

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** The passage below is taken from an address to congress delivered by Rafael Palma in 1919, in support of a Constitutional Amendment giving women the right to vote. Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

It is an interesting phenomenon that whenever an attempt is made to introduce a social reform, in accordance with modern ideas and tendencies and in contradiction with old beliefs and prejudices, there is never a lack of opposition, based on the maintenance of the status quo, which it is desired to preserve at any cost. As was to be expected, the eternal calamity howlers and false prophets of evil raise their fatidical voices on this present occasion, in protest against female suffrage, invoking the sanctity of the home and the necessity of perpetuating customs that have been observed for many years.

Frankly speaking, I have no patience with people who voice such objections. If this country had not been one of the few privileged places on our planet where the experiment of a sudden change of institutions and ideals has been carried on most successfully, without paralyzation or retrogression, disorganization or destruction, I would say that the apprehension and fears of those who oppose this innovation might be justified.

However, in less than a generation our country, shaken to its very foundations by the great social upheavals known as revolutions, has seen its old institutions crumble to pieces and other, entirely new institutions rise in their place; it has seen theories, beliefs, and codes of ethics, theretofore looked upon as immovable, give way to different principles and methods based upon democracy and liberty, and despite all those upheavals and changes which have brought about a radical modification in its social and political structure, or rather in consequence of the same, our people has become a people with modern thoughts and modern ideals, with a constitution sufficiently robust and strong to withstand the ravages of the struggle for existence, instead of remaining a sickly and atrophied organism, afraid of everything new and opposed to material struggles from fear of the wrath of Heaven and from a passive desire to live in an ideal state of peace and well-being.

1. What does Palma accuse those who object female suffrage of wanting to preserve?

- a. liberty
- b. democracy
- c. status quo

Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the idea of female suffrage in contradiction to?

- a. old beliefs and prejudices
- b. democracy and liberty
- c. social and political structure

3. Why does Palma say that the apprehension and fears of those who oppose female suffrage is not justified?

---

---

---

---

---

4. How does Palma describe the character of the American people as a result of having weathered the Revolution?

---

---

---

## **ANSWERS**

1. C

2. A

3. This country is one of the few privileged places on our planet where the experiment of a sudden change of institutions and ideals has been carried on most successfully, without paralyzation or retrogression, disorganization or destruction, I would say that the apprehension and fears of those who oppose this innovation might be justified.

4. robust, strong, modern