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A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

Before I trust thy hand to thee,
Or place my hand in thine;
Before I let thy future give
Color and form to mine,
Before I part all for thee,
Question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all higher bonds for thee,
A shadow of regret—
Is there one link within the past
That binds thee to the past?
On the faith of some future day,
As that which I am pledged to thee?

Lock deeper still, if thou canst find
Within thy breast some
That thou hast kept a portion back,
Let no false pity move the blot,
But, in true manhood, tell me so,
Is there within thy heart a seed
Which mine cannot fulfill?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Some soul that some future day
My whole life will be day.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day,
And answer to my claim,
That fate, and that to-day's mistake,
Not thou, had been to blame?
Some soul that some future day
Will surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer not—I dare not hear,
The words would come too late—
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
No comfort thee, my fate—
Whatever on my heart may fall,
Remember I would risk it all.

Adelaide Ann Proctor.

THE INDEPENDENT CONFERENCE

The Independent Republicans of the United States have recently had a conference at New York and have issued an address which explains their attitude in the impending struggle for the presidency. The celebrated Carl Schurz seems to have been the chief inspirer of the meeting and certain phrases of the address give evidence that he had a hand in its composition. Whether it be so or not, it is distinguished for eloquence of expression and its apparent aim is of a character to elicit the approval of honest men of all parties.

The folly of the movement, it seems to us, is in the supposition that it can make an impression upon politics outside of and independent of an alliance with existing political organizations. Dig as the country is, it is not big enough yet for three distinct and antagonistic parties, and to make themselves felt and effective in the presidential issue, the Independents must forego the idea of "putting forward a candidate of their own" and take service as allies with either the Republican or Democratic organization. They are already pronounced against Grantism, and as Grantism is almost certain to name the Cincinnati nominee, their only chance to become a factor of moment in endeavoring to "reform the abuses of our political life" is to take service for the time being under the leadership of the democratic party. This we suppose, they will ultimately do and, in fact, it is the only sensible thing they can do, if they are really honest in their professions of reform.

Fellow-Citizens—A conference of citizens assembled in New York, sincerely desiring to secure the best interests of the American people, beg leave to submit to your candid consideration the following appeal:

A national election is approaching under circumstances of peculiar significance. Never before in our history has the public mind been so profoundly agitated by an apprehension of the dangers arising from the prevalence of corrupt practices in our public life, and never has there been greater reason for it. We will not herein detail the distressing catalogue of the disclosures which for several years have followed one another in rapid succession, and seem to have left scarcely a single sphere of our political life untouched. The records of our courts, of State Legislatures and of the national Congress speak with terrible plainness, and still they are adding to the scandalous exhibition. While such a state of things would under any circumstances appear most deplorable, it is peculiarly so at the present moment.

We are about to celebrate the one hundredth birthday of our national existence; we have invited the nations of the earth on this great anniversary to visit our land and to witness the evidence of our material progress as well as the working and effects of that republican government which a century ago our fathers founded. Thus history are rising up before us in a new order of life, forcing upon us in a new comparison of what this republic once was, what it was intended to be, and what it now is; and upon this we have challenged the judgment of civilized mankind jointly with our own. There is much of which every American citizen has just reason to be proud—an energy and thrift, a power of thought and action, a progressive spirit which, in consequence of result, have outstripped all precedent and anticipation; a history abounding in illustrations of heroic patriotism, fortitude and wisdom; a greater freedom from foreign wars and revolutionary changes of government than most other nations can boast of; our republic but a century old, and just

formed from the only great civil conflict we have had to deplore, so strong in resources and organization that it stands in the foremost rank of the great powers of the earth; and yet with all these splendid results no record can be traced that at no period during the century past behind the American people have been less entitled with respect to the substantial anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in so many respects to all Americans a day of sincere pride and rejoicing, is felt to be in other respects not without self-reproach and humiliation. Of this the corruption revealed in our political life is the cause.

To the honor of the American people, be it said every patriotic citizen feels the burning shame of the spectacle presented in this centennial year—there the mementoes and monuments of the virtues of the past, and here the shocking evidence of the demoralization and corruption of the present; there the glowing eulogies pronounced on the wisdom and purity of the fathers, and here in mocking contrast the servile courts and the records of legislative bodies, illustrating the political morals of to-day; and this before all mankind, solemnly summoned as a witness to the exhibition and a guest to the feast—Never was there cause for keener mortification, and heartily does it strike every patriotic heart.

How can we avert such dangers and wipe out such shame? By proving that although the government machinery has become corrupt the great body of the people are sound and strong at the core, and that they are honestly determined to reform the abuses of our political life, and to overthrow at any cost the agencies of evil that stand in the way. Only such an effort, well directed and steadily persevered in until success is assured, will save the good name of the nation, prevent the prevailing disease from becoming fatal, and restore to its old strength the faith of our own people in their institutions.

At the impending national election various questions of great importance will be submitted to our judgment. The settlements of the civil war as constitutionally fixed must be conscientiously maintained, and at the same time the government strengthened in general confidence by the strict observance of constitutional principles, and the old brotherhood of the people revived by a policy of mutual justice and conciliation. Our solemn and often repeated pledge faithfully to discharge all national obligations must be fulfilled, not only by the payment of the principal and interest of our bonded debt when due, but also the removal, not later than the time provided by existing law, of the curse of our redundant irredeemable paper currency, which not only impedes the return of true prosperity, but has largely contributed to the existing demoralization.

These are grave questions, but grave as they are, still in our present situation we must as American citizens recognize as our most pressing duty to re-establish the moral character of our government and to elevate the tone of our political life. Honest government is the first condition of enduring national prosperity, power and freedom. Without the elementary virtue of political as well as social life, decay will outstrip our progress; our discussions and struggles about other party questions and principles will appear like a mockery, and face if we permit our public concerns to drift into that ruinous anarchy which corruption necessarily brings in its train, because it destroys the confidence of the people in their self government, the greatest calamity that can befall a republic. It is a simple question of life or death. A corrupt monarch is rarely by the rule of force; a corrupt republic cannot endure.

It is useless to console ourselves with the idea that the corruption among us must be ascribed solely to the immediate effect of the civil war, and will without an effort at reform soon pass away. There is another cause which is not transitory, but threatens to become permanent. It is that system which makes the spoils of the government the mere spoils of party victory; the system which distributes the patronage and responsibility as the reward of party service and the bounty of favoritism; the system which appeals to the mean impulses of selfishness and greed as a controlling motive of political action; the system which degrades the civil service to the level of a mere party agency, and treating the officer as the arch-villain of the party and taxing him for party support, stimulates corruption and places it under party protection; the system which brings the organization of parties under the control of their most selfishly interested and therefore most active element, the place holders and the place hunters, thus tending to organize a standing army of political mercenaries to be paid out of the treasury of the government, who by organized action endeavor to subjugate the will of the people to their ends through the cultivation of a tyrannical party spirit. Every student of our political history knows that since the spoils system was inaugurated corruption has steadily grown from year to year, and so long as this system lasts, with all its seductions and demoralizing tendencies, corruption will continue to grow in extent and power; for patriotism and true merit will more and more be crowded out of political life by unscrupulous selfishness. The war has only given a sudden stimulus to the tendency, but without the war it would

have proven a more insidious and more dangerous enemy than it is now.

We know that the spoils system is a corrupting influence, and that it is a source of weakness to the government. We know that the spoils system is a source of weakness to the government. We know that the spoils system is a source of weakness to the government.

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THE STORY OF JESSIE BROWN.

The following touching story is connected with the rescue of Lockwood by the Highland forces, under Sir Colin Campbell, on the 20th of September. It has been committed to an immortal fame by the genius of the most eminent poet and lecturer in the world—Whittier and Longfellow have told the story in song, Chapman has woven it into a beautiful lecture on temperance. The universal confederacy of literary writers have so entwined it about the memory of their readers, that it will not soon be forgotten. The following account is taken from the letters of a lady who was one of the sufferers relieved by the gallant Sir Colin Campbell.

"Death stared us in the face. We were fully persuaded that in twenty-four hours all would be over. The engineers had said so, and all knew the worst. We women strove to encourage each other, and to perform the light duties which had been assigned to us, such as conveying orders to the batteries and supplying the men with provisions, especially cups of coffee, which we prepared day and night. I had gone out to try and make myself useful, in company with Jessie Brown. Poor Jessie had been in a state of restless excitation all through the siege, and had fallen away visibly within the last few days. A constant fever consumed her, and her mind wandered occasionally, especially on that day, when the recollection of home seemed powerfully present to her. At last, overcome with fatigue, she lay down on the ground, wrapped up in her plaid. I sat beside her, promising to awaken her when, as she said, the father should return from the world, and sleep whiskered and apparently breathless, her head resting in my lap. I myself could no longer resist the inclination to sleep in spite of the continual roar of cannon.

"Suddenly I was aroused by a wild and unearthly scream close to my ear, my companion sitting upright beside me, her arms raised, and her head bent forward in the agonizing listening. A look of intense horror, and a countenance which gave me the impression of death, she gazed at my hand, drew me towards her, and exclaimed, 'Dinna hear it? dinna hear it? Ay, I'm no dreaming; it's the slogan of the Highlanders!—We're saved; we're saved!' Then, flinging herself on her knees, she thanked God with passionate fervor. I felt utterly bewildered; my English ears heard only the roar of artillery, and I thought my poor Jessie was still raving, but she darted to the batteries, and I heard her cry incessantly to the men, 'Courage! hark to the slogan—the Magregor, the grandest of them all! Here's help at last.' To describe the effect of these words upon the soldiers would be impossible. For a moment they ceased firing, and every soul listened with intense anxiety. Gradually, however, there arose a murmur of hoarse discontent, and the wailing of the men who had locked out began anew as the Colonel shook his head. Our dull lowland ears heard nothing but the rattle of the musketry. A few moments more of the deathlike suspense of this agonizing hope and Jessie who had again sunk on the ground, sprung to her feet, and cried in a voice so clear and piercing that it was heard along the whole line—'Will ye no believe me? The slogan has ceased indeed, but the Campbells are coming—D'ye hear, d'ye hear?'

At that moment we seemed indeed to hear the voice of God in the distance, when the bagpipes of the Highlanders brought us tidings of deliverance, for now there was no longer any doubt of the fact. That shrill, penetrating, ceaseless sound, which rose above all other sounds, would come neither from the advance of the enemy nor from the work of the sappers. No, it was indeed the blast of the Scottish bagpipes, now shrill and harsh, as threatening vengeance on the foe, then in softer tones, seeming to promise succor to their friends in need. Never surely was there such a scene as that which followed. Not a heart in the Bastion of Lockwood, but bowed itself before God. All by one simultaneous impulse, fell upon their knees, and nothing was heard but bursting sobs and the murmured voice of prayer. Then all arose there rang out from the thousand lips a great shout of joy which resounded far and wide, and lent new vigor to that blessed

CEASAR BORGIA.

Almost absolutely lost as Caesar Borgia seems to have been, he was one of the most graceful, cultured, and attractive men of his time. His manners were perfect, his voice so sweet, his face so handsome, his ways so winning, that he captivated men's wills and women's affections.

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OLIVER CROWWELL.—It was Crowwell, however, whom all adherents of the party that now found itself standing in such fierce opposition to the Presbyterians, regarded as their chief; whom the enthusiastic Vane, the cautious Fenton, the generous Hutchinson, the sincere Ludlow, as well as the sectarian, whatever his denomination, Independent, Brownist, or Anabaptist, all alike looked upon as the one man able to understand their wants, and to lead them to the accomplishment of their aims. For, above others, he possessed a power of sympathy, talking to each in the language of the hearer's heart, until one and all found it impossible to doubt that his vigorous sympathy with their feelings must spring from a sympathy with their views; with Ludlow and Hutchinson he would discuss Republican government; with Vane he could look forward to the time when men, instead of being governed by self-interest, should strive to act as Christ would act did he reign upon earth; with his soldiers he could pray and humble himself before the Lord, feeling that he and they were but as weak worms, and that it was God in his mercy who bestowed victory upon his saints; with the more proudly-minded he could unbend and be a pleasant companion, using the language of the ordinary English gentleman, while in debate he could either attest his sincerity with the fervid words and tears of a more demonstrative age, or rein in his feelings and battle with the calm arguments of reason. Freedom from the various forms of vigorous life that spring from freedom—this was his ideal, and it was one that had within itself for all the others. A man whose nature is based on a principle so wide and deep, when dealing with those whose aims converge in different lines on the same point as his own, is not to be considered false-hearted because his consideration seems to accord with his companion's character; it is rather that his mind is more capacious, able to entertain more ideas and feelings than those to a question, they but one. Sympathy, in fact, the first quality of a leader. To move men he must be moved by them; thus alone will they follow while he leads. It was through his being able to obtain the confidence of all that Crowwell took natural position as chief of a coalition, united by common hatred of Presbyterian ascendancy, and Fifth-Monarchists, aristocratical Republicans and Independent Democrats, who were reformers and church reformers, who were lawyers and Erastians who were Moscovists at heart.

The features of this man, who, having begun life as a farmer, was rapidly rising to become the director of a great nation, rough as they were to look upon, could not fail to bear upon them the expression of his true worth. A big head, which was covered with light-brown hair curling down upon his neck; a forehead broad and high; slayer eyebrows, with stern, deep-set eyes looking out from beneath them; a nose that stood well out from the face; rather broad and red; a chin and mouth expressive of firmness; a skin tanned brown with exposure to wind and weather; a rough looking face, with a big wart over the right eyebrow; the whole bearing the expression of dignity though not of grace, showing a man of strong feelings with stronger self-control, of spirit stern and just. One of his household, writing to a friend in America, thus describes him: "His body was well compact and strong, his stature under six feet and about two inches; his head so shaped, as you might see it a store house and shop both of a vast quantity of natural parts, his temper exceedingly fiery (as I have known), but the heat of it kept down for the most part, or soon allayed with those moral endowments he had. He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure.—Though God had made him a heart wherein was little room for any fear, but that was due to himself, of which there was a large proportion, yet he did exceed in tenderness towards sufferers. A larger soul, I think, hath not dwelt in a house of clay than his was."

Truth being founded on a rock, you may boldly dig to see its foundation; but falsehood being built on the sand, if you dig to examine its foundation, you cause its fall.

Mrs. Partington says she was much elucidated last Sunday on hearing a fine discourse on the parody of the prodigious son.

DEBT.—Of all masters that a man ever had to serve, debt can use the lash the most dexterously. In the morning comes the lash, doubled in the smarts at noon, and the long weary day is closed beneath the smarting strokes of this tyrant whip. When the dark curtain of night shuts us out from the world, and sleep whiskered and softly bears us on towards the dreary land of forgetfulness, up rushes our master, lash in hand, and the green fields spread out before us vanish for the night. The slave that toils all day long like a beast of burden, rejoices when sleep locks him up from the brightness of his dreams. The soil worn soldier makes the hard march with his bleeding feet and aching limbs, trundling at every step, and when he hears the harsh voice of his tyrannical commander, but the bivouac gives him rest, and the campfires light him to sweet slumber. No such peace is found for the poor slave to debt. His troubled sleep gives him no rest, and forgetfulness never drowns his misery. Poor man, he has forged his iron chains on his own neck, and never cease to cut to the bone, chains that bind the soul and drive out his manhood.

The slave of debt may seek solace away from his fellow man and wander on hills and traverse deep valleys—still his thoughts are of his master's lash. The green leaf is whispering to him of debt, the song of the wild bird has no melody for him, and his hearted brow is no cooler by the gentle zephyrs; the returns to the haunts of men, and he becomes a moral peltroon, craven hearted, and is unable to look his fellow man in the face. His eyes bent to the ground, he walks the streets and loaths himself, and at last goes down to a premature grave unmoored, with no stone to mark his last resting place. Now he is out of the tyrant. He has paid his last debt.—*Press & Cultivator.*

IRISH WRIT.—After the capture of President Davis by Wilson's cavalry, in May, 1865, he was brought to Meacon in an ambulance, which stopped in front of the Lanier House, the headquarters of the Union army, and a crowd surrounded the vehicle to take a look at the illustrious captive. Among this crowd were many grey jackets who sadly and sorrowfully viewed their captive chief. The feelings of triumph, sympathy and curiosity had stilled the voices of the crowd of gazers and a perfect quiet rested on the multitude, which was broken by an Irish Union soldier, who, carrying a consistency clad in grey, said to him triumphantly:—"Deorra, Pat, we've got yer President."

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A shrewd old Yankee said he didn't believe there was any downright cure for laziness in a man. "But he added, 'I've known a second wife to hurry it some.'"

The way to conquer men is by their passions; catch but the ruling foible of their hearts, and all their boasted virtues shrink before you.

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