

THE "HARMONIOUS" DEMOCRACY

[December 1, 1846]

It is well known that the representatives of Democracy now assembled here have not acted towards each other as brothers of the same political creed should act and that a spirit of strife and contention has been exhibited amongst them. While this is true, no overt acts of hostility have been committed until last week, when (as will be seen by our reports of the proceedings of the convention) the elements of discord broke out into a flame, and had it not been smothered by the greatest exertion, there is every reason to suppose that the fair fabric about being raised by the joint efforts of "hards," "softs," "ladpoles," and "crawfish," would have been totally annihilated. We refer to an altercation which occurred in the convention between Moses M. Strong and Mr. Magone, in which the former threw his cane at the latter, without, however, any serious damage. These gentlemen, belonging to opposite factions of the same party, have given substantial evidence of a want of harmony in the Democratic ranks; and although we do not purpose to take sides with either of the belligerents, we shall state our opinion of the matter. The personal application of the charge of "low pettifogging" made by Mr. Magone to Mr. Strong was wholly unwarranted, and would have applied (had there been any truth in it) with equal force to other gentlemen who took part in the discussion. On the other hand, while the offending party deserved a severe rebuke, the manner of bestowing it was not at all calculated to cool the excitement or allay the fever of passion. We hope that for the future and for the honor of the territory the capitol will not be made the theater of any more such disgraceful scenes. Such conduct should meet with reprobation, and especially when the actors are those chosen to frame the organic law of a state.

THE RIGHTS OF MARRIED WOMEN—EXEMPTION OF
PROPERTY FROM FORCED SALE

[December 8, 1846]

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All acknowledge that woman has rights that should be protected; yet all do not agree in what those rights consist. Some maintain that she should enjoy the same privileges as the other sex in regard to all the civil relations of life—have the privilege of voting, holding

office, and holding property separate from her husband; while others (and a large majority) believe that she would be thrown from her appropriate sphere should she be permitted to exercise these functions. We belong to the latter class. What does woman pledge herself to do when about uniting her destiny with the man of her choice? That she will love and obey him. Is it consistent with love and obedience to withhold that from the husband which should be used for the benefit of both? We opine that it is not. But here we may be met with the objection that the husband may squander the property of the wife and reduce her to penury and want. This we admit; but does this apply in all cases? Certainly not; it is only an exception to a general rule. Why, then, by giving woman the control of her property after marriage, open the door wide for domestic disquietude and the severance of ties that should be held sacred? Woman when occupying the position designed for her is seen to the best advantage. There she holds supreme sway—there she is the companion of man, the guardian of infancy, the ministering angel to all the "ills that flesh is heir to." But snatch her from this lofty station, place the ballot in her hand and bid her vote, seat her in legislative halls, give her the control of property separate from her husband, and she will become equally as selfish and equally as ambitious as man now is, and instead of devoting her life and energies to calming the sterner passions of man and making home an Eden she will but add tenfold to the calamities and misfortunes that already press heavily upon humanity.

In regard to exemption from forced sale we are in favor of the principle, and hoped to see a clause incorporated in the constitution exempting a certain amount of property. But in the section adopted by the convention no limitation is put upon the amount that can be held free from forced sale—thus holding out inducements for the greatest frauds and iniquities. Trade and commerce would be seriously injured should the people give it their sanction. None but capitalists could do business, and a monopoly would thus be created that would be felt by every farmer, mechanic, and laborer in the state. As our Democratic friends profess to be opposed to monopolies, we hope to see them give tangible evidence of their sincerity when the constitution is presented for their approval or rejection. In our view, should the constitution be every way worthy of acceptance in other respects, the article * * * would render it so objectionable as to merit defeat.