

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE NINTH
NATIONAL
WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION

HELD IN NEW YORK CITY,

Thursday May 12, 1859,

WITH A PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT OF THE

SPEECH OF WENDELL PHILLIPS,

BY J. M. W. YERRINTON.

PUBLISHED FOR THE CONVENTION.

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1859.

PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with a call issued by the
Ninth National Woman's Rights Convention
New York, on Thursday, May 12th, 1859.

The sessions commenced with a business
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Legislatures, and the following Committee
purpose:—Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Cad
H. Dall, Mrs. C. M. Severance, Ernestine I
Brown Blackwell, Thos. W. Higginson, Susan

The following resolutions were then offered
the consideration of the Convention:

Resolved, That while every newspaper in the land
record of woman's dishonor, the women who seek to
bound to inquire into its causes and save from its paraly

Resolved, That while we have no daughters too tend
too innocent, to escape from the influence of such trage
Adams and Washington, the true modesty of every m
of every wife, should forbid her to put aside the questio

Resolved, That the dishonor of single women proceed
from destitution, and the dishonor of married women as
want of education and utter absence of purpose in life
of their husbands to inspire them with true respect an
giving: therefore,

Resolved, That it is our bounden duty to open, in eve
vocations to women, to raise their wages by every advi
secure to them an education which shall be less a decor
than a tool to their hands.

Resolved, That while Courts adjourn in honor of a ma
Key, while the whole Bar of the District of Columbia p
honor, and vote to attend his funeral, as a mark of respe
opinion of a whole community sustains a man who could
derous indignation by the witness of an unspotted life, it
public opinion as a corrupting power, and to bring up o
knowledge and sanction of a higher law.

PROCEEDINGS.

In accordance with a call issued by the Central Committee, the Ninth National Woman's Rights Convention was held in the City of New York, on Thursday, May 12th, 1859.

The sessions commenced with a business meeting, on the afternoon of that day, in Mozart Hall. The meeting was called to order by Miss SUSAN B. ANTHONY, of Rochester, New York, who made a few introductory remarks, after which, the question of the expediency of memorializing the Legislatures of the different States, on the subject of granting equal rights to Woman, was discussed at some length. At the close of the debate, a resolution was adopted, that it was expedient so to memorialize the several Legislatures, and the following Committee appointed for that purpose:—Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. C. H. Dall, Mrs. C. M. Severance, Ernestine L. Rose, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Thos. W. Higginson, Susan B. Anthony.

The following resolutions were then offered by Mrs. Dall, for the consideration of the Convention:

Resolved, That while every newspaper in the land carries on its face the record of woman's dishonor, the women who seek to elevate their sex are bound to inquire into its causes and save from its paralysis.

Resolved, That while we have no daughters too tender and pure, no sons too innocent, to escape from the influence of such tragedies as those at North Adams and Washington, the true modesty of every mother, the true dignity of every wife, should forbid her to put aside the questions they involve.

Resolved, That the dishonor of single women proceeds in a great measure from destitution, and the dishonor of married women as much from their own want of education and utter absence of purpose in life as from the inability of their husbands to inspire them with true respect and help them to true living: therefore,

Resolved, That it is our bounden duty to open, in every possible way, new vocations to women, to raise their wages by every advisable means, and to secure to them an education which shall be less a decoration to their persons than a tool to their hands.

Resolved, That while Courts adjourn in honor of a man like Philip Barton Key, while the whole Bar of the District of Columbia pass resolutions in his honor, and vote to attend his funeral, as a mark of respect, while the public opinion of a whole community sustains a man who could not defend his murderous indignation by the witness of an unspotted life, it is our duty to rate public opinion as a corrupting power, and to bring up our children in the knowledge and sanction of a higher law.

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in 1859, dictates terms to Europe, and stands at the head of all her States. It is not in the power of Napoleon to crush that all-saving popular element which the French Revolution inaugurated, and incorporated into the civilization of thirty millions of people. What we ask is the same. Give to woman her sphere, and you double the intellectual strength of these thirty States. You purify politics, you cleanse the atmosphere, you raise the level of public life. You give her the means that enable her to educate herself.

I will not attempt to detain you longer. ["Go on"—"Go on."] I have neither the disposition nor the strength to trespass any longer upon your attention. The subject is so large that it might well fill days, instead of hours. It covers the whole surface of American society. It touches religion, purity, political economy, wages, the safety of cities, the growth of ideas, the very success of our experiment. I gave to-night a character to the city of Washington which some men hissed. You know it was true. If this experiment of self-government is to succeed, it is to succeed by some saving element introduced into the politics of the present day. You know this: your Websters, your Clays, your Calhouns, your Douglasses, however intellectually able they may have been, have never dared or cared to touch that moral element of our national life. Either the shallow and heartless trade of politics had eaten out their own moral being, or they feared to enter the unknown land of lofty right and wrong.

Neither of these great names has linked its fame with one great moral question of the day. They deal with money questions, with tariffs, with parties, with State law, and, if by chance they touch the slave question, it is only like Jewish hucksters trading in the relics of Saints. The reformers—the fanatics, as we are called—are the only ones who have launched social and moral questions. I risk nothing when I say, that the anti-slavery discussion of the last twenty years has been the salt of this nation; it has actually kept it alive and wholesome. Without it, our politics would have sunk beyond even contempt. So with this question. It stirs the deepest sympathy; it appeals to the highest moral sense; it enwraps within itself the greatest moral issues. Judge it, then, candidly, carefully, as Americans, and let us show ourselves worthy of the high place to which God has called us in human affairs. (Applause.)

The Convention adjourned, *sine die*.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY, *Chairman*.

MARTHA C. WRIGHT, *Secretary*.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

BEGINNING 1848 ...