

## A WOMAN'S METHOD.

### WHAT MRS. MELUSINA FAY PIERCE PROPOSES IN LIEU OF THE SUFFRAGE.

Mrs. Melusina Fay Pierce has made an interesting address before the Massachusetts Legislative Committee on Woman Suffrage in opposition to the proposition to give tax-paying women the right to vote for municipal officers. In concluding she says :

"I believe there are three great forces which alone can work out to its very best possibilities the so-called 'woman question.' The first is the coeducation of the sexes from the kindergarten through the university. The second, co-operative store-keeping and housekeeping by women. The third, the advisory representation—if I may so phrase it—of women as above indicated. I am opposed, Mr. Chairman, to the demand for universal woman suffrage as presented here every year so far, and I am opposed to tax-paying woman suffrage as presented this year, because both of them are founded upon the theory that in politics a woman is the same thing as a man. While women are the protected class this can never be, and they always will be the protected class, for so their Maker has ordained. Why should they disdain and hate this gracious and fascinating position? They will not disdain it, gentlemen, if you will do your duty. Nothing makes women so womanly as chivalry in men. Certainly there is, and always has been, a missing factor in governments. Were it not so, the path of Time would not be strewn with the wrecks of nations, empires, kingdoms, and republics, as it is. What is that factor? It is very simple; and the woman suffragists are right when they say that it is the feminine factor. And they are not wrong, either, in feeling it a hardship that the 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 of women in this country should be arbitrarily governed by men without ever being consulted. When we reflect upon it, it is indeed astonishing that men should so calmly and confidently go on, year after year, exercising this tremendous authority, bearing this tremendous responsibility, without ever asking for light and information from the enormous multitudes they legislate for.

"Why, then, should you not, Mr. Chairman, give to women in the State that which you give to women in the home, and which nature and religion alike teach you is their due—the consulting, the advisory function—thus bringing them into real and useful and mutually respecting relations with yourselves? If you will do this gentlemen—if you will request the women of every town to elect advisory councils and school and charitable boards in connection with the local authorities—and after 10 years of this experience, if you will request them to send here their women representatives to a consulting or advisory house in organic relation with your own, you will have given to women in politics all the real weight that they can possibly have, and will have solved the woman question in a way which, I am confident, will meet the admiration and sympathy of the majority of the women of this generation at least. The next, if it pleases, can go one step further—educate every woman to carry and use a loaded pistol, throw open manhood suffrage and the ranks of the Militia to her, and let her take care of herself if she can!

"In conclusion, should it be objected that the Legislature of Massachusetts should not, according to my own principle, confer this advisory representation upon women without having been requested to do so by the majority of the women of Massachusetts, I answer that, as I look at it, the cases are not parallel, because to confer the manhood suffrage or law-making power upon women would be revolutionary—something entirely novel in human experience—and therefore to be undertaken only in accordance with the most clearly expressed popular will; while to confer the advisory power recommended would be natural—would be simply to enlarge the conception and scope of the actual and immemorial relations of women with the governing half of the world."

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