one years old to come to us and say: "My mother, I owe you much; sometimes I think all that is good in me has come from you, but to-day you will retire and I will rule. I will no longer listen to your counsel; the law will not permit me to in that sense, but I will make the laws for you and my sisters, and you must obey them. Henceforth I am your ruler."

Now, friends, a government can not last long that teaches its sons to disrespect its mothers. It is our principle that we recognize the mother element in the Government as well a in the family. Suppose we tried to cross the ocean in a vessel with paddles and we locked up one set of paddles, how many Atlantics could we cross? Then another point: To-day we have all Asia and Europe coming here, which complicates our case. You do not get along as well as you did when you had no complication of foreigners and you lived entirely with each other; but to-day you have got to carry all Europe and Asia, and you have got to unlock the mother paddle and let American women's voices be heard, her powers be felt.

#### **ADDRESS OF MISS SUSAN B. ANTHONY.**

Miss Susan B. Anthony next addressed the committee. She said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, the only words I would like to add to those spoken are that the committee recommend to the House the passage of the resolution which is before you. I was presented by the Hon. Mr. Greenleaf of New York. I am proud to say that it is my district which Mr. Greenleaf represents; we never send a man down here that is not right. Then I am proud to say about Mr. Greenleaf that he is not only right himself, but his wife is, too. She is president of the New York State Woman's Suffrage Society. The point we wish to make clear to you is this: We do not ask you to decide whether women

in different States shall have the right to vote. We want simply to make it possible for the States to decide whether the women of their respective States shall have the right or not conceded to them. All that is within the power of Congress is to pass this resolution submitting the proposition to the State legislatures, and, as you know, it is a long way after that, because we have to get a majority of three-fourths of the legislatures; and I wish gentlemen would dispossess their minds of the idea that they are saying whether women shall vote or not when they pass this resolution.

We expected to have had, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, the committee on petitions that has been at work: We wanted them here in time to have, presented them to you, petitions representing various associations, Knights of Labor, etc., who are sending up appeals to Congress to pass it on the basis I have represented. The petitions so far gathered represent men who believe, not all of them, in suffrage, but in the right of each State to express itself on this point. As I said in the beginning, we have been coming here for a great many years. Mrs. Stanton, after the hearing before this committee of the Fifty-first Congress, declared that she would never come up here again "to talk to those boys." But here is a woman past her seventy-sixth year. When she was a young girl she began to make this demand. Most of you were not born when she and Lucy Stone determined to secure to women the right to vote in this country, and yet these aged women have been working for this reform for forty-five or fifty years. They plead before young men in Congress who have not thought upon the subject until they see them before the committee table. So we have come here to-day to make you think of this question, and we know you will think of it.

The Chairman. The committee is very much obliged for he speeches you have been kind enough to deliver before it.

Miss Anthony. We are exceedingly obliged, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, for the courtesy of giving us a chance once more of presenting our claims before you.

BMr'05