

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

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Address to Judiciary Committee of the New York State Legislature

GENTLEMEN OF THE JUDICIARY: --

There are certain natural rights as inalienable to civilization as are the rights of air and motion to the savage in the wilderness. The natural rights of the civilized man and woman are government, property, the harmonious development of all their powers, and the gratification of their desires.

There are a few people we now and then meet, who, like Jeremy Bentham, scout the idea of natural rights in civilization, and pronounce them mere metaphors, declaring there are no rights aside from those the law confers. If the law made man too, that might do, for then he could be made to order, to fit the particular niche he was designed to fill. But inasmuch as God made man in his own image, with capacities and powers as boundless as the universe, whose exigencies no mere human law can meet, it is evident that the man must ever stand first -- the law but the creature of his wants -- the law-giver but the mouthpiece of humanity. If, then, the nature of a being decides its rights, every individual comes into this world with rights that are not transferable. He does not bring them like a pack on his back, that may be stolen from him, but they are a component part of himself -- the laws which insure his growth and development. The individual may be put in the stocks, body and soul, he may be dwarfed, crippled, killed outright, but his rights can no man get -- they live and die with him.

Though the atmosphere be forty miles deep all round the globe, no man can do more than fill his own lungs. No man can see, or hear, or smell, but just so far; and though hundreds are deprived of these senses, his are not the more acute. Though rights have been abundantly supplied by the good Father, no man can appropriate to himself those that belong to another. A citizen can have but one vote, fill but one office, though thousands are not permitted to do either. These axioms prove that woman's poverty does not add to man's wealth, and if, in the plenitude of his power, he should secure to her the exercise of all her God-given rights, her wealth could not bring poverty to him. There is a kind of nervous unrest always manifested by those in power, whenever new claims are started by those out of their own immediate class. The philosophy of this is very plain. They imagine that if the rights of this new class be granted, they must, of necessity, sacrifice something of what they already possess. They cannot divest themselves of the idea that rights are very much like lands, stocks, bonds and mortgages, and that if every new claimant be satisfied, the supply of human rights must in time run low. You might as well carp at the birth of every child, lest there should not be enough air left to inflate your lungs; at the success of every scholar, for fear that your draughts at the fountain of knowledge, could not be so long and deep; at the glory of every hero, lest there be no glory left for you.

"If the citizens of the United States should not be free and happy, the fault," says Washington, "will be entirely their own." Yes, gentlemen, the basis of our government is broad enough and strong enough to securely hold the rights of all its citizens, and should we pile up rights ever so high, and crown the pinnacle with those of the weakest woman, there is no danger that it will totter to the ground. Yes, it is woman's own fault that she is where she is. Why has she not claimed all those rights, long ago guaranteed by our own declaration to all the citizens of this Republic? Why does she not this day stand in our Senate Chamber and House of Representatives, to look after her own interests? A citizen is defined to be a person, native or naturalized, who has the privilege of

exercising the elective franchise, or the qualifications which enable him to vote for rulers, and to purchase and hold real estate. With this definition, a woman can hardly be called a citizen of this State, and if not, her position is a singularly anomalous one. She is a native and naturalized, yet has not the privilege of exercising the elective franchise. She has all the necessary qualifications to vote for rulers, and to govern herself, -- yet she is denied the right. She may hold real estate, but cannot protect her property by law. She is taxed to support government, pays the penalty of her own crimes, and suffers the consequences of all man's false legislation, but she is not permitted to say what her taxes shall be, what civil acts shall be criminal, and she has no appeal from man's administration of law. She is, in fine, honored with all the duties and responsibilities of a citizen, and at the same time is denied all his rights and privileges. It is declared that every citizen has a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Can woman be said to have a right to life, if all means of self-protection are denied her, -- if, in case of life and death, she is not only denied the right of trial by a jury of her own peers, but has no voice in the choice of judge or juror, her consent has never been given to the criminal code by which she is judged? Can she be said to have a right to liberty, when another citizen may have the legal custody of her person; the right to shut her up and administer moderate chastisement; to decide when and how she shall live, and what are the necessary means for her support? Can any citizen be said to have a right to the pursuit of happiness, whose inalienable rights are denied; who is disfranchised from all the privileges of citizenship; whose person is subject to the control and absolute will of another? Now, why is it, gentlemen, that woman stands at this day wholly unrepresented in this government? Why is it that the mass of laws affecting her special interests remain in their original barbarism at this hour, whilst all others have been undergoing change, and improvement? Simply because she has never exercised her right to the elective franchise. The grant of this right would secure all others, but the grant of every other, whilst this is denied, is a mockery! What is the right to property without the right to protect it? The enjoyment of that right to-day is no security it will be continued to-morrow, so long as it is granted to her as a favor by a privileged class, and not secured as a sacred right. It is folly to urge woman's claims on the broad platform of human rights, or from the grand basis of republicanism, upon which this government rests, for by your laws you deny her humanity, her citizenship, her identity with yourself. Justice, common sense, sound logic, all point to equality, to a full and perfect recognition of all her God-given rights. But as you are not yet prepared for any thing more than a partial legislation, believing, as you do, that womanhood is such a subtle essence of frivolities and contradictions that it needs some special code of laws to meet its exigencies, on the low ground of expediency and precedent must we plead our cause.

Man having denied woman's identity with himself, has no data to go upon in judging of her interests. If the sexes are alike in their mental structure, then there is no reason why woman should not have a voice in making the laws which govern her? But if they are not alike, most certainly woman must make laws for herself, for who else can understand her wants and needs? If it be admitted in this government, that all men and women are free and equal, then must women claim a place in our Senate Chambers and Houses of Representatives. But if it be found that even here, we have classes and castes, not Lord and Commons, but Lords and Ladies, then must woman claim a lower house, where her representatives may watch the passage of all bills affecting her own welfare, and the good of the country. Surely you should have as much respect for the rights of different classes as monarchical England. Experience taught her that the nobility could not legislate for the peasantry, and experience teaches us that man cannot legislate for woman. If the object of government is to protect the weak against the strong, how unwise to place the power wholly in the hands of the strong? Yet that is the history of all governments, even the model republic of these

United States. You who have read the history of nations, from Moses down to our last election, where have you ever seen one class looking after the interests of another?

Any of you can readily see the defects in other governments, and pronounce sentence against those who have sacrificed the masses to themselves; but when we come to our own case, we are blinded by custom and self-interest. Some of you who have no capital can see the injustice which the laborer suffers; some of you who have no slaves, can see the cruelty of his oppression; but who of you appreciate the galling humiliation, the refinements of degradation, to which women (the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of freemen) are subject, in this the last half of the nineteenth century? How many of you have ever read even the laws concerning her that now disgrace your statute-books? In cruelty and tyranny, they are not surpassed by any slaveholding code in the Southern States; in fact they are worse, by just so far as woman, from her social position, refinement and education, is on a more equal ground with the oppressor. Allow me just here to call the attention of that party now so much interested in the slave of the Carolinas, to the similarity in his condition and that of the mothers, wives and daughters of the Empire State. The negro has no name. He is Cuffy Douglas or Cuffy Brooks, just whose Cuffy he may chance to be. The woman has no name. She is Mrs. Richard Roe or Mrs. John Doe, just whose Mrs. she may chance to be. Cuffy has no right to his earnings; he cannot buy or sell, or lay up anything that he can call his own. Mrs. Roe has no right to her earnings; she can neither buy nor sell, make contracts, nor lay up anything that she can call her own. Cuffy has no right to his children; they can be sold from him at any time. Mrs. Roe has no right to her children; they may be bound out to cancel a father's debts of honor. The unborn child, even by the last will of the father, may be placed under the guardianship of a stranger and a foreigner. Cuffy has no legal existence; he is subject to restraint and moderate chastisement. Mrs. Roe has no legal existence; she has not the best right to her own person. The husband has the power to restrain, and administer moderate chastisement.

Blackstone declares that the husband and wife are one, and learned commentators have decided that that one is the husband. In all civil codes, you will find them classified as one. Certain rights and immunities, such and such privileges are to be secured to white male citizens. What have women and negroes to do with rights? What know they of government, war or glory?

The prejudice against color, of which we hear so much, is no stronger than that against sex. It is produced by the same cause, and manifested very much in the same way. The negro's skin and the woman's sex are both prima facie evidence that they were intended to be in subjection to the white Saxon man. The few social privileges which the man gives the woman, he makes up to the negro in civil rights. The woman may sit at the same table and eat with the white man; the free negro may hold property and vote. The woman may sit in the same pew with the white man, in church; the free negro may enter the pulpit and preach. Now, with the right to suffrage, the right unquestioned, even by Paul, to minister at the altar, it is evident that the prejudice against sex is more deeply rooted and more unreasonably maintained than that against color. As citizens of a republic, which should we most highly prize, social privileges or civil rights? The latter, most certainly.

To those who do not feel the injustice and degradation of the condition, there is something inexpressibly comical in man's "citizen woman." It reminds me of those monsters I used to see in the old world, head and shoulders woman, and the rest of the body sometimes fish, and sometimes beast. I used to think, What a strange conceit! but now I see how perfectly it represents man's ideal! Look over all his laws concerning us, and you will see just enough of woman to tell of her existence; all the rest is submerged, or made to crawl upon the earth. Just imagine an inhabitant of another

planet entertaining himself some pleasant evening in searching over our great national compact, our Declaration of Independence, our Constitutions, or some of our Statute-books; what would he think of those "women and negroes" that must be so fenced in, so guarded against? Why, he would certainly suppose we were monsters, like those fabulous giants or Brobdignagians of olden times, so dangerous to civilized man, from our size, ferocity and power. Then let him take up our poets, from Pope down to Dana; let him listen to our Fourth of July toasts, and some of the sentimental adulations of social life, and no logic could convince him that this creature of the law, and this angel of the family altar, could be one and the same being. Man is in such a labyrinth of contradictions with his marital and property rights; he is so befogged on the whole question of maidens, wives and mothers, that from pure benevolence we should relieve him from this troublesome branch of legislation. We should vote, and make laws for ourselves. Do not be alarmed, dear ladies! You need spend no time reading Grotius, Coke, Puffendorf [sic], Blackstone, Bentham, Kent and Story to find out what you need. We may safely trust the shrewd selfishness of the white man, and consent to live under the same broad code where he has so comfortably ensconced himself. Any legislation that will do for man, we may abide by most cheerfully.

"Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." "Taxation and representation are inseparable." These glorious truths were uttered for some higher purpose than to decorate holiday flags, or furnish texts for Fourth of July orations. If they mean any thing, by what right do you try woman by your civil code, or tax her to support this government? Do you claim that she is represented by her father, husband, brother, son? Your statute-books testify against you. They show but too well how faithless you have been to the high and holy trust you have assumed. A proper self-respect forbids such an admission. If those to whom woman is bound, by all the ties of blood and affection, have made, and do now sanction, such laws as disgrace your whole code, may Heaven save her from her friends! But if man claims to be her representative, let him pay her taxes. Instead of sending his tax-gatherer round to poor widows, let him look up their fathers, brothers, sons, or some negro that they have helped to emancipate, or some clergyman they have helped to educate. Get it out of some one crowned with the glory of manhood. But for consistency's sake; for all feel for the who sent forth rights which made ever tremble on his throne; those mighty words an not hold one the respect you bear to republican principles; as you honor the memory of those who settled this question for you, by sufferings that grand declaration of crowned head in Europe for the memory of all deeds of the past, do half of the people of this State beyond the limits of justice. Our State Treasury reports show thousands of dollars collected every year from the one-house and lot of poor widows and maidens. Taxation without representation was the theme for many a hot debate in the parliaments of the old world, and for many an eloquent oration in the forests of the new. We but re-echo those undying truths uttered by the heroes of American liberty, scarce one century ago. It must strike every mind as just, that if man is not willing to have woman represented in this government, then she should not be subject to taxation. Your Constitution regards the negro, so unjustly degraded, with far more consideration than your wives and mothers. If he is possessed of a certain amount of property, then is he permitted to vote, and pay taxes, too. If he has not that amount, then he is not permitted to vote, neither is he taxed. But woman -- no matter how rich, how noble, how virtuous, she shall have no voice in the government; and no matter how weak or ignorant, how wretched or worn out with life's struggles, if, by unwearied industry, she has made a home for herself and children, she must be subject to taxation.

Talk not of chivalry, men of New York, so long as feeble women, who own but one house and lot, are legal subjects of taxation! Talk not of justice, so long as sex is made a badge of oppression! I am better educated than the Irishman who saws my wood. I read and write his letters for him to the

Emerald Isle, and in conversation, I find myself better posted than he is on law and politics, and with a far higher appreciation of the blessings of a republican form of government. Yet he suffers none of the injustice I do, but is in the full possession of all his civil and political rights, equally with any member of your honorable body. In standing before grave and reverend senators, full of years, experience and wisdom, I might find in their vast superiority sufficient ground for their superior rights. But when I contrast myself with the ignorant alien, the gambler, the drunkard, the prize-fighter, the licentious profligate, the silly stripling of twenty-one, the fool, the villain, I see no ground for these broad distinctions.

But, say you, we would not have woman exposed to the grossness and vulgarity of public life, or encounter what she must at the polls. When you talk, gentlemen, of sheltering woman from the rough winds and revolting scenes of real life, you must be either talking for effect, or wholly ignorant of what the facts of life are. The man, whatever he is, is known to the woman. She is the companion, not only of the accomplished statesman, the orator and the scholar, but of the vile, vulgar, brutal man, his mother, his wife, his sister, his daughter. Yes, delicate, refined, educated women are in daily life with the drunkard, the gambler, the licentious man, the rogue and the villain; and if man shows out what he is any where, it is at his own hearthstone. There are over forty thousand drunkards in this State. All these are bound by the ties of family to some woman. Allow but a mother and a wife to each, and you have over eighty thousand women. All these have seen their fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, in the lowest and most debased stages of obscenity and degradation. In your own circle of friends, do you not know refined women, whose whole lives are darkened and saddened by gross and brutal associations? Now, gentlemen, do you talk to woman of a rude jest or jostle at the polls, where noble, virtuous men stand ready to protect her person and her rights, when, alone in the darkness and solitude and gloom of night, they have trembled on their own thresholds, awaiting the return of husbands from their midnight revels? -- when, stepping from her chamber, she has beheld her royal monarch, her lord and master, -- her legal representative, -- the protector of her property, her home, her children and her person, down on his hands and knees slowly crawling up the stairs? Behold him in her chamber -- in her bed!

The fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast is far too often realized in life. Gentlemen, such scenes as woman has witnessed at her own fireside, where no eye save Omnipotence could pity, no strong arm could help, can never be realized at the polls, never equalled elsewhere, this side the bottomless pit. No, woman has not hitherto lived in the clouds, surrounded by an atmosphere of holiness and divinity, ignorant of vice and impurity, -- but she has been the companion of man in health, in sickness and in death, in his highest and in his lowest moments. She has worshipped him as a saint and an orator, and pitied him as madman and a fool. In Paradise, man and woman were placed together, and so they must ever be. They must sink or rise together. If man is low and wretched and vile, woman cannot escape the contagion, and any atmosphere that is unfit for woman to breathe, is not fit for man. Verily, the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation. You, by your unwise legislation, have crippled and dwarfed womanhood, by closing to her all honorable and lucrative means of employment, have driven her into the garrets and dens of our cities, where she now revenges herself on your innocent sons, sapping the very foundations of national virtue and strength. Alas! for the young men just coming on the stage of action, who soon shall fill your vacant places -- our future Senators, our Presidents, the expounders of our constitutional law! Terrible are the penalties we are now suffering for the ages of injustice done to woman.

But, say you, God has appointed woman's sphere; it is His will that she is as she is. Well, if that be so, then woman will be kept in her sphere by God's laws. It is folly said Daniel Webster, to reenact God's laws. Wherever God has placed woman, there must she ever be. You might as well pass laws to keep Venus, the beautiful morning star, from refreshing herself by an occasional promenade on the broad belt of Saturn. Nature's laws are immutable; no planet or immortal being can ever get out of its prescribed orbit. Again, the condition of woman, in all ages, has differed materially, and differs at this moment, among the various nations of the earth. Now, which of all these conditions, think you, is in accordance with the will of God? Enervated and voluptuous by confinement, as she is in the Turkish harem, or exhausted by toil and out-door labor, as she is in Switzerland and Germany, -- with her feet compressed in iron boots to the smallest possible dimensions, depending on man to carry her about, as she is in China, or standing all day in the intense heat of a summer's sun in the cotton field and rice plantation, as she is in Christian America, -- with the crown and sceptre ruling the mightiest nation on the globe, or burning on the funeral pile of her husband, a useless relic of her lordly dead, as she is in India, -- who can decide which of all these is the woman's true sphere?

Ever and anon, through the long ages, great emergencies have called forth the true, the individual woman, and multitudes have always greeted her with joy, and proudly welcomed her success. On the war-horse, bearing the flag of conquest, she has led the armies of mighty nations. With telescopic vision, she has prescribed the orbit of planetary worlds. In the midst of peril, mutiny and death, she has seized the command of the lonely ship, and brought it safely to its destined port. With the mild gospel of Jesus, she has passed, unscathed, through all earthly dangers. What depths of pollution and vice have been unwatched and unpitied by eye of woman? An angel of mercy, she has walked up and down the solitary places, by-lanes and dark prison-houses of our modern Babylons, ministering to the children of suffering and want, cheering the trembling criminal, the depraved and the profligate with bright hopes of the future! Amid all the horrors of the French Revolution, in the gloomy Bastille [sic], at the guillotine, through all the tragic scenes of the Crimea, amid all the dangers and sudden emergencies of every-day life, self-poised and self-sustained, tell me,

Can she be too great, too grand,
To fill the place where she can stand,
To do and dare what she has
done Before all Israel and the sun?

Again, it is said that the majority of women do not ask for any change in the laws, that it is time enough to give them the elective franchise when they, as a class, demand it.

Wise statesmen legislate for the best interests of the nation; the State, for the highest good of its citizens; the Christian, for the conversion of the world. Where would have been our railroads, our telegraphs, our ocean steamers, our canals and harbors, our arts and sciences, if government had withheld the means from the far-seeing minority? This state established our present system of common schools, fully believing that educated men and women would make better citizens than ignorant ones. In making this provision for the education of its children, had they waited for a majority of the urchins of this State to petition for schools, how many, think you, would have asked to be transplanted from the street to the school-house? Does the State wait for the criminal to ask for his prison-house? the insane, the idiot, the deaf and dumb for his asylum? Does the Christian, in his love to all mankind, wait for the majority of the benighted heathen to ask him for the gospel? No; unasked and unwelcomed, he crosses the trackless ocean, rolls off the mountain of superstition that oppresses the human mind, proclaims the immortality of the soul, the dignity of manhood, the right of all to be free and happy. No, gentlemen, if there is but one woman in this State who feels the injustice of her position, she should not be denied her inalienable rights, because the common

household drudge and the silly butterflies of fashion are ignorant of all laws, both human and Divine. Because they know nothing of governments, or rights, and therefore ask nothing, shall my petitions be unheard? I stand before you the rightful representative of woman, claiming a share in the halo of glory that has gathered round her in the ages, and by the wisdom of her past words and works, her peerless heroism and self-sacrifice, I challenge your admiration, and, moreover, claiming, as I do, a share in all her outrages and injustice, contempt upon her, in her deep degradation, hopeless wretchedness, by all that is helpless in her present condition, that is false in law and public sentiment, I urge your generous consideration; for as my heart swells with pride to behold woman in the highest walks of literature and art, it grows big enough to take in those who are bleeding in the dust.

Now do not think, gentlemen, we wish you to do a great many troublesome things for us, that you need spend a whole session in fixing up a code of laws to satisfy a class of most unreasonable women. We ask no more than the poor devils in the Scripture asked, "Let us alone" (Mark 1:24). In mercy, let us take care of ourselves, our property, our children and our homes. True, we are not so strong, so wise, so crafty as you are, but if any kind friend leaves us a little money, or we can by great industry earn fifty cents a day, we would rather buy bread and clothes for our children, than cigars and champagne for our legal protectors. There has been a great deal written and said about protection. We, as a class, are tired of one kind of protection, that which leaves us everything to do, to dare and to suffer, and strips us of all means for its accomplishment. We would not tax man to take care of us. No, the Great Father has endowed all his creatures with the necessary powers for self-support, self-defence and protection. We do not ask man to represent us, it is hard enough in times like these for man to carry back-bone enough to represent himself. So long as the mass of men spend most of their time on the fence, not knowing which way to jump, they are surely in no condition to tell us where we had better stand. In pity for man, we would no longer hang like a millstone round his neck. Undo what man did for us in the dark ages, and strike out all special legislation for us; strike out the name, woman, from all your constitutions, and then, with fair sailing, let us sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish together.

At Athens, an ancient apologue tells us, on the completion of the temple of Minerva, a statue of the goddess was wanted to occupy the crowning point of the edifice. Two of the greatest artists produced what each deemed his master-piece. One of these figures was the size of life, admirably designed, exquisitely finished, softly rounded, and beautifully refined. The other was of Amazonian stature, and so boldly chiselled that it looked more like masonry than sculpture. The eyes of all were attracted by the first, and turned away in contempt from the second. That, therefore, was adopted, and the other rejected, almost with resentment, as though an insult had been offered to a discerning public. The favored statue was accordingly borne in triumph to the place for which it was designed, in the presence of applauding thousands, but as it receded from their up-turned eyes, all, all at once agaze upon it, the thunders of applause unaccountably died away, -- a general misgiving ran through every bosom, -- the mob themselves stood like statues, as silent and as petrified, for as it slowly went up, and up, the soft expression of those chiselled features, the delicate curves and outlines of the limbs and figure, became gradually fainter and fainter, and when at last it reached the place for which it was intended, it was a shapeless ball, enveloped in mist. Of course, the idol of the hour was now clamored down as rationally as it had been cried up, and its dishonored rival, with no good will and no good looks on the part of the chagrined populace, was reared in its stead. As it ascended, the sharp angles faded away, the rough points became smooth, the features full of expression, the whole figure radiant with majesty and beauty. The rude hewn mass, that before scarcely appeared to bear even the human form, assumed at once the divinity which it represented, being so perfectly

proportioned to the dimensions of the building, and to the elevation on which it stood, that it seemed as though Pallas herself had alighted upon the pinnacle of the temple in person, to receive the homage of her worshippers.

The woman of the nineteenth century is the shapeless ball in the lofty position which she was designed fully and nobly to fill. The place is not too high, too large, too sacred for woman, but the type that you have chosen is far too small for it. The woman we declare unto you is the rude, misshapen, unpolished object of the successful artist. From your stand-point, you are absorbed with the defects alone. The true artist sees the harmony between the object and its destination. Man, the sculptor, has carved out his ideal, and thousands welcome his success. He has made a woman that from his low stand-point looks fair and beautiful, a being without rights, or hopes, or fears but in him -- neither noble, virtuous nor independent. Where do we see, in Church or State, in school-house or at the fireside, the much talked-of moral power of woman? Like those Athenians, we have bowed down and worshiped in woman, beauty, grace, the exquisite proportions, the soft and beautifully rounded outline, her delicacy, refinement, and silent helplessness -- all well when she is viewed simply as an object of sight, never to rise one foot above the dust from which she sprung. But if she is to be raised up to adorn a temple, or represent a divinity -- if she is to fill the niche of wife and counsellor to true and noble men, if she is to be the mother, the educator of a race of heroes or martyrs, of a Napoleon, or a Jesus -- then must the type of womanhood be on a larger scale than that yet carved by man.

In vain would the rejected artist have reasoned with the Athenians as to the superiority of his production; nothing short of the experiment they made could have satisfied them. And what of your experiment, what of your wives, your homes? Alas! for the folly and vacancy that meet you there! But for your club-houses and newspapers, what would social life be to you? Where are your beautiful women? your frail ones, taught to lean lovingly and confidingly on man? Where are the crowds of educated dependents -- where the long line of pensioners on man's bounty? Where all the young girls, taught to believe that marriage is the only legitimate object of a woman's pursuit -- they who stand listlessly on life's shores, waiting, year after year, like the sick man at the pool of Bethesda, for some one to come and put them in? These are they who by their ignorance and folly curse almost every fireside with some human specimen of deformity or imbecility. These are they who fill the gloomy abodes of poverty and vice in our vast metropolis. These are they who patrol the streets of our cities, to give our sons their first lessons in infamy. These are they who fill our asylums, and make night hideous with their cries and groans.

The women who are called masculine, who are brave, courageous, self-reliant and independent, are they who, in the face of adverse winds, have kept one steady course upward and onward in the paths of virtue and peace -- they who have taken their gauge of womanhood from their own native strength and dignity -- they who have learned for themselves the will of God concerning them. This is our type of womanhood. Will you help us raise it up, that you too may see its beautiful proportions -- that you may behold the outline of the goddess who is yet to adorn your temple of Freedom? We are building a model republic; our edifice will one day need a crowning glory. Let the artists be wisely chosen. Let them begin their work. Here is a temple to Liberty, to human rights, on whose portals behold the glorious declaration, "All men are created equal." The sun has never yet shone upon any of man's creations that can compare with this. The artist who can mould a statue worthy to crown magnificence like this, must be godlike in his conceptions, grand in his comprehensions, sublimely beautiful in his power of execution. The woman-the crowning glory of the model republic among the nations of the earth-what must she not be?