

Chapter II Helen Campbell:

Mrs. Gilman brings her in as the head of a settlement on the North side of Chicago. At that time she was teaching economics in Wisconsin. What I must find just what we had from her in the Chautauquan. What I remember was that I became greatly interested in the possibilities in the cooperative house-keeping. There had been various stabs at it. The Chicago settlement was "Little Hell".

I remember that finally out of the various agitations and experiments my mind settled down to something like this:- The possibility of outside laundering - cooperative or commercial. The cooperative experiment was generally amateurish. That was the trouble with all of the cooperative undertakings, not put on the basis of efficiency and a balanced budget. Good ideas but no administration, the notion that resulted in poor work and greater expense, the fear that the people who ran the thing would get something out of it. I began to see the difference between the amateur and the professional in business, became an ardent supporter of ^{head making} ~~dressmaking~~ outside the family - wash day and baking day. I could not share Mrs. Gilman's resentment at the cook stove. My first recollection of her was in Washington in 1896 when she came as a delegate to a suffrage convention. I was living there then. (Page 187)

She produced an impression that is quite unforgettable. She was all over the place going everywhere that she was asked, and of course she was asked everywhere, Among other things she

addressed the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives
 but it was only her attack on the ^{cook} stove that I remember. I ~~can't~~
 remember that slender figure, slightly ~~thin~~ ^{sharp} but always
 animated face. She stood, I remember, with hands behind her back
 a good deal of the time.

I did not run onto Mrs. Gilman often. Now and then
 after she came to New York. I remember a talk I had with her once
~~after dinner~~ while the History of the Standard Oil Company was
 running in McClures and she said, "I can't understand how anybody
 can ^{dig up} ~~face~~ the facts as you do. I could not possibly ^{conquer} ~~conquer~~ myself
 to do it. I sit down in the morning and my work comes out of
 my mind;" I had a rather humiliating feeling that she thought
 the grubbing I was doing, and which I was dignifying by the title
 of research was unworthy of a social crusader. However, I think
 it would be unfair to underestimate Charlotte Gilman's work; she
 researched. It was among living people and she belonged to the
 stumbling group of new sociologists and read their works. Her
 Autobiography shows how she felt and how they came to see her.

The last time I saw Charlotte Gilman was at a dinner
 of the P E N in New York; she was working then on her Autobiography,
 had finished it to her liking, I took it from what she said. But
 she complained that the publishers to whom she submitted it found
~~xxxxxx~~ that she had made more of her physical handicaps than they
 believed wise and at that time she was struggling to persuade them
 that the success of her story was her conquest of her body. She
 had won out, producing, working for humanity as she saw it in spite

of physical exhaustion, ills. She described the book to me and I must confess that having been an editor I said to myself that I never would want to put out so lugubrious a tale. ~~XXXXXXXX~~ But I do not find it lugubrious in the reading. I feel real regret that she did not have the satisfaction of the interesting ~~XXXXXX~~ way in which her book was received by the Press. It would have found that have given her a renewal of life, to ~~find herself~~ once more she counted. It was the fact that in her latter years it seemed to her that she did not count, that people did not listen to her, that she felt as keenly as she had ever done that what she was saying was needed, that people must hear and listen to her that growth was the great thing. But the fact that nobody lasted very long with the public, that new voices were constantly coming on, youth pushing the elder out and off the stage - she could not reconcile herself to that and I have a feeling that in ~~her~~ taking her life there was an element of that, that people no longer listened to her and she could not stand it. She said as much as that to me at this dinner of which I have spoken. "I am pushed off the stage," she said, "and those who have less worthy messages than mine are listened to."

Well, at that time I was having the experience of being pushed off the stage and having the struggle which the professional person must have as he passes his sixty fifth - the age I believe ^{on which} the Government has decided to side-track us. I was saying to myself, 'Buck up now, the world belongs to the young; there is no place for you any longer so be cheerful about it.'

In talking of Mrs. Gilman I might introduce my own reflections at the time that the crusade against the cook stove was in progress, back in the '90's. I was lukewarm about it; I didn't think so badly of the cook stove. The fact of the matter was I was brought up in the old New England way where in well-managed households the good housekeeper ran her household factory as an efficient factory manager runs it; her work was planned, ^{routed} ~~rooted~~, and she was an efficient factor of plant ^{and rout} and root. She kept a schedule of hours as any efficient productive person must. We laugh at the old scheme of Monday wash day, Tuesday ironing day, Wednesday baking, Thursday off - so far as the housekeeper is ever off - Friday cleaning, Saturday baking again, Sunday a day of rest and social life. All this was carried off by an ~~excellent~~ ^{schedule which would handle} ~~scheme with its~~ due credit to Frederic Taylor, himself.

Now I have known the scheme in operation; I knew it in the country. One of my early recollections of the farm on which I was born, and where I continued to go summers long after the log house had disappeared and a tidy little frame home had taken its place. My chief visiting place was a nearby farm ~~xxxxxx~~ where the woman at the head of the household managed it in this able fashion and with early hours. The farm was on top of the hill, looked down on a valley and if a washing was on the line earlier than hers you heard about it. There was great rivalry among the efficient housekeepers about the hour you got out your laundry. Her clothes were washed, dried, rolled for ironing by noon and dinner on the table by twelve o'clock for a big household. And that was managed, as far as the dinner was

concerned as another type of the planning. Sunday dinner was always a big meal, everything ready for it on Saturday. Enough was planned to be left over from Sunday for the makings of the Monday dinner so that ^{the} washing could be gotten out of the way and the dinner put easily on the table. The children in the family were all trained to certain jobs which they did methodically and nobody was let off. By three o'clock in the afternoon my friend was cleaned up and sitting with her piece work, or knitting or sewing, for she did all for that family - doing what they called in the country "taking comfort." If kept up regularly it was no burden. The big suppers they had to which I often joined them were always bounteous and attractive meals - bread, milk, butter, pickles, sauce, pie, cake. The preparation of this depended on Saturday's baking. Of course by the middle of the week Saturday's baking was used up but then on Wednesday the larder was resupplied for the great day.

The triumph of intelligent planning - they don't know anything better in the best factories - of course it meant the cook stove, of course it meant feeding a fire with wood, of course it meant going outside for your water unless ^{had} ~~by~~ you/arrived to the dignity of having ~~expensive~~ a sink in the kitchen with a pump in it. That was the great ambition of all these country women. Management, brains, did it; it was the woman who would not manage, who would /not put her mind to the conquering of the cook stove that was unhappy. The untrained person in any job, the revolting person in any job must be unhappy, but these women who I knew had a pride in their housekeeping. There was rivalry; there is rivalry in the products

of a factory today and it was the individual developing life
(than most women have under modern conditions.) So you see I was
not so impressed by ~~the~~ Mrs. Gilman and her cook stove.

It was just as it was with other things, as far
as my observation showed, that you hated the thing which you did
not do well, or I am inclined today to believe that there are
many women who hate the management of a house, feel isolated,
in spite of all the numerous helps that come. Press the button
housekeeping is only an advantage to the woman who has some
useful productive thing with which to occupy her mind.