

Mr. Chairman and Members
of the
Charter Commission
Gentlemen, and (incidentally)
Ladies.

In grateful acknowl-
edgment of the courtesy extended to me tonight on
behalf of the many present and prospective wage-
earning, tax-paying women of Portland, whom
I have the honor to represent, I wish, first of
all, to impress you with the fact that we come
before you in the spirit of amity and friendship.
We all like men better than we like women.
I, myself, had spent nearly a quarter of a century
in mothering men before the public heard
from me at all; and, although, since that work
was accomplished, I have been the recipient

of fame and honors far above my early anticipations, there is no ^{other} part of my strenuous life upon which I look back with the ^{satisfaction} extreme happiness that crowns the memory of the busy years, when "With little children clinging to my gown," I was one of the unprideful of humble mothers who "Kissed the old kitchen floor".

But the world of working women has changed its front. The manufactures which formerly occupied women within the home, have been transferred from the home to the store, the office, the lodging house, the hotel and the factory. And women, whose physical necessities are equal to men's and their ^{moral} obligations to others ^{often} far greater, have been compelled in many, if not the majority

cases, to follow ³ the work that has been
taken away from the home to the business they
are compelled to pursue in order to have any
home at all to keep.

I admit and admire the power of men. I admire
their theories about "clinging vines" to which they
delight to compare women, and "sturdy oaks" to
which they love to compare themselves. If these
theories were facts, with only an occasional exception,
there would never have been a "woman move-
-ment" on the face of the earth, for there would
never have been any cause for it. But the average
man, (the Honorable Body, The General Convention
and its allies, and ^{as a rule} the ~~exception~~) is not
a successful business man. Look at the lodging
houses, boarding houses, apartment houses,
little hotels - all kept by women. Follow

The crowds of ^{women} clerks, stenographers, day-labourers, sewing machine operators, laundry women and house cleaners, none of whom are supported and protected by husbands and fathers, not to mention teachers, doctors and professional women of all sorts and grades, whose livelihood depends upon their own efforts, and I am sure you will agree with me that, (present company excepted) the list of women who are not "supported" in this the home is much larger than that of the sheltered, favored few whose husbands and fathers have endowed them ^{with} a livelihood they have not earned by labor of ^{their own} hands or brain. *

I am not coming to you tonight with a request for anything new or tentative. But I do ask, in all seriousness, that you ~~grant~~ somebody, in the charter you are taking

so much pains to prepare, an article
 granting municipal suffrage to the tax-
 paying women citizens of Portland who
 are as deeply interested as yourselves in the
 governing provisions of this rapidly
 growing metropolis, whom expenses they must help to pay.
 I know lawyers - especially those educated
 in the archaic law schools of Eastern Universi-
 ties, will oppose us with the cry "unconsti-
 tutional".

Mr. Chairman; In the most fully argued
 for this very question which I heard you
 make at the Forum last Sunday evening,
~~heard you said~~, and your speech was
 applauded to the echo. That nothing was more
 unjust or ridiculous than attempts to

created by them for their safety and happiness; that, whenever any government becomes subversive of these ends it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it.

The tax-paying, wage-earning, home making mothers of Portland have not commissioned me to ask you to alter or abolish the government we are compelled to pay taxes to maintain. And we do ask you to so extend its provisions by a clause in your proposed Charter that every woman within the confines of this great and growing metropolis may have a voice in the distribution of her taxes.

Women insist that they are not asking you for any new or untried experiment. I have here a summary of precedents to

created by them ^{for} their safety and happiness &
That whenever any government becomes
unwarranted of these ends it is the right
of the people to alter or abolish it, and
to institute a new government that shall
be conducive to their safety and happiness.

I am now here, gentlemen to ask you
to alter or abolish the government and to
~~see~~ or extend its provisions that it shall
conform to the present conditions of
women in this wage-earning, property-holding,
tax-paying municipality.

Every member of this Commission knows,
in his heart of hearts, that our demand
is reasonable and just.

7
to which I respectfully call your attention
Passing over tax-paying school suffrage, which
has been granted to women in a majority
of the States in the Union without a change
in their respective Constitutions, of which
Oregon is a notable example, and omitting
mention of the many governments of the
Old World where municipal suffrage
prevails, please note that this form of
suffrage is now enjoyed by the women
of Kansas and Louisiana without a change
in their State Constitutions.

I have myself voted, in company of many
other tax-paying women upon bonds for
bridge building, and you all know the
constitutionality of that vote has never
been questioned.

8

Your Honor informed us the other night
at the Forum, that everybody was to
be allowed to vote for or against the
new Charter, not in sections, but as a
whole. Duty to my constituents compelled me
to ask if everybody included women? But,
when I asked if women were not people
what are we, I confess that I sympathized
with your evident embarrassment when
you dodged the question, for I knew a man
so noted as yourself for chivalry and
^{justice} would have been glad to acknowledge
the ^{existence of the} mothers of men as a component part of
"everybody" if we had been voters already.
We ask you to relieve yourselves of
this embarrassment by throwing for us a

Mr. Chairman, when you informed us that
other right to the Form that the ^{every} ~~every~~ ^{body}
you were telling us would have a chance
to vote yes or no on the proposed Charter
didn't include tax paying women, I confess
I felt a motherly sympathy for your
evident embarrassment. That it is in
the power of this Convention to give
~~tax paying~~ women a referendum vote on a
separate clause in its many articles
respecting their own right to the
equal protection of the laws they help
to maintain by an enforced tax for
which they are now denied representa-
tion

a principal plank and extending to
our freed hands the power to seize it.
You know you can do it if you will,
you know you ought to do it if you
don't. But, when you extend this
plank to us for use in the city government
at this time or not, there is one thing you
can do for the faithful ^{miners} wives and mothers
of ^{the} men ^{of Oregon} at the next State election. As you
know, we have a tax-paying citizens consti-
tutional amendment pending for the ~~State~~
election of 1910. This election is placed
beyond the power of the present Legislative
Assembly to prevent, it having been accepted
and filed by our Secretary of State under the
laws of 1904-8.

You can, gentlemen, and we sincerely

Wyoming, Michigan, Minnesota, Colorado
and Hampshire, Massachusetts