

# Woman Questions

## ADDRESS OF MRS. W. WINSLOW GRANNELL,

CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE 3RD JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS OF THE REPUBLICAN  
NATIONAL CONVENTION, AT ST. LOUIS,  
JUNE 16, 1896.

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee on Resolutions.*

I appear before you with reluctance and trepidation. I am here to represent a large body of women who do not crave publicity or notoriety, and who, until recently, were content to submit in silence to the demands presented by a few women for the extension of suffrage to their sex; but when the issue was forced upon us either to speak or to become implicated in the suffrage movement through our silence, we felt that we must be heard; and so I was asked to present our protest to your honorable committee.

In the name of nearly one million and a half of women of the State of New York, I protest against any such action being taken by your honorable body as is asked for by Mrs. Blake.

I protest in the name of the Constitutional Convention of New York State, in 1894, a body largely Republican, who, after mature deliberation, decided that "until it is shown that woman may become a politician without losing something of the precious charm of her personality, and that the State may exact her services in that capacity without imperiling its stability and tranquility, it is surely the conservative course of wisdom to retain the existing conditions under which we have achieved our great happiness and prosperity."

I protest in the name of South Carolina, as shown by her action in 1895; of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as shown at the November election in 1895; of Rhode Island's Legislature of 1896.



All the best civilization opposes forced changes; and I take it that such a radical change as adding to the 1,500,000 votes of New York State over 1,500,000 votes more, in direct opposition to the wishes of her people, is something that you are hardly prepared to father; but if you were, there would then be these questions to be answered affirmatively:

Will it be for the best interests of the country to grant the suffrage to women?

Are these certain definite benefits to be secured through women's suffrage which cannot otherwise be secured?

And men of your intelligence, gentlemen, do not need to have me point out the fallacy involved in an affirmative answer.

Permit me to state briefly our objection:

We object to any woman who has only a backing of one thousand six hundred enrolled suffragists in New York State to say that she represents the million and one-half of home-loving women of that state.

We believe that the extension of suffrage to a people more than as large again as the present voting population would be to increase the evils that already threaten to overcome the principles for which our fathers fought.

We assert that women to-day are so protected by laws made by men, that they have nothing more to ask for legally. The question of wages never has been, nor never will be, governed by the question whether the wage-earner has a vote; wages are always governed by demand and supply. The question of taxation without representation, as applied to women who have no vote, is absurd. Taxes are not conditioned upon a right to vote. When our forefathers complained it was because taxes were imposed upon them by a Parliament sitting 3,000 miles away, in which there was no representation whatever of the colonies. They did not ask for individual representation.

There is no discrimination against women in taxation. Every tax-paying woman in the city of Albany, N. Y., who could be found, signed a protest against striking out the word "male" from the State Constitution. Many men are taxed who have no vote—the wealthy minor and the man who, living in one town, owns property in another. Taxation is the price the citizen pays for the protection of his property, his life and his liberty.

The value of the ballot in itself is largely overestimated. It is but a simple piece of paper, were it not for the force lying behind it.

The truth of Horace Greeley's terse statement to Miss Anthony many years ago, that "behind the ballot lies the bullet," is as powerful to-day as it was when uttered. To imagine a government unbacked by the physical power to enforce its laws, is to imagine an anomaly, or something which must of necessity develop into anarchy. The advocates of female suffrage refuse to admit that the stability of government is dependent upon physical force, because they dare not admit it; since to do so would be to admit the weakness of their cause.

But you will recognize its truth, I am sure, gentlemen; otherwise why do you develop and improve your militia; why do you erect armories and organize and drill bodies of police in all the centres of population? To make laws that cannot be enforced is worse than useless; and to grant the right of embroiling the nation in war to a people wholly incompetent to carry it on, would be to bring our government into contempt.

Without doubt I shall be stigmatized as absurd by the women suffragists, but ridicule is not argument; and it is your duty as serious men, charged with great responsibility, to see to it that your vision be not obscured by chivalry, emotion or sentiment.

We are in the midst of hard times. Every industry languishes. Our farmers fail in the markets, and our merchants and bankers go into bankruptcy. There is an undercurrent of anarchy that roils the waters of our social and political life. Everywhere men and wise women are asking, What will be the end? The cry goes up all over the land, How shall we regain our prosperity? To-day you were told that the people were going to ask the Republican party to lead them back to green pastures. Do you think that a solution of the problem that is vexing men's minds and casting shades of gloom over the whole country can be found in adding to the already unwieldy and uncertain quality called male suffrage, the vote of every woman in this land?

For suffrage is not asked only for the women who are here to-day, but for every woman in our land, without regard to intelligence or morality.

If there be any among you who believes at all in the extension of suffrage to all women, I ask you, seriously, is this the time for its inception? Have you not to face such problems as have not often vexed men's souls, and do you think it would be wise, at this time,



to throw into the boiling mass of unrest and disquiet the uncertain element of woman suffrage?

Gentlemen, without taking up more of your time, in the name of your mothers, who served their country best by being home makers and keepers, and by educating sons to care for their country; in the name of your wives, who are living up to the full the sweetness of the quality of help-meet; in the name of your daughters—I am sure you would wish to keep them out of the mire of political life—in the name of the many hundreds of thousands of women who are silent to-day because they are loving, home women and have confidence in you, and in the name of the many thousands of women in New York State whom I, personally, represent, I ask you to refuse to take action on the question of woman suffrage.

Officers of the Anti-Suffrage Association of the 3rd Judicial District, of the State of New York.

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Apply for more papers to Anti-Suffrage Association, 13 Elk Street, Albany.