

Why Women Refuse to be
Led by Other Women

Women Don't Like Themselves

By

GRACE ADAMS

MADAME, THE PRESIDENT!
How long before all good Americans will be addressing their highest executive with those words?

A group of idealists in New York City evidently think the time is not far off. At least they have formed a society which has for its sole objective the vision of some day elevating a woman to the highest executive position in the United States.

But if these impractical moon-gazers really cared anything about real facts and figures, they would immediately close their desks, cut off their lights, disconnect their telephones, lock their office doors, and go back to their knitting. For so long as these United States remain a democracy whose rulers are chosen by popular vote, just that long will these chosen rulers continue to be men.

This does not mean that there might not be somewhere within this country, and at this very hour, a woman as capable of handling the affairs of her nation as were her most illustrious historical predecessors — Catherine of Russia, Cleopatra of Egypt, and England's notoriously virgin Elizabeth. It does not mean, either, that should such a woman actually appear in our midst, the sensible men in this country would not greet her with loud huz-

zahs and, with unashamed tears of gratitude, thrust their wearisome burdens of governmental perplexities upon her comely shoulders.

But it does mean, and emphatically, that should such a woman possess all the noblest and most endearing traits of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, she could still never call the White House her own — as opposed to her husband's — home. Because the great majority of American women would never stand for the foolishness of having another woman lording it over them.

The truth is that, so far as its original intent and purpose is concerned, the movement for woman's suffrage has been a dismal and a colossal flop. The Nineteenth Amendment is still an integral part of our constitution, and it is likely to remain so, for after all it really does no one any great harm. Yet actually it has been, though considerably less vicious, not one whit more effective than the eighteenth was.

When in 1920 the men of this nation granted to their wives and sweethearts and aunts and nieces the right not only to vote but to hold public office, they proved as conclusively as possible that they considered them capable of holding such office. But what have the women themselves done with this right?

To date they have done exactly nothing. For all the good they accomplished, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Carrie Chapman Catt and all the grim old girls who crusaded so righteously for woman's political equality, might just as well have stayed at home and raised babies or turnip seeds. Their raucous campaigns never got them nor their fellow club members anywhere.

Women have gone far in America in the last sixteen years, to be sure. But not in politics. Women are holding public office today. Certainly they are. And many of

them are doing an acceptable job of it, too. There are more women like Secretary Perkins and Judge Allen and the Misses Lenroot and Anderson who preside over the destinies of two important divisions of the Department of Labor.

BUT HOW DID THESE WOMEN come by their exalted positions? Through other women leaving their dishes in the sink and their stews on the stove, and rushing to the polls to vote for them? Far from it. Not one of them was elected to these offices. They were all appointed to them, and by men, even higher on the nation's honor roll than they, who recognized their abilities and sought to reward them suitably.

There are at present two women among the ninety-six Senators of the United States, and six females among the 429 male members of the House of Representatives. And during the past twenty years ten other women have flitted into Washington, quietly taken their seats in Congress and, after their first two years were up, just as quietly relinquished them.

And who are these women? How were they selected for their offices? And what have they done for their country since they have held them?

Are they outstanding club women like Anne Morgan or Grace Morrison Poole? Or hard working feminists like Genevieve Parkhurst or Eleanor Roosevelt? Or women with proved executive ability like Mary Dillon who is president of the Brooklyn Edison Company, or Mrs. William Sawyer who owns the Nehi Bottling Works, or Rose Knox who controls the gigantic geletin company which bears her name? Are they women of strong and independent opinions, capable of upholding their convictions against the keenest of masculine logic?

Most decidedly they are not. Both lady Senators and the majority of the lady Representatives are simple, conventional and, on the whole, rather mediocre housewives, who happened in their youth to marry men who later became statesmen and still later died in office. It was the sentimentality of the governors of their states, not the political will of their fellow citizens, which placed them in the positions which they have held so placidly (just as long before the Nineteenth Amendment was conceived a governor of Georgia made eighty-seven-year-old Rebecca Felton the first woman Senator). No one knows what they have done since they went to Washington. And few people outside their immediate neighborhoods at home even remember their names.

If you don't believe this, then try for yourself to identify the states which Marian Clark or Effie Wingo or Willa Eslike represented.

Even the wealth and prestige of their own and their husbands' families were not powerful enough to re-elect such relatively prominent women as former Representatives Ruth Hanna McCormick, Ruth Bryan Owen and Ruth Baker Pratt after their first terms in Congress had expired.

And the votes which made Nellie Ross Governor of Wyoming and Ma Ferguson Governor of Texas were really tributes not to these two ladies themselves but to their husbands who had held the same offices before them and then for one reason or another become ineligible to hold them again.

Since ballot boxes are sacredly secret affairs in this country, we cannot state positively that the contrary votes of women have defeated without exception every lady Representative that stood for re-election on her own individual merits — but we can be fairly sure of it.

In the first place there is absolutely no recorded evidence of that mythical "sex antagonism" on the part of men about which so many disappointed and embittered females speak so vehemently. Quite the contrary. Men have been not just willing, but actually eager, to give capable women strenuous boosts up the ladder of fame — not only in public life, but in business, in the professions, and in all manner of strange and unexpected enterprises.

It was men, not women, who backed and encouraged Amelia Earhart's solo flights across two oceans. It was men, again, who promoted Dr. Alice Hamilton to an exalted position in the medical faculty of Harvard University, and Dr. Florence Sabin to an even higher place in the Rockefeller Institute. It was men, once more, who elected more than a thousand women to boards of directors of the banks of the country. After these women had won their honors, their sisters and girl friends applauded them lustily, but they gave them precious little help when they needed that help most urgently.

EVEN MORE PERTINENT to the question of political sex antagonism is this simple little fact: the majority of women who have been elected to Congress have come from the mining states of the West where men voters are much more numerous than women; while Eastern states like Alabama, South Carolina and Delaware, where the female votes actually outnumber the male, have never sent a single woman to Washington — or even to their own state capitols.

It isn't only that women in the East have more votes to cast than men. Throughout the entire country they have more real, hard economic power. Women are no longer the sheltered, pampered darlings that they were twenty-five years ago. Most of them are now alert, clear-eyed,

hard-headed citizens of the modern world. More than ten millions of them are now making their own livings in more varied occupations than any one person could possibly imagine.

Aside from the countless thousands who preside over tea rooms, beauty parlors, circulating libraries, antique shops, and similar peculiarly feminine establishments, 6,825 of them are qualified physicians ministering every day to the sick; 1,287 are pulling and filling teeth in their own dental offices; 3,385 with their lawyers' licences are either arguing legal cases or presiding over them; 1,793 are selling stocks and bonds; 632 are conducting pawn shops; 1,502 are driving trucks and taxicabs; 3,276 in ministerial robes are preaching the Gospel to their less consecrated sisters and brethren; and more than 2,000 are preparing the dead for burial in undertaking parlors or guarding their graves in cemeteries. Quite obviously American women are no longer delicate little flowers, but hard-boiled human beings who know their way around.

What is more, they actually control the purse strings of the nation. They may not make the most billions, but eventually they own them.

Most of us become so groggy when contemplating the gigantic fortunes which glamorous young women like Doris Duke and Barbara Hutton have inherited from their daddies and granddaddies, that we forget the smaller amounts that are continually passing from the estates of dead men into the bank accounts of their very much alive feminine relatives. But the simple truth is that the oftener men die the richer do women become. Wives and daughters and aunts and nieces, and occasionally girl friends, are the beneficiaries of more than eighty per cent of all the insurance policies in this country.

Women have acquired so much money in so many

different ways within recent years that they now control almost half of all the railroad and public utility stocks in America, and more than two-thirds of all the savings bank deposits. If money talks in politics, and those in the know about such matters declare that it does, then the female voice is potentially much louder than the male.

If women really wanted to be governed by members of their own sex, Washington would even now be overrun with their sisters and cousins and sorority chums and bridge pals. And the men who once dominated the halls of Congress would be back home again trying to find themselves new jobs.

But, quite obviously, women want no such thing. And why? Because most women are still more idealistic about the government of this country than about the moral qualities of their own sex. Most women still believe, though realities often seriously try such faith, that this nation *should* be ruled by persons who are brave and wise and trustworthy. However much the average woman may disparage the average man, she secretly believes that the male sex is more generously and more generally blessed with these high virtues than is the female.

Women have shown themselves ready enough to reward other women's unique abilities when applied to problems less vital than those which concern the policies of the nation. It is the patronage of women which enables Garbo and Crawford and other dazzling beauties to receive such stupendous salaries for posturing before the camera. It is the purchases of women which allows Fannie Hurst and Kathleen Norris and Faith Baldwin to acquire such fabulous royalties from their books. It is the dimes and quarters and dollars spent each day by women which makes it possible for thousands of other women to gain their livelihood by designing clothes and preparing food

and, eventually, to attain the renown in such enterprises that Milgrin and Alice Foote McDougall have. And it is the sincere interest of women that keeps the most trivial acts of the wives of great men continually in the headlines.

But, at least so the average woman thinks, the governing of the nation is a more serious business than writing novels, posing for pictures, putting feathers on hats or lettuce between sandwiches. And this more serious business, she feels, had best be left in the hands of men.

After men are elected to office they may break their promises and betray the sacred trusts with which they are invested. When they do, women are disturbed and disappointed. Yet when the next election day rolls around they vote again for men.

For they still believe, no matter how many or how painful the exceptions, that most men are by nature capable of honesty, integrity and keeping faith. But they know, because they know themselves and their feminine friends and relatives so well, that most women are not. They appreciate that their own sex may be quicker with its sympathy and kinder in its heart than the opposite sex. But they are forced to admit that it always has a darn hard time keeping either a secret or a promise. They agree with James Branch Cabell that "the trouble is no lady can ever be a gentleman."

And so they prefer to leave the vital policies of their country to those who possess at least the potentialities of gentlemen.

The Gentler Sex
Still Struggles—
For a Man

Why Women Make No Sense

ARTHUR STRINGER

SYLVIA WANTED TO SEE THE STARS from our host's six by twelve penthouse terrace.

"Won't you freeze in that thin frock?" I asked as we stepped out.

Sylvia's laugh was as crisp and cool as the night air.

"It came from Paris," was her elliptical yet contented reply.

"What's Paris got to do with it?" I demanded as I studied her gown while she studied the stars. There was about enough of it, apparently, to dust a flute. It accentuated Sylvia's secret lines of loveliness, but it could no more conserve calories than a baby's breath could stop a bullet.

"If you were a woman," said Sylvia, "you'd realize that when you wear the Right Thing you really air-condition your soul. Weather doesn't count."

"Why doesn't it?"

"Because civilized woman can get an inner glow from the knowledge she's properly gowned which even religion can't give her."

"Then," I retorted, "she'd better get a God a little bigger than her own barbaric body."

"Men won't let her," was Sylvia's reply. And that