



The equality of woman.

[s.l.]: [s.n.], [s.d.]

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FUE3UWC6FNWHF9B>

This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17, US Code).

For information on re-use see:

<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

Boyceville zenith

THE EQUALITY of WOMAN

Her Struggles of Yesterday,
Her Triumphs of Today,
Her Hopes for Tomorrow

BY THE IMPERIAL COMMANDER.



We pledge our power of motherhood to America. We can instill the spirit of our forefathers into the lives of our boys and girls. Our knees can be altars of patriotism to them, and our homes shrines of idealism where liberty can be fostered. The old saying that, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world," is true. We can prove a power in the preservation of America for Americans in our home life and in the development of the ballot now, and we will vote with our men for right men and right programs and right government.—ROBBIE GILL COMER, IMPERIAL COMMANDER.



WOMEN OF THE KU KLUX KLAN, INC.
Imperial Headquarters
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS



ROBBIE GILL COMER,
Imperial Commander.

THE EQUALITY OF WOMAN

And they shall be one flesh—Gen. 2:24.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them—Gen. 1:27.

In antiquity woman exhibited the manly qualities of greatness of soul and civic virtue; in the Middle Ages she revealed the same faculties as man for saintliness and love; in the Renaissance she manifested the same ability as man to mold her own personality into a living work of art.—*Ellen Key in "The Woman Movement."*

THE only woman problem that exists today is either subjective or provincial. Objectively, it has become a figment of the imagination. The age-long enigma has been solved by woman herself, and whatever problem remains is her own. There is no more a woman problem in the modern society of the more enlightened nations than there is a man problem, for woman has risen above the problematical into the sphere of the demonstrable. No longer is woman considered inferior to man simply because she is a woman, and capacity is recognized not as a question of sex but of heredity and opportunity for expression.

Woman was originally created the helpmeet of man, on a basis of equality, the complement of creation, without whom mankind would have been incomplete. In the broadest sense, woman is only female man, into whose keeping an Omniscient Creator entrusted the perpetuity of the species. Bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, with brain as active, with like ambitions and desires, though frequently repressed, gifted with as great physical prowess under favorable environment, woman has been from the beginning essentially man's equal. Students of history are constantly reminded of the fact that in nations where men lose their dignity and eminence, woman disappears from the scene; but when they rise with worth, woman again comes to the stage in all her power and tenderness.

Woman is an anomaly. She is the coryphee of sin, and

the guardian angel of the heavenly portals. The pantheons of all religions are filled with female deities, and the sirens who lure men to death and destruction are pictured as women. There is nothing more wicked than a wicked woman, and none so pure and good as a good woman. Lucretia Borgia was more wicked than the Butcher of Berlin, for she murdered for gain and prestige, and he through only an inordinate lust for killing. Woman has typified the antitheses through all literature and tradition. But honesty impels the statement that similar contrasts may be found among men. In fact, an unbiased analysis might not be found complimentary to the "lords of creation." And this brings us back to the major premises of sex-equality. To woman is reserved the peculiar function of wifehood and motherhood, the *sine qua non* in the survival of species, but this within itself, has no bearing upon the fact that she is, by nature and instinct, in all things the compeer of man. In nothing is the mental equality of women with men more clearly indicated than in the manner in which both pursue a career of crime, and contrawise. Woman has been the subject hemisphere of creation through the cruelty, rapacity, egoism, and ignorance of man, but all that is passing. The co-existent fact of equality is at last being recognized, and with it comes other problems related to but distinct from that of sex.

Differences Have Been Purely Man's Invention.

THE differences that have existed, aside from the biological bases, have been purely man's invention. From these false premises anomalous conditions arose. Deified or degraded, woman's position in the world became a problem to be solved only through long ages of "struggling upward toward the light." She became a serf, a chattel, an object of barter, a slave, the weakling plaything of the more sensual half of creation. She became the heroine of literature but a being without a soul or hope of immortality, according to the Hindoo, the Chinese and the Mohammedan religions. Aristotle declared that the relation of man and woman was that of governor and subject, and Plato averred that woman's chief duty was to obey her husband. There was an amelioration of her lot, it is true, in Ancient Rome

and among the Hebrews, and in lesser degree among the Greeks. Historians assert that woman's influence in Rome during the first three centuries of the Christian era was in the highest ascendancy in all history. It was a Roman matron, Hortensia, two centuries before Christ, who delivered the first suffrage address when she said, "Why should we pay taxes when we have no part in the honors, the commands, the statecraft for which you contend against each other with such baneful results?" And yet to this day the hierachal influence has been opposed to the admission of equality, and but recently Cardinal Gibbons declared that "woman suffrage, if realized, would be the death blow of domestic life and happiness." Even so late as 1873, in America, the heaven-ordained cradle of liberty, a writer said: "So hard is it to remove old-time prejudice, it is probable many years will elapse before woman will be allowed to enjoy equal rights and privileges with men." Even then suffragists were derided as fanatics, "long-haired men and short-haired women," and condemned for false and harmful teaching. And yet in less than fifty years the Great Change had fully come.

Woman's Will and Man's Acquiescence.

WOMAN finally gained this ascendancy, through two avenues—by sheer force of an awakening consciousness of her own strength, and the acquiescence of the man who had through the ages assumed a false superiority as her actual lord and master. Prejudices old as mankind and traditions hoary with antiquity have not easily been overcome. She was subdued under the same perverted notion of social supremacy that made possible the slavery of inferior and subjugated peoples. Power is the secret of it all. To the present day the Nietzschean philosophy that "Might makes right" prevails in some quarters. The weak and ignorant were held in bondage by the powerful and intelligent. Prisoners captured in warfare became the slaves of the conquerors—the men for the more arduous duties of the field, the forest, the shop or the battle-front, and the women, in proportion to their charm and attractiveness, for either domestic drudges or the pampered playthings of sensuous masters whose power over them was supreme. Slavery was accepted even among the

most Christian nations until late in the 19th century, and yet prevails in some of the most remote corners of the world, in constantly decreasing extent.

Still in those sections of the Near East where the shadows of the Koran or the Vedas lie athwart her path, woman has not fully asserted her power or claimed her God-given equality. She is still the slave of the seraglio, subservient to the will or caprice of the absolute monarch who rules over her under the benign approval of Allah. She is segregated as a necessary evil, to be used and exploited as her master may desire. Her face is veiled, she is denied the social amenities enjoyed by her emancipated sisters, and when she no longer pleases, her murder is a natural consequence for which the slayer need answer only to Mohammed—and the Prophet himself was not over-nice in his dealing with woman-kind. It is a private matter, and no concern of the state.

And then in many of the over-populous nations of the Orient, woman, the prolific cause, has long been considered excess baggage in the human race. The Yang-tse has for ages flowed to the sea laden with its horrific burden of unwanted girl babies. The burning ghats along the fetid Ganges have, unassuaged by the teaching of Gautama, echoed eerily with the piteous wails of child widows. In some of the more remote sections of Africa, the widows of tribal monarchs are still immured alive with the bodies of their accursed over-lords. Even they, though subject spirits, are granted the immortality denied all women by the followers of Buddha. Among the American Aborigines, the woman has ever been the burden-bearer, the hewers of wood and the tillers of the soil—tasks too menial for the painted savage whose glory lay in the chase or the battlefield.

Emancipation of Women Must Become Universal.

AND what recourse have the women of India, of China, of the Congo Belge, of Constantinople and Bagdad; and the isles of the Sea? It is inconceivable that there should not be among them, even among the most benighted and repressed of Darkest

Africa, some women of spirit, capacity and courage, with visions of freedom from the thrall of slavery. But they are powerless because they are in the minority and not in accord with accepted tradition. Their emancipation must accompany an aroused conscience, an awakening intelligence, and an enlightened civilization.

The last generation has been the greatest era in woman's long struggle for the recognition of sex-equality. England and America, the foremost nations on the face of the earth, have granted her the fullest measure of suffrage, only within the last decade having removed the final barrier against the most complete expression of her life. Political manumission has come, because she demanded it as an inalienable right, and because man, convicted of the wrongs that long had been done the mothers of the race, consented more or less graciously. This grant of equality could not have come without man's consent. He held the power in his own hands. Tradition favored his pretensions. History bristled with masculine precedent. The Salic law applied not only to monarchical succession but to the affairs of every day life. Woman had no rights that man was bound to respect if man willed otherwise. There was an abundance of law in the more advanced states, but for the most part it favored the man.

Hoisted upon a pedestal of fulsome flattery, condescending attention was considered by most men an adequate compensation for persistent indignities heaped upon their so-called inferiors. But when "rights" were mentioned, lo! the scene was changed, and erstwhile "angels of light" became "ambitious, indelicate, not to say immodest, bold-faced females." It is but natural that woman should rebel against such treatment. The essence of the Babylonian and Athenian laws, in all their asperities, in dealing with women, had infiltrated the social organism, and far into the 19th century its influence was felt. While woman's awakening will was a potential cause, it was more or less man's yielding to the inevitable that made it possible to strike off the woman's fetters. Had he not yielded, she must have remained a slave and a chattel for the mothering of his children. Herein is indisputable proof of the innate equality of the sexes, recognized by each. And with the woman it is something more, since enlightened Christian man-

hood must ever maintain toward woman that chivalrous attitude that has been the saving grace of the ages.

Eternal Feminine Was Ever the Temptress.

WOMAN, because man has chosen to make her a problem, has defied solution even while a subject of barter and a buffer of lust. She was primarily, and in the very weaknesses of human nature, the temptress, and man the willing object of her wiles. Eve set the pattern all her daughters have followed, consciously or not. Despite recognized equality she will continue through the ages to enact the role of temptress, either through love or guile, ambition or revenge. History's pages are blazoned with the records of women who have risen above the sordid and galling restraints of environment. But they were super-women, and their meteor-like brilliance reflected only a slight radiance into the drab lives of the millions of submerged women who lived at the same time. Even when most debased, woman was made an object of idolatry and adoration. It was a fiction preserved largely by the intellectuals, and by the comparative few who by sheer force of will and fortuitous circumstance carved for themselves a niche high in the Temple of Fame. Deborah, Miriam, Hypatia, Dido, Zenobia, Cleopatra, Sappho, Antoinette, Elizabeth, Victoria and scores of other illustrious names relieve the drab background of history. There were nations ruled only by queens. The Spartan mothers set an example of stern devotion to duty that has become a proverb. The fabled Amazons were a superior military type that doubtless had some foundation in fact. The Circes and the sirens were women, yet so were Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the beneficent women whose names shed lustre upon many a throne that man has defiled.

Through the so-called Dark Ages woman's lot was a hard one, but with the Dawn of Chivalry she was advanced one step further toward emancipation. Chivalry set her upon a throne, the Court of Love was dedicated to her, bard and minnesinger sang her praises, and gallant knights fought for her honor and her favors. Yet if we judge history a-right, there was a false glamour over it all and underneath still remained the sordidness

and the slavery engrained in custom and supported by the prejudice of inequality. Revolutionary results of a day, or a generation, however radical, cannot effectually accomplish that which comes from only the educative process and racial training. The truth of social evolution cannot be more practically demonstrated than in this very process of woman's emancipation.

While luminous haloes surround the names of many illustrious women of those early days, we have no assurance that the lot of women in the majority, was permitted to rise much above the clod. The Chivalry which deified her was observed most in the breach, and woman, as such, remained the slave and the chattel. Caste did more to free the few and submerge the many than any abstract theory of sex-equality or the rights of women. The favored classes—the royal, the nobility, the wealthy, the intellectual geniuses—were exalted and their exaltation has been mistaken for the freedom of all women. But it affected only the few, and the great majority were still but little more than the cattle of the field. Brilliant meteors often illumine the sky, but their brilliance obscures rather than brings into relief the millions of stellar motes that fill the shoreless universe of social convention. And so history is the record of men and their achievements, with here and there a woman whose superiority forced her above the counterfeit level of the male ego. That there were great women in the past does not argue that man was relenting his severity and beginning to yield his traditional superiority, but that rare individuals of the falsely called weaker sex dared assert themselves and demand recognition.

Aryan Races Were the Cradle of Woman's Freedom.

THE Aryan races have been more considerate of their women-kind, where others have been only brutally tolerant. In the branches of the Aryan geneologic root, in the Anglo-Saxon particularly, and notably in the Germanic races, is found the efflorescence of that genuine regard for woman taught by the Galilean and inculcated by the enlightened conscience of the world. It was He who taught, "Honor thy father and thy mother"—an admonition handed down with the Mosaic code. It is the pagan

religions, the debauching practices of heathen worshippers of sensuous and malevolent deities, the devotees of Ashtoreth, and Bel, and Hera, and Siva, and Mithra, that have oppressed and repressed women. Just as these false religions with their veneer of morality and benevolence, but with an interior reeking in filth and falsehood, are eradicated to be superseded by the religion of Christ, so will woman be given her proper place in the economy of life—neither as an inferior or a superior of man, but as his peer, always plus the courtesy and the chivalry the true man accords to woman as her right.

As in America was struck the first blow of world-wide significance for freedom from the tyranny of kings, and for the establishment of representative government; as here the fetters were stricken from the limbs of human chattels so effectually that it has outlawed slavery throughout the world; as here the vice of the open-saloon and the tyranny of rum were throttled; as here even the more galling gyves of ignorance were removed and opportunity of intellectual equality granted to all classes through the public schools; as here conscience was freed from the dominance of kings and popes; as here an enlightened people, cognizant of their own power to will and to do, have decreed that tyrants and supreme monarchs, civil or ecclesiastical, have no part in our national program—so it was fitting that here should germinate and flourish to its fullest fruition, the emancipation of women from the restrictions of the past, the shackles of tradition, the obstacles of prejudice and selfishness, and the slavery of mind and body submerging her in an obscurity that denied her individual expression.

Woman Problem Was Once a Serious and Genuine One.

WITH the great pioneer minds who declared that woman should be free, the woman problem was serious and genuine. They had to combat not only the established customs of the ages; the over-developed ego of man; social, commercial, industrial and professional prejudices that had become fixed law; a tradition of inferiority and elemental incapacity that was accepted as truth; but they had to combat the attitude of women themselves,

many of whom had become saturated with the unassertive principle of *laissez faire*. Their ambitions were atrophied through long disuse. In a dull sort of a way, they were content to let well enough alone, and continue like "dull, driven cattle" to pursue the tortuous byways tradition had blazed for them. But the God who directs the destinies of mankind decreed that the time had come when the conventional inequality of the sexes should no longer be tolerated. The woman asserted it, the man acquiesced, and lo! the impossible was accomplished.

It has been the greatest revolution in all history, for it affects, directly or remotely, one-half of all human-kind. And it has been brought about by peaceful methods. Conscience was the only arbiter. While a few thousand slaves of an inferior race were freed from bondage at the expense of five years of bloody warfare, fifty million American women have been emancipated without bloodshed from a greater thralldom. It would have been quite impossible otherwise. A war of the sexes is unthinkable. Such a monstrous thing could have resulted in nothing save the extermination of the race. When mankind was ready for the change, leaders arose in both sexes and made it effective. It was not a selfish movement but essentially altruistic. There was a community of interest between man and woman that refused longer to assert the inferiority of either. Mentally, socially, politically, industrially, and even physically woman is being recognized as the equal of man—no better, no worse, the long suppressed complement in the human equation.

Tirades of satirists and cynics and truculent reformers against woman's idleness, frivolity, luxury, dissipation, promiscuity, and aversion of parental responsibilities were as frequent and as ineffective in the days of Roman opulence as in our modern day. The emergence of the democratic ideal in the agitation for equal political and economic opportunity is responsible for the difference between the woman of the old world and the woman of the new. But no other age is comparable to the present in the catholicity of our outlook upon life, and our freedom from debasing influences, despite the mouthings of the pessimist and the materialist. And to the enfranchisement of women more than to any other cause is attributable this superiority of our modern

civilization over the most luxurious and intellectual civilizations of the past.

Many Are the Readjustments Yet to Be Made.

THE re-adjustment yet leaves much to be desired. Revolutions are not accomplished in a day. Prejudices still persist and traditions still cast their baleful shadow over the new social order. These obstacles are not confined to either sex, but are found in both. The selfish man who insists that woman's only place is in the home, to manage the household and to bear and rear children, is no greater enemy to the complete emancipation of woman than is the radical feminist of her own sex. It is just as harmful for a woman to assert rights superior to established law as for a man to deny her any rights under the law. The unsexed woman who insists upon woman's defiance of the conventions of society, the integrity of the home, her divinely ordained responsibility for the perpetuity of the race, and the degradation of man who has too long been her master, is as much a menace as the man himself who would retain her as a chattel or a being akin to the divine to be worshipped but denied all human rights. Her sentiment of revenge may be natural, but it is irrational. Both men and woman are necessary in the economy of the race. Without either the other perishes.

From the beginning man has made himself master, for primitive society, before the advent of Christianity, seemed to make it necessary. He was the tyrant whose will was law. Often, it is true, the woman's fetters were lined with rose leaves, the victim's wounds were bathed in the rarest perfumes, and songs of genius divine were hymned to her beauty and virtue. Still she was a slave. Her mind was in her master's keeping. Her body was at his disposal. Her fate was subject to his will. Now that she has the power of reprisal, it would not be surprising should she attempt to exert it. But she will not do so. It is wrong for woman to usurp authority over man; and just as decidedly wrong for man to usurp authority over woman. Both sexes must develop together. The process of social evolution has entered upon another stage. The radicals of either sex will be denounced as are

the radicals who would distort and confound the political order. Out of the chaos of contending influences and tendencies will come the harmonic co-operation of the sexes in conducting the affairs of state and in the propagation of the social amenities. The men of today may be tainted with the heritage of the past, but they are not responsible for it. Woman has likewise renounced her heritage and entered a new domain. Together they have declared that old things have passed away, and together must they work out the destiny of mankind. "As unto the bow the string is, useless each without the other."

Watchman, What of the Future?

AND now that the long night of gloom is merging into the mel-
low dawn of a new day, we may well inquire of the watch-
man on the tower, "What of the future?" Verily, the old order
changeth and all things are becoming new save human nature
and the immutable laws of God. For woman the future holds
much of promise, but there are lessons of the past only the foolish
or the ignorant dare ignore. Some one has said we should not
be spendthrifts of the past. Profiting by the lessons and avoiding
the mistakes of yesterday, we can better meet the situations of
tomorrow. Will woman abuse her newly-granted power as man
has abused it? Surfeited with freedom, will she direct it along
unwomanly channels? Will she seek too quickly the heights man
has spent ages in attaining? Will she permit self to eclipse soul
or the ego to overcome that modesty which is her richest and most
unique inheritance? Will she be as relentless toward man as
man has been cruel toward her? These are questions the woman
must answer for herself. And with proper leadership she will
answer each question with a firm negative.

As a logical sequence of the election of women to the gov-
ernorship in two American states, George Bernard Shaw professes
to see in the feminist movement a tendency to turn over the af-
fairs of government to women. He asserts that women are better
qualified to govern than are men. But he argues from a false
premise, and his conclusion is therefore illogical. In the first
place, government affairs, generally, will never be surrendered

to women, as they have been usurped by men in the past. In the second place, the allegation that women are better qualified to rule than man is not biologically, historically, or psychologically sound. Both statements are repugnant to the facts. Admit either, and the theory of sex equality becomes untenable, and this we are unwilling to concede. We readily grant that, considering she is necessarily a novice in state-craft, she is potentially as capable of ruling as man, and that in the new order, she is to be given an opportunity, regardless of sex, to assert herself in public affairs. To deny this would be to nullify the struggle of all the ages to break down sex barriers and establish genuine equality.

The Feminist Movement Has Served Well Its Purpose.

WOMAN has at last come into her own, and it is conceivable that the leaven of freedom will eventually leaven the whole world. The feminist movement, as such, has served well its purpose. There is now no more need for it than there is for a man movement. There will be rivalries between types and individuals of the sexes, yes, as there have always been rivalries and conflict between man and man, but the ideal relation will exist when individual and not sex is the issue. Now that restraints have been removed, great leaders must develop among women just as there have been, are, and will be great leaders among men; always, however, with the element of equality in the foreground.

Absolute equality is a fiction. There have always been men and women of superior intellect, prowess, or personal charm, and there always will be, but herein can be no differentiation of sex. A Victoria, a Browning, or a Willard cannot be compared with the ignorant, illiterate clod whose environment and heredity may have made him what he is, but their superiority is not due to their sex. Sex has nothing whatever to do with it. That is the truth we are endeavoring to drive home. Elizabeth Barrett Browning must have been a great poet had she been born a man, and the military genius of Joan of Arc might well argue her masculinity.

Organization and the Feminist Movement.

THE feminist movement has given rise to numerous parties, organizations, clubs and propagandisms through and by which woman has sought expression. They are not unique, however, for man always has and always will do the same. But the trend of the time is to bring the sexes together upon an equality. This is seen in the growth of co-educational institutions, the grant of political and property rights, the breaking down of conservative social conventions, and the tendency to make men and women equally eligible to membership in fraternal orders. To be sure, this is often done only through auxiliary or co-ordinate organizations but the tendency is cognizable and salutary.

The political rights of women have been conceded through a slow process. First, she was given rights over her own person; next, it was admitted that she had an inherent right in the protection of her own children; next, her rights of property were conceded; professional and industrial freedom followed, and last of all came a complete bestowal of political rights. No longer is she subject to taxation without representation. No longer must she acquiesce in laws in the making of which she has had no voice. No longer must she submit to authority selected and exercised by man alone.

The woman of tomorrow will not differ from the woman of yesterday in the eternal feminine, in mental capacity, in spiritual power, in her charm for men or her love of children, but in the rational response of her nature to the changed environment. Today woman is entering the junior class in her education for the duties and responsibilities of the new era, and man must go with her. She need no longer be a drudge or a drab, and she must not continue to be a doll. Possessing the power of self-determination, she becomes the arbiter of her own fortunes. The spirit that makes the mother love her child will make her love her kind when properly directed and encouraged, and she will not require so much training as the more impulsive man.

Mission of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan.

IN the Women of the Ku Klux Klan, woman has for the first time an organization which should solidify the women of America and accentuate and direct their new freedom as can be done by no other agency. It is not an organization that would unsex women by forcing them into fields for which they are by nature unfitted; or that would re-assert the barriers that have finally been removed. It is rather an institution that would reaffirm and vitalize the genuine essence of equality for which men and women of vision have so long contended; that will strive to better fit women for their new responsibilities and at the same time re-emphasize the responsibilities they have inherited simply because they are women; that will recognize ability and righteousness in both men and women, as well as the vicious, the depraved, the tyrannical, and the base. Christ shall ever be their criterion of character, rather than gold, or power, or position.

The borders of the Invisible Empire are being extended until it shall include under its beneficent dominion every American woman eligible to membership. The Women and the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, with the junior and kindred organizations, are the hope of America. It is not a theory of government, a potential political party, a fraternal society, a social club or a mysterious civic force. It is an institution formed of and directed by a group of native-born, white, Gentile, Protestant women, all of whom are actuated by one mind and one ambition—to make America a cleaner, purer, more desirable country in which to rear their children, the men and women who are to follow after.

Based upon the Christian religion as opposed to that which is sordid, or venal, or false; hopeful in its ministrations; devoted to a pure and undefiled love for home, and country, and flag; jealous of the traditions and institutions of the great nation that has been so good to them; inspired by the prospect of greater and more far-reaching achievements, the Woman of the Ku Klux Klan is dedicated by the Woman of Today to the Woman of Tomorrow.