

EXTRACT FROM A MESSAGE

FROM HIS EMINENCE

JAMES, CARDINAL GIBBONS

To the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage

Read by

THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM T. RUSSELL

Bishop of Charleston, S. C.

at

NATIONAL ANTI-SUFFRAGE CONVENTION

Washington, D. C.

(December 7, 1916)

*** When I deprecate female suffrage I am pleading for the dignity of woman; I am contending for her honor; I am striving to perpetuate those peerless prerogatives inherent in her sex, those charms and graces which exalt womankind and make her the ornament and coveted companion of man. Woman is queen indeed, but her empire is the domestic kingdom. The greatest political triumphs she would achieve in public life fade into insignificance compared with the serene glory which radiates from the domestic shrine and which she illumines and warms by her conjugal and motherly virtues. If she is ambitious of the dual empire of public and private life, then, like the fabled dog be-

holding his image in the water, she will lose both; she will fall from the lofty pedestal where nature and Christianity have placed her and will fail to grasp the scepter of political authority from the strong hand of her male competitor.

*** I regard 'woman's rights' women and the leaders of the new school of female progress as the worst enemies of the female sex. I wish I could impress on American women the dangers that would attach to such innovations. I wish I could show them the ultimate result of participating in public life. It has but one end—the abandonment, or at least the neglect, of the home.

"The most precious undeveloped as-

set of any nation is its children. An all-wise God through the law of nature has committed this precious treasure in a special manner to the mother. Any occupations, however alluring in its specious pretence, which draws woman's attention from her most exalted duties of motherhood, will result in detriment to the nation and the race. Women cannot vote intelligently unless they give time to an intelligent study of political questions, and all such time taken from the household will be injurious to the future generation, by robbing it of its natural right, a mother's care, without giving to the present generation any appreciable benefit in the purifying of the ballot. ***"

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