

The Declaration of Sentiments in its zeal to emphasize woman's wrongs, ignored many facts. It forgot that universal male suffrage was but little over fifty years old in the world and by many of the best men of the country was still considered an experiment, that women had already in some parts of the United States been given certain franchise privileges (In New Jersey from 1807 to 1810 she had equal suffrage rights) and she had never made anything of them; that the atrocious civil laws which worked her so much injustice had already been attacked by men and were certainly doomed in time; that her full education in political theory particularly had been from the beginning of the republic demanded by men as necessary to the life of the Democracy and that in no other single particular since the adoption of the Constitution had there been so great a radical advance in the United States as in their education.

Only a few years before this convention was called Abraham Lincoln had given us his idea of what the suffrage should be in the United States; the following statement is the following: "I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females)."

The women who began the movement had started out as we have seen with a definite program of rights to be secured. Their methods for accomplishing the results were the time honored ones of agitation: circulating petitions and persuading on the platform and through literature. But they did not devote themselves entirely by any means to their own particular cause. Their right to speech on the platform and to work in organizations had been disputed and in order to secure that, they felt they must ally their cause with any other cause which would accept their aid and their platform. So as a matter of tactics they worked wherever they were recognized and they opened their platform to whoever would come. This "free platform" seemed to them the logical development of their own demand for freedom.