

Precedents and the Women of Utah.

To the Editor of the Argus :

SIR :—In your edition of November 4, you say, editorially, that “there will be no little interest in the official returns from Utah, especially to the advocates of woman suffrage. It is asserted that the number of women registered in Utah exceeded the number of men who voted last year. If the percentage of women voting is equally large, it will, certainly, combat, to a considerable extent, the ancient contention that women would not vote if they could, since they do not where and when they can.”

By this date the result of the vote in Utah is known to you. But, possibly, in some of its minute details, to not all of your readers. The women did vote and carried the State by an overwhelming majority for Bryan. This is hardly compatible with the sense of the woman suffrage sentiment, as expressed in the Republican platform. It is probably known to most of your readers that a Utah woman, Mrs. Mattie Hughes Cannon, has been elected to the State Senate. What is not known, perhaps, is that she ran against her one-fourth interest in her husband; and, as the dispatches put it, “licked him out of his boots.” It is whispered that the other three wives of Mr. Angus M. Cannon—the husband of Mrs. Mattie Hughes Cannon, as well as of the other three women—voted against Mrs. Mattie, and in favor of their mutual husband.

There can be no such an emergency arising in this Mormon family as might arise in the East, did a wife defeat her husband for the senatorship. Here a question regarding the household arrangements might obtain; there the other three wives can settle that question, and leave Mr. Angus to shine in the reflected light of his better one-fourth.

What I object to in your editorial, Mr. Editor, is the inference that Utah women could in any way establish a precedent for Eastern women. Questions of right and wrong have different values in Utah and in New York. What Utah women do cannot in any way be taken as an indication of what New York women would do.

Regarding the statement that women will not vote when permitted to do so, let me call your attention to school suffrage statistics

The great cry of the suffragists has been that the women should,

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at least, have a voice in the selection of those in control of the education of their children, inferentially asserting that men are indifferent as to their children's interests and welfare. This idea has prevailed until in twenty-two States and in two territories women may vote in the selection of school officers. The anti-suffragists have not opposed this, although, personally, I do not approve of it, for obvious reasons:

In Connecticut only two and one-half per cent. of the women voted. In Massachusetts the vote dwindled down from a registration of 20,252 in 1888, when a warfare of religious sects was made, to 3,000 in 1891, and only two-thirds of that number voted. In Chicago, two years ago, the registration of women was, in round numbers, 30,000, and about 24,000 voted. This year the registration dropped to 6,264!

Before men force a duty upon women, they should see to it that they keep themselves in line. A full male vote is an unprecedented fact. Who are the men who do not exercise this wonderful "right?" Are they the ignorant? The purchasable? The fanatics?

If there is nothing to be gained by women from the ballot—and of that there is no doubt in any well-balanced mind—what is the country to gain that will balance the disadvantages and burdens, its imposition would imply? Either every woman of intelligence and probity would have to vote in rain or shine, sick or well, in order to counteract the vote of the other women, or the country would more than lose by their suffrage.

Let us retain our confidence in the men who make our laws, Mr. Editor, and who vote not only for their own interests but for ours, as they are identical. We do not believe men are so black as they are painted when it is asserted that women must vote in order to protect themselves and purify the ballot.

MRS. W. WINSLOW CRANNELL.

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