

CONVENTION AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

A CALL for a convention of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association was issued about the middle of March and telegrams and letters sent out to notify those living at a distance from headquarters who would wish to attend, and on the 18th of March the Utah Territorial W. S. A. held a convention in the Probate Court room of the City and County building. Delegates were present from several counties and the Territorial President was elected chairman of the meeting, the vice-presidents were Mrs. F. S. Richards and Mrs. C. W. Bennett, Mrs. Nellie M. Little, Secretary and Mrs. Augusta W. Grant, Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Zina D. H. Young, Chaplain. After Mrs. Young had offered prayer and the call had been read, Mrs. Richards moved that the president appoint a committee on Memorial to draft a suitable document to present to the Constitutional Convention then in session. The President Mrs. Wells appointed Mrs. Richards Chairman. Mrs. C. W. Bennett, Mrs. G. S. Carlton, Mrs. J. S. Gilmer, Mrs. Zina D. H. Young, Dr. Romania B. Pratt, Mrs. Phebe Y. Beatie, Mrs. Amelia F. Young, Dr. M. Hughes Cannon, Mrs. C. E. Allen, Mrs. Emma McVicker, Mrs. Ruth M. Fox, Mrs. Priscilla Jennings, Mrs. J. D. Pardee Mrs. E. H. Parsons. The committee retired five minutes, and while they were out speeches were made by county presidents or their representatives; Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson Salt Lake County, Lucy A. Clark Farmington who read an original paper on the subject, displaying a great deal of talent and clearly setting forth her arguments. Mrs. Hannah Lapish, American Fork, Mrs. Jennie Nelson, Ogden, Mrs. M. A. Grover, Nephi, Mrs. Celia E. Bean, Richfield, Mrs. Alvira L. Cox, Manti, represented counties. Mrs. M. Isabella Horne a veteran pioneer and mother in Israel spoke briefly, Mrs. Jane S. Richards of Ogden an Honorary Vice-President of the National American W. S. A. also made a few forcible remarks, also Mrs. Mary A. Freeze, Mrs. Kate Hilliard of Ogden, and Mrs. Joanna Melton of this city, Mrs. Aurelia S. Rogers, Farmington, and Mrs. Ellen S. Clawson Salt Lake and perhaps one or two more. The committee returned, the chairman read the memorial, which on motion was adopted and signed and no other business being presented the convention adjourned sine die.

In the afternoon many of the ladies went into the hall where the Constitutional Convention was in session. Hon. F. S. Richards a member of the Convention presented the memorial, it was read by the Secretary and referred to the committee on Elections and Suffrage.

TO THE HONORABLE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF UTAH:

WE your petitioners and memorialists, representing the great majority of the women of Utah, and more particularly as the

official representatives of the great women organizations of Utah, numbering in aggregate membership over 35,000, viz.

The Utah Suffrage Association auxiliary to the National American Woman's Suffrage Association, the National Woman's Relief Society, and the Young Ladies' National Mutual Improvement Association; these thousands of women standing in a general way, or in virtue of direct official relationship, as our constituents, we, your memorialists, speak in their names and in behalf of the women of Utah herewith present the woman's cause.

It is a matter of congratulation that in these closing years of the nineteenth century the cause of woman can, without the stigma of partisanship, be laid before a body of chosen men ordained to the work of creating a new sovereignty within the galaxy of states; as an equal member of the indissoluble Union. The men of Utah, in their respective political parties, have with equal unanimity, said that women shall be accorded equal rights and privileges of citizenship, that sex distinction shall no longer be a ban and a bar to equal opportunity with men to exercise the God-given powers and capabilities with which women are endowed for purposes of equal self-government and equal enjoyment of the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We take it that the men of Utah have spoken honestly, sincerely and conscientiously as true men to that equally large number of citizens who are now disfranchised, who are now deprived of authority to speak a word or cast a vote in the framing of an organic law which determines their personal and property rights, their civil and political status in the social organism.

We are glad to feel assured that our brothers are dealing honestly and righteously with us, and that they will ordain truth and justice in the name of God and humanity. And we are happy, too, in the belief that these overtures made by the men of Utah are in line with the onward march of civilization, that the bow of promise is rising higher and brighter in the heaven of human hope, that with the elevation and emancipation of women "the plans of God are ripening with the process of the suns." And we say to you that we contemplate no rival sovereignty, no sphere peculiar and apart, no conflicting regime or antagonistic legislation, no hostile policy or divided counsels. No, the woman movement means only true human progress. It means higher and truer harmony, more genuine and enlightened fellowship, more real co-operation, more vital and perpetual union. The key and clue to all true progress is the larger harmony that the Infinite Spirit is breathing into the rising grandeur of human development.

As Constitution makers, as framers of the chart that shall guide us in what we hope to be a long and prosperous future, you will cherish in your deliberations a sacred regard for the principles of liberty, for those undying axioms that have been laid at the foundations of our Temple of

Freedom. We have thousands of women in Utah who are property holders and taxpayers in their own right. Probably no other state furnishes as large a roll of tax-paying women. "Taxation without representation is tyranny." This was the keynote, the bugle call of the revolutionary fathers in their struggle for liberty. Says James Otis, in 1764, in one of the pamphlets that made our independence, "The very act of taxing, exercised over those who are not represented, appears to me to be depriving them of one of their most essential rights. For what one civil right is worth a rush after a man's property is subject to be taken from him at pleasure, without his consent. If a man is not his own assessor, in person or by deputy, his liberty is gone." Hon. Charles Sumner, in his speech on March 7, 1866, endorses these declarations of James Otis, and he says "Stronger words for universal suffrage could not be employed." His argument is that if men are taxed without being represented, they are deprived of essential rights.

These axioms are as clear as sunlight, and it would be in violation of the fundamental principles of our institutions for the men of Utah to frame laws whereby women property holders shall be taxed without their consent given through such representation as is accorded to men as a condition precedent to their being taxed.

Again, all our constitutions, either in terms or in substance, commence their preamble with that comprehensive formula, "We, the people." Our government is "of the people, for the people and by the people." Whatever the status of women may be, they are at least a part of the people. As such the government provides a place for them, and by no form or principle of reasoning can they be deprived of such rights and privileges as inure to men under government, without at the same time destroying the natural rights which men hold for themselves to be inviolate.

Furthermore, by the Declaration of Independence, the existence of government hinges upon "the consent of the governed." This consent is to be given through the forms and provisions whereby governments are made and administered. This consent goes to the framing of the constitution, to the enactment of laws under that constitution and to the administration of those laws; and there can be no consent without representation. Hence the disfranchisement of half the people and a large proportion of taxpayers and creators of wealth is tyranny pure and simple, even though it be under the shadow and in the name of liberty and free government.

But we seek not to weary you with the recital of axioms. What we desire is that we may uphold your hands in revealing them to the world and making them effective in human government. Jefferson laid a deep foundation for human freedom in planting equal rights at the roots of the tree of liberty; but it was given to Lincoln to make those principles most effective, and to cause them to shine as the noonday sun in the firmament of American history.

He said: "I believe the day is not far distant when women will wield the ballot to purify and ennoble politics. I go for all sharing in the government who assist in bearing its burdens, by no means excluding the females."

To you, gentlemen of the Utah Constitutional Convention, it is given to make other

deep and fundamental principles of our government effective in the administrations of law. We do not doubt your ability and willingness to do so. But we come to greet you in behalf of the women of Utah, to strengthen your hand and to assure you that we are keenly alive to the importance and far reaching consequences of your labor in our behalf.

"And above all we would impress you with the fact that the women of Utah are by no means indifferent spectators of the drama that is now being enacted. We believe that every age has its rising and its setting sun. We believe that the woman movement has come because the sun of our civilization has thrown across our social horizon the dawning of a new and more glorious era in the history of man. We believe that "through the ages an eternal purpose runs," and that in the full enfranchisement of women there will come a larger and truer sovereignty, a national conscientiousness in fuller harmony with the temporal welfare and happiness of man. We believe that both men and women will be benefitted morally, socially and economically. We believe that now the time clock of American destiny has struck the hour to inaugurate a larger and truer civil life, and that the future writers of Utah history will immortalize the names of those men who, in this Constitutional Convention, defying the injustice and prejudice of the past, strike off the bonds that have heretofore enthralled woman, and open the doors that will usher her into free and full emancipation.

"We therefore ask you to provide in the Constitution that the rights of citizens of the State of Utah to vote and hold office shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex, and that male and female citizens of the State shall equally enjoy all civil, political and religious rights and privileges."

The memorial was signed by the following ladies: Emmeline B. Wells, president of the Woman's Suffrage Association of Utah; Emily S. Richards, vice president; Zina D. H. Young, president of the National Woman's Relief Society; Jane S. Richards, vice president; Ellen B. Ferguson, Salt Lake County Suffrage Association; Electa Bullock, Utah County; Lucy A. Clark Davis and Jennie Nelson, Weber County; Celia E. Bean, Sevier County; Alvira L. Cox, Sanpete Co., M. A. Grover, Juab County; and many others.

At ten o'clock the morning of the 19th, a hearing was given to the ladies' who had been invited to speak before the Committee who had the memorial in charge. Hon. J. F. Chidester Chairman of the Committee, Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball introduced the speakers with a few preliminary remarks. Mrs. F. S. Richards read a carefully prepared and logical paper, Mrs. Carlton now of Wyoming formerly of Utah told in a very interesting manner of the practical work of the franchise in that state, Dr. M. Hughes Cannon read an able paper, every word of which was telling, the subject being whether women would be more susceptible to priestcraft than men. Mrs. Joanna Melton spoke very forcibly illustrating her remarks in a very original way. Mrs. A. S. Pardee followed with some bright thoughts in expressive language and read a few paragraphs from the Arena for February clinching her arguments in good style. Dr. R. B. Pratt read a paper giving her view and embellishing beautifully the

facts she presented. Mrs. E. B. Wells was last on the list and spoke to the question without notes, or references. A few minutes being left Mrs. Zina D. H. Young was invited and made a few remarks upon woman's place in the world, and Mrs. Jane S. Richards of Ogden being urged to speak came forward with a few pertinent words, this closed the hearing before the Committee.