

THE LITERARY DIGEST

June 30, 1894: p. 245

WOMAN-SUFFRAGE LEADERS CALL DOWN A STORM OF CRITICISM.

TALKING about hot weather!

The action of Susan B. Anthony and Rev. Anna Shaw, leaders of the Woman-Suffrage women, in promising the Kansas Populists to support their party if their State Convention declared for the woman's ballot, has called forth denunciations that sizzle. The Convention, after a stormy time, adopted a Woman-Suffrage plank by a vote of 349 to 268, and Mrs. Shaw and Miss Anthony pinned Populist badges on and led in singing the Doxology. Such is the report that the Press dispatches give us, and the correspondents of *The Sun* and *The Evening Post* declare that these ladies by making such a bargain have become "political corruptionists." No less severe are the comments of a number of editors, and even *The Woman's Journal*, the leading organ of the Woman-Suffrage movement, seems to condemn as inexpedient the course pursued by these leaders:

"If Woman-Suffrage were the sole question at issue, the natural and proper thing would be to go with the Populists and fight it out on party lines. And if political parties were mere representatives of abstract principles, and not bodies of living men with personal loves and hatreds, sympathies and antipathies, the line could be fairly drawn. But such is not the case. Women, as well as men, are affiliated with the respective parties by convictions on other questions of public importance. Woman-Suffrage is not the sole question and cannot be made such. Thousands of Democrats and tens of thousands of Republicans are in sympathy with Woman-Suffrage. It would be folly to alienate them. It would be like saying, 'Henceforth you must abandon all other principles and interests, or cease to be a suffragist.'

"While the Populists deserve and should receive the commendation due to courage and consistency, and have the enthusiastic support of all women who believe in the Populist programme, the State Woman-Suffrage Association should remain non-partisan, and each individual woman should feel free to ally herself with whatever party she approves."

Kate Field's Washington.—"If these two good women had gone to that Convention as Populists to win over their political party to the cause of equal suffrage, there could be no adverse criticism. On the contrary, their course would be natural and proper; but such was not the case. They swallowed free coinage of silver, non-interest-paying bonds, etc., for the sake of getting what should have been obtained without any bargain whatever. They entered that Convention as leaders of a non-political cause, and came out of it committed to a third party, in which a majority of Americans have no faith."

Omaha Bee (Rep.).—"The whole deal has been nothing more than a political bargain, in which each side hopes to get the better of the other without sacrificing more than is absolutely necessary. Of course Woman-Suffrage has no greater interest for the members of the Populist Party than those of the other parties, because their principal proposals do not appeal stronger to women than to men. The Populist National Convention at its session in Omaha two years ago refused point-blank to incorporate a Woman-Suffrage plank into its platform, and the best its delegates could do for the equal-suffragist faction was to express their sympathy for all propositions for reform, while declaring them all secondary to the great issues now pressing for solution. 'Equal rights and equal privileges for all the men and women of this country' was held up as something to come as a matter of course in the dim and distant future, after the principles of the Populist Party shall have been incorporated into the Government."