



WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS

One of the most interesting features of English politics at the present time is the part that women take in the canvass before an election. The calmness of Mrs. Randolph Churchill or of Mrs. Gladstone in the midst of a howling egg-throwing mob reverses the accepted opinions about the hysterical timidity of the sex. The wife's presence on the platform is as much a matter of course as that of the candidate's and her sangfroid when the howls of a mob of politicians drown her husband's voice, is complete.

The English voter is visited on his farm and in his shop, or counting-room by the candidate's sister or wife. She talks with him about the candidate's views, and explains his liking for that particular section of country. Woman's importance in practical politics in England is undisputed. Whether the influence she exercises is legitimate and beneficial is another question. The basis of the influence she exerts is her femininity and because it can have nothing to do with the questions to be settled by the election of this or that candidate it is of doubtful expediency. When women enter politics in this country let it be through the front door as an individual and not indirectly as a sister or a wife of a candidate.

Wives of American politicians are following the English in appearing on the platform with their husbands at all political meetings, though they have not yet formed the habit of making a personal appeal to those who possess the suffrage.

In our own state Mrs. Thurston set the fashion. In the nominating conventions and mass meetings of the last decade of Nebraska politics, in which Mr. Thurston has been a prominent feature, Mrs. Thurston has been by his side.

So far Mrs. Bryan has accompanied her husband in his campaigns. She has gone with him to New York and when he goes out to speak in the many states of the union, she will go with him. After the announcement celebration is over they will go to Bath, Me., to visit Mr. and Mrs. Sewell. Mrs. Bryan stimulates those who come in contact with her. It is well known that she helps her husband with his speeches. The Review of Reviews says: "Mrs. Bryan has been almost as deep a student of public questions as her husband. While his chief interest lay in the practice of the law she studied law and aided him in his office. When, following the natural inclination of his mind, he turned to politics and state craft, she, too, took up the questions of the day and investigated them intelligently and exhaustively. Mr. Bryan frankly confesses the aid she has given him in preparing his addresses—for like most good speakers, he seldom goes before an audience on an occasion of importance without careful preparation. During his term in the house of representatives she never failed to be in the gallery when he was to speak, and her presence stimulated as her aid before had prepared him. At the Chicago convention she sat prominently on the platform throughout the sessions, noting with a mind trained to grasp public affairs, the varying moods of the great gathering. She saw the wonderful outburst of enthusiasm that followed his speech and sat through the four ballots which ended in his nomination. Since the convention she has been constantly at his side, traveling with him and sitting on the platforms from which he makes his speeches. In the event of his election she may be expected to be more than merely mistress of the White House. Her impress already upon his public utterances is apparent to those who

know her, and should her husband be called to the first position in the republic, American womankind might feel more than ever before that their sex had a positive part in the government of the nation."

McClure's for August contains an article on Gladstone by the friend of Chicago—Mr. W. T. Stead. Speaking of wives, he says Mrs. Gladstone was not his equal in intellect, nor ever aspired to be more than a sympathetic listener to his political discourses. She was a capital house mother, faithful and attentive; an admirable nurse, who studied her husband as a doctor studied his patient; for all his physical and social needs, she was all that could be desired, but it ended there. The illustrations show him in his fifty-fifth and in his eighty-sixth year. In the former he looks like a man of forty. At eighty-six he looks seventy. His taste for literature and his love of religion in addition to his placid adoring wife have kept him about fifteen years younger than his years in vigor physical and mental. No one has yet been able to broach a subject upon which Mr. Gladstone could not talk with mastery of the detail of it. Mr. Stead says: "There is a tradition to the effect that on one occasion when Monsieur Chevalier, the eminent French economist, was invited to Downing street to breakfast, he came away sadly disappointed, for Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright happened to raise the subject of corns, discussing chiropody in all its branches, with a wonderful array of personal experience and literary reference which bewildered the Frenchman, who, at first, was under the illusion that the prime minister and the great free trader were engaged in the discussion of the corn laws.

This faculty of absorption in other affairs besides those of state has kept Mr. Gladstone chipper and blythe when other people thought it their duty to worry and grow aged over the degeneracy of humanity and the future of the nation. His power of concentration was so absolute that even when he was making up a cabinet he could put his mind on to the Iliad with such singleness that to get his attention was like waking a person from a sound sleep.

Anthony Hope's story of "Phroso" springs along in this number, but the end does not seem any nearer. The action of his stories never lags—only the end recedes. The hero is a very brave man, but almost incredibly stupid. In the last chapter of the present number he lets Mouraki Pasha—an unspeakable Turk, lead him into a cottage surrounded by the Pasha's soldiery and both of them are in love with the same girl and Mouraki is fifty years old and has never been conquered by a woman yet. The Englishman, Lord Wheatley, knows that Mouraki sentences men to hideous deaths as a butcher orders a steer knocked on the head, yet because he is an Englishman he does not suspect him of any designs upon himself. It may be that Lord Wheatley will have to marry Phroso or see her carried off by the Turk. Wheatley loves her and Phroso loves him, but before he came away from England, his relations and her relations engaged him to a girl. It was purely "une affaire de convenance." Since coming to the island the bonds wherewith he is bound cut deeply into his flesh, though he never thinks of snapping them. Considering the strength of his sense of honor, Anthony H. will have to get him into the most complicated circumstance in order to marry him to Phroso. He must be threatened with the loss of what is more precious than life (in poetry and fiction) and so must

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