

RESOLUTIONS OF THE FIRST NATIONAL WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION
As reported in the Proceedings at Worcester, Massachusetts on October 23-24, 1850

The **Business Committee** reported the following **Preamble** and **Resolutions**,

Whereas, The very contracted sphere of action prescribed for woman, arising from an unjust view of her nature, capacities, and powers, and from the infringement of her just rights as an equal with man, - is highly injurious to her physical, mental, and moral development; therefore,

Resolved, That we will not cease our earnest endeavors to secure for her political, legal, and social equality with man, until her proper sphere is determined, by what alone should determine it, her Powers and Capacities, strengthened and refined by an education in accordance with her nature.

Resolved, That every human being of full age, and resident for a proper length of time on the soil of the nation, who is required to obey law, is entitled to a voice in its enactments; that every such person, whose property or labor is taxed for the support of government, is entitled to a direct share in such government. Therefore,

Resolved, That women are clearly entitled to the right of suffrage, and to be considered eligible to office; the omission to demand which, on her part, is a palpable recreancy to duty; and the denial of which is a gross usurpation, on the part of man, no longer to be endured; and that every party which claims to represent the humanity, civilization, and progress of the age, is bound to inscribe on its banners, Equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color.

Resolved, That political rights acknowledge no sex, and therefore the word "male" should be stricken from every State Constitution.

Resolved, That the laws of property, as affecting married parties, demand a thorough revisal, so that all rights may be equal between them; - that the wife may have, during life, an equal control over the property gained by their mutual toil and sacrifices, be heir to her husband precisely to the extent that he is heir to her, and entitled, at her death, to dispose by will of the same share of the joint property as he is.

Resolved, That as women alone can learn by experience, and prove by works, what is their rightful sphere of duty, we recommend, as *next steps*, that they should demand and secure

1. *Education* in primary and high schools, universities, medical, legal, and theological institutions, as comprehensive and exact as their abilities prompt them to seek, and their capabilities fit them to receive;
2. *Partnership* in the labors, gains, risks, and remunerations of productive industry, with such limits only as are assigned by taste, intuitive judgment, or their measure of spiritual and physical vigor, as tested by experiment;
3. *A co-equal share* in the formation and administration of law, Municipal, State, and National, through legislative assemblies, courts, and executive offices;
4. Such unions as may become the guardians of pure morals and honorable manners - *a high court of appeal* in cases of outrage which cannot be and are not touched by civil or ecclesiastical organizations, as at present existing, and a medium for expressing the highest views of justice dictated by human conscience and sanctioned by Holy Inspiration.

Resolved, That a Central Committee be appointed by this Convention, empowered to enlarge their numbers: on (1) Education; (2) Industrial Avocations; (3) Civil and Political Rights and Regulations; (4) Social Relations; who shall correspond with each other and with the Central Committee, hold meetings in their respective neighborhoods, gather statistics, facts, and illustrations, raise funds for purposes of publication; and through the press, tracts, books, and the living agent, guide public opinion upward and onward in the grand social reform of establishing woman's co-sovereignty with man.

Resolved, That the Central Committee be authorized to call other Conventions, at such times and places as they shall see fit; and that they hold office until the next annual Convention.

Resolved, That since the prospect of honorable and useful employment, in after life, for the faculties we are laboring to discipline, is the keenest stimulus to fidelity in the use of educational advantages, and since the best education is what we give ourselves in the struggles, employments, and discipline of life; therefore, it is impossible that woman should make full use of the instruction already accorded to her, or that her career should do justice to her faculties, until the avenues to the various civil and professional employments are thrown open to arouse her ambition and call forth all her nature.

Resolved, That every effort to educate woman, until you accord to her rights, and arouse her conscience by the weight of her responsibilities, is futile, and a waste of labor.

Resolved, That the cause we are met to advocate, - the claim for woman of all her natural and civil rights, - bids us remember the million and a half of slave women at the South, the most grossly wronged and foully outraged of all women; and in every effort for an improvement in our civilization, we will bear in our heart of hearts the memory of the trampled womanhood of the plantation, and omit no effort to raise it to a share in the rights we claim for ourselves.