

Gentlemen of the Legislature of Alabama:-

Permit us, if you please, as the representatives of the wishes and views of more than eighty per cent, of the white women of Alabama, to express to you our thanks for the opportunity which you have so courteously offered to us to appear before you in this Joint Session in opposition to the ratification by you of the proposed Woman Suffrage Amendment to Constitution of the United States.

We do not avail ourselves of the opportunity thus offered because, in the first place we feel that when that unhappy time has come when the women of Alabama have to plead with the men of Alabama not to thrust them against their wills into the conflicts, the dissensions and the coarsening atmosphere of politics, the men of Alabama will have become so changed from that splendid race to whom we have so long looked to stand between us and the rough things of life, that our wishes and our welfare will have become things to which they are indifferent; and, in the second place, to appear before you to argue a political question in which the discussion may become acrimonious, would be to do the very thing which, in opposing this amendment, we seek to avoid having thrust upon us. Moreover, it would be personally embarrassing to us, in a high degree, to assume the unfamiliar and distasteful role of political gladiators.

We are not politicians nor political debaters, and we seek no laurels upon the hustings nor upon the floor of this House. We are home keepers and the mothers of children, and we seek to discharge our duty to our country and to the cause of civilization and right living, not by voting and holding office, but by making homes in which Love and Peace and Happiness dwell, and by instilling into our children love of their country and devotion to high ideals. We seek to remain such and we look with confidence to you, in whom the high traditions of the South still live, to protect us from this device of Northern Abolitionists, which if adopted, will, it seems to us, be not only debasing in its effects upon the womanly character, not only productive of discord in the sweet harmony of the family circle but will also inevitably result in striking down those barriers which you and your fathers have raised between Anglo-Saxon civilization and those who would mongrelize and corrupt it.

We oppose the adoption of this amendment because the vast majority of the white women of Alabama do not want it; we oppose it because we believe that women can exercise a better and greater influence upon the race, and contribute more fully to its development and its progress by remaining supreme in their own peculiar sphere than they can by invading yours; because we believe that to adopt it will nullify the work of those wise and patriotic men who have purified the ballot box from the contamination of negro votes, or from the fraud necessary to keep them out because we believe in you and trust you, and know that in the laws which you make, and in your administration of the public affairs, we will find a solicitude for our rights and our happiness which we ourselves could not exceed.

We revere the traditions of the South and of the Democratic party, and the fundamental principle of both has been, and still is, local self government. To that principle both have been true through many weary years of discouragement and defeat. The unterrified Democracy came again to power because it stood, in the face of all discouragements, for the principles in which it believed. How strange then it is that some of those who are high in its councils, who are in honor bound by its platform which still declares against this amendment, presume to urge upon you to abandon principle for expediency. When they do so, they ask you to cease to be Democrats because the existing pronouncement

of the supreme authority of the party condemns this amendment. We, your countrywomen, bone of your bone and blood of your blood, say to you that such an appeal is discreditable to him who makes it, and seeks to dishonor him to whom it is made. We who know you would feel ashamed to ask you to stand immovable for principle. We know you will do that, but we do ask you to make such a reply by your vote to that appeal which assumes you to be time serving weaklings, that no other man or high official will assume again to hold you in such contempt.

Gentlemen, our welfare is in your hands. You may, if you will, thrust us from the quietude of our homes into the contaminating atmosphere of political struggle, but we feel the strong assurance that in your protecting care we, our institutions and our sheltering laws are safe; and that you, on our behalf as well as your own, will decline to surrender our great state's control of her own electorate into hands that may be regardless of our welfare, our happiness, our safety and our great traditions.

Respectfully,

Woman's Anti-Ratification Executive Committee,

Mrs. James S. Pinckard, Chairman.
Mrs. Charles Henderson, Vice Chairman.
Mrs. W. T. Sheehan, Secretary.
Mrs. Marie Bankhead Owen.
Mrs. Chas. A. Thigpen.
Mrs. W. J. Hannah.
Mrs. Hails Janney.
Mrs. Jack Thorington.
Mrs. J. G. Winter.
Mrs. Ormond Somerville.
Mrs. Clayton Tullis.
Miss Mae Harris.
Mrs. J. Winter Thorington.
Mrs. E. Perry Thomas.
Mrs. Wm. E. Ellsberry.
Mrs. J. H. Naftel.
Mrs. W. B. Kelly.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MONTGOMERY

Keep for Consider-
ation on Friday 18th inst.