

THE BALLOT BOX.

VOL. 1.

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No. 10.

"A weapon firmer set,
And better than the bayonet—
A weapon which comes down as still
As snow-flakes fall upon the sod,
But executes a freeman's will
As lightning does the will of God:
And from its force nor bolts nor locks
Can shield you—'tis the ballot-box."

THE BALLOT BOX.

A monthly journal published in the advocacy of equal rights irrespective of sex, by the Toledo Woman Suffrage Association.

The pressing need of the hour demands a thorough purification in all branches of the government, and prominent toward this end the removal of the great blot upon the honor of the nation as a Republic, the subjection of women. Women are taxed without representation; governed without their consent; treated as perpetual minors and their most sacred rights ignored. The BALLOT BOX protests against these wrongs, and invites cooperation, by way of subscription and other methods of aiding its circulation, from all those who are willing to examine impartially these momentous questions.

Fearing nothing but error it does not hesitate to express its honest convictions; but while decided in its demands and free in the expression of them, its columns are open to discussion where it can be carried on in sincerity.

Terms of subscription, one dollar per year payable in advance. Specimen copies sent gratuitously on application. All communications to be addressed to

SARAH R. L. WILLIAMS,
TOLEDO, O.

APPEAL FOR A SIXTEENTH AMENDMENT.

To the Women of the United States:

Having celebrated our Centennial birthday with a National jubilee, let us now dedicate the dawn of the Second Century to securing justice to Women.

For this purpose we ask you to circulate a petition to Congress, just issued by the "National Woman Suffrage Association," asking an amendment to the United States Constitution, that shall prohibit the several States from disfranchising any of their citizens on account of Sex. We have already sent this petition throughout the country for the signatures of those men and women who believe in the citizen's right to vote.

To see how large a petition each State rolls up, and to do the work as expeditiously as possible, it is necessary that some person, or society in each State and District should take the matter in charge, print, and send out petitions to reliable friends in every county, urging upon all thoroughness and haste. When the petitions are returned they should be pasted together, neatly rolled up, the number of signatures marked on the outside, with the name of the State, and forwarded to Sara Andrews Spencer, Chairman of the Congressional Committee, corner of L and 7th street, Washington, D. C. On the 16th and 17th of January, 1877, we shall hold our 8th Annual Convention at the Capitol, and ask a hearing on our petition before Congress.

Having petitioned to our law-makers, State and National, for years, many from weariness and despair have vowed to appeal no more; for our petitions, say they, by the tens of thousands, are piled up mid the National archives unheeded and ignored. Yet, it is possible to roll up such a mammoth petition, borne into Congress on the shoulders of stalwart men, that we can no longer be neglected or forgotten. Statesmen and politicians, alike, are conquered by majorities. We urge women of this country to make now the same united effort for their own rights, that they did for the slaves at the South, when the 13th amendment was pending. Then a petition of over 300,000 was rolled up by the leaders of the suffrage movement, and presented in the Senate by the Hon. Charles Sumner. But the leading statesmen who welcomed woman's untiring efforts to secure the black man's freedom, frowned down the same demands when made for herself. Is not liberty as sweet to her as to him? Are not the political disabilities of Sex as grievous as those of color? Is not a civil rights bill that shall open to women the college doors, the trades and professions—that shall secure her personal and property rights, as necessary for her protection, as for that of the colored man?

And yet the highest judicial authorities

have decided that the spirit and letter of our National Constitution are not broad enough to protect Woman in her political rights; and for the redress of her wrongs they remand her to the State. If this Magna Charta of Human Rights can be thus narrowed by judicial interpretations in favor of class legislation, then must we demand an amendment that in clear, unmistakable language, shall declare the equality of all citizens before the law.

Women are citizens, first of the United States, and second of the State wherein they reside: hence, if robbed by State authorities of any right founded in nature or secured by law, they have the same right to national protection against the State, as against the infringements of any foreign power. If the United States government can punish a woman for voting in one State, why has it not the same power to protect her in the exercise of that right in every State? The Constitution declares it the duty of Congress to guarantee to every State a republican form of government, to every citizen equality of rights. This is not done in States where women, thoroughly qualified, are denied admission into colleges, which their property is taxed to build and endow; where they are denied the right to practice law and are thus debarred from one of the most lucrative professions; where they are denied a voice in the government, and thus while suffering all the ills that grow out of the giant evils of intemperance, prostitution, war, heavy taxation and political corruption, stand powerless to effect any reform. Prayers, tears, psalm singing and expostulation are light in the balance, compared with that power at the ballot box that converts opinions into law. If Women who are laboring for peace, temperance, social purity and the rights of labor, would take the speediest way to accomplish what they propose, let them demand the ballot in their own hands, that they may have a direct power in the government. Thus only can they improve the conditions of the outside world and purify the home. As political equality is the door to civil, religious and social liberty, here must our work begin.

Constituting as we do one-half the people, bearing the burdens of one half the National debt, equally responsible with man for the education, religion and morals of the rising generation, let us with united voice send forth a protest against the present political status of Woman, that shall echo and re-echo through the land. In view of the numbers and character of those making the demand, this should be the largest petition ever yet rolled up in the old world or the new; a petition that shall settle forever the popular objection that "Women do not want to vote."

On behalf of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, Pres.
MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE, Chair, Ex. Com.
SUSAN B. ANTHONY, Cor. Sec.
TENAFLY, N. J., Nov. 10, 1876.

PETITION FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

The National Woman Suffrage Association issue the following petition for general signatures, which will be presented to Congress in January.

To the Senate and House of Representatives, in Congress Assembled:

The undersigned citizens of the United States, Residents of the State of _____ earnestly pray your Honorable Bodies to adopt measures for so amending the Constitution as to prohibit the several States from disfranchising United States citizens on account of sex.

(Friends of the cause should lose no time in circulating the above.)

A Massachusetts court has recently rendered a decision denying to a married woman the ownership of her own clothing. She is perhaps one of those women "who have all the rights they want."

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ILLINOIS WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

"Congratulations, good friends, that this, our morning session of our annual meeting is not so largely attended as many had hoped." Why are our women absent? From lack of interest? Far from it; but the royal, imperious opportunities and duties for woman have come crowding upon her so in the past months, that our suffrage women everywhere are in demand, called upon to bear the burdens of church and State. Throughout our entire city to-day women are at work, addressing the vast audiences that crowd the Moody meetings, holding the daily temperance meetings in Farwell Hall, etc. Many of them have written, "will be with you in spirit, but urgent business demands my care." Hundreds of women joyfully entering these new fields forget not the women who have opened the doors for them. While alas, some of the women to-day, addressing vast crowds of men and women upon the most vital and momentous questions, yet make haste to assert that "they are not yet convinced that women would be capable of voting for moral reforms."

Such were the opening sentences addressed to the Convention by its President, Mrs. Elizabeth Boynton Harbert, who also explained why the meeting had been called at this time when the interest of the city centered in the great meetings above referred to. The special business being the circulation of petitions to Congress, to be presented at the time of the approaching Convention called by the National Woman Suffrage Association, to convene in Washington on the 16th and 17th of January.

The following letter was then read from Dr. Thomas, ex-pastor of the church:

AURORA, Ill., Dec. 3, 1876.

DEAR FRIEND:—I have the honor to acknowledge your kind letter of invitation to take part in the annual meeting of the Illinois Woman's Suffrage Convention to be held in Chicago on the 5th inst. I should esteem it a privilege to comply with this request, but previous engagements make it impossible. I have from the first given such encouragement as I could to this movement, not so much from a clear conviction that women should have the ballot—though I have not been unwilling to see this power put in their hands—as from a feeling that there must be some unmet want in the social order on which the demand rested, and that the agitation of the subject would at last do good in opening many other doors that have too long been closed to their presence. This result has been quite largely reached, and our sisters now stand by our side in the pulpit and the press, at the bar and in the sick-room, and are welcomed in every field of industry. And I have a growing conviction that society must ere long not only acknowledge woman's right to the ballot, but confess its need; that she have it for its own preservation and purity.

Indeed, it seems unreasonable to ask woman to take so large a part in the hard work of the world's reform, and at the same time deny her the right to vote, which is the greatest, and in many cases the only power by which these reforms are effected. I think that this whole question of the right of franchise needs to be gone over again in this country. It is a sad comment that a great election is left to turn upon the rabble of our great cities or the unlettered negroes of the South. Citizenship in our country means both too much and too little; too much in the power that is put in the hands of the ignorant and vicious, and too little in that it is so cheap that no one cares to value it. It seems to me that it would be better to remove the restrictions of sex from the ballot, and place it entirely upon some just basis of intelligence and property. This would place a premium upon industry and learning, and while it would restrain the power of the low and ignorant classes, it would at the same time secure their rights and their greatest good by placing this power in better hands. The public mind is prepared to give you a fairer hearing now than ever before, and I trust your meeting may result in wise conclusions and suitable action. But I had no thought of saying so much in this hasty letter.

Sincerely yours, H. W. THOMAS.

Following this was an interesting account of the coming before the National Convention at Cincinnati last June of Mrs. Harbert and Mrs. Sara J. Spencer, and speaking in highest terms of their reception. She gave a short synopsis of her remarks at that time, and said that politicians, knowing and acknowledging the power of women in Washington, are asserting that the influence of Christian women throughout the land now constitutes the only reserve force.

Mrs. J. C. Cutler then made a very interesting address, giving an account of the progress made by the women all over the world. She had, she said, been engaged in the work of advancing the women since 1851, and those who then advocated women's rights were denounced as infidels; that since that time the movement had been growing in favor, till now the great schools are opened all over the world to women, and in Italy the colleges and all the ranks in them are as free to women as to men.

She said: "It is rights, not privileges, we want, and I can't but think that if Mr. Charles Sumner is looking down upon us he must still regret that in framing the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments they did not give to women that priceless pearl of franchise."

Mrs. Duniway, of Portland, Oregon, editor of the *New Northwest*, made a short and stirring address, telling of the increasing in-

terest felt in the cause in Oregon, and expressing her conviction in favor of its justice.

Mrs. Judge Waite, of Aurora, the Secretary of the association, then read the report, in which she paid a graceful tribute of respect to Mrs. Fernando Jones, the former President of the association, and also to Mrs. Barnet, for her generosity in furnishing the sinews of war when the battle seemed to require it. Thanks were also tendered to Mrs. Harbert for her untiring zeal, which resulted in the insertion in the Republican platform of the woman's rights plank. The nomination of officers was then placed in the hands of a committee, composed of Mrs. Judge Waite, Mrs. Dr. Cutler, Mrs. E. J. Loomis, Mrs. Dr. Mix, and Mrs. Fernando Jones.

The meeting then adjourned till 2 o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION.
The audience in the afternoon was very much of an improvement on that of the morning in point of numbers, and also on the apparent interest felt. Prayer was offered, after which came the report of the Nominating Committee, which was as follows:

Pres't—Mrs. Elizabeth Boynton Harbert.
Vice Presidents—Mrs. Jane Grahame Jones, Capt. William P. Black, A. I. Grover, Esq., Mrs. Dr. Gardner, Hon. C. B. Waite, and Mrs. A. Barnet.

Secretary—Mrs. A. I. Grover.

Treasurer—Mrs. E. J. Loomis.

Executive Committee—Mrs. Judge Holbrook, Hon. J. C. Bradwell, Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Cynthia Leonard, Miss Francis A. Willard, Mrs. George Gifford, Miss Fernando Jones, Mrs. Dr. Mix and Mrs. H. M. T. Cutler.

Mrs. Fernando Jones then read a lengthy and circumstantial account of the progress of the Woman Suffrage movement in the State of Illinois.

This report of Mrs. Jones was very interesting and spicy, and I hope to secure the MSS. in order that it may be preserved in the BALLOT BOX.

Following this was an exceedingly interesting discourse by Mrs. Abigail Scott Duniway, which was listened to with the most profound interest.

Mrs. J. C. Cutler then related how her interest was first awakened to the true legal status of women in this country; how, hearing the phrase over and over in the legal books, infants, idiots, and women, the classification seemed at least somewhat remarkable. By long experience she had found that women were really in law not much better situated than the first two classes. She had, after long and weary trials and tribulations, succeeded in having a bill protecting women's rights in regard to property brought before the Legislature, to have it in ridicule referred to the Committee on Internal Navigation.

Contrasting this action of the Legislature with recent progressive action in different States, she proved conclusively that the cause has rapidly progressed.

The Convention then proceeded to elect delegates to the Washington Convention, with the following result:

Mrs. Elizabeth Boynton Harbert, Mrs. Jane Grahame Jones, Miss Frances E. Willard.

The distinguishing features of the evening session were the eloquent oration of Capt. W. P. Black (one of the prominent lawyers of Chicago), and the reading of Miss Francis E. Willard's eloquent address by Mrs. L. S. Rounds. Mrs. Rounds is not only a lovely, Christian woman, but one of Chicago's recognized leaders in Christian philanthropy, and when our hitherto conservative women begin to see that the *ballot is crystallized moral power, then our battle is won.*

The hitherto prejudiced are beginning to discover that Woman Suffrage means moral reform.

Interesting letters were received from the Presidents of the Ohio and Oregon Woman Suffrage Associations the day after the Convention. From north and south, east and west, everywhere comes the assurance "the tide is rising." Let woman have her lamp trimmed and burning, for surely our beloved country, from the depths of her present despair will cry out, as have many of our debt-burdened churches, "Our sisters, we pray you, come over and help us," and with a firm faith in the triumph of *Truth* we buckle on the armor and unfurl our ensign, "For God and Home and Native Land."

From the Toledo Blade.

A WOMAN SUFFRAGE TRIUMPH.

The ladies can now rejoice; they have a substantial decision in favor of their political rights which cannot help being of great use to them in future discussion. The Supreme Court of Iowa has decided that they can hold certain offices—not by virtue of any special law, but because there is *nothing in the Constitution which says they shall not.* This is a great point gained.

The case in which the decision was made was that of Cook versus Huff. Two years ago Miss Elizabeth S. Cook was elected Superintendent of Schools in Warren County, Iowa—a fine, rich county, with a college and excellent schools. Her opponent was John A. Huff, who was beaten by a large majority, but he adopted the tactics lately made famous by Mr. Cronin, of Oregon. He claimed that Miss Cook was ineligible on account of her sex, and that he, having the next highest number of votes, was entitled to the office.

The Circuit Court before which the case was brought, decided adversely to both parties; to Miss Cook, because she was a woman, and to Huff because a majority of the votes cast were against him.

Miss Cook appealed to the Supreme Court. In the meanwhile the Legislature had passed a law authorizing women to hold

"Truth forever on the Scaffold—Wrong forever on the throne,
But that Scaffold sways the Future, and behind the dim Unknown,
Standeth God within the Shadow, keeping watch above His own."

the office of County Superintendent, and providing further that the question of sex should not be held to disqualify any who had already been elected to the office.

The Supreme Court rendered its decision on the question last week, reversing the case of Cook vs. Huff, and holding that Miss Cook is entitled to the office, without regard to the law passed in 1875, on the ground that there is nothing in the Constitution prohibiting it. As to the retroactive part of the law, which legalized the elections and acts of others who had held the office, the Court held that the Legislature had power to pass such a law, or, in other words, there being no inhibition in the Constitution against women holding the office, and the Legislature having the power to have authorized their election at any time, it was therefore competent now to do what it had power to do before. The law was therefore constitutional.

This decision is regarded as establishing the right of women to hold any office in the State, in which the word "person" is used in the law creating and defining its duties. This will include everything except that of members of the Legislature, and Judges of the Supreme Court.

FROM IOWA.

ED. BALLOT BOX:—Do not think because you have not heard from us the two past months, we have lost interest in the political emancipation of woman. Since our last missive we have had much to inspire us in renewed effort, and encourage us in the hope that the day is not far distant when "our land" will be the land of the free and the home where men and women will unite to form its government. That will be a consistent Republic when all of proper age, regardless of sex, can have a voice in the laws by which they are governed, and an interest in a government mutually supported by taxation. If we do not vote, why should we be taxed? No man has yet been found who can logically answer this question. Let us continue to ask it until by the weakness of the endeavor to answer men will be convinced they are doing a *wrong* by withholding the ballot from woman.

In October we visited the "Great Centennial Exposition," and saw the glory of women as well as men. It would be vain to attempt a description, but when the noisy "Corliss engine" sounded its own praise we turned instinctively to the needle threader, serving the place of eyes, to the manufacturer of clothing, quietly doing its useful work—the invention of woman. Many other useful inventions, by women, convinced us they are exercising their brains as well as men in the right direction. Although the Centennial gathering was to celebrate the men's hundredth year of national independence, had not the women contributed their handiwork the Exposition would have been far less interesting. Many of the fine paintings, statuary, embroidery, laces, clothing, etc., were fashioned by women.

We also had the pleasure of attending the "American Woman's Suffrage Convention" and the "Women's Congress," the annual meeting of each being held in Philadelphia, thus affording the friends of the cause attending the Exposition from a distance to have not only a surfeit of sight-seeing, but an intellectual feast. Never before in the United States were assembled so many *good* and *great* women to discuss the ways and means for the advancement of our sex. We missed our friends, Mrs. Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, at the Congress. (They were at their Herculean task at Tenafly, writing the history of the woman's movement which, when published, will no doubt be a book in which all friends of the cause will be interested.) Dear Lucretia Mott, over eighty years of age, gave us a short address, and represented how much more easy it is to be a female suffragist now than it was when she and a few other brave women commenced advocating the unpopular cause. She looked so pure and womanly in her quaint quaker dress, and her words were so earnest and impressive that all sat in almost breathless silence, eager to catch every word from her tremulous voice. She looked so feeble we felt we were hearing her for the first and last time. After the exercises had closed we begged a kiss from her; she looked up with a true motherly love and freely granted it, with the cheering words, "God bless you." After receiving her blessing do you wonder we are encouraged to persevere? The women of the "Congress" discussed more scientific than practical subjects, which is not a wonder when so great a scientist as Maria Mitchell presided. Many men were present and listened *attentively* to words of wisdom as uttered by women. One learned Professor remarked to us, "Some of the scientific subjects were as ably presented as they could have been by the scientific men of the nation." They no longer kept silence upon the subject of female Suffrage. Frances Willard, in her temperance address, boldly advocated it, and many others alluded to it, a theme which has heretofore been avoided; no doubt they were convinced—there could be no *truly great reform* without it. This advance caused us to be thankful we had been elected a member, and thus afford us an opportunity of meeting yearly with sisters of advanced ideas from Maine to Oregon.

Iowa is "not dead, but liveth." In our next communication we hope to report many names for the Sixteenth Amendment. We are not discouraged. "The mills of the gods grind slowly but surely."

N. R. ALLEN.