

MORE ABOUT WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

ABOUT a month ago a "communicated" article appeared in a morning daily attacking woman suffrage, to which, by request, we made reply, taking up each point advanced and treating it with courteous argument. It seems that the writer, for some reason that does not appear, addressed himself again to the subject in the columns of a semi-weekly paper which we never see. A marked copy, about three weeks old, has been sent to us and a "communicated" editorial article in it attempts a rejoinder and invites us to say something further.

We regret that the writer treats a subject of such grave importance in the spirit of polemic contention, confessing to be "so much of a savage as to believe that the victor has a right to the scalp of the vanquished, and should have the undisputed privilege of waving it to his heart's content." We are after nobody's scalp, we are not desirous of vanquishing any opponent, we have no admiration for anything like gloating over the defeat of an adversary. We only desire the triumph of right over wrong, of justice over injustice and of liberty over oppression.

The writer claimed as an argument against woman suffrage that government belongs to man, and we replied that under our form of government this was an argument in its favor, because if governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, to deny women a voice in the choice of those who are to govern them is unrepugnant. To this he remarks:

"If we had said that government belonged to mankind in such sense as to include men and women, then there would be some point to the school boy claim of the News editor that our statement was an argument against ourselves."

To this is added some flippant remarks as to our denying the premises, and the conclusion is jumped at that as government belongs to "the male of our species," "to deny to woman a voice in the affairs of government is not inconsistent nor unjust."

We do not think it will take reasoning powers above those of the average "schoolboy" to perceive that, put in this form, the writer has again made an argument against himself. We understood him to mean the male, when he first claimed that government belongs to man. And it was for that very reason that we claimed it to be unrepugnant and unjust to deny to women a voice in the selection of those who are to govern women. If government does belong to man, women as well as men being "the governed," and if governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, is it not inevitable that to deny to one half of the governed any voice in the selection of the men who are to govern, is unjust and unrepugnant? It is government without the consent of at least half of the governed.

But the writer appears to take the ground that because "man is the head of the woman as Christ is the head of the Church," this means that woman is to be "subject" to man as "the head of a 'little society or government of which man is the ruler,'" and that woman must not "refuse obedience" in anything, for if she does, she be-

comes "a contending rebel" and "then farewell to domestic peace." He recognizes the right of woman, however, to throw off her "allegiance" but that, he says, would be "revolution." Our remark that man as "the head of the woman relates to the family" is called an "assumption," and the broad doctrine is laid down that the man rules as a "king" and it is the duty of the woman to be "a subject."

This is not surprising from one who is "so much of a savage" that he delights in "waving the scalp" of an adversary. The domination of man over woman as an inferior, or a "subject," who is under his "dictation," who would be a "rebel" if she differed from her husband in politics and did not render him "becoming submission" in "all the relations of life," is a relic of barbarism, of a state of savagery from which mankind has nearly become emancipated. The modern civilized idea is that woman is the companion and partner of the man, not his "subject." That she has a right to her own opinions on all subjects, and is no more a "rebel" if they differ from her husband's views, than he is a "rebel" because his differs from hers. A woman has a right to choose her own religion, to worship God according to the dictates of her own conscience, as a responsible individual who will be judged for her individual acts. On the same ground she has the same right to her individual political convictions, and is independent as to her opinions as she is to her appetites.

But we are told that "we concede the right of man to rule in the family," and that "by parity of reason he should rule in the state." Exactly. But only in the same way. We do not believe in the "rule" which makes the husband the autocrat and the wife the "subject." But, letting that pass, the woman makes her choice of the man that is to stand as the head of the family, and our argument is that she should have the same choice as to the head and officers of the State. We have offered no objection to "the same rule prevailing in the State." On the contrary that is what we claim. But our assailant demands a different rule, and while he concedes woman's right to a choice of man as "ruler in the family," he denies it to her as to the rulers in the State. So that all his would-be sarcastic remarks on this point are merely a boomerang and, once more, "an argument against himself."

As to our reference to the Church, it was simply in answer to his own quotation from Paul, and therefore his reflections about our mentioning the Church in connection with a political subject come back in his own face. But he reminds us that though women vote in the Church "for its officers at conferences,"

"In council and priesthood meetings where the real affairs pertaining to the Church are considered, women are banished."

Are we to understand then that the voting at conferences and the affairs presented there are unreal? That they do not amount to anything? Then the election of officers for the State and the voting for them is equally unreal. And it is only in this to us real and important matter that we claim for woman equal rights with man. It is

woman suffrage, not office-holding or executive powers, that is in question. It is not whether women shall sit in the councils of the nation, or upon the judgment seat, or figure in the execution of the law, but simply whether they shall have a voice in the choice of the men who are to occupy those positions. Thus the "parity of reasoning" once more is against his position.

He is also mistaken in jumping at the conclusion that we had "reference to the Mormon Church only," and thus he has introduced an element into the controversy that might as well have been left out. In most churches now-a-days women members are granted a vote in Church affairs, and the injustice of denying it to them is fast forcing itself upon the minds of even the most illiberal in those denominations that have not so far advanced. As to the "banishment" of women from all matters pertaining to the government of the Church, that is rather an extreme expression, and it is a fact that by the organization of the Relief Societies and other Associations, woman's capacity for government in her own sphere—among her own sex and over juveniles of both sexes, is officially recognized and given a sphere of action. Thus the Church gives woman the suffrage and such offices as are suitable to her sex. That is all we ask for her in the State. But the present issue goes no further than woman suffrage, pure and simple, that is, the right of woman to the ballot.

The writer assumed that "women cannot act independently in voting," by which of course he meant married women, and we showed that "this objection would deprive all men of the suffrage who it might be alleged are not in circumstances to act independently." To this he replies, "So indeed it should." That is, if it is alleged that some men cannot act independently they should be deprived of the right of suffrage. The Democrats, then, have only to allege that certain Republicans and vice versa, cannot act independently, and they must be deprived of the ballot! Observe, it is only his "assumption" that "women cannot act independently in voting." We do not admit it for a moment. Facts are against it. But the rule, we say, would hold equally against the young man who is of age and who is still under the "dictation" of the head of the house. To this the writer responds:

"Not so, for he may walk out from under that dictation at any moment, while there are a thousand and one things that will keep the mother under as long as she lives."

Yes, the mother will be always "kept under" while the theory prevails that she is a "subject" instead of an associate, a partner in the family government. And it seems the only thing she or a matured son can do, according to our opponent's theory, if either differs from the notions of the family "king," is to walk out from "under that dictation" become a "rebel" and seek the remedy of "revolution."

This comes, too, of persisting in the notion that the family and not the matured individual is the political unit. There is no such thing known in our system of government as "family suffrage." It is each individual citizen.