WOMAN'S SLAVERY
HER ROAD TO FREEDOM

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A 20th CENTURY REVOLUTIONIST

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"None of Us Wouldn't 'a Bin a Girl."

We are all familiar with the historic tale about the convention of holy fathers that met to decide whether woman had a soul or not. That august assembly convened, in all seriousness, in the First Century, A. D.

We would expect, in the onward march of progress throughout the centuries, that such an attitude toward women would be fully outgrown. And yet what do we find, even today, regarding the position of woman in the minds of many men? The story of little Tommy and his brothers is a commonplace enough one, proving that the mind of the average man has not kept pace with general social progress, regarding woman.

Tommy had three little brothers, but no sisters. Com- miseratively a friend said: "How sad, Tommy, that you are all boys. One of you should have been a girl, so you could have a sister." At which Tommy sniffed in disdain and retorted: "Humph! If one of us had to be a girl I don't know which it would 'a bin. Jimmie wouldn't 'a bin 'er. Frankie wouldn't 'a bin 'er, Bill wouldn't 'a bin 'er, en I KNOW I wouldn't 'a bin 'er. None of us wouldn't 'a bin a girl!"

Unconsciously, in his momentary fight for his rights, Tommy was reflecting the race mind on the woman question. "NONE OF US WOULDN'T 'A BIN A GIRL!" WHY?

Because it is against human nature, against all the forces of progress, that the master should change places with the slave.

And Tommy, with the world before him, with the lure of conquest, of glory, of participation in the affairs that make life big, could never bear the idea of changing places
with a girl, whom the laws of man, from the holy fathers who met to decide whether she possessed a soul, down to Tomniy's generation, classed as an inferior. Tommy would not have understood that it was not the girl, the human being, he despised, but the limitations set upon her by his own sex, that he hated, and would never submit to.

And the average man, and the woman herself, for the most part, fails to see this paradox of woman's so-called inferiority.

Biologically, psychologically, there is nothing the matter with the woman. Her troubles are the limitations that have been forced upon her, first, by brute strength, and afterward by a network of laws that lashed her, like a galley-slave, to one small corner of our social organism, and held her there as completely and irrevocably as the galley-slave is held at his oar in the hold of a ship. No sane man would want to be a galley-slave. Not because the galley-slave is not all right in himself; very frequently he is of finer stuff than his captors; but because of the terrible limitations of his life.

Now, fortunately for mankind, all men are not galley-slaves. But, unfortunately for womankind, all women are subject to the laws against their sex, which means that every woman, good or bad, wise or silly, rich or poor, is bound and limited and repressed by human statutes so old that we have come almost to look upon them as natural laws.

**WOMAN THE FIRST SLAVE.**

_Woman was the first slave_," says August Bebel, in his "Woman Under Socialism." She was enslaved before the man was enslaved. And Lester F. Ward, in "Pure Sociology," dates the time of her slavery back to man's awakening to a consciousness of fatherhood. That the woman bore him children, children who could hunt and fish, and fight with him in battles, gave her an economic value, a value besides that of the natural attraction she had for him. And with fist or club, if necessary, he made conquest of her, dragging her to his lair, and holding her there against the encroachments of other men.
This was the excessively crude, and rather stern, beginning of family life. (Although woman is secured by man in a much more refined manner today, the germ of this old idea still holds in our laws which permit a man to divorce his wife if she fails to bear him children.)

As Olive Schreiner poetically puts it, “When the woman stooped low to give suck to her young, man placed the burden of inevitable necessity upon her back.” He enslaved her through her child.

Coming up the centuries we find this burden of “inevitable necessity” crushing the will of the woman and weakening and narrowing her once broad back. According to Herbert Spencer, many savage peoples were so cruel to their women that whole tribes vanished from the face of the earth, owing to the incapacity of the women to carry on the process of reproduction.

The ancient Hebrews held women as the natural inferiors of men, closing all the avenues of progress against them, denying them the right of speech in the synagogue. The Hebrew myth of the rib has been made a potent agent for woman’s continued subjection. Boussuet, in his “Elevations sur les Mysteries,” uttered the classical note which has been hurled at woman on every possible occasion: “She was formed out of the rib of a man, which justifies her domination by him.”

The literature and thought of India is thoroughly hostile to woman. This misogyny is attested in a large number of its proverbs. “You can never be safe from the cunning artifices of a woman.” “Woman is like a snake, charming as well as venomous.” According to the Code of Manu, “She should always be in a good humor and revere her husband, even though unfaithful, as a god.” On the contrary, the unfaithful wife, not only among Hindoos, but among other ancient races, including the early Greeks and Romans, was punished by death.

**WOMAN AND THE MODERNS.**

The laws regarding woman varied among the more modern races. With the Gauls the husband had full power of life and death over his wife, as over his children. They were his property, as were his cattle and slaves. If a nobleman died, and there was suspicion as to
the cause of his death, his wife was put to inquisitorial torture and was burnt at the stake when adjudged guilty of the murder.

The position of woman among the barbaric Germans was the best of any, perhaps, among medieval races. She was strong and beautiful of physique, frequently going with the men to battle. She was regarded as a seer and prophetess, and had a place in the councils of the tribe. With the coming of the Romans and the introduction of the canon law this was changed. Karl Pearson, in a most interesting study of the "Early Sex Relations in Germany," brings up many instances of the struggles of the women with the men for the maintenance of their rights. He says: "The old legends of contest between men and women are not such idle fancies as some would have us believe, and very dark shadows indeed do such figures as those of Ildico, Fregunde and Brunhilde cast across the pages of history. * * * Woudan replaces Hellja and Mother Earth, Siegfried conquers Brunhilde, Beovulf defeats the offspring of the swamp-goddess, Grindel, and Thor fights with Giulp and Griep, the daughters of Geirrod." And, again: "The witch trials of the middle ages wherein thousands of women were condemned to the stake were the very real traces of the test between man and woman. It is the last struggle of the woman against complete subjection."

Since that time the position of the German woman has been anything but enviable. "The German attitude toward woman," says Lester Ward, "was perhaps typified by the father of Frederick the Great, of whom it is related among his sterling qualities that when he met a woman in the street he would walk up to her with his cane raised, saying: "Go back into the house! An honest woman should keep indoors." And Spencer says: "Concerning the claims of women, as domestically associated with men, I may add that here in England, and still more in America, the need for urging them is not pressing. In some cases, indeed, there is a converse need. But there are other civilized countries in which their claims are very inadequately recognized; instance Germany."

Woman is much more respected in France, but under Napoleon and his code there was a recoil toward barbarism. According to Napoleon, "a husband should have absolute
power over the actions of his wife.” And, again, “Woman is given to man to bring forth children. Woman is our property; we are not hers; for she gives us children and man does not give any to her. She is therefore his property as the tree is that of the gardener.”

Napoleon’s idea reached back into the deep gloom of the earth’s history when the burden of inevitable necessity was placed upon the back of woman as she bent low to give suck to her young. She was valuable to man as a producer of human beings—a producer of warriors and laborers—and therefore became his personal property, she and the children she bore him.

Fortunately the ideas of Napoleon did not fasten themselves too tenaciously upon the minds of French women. Jean Finot, in his scientific study of feminism, says the new woman was born in France. He declares it is the glory of the French women to have been among the first to proclaim that their rights as citizens should equal those of men, and as far back as 1789 there was an abundant and genuine literature of feminism in France. We all know of the heroic work of women during the Revolution. For this they should have been made citizens, with every civic right. But men were so busy thinking of the “rights of man” that they forgot the women, and the latter are still asking for the rights of citizenship.

As for England, poor, proud, stubborn old England, she is, according to the language of the day, “getting hers” for the position to which she has debased woman, for, lo, these many centuries. Herbert Spencer notwithstanding, woman’s position in England has been anything but ideal. Perhaps some of us recall Mr. Weller Sr.’s reference to the “amiable weakness of wife-beating,” which was a legitimate part of a husband’s rights and which was not confined to the lower classes, by any means. The law came to the woman’s defense to the extent that the rod with which
she was beaten should be no thicker than a man’s thumb. An old document thus describes a husband’s duty: “He shall treat and govern the aforesaid A well and decently, and shall not inflict any injury upon her except in so far as he may lawfully and reasonably do so in accordance with the right of a husband to correct and chastise his wife.”

Blackstone also said of a husband’s power: “The husband also, by the old law, might give his wife moderate correction. For, as he is to answer for her misbehavior, the law thought it reasonable to intrust him with the power of restraining her, by DOMESTIC chastisement, in the same moderation that a man is allowed to correct his apprentices or children * * * allowing him for some misdemeanors to give his wife a severe beating with whips and clubs; for others to apply moderate correction. * * * The lower ranks of people who were always fond of the old common law still claim and exert their ancient privilege; and the courts will permit a husband to restrain a wife of liberty in case of any gross misbehavior.”

Hecker, in his History of Women’s Rights, says wife-beating is still a flagrantly common offense in England.

This, in itself, is almost sufficient commentary on the status of women in England. However, the actual power of the husband is shown in the economic situation, which gave him complete ownership of the goods the wife possessed when he married her. He might sell her property without her consent. There was no community even of moveables between husband and wife. All of these belonged to the husband upon their marriage, and he could even sue for debts owing to his wife. She could not make a will without his consent, and any consent that he might give was revocable at any time before the will was proved.

Women suffrage organizations have been in existence for the past fifty years in England, and as a result of their agitation these laws have been repealed and amended until woman’s position is very much better than it formerly was. However, custom and habit of thought, centuries old, is a tremendous force in retarding the actual working of the law, and no doubt many loopholes are found to hinder the enforcement of the newer ideas. Some one has said that a law on the statute books is never fully workable until its
spirit is in the hearts of the people. And England evidently doesn’t rate her women too highly as persons, even today. (Note Hecker’s statement of wife-beating.) Which sentiment, no doubt, is the irritant back of the suffragette activities.

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES.

The status of woman in the United States was very much that of her English cousins during colonial and post colonial days, as our laws were taken largely from the English statutes. The scarlet letter, stocks, the ducking stool, and on extreme provocation the fagot, were the methods of punishing the unruly female of our early days. New conditions, however, and a scarcity of women considerably modified the old barbaric attitude toward women and prepared the soil for a possible climb toward full equality with men.

The work of the women was home-made factory products. Mr. Hamilton in his report to Congress on manufacturing in New England in 1791 speaks of the vast scene of household manufacturing which contributed more largely to the supply of the community than could be imagined, without having it made an object of particular inquiry. Great quantities of coarse cloths, coatings, serges and flannels, linsey-woolsey, hosiery of wool, cotton and thread, coarse fustians, jeans and muslins, checked and striped cotton and linen goods, bed ticks, coverlids and counterpanes, sheetings, towelings and table linens were made in the household way, and in many instances not only for family use, but for domestic sale, and even for exportation. Indeed, the colonial housewife was the colonial manufacturer, and her home was the factory of the nation.

With the development of industry and the factory system this was all changed; women’s “factories” were taken away from them, their work was absorbed by the big factory owner, and those among them who did not follow their former tasks into the factory were left behind to minister to the needs and comfort of the family.

Native American girls in the factories were enabled to maintain a higher social standing than the factory girl of today. With the growth of competition, however, wages were lowered, working conditions became very bad, and cheap labor was imported from Europe.
Harriet Martineau, even so late as 1840, found only seven employments open to the American girl—primary teaching, needlework, keeping boarders, working in cotton mills, in book-binderies, typesetting and household service. This may account for the fact that in 1850, according to Carroll D. Wright, there were 225,298 females and 741,671 males in the manufacturing industries in the United States. This is a higher percentage of women factory workers than we have since known, owing to the gradual opening of other fields of employment to women.

The first female seminary to approach college rank was Mount Holyoke, opened in 1836. The opening of the higher education led to professional life, though the women entering it invariably had to struggle to overcome the prejudices of the times. For instance, Lucy Stone, upon graduating from Oberlin College, was not permitted to read her graduation essay, as it was not nice for young women to thus appear in public. In 1841 Marie Childe edited the Anti-Slavery Standard. And it might not be out of place here to mention the generally unknown fact that a woman started the first daily newspaper in the world. This was the Daily Courant and was published by Elizabeth Malet in England. A woman also was connected with the Massachusetts Gazette and News Letter during the Revolutionary war.

In medicine, law and the ministry, women gradually worked their way. But always there were antagonisms to overcome. Every step of the way in the professional world was barred with prejudices ages old, and strong of purpose and of will had to be the young girl or woman who dared to make her way against them. This situation led to a demand for the ballot and full recognition before the law with man.

THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT.

It is very befitting that the woman's rights movement of America should have grown directly out of the anti-slavery movement. Sarah and Angelina Grimke, Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone and a number of other women were ardent adherents of the anti-slavery movement. They talked it to their neighbors, distributed its literature, helped raise money for it, and did all that was in their power to do. As soon, however, as they began to address meetings in
which men were present a tempest arose. All the men were in perfect accord with the gospel according to St. Paul, which says that a woman should hold her tongue in public. And at the annual meeting of the Anti-Slavery Association in 1840, men refused to serve on any committee in which women had a part. And this, according to one historian, in spite of the fact that it was largely the donations of women that were sustaining the cause.

In other words, it was perfectly respectable for grown, able-bodied women to serve lunches and wash dishes in the kitchen annex, but when it came to speaking their minds in public, theirs was the wisdom of fools and of babes, and it couldn’t be allowed.

Affairs in regard to the rights of women to participate publicly in the anti-slavery movement reached a climax at the World’s Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840. Women delegates from certain American societies were denied seats by the English members. The result was that Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as a protest against this discrimination, decided to hold a woman’s rights convention upon their return home.

No doubt there was considerable work to do in regard to breaking ground before sufficient sentiment could be stimulated to hold a convention of this kind. But the women kept steadily at their work, and on July 19-20, 1848, the first woman’s rights convention of the world was held at Seneca Falls, N. Y.

It was certainly an invasion upon the ideals of the time. Those who were not for it were uncompromisingly against it. The newspapers were among those that were against it. According to them, the convention was organized by divorced wives, childless women and sour old maids. These supposedly disappointed and unfortunate women were Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Mrs. McClintock, Lucy Stone and other really brilliant and fearless women, who not only have contributed to the social growth of the world, but brought up splendid children besides. Harriet Stanton Blatch and Alice Stone Blackwell are fitting representatives of their mothers, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucy Stone, in our day.

It is said great crowds attended the first woman’s rights convention. This is not unlikely, considering the kind of
advertising the papers gave it. A "declaration of sentiments" was adopted, which follows the lines of the Declaration of Independence.

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitles them, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light or transient causes; and accordingly all experiences hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient suffrage of women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity provided that they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she
is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master, the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce as to what shall be the proper causes, and, in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the unhappiness of the woman—the law in all cases going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues of wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education in the affairs of the church.

He allows her in church, as well as in state, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society are not only tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own bowers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half of the people of this country, their social and religious degradation; in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and National Legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and press in our behalf. We hope this convention will be followed by a series of Conventions, embracing every part of the country.

Such was the defiance of the woman's rights convention of 1848. It was a long step, indeed, from the days of St. Paul, of Chrysostom, of Napoleon: But it was the step of a very small minority, both of women and men, and much
was to be done, and many years passed, before the small seed thus sown should blossom into full fruition.

However, other conventions followed within a few years, one at Rochester in 1853, at Albany in 1854, and in Ohio at Salem, Akron and Massillon. In Ohio a bill to extend suffrage to women was defeated by a vote of 44 to 44. The petition praying for its enactment had received 10,000 signatures.

The time came when hardly a year passed without a local or national suffrage convention. Women were given the ballot in Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Wyoming. Recently they have won it in Washington, California, Kansas, Arizona, Alaska and Illinois. Warm fights are being made for it in other states, and it will be a comparatively short time now until the majority of the states will give suffrage to women.

And why, may be asked, does the woman seek this particular thing? What to her will be the advantage of going to the polls on stated occasions and voting?

To get the answer for the woman, let us look a little into the history of the ballot, and discover its effects as a civilizing influence on the individual and on society.

THE BALLOT.

The battle-cry of the eighteenth century was political democracy. Up to this time governments everywhere were in the hands of a monarch and a privileged class, called the "aristocracy." In their earlier stages, constitutional struggles were between the monarchy and the aristocracy, the king seeking to make his authority supreme, the nobility seeking to limit and circumscribe it. The all-important question was whether the king or the nobility should control the state. Civil wars were waged to decide it, and the part the common people took in the controversy was to do the fighting. Whichever side won, the common man was at the bottom of the scale, and his oppression went on without interruption.

Arthur Young, a traveler in France in 1787-89, tells of the terrible condition of the French peasants under the ancient monarchy. Their homes, he says, were "miserable
heaps of dirt.” There were no glass windows, hardly any light, and women furrowed without age by hard work. One of these, so bent and hardened by labor, looking to be at least sixty or seventy, though she was in reality but twenty-eight, groaned out as he passed her, “Sir, the taxes and the dues are crushing us to death!” “One-third of what I have seen of this province seems uncultivated,” he writes, “and nearly all of it in misery.”

The nobility, nursed in the lap of luxury, were generally a shiftless lot, scorning honest toil, mental or physical, as beneath their dignity. They got their living by crushing their tenants and serfs with hard labor and exorbitant taxes. Under such a regime industrial and intellectual progress were impossible. The merchant, the trader, the manufacturer, even the scholar, were looked upon as menials, and were little above the serfs in point of privilege.

Unrest fermented among the oppressed elements in France, breaking at last into the revolution. No definite line of procedure toward a democracy had been laid down. The mass mind was noisy, but incoherent. However, the “Rights of Man” idea was in the air, and the people were feeling their way toward the light.

After the revolution the monarchy took a back seat, the republic was established, the franchise gradually extended, and conditions began to look up for the farmer and the business man, who now had the reins of government in their hands. Of the transformation produced by this change one writer says: “Europe has seen in this century nothing more striking, and hardly any single thing more entirely blessed, than the transfiguration of rural France from its state under the ancient monarchy to its state under the new republic.”

Great tracts of land formerly belonging to the princes of the blood, and only miserably cultivated by the oppressed peasantry, became splendid farms and vineyards, under the ownership of the farmer, while France itself has been lifted out of the mire of degeneracy and inadequacy and is one of the leading nations of the earth. The laws governing the franchise in France are very broad, requiring only that a man be 21 years of age, and that he shall have lived at least six months in the commune in which he votes.
The American colonists fought, bled and died for self-government, and realized much the same benefits that accrued to France when her commercial classes sprang out of the chaos of the revolution, the reins of government in their hands. The American colonists, as subjects of England, had no rights that the mother country was bound to respect. The merchant, or trading classes, objected to this, and instigated the American Revolution, following it with a more or less democratic form of government and deriving the benefits therefrom.

Perhaps the most concrete example of the benefits of the franchise may be cited in the case of the negro, since the negro's enfranchisement, though limited in many states by property and educational qualifications, was the most instantaneous and complete of any subject people.

During the 260 years of negro slavery, the percentage of those who could read and write scarcely rose above one in 10,000. And this in spite of the fact that a good many free negroes were settled in the South before the war.

Immediately after the proclamation of emancipation the Constitution was amended so that every negro man of age became a voter. During the period of reconstruction negroes were in the majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate in some of the Southern states. Educational laws, however, were soon enacted, which limited their political powers.

The very knowledge of his citizenship, with its educational provisions, has stimulated the negro to a much higher level than he would, or could, have attained otherwise. His social life is more elevated, his tastes more refined, his morals more improved, and his comfort and happiness, where he has taken intelligent advantage of his rights and privileges, infinitely increased.

The enfranchisement of the women of ten of our states has redounded to the advantage of the women, and of the states in which they vote. Shorter hours of labor and higher pay, raising the age of consent in girls to 18 years, equal guardianship of parents in their children, the rights of the woman in her property and wages, the full rights of citizenship, with their train of municipal "house cleanings," always follow the enfranchisement of women.
Now it is true that many things may be won without
the direct use of the ballot. For instance, many laws on the
statute books, both of England and America, have been
placed there during the past fifty years which raise the
status of women, and give them many rights and privileges
they never before possessed. These were secured without
the direct vote of the women themselves, so we are told by
the opponents of suffrage for women. (Strange we never
hear of opponents for suffrage for men as a sex.)

But we cannot overlook the very significant fact that none
of these laws was enacted previous to woman’s agitation
for political liberty. From the days of Mary Wollstone-
craft in England, and of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B.
Anthony and others in America, legislators have taken no-
tice of the wrongs against womankind, and little by little
have made laws eradicating these wrongs.

Since most human rights, however, must come through
legislation, how much easier and simpler for all men and
women to resort to the direct method of voting for any re-
dress of grievances! As an illustration, the Wisconsin
Senate has just killed the joint guardianship bill. In Wis-
consin, as in most other states, a mother has no legal rights
over her minor children so long as she lives with her hus-
bond. It took Massachusetts suffragists 55 years to secure
an equal guardianship law by “indirect influence.” In Colo-
rado, the first Legislature after women were enfranchised
granted it. In California the same law was sought in vain
for many years, and now the first Legislature to meet after
women were enfranchised has passed it.

By looking back upon the history of her kind, woman
has concluded that “human nature,” as vested in the other
person, is not a safe guardian for her welfare. Did she
possess beauty, that sometimes gave her power, in a limited
way; but it was the power of caprice, and when it failed
she generally was reduced to great suffering. On the other
hand, if she happened to have, as one brilliant woman put
it, “a wart on her nose,” she usually passed her life at the
bottom of the scale, subject to ills and oppressions of which
we do not like to think.

Now the modern woman is saying that the chance mat-
ter of facial beauty or disfigurement should have nothing to
do with woman’s right to life, liberty and the pursuit of
happiness. The fact of her humanness should be full guarantee for these human rights.

WOMAN AND THE BALLOT.

The question arises, What will women, who have concerned themselves with the affairs of the home for so long, do with the ballot, once they get it? For the ballot is not an end in itself. It is only an instrument of use, and may prove a deadly weapon, if not intelligently manipulated.

First of all, the possession of the ballot makes us a conscious part of, or participant in, the affairs of the outside world. The woman without the ballot usually regards herself as an attachment to her husband and her home. Outside of these and her children, there is nothing that gets her serious attention.

But the ballot means an open door to an unexplored country. A vast expanse of conditions and things that daze the senses, and make the brain go round. How could the most brilliant of men, to say nothing of the shut-in woman, ever untangle it all? And the only answer is that no one ever really untangles it alone, nor any body of persons all at once; but little by little many are trying it, together, and the results justify the efforts.

First of all, there is politics. Of course. The ballot means politics. Politics means the ballot. And then, politics is divided up into parties. And how could a woman doing her duty at home ever care for political parties?

But a woman isn't doing her duty at home these days unless she DOES care about political parties. And for this simple reason: There is not a political party extant that doesn't in some manner have to do with the affairs of the home, from the milk bottle of the infant to the taxes on the coffin the loved ones are laid to rest in.

Political parties have to do with the tax on our clothing; with the food we eat; with the rent we pay; with the wages we get; with the gas bills; with the architecture of our houses; with sanitation; with our amusements, with everything that concerns our daily and most private lives.

And no housewife, whether she can vote or not, is doing her duty to her position in life, without concerning herself with these things.
THE HOME UNDER A CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT

We have seen something of woman's position under slavery, barbarism, feudalism, and other past forms of government. Now let us examine her position a little under an advanced form of capitalism. For that is what sociologists call our present form of government.

Today women have educational advantages. They are employed in almost every form of industry. A few of them have the rights of citizenship. Many of the very galling statutes concerning them have been removed from the law books. Those that are not removed will be removed as time goes by. Advantages will be continually opening to women, from time to time, so that woman's position today, as compared with that of former times, seems glowing indeed.

But there is one widespread and fundamental evil from which the vast majority of women suffer—and that is poverty. "The wolf of want"—if not of actual starvation, of the want of those things which make life worth living—haunts millions of our women of the working and lower middle class, night and day.

Millions of women are straining every nerve to make ends meet in the matter of life's necessities—food, clothing and shelter. There are six million or more women toiling long hours at low wages to support themselves or their families, or to supplement the low wages received by the men of their families. These women are exploited, as are their men folks—and in a greater degree—in the interests of the owning classes. Their wages are (with the exception of the states in which women vote) invariably lower than those of men. In thousands of instances they take the places of men at machines that have been installed which they can operate. It is not uncommon, either, for the child to displace both the man and the woman at the machine. In many cotton mills the child worker is so much of a fixture that the machines are built low so that he can operate them!

With the aid of the machine and the smaller wage paid the woman and the child worker, the employer is enabled to make an ever increasing profit. While the conditions of the working class family reach the most miserable degree. This reacts upon the whole of that portion of the human
race which lives on its wage, or salary, be it professional or common laborer, in that it places the standard of living at the lowest subsistence point.

The following from the Government Report on Women and Child Wage Earners in the United States gives an insight into the home life of working-class families which is common in any industrial section of the country. The family instanced here is referred to in the report as "Family No. 14," and the description is in the exact words of the report:

This family consists at present of the father and two children; other children live at home during different parts of the year. During October, 1908, the grandfather, who lived with the family, died of old age. In April, 1909, the mother died of tuberculosis. She had been ill for more than a year and during the last five months of her life, she was confined to her bed. The daughter is not well, and was compelled to quit her work in the mill. She appears tubercular.

They live in a six-room house and pay $3 per month. The house is neat and clean, but plainly furnished. The family expenses exceeded the income by $22.77.

During the past year of her life no new clothes were purchased for the mother. Indeed, as soon as she realized that she had tuberculosis she refused to have the doctor or to take any more medicine. She did this in order to save expenses.

The average food value consumed per week per man unit for the year covered was $1.27.

This is a typical "mill" family of the South. The South may not realize it, but the standard of living set by this family and thousands of others like it determines the standard of living for the whole community. Salaries are fixed and prices are controlled according to the "minimum standard" of living—that is, the lowest that can exist.

What had politics to do with this family's living? A Republican party, the keynote of which is "a tariff (tax) which shall protect the manufacturer," was in power at Washington, and a Democratic party, which has constantly legislated for child labor and a low wage in the South was in power in the state in which this family lived, and there was no recourse against these powers for them.

There is a movement on foot in Massachusetts to reduce the spread of tuberculosis. There has been agitation favoring legislation that will work to this reduction. In reply to this agitation various manufacturers have said various things. Here is what one of them said: "Class legislation is pernicious. I think the Worcester movement unfortunate
in that it favors class legislation and puts a premium on illness.” * * * And another: “It is neither wise nor proper to lead persons who work in factories to expect that they will be cared for if afflicted with tubercular or any similar diseases.”

This is an example of what politics and those who rule politics have to do with our homes, even the very condition of our bodies.

The following from the Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor (1911) reveals further the condition of large numbers of working women, of children and of home life, under our present capitalist system. This is from a report on women and children in the canning industries:

Children too small to work and babies are frequently brought into the canneries because their mothers have no place for them outside. As a cannery is not designed for day nursery purposes, these children naturally fare badly. The babies are laid down wherever space can be found for them, while those a little older play about as best they can. “A great many children too small to work were playing about the room and babies were asleep in overturned boxes,” reports one inspector. “About twenty children stood about on the wet, sloppy floor, but the majority wandered aimlessly about the dirty, unattractive yard, so as to remain within mother’s sight.”

As to the children working in the canneries, the report has the following to say:

Agents stationed themselves near the entrance of several canneries to see whether any children went in early. The first that came, were two boys, their ages estimated at 8 to 10 years respectively, who went into the factory at 3:43 a. m. Between that hour and 5 a. m., 115 children were seen entering, their apparent ages ranging from 5 to 15 years respectively. Approximately two-thirds were under 12.

Now, if this sweated labor of women and children under the most unfavorable circumstances helped in reducing the cost of living for the rest of humanity, it might be tolerated with some degree of grace. But it does not reduce the cost of living. All canned goods, for instance, have soared in price until they are almost out of reach of the poorly paid laborer, and weigh heavily on the pocketbooks of the average consumer.

So the sweated labor of women and children, instead of bringing relief to the rest of humanity, is fraught with disaster to the race, in that it reduces the standard of living, creates widespread poverty, breaks the health of millions of women, and stunts the child in its mental and physical growth.
THE HOUSEWIFE OF TODAY.

While the sad condition of the woman wage-earner has become a matter of public comment, very little is being said about the condition of the woman in the home. A number of years back a good deal was said about the women on the farms of Kansas and Nebraska going insane because of the loneliness and drudgery of their lives. That tremendously abnormal strain has been relieved by the introduction of the telephone and the settling up of the country.

We should not wait, however, until women go insane before we look into the condition of their lives.

"Home" has always been referred to as an abiding place of bliss and comfort and gentle content. "Breaking up the home" is the black anathema that has always been cast at any movement for the advancement of society in which women were included. When women first entered college the cry went abroad that it would "break up the home." Maybe woman's increased knowledge and good sense has broken up some homes. If so, the home was at fault, and not the fact of the woman's intelligence.

Carroll D. Wright, labor commissioner for the United States, after an exhaustive inquiry, found that the income of the average American family, including husband and wife, is $827.19 per year. Commissioner Wright itemized the expenditures of this "average family," and we find it spending, among other things, $107.90 on clothing, $350.10 for food, $25.28 for furniture and utensils, $99.53 for rent, $20.52 for sickness and death, and $12.30 for amusements and vacations.

There is nothing here about money spent for labor in the home. Upon the woman, then, of the "average family" falls the burden of running a home. Washing, ironing, scrubbing, sewing, nursing, cooking, and clearing away.
This is the round of the life of the average woman—$12.30 for vacations and amusements doesn’t leave anything, as a rule, for the housewife. Her vacations from home are short excursions to the butcher and grocer, trying to bargain them out of some of the necessities of life. Her amusements consist in trying to get up a meal in which a small food supply will cover large and multiplying appetites.

The average housewife cannot afford even to get sick and die, as that would cost too much—$20.52 will not cover the cost of the birth of babies, and when they come, as they will persist in doing—as they must do, if the nation does not mean to die out—there must be less food, or clothing, or amusements for the family.

The housewife goes down to the brink of the grave to bear her child, and comes up again, often weakened and unfit through lack of proper care, to redouble her energies at the cook stove, the wash tub and the other dozen and one places in which they must be expended.

What does she get for it all?

There is a sentimental notion prevalent that women do this sort of thing because they love their husbands and their children. But is this the reason? If women toil endless hours without pay, for the love of their families, how is it that those who can afford to hire other women to do this same work do so? Are these more fortunate women less loving, less sympathetic? Do they make poorer wives and mothers because they are free from the wearing burdens of house drudgery?

The fact is that love has nothing to do with a woman’s work in the home, outside of the tender care and solicitude any woman will give the man and children she loves. Scrubbing, washing, baking, are things apart, and in nowise involve the affections of the doer of them. An outsider, paid decently for it, might, and generally would, do these things much better than the housewife with her numerous other responsibilities.

“This is the position of the married woman; she is privately employed by her husband, at house service,” writes Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who stands alone in her scientific treatment of the position of the housewife. “Industrially considered, she is his housekeeper, or servant, on board wages.” And Mrs. Gilman asks: “Is not legal possession with enforced labor and no pay slavery?”
There are those who refer to the position of the housewife of the workingman as the "slave of a slave."

What is the cure for this submerged condition of the average housewife? There must be a cure, because the condition in itself is "breaking up the home" at a fearful rate. The divorce mills are grinding with ever greater speed, 900,000 having been granted in the United States between the years of 1887 and 1906.

In Chicago alone there are 32,000 homeless men, enough to form a considerable city just in themselves. Men who in many instances found the home life unbearable, or impossible, and, crushed by the weight of circumstances, are living apart from their families, aimless, homeless, the very dregs of a system under which they have ceased to fight for an existence.

The wives, mothers, sisters, of these men are left to struggle as best they can with the problems of life under the present high cost of living and the low wages paid to women. Too often the woman goes the way of the lost man, along a woman's route, and in the end they fill pauper's graves, while their children are forced to follow in their footsteps through the pinch of poverty which snatches from them every normal necessity of life.

Breaking up the home? Never were so many homes broken up in the ages of the world as today.

THE WHITE SLAVE.

Another symptom of our misfit capitalist system is the degradation to which women are reduced as "white slaves." In one borough of New York City alone 15,000 women walk the streets for prey, that they may keep the breath of life in their bodies as long as possible. For the most part, these women have no choice but their miserable condition. They are driven to it by abject poverty.

Jacob Riis, in writing of the slum life of New York City, said: "Thirty years ago when I commenced this fight, there were 40,000 windowless rooms in New York. Today there are 360,000."

From these windowless rooms, miserable homes of working girls, too often flock the painted creatures of the
street, selling their bodies for a crust of bread.

There are those who oppose women voting because they contend that man's chivalric nature will look after woman's interests in the political world. A little investigating, however, will show that man's "chivalry" sometimes takes curious turns.

The Vice Commission of Philadelphia recently reported that $6,250,400 is spent in that city for prostitution purposes in a year. The Chicago Vice Commission estimated the revenues from prostitution in Chicago, to amount to $20,000,000 in 1906.

So vast, indeed, has this vice condition become that, according to physicians' reports, 80 per cent of all men are tinged with venereal diseases. This taint they carry into the home, and fearful afflictions of wife and children follow.

It is notorious that politicians of both leading political parties are too often hand-in-glove with the vice interests. If they were not the vice interests could not survive. Or, rather, it were more correct to say that the politicians could not survive. For vice is organized as one of the great business interests of the capitalist system. Under this system everything that can be coined into profits is organized and turned to such usage. And the politicians who stand against such interests, singly or in groups, are speedily relegated to the sphere of the ordinary layman. To quote from a recent vice commission report: "Among the worst dances which our investigators attended * * * was a ball given by a political club. Another such club was a 'hang-out' for politicians, barkeepers, pimps, etc."

It may be further argued that if this is the case women should keep out of politics. But when women learn that the long arm of this evil reaches into their very homes, polluting their bodies and maiming their children, will they not look about for some manner of stopping it? And what better weapon can they find with which to fight it than the ballot, intelligently used?
INTELLIGENT USE OF THE BALLOT.

E have said before that the ballot is a weapon, which, if ignorantly used, reacts on the user, bringing dire calamity.

In what way, then, shall we discover the most intelligent use of the ballot?

By studying political organizations, and what they will do for society. And especially what they will do for women and the working class. For women and the working class are the last two remnants of society which are held in social and legal bondage to other classes or persons. We have seen how the monarchs and nobles once reigned supreme, and there were no other classes with any rights. The trading or merchant class was then little better than the smuggling or outlaw class; the farming class mere serfs, or miserably oppressed peasants. Through the processes of evolution and revolution these have thrown off their chains, and the “leading classes” today in America are the business men and the big farm owners.

Women through all the ages, as we have seen, held no individuality apart from some man. They were perpetually legislated against, without the right even of protest. Today their legal status is improving, but there is much even yet to be gained before they, as a sex, may enjoy the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

So it now remains for the wage-workers and for woman-kind to free themselves; and when they have done so the whole human race will stand together in one great unified mass, with classes abolished, sex privileges and limitations obliterated, all equal in point of opportunity and social rights. This, of course, will be the biggest revolution in social conditions the world has known, because it involves the greatest number of people, in the most far-reaching and vital way.

Now, with which political party shall women cast their ballots, to attain to this condition?

First of all, let us consider the Republican party, because it has led in point of power in the immediate past.

There is no hesitation on the part of the Republican party to say that it was organized by, and exists for, the protection of “big business”; in other words, the capitalists.
Through its reign the vast industries have been built up, and vast profits made for the owners of the industries. It has played its part, and played it according to the laws of evolution—it has organized industry. It has done this by a platform of a high protective tariff. The consumer has had to pay the price of this organization through the tax on the clothes he wore and the food he ate, but the manufacturer had the incentive of big profits to force him ahead in his business organization.

Now that industrial organization is well under way, there is no longer any use for the old-line Republican party. It has had its day, so far as its service to humanity is concerned. From now on it can only be a menace to the people, in that it robs them to build up vast fortunes for private interests.

"Progressives" are realizing this, and they are hoping to do away with the terrors of the Republican party by organizing a party of their own, with a platform which softens a little some of the hard planks in the Republican party. That is, the Progressive party offers a number of reforms, political, social and industrial. Among these are: Direct primaries; the initiative, referendum and recall in the states; equal suffrage for men and women; the prohibition of child labor; minimum wage standards for working women; to provide a "living wage" in all industrial occupations; the eight-hour day in continuous twenty-four hour industries; a protective tariff which shall equalize conditions of competition between the United States and foreign countries, both for the farmer and the manufacturer, and which shall maintain for labor an adequate standard of living; an immediate downward revision of the tariff.

These are the fragrant buds in the platform of the Progressive party.

The platform of the Democratic party differs from the Republican and Progressive parties primarily on the tariff question. On this subject it says: "We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the federal government, under the Constitution, has no right or power to impose or collect tariff duties, except for the purpose of revenue, and we demand that the collection of such taxes shall be limited to the necessities of government honestly and economically administered."
Now, the one vital point in these three platforms is the tariff, or tax on life's necessities. The Republicans stand for a high protective tariff, which enriches the owners of the great industries at the expense of the people. The Progressive party stands for a "downward" revision of the tariff—that is, shaving the taxes down gradually. The Democratic platform stands for a tariff for revenue only. That is, only so much of a tariff as the government needs in the carrying on of its business.

It is noteworthy that the present Democratic administration is evidently trying to carry out its anti-tariff policies. But, even if it succeeds, will that cure the nation of its poverty? England is a free-trade, or anti-tariff, nation, and the bitterest poverty reigns throughout that country. So it looks as though tampering with the tariff, or even abolishing it altogether, is not going to save the people from what is ailing them at present.

Yet there is no reason why we should suffer for the necessities of life. We have had no famines. Our great machines are producing food and clothing sufficient not only for our own people, but for exportation in tremendous quantities, also. Besides, some of our people are fabulously rich, and are growing richer at a rapid rate. What, then, is the matter?

THE TRUSTS.

The trusts (organized industry) are bleeding the people. They are the cause of all our trouble. The trusts are at once our unspeakable burden and our splendid possibility. In themselves they are perfectly good. It is the PRIVATE OWNERSHIP of them that makes them evil. They produce so much wealth that the private owner becomes a menace to society. He is richer than any king or prince the world has known. He reaches out with his vast power and crushes in his service the man, the woman and the child. And none of the political parties mentioned can stay him, because he OWNS the wealth of the land, and they have not suggested the taking from him of this ownership.

The Socialist party alone stands for the ownership of the trusts (organized industry) by the people. It contends that the nation shall own the big industries just as it owns the postoffice, the public parks, highways, schools, libraries, etc.
Time was when these necessities were privately owned, and men made profits from them just as they now make profits from the railroads, the mines, factories, etc.

It is at this vital point that the Socialist party differs from the other political parties—that the whole people (the nation) shall own the necessities of life, instead of individuals owning them.

This ownership by the people will emancipate the working class—upon whose toil the world’s industries are built—and the woman who today is dependent upon the poorly-paid workingman for her support. Who, in fact, is a “house servant on board wages,” or the “slave of a slave.”

Economic freedom for women is becoming the battle-cry of the feminist movement. Mrs. Belmont, immensely rich herself, but who has studied the condition of the average woman, declared in a magazine article that no woman could maintain her self-respect and be economically dependent upon any man. The woman who is “supported” by a man, without having to do honest labor for that support, either in the home or out of it, is a parasite, getting her living by virtue of her sex. This is the position of the average wife of the rich man. She is simply a consumer without giving a return value for what she gets. She is the female drone in the hive. On the other hand, the wife of the poor man is usually an unpaid house drudge. Both positions are undesirable because they are harmful to the individual man and woman, and to society.

The woman who leaves her home and goes into the industrial field to support herself simply changes masters, selling her labor power at any price the master desires to pay for it. This, perhaps, is better than the parasite, or the house drudge on board wages, but it is far from satisfactory, and is crushing millions of our women with long hours and low wages.

If women are ever to have real economic freedom they must attain it in the same way the working class must attain it—through the abolition of the private ownership of the trusts. The woman’s movement, its own roots struck deep in the class struggle, can never attain its end under a capitalist system. It is significant that neither of the major political parties raised a voice for woman suffrage until recently. There is one international political movement, how-
ever, which has stood from the beginning for suffrage for women. This is the Socialist party.

We recall what Herbert Spencer said about the German attitude toward women—rating it lower even than that of the English. Yet in spite of this universal sentiment among Germans on the woman question, the first politicians to give woman a position of perfect equality with man were the German originators of modern Socialism.

Our movement, they said, is founded on the material laws of production and distribution. In what way do women and these laws act and react upon each other? And they looked about them for facts, and they saw women toiling in field and factory and shop, in every country of the world. They saw that great hordes of women were toiling in their homes without remuneration, save their clothes and board. And they said that women are producers of the world's necessities along with men. They are subject to industrial and political laws, as men are, therefore their status must be identical with that of the male producer of the world's wealth, and together the man and the woman shall make the laws, and own the world's wealth, deriving equal benefits therefrom.

The Socialist movement the world over today has accepted this position of the founders of modern Socialism, and today the platform of every Socialist organization carries a plank calling for equal political and economic rights for men and women.

THE ROAD TO FREEDOM.

Out of her age-long subjection, then, woman is rising today with a demand for freedom. Bound up as she is with the forces of society, she cannot attain this freedom alone. Only by aligning her forces with those that make for the greatest good of the greatest number, can she win what she wants.

Like the symbolic creature in one of Olive Schreiner's "Dreams in a Desert," woman has borne the weight of oppression so long that she is in many cases very weak, and very ignorant, and very much afraid. Yet there is the light in her eyes, she is struggling to her feet, and those who are
stronger, those who know, may assist her by reaching a helping hand, and pointing the Road to Freedom, toward which millions are marching the world around—\textit{the Road that leads to the Greatest Good of the Whole}.

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