

WHY SHOULD WOMEN VOTE?

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF LEADING FARMERS.

Why should women vote? That is the question that is ringing from ocean to ocean and reverberating from the Canadian boundary to the Mexican border. It is the mission of a newspaper to give the news and the action of the Texas Farmers' Union in opposing woman's suffrage when that question was recently before the Texas legislature is significant as representing the attitude of the organized plowmen. We reproduce in part the argument presented by Hon. W. D. Lewis, president of the Texas Farmers' Union, in opposing the bill:

"It is gratifying to note that it is not the farmer's wife who is clamoring for the ballot. She is too busy trying to make happier homes, molding the minds of future citizens and sharing with her husband the cares of life to indulge in political gossip. The ballot will give her no relief from drudgery, give no assistance in clothing the children or bring to the home additional comforts, conveniences or opportunities in life. It is, as a rule, the city woman promoted to idleness by prosperity, who is leading the suffrage movement.

"From many standpoints, perhaps a woman has as much right to vote as a man. So has she as much right to plow as a man; she has as much right to work in a factory as a man; she has as much right to shoulder a musket as a man, but we would rather she would not do so from choice and we regret that necessity oftentimes compels her to earn a living by engaging in gainful occupations. We do not consider mistreatment a qualification for suffrage or a business accident a reason for granting franchise. We are opposed to woman at the ballot box the same as we are opposed to woman in the field, in the factory or in the army and for the self-same reasons. We had rather see her plant flowers than sow wheat; gather bouquets than pick cotton and rear children than raise political issues, although she may have as much right to do one as the other.

Opposed to Unsexing Humanity.

"Sex qualification for suffrage may have its apparent inconsistencies. No general rule adjusts itself perfectly to all conditions. It is a favorite argument advanced by the proponents of woman's suffrage that many cultivated and noble women are far more capable of intelligently exercising sovereignty than a worthless negro, but the South never was anxious for negro suffrage, and while culture and refinement, and even morality, are desirable virtues, they are not the only qualifications for franchise.

"The primary, inherent and inseparable fitness for suffrage is supporting a family. The plow handle, the forge and the struggle for bread afford experience necessary to properly mark the ballot. Government is a great big business and civilization from the very beginning assigned woman the home and man the business affairs of life.

"There has been much freakish legislation enacted during the past decade that no doubt appeals to woman's love for the ridiculous, but to undertake to unsex the human race by law is the height of legislative folly and a tragedy to mankind.

"We are opposed to the equal rights of woman—we want her to ever remain our superior. We consider woman's desire to seek man's level the yellow peril of Twentieth Century civilization.

"Woman is the medium through which angels whisper their messages to mankind; it is her hand that plants thoughts in the intellectual vineyard; it is through her heart that hope, love and sympathy overflow and bless mankind. Christ—the liberator of woman—was satisfied to teach the lessons of life and He was a man. He chose to rule over human hearts and refused worldly power and men followed after Him, women washed His feet, little children climbed upon His knees and the ruler of the universe said that in Him He was well pleased. Can woman find a higher calling?"

THEMISTOCLES

When Themistocles was asked by his host at a dinner party to entertain the guests by playing the lute, he replied that he could not play the fiddle, but that he could make a small town a great city. We have in this nation many politicians who are good "fiddlers," but they cannot make a small town a great city. We are overrun with orators who can play upon the passions of the people, but they can't put brick and mortar together. We need builders.

Let those who hunger and thirst for power understand that the highest glory of a statesman is to construct, and that it is better for a man that he should build a public highway than that he should become Governor of a state, and that he start a plow than that he become the author of a law. The true test of statesmanship is the plow and the hammer, so let those who would govern, first build.

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1907	135,846.71
1908	142,413.20
1909	553,345.20
1910	607,390.23
1911	785,133.57
1912	1,008,696.57
1913	1,187,604.25
1914	1,287,124.62
1915	1,319,455.66
May 1, 1916	1,418,973.17

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