

Wise Words From Leading San Francisco Club Women on the Twentieth Century Girl.

WHEN the curtain rises on the twentieth century, woman will be discovered occupying the center of the stage. What will she be like, this woman of the coming century? According to Flammarion, the famous French scientist, the twentieth century does not begin until the end of the year 1900. Therefore the coming twelvemonth will in truth be the fin-de-siècle—a term which, through its use and misuse, has almost lost its literal meaning. The following prophecies from some of the brightest women of to-day predict splendid attainments for the woman of to-morrow. These ladies are most competent to sketch the women of the coming century, for they themselves stand for the highest development of the present day. They are ladies prominent in club and social life, women of broad knowledge, with advanced ideas, yet lacking none of the domestic qualities that are to a woman's charms what the perfume is to the flower.

If the woman of the twentieth century advances with the stride of the woman of this century great, indeed, will be her achievements. The woman of yesterday and to-day are leagues apart. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the only opportunity for liberal education open to any woman was through the employment of private teachers. No college or high school was open to her. Seminaries, Quaker boarding schools and convents existed, but the curriculum of such schools included "rudiments" and "accomplishments" only.

The study of geography was not often permitted to girls, being considered "indelicate" as well as useless. In 1831 the Troy Female Seminary was opened by Mrs. Emma Willard, the first institution in the United States offering "higher education" to women. Mrs. Willard is known as the pioneer of the "Higher Education for Women."

In 1835 Boston opened a high school for girls, but in 1838 the school was closed, yielding to the clamor of opposition. In 1833 Oberlin College was established on a co-educational plan and education for women. "Indelicate" was now pronounced merely "unnecessary," gradually evolving until it was accepted as "natural" and "necessary."

Even in the middle of the nineteenth century physiology was considered highly "indelicate" for girls. Graduates of Troy Seminary report seeing thick paper pasted over illustrations of the human body in textbooks, having been accounted by parents too indecent for students to observe in a school taught by one of Mrs. Willard's graduates, the mothers left the room in a body when the examination in physiology was called.

Paulina Wright Davis, who lectured on physiology and used a manikin for illustration, reported that "women frequently dropped their veils, shocked at the indecency, ran out of the room and even fainted at sight of it."

In 1848 Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell was graduated in medicine at Geneva, N. Y., the first graduated woman physician in the world. Upon her application for admission, the faculty agreed to leave the matter to the students, fully expecting and hoping they would say "no"; but they voted unanimously to admit her. The women at her boarding house refused to speak to her during her three years of study, and on the streets drew aside their skirts if they chanced to meet her, lest they should become contaminated by contact.

Another incident shows strongly the progress in occupations and professions. In 1841 B. F. Hamilton, a merchant of Saco, Me., employed a young woman as clerk in his store. Born merchant and clerk were highly respectable, but the store was "boycotted" by the "best women in the town."

By such slow, laborious, even painful processes public opinion has been transformed in this century. As for the women of the twentieth century? Read the following answers to the interrogations:

The Cleverest, Most Interesting Woman the World Has Known.

The twentieth century woman will be the all-around cleverest, most interesting woman the world has ever known. Her splendid advantages in education and co-education, her facilities for travel, her independence of action and thought inherited from her mother, or possibly her grandmother, will combine to make her forceful and self-reliant, broad minded and useful. Looking about intelligently in a busy imperfect world, she will want to contribute her share toward that world's progress; she will make philanthropy a scientific study, and at the same time a sacred duty. She will, however, not fail to make herself personally attractive or neglect what may contribute to her personal happiness. Modern athletics will have made her strong, active and full of the joy of living. She will look and feel at 40 no older than the early nineteenth century woman did at 25. She will drift into matrimony late and then preside in her home with the quiet dignity and intelligent sympathy gained from the aforesaid study of all sorts and conditions of men. For diversion she will have more advanced reading, more realistic plays, more highly organized clubs—questionable advantages, but her natural legacy from present conditions.

MRS. HELEN HECHT,
Philomath Club.

Every Girl Should Be Taught to Solve the Bread and Butter Problem.

The woman of the coming century will develop along the lines laid down by the broad-minded women of this age and generation. If coming events cast their shadows before, the progressive, narrow-minded woman will be forced to at last trail at the end of the procession in the onward march of progress. Broad-minded mothers will train their boys and girls so that the men themselves will take up the cudgels for woman's right to have an opinion that shall count—and there is but one way to give her that right—through the ballot. Woman's last bright light will be returned to her when a generation of men, educated to that point of view, shall place the masculine seal of approval on the cause of suffrage, and thereby prop the opinions of the women who are undecided, indifferent or opposed. Women fitted in the highest sense to be mothers will so train their boys and girls that this will be brought about as a natural sequence of natural training.

Every girl of the twentieth century should be taught to solve the bread and butter problem. She should put her capacity to earn her own living to a test as soon as she is able to do so. She will then be prepared practically if it is ever necessary for her to be a wage-earner.

But the woman of the coming century will not lose any of the feminine qualities that have marked the women of all centuries. Neither suffrage, higher education nor anything else will mar her womanliness. She is so by nature. Femininity is a "close corporation" among women.

MRS. JOHN SWIFT,
Century Club.

She Must Not Leave Her Little Ones to the Tender Mercies of Hirelings and Servants.

The women of the coming century will be just what the mothers of to-day and their own environments shall make them. True, wonderful avenues of industry and usefulness, and fame are opening up before them, and where once woman's foot dared not to tread she may now walk with perfect impunity, secure in the knowledge that with the broad-minded men of intellect and cultivation and in the light of the coming century her sterner brothers will not jostle her aside from the fields of labor so long held to be distinctively their own. They may even lend a helping hand now and then, or stand aside to let her pass, recognizing superiority of intellect (it may be), or that force of character which impels her to win or lose all.

The women of to-day are fast winning fame and fortunes for themselves in the fields of law, medicine, literature, education and the fine arts, and in the century to come what may they not accomplish with the aid of all the wonderful appliances of science and the great institutions of education that are springing into active life on every hand. Of course, I am dealing with the question from the standpoint of the "work-a-day" people. The so-called ladies of fashionable leisure will remain the same to-day, to-morrow and forever, unless the ever-increasing women's clubs, with their methods of culture and pleasant interchange of thought and happy social pleasures, may allure them from their easy indolence and self-indulgence to exercise, and give to others the benefit of their God-given talents lying so long dormant in their inmost natures.

Here let me voice the hope that no young mother with little ones at her fireside may be tempted to leave them to the tender mercies of hirelings and servants while she makes a record for herself at the club and becomes the (to many people) "odious club woman," running after every new fad in that line that comes along. Remember, young mothers of to-day, that your little ones will grow up and away from you before you are



aware of it, and if the way seems hard at times and it is a privation for you to sit quietly at home while some less fortunate sister is making a record for herself in public life that they "serve also who only stand and wait," and the time will come quickly enough and you will be the better fitted for it (if you keep yourself in touch with the spirit of the time and do not become rusty), when the little ones have gone out into the coming century and you will find the vacant places at your firesides filled only with loving remembrances of the happy past, and a time will not drag so heavily if the outside interest of club life can come in to broaden and enrich your later years, for which you

have been laying up treasures of information culled in the busier, if not happier, years when the education of your children brushed and brightened up the dormant interests of your school girl days. The bright, independent, self-reliant young woman now known as the "bachelor maid" will add her quota also of broad, original fancies to incite her sisters to best themselves to keep pace with her rapid strides toward that freedom of thought, usefulness and action that all right-minded, right-thinking women consider their own by right of birth.

Let us hope that the woman of the coming century will lose none of her womanly sweetness or refining graces in this transition period that seems to await her, but shall shine pre-eminent as an example of the brightest and best of womankind, growing stronger, wiser, lovelier in character, as the years of the century roll on, until all the waiting world shall yield her the place that shall be hers by right of heritage and secured to herself by dint of perseverance in true living.

MRS. FRANK DALTON,
Corona Club.

Will Occupy a Plane on a Level With Man, but Not the Same Plane.

What will the woman of the coming century make out of the experience of her sisters of 1890?

Will she have the good sense to suspend for a time her craze for advancement and adjust herself to the improvements that have already come?

Will she realize that she is a very fortunate creature and stop making herself ridiculous by crying out for her rights from the housetops when she already has them?

Will she be able to comprehend that, though her brains weigh as much and are as good, she is not a man?

Will she acknowledge that, though she may occupy a plane on a level with man, it is not the same plane?

Will she be able to be a great writer, a great musician or a great artist from a woman's standpoint? Or will she cling to that threadbare theory that she must win greatness by aping masculinity?

In brief, will the woman of the coming century find herself? It's all a question which some enlightened sister will have to answer in the year 2000.

MRS. EDWARD A. BELCHER,
Sorosis Club.

Has Put Her Foot on the Rung of the Ladder, Determined to Climb to the Top.

I have been requested to express an opinion on the twentieth century woman. I consider the woman of the nineteenth century one of the most brilliant as well as one of the noblest products of the dying century. From unrecorded time as well as from the dawn of civilization, every age has brought forth new developments. The nineteenth century is noted for its discoveries and inventions directed to utilitarian and practical ends, in all of which woman has played an important part. Her impress and moral influence are engraved on every step of the world's progress. The woman of to-day does with the approval of the world what would have been condemned in the time of St. Paul.

In ancient and medieval times there have been women with all shades of opinions. There has come to the surface the political Deborah, the cruel but courageous Jael, the masculine and heroic Judith, the self-sacrificing Jephthah's daughter, the accomplished and intellectual Cleopatra, the valorous Zenobia, the wise Hypatia and the brilliant Aspasia, but the present century runs the same gamut of illustrious women. The masses of to-day have risen, become a power and are recognized at their true worth.

Woman no longer sits down and waits for the recognition of man, but she rises in the dignity of her true womanhood and makes for herself a niche in the world, whether in the temple of fame or in acting well her part in the humblest condition of life, and that is what makes the nineteenth century woman the equal of the nineteenth century man.

Woman in all ages has been the firm friend and comforter of man, assuaging his grief and alleviating his pain. To-day she is by his side endeavoring to lighten his task as a breadwinner as well as being "a ministering angel." And she is more than ever anxious to bear the conditions of humanity and ready to go along with the resistless tide of the electrical nineteenth century—the century that is gravitating toward the revolutionizing of the world with its rapid strides, bringing up new problems without solving the old ones. No difference what will occur, woman will keep right on as she is now, smiling, alert and active. From the girl to the woman, from the woman of limited means to one of fabulous wealth, from the religious to the materialistic woman, from the woman of the home to the woman of the world, comes the eager desire to do something besides basking in the sunshine for her own gratification, like "the lilies of the field that spin not, neither do they toil." She is no longer the ignorant, soulless thing of former times, but she has put her foot on the rung of the ladder, determined to climb to the top.

Woman, though weak physically, is strong mentally, patient in suffering and warm in sympathy. Paradoxical as it may seem, woman is stronger and braver than man. The woman of the nineteenth century is comparatively more splendid in attainments, more liberal in thought, more active in educational and altruistic propensities than the woman of any other age. In fact everything of the present day is on a broader, higher plane—the natural evolution and progress of things.

The intellectually and goodness of heart are the gems that glisten on the brow, and are the crowning glory of the woman of the nineteenth century, the heritage of the woman of the coming century.

MRS. I. LOWENBERG,
Philomath Club.

Advance of Woman Marks the Advance of the Age.

The woman of the twentieth century will be the outgrowth of the formative influences of this nineteenth century.

Of these most prominent is the higher education now given to women.

Education is of undoubted good to the race, and applied specifically to women it has a direct effect through the medium of the family.

Its influence is to dispel ignorance and superstition and thus bring better conditions into the family life; to develop the power of judgment and to offer it as a balance to the old criterion of feeling or emotion, which, however, it does not destroy.

Therefore, I have no sympathy with those who fear women will lose their essential characteristics as women and their love for domestic life. If there is any such tendency now, it is but a phase of a transitional stage and must disappear before a still higher development.

The advance of woman is simply a mark of the advance of the age. Compare the liberal education thought necessary for women in the early part of the last century with that of to-day. A valued book of those times prescribed for her "Reading with propriety and life; readiness at her needle, a free command of her pen and complete knowledge of numbers as far as the rule called practice."

The conditions of the next century may require of woman as great an advance from the conditions of to-day as she has made from her status in the last century.

Club life, college settlements and organized charities are indications of her capacity for organization; teach her to subordinate the individual for the sake of the general good and develop her knowledge of human nature. This phase of her growth in the present century's expression of the idea of