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MISFORTUNES never come singly, and, according to Sir George Grey, women in New Zealand are not only to be eligible for voting and sitting in the House of Representatives, but they are to have an Upper House of their own. Clearly the Knight of Kawan knows on which side his bread is buttered, and that the secret of fame is to win the female tongue to your side. The politician who would not only enfranchise women, but would also give them a House of Ladies to complicate what is already an awkwardly-working legislative machine, will never lack immortelles for his tomb. As the man in the tramcar says when the fat woman sits down upon him, 'this is too much of a good thing.' The objections to it, indeed, are so numerous that even those accustomed to the ideas of Sir George can only view such an opinion as a piece of chivalrous pleasantry on his part.

It is highly probable, seeing how things are going, that ere a generation has elapsed women will sit in Parliament as a matter of course, and not one will be surprised at it. The way in which the derided movements of a quarter of a century ago have become established facts of to-day justify this expectation. But the reason given by Sir George Grey for the separate deliberation of women, namely, that of delicacy, is a poor one. The artificial separation of the sexes in their intellectual and social pursuits is the cause of the great want of sympathy there is between them at present, and the separation of the male and female elements in the legislature would result in a great loss to its collective intelligence, and probably lead to frequent dead-locks between the houses.

Each sex has foibles, but these foibles have a tendency to counteract each other and produce a rational result. If the personal influence of each sex is not to be allowed to act and react in the same legislature, much of the good of combined sexual legislation will be lost. Just as you don't make war with rose water or omelettes without breaking of eggs, so the human race cannot collectively go a-legislating with its present finicking notions of propriety. The male and female law-makers will have to debate all topics, human and divine, in common when duty and the general well-being demand it. The hard facts of politics will exact this.

The idea of having a separate House of Ladies is fraught with difficulties. The chances are it would lead to a *coup d'etat* before three years were past, and we need hardly say with what results to the sex which flatters itself that it rules the world. The consequences of letting women deliberate by themselves would be, that too many of them would be engaged at it, that they would talk the session out without resolving upon anything, that they would quarrel among themselves, and the minority go off and complain to their male confrères, that when they did agree to oppose the male branch of the legislature it would be in such a stiff-necked, inconsequential sort of way that the only method of cutting the Gordian knot would be by means of a *coup d'etat*.

When the artillery was rolling out and the masculine legions marching on, oh! what a fall would there be then, my countrywomen! The lady speaker perhaps would sit in mute and tremulous courage with her bonnet on, like Lenthal when King Charles I. threatened the five members, or Herauld Seychelles, when the Parisian mob demanded the Girondists, but the mass of the female delegates would assuredly be lying in all the various stages of collapse with their bonnets off and their bodies flaccid across the seats of the House. Talk of a whiff of grape shot, why, a round of blank cartridge for the windows of the House, scissors for

their stay-laces and bottles of sal-volatile for the resuscitation of the badly-frightened members would be all the insurrectionary men would require.

Know ye, ye gentlewomen who talk of power, that it is and ever will be founded in the last resort upon the faculty of giving good hard knocks. In so far as you can enlist men friendly to your cause, you will get such power as men choose to let you have, and as the idea of justice broadens you will have many privileges now deemed atrocious chiefly by yourselves. When, however, women collectively renounce 'the unanswerable tear' of Byron, and fancy that they are going to 'bounce' the male collectively, they will speedily discover that men know where to draw the line between chivalry and subservience, and that a House of Ladies seeking to legislate for the ruder animal would weep itself distractedly away from off the page of history.

Modern society calls itself civilized, but it nevertheless is quite indifferent on two points which seem essential to making our short span of life something less of a vale of tedium or of tears. So common is misery and vacuity of mind that their existence is used as a reason for their continued existence. Hence the height of selfishness is often regarded as the height of virtue, and for people to go back after business hours and shut themselves up in the seclusion of what they term their 'home,' with the utmost indifference to their fellows, is so common as never to create a suspicion that mankind should live for something more brotherly than this.

It is not to be assumed that a household should have no privacy; but at present the idea prevails that outside co-operation during working hours, there is no obligation upon citizens to co-operate for the purposes of amusement. Luckless strangers arriving in a new place without friends or introductions find themselves the prey of neglect and ennui. Neither for these nor the home-bred is there any provision made by the municipality for rational entertainment and kindly intercourse during the evening. Hence public-houses, penny gaffs, and disreputable places of all sorts alone extend a sort of welcome to the solitary, the friendless, and the bored. So strong is the feeling of isolation and cliqueism, that even in the case of musical societies it acts as a great stumbling-block, and parents and elderly people so far from discountenancing and stamping it out in the minds of the rising generation, seem to take a pride in handing down the baneful heritage of pride to their successors.

In this tendency towards isolation women are conspicuous. A lawyer, a butcher, an architect, and a tailor will meet regularly to play the fiddle or to play chess together, and go home the brighter and better for the sympathetic contact. It will never enter into the minds of the lawyer or the architect, until their wives remind them, that there may be a certain so-called social disparity between them and their companions. But Mrs Lawyer and Mrs Architect consider that they have the social status of their husbands in their keeping, and that it is their duty to do enough 'high-sniffing' for their consorts and themselves. The lawyer and the architect are probably wishing that they could play the fiddle or chess like the butcher and the tailor, and make no bones about saying so. If they were to suggest to their wives that they should start a sewing class or a mutual entertainment club with Mrs Butcher and Mrs Tailor, their wives would deem them insane.

This fact partly explains why society is so unsociable, and why no public effort is made to give a corporate brightness and zest to this humdrum life, except such as can be got outside at pot-houses, clubs, dancing saloons, and lupanars. Only in the case of the Seamen's Rest has the principle been vindicated slightly, but even here among the patronesses there creeps out the feminine inclination to go proselytizing among men whose mothers and sisters the patronesses would not deign to look at.

In a rationally-ordered condition of society, which may possibly be attained some centuries hence, every city would be divided up into wards or districts, each with its great 'ward-hall,' 'house-hall,' or 'home-club,' under the government of the male and female heads of families of the ward. There on an immense

scale would be conducted amusements of all kinds every evening. There would be the choral society, the orchestral society, the dancing socials, the amateur theatricals, the gymnasium, the library, the chess, draughts, and debating clubs of the ward. There, too, would be organised friendly competitions with the other 'home clubs' of the city, and there would be received any new-comer who could produce decent vouchers for his or her respectability. In these, as *esprit de corps* grew with genial competition, all that available ability in young persons would be routed out which at present cannot be ascertained and runs to seed on account of the stupidity or lethargy of parents. Then with intercommunication the good-breeding, knowledge, wit, artistic faculty, and better nature of the individuals of the community would indeed become common property, and a newer and a finer race result. At present the curse of a barbarous individualistic past weighs down the better nature developing in mankind, and the sooner each person begins to realize that the modes of thoughts of their progenitors are unsocial, the sooner will the world find itself nearing that happiness about which everybody talks so much and does so little to promote.

Among the types that are to be met with in life, the governess is one. Her fortunes are a favorite topic with lady-novelists, who find her an excellent foil for presenting the petty distinctions which rule in the grade of society in which governesses find their sphere of usefulness. Why well-educated girls become governesses it is difficult to conceive, unless it is upon the off-chance of marrying the brother, son, or friend of the family which charitably accepts them. Outside this faint, very faint possibility, a governess enjoys all the restrictions on action of the daughters of the house with none of their liberty. The great doubt actuating the mind of the woman who engages a governess is that she may not be genteel and good enough for the high calling of educating her children, while she may prove so fascinating to the male folk around as to become inconveniently dangerous. Hence, while the resident governess is denied the servant's privilege of 'keeping company' with her young man out of doors, a very sharp look-out is preserved to see that she does not succeed in 'mashing' any of the males within.

A more ambiguous and isolated condition than that of the resident governess it is difficult to conceive, unless she has relatives or old friends living within hail. Sympathy between an employer, with despotic whims regarding the conduct befitting a dependant of her house, and an employé, who notes that the women around freeze her out while the men are dexterously manipulated off, is not likely to be very great. If she possesses any individuality, she is irritated by finicking restrictions; if gentle and pliant, she is crushed by officious patronage. There is probably nothing more ludicrous than the fussiness of a woman who persistently assumes the rôle of shepherding another woman without her consent. It is like a great St. Bernard dog half smothering a Maltese terrier with undesired affection, and is in reality only a disguised indulgence of power. To this sort of solicitude some governesses have the ill-fortune to be subjected. Taken altogether, the game of being a governess is not worth the candle, and the wonder is that the ranks of the profession (*sic*) are not deserted for the less distinguished but freer walks of life of the milliner and the cook.

ON SHORE.

OUR voyage nears its ending,
Our eyes we forward strain,
To see the bluffs upstanding
High o'er the heaving main;
When, tossed about no longer,
And pent up close no more,
How great our fun, what rigs we'll run,
When once we get on shore!

Let who will praise the ocean,
And call it fine and grand;
In calm or in commotion,
Give me good solid land.
There we may sleep in comfort,
Our irksome journey o'er;
Though skies may scowl and tempest howl,
Who cares when safe on shore?

For here we find no gladness,
No restfulness nor ease,
We gape and yawn in sadness,
And pleasure fails to please;
Calms only make us duller,
The tempests leave us sore,
Pleased we shall be when once more free
And safe and sound on shore.

On shore—who does not brighten
To hear that joyful sound?
Each eye will lift and lighten,
Each heart more gladly bound;
Soon, soon will be our parting,
Perchance to meet no more,
Then let us say at parting, may
Good luck meet all on shore.

R. A. BULLEN.