

NATIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

Member National Council of Women.

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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 2008 American Tract Society Building, N. Y.

Office of Honorary President, Rochester, N. Y.

June 7, 1900

To the President, Officers and Delegates of the

Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America,

in session at Burlington, Ia., June 15-22.

My Dear Friends: --

As chairman of the committee appointed by our National-American Woman Suffrage Association to address letters to all of the large conventions held during this last year of the nineteenth century, allow me to bring before you the great need for the recognition of the women of our nation in all of the rights, privileges and immunities of United States citizens.

The utter powerlessness of the religious world in governmental affairs is frequently commented upon by both the church and the secular press. Permit me to call your attention to the cause of this fact. Nearly every money-making enterprise, large or small, is owned and conducted by men. The great monopolies -- railroad, oil, coal, sugar, liquor, tobacco, etc. -- have their agents and attorneys at Washington and at every State capital not only to secure laws in their favor, but to prevent the passage of any which would be inimical to their interests. In addi-

tion to the capitalists themselves the vast majority of their employes, being men, are voters, so that these corporations can put into one of the political scales the weight of both money and ballots. On the other hand, the churches, the charities, the schools, the reforms, though generally officered by men, count but a very small minority of voters in their membership, however large that may be. It is therefore but a very simple problem in mathematics to show that if you put all the great material interests into one scale with votes, and all the great moral and spiritual interests into the other practically without votes, the latter must kick the beam. The representatives in any legislative body have no alternative -- they must comply with the demands of those who gave and can take away their positions.

It is generally admitted that we stand at a moral deadlock. While it is possible to secure some enactments for the suppression of drunkenness and immorality, such laws are virtually dead letters on the statute-books of every State in the Union. This is so not because humane men do not try to have good laws enforced, but because there are not enough such men to make a balance of power sufficiently strong to re-elect officers who have faithfully discharged their duties. Since all classes of men are now voters, there is no possible way of obtaining this needed balance of power except by the enfranchisement of women, who already form the vast majority of members in every educational, reform or religious association. But it surely is not necessary for me to argue this point with those whose life-work it is to study how to better the conditions of the world.

Will you not have introduced into your meeting, discussed and adopted, a resolution in favor of woman suffrage, and also have your officers, on behalf of the Synod, sign a petition to Congress asking for the submission of a Sixteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, prohibiting the disfranchisement of United States citizens on account of sex?

Enclosed is a form of petition. Please make two copies of it on your own official paper, if adopted, and return both to me when signed for presentation to Congress. Kindly send me also a copy of the suffrage resolution, should one be passed. In any case, I shall esteem it a favor to be informed of whatever action is taken upon these requests.

Hoping that the churches represented in your Synod will throw the weight of their influence on the side of justice and equality for women, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Susan B. Anthony