A SILENT CAMPAIGN.

Able Review of the Fight for Woman Suffrage.

Mrs. Florence Percy Matheson Tells About How the Late Campaign Was Managed.

In May, 1895, at the close of the second Woman's Congress held in San Francisco, there was inaugurated one of the most aggressive campaigns for woman suffrage that has ever made itself part of the history of any State.

The first Woman's Congress, convened during the progress of the wonderful Midwinter Fair, which attracted so many strangers to the Pacific Coast metropolis, was most successful. The efforts of a handful of earnest women brought together an assemblage of their sisters who, in sympathetic communion, gave expression to thoughts helpful both to themselves and their hearers. Women of more than national reputation brought their treasures of heart and brain and poured them out freely for the benefit of womanhood in general and then sat and listened with respectful, appreciative attention, while other women shyly lifted the curtain of silence behind which they had lived their self-repressed and often morbid lives, and for the first time let their timid ideas, beliefs and aspirations look out into the world around them.

All were made genuinely and graciously welcome and no lines of distinction were drawn between rich or poor, the gentle or simple, the famous or the unknown. The rancher's wife and daughters in their cheap gowns were admitted on the same terms as was the millionaire's family in their silks, velvets and diamonds. The poorest working woman, had she something to say on the topics under consideration, was listened to as eagerly and attentively as the famous lecturer, or author, or clergyman. It was indeed "good to be there," and there was not one of the participants in that gathering who did not go back into everyday life feeling better, stronger and happier because of the lessons, the companionship and the experiences of those few days.

The next year saw a similar but much larger gathering in the Bay city. "The Home" was the topic selected for this session, and the magic of that word drew to the meetings many who had been too busy or too indifferent to attend the previous year. The possibilities in a discussion of such a subject were almost infinite, and that interest therein—even in these days of restaurants and boarding-houses—was widespread and heartfelt was proven by the crowds which flocked to the meetings during the entire week of their continuance.

Crowded as the meetings were, however, and excellent as were most of the papers presented, this second congress was not productive of that unalloyed satisfaction and good feeling which had characterized the initial session. A new element had been introduced into the assemblage in the person of one of the "war-horses" of the woman's suffrage cause—Miss Susan B. Anthony—who, with her able "Lieutenant," Miss Anna Shaw, had been sent for to grace the occasion by her presence, and there were some conservative women who felt that this procedure on the part of the congress managers was neither wise nor kind.

Women who did not desire or believe in equal suffrage, but who did believe in woman's congresses, properly carried out on strictly neutral ground, considered that they were placed in a false and unpleasant position, since the meetings were—from the first greeting to the special guests of the occasion—dominated by the suffrage idea.

"The Home" was a secondary consideration, for no matter how innocent and domestic a paper might be, in the ensuing discussion the advantages of "the ballot" were sure to be exploited by some eager champion of "woman's cause," to the distaste of many in the audience who felt that their opinions and convictions were worthy of consideration, but were averse to entering into a public controversy on the subject.

So it was that the second congress, though a brilliant success in many ways, left behind some little heartburning and gave rise to some sharp, if quiet, criticism. At the close of the meetings, however, the real motive for the persistent forcing upon the congress audiences of suffrage ideas became evident. An extra meeting was called—a sort of aftermath—and during that meeting the California Woman's Suffrage State Constitutional Amendment Association was formed. From that moment the fight for equal suffrage in California began in earnest and never ceased until the third day in November of this year. It was vain to tell the little knot of suffragists who took it upon themselves to do battle for the women of California, that those same women did not, as a class, long for the boon which they were so anxious to bestow upon them. In their superior wisdom the suffragists decided that they ought to want it, and that they should have it if it were possible to secure it for them. If the women of California did not realize that they were abused, down-trodden, tyrannized over, and generally victimized, it was their—the suffragists'—business to make them know it. Therefore they started out with the laudable determination, loudly and frequently expressed, to "make the contented woman discontented," and "rouse up all women to demand their rights."

To this end these ardent champions of their sex organized and collected funds, and planned, and wrote, and lectured, and argued, in season and out of season. The highways and byways of our State were trodden by the eager feet of women whose mission it was to carry the "gospel of equal rights" to the poor heathen—those women whose unenlightened minds made them objects of contemptuous pity to their more advanced sisters. Scarcely a hamlet was so small that some more or less gifted female orator did not honor it with her presence and organize a little band of suffrage workers to help on the "cause" after her departure.

The third congress, which took place this last May, was—a natural consequence to the work of the previous year—devoted to the consideration of "Woman and Government," and the subject was treated most exhaustively, and, it was hoped, impressively, by the ladies who were selected to explain matters to the general public.

From May to November the suffragists redoubled their efforts to "mold public opinion" and win over to their side men enough to give the famous sixth amendment the seal of popular approval on election day. The lecturers imported from the East made themselves heard everywhere, and on almost every occasion. Indeed, it was said, and with a good deal of truth, that "only at a funeral could one be quite sure that a suffrage speaker would not conclude the exercises by a few remarks on her favorite topic."

The newspapers treated the ladies most courteously. One of the "great dailies," actuated by conviction or the hope of gaining additional favor in feminine eyes, even espoused their cause and came out boldly as a suffragist organ. The others gave them space in their columns freely, and, if they did not editorially indorse ther views, at least gave them respectful consideration.

Incidentally one amusing feature of the campaign was the suffragists' pronounced change of tactics as regarded "tyrant man." Heretofore the masculine portion of humanity has been handled rather severely by the "woman's rights" contingent; man's misdeeds and shortcomings have been very freely exploited and sneered at by the "strong-minded" members of the other sex; but all this was changed in the campaign of '96. No matter how inferior the male human being, in his infinite variety, might be, he was a voter, and so he was wheedled, and flattered, and cajoled, and made much of generally, by the politic leaders of the would-be voters, in a way which must have been as surprising to him as it was amusing to the lookerson, who were forcibly reminded of the old fable about the monkey, the cat and the hot roasted chestnuts.

With such active, energetic and tireless workers in the field; with such able generals to direct their maneuvers; with funds sufficient to prosecute their work in every direction; with elegant headquarters in San Francisco; with "suffrage teas" and house-to-house canvasses to arouse the indifferent and careless; it really seemed as though with all this that the movement could not end in failure. The eager workers met with practically no opposition. They were listened to courteously and allowed to say and do whatever they pleased in the premises without contradiction or controversy. No foeman worthy of their steel appeared to pick up the gauntlet which they flung defiantly down on all occasions. Their course was apparently a "walk-over" from start to finish; but—unbelievable as it seems—when the finish came the "glorious cause" met with overwhelming defeat.

In San Francisco the majority of negative votes was said to be 10,000; in Alameda County—the "church county" of California, and reckoned their stronghold—the majority against the amendment was nearly 5,000. So it went all through the State, to the utter surprise and bewilderment of the good ladies who had flattered themselves that the coveted ballot was well-nigh within their grasp, and to the surprise likewise of the many who had not realized that, during the past two months, two compaigns had been going on in our State. The "loud" campaign every one knew of, for the insistent din of it had been heard all through the land; but the other—the "silent campaign"—had been going on also, and, without officers, lecturers, press agents, funds or notoriety, had achieved a victory as signal as it was unexpected.

Earnest, indefatigable and single-minded as were the officers and members of the Amendment Association, they made a vital mistake at the very outset of their career. For some occult reason they decided that the work—and, incidently, the generous salaries therefor—must be principally placed in the hands of Eastern women, and a decided "snub" was administered to Californian women by the importation of seven ladies from beyond the Rockies to do our fighting for us. These ladies had not won the blessing of the ballot for the women of their own States, but they felt quite sure that they could succeed in gaining it here. They were supposed to be able to show California men what smart women really were, and by reason of their eloquence, intellectuality and all-around superiority, win votes by the wholesale.

The California men, however, are much inclined to favor home products. They are, as a rule, very proud of California women, and some of them who were at first disposed to think well of the amendment quietly, but decidedly, resented the imputation cast upon the wives and daughters of our State.

"If our own women are so stupid and tongue-tied that they must pay Eastern women to intercede with their own fathers, brothers, husbands, lovers and friends in their behalf," said many of our men, "they might have to get Eastern women to come out here and tell them how to vote after they had the ballot. It's a sure thing that some of the Eastern women would feel it necessary to stay out here and 'represent' them whenever there was any money or glory to be had. Anyway, if our women are not bright enough to ask for what they want themselves, they ought not to get it!"

This feeling cost the amendment many votes and helped the "silent campaign" not a little.

Another mistake which the suffragists made was in the treatment accorded to those women who differed with them in opinion. There are, indeed, in the suffrage ranks many refined and courteous ladies who are broad-minded enough to allow others to think for themselves and possess their beliefs in peace. The majority of the suffrage army, however, took the "aggressiveness" of their campaign with them wherever they went, and by their unpleasant tactics succeeded in rousing the active antagonism of hundreds of their quiet sisters who might have been actually won over to their side had they been treated differently. As a general thing the woman who dared to avow that, for any reason whatever, she did not believe in woman suffrage, exposed herself to most unpleasant and unkind attacks both in public and private. She was sneeringly given to understand that she was a "simpleton," or a "coward," or was "trying to curry favor with men." Such a spirit of intolerance was shown by certain devoted followers of the two excellent maiden ladies before-mentioned that, during the last of the struggle, many sensitive women from very dread of them, remained away from all gatherings where there was a probability of being brought in contact with one of the "earnest workers."

At first it seemed to some of the women, who thought that the right to have and hold opinions of one's own without being metaphorically burnt at the stake therefor, was even more desirable, for the time being, than the right to vote, that it might be well to organize and meet their sisters on the lecture platform, but after consideration this idea was given up. The suffragists knew their arguments already and scoffed at them. Plainly public discussion would do no good, and would only lead to manifold unpleasantnesses. Still they did not want the ballot—at least not just at this time—and they did not want it forced upon them by the stranger hands that were "pulling wires" in every direction with that end in view.

What was to be done?

"Each of us will just tell our own people and our own friends that we do not want that amendment passed," said they, "and we will pass the word along without any fuss or quarreling. We shall not need to lecture, or hold meetings, or write for the papers about it; we will just tell our own voters to tell other voters to vote 'no' when the time comes."

And so the "silent campaign" was begun, and the quiet word was "passed along" through village and town and city and county until it went through the whole State, from the Oregon to the Baja California line, and from the Sierras to the Pacific. And when election day was over and the votes were counted, it was clearly demonstrated that in the case of the proposed Sixth Amendment "speech" had indeed been "silver," but "silence" had been "golden."

The veteran leader of the suffrage forces seems to be willfully blind to the facts in the case. She is reported as saying during the "welcome home" receptions tendered her in the East, that the amendment was lost "only by a very small majority," and stating that the majority was composed of the "whisky and beer element." She even accuses—the telegrams say—the brewers of "giving their employes ballots specially prepared for them" with a "big no" after the amendment question, and asserts that these ballots were voted.

In this connection we would recommend several things for Miss Anthony's consideration:

First—That truth is a jewel which should be worn even by suffragists.

Second—That an inspection of the official records might change her ideas as to the "very small majority" that emphatically expressed our State's decision on the suffrage question.

Third—That it would be well for women who want to vote to know something about the modus operandi of that Act in the State that they have been working in for nearly two years. Would not a man who tried to vote a ballot "specially prepared for him" by anyone find some little difficulty in carrying out his intention here in California? Miss Anthony should know that the Australian system is in use here, and a little study of that system ought to convince even her that such proceedings as those of which she asserts the brewers were guilty are simply impossible under its operation.

Fourth—That a very small minority of the women who do not want to vote are in any way connected with the "whisky element," but that there are thousands of women in our Golden State who are, at the present time, quietly rejoicing over the fact that peaceful tactics conquered, and that success perched upon the banners of the "silent campaign."

FLORENCE PERCY MATHESON.

Oakland, Cal., Dec. 5, 1896.

A CHEEKY THIEF.

He Offered to Sell a Man the Property He Stole From Him.

On Monday night Deputy Sheriff Katzenstein saw a man come out of the alley between Fourth and Fifth, J and K streets, carrying a suspicious looking bundle.

He followed the fellow into a restaurant, where he sold the bundle, which contained several large ironstone china platters, for 75 cents.

Katzenstein afterwards found the fellow on L street, whether he had gone to invest the money in liquor, and took him to the station-house, where he gave the name of Nick Ashton, and a charge of petty larceny was placed against him. Katzenstein ascertained that he had been sleeping at the St. George Saloon, in the rear of which was a room in which the proprietor had stored a lot of crockery, and Ashton had not only gone so far as to help himself to them for the purpose of selling them, but had actually offered some for sale to the owner himself, who told him he would buy them if they were not stolen.

REV. EDWARD DAVIS.

Oakland's Pulpit Orator to Speak on Friday Night.

A great many tickets have been sold by the ladies of the First Christian Church for next Friday evening, when Rev. Edward Davis of Oakland will appear at the new church on Sixteenth and L streets, in one of his interesting entertainments.

On account of the favorable comments made by the press in cities where he has appeared, there is no small amount of curiosity among people here to see and hear him. It is said of him that he is poet, actor and orator, and that he has never yet failed to please his audiences.

The object of the entertainment is to raise funds to meet the expense to which the church has gone in erecting the nearly new edifice. It will be the first time the auditorium of the church has been used and it is expected that the crowd in attendance will tax its capacity. The "Overland Monthly" of San Francisco says of him:

The Rev. Mr. Davis has won national reputation as a sensational speaker, the New York "Tribune" calling him in review, "an actor-preacher, a word painter, a patron of the waltz, a sponsor of 'bean' poker, and the most popular preacher in the city." Despite misrepresentations he has retained the implicit confidence of his splendid congregation, and though the youthful preacher has received invitations to the most prominent pulpits of the coast his refusals indicate content with his present pastorate.

Notably he has been a man of immense audiences, and invariably the thronging thousands have been conquered. He has addressed Chautauqua assemblies and the State Conventions of his church in California, Oregon and Washington..

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Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. 25c.

Lodging-house, 15 rooms, and saloon for sale cheap. See Sherburn, 323 K. *

Call and get our prices on stoves. M Hirsch, 1013 and 1015 J street. *

Finest ground concave and convex lenses, mounted in solid nickel frames, $2 50. Gold eye glass frames, $3. F. de Wolfe Hennah, Masonic Temple. *

For the finest home-made bread and cakes in the city, go to The Pacific Grove Bakery, 823 J street. *

Piano Tuning—Paul Schoen of Oakland will be here next week at Pommer's or Hammer's. *

MEN'S HOLIDAY SLIPPERS!

There never was a time when Lavenson's showed such an endless variety of Men's Holiday Slippers as right now, and never have prices been so low. The styles in vogue this year are the "Romeo," in colored Russia calf or kid, and the "Columbia" Slippers that come up high on the instep.

Just a Hint.

Men's Wine-colored Alligatorette Slippers, in two styles, $1 a pair——Men's Fine Tan Colored Russia Calf "Columbia" Slippers, in narrow or wide toes, $1 50 a pair——Men's Black Velvet Embroidered Slippers, 75c a pair——Men's "Romeos," in tan Russia calf or black vici kid, $2——Men's finest quality "Vici" Kid Romeos, black, with narrow square toes, $2 50; Chocolate, with pointed toes, $3.

More Doll Shoes.

Another lot of those beautiful Doll Babies' Shoes, which we are giving away with every dollar purchase, have come. To be seen in the corner window.

LAVENSON'S,

Fifth and J Streets.

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KENT BROS., 1517 Third street, for carriages, buggies, rigs of all kinds at short notice. Telephones—New, 215; Old, 511.

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NEW TO-DAY.

ENTERTAINMENT

GIVEN BY THE MRS. MARGARET E. Crocker Lodge, No. 180, Auxiliary to Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers at Liberty Hall, Foresters' building, SATURDAY, December 12th. Dancing to follow. Admission, 25 cents.

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Greatest Musical Attraction of the Winter Season.

ENGAGEMENT OF TWENTY-TWO leading vocal and instrumental artists. Subscription tickets which entitle holder to admission, reserved seat and transferable, $1 50 each. Only subscribers for the series of three concerts will be entitled to reserved seats. Tickets on sale at Purnell's, 609 J street. WFSu

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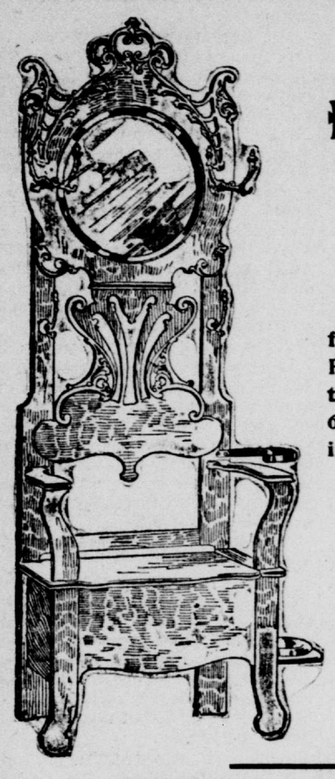

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LOT 4—237 Imported Worsted Suits, plain or fancy patterns—French piques, English thibets, black and blues. Imported goods. Your tailor would charge you double the money to make you a suit just like it. They are worth at any other place $18, $20 and even $22. At this special this week,

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LOT 6—Heavy Corduroy Pants, drab shade. The kind all others sell for $2 50, some even $3. Our price this week,

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LOT 7—All-wool Pants in worsteds, cheviots, etc. We have a large assortment left from suits which we are determined to close out. Worth from $3 to $5. This week,

$2 00.

LOT 8—Men's Woolen Gloves, quite a lot on hand. Your gain our loss.

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The entire stock of C. A. Sawtelle, No. 708 and 710 J street, will be sold at public auction, commencing THURSDAY, December 10th, at 10:30 a. m.

d8-8t D. J. SIMMONS, Auctioneer.

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GREER & CO. WILL SELL AT THEIR salesrooms, 1004 and 1006 J street, WEDNESDAY, December 9, 1896, at 10 a. m., an elegant line of household goods, including Parlor, Bedroom, Dining-room and Kitchen Furniture. Also, 1 new Upright Piano; been used only four months; cost $550. R. E. GREER, Auctioneer.

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AT 927 K STREET, TO-DAY, AT 10 o'clock, at which time I will sell the following goods: 1 Range, 1 Small Cooking Stove, 3 Heating Stoves, Coal Oil Heaters, 1 lot Crockery, 1 lot Glassware, 3 extra Bureaus, Bedroom Sets, Parlor Furniture, etc. Sale positive. No limit. J. L. SAUNDERS, Auctioneer.

AUCTION SALE

AT THE AUCTION HOUSE OF BELL & Co., 415 J street, TO-DAY (Wednesday), December 9th, 10 a. m., Harness, Whips, Robes, Pictures, Cigar Counter, etc. BELL, Auctioneer.

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