CHAMPION OF HER SEX.

Miss Susan B. Anthony Tells the Story of Her Remarkable Life to "Nellie Bly."

WOMAN SUFFRAGE MUST COME.

Interesting Views, Ideas and Opinions on All the Live Questions of the Hour.

ADVANCED THEORIES ABOUT MARRIAGE.

Perfectly Proper for Women to Propose Now that They Are Independent Wage Earners.

Susan B. Anthony! She was waiting for me. I stood for an instant in the doorway and looked at her. She made a picture to remember and to cherish.

She sat in a low rocking-chair, an image of repose and restfulness. Her well-shaped head, with its silken snowy hair combed smoothly over her ears, rested against the back of the chair. Her shawl had fallen from her shoulders and her soft black silk gown lay in gentle folds about her. Her slender hands lay folded idly in her lap, and her feet, crossed, just peeped from beneath the edge of her skirt. If she had been posed for a picture, it could not have been done more artistically or perfectly.

"Do you know the world is a blank to me," she said after we had exchanged greetings. "I haven't read a newspaper in ten days and I feel lost to everything. Tell me about Cuba! I am so interested in it. I would postpone my own enfranchisement to see Cuba free."

I had gone to her to talk of her own great self, but Cuba, so after I told her briefly how matters stood, I instantly followed it up with a question about herself.

"Tell me, what was the cause of your being a suffragist? How did you begin?" I asked.

"My being a suffragist resulted from many other things that happened to me early in my life," she answered, unclasping her hands and resting them on the armsof her chair. "I remember the first time I ever heard of suffragists. I was bored and complained because my family were so intensely interested in the subject. 'Can't you find anything else to talk about?' I asked my sisters in disgust. That was over fifty years ago.

Her Family History.

"Let me tell you of my family, and then you can understand it better," she continued. "I was born in South Adams, Mass. My mother and my father were born in the same town. My father was a Quaker and my mother was a Methodist, so you see at once began the question of education of us children. There were four girls and two boys in the family. My father was a practical man. He believed in the equality of his daughters even in those days. One of my sisters was a splendid business woman and was a great assistance to my father. He said he would put Anthony & Daughters on his business house if he hadn't known that such a move would kill him. People were very narrow in those days.

"My family were my strong supporters when I first started out," she said earnestly. "I don't think I could ever have done my public work, Nellie, if I had had opposition at home. My youngest sister, who taught school twenty-six consecutive years, superintended everything I wore, and I was relieved of every home responsibility. When I used to go to a town to speak, ministers would preach against me. They would say, I was a member of the Quaker Friends and, while we were good people generally, we had no orthodox religion. When I went home disheartened and told my father, he would say: 'My child, you should have thought of such a text to quote against them.' And he could always furnish me with some text that aptly replied to my enemies."

"But what gave you the idea of becoming a suffrage leader?" I urged.

Her First Idea of Suffrage.

"Many people will tell you," she answered, smiling, "that from their earliest days they obtained the ideas that eventually became their life work. I won't. As a little girl my highest ideal was to be a teacher. Indeed, I wanted to be inspired by God to speak in church. That was my highest ambition. My father believed in educating his girls so they could be self-supporting women. I went. In olden times there was only one avenue open to women. That was teaching. So every one of us girls took turns at teaching. Finally I was fitted and taught until I was thirty.

"I think the first seed for thought was planted during my early days as a teacher. I saw the injustice of paying stupid men double and treble women's wages for teaching merely because they were men.

"But I should go back," she added. "When I was six years old we moved from Massachusetts to Eastern New York. A company to which my father belonged owned all the land around the tavern. My father was a pattern for capitalists. The men in those days had long hours and worked until 8 in the evening. My father started a reading room for them, where they were taught from 7 until 8. He also had a Bible class, where they were taught good principles and general intelligence.

"Being a Quaker, and public schools being very inferior, we always had a select school. When I was twelve years old my father made and burnt his own brick and built a splendid two-story brick house. And my mother boarded all the men engaged in the work. My father also made the woodshed two stories, and the upper floor was used for a schoolroom, where we Quaker children attended. You can know how thorough my father tried to be when he secured for our first teacher Mary Perkins, who graduated at Miss Grant's side by side with Ulysses. At the same time as did Mary Lyons, who founded the Holyoke Seminary.

"That laid the foundation to our education," she continued. "You probably never speak of Quakers to know they have no creed. All it is is a big family. Now that it is extremely queer. So you see in what a free way I was brought up."

"Tell me about your first school," I pleaded. "Were you frightened?"

Susan B. Anthony leaned on the arm of the chair and smiled at me.

Used to Think She Knew It All.

"I wasn't a bit timid," she said frankly. "I was only fifteen, but I thought I was the wisest girl in all the world. I knew it all. No one could make me think anything else. The first time I taught was in 1835. An old Quaker lady came to our house for me to go for her children and several of her neighbors', making in all a class of eight. I accepted the position. I lived in her family, and for teaching the children three hours before dinner and three hours after, I got $1 a week and my board."

"After that, as I wanted to finish my own studies, I taught in the summer and went to school in the winter. And my father was the richest man in the county, too. For several years I taught district school and boarded around among my pupils. My pay was $1.50 a week. In 1838 I gave up teaching and came to Philadelphia to a boarding-school."

"Did you ever whip any of your scholars?" I inquired anxiously.

"Oh, my, yes!" she laughed. "I whipped lots of them. I recall one pupil I had. I was very young at the time. I had been warned that he had put the last master out of the window and that he would surely insult me. I went into that school boy when he began on me. I made him take off his coat and I gave him a good whipping with a stout switch. He was twice as large as I, but he behaved after that.

"In the good days," she said, "we did not know any other way to control children. We believed in the goodness of not sparing the rod. As I got older I pressured to the front. I couldn't make age a child I thought it my ignorance, my lack of ability as a teacher. I always felt less the woman when I struck a blow.

"You spoke in your article the other day about the way some of our women dress," Miss Anthony observed, suddenly changing the topic. "Forty-five years ago I tried a reform dress. But I gave it up. People couldn't see a great principle because of my garments. Although I saw Horace Greeley go before an audience once with one trouser leg inside his boot and one outside!"

"Of whom were you dame?" I asked.

"I was named Susan after my father's sister and after my grandmother on my mother's side. Grandmother Brownell's name was Susanah, but they never put the ah on me. When I was a young woman I then came a great craze for middle initials. Was girls scratched our heads and tried and, as my aunt who named me afterwards married a man named Brownell, and I decided to take that name for mine. So you see, I named myself.

"Now you want to know when I first heard of woman suffrage," she replied. "I will put it this way. I came home at the end of my school term to visit my family. Mrs. Stanton and Mrs. Mott had just been in Rochester, and my family were busy talk of nothing else. I didn't understand suffrage, but I knew I wanted equal rights for my sex. I couldn't vote, even if had no idea between voting and equality, went back to my school and forgot all about it.

"In 1849 I heard Abbie Kelly Foster, the Quaker lecturer, speak. I drank in reports of a great convention that gave me the first clear statement of the underlying principles of woman suffrage. The next year I went to the big meeting at Seneca Falls, where I met Mrs. Stanton. She was head of the Daughters of Temperance society. As I was a schoolma'am, I was asked to make a speech. I've got the yellow manuscript now of that speech. There were two children in the house, and I was composing it, and I can't write a speech out. I've been a nuisance to myself to insure others. When I am before a house filled with people I can speak, but to save my life I couldn't write a speech.

"A little later the Sons of Temperance had a convention at Albany, and they invited the daughters to send delegates. I was one of the delegates. They were assembled in the hall and something like a discussion when I arose to make a speech. The chairman, the Grand Worthy Master, The sister will allow me to say she objected to me. And we listened then, here to look and listen, but not to speak. Mrs. Stanton, Mrs. Bloomer, and Lucy Stone's husband, Mott, sound. We hired a hall and got Thurlow Weed to announce in his paper, the Evening Journal, that the Woman's Temperance Society would hold a meeting at which Mrs. Judge D. May, father and I would speak. Philadelphia came to our meeting, and dear Rev. May taught us how to do this. I was made chairman of the committee and the first thing I did was to call a business meeting. We got a call signed by such distinguished men as Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher. We held a two days' convention and Mrs. Stanton was made President and I was Secretary. And it all rose out of the men refusing to let me speak.

Secret of Her Work.

"The secret of all my work," she said, "is that I've always had something to do. As I rolled up a mammoth temperance petition of 28,000 names and it was presented to the Legislature. When it came up for discussion one man made an eloquent speech against it. 'What are these,' he asked, 'who signed the petition? Nothing but women and children.' Then I said to myself, 'Why shouldn't women's names be as powerful as men's? They would be if women had the power to vote. Eloquent appeals wouldn't count. So eloquent against temperance, for he would vote his head off.' I vowed there and then women should be equal. Women could then protect themselves or get men to respect them as equal until they had the power to vote.

"In the spring of 1852 we held the first annual convention of the Daughters of Temperance. Mrs. Stanton made an address which made the call for a divorce for women whose husbands drank. I was raised on Lucy Stone's message which I thought it my ignorance, my lack of ability as a teacher. I always felt less the woman when I struck a blow.

"You spoke in your article the other day about the way some of our women dress," Miss Anthony observed, suddenly changing the topic. "Forty-five years ago I tried a reform dress. But I gave it up. People couldn't see a great principle because of my garments. Although I saw Horace Greeley go before an audience once with one trouser leg inside his boot and one outside!"

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Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Miss Anthony.

In 1847

In 1852

In 1856

Latest Picture of Susan B. Anthony — Taken Oct. 7th 1895

THE CHAMPION OF EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

merely because they are less cumbersome, but I think woman must evolve something that will give her freedom in clothes and you need not make her an object of ridicule. Men can wear trousers and change to gowns and caps when on the judge's bench. I want women to exercise the same freedom. I tried the experiment of short dresses forty years ago and it taught me one thing—you can't carry your thoughts before the people at the same time. One or the other will suffer. And when a girl is working for a great cause she cannot afford to indulge in peculiar notions of dress.

"Let me tell you what I think of bicycling," Miss Anthony said, leaning forward and laying a slender hand on my arm. "I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives woman a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. It makes her feel as if she were independent. The moment she takes her seat she knows she can't get into long skirts she gets off her bicycle, and away she goes, the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.

"And bloomers?" I suggested, quietly.

"Are the proper thing for wheeling," added Miss Anthony promptly. "It is as I have said—dress to suit the occasion. A woman doesn't want skirts and flimsy laces to catch in the wheel. Safety, as well as modesty, demands bloomers or extremely short skirts. You know women only wear foolish articles of dress to please men's eyes, any way."

What Will the New Woman Be?

"What do you think the new woman will be?

"She'll be free," said Miss Anthony. "Then she'll be whatever her best judgment wants to be. We can no more imagine what the true woman will be than we can what the true man will be. We haven't him yet. And we won't until women are free and equal. The present unfair arrangement brings out the worst in man, as well as the worst in woman. And for a hundred years after we gain freedom we'll not know what the real man and woman will be. They will constantly change for the better, as the world does. What is the best possible to-day will be childish to-morrow. I think just the same of the man. He can't be real and great now. His absolute control develops all his autocratic powers, just as it subordinates the woman. No woman can possibly be honest so long as her position compels her to study to please a man merely because she belongs to him and knows she must suffer if she doesn't."

"What would you call woman's best attribute?"

"To have great, good common-sense. She has a great deal of uncommon-sense now, but I want her to be rounded down to a level—not to be gifted overly in one respect and lacking in others."

"What kind of a woman do you think succeeds best?"

"The all-around woman. I have noticed that women especially gifted in one respect can never make a living, and we are poor creatures when left with but one. It recalls to my mind what Sojourner Truth said. Sojourner Truth was as black as the ace of spades and six feet tall. She had been a slave for forty years, and attending one of our conventions after the war she was called upon to speak. 'I can't, chil'ren,' she said. 'Where de Lord's work for me to be is all growed.' That's what becomes of our speeches that we neglect to cultivate—they grow up.

"What you think is woman's greatest force in life?"

"That she shall be a woman. My point in this is, that she must first be a womanfree, trained, above old ideas and prejudices, and afterwards the wife and mother. The old theory of a wife and mother needing only a good cook and housekeeper is rapidly going to the dark ages."

"Who is the greatest woman of our time?"

"Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She is a philosopher, a stateswoman and a prophet. She is wonderfully gifted—one of the world's few privileged ever knew, man or woman—and had she possessed the privileges of a man her fame would have been world-wide and she would have been the greatest person of her time."

"And now," said, approaching a very delicate subject on politics, "tell me something more. Were you ever in love?"

"In love?" she laughed, merrily. "Bless you, Nellie, I've been in love a thousand times."

"Really!" I gasped, taking aback by this startling confession.

"Yes, really!" nodding her snowy head. "But I never got any further than that. I thought it would last. In fact, I never felt I could give up my life of freedom to become a man's housekeeper. When I was young, if a girl married poor, she became a housekeeper and drudge. If she married wealth she became a pet and a doll. Just think, had I married at twenty, I would have been either a drudge or a doll for fifty-five years. Think of it!"

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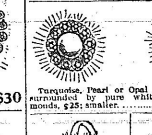

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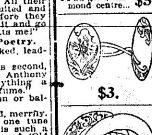

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