

The Right to Vote

West Algoma Equal
Suffrage Association

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

It is absolutely certain that as far as women and their rights are concerned a mighty change has come and is still coming over the lives of womankind. They have awakened to a sense of responsibility such as their maternal ancestors never had. Women have proved their interest and ability in governmental affairs. It was a woman editor who first dared publish the Declaration of Independence; it was a woman who first set foot on Plymouth Rock; it was a woman who designed the Stars and Stripes that float so proudly across the border. It was a woman who at seventy years of age braved the unspeakable Turk, while the great powers of Europe with their standing armies and great battleships dared not lift a finger in behalf of suffering America. Brave Clara Barton was braver than all the country's force, and in the name of Christ and humanity has forever silenced the criticism that women are physical cowards. I rejoice that I am identified (even if only in a humble way, with this great movement that will eventually put woman where God meant her to be, equal with man in thought, word and deed. Ballots, not bullets are the implements of power and the millions of intelligent women of the world are as capable or using ballots as are men. The woman who says "I have all the rights I want" is either selfish or ignorant, or both; for sister women suffer under burdens it is our business to lift. There are many who withhold their consent to woman suffrage on the plea that they are not fully persuaded that it will prove helpful to the settlement of the problems before this nation. This does not in any way alter the fact that it

is just to put the ballot in the hands of the women. Men have had the ballot for a long time and have yet a great many questions to settle with which they have wrestled for years. It is just as reasonable to say that men ought not to have the suffrage because they have not settled the liquor question, the tariff question, etc. For sixty years the British Empire was proud to have a noble woman on the throne guiding its destinies; but had she been born in humbler life she would not have been deemed a fit and proper person to mark a ballot.

I have studied carefully the question of which I deem it a privilege to write, and I say there are many Victorias in the world today, yea even in our own midst. Give a woman the franchise and the result would be a national housecleaning of which the country has long stood in need.

God has placed man and woman side by side in the home. In the ideal home man and woman consult and confer together for its best interests; the country is only a larger establishment, a home of homes, why then should not both men and women have a say in the laws thereof?

The woman who is capable of assuming the burdens of housekeeping, homemaking and child bearing is capable of demanding rights under which she and her children shall live.

The right thinking men are on our side, every husband and father who appreciates the wife, mother and companion that stands by him through thick and thin, does not stand back and say, women should keep to the home, they have no right to vote, rather do they resent the conditions that withholds from the hands that rock the cradle wherein lies the future hope of the nation, the right to mark the ballot.

THE CRADLE AND THE BALLOT

Woman who has for ages past,
Her burdens borne unknown,
Stands side by side with man at last,
And firmly claims her own.

The maxim that her sphere is home
Perhaps is very true,
But the hand that rocks the cradle
Should mark the ballot too.

For within those tiny trundle beds,
Lie our future men of state,
And within their mother's loving hands
Swing the pendulums of their fate.

They look to her for love and health
And home life pure and true,
The hand that rocks the cradle
Should mark the ballot too.

When God sent down His only son,
The sin-stained world to save,
He did not choose an earthly sire
But to a woman gave—

The sacred trust of womanhood,
So sanctified and pure,
That her great wisdom, love and power
Forever might endure.

And thus through following ages
God blessed all womankind,
And raised her man's own equal
In heart and brain and mind.

Come forth, oh wives and mothers,
There's a work for you to do.
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Must mark the ballot too.

—Mrs. Gertrude E. Knight, Port Arthur.