

Doors and Windows  
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Once upon a time, there was a great fortress called Our National Government, which protected well those who were within its citadel. It was built by all the people, the sheltered ones within and the unsheltered close at hand.

The great front doors were the constitution and the federal laws presided over by congress, which devised the keys for opening these doors. These keys were called constitutional amendments and Unites States statutes.

Tickets of admission through these great front doors into all the privileges and rights of the inner circle had been for many years granted to all white males of certain age and condition.

Men of foreign birth desiring admission were not immediately welcomed but were put on a five years' probation before the United States statute key would be turned.

Indian men who desired similar privileges needed a different sort of national key to unlock the front door which barred them from entrance. So congress made a "renouncing-tribal-relations" key, whereby every Indian who foreswore allegiance to his own tribe could become a "Unites States" citizen in the technical legal sense. To be sure, in a real and practical way all Indians were native-born citizens, even for a thousand or more years' residence. They were really more native born than most of the other inhabitants who had been on the continent only 200 or 300 years. But legally an Indian only became a United States citizen, entitled to enter the great front doors after congress had prescribed the legal method and he had complied with the conditions.

There were great numbers of southern people who voluntarily left the protection of this citadel over fifty years ago for that of another citadel labeled Southern Confederacy. When that failed them, congress made special keys called "reconstruction acts," coaxed them to return home, assuring them that they would always find the latchstring out. So they, too entered through the front door and enjoyed all the privileges granted the most favored residents of the forty-eight rooms.

About this time it was discovered that there were millions of black people living and working near the citadel, ignorant, poverty stricken, resourceless and inefficient. It could not be

said that they knocked at the front door. They scarcely knew enough. But the benevolent congress seeing how much they needed every powerful protection made keys called the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments which could also unlock the doors into every one of the forty-eight rooms. So entered the Negro men through the wide-flung doors of great front entrance.

There was a small group of other men who had been expelled and put into prisons because they broke the rules of the citadel. They were criminals. They wanted to return. So the great ruler from within gave some of them a special key called "executive pardon." Such former criminals bearing this evidence of presidential clemency found also a safe entrance through the great front doors into full citizenship.

Then came a band of fresh-faced youth, the romping youngsters of yesterday, now grown 21, and the big doors, wide open, welcomed them to every privilege of their fathers. They renounced nothing, they foreswore nothing, they were forgiven nothing. The glorious key of 21 years opened every door.

So the foreigners, the Indians, the confederates, the Negroes, the pardoned criminals and the boys of 21 have been received in a dignified and lordly manner through the great front doors of our national citadel and today are enjoying all the rights, privileges and immunities of every one of the forty-eight rooms. The moment any one of the classes becomes a United States citizen of 21 years of age he then by the rules of all the forty-eight rooms can demand every privilege and right of a citizen.

For many years there have been other great groups begging an entrance to this citadel of national protection. These were groups of women. These women knocked before the Negroes. They were told the slaves' condition was serious and that women ought to wait. The Negroes' hour had struck. So the women waited and even helped secure the Negroes their abundant entrance. They were good waiters. They were women. The law of the sea, that chivalrous mandate, "Ladies first," had no recognition at this entrance. The rule seemed to be "Every sort of man before women." Women asked to use the Negroes amendment keys, but were told that this great front door was no "Ladies' entrance." Then they asked for an amendment key like the Negroes', the Susan B. Anthony amendment, and for forty years they were refused.

Some of them at last found a back door through which they hoped to enter. It was labeled "Judicial construction." Women in Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and New York made separate

attacks at the back door guarded by the United States supreme court. The women claimed that they had always belonged inside with other citizens and that it was only an inadvertence in judicial construction which had kept the entrance open only to males.

But the supreme court at the door it guarded was as unyielding as the congress at the great front doors. The judges claimed that mere citizenship was not the only essential; that maleness was also an important requisite for entrance into the protective citadel. The supreme court said that women, being so near walls, had much protection already. No foreign citadel dared send its members to attack them.

The women answered back that they had helped construct the citadel itself and even were part of the outside bulwarks protecting the great fortress. Such protection as women received they deserved and more,. Though they had sought shelter near the walls, they were not protected, as they should be from the winds of unequal taxation, nor from the tempests of unjust laws often beating upon them fiercely, nor were they always protected from judicial decisions which dripped down upon them from the eaves and often thoroughly soaked them. The women said they were not protected from the gray wolves of greed and graft, the rats and mice of public inefficiency and wastefulness, the vultures of disease or the tigers of vice. The women made good arguments but the accompaniment of yelps and squeaks and roars of those who attacked them unceasingly seemed to drown their voices. The supreme court members were old men and perhaps asleep or busy and they made no further response than to keep the doors shut.

There were, however, generous and just men within the citadel who began to understand these pleading for help and protection from without. Some descendants of the scriptural unjust judge were also there and, remembering the importunate widow, feared her ghost would walk. It was either the importunate widow or many of her direct descendants who continued to plead and insist until the men within woke up and began to argue for and against opening the sheltering doors. Thus far the just men and the generous were in the minority and the front doors, the congressional front doors, were still shut, though the parley continued.

Along back nearly fifty years ago the men in one great room called Wyoming said, "If the women can't enter the congressional front doors, what's to hinder our pulling them up through a Wyoming window?" Soon a strong man shouted, "Hist there, sisters! Look up! See the rope! Grab it! We will pull you into the "Wyoming window." It was done and Wyoming women were

sheltered with the brothers fairly and justly. All the women around the citadel rejoiced over what the Wyoming men had done.

Then the men in twenty or more other rooms thought of something pleasing for their dissatisfied women. They decided to unlock for one day in the year the little basement or school suffrage windows under their respective rooms and let the women climb in to repair the foundations. This was much needed, quite fundamental and unremunerative. The women were on their mettle. They worked bravely at this important and modest task. In between times they were put out under the eaves. But they found this small climb in and out the school suffrage windows were strengthening their political muscles and preparing them for longer and harder climbs.

The men in a few rooms decided to let the women in through a little bond or tax suffrage coalhole for a slight protection. That was nice. The opportunity to shovel in coal or taxes to keep the rooms above warm had advantages, but alas, this entrance into the tax suffrage coal hole gave the women no control over the coal, once they had shoveled it in, and so was not entirely satisfactory.

These little openings called school suffrage basement window fundamental work and bond suffrage coalhole fuel work made the women long for the opening of other great windows, like the great window in the Wyoming room.

The Wyoming state amendment window idea at last had a few imitators when the men in the Colorado, Utah and Idaho rooms bravely hung out their ropes and pulled up their sisters into the complete protection they themselves enjoyed. The men in their Kansas room made a little early effort, however, in this direction when they let the women enjoy some municipal suffrage spring-cleaning with good results.

For fourteen long years after this no large window to any of the great rooms was opened. The women however, were not idle. These heroic descendants of the importunate widow kept up the serenading of the inmates of the forty-four other rooms where they sat in monkish solitude at the forty-four other windows. Those were pitiful serenades outside in the cold and sleet and the serenades received little comfort from the bouquets the men often threw out, for the flowers were the flowers of the lemon, such as "We keep you out for your own good." "It is too filthy here for nice women." "It is too strenuous for you feeble women to climb up here."

The woman's chorus would then sing with emotion about the strenuousness of struggling unarmed with the gray wolves, the rats, the vultures and the tigers when they needed the safety of the great walls they had helped to build.

The men's chorus would then respond:

"We love weak women, we hate the strong;

If you want love, you stop that song."

That did quiet some women but a juvenile chorus would chant this truthful refrain,

"The mothers who're strong

Help us kids along,

And that's no lie."

Sometimes the pleading sisterhood had visits from the favored women citizens from the four rooms with generous men. Even as Lazarus the beggar could go from his last abode of bliss to visit Dives in his heated quarters so the blissful sisters visited and recited their rights, privileges and immunities enjoyed equally with their brothers. These calls made the debarred sisters even more insistent and their serenades continued near every large window, every school suffrage basement window, every tax coal hole and with splendid talent at the great front doors of congress. These fresh appeals at all the windows and at the big front doors began to ring results. Other windows opened one by one and women laboriously climbed up the friendly ropes into seven more windows which opened into the rooms labeled Washington, California, Kansas, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada, and 9Montana, making a grand total of eleven great rooms truly democratic.

The Illinois window had stuck very tightly but some generous Illinois men wanting to lift their sisters somewhat away from the wolves of graft, the rats of wastefulness and inefficiency, the vultures of disease, and the tigers of vice, constructed a fine sleeping perch addition where women could have a look into the inside of the Illinois room and occasionally open up things for ventilation. This was the presidential, municipal and primary suffrage sleeping porch. This was a wonderful protection and soon such porches became the fad, built after the Illinois plan.

North Dakota, Ohio, Indiana, Rhode Island, Michigan and Nebraska men built similar porches in harmony with their own window architecture and their women are now this much nearer to protection in the great citadel. Arkansas did not plan one after the Illinois idea entirely,

as hers is only a primary vote porch. Upon investigation, the women discovered that as Arkansas is practically a state of but one party and the primaries pick the winners, the partition between this and the full privileges of the big room are nothing but long French windows with glass out and so unlocked, that the women may go in at will.

Indiana, too had more than the beautiful porch. Her men gave each woman on entering a stout hammer labeled "Vote for Delegates to the Constitutional convention."

These hammers were guaranteed to knock down the partition between the porch and the Indiana room so that Indiana women could help themselves to their own full enfranchisement.

In many struggles when the women have wanted their rights they equipped themselves with the womanly weapons of doughnuts and coffee. But such weapons the men swallowed as though they were sword eaters and there was nothing to show for it. For efficient service coffee and doughnuts would have been greatly surpassed by the Indiana hammer. It might not have comforted the inner man greatly but its coercive power would have been a thousand fold more effective.

This hammer was not left long in the undisputed possession of Indiana women. Some sons of evil confederated to contest the legality of the constitutional convention law. The Indiana supreme court decided there would be no convention at this time, but left undecided the question whether or not Indiana women might use this hammer at some other time for a properly constituted constitutional convention.

Then appeared a foe from the tribe of Suffering Taxpayers who opposed the Indianapolis women using the new municipal suffrage porch because of the expense to him of women's ballots. Suffering Taxpayer's personal share of the whole extra expense during his whole life would probably be less than thirty cents, yet such possible financial disaster caused hundreds of pages of briefs and hours of oral arguments, and the supreme court decided to save Suffering Taxpayer this heavy expense.

In Ohio the warlike Hivites and Jebusites, known as "The Wets", filed referendum petitions against the women and so did the workers of the iniquity in Nebraska, while the Sanballots and Tobias of North Dakota as yet are only threatening the destruction of the North Dakota presidential elector sleeping porch.

Windows to other rooms have been opening slightly to the pleading of the women.

In Maine, New York, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Oklahoma, the guardians at the windows concluded that they would allow the men in their rooms to decide whether they wanted their respective windows opened. That seemed simple enough and yet the men who control the constitutional window in many of the remaining great rooms would not even do that much. They have refused to allow the men inside their rooms to decide whether the women may come in. In two of these, North Dakota and Iowa, more deliberation will yet be needed before it is ordained that their own men in North Dakota and Iowa should be allowed to decide this question. In the Maine room so many good men were asleep that Wrong conquered and their window remained closed.

In the great Empire room New York, the good men woke up, rushed to open the window and the women's rejoicings resounded from ocean to ocean. More women have climbed up through the New York window into the full protection of the great citadel than could have entered three or four other ordinary windows.

The generous and just men on the inside of the citadel have discovered that from the twelve rooms where women have entered, much help is coming to batter down the great front door from the inside. The sisters from the seven sleeping porches are also promising what they will do when they wake up in 1920 and vote for presidential electors. The citizens from the twelve rooms with completely open windows and those from the seven rooms with the sleeping porches have figured that they control about 200 electoral votes and that if additions keep on until 1920 a majority will be easy.

Some of the forty-eight rooms have portions of their windows controlled by separate groups. Columbus in Ohio and a dozen other scattered groups allow women the municipal advantage of a single pane of glass. Though the opening is small, it allows the women a hurried look within and causes some ventilation for everything within which needs ventilating.

How slowly and with what infinite labor and patience have these changes come. No other class who desired to enter the great front doors of privilege and honor has been so rebuffed and so delayed. No other class has been chased from front doors to back doors, to basement windows, to porticoes or has needed to climb up by ropes into safety and shelter. A generous and hearty welcome has been given to every class except the women who are physically least able to

endure this continuous and arduous labor. The mothers of the race should have been welcomed and urged to enter.

A new danger is here. A great war is upon us. The mothers are the first bulwark of the great citadel. In torture and suffering each mother has borne a soldier. Even on the battle field this soldier may never know worse agony. The mothers were not cowards then, nor will they be in the horrors before them.

War's heavy burdens will fall on them, the "weakest." As in primitive ages when men would only hunt or fight, women were the agriculturists the weavers and the home defenders, so today the mothers must expect to hold the plow, tend the spindles, mine the ore, feed and clothe the nation and its allies, nurse the wounded, bury the dead and bring forth more sons for soldiers and more daughters to plow, and to nurse, to bury and to beg for equal rights and fuller protection.

Shall those who control the citadel ask so much from its women and yet refuse their prayers for every right, the privilege, every immunity?

The nations of the world beholding the great sacrifices of money, food, ships and human life offered for freedom's sake, may well wonder why those who control do not speedily accomplish the one freedom at home which needs no bloodshed or sacrifice, the free opening to women of the great front doors.

Women claim these rights for all the reasons they formerly gave and also now for this reason, that their wishes may be observed in the conduct of this war. They still behold in the tall, bronzed, stalwart soldiers, choice men of the nation, only their own little sons who must be suitably clothed and fed, and not with embalmed beef. Women have demanded that proper arrangements must be made for health and sanitation. Women have insisted that army camps must be surrounded by "white zones." Mothers who are risking their souls' salvation. Women today are unitedly calling to those who control affairs, "Ours sons must not be corrupted. Foul diseases are worse than death." These cries of the mothers are being heard. The demands of women in eighteen states where they may vote for president are more influential than formerly.

What the great government has not yet done for women for the sake of simple justice it may now do to make them more efficient helpers in the great war. Congress meets in regular session in December. The hour may be close at hand when women will not be relegated to the



precarious and varied window climbing methods, but at last be welcomed into the great governmental citadel and all its forty-eight spacious rooms, through the wide open front doors of a federal suffrage amendment.

So glorious and abundant an entrance for women will fling a message to all the countries of the world, "We not only believe in freedom for all, but we practice it."