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WOMANHOOD SUFFRAGE. – NO. 5.
A REVIEW OF OBJECTIONS.

THAT MAN REPRESENTS WOMAN.

This argument presupposes that woman will take an intelligent interest in the social, benevolent and reformatory measures which are regulated by the ballot, but that instead of herself actually voting she will resort to the expedient of influencing her husband – her political representative – to vote in accordance with her ideas of justice and expediency; all women being supposed to have husbands.

According to this theory another consideration is added to the already too numerous ones for lowering the standard of marriage. Woman will be tempted to wed, not only, as is too often the case now, for a home, social position or support, but for the object of securing a representative in the government. In choosing a husband, instead of being influenced solely by personal esteem and affection, she will be obliged to question the gentleman as a candidate for political office is questioned, to ascertain whether he is qualified to represent her properly, and she must be influenced in her choice accordingly.

Moreover, if a man is actually the political representative of his wife, he is bound to cast his vote in accordance with her desires. A representative is chosen to represent his constituents, and it is his duty to carry out their wishes, not his own. It is doubtful whether men would be willing to accept the duties of representative with this understanding.

But the idea that the husband is, or can be, the political representative of his wife is a fallacious one. A representative is necessarily chosen for a brief term of service. Elections of Representatives are made thus frequent in order to secure a faithful discharge of their duties. Were they elected for a long term of years, or for life, they would be too independent of the people. Being permanently seated in power, they would feel less responsibility to their constituents than when they may be removed from office at the expiration of every year. A short term of office is best calculated to insure obedience on the part of a Representative to the will of the people whom he represents.

Since it will scarcely be considered practicable for a woman to change husbands every year, or every few years, it will be perceived that the fundamental principles of matrimony and of representation are totally different from and inconsistent with each other. Hence a husband cannot be the political representative of his wife.

It may be said that woman chooses man to represent her in a vague and general way, trusting that he will always act wisely and well, and not taking the trouble to inform herself upon subjects of political interest. This has been largely the case in the past, but owing to the progress of education, the more general diffusion of knowledge, and the increasing interest of woman in public questions, it cannot continue. Woman has already commenced and will continue to take a deeper and more intelligent interest in subjects affecting the general welfare, and it is impossible that she should longer be satisfied with the neutral position which she has hitherto held. Christian principle and Christian feeling will stimulate her desire for action. Christ's command was given to all, "Go, work in my vineyard," and every

opportunity will be embraced. Young's "Science of Government," by earnest Christian women for extending and promoting the interests of his cause.

THAT THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMAN IN POLITICAL LIFE WOULD CREATE FAMILY DISSENSIONS.

A husband, we are told, might belong to one political party and his wife to another, and continual quarreling and wrangling would be the result. The same objection may be urged, and with far greater force, against woman having any religious opinions. A man may be an unbeliever, and his wife a Christian; he may be a Protestant and she a Catholic, or he a Methodist and she a Baptist. Would not continual wrangling be the result? Upon no other subject are people so sensitive as upon their religion. No controversies have been so fierce and bitter, nor wars so cruel, as those of which religion has been the inspiring motive. It would therefore seem a most dangerous element to introduce into the family, and yet such has not proved to be the case. Presbyterian husbands and Episcopal wives have not torn each other's hair, nor have Methodist husbands and Congregational wives dug out each other's eyes. Even believers and unbelievers have lived together in peace and harmony. Reasoning from analogy, Democratic husbands and Republican wives will neither make each other miserable nor disorganize society. If, as time passes, and women become more intelligent, and more deeply interested in the important movements of the day, and yet are granted no power in guiding them excepting indirectly by influencing their husbands, difficulty may be apprehended. Two opinions with but one vote would clash, while two opinions with two votes would go their ways in peace.

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