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1.  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
and  
The Federal Amendment  
By her daughter  
Margaret Stanton Lawrence.

For many years the National Woman Suffrage Association of Which Mrs. Stanton was President for over twenty-five years, frequently held its annual Convention in Washington D.C.

On January 10, 1878 the Federal Amendment for Woman Suffrage, in exactly its present form, has introduced in the Senate of the United States by Senator Aaron A. Sargent of California. My mother was the guest of Senator and Mrs. Sargent and together they arranged the affair,

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2.  
Miss Susan B. Anthony was traveling in the far west at this time. On the following day January 11, Mrs. Stanton made one of the best and most logical speeches before the Judiciary Committee of the Senate, urging the passage of this Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which would thus, by a stroke of the pen, emancipate the women of the nation. This did not take place alas, til forty-two years later!

The National Woman Suffrage Association was holding its annual Convention in Washington, at this same date - Jan. 1878. And Mrs. Stanton in her opening address brought forward, for the first time, before that body of her coadjutors the demand for a Separate Amendment to the Constitution of the United

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3.  
States dealing with woman suffrage. Up to this time efforts, in the interest of women, had been concentrated in endeavors to change the 14th and 15th Amendment as they passed through congress. Mrs. Stanton's eloquent speech in a 16th Amendment may be read in Volume II of The History of Woman pp. 348-355.

The Wording of Senator Sargent's Amendment.

The wording of the amendment introduced by Senator Sargent at Mrs. Stanton's request in 1878 is exactly like that of the "XIX Amendment," which was proclaimed by the Sec. of State of the United States, as carried Aug. 20, 1920.

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How the XIX Amendment Reads.

Article XIX. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state on account of sex.

2. Congress shall have power, by appropriate legislation to enforce the provisions of this article.

The History of Woman Suffrage.

The history of Woman Suffrage

Consists of three large volumes; let me make a few words of explanation about these

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5.

huge tomes.

I don't know whether they are in the Seneca Falls Library or not. If not, I am sorry for they are worth perusing. They are in most of the big libraries of the United States and on the shelves of many in Europe ^ having been presented as gifts from my mother and Miss Anthony.

In the early eighties, my

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mother, in connection with Miss Anthony and Mrs. Matilda Joslyn Gage, of Syracuse, edited and largely wrote the first volume of The History of Woman Suffrage. It contained 871 pages, the print and paper are good, it has handsome engravings of the distinguished women in the suffrage movement, and is nicely bound. This was followed later on by two more large volumes.

Speaking of the three volumes as they came from the press, Mother says, that she, "Welcomed Vol. I with the same feelings of love and tenderness as she did her first-born child."

"It was reviewed by the

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newspapers all over the United States and England with far more praise than criticism," says Mrs. Stanton.

Mother speaks of these large volumes, somewhere in her writings, not

so much as books to be read through, by the average reader, but as arsenals of facts for the future historians of the Woman Suffrage Movement.

A fourth volume was gotten out, after my mother's death, edited by Ida Hasted Harper, bringing the suffrage history down to a late date.

Converting A United States Senator.

How one from the State of California was brought into the Suffrage Ranks.

I was relating what follows to a

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friend one evening, she was so interested that she begged me to write it out for publication. I did so, and here it is. I heard it from the lips of the senator and his wife during one of my visits, with mother, at this hospitable fireside.

The Sargent family had just arrived in Washington, father, mother, and their lovely children, two girls and a boy.

The Senator was a strikingly handsome man, a good talker and forceful speaker. He had white hair, big, laughing blue eyes, rosy cheeks, and very handsome teeth. Was straight and muscular, held his head and chest

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up, and commanded attention at once. His wife, on the contrary, was a demure little body, inconspicuous in looks, and never had much to say, especially in public. She was a guest reader, however, and well informed in many topics, she "did" things quietly: but when she did speak it was right to the point.

One evening, soon after the Sargents [first is crossed out] arrived in Washington, -this was before 1978 - they were attending one of their first big dinner-parties as one of the renowned homes of that city.

Many distinguished senators and their wives were present. The subject

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10.

of Woman Suffrage came up for discussion: most of what had been said was in opposition to the cause. Senator Sargent had spoken very emphatically against it. Suddenly the gentleman, who had escorted Mrs. Sargent out of dinner, turned to her and said, "What do you think on this subject, Madame, you haven't said anything?"

I have often heard the Senator, his wife, and mother laugh over this experience during my visits there.

Mrs. Sargent being thus challenged

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spoke up and gave a good account of why she believed in Votes for Women. She quoted the authorities, and altogether made such a deep impression on her hearers that many of those present decided, from that moment, to look into the subject.

Her husband rubbed his eyes and said to himself, "Is this the woman who has lived so long by my side, whom I have loved and cherished? Why have I never before known how she felt?"

He was furious at her, for it -

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12.

was not fashionable then to believe in woman suffrage. They had just begun their Washington career. He thought her advocacy of this improper cause would cast a veil over their social standing.

They had always been a most devoted couple, their home life had been ideal, and now to have this spectre come up between them, at this most important time of their lives, made the senator mad and disgusted. He was usually a most reasonable being.

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When it came time to go home he said; "Ellen, since you believe in woman's right to do and dare you may go home alone," turned his heels and walked off.

"Very well, Aaron," said our little heroine, "Share my key, so I can get in the house."

She said she never felt so sad in her life, but she just had to speak out her convictions when challenged to do so, even if it did cause a break between her and her husband. When she reached home she drew two chairs before the fire-place, poked

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up the fire, threw on some light wood, added a log or two, and set down to await the arrival of her leige [sic] lord.

Soon he appeared, and when he saw the cheerful blaze, the empty chair beside his wife, and was greeted with, "Come and sit-down, Aaron, I want to talk to you, " and this, in the kindest, sweetest tones possible, he was won over. His anger slipped from his finger tips.

"Oh, Ellen!" he said, "I am ashamed of the way I spoke to you, but I want you to know that I walked

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along the other side of the street a little back of you, to see that no harm came to you."

"I know you did, Aaron," she said, as he patted her on the head and took her hand and kissed it. "I saw you out of the tail of my eye."

Then they sat and talked far into the night on the subject that lay nearest her heart, and it was agreed that every morning as he shaved she would read some book aloud to him on the subject of woman suffrage. So the next

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day they started on John Stuart Mill's "Subjection of Women".

The Senator had such an open mind that before the book was finished he was thoroughly converted to the belief in the ballot for women, and was ever after one of our greatest champions in the Senate of the United States.

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[typed transcript]

COPY  
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Original in  
Alma Lutz Collection.

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