

# Why Women Should Vote

By ALICE STONE BLACKWELL

1. **BECAUSE** it is right and fair that those who must obey the laws should have a voice in making them, and that those who must pay taxes should have a vote as to the size of the tax and the way it shall be spent.

2. **BECAUSE** the moral, educational, and humane legislation desired by women would be got more easily if women had votes. New York women have worked in vain for years to secure a legislative appropriation to found a State Industrial School for Girls. Colorado women worked in vain for one till they got the ballot; then the legislature promptly granted it.

3. **BECAUSE** laws unjust to women would be amended more quickly. It cost Massachusetts women 55 years of effort to secure the law making mothers equal guardians of their children with the fathers. In Colorado, after women were enfranchised, the very next legislature granted it. After more than half a century of agitation by women for this reform only 14 out of 46 states now give equal guardianship to mothers.

4. **BECAUSE** disfranchisement helps to keep wages down. Hon. Carroll D. Wright, National Commissioner of Labor, said in an address delivered at Smith College: "The lack of direct political influence constitutes a powerful reason why women's wages have been kept at a minimum."

5. **BECAUSE** equal suffrage would increase the proportion of educated voters. The high schools of every state in the Union are graduating more girls than boys—often twice or three times as many. (Report of Commissioner of Education.)

6. **BECAUSE** it would increase the proportion of native-born voters. According to the census of 1910, there are in the United States 129 men of foreign birth to every 100 women, while among Asiatics the men outnumber the women two to one.

7. **BECAUSE** it would increase the moral and law-abiding vote very much, while increasing the vicious and criminal vote very little. Women form a minority of all the criminal and vicious classes, and a majority of all the classes working for human advancement.

8. **BECAUSE** it leads to fair treatment of women in the public service. In Massachusetts the average pay of a female teacher is about one-third that of a male teacher, and, in almost all of the states it is unequal. In Wyoming and Utah, the law provides that they shall receive equal pay for equal work. (Revised Statutes of Wyoming, Section 614; Revised Statutes of Utah, Section 1853.)

9. **BECAUSE** legislation for the protection of children would be secured more easily. Judge Lindsey, of the Denver Juvenile Court, says: "We have in Colorado the

most advanced laws of any state in the Union for the care and protection of the home and the children. These laws, in my opinion, would not exist at this time if it were not for the powerful influence of woman suffrage."

10. **BECAUSE** it is the quietest, easiest, most dignified and least conspicuous way of influencing public affairs. It takes much less expenditure of time, labor and personal presence to go up to the ballot box, drop in a slip of paper, and come away, than to persuade a multitude of miscellaneous voters to vote right.

11. **BECAUSE** it would make women more broadminded. Professor Edward H. Griggs says: "The ballot is an educator, and women will become more practical and more wise in using it."

11. **BECAUSE** woman's ballot would make it harder for notoriously bad candidates to be nominated or elected. In the equal suffrage states, both parties have to put up men of respectable character or lose the women's vote.

13. **BECAUSE** it would increase women's influence. Mrs. Mary C. C. Bradford, of Colorado, says:

"Instead of women's influence being lessened by the ballot, it is greatly increased. Last year there were so many members of the Legislature with bills that they wanted the club women to indorse that the Social Science department of the State Federation had to sit one day each week to confer with these legislators who were seeking our endorsement. Club women outside the suffrage states do not have this experience."

14. **BECAUSE** it would help those women who need help the most. Theodore Roosevelt recommended woman suffrage in his message to the New York Legislature. On being asked why, he is reported to have answered that many women have a very hard time, working women especially, and if the ballot would help them, even a little, he was willing to see it tried. Mrs. Maud Nathan, President of the National Consumers' League, says: "My experience in investigating the condition of women wage-earners warrants the assertion that some of the evils from which they suffer would not exist if women had the ballot. \* \* \* In the states where women vote, there is far better enforcement of the laws which protect working girls."

15. **BECAUSE** it is a maxim in war: "Always do the thing to which your adversary particularly objects." Every vicious interest in the country would rather continue to contend with woman's indirect influence than try to cope with woman's vote.

16. **BECAUSE** experience has proved it to be good. Women are voting, literally by hundreds of thousands, in Norway, Finland, England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Utah, Idaho, Washington and California. In all these places put together, the opponents have not yet found a dozen respectable men who assert over their own names and addresses that the results have been bad, while scores of prominent men and women testify that it has done good. An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory.

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