EXTRACTS
from the lives of

Victoria Claflin Woodhull
NOW MRS. JOHN BIDDULPH MARTIN

AND

Tennessee Claflin
NOW LADY COOK
INTRODUCTION

When perusing old files of American newspapers, I have been so deeply touched by the work and terrible experiences of two women, Victoria Claflin Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin, that I at once made up my mind to write their lives.

Their history, by what I read, is really the history of women in America during the last half century, and is the most remarkable and extraordinary existing to my knowledge, even in fiction. The ups and downs, the popularity and unpopularity, the applause and the persecution, the utmost misery and fabulous riches are living in it; everything, in fact, that can move the hearts, make them palpitate with the deepest emotions.

Women! they have dared more than to go among the jungles to chase lions and tigers, they have dared to go into the human life of the world, and still more dangerous has it been. They defied criticism. They have vanquished; but they bear yet the horrible scars of the paws and teeth of ferocious ignorance.

The following is only a short synopsis of what I propose to be a large work, and I publish it with the idea of making known my intention to the public, and to beg persons who may have any information or documents likely to be useful to my publication, and to add interest to the voluminous material I already possess, to be kind enough to communicate them to me, addressed—

M. F. DARWIN,
c/o Caulon Press, 241 W. 37th St.,
New York City.
RUBIN BUCKMAN CLAFLIN, ESQ.
Born, 1796, Sandersfield, Mass., U. S. A.
Father of Mrs. Victoria Claflin Woodhull and Miss Tennessee Claflin
MRS. ANNA HUMMEL CLAFLIN
Mother of Mrs. Victoria Claflin Woodhull and Miss Tennessee Claflin

Born, 1804, Youngstown, Pa., U. S. A.
MRS. VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL
Now Mrs. John Biddulph Martin
Born, September 23, 1838, Homer, Ohio, U. S. A.
MISS TENNESSEE CLAFLIN

Now Lady Cook

Born, October 26, 1845, Homer, Ohio, U. S. A.
SIR FRANCIS COOK, Baronet (England)
Viscount of Montserrate (Portugal)
MEMO:

BENEATH

THE WASHINGTON PEDIGREE,

AS ON THE CHART, READS AS FOLLOWS:

JOHN DANDRIDGE had two daughters.

King Robert III. of Scotland

King James of England

(from whom are descended)

The Dukes of Hamilton,

to whom was related

Alexander Hamilton,

the friend of Washington

Thomas Hamilton married Anna Underwood

Their grandson was

Rubin Buckman Claflin (born in 1796, at Sandersfield, Mass., U. S. A.), the father of

VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL and TENNESSEE CLAFLIN.

Geo. Washington married Martha Dandridge.

Penelope Dandridge married Michael Biddulph, who died in 1800.

Their son

John Biddulph married Augusta Roberts

Their daughter

Mary Ann Biddulph married Robert Martin.

Their son

John Biddulph Martin married VICTORIA WOODHULL.

The Claflin family are descended, on the maternal side from the old German families of the Hummels and Moyers. Anna Hummel was born in 1804, at Youngstown, Penn., U. S. A.

On the paternal side also, they are of royal blood, being descended from the ducal house of Hamilton; their great-grandfather having been a son of one of the Dukes of Hamilton. Anna Underwood married Thomas Hamilton who was the first Senator from Massachusetts, who was descended from King Robert III. of Scotland, and King James I. of England.

They are related likewise to the Underwoods, to the Merrys, and to Washington's inseparable companion, the famous American legislator, Lieut.-Colonel Alexander Hamilton whose statue adorns the Central Park, New York City.

Miss Victoria Claflin was married, when quite young, to Dr. Woodhull, a physician by whom she had two children,
a son, and a daughter. In England, she married John Biddulph Martin, Esq., banker of Lombard Street.

Miss Tennessee Claflin married Sir Francis Cook, Bart. of England, and Viscount Montserrat of the Kingdom of Portugal.

They were early impressed with the political and civil inequality of the status of the sexes; and, searching into the "Constitution of the United States," discovered in the XIVth and XVth "Articles of Amendment" that the electoral right belongs to every American citizen without reference to sex.

Mrs. Woodhull thereupon demanded that right for American women; and in 1872, in recognition of the services which she had rendered to her country-women, she was nominated, by a Public National Convention, for the Presidency of the United States, and was well supported.

They strove also to arouse the public mind to the importance of intelligent maternity. They dwelt most eloquently upon the terrible consequences of ignorant marriages between the diseased, the morally imbecile, and the otherwise unfit. The results of such marriages, they said, were filling our prisons, our asylums, our hospitals and indeed, the whole social world, with criminals who never come within the jurisdiction of the law. Their remedy was the education of woman in her duties as wife and mother. They taught that as long as ignorance was esteemed to be purity, social evils would fester, and contaminate society.

In morals, also, they felt that the inequality in the status of the sexes is a cruel injustice; man being welcomed in society, while the woman is ostracised forever.

This roused the indignation of the two sisters, and their sympathy with the fallen.

The advocacy of such theories drew down terrible persecution on these devoted ladies; and, their health failing, they went to England for rest; and there, after a course of lectures delivered, the sisters married, as stated above, and retired into private life for a time.

The lectures of Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin still resound in our ears as the distant music sound-
ing the charge, like the trumpet of the archangels of the last judgment. Still we see the moved audiences crying at their appeals. Still we feel their eloquence like a sea breeze, refreshing our hearts. Still we hear the insults they calmly receive, we see them cast in prison, and, at last, like some wreckage thrown on the English shore, broken, dead!

In the lives of these two women we find the history of woman’s cause, and we are waiting for the last chapter, the acknowledgment of the endured sufferings, the apotheosis.

It is extraordinary to see two young ladies of good society, the daughters of an eminent lawyer, taking into their heads to show the world what women—of then so much despised aptitudes—can do. “What shall we begin with?” says Tennie. “Bankers and brokers,” replied Victoria. “People would never believe women could do any such business.” And without any hesitation they took offices at Hoffman House and began work. Seeing at once their offices would be too small for the business that was flowing in, the lady bankers arranged to have larger offices fitted up at 44 Broad Street, New York City.

In six weeks they had made over 750,000 dollars net profit, and the profits went on increasing day by day, every penny of which was soon afterwards spent in their great work. They were called the “Queens of Finance,” and they were indeed so clever as really to lead the market. The New York Evening Telegraph, of February, 1870, shows us their position in finance in a sketch representing them in a chariot, drawn by two bullocks and two bears, with the heads of the largest financiers of the time. Tennessee is holding the reins, and Victoria is whipping right and left. Some doubtful financiers are crushed under the wheels of the chariot, whilst others, embodied as ducks, with crutches under their wings, are trying to fly away. In fact all the press spoke highly about the revolution they created.

It would take volumes to reproduce what was said on that occasion, and space allows us to quote but little. The New York Herald, of January 22nd, 1870, says that “a couple of fashionably dressed ladies made their appear-
MISS TENNESSEE CLAFLIN RECEIVING ORDERS FOR STOCK SPECULATION, 1870.
ance upon the busy trottoirs of Wall Street and are conspicuous for extensive purchases and sales of stocks, the transactions in which they conduct with a savoir faire of the routine of the Stock Exchange that could have been derived only from an intimate familiarity with the intricacies of operations in that moneyed region."

The following is the conclusion of an article of the New York Sunday News:—"Taking a well balanced view of the whole subject, and putting aside prejudices which will gradually die out in time, we must come to the conclusion that the firm of Woodhull, Claflin & Co. will, in time, reach the summit of its ambition, and have a standing equal to some of the oldest firms in the 'street.'"

Nearly all big firms were doing business with them. Woodhull and Claflin's offices, arranged with all the latest improvements, and comfortable, and all facilities of direct communication with markets of all parts of the world by wire, were the "great attraction," and were receiving daily the visit of the greatest financial men. The few following lines from the New York World, Feb. 8th, 1870, will give an idea of it:—"Outside on the walk there is gathered throughout the day an assemblage of men, who look anxiously in at the windows, peer anxiously through the doors and utter expressions of surprise and pleasure if they can but catch a glimpse of one of the members of the firm. A clarence remains in front of the door the greater part of the day, as the ladies frequently have occasion to drive here and there in pursuance of their business. Inside the office door a doorkeeper has been placed who excludes all those who have no real business with the firm. On the door of the private office is a card, on which is written:—

"All Gentlemen
will state their business
and then
retire at once."

Banking and Stockbroking had been a success. The ladies had fought with the shrewdest men and gained the victory. It was a sufficient evidence of the abilities of woman, and as Victoria C. Woodhull and her sister, Tennessee
THE LADIES TRANSACTING BUSINESS IN THEIR OFFICE IN 44 BROAD STREET—1870.
Claflin, did not at all care about making money for themselves, but had at heart their cause, the question was, "What shall we do next?"

"We have proved women can organize and manage personally big firms; we will now prove that women can manage as well as man the interests of the country, and, above all, that they have a right to do it. To do the good we wish to do, to be heard, we want a prominent position. I shall put myself forward for the next election of the Presidency," declared Victoria. "And I shall run for Congress," declared Tennessee. "We shall try to go to the White House. Anyhow we have money, and we will make use of it for women's cause. First we will start a paper to support the election, and this independent instrument will allow us also to expose the large swindles that are going on in the market."

And the first number of the Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly appeared May 14th, 1870, and was well received by the public. It met another great success, over 50,000 copies being circulated every week. It did good work and proved itself, in its independency and darings, of great benefit to women, and to the public in general.

On the 12th of January, 1871, at the Senate, Washington, the House Judiciary Committee heard the argument of Victoria C. Woodhull in favor of the enfranchisement of women. The hall was crowded. Judge Bingham, Judge Loughridge, General Butler, Messrs. Cook, Peters, Kerr, Eldrige, Kellogg, of the committee, and most of the leading men were present to hear the Memorial that was to attain such celebrity throughout the world.

[From The Congressional Globe, Dec. 22nd, 1870.]

"In the Senate:

"Mr. Harris presented the memorial of Victoria C. Woodhull, praying for the passage of such laws as may be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the right vested by the Constitution in the citizens of the United States to vote without regard to sex; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and ordered to be printed."
FROM FRANK LESLIE'S, FEB. 4TH, 1871. MRS. VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL AND HER SISTER, MISS TENNESSEE CLAFLIN,
JANUARY 11TH, 1871. MRS. VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL BEFORE THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, WASHINGTON, D. C.,
READING HER ARGUMENTS.
“In the House:

“Mr. Julian.—I ask unanimous consent to present at this time, and have printed in the Globe, the memorial of Victoria C. Woodhull, claiming the right of suffrage under the XIVth and XVth Articles of Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, and asking for the enactment of the necessary and appropriate legislation to guarantee the exercise of that right to the women of the United States. I also ask that the petition be referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.”

“No objection was made, and it was ordered accordingly.”

THE MEMORIAL OF VICTORIA C. WOODHULL

TO

The Honourable the Senate and House of Representatives

of the United States in Congress assembled,

respectfully showeth:

That she was born in the State of Ohio, and is above the age of twenty-one years; that she has resided in the State of New York during the past three years: that she is still a resident thereof, and that she is a citizen of the United States, as declared by Article XIV. of the Amendments to the Constitution of the United States:

That since the adoption of Article XV. of the Amendments to the Constitution neither the State of New York nor any other State, nor any Territory, has passed any law to abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote, as established by said article, neither on account of sex or otherwise:

That, nevertheless, the right to vote is denied to women citizens of the United States, by the operation of Election Laws in the several States and Territories, which laws were enacted prior to the adoption of the said Article XV., and which are inconsistent with the Constitution as amended, and therefore are void and of no effect; but which, being still enforced by the said States and Territories, render
the Constitution inoperative as regards the right of women citizens to vote:

And whereas, Article VI., section 2, declares "That this Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and all judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution and laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding:"

And whereas, no distinction between citizens is made in the Constitution of the United States on account of sex; but Article XV. of the Amendments to it provides that "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws:"

And whereas, Congress has power to make laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution all powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, and to make or alter all regulations in relation to holding elections for senators or representatives, and especially to enforce by appropriate legislation the provisions of the said Article XIV.;

And whereas, the continuance of the enforcement of said local election laws, denying and abridging the right of citizens to vote on account of sex, is a grievance to your Memorialist and to various other persons, citizens of the United States, being women—

Therefore, your Memorialist would most respectfully petition your Honourable Bodies to make such laws as in the wisdom of Congress shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the right vested by the Constitution in the Citizens of the United States to vote, without regard to sex.

And your Memorialist will ever pray.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

Dated New York City,
 December 19th, 1870.
She contended the Constitution of the United States made woman a citizen, with the right to vote, and desired to know by what ethics any free government imposes taxes on woman without giving her a voice upon the subject or participation in the public declaration as to how and by whom these taxes shall be applied for the common public use. Women constituted a majority of the people of this country and were entrusted with the most vital responsibilities of society. They bear, rear, and educate men, train and mould their characters, inspire the noblest impulses in men, and often hold the accumulated fortunes of a man's life for the safety of the family and as guardians of the infants, and yet they are debarred from uttering any opinion by public vote. Women had the right to vote, and it was by usurpation only that they were debarred. In her address she quoted from many legal authorities in support of her argument.

This was her debut as orator. Her speech was reckoned one of the finest forensic pleadings ever listened to. It won over to her view of the constitutional law General Butler and Judge Loughridge; and, ultimately, the Judiciary Committee issued a minority report in its favour. According to American papers we can conclude it is from that moment that she was considered the official leader of the cause.

From that time they went on lecturing in favour of woman's cause, and the wonderful success they obtained has no precedents. The halls where they were delivered were always crowded, and they seemed to have such powerful influence over the minds of all those who heard them that after a few moments they carried away with them the most skeptical to their cause.

Even General Grant was gained. He said women were right in pushing their franchise, and he believed with Victoria Claflin Woodhull that the 15th Amendment, as it stands, confers the right of suffrage upon women as well as men, their legal status as citizens not being denied before any court of record.
MISS TENNENESSEE CLAFLIN
Now Lady Cook
As she appeared for Congressional honours in the Eighth District, New York City
ARTICLE XIV.
OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. Nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdictions the equal protection of the law.

ARTICLE XV.
The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any State, on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude.

The New York Herald said:—"Miss Anthony is proud that Victoria Claflin Woodhull presented her memorial before the Judiciary Committee, and the youth, beauty, and wealth of Mrs. Woodhull carried the day, and the grave legislators, 'even Ben. Butler,' bowed before these combined attractions. No one made a leader of Mrs. Woodhull; like all great leaders, she made herself."

Tennessee Claflin did not remain a stranger to the platform, for she did also her part of lecturing for the cause. On August 11th, 1871, she made a speech in German, when she appeared as a candidate of the German-American Progressive Association for Congressional honours in the Eighth district. In this district was situated the beautiful mansion, 15 East 38th Street, New York, in which she lived, She, also, obtained great success, and was greatly cheered, in the evening of that day she was serenaded at her residence, and from her balcony, had to make another speech.

New York Sun, Aug. 12, 1871
Miss Claflin appeared, last evening at Irving Hall.
Smiling her acknowledgements of the vociferous cheers and deafening applause that greeted her. Her hair, which she wears short, hung loose and bushy about her forehead and temples. She wore no jewellery or ornaments. As soon as the applause had subsided, she proceeded to speak in a clear, strong voice, using the German language, from which we translate her remarks as follows:

Miss Claflin's speech: "Are Women Citizens? The law under which I—and with me all women, in whose behalf I know that you are all interested—claim the rights of a citizen of the State of New York, reads as follows: Article first, section first, of the Fourteenth Amendment: 'All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdictions thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.'

"I fulfill the necessary conditions. I was born in the United States, and am therefore a native citizen of the same, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof. Why, then, I ask you, should I not be allowed to vote? And if I am allowed to vote; why may I not hold an office? (Applause.)

"Is a woman capable of holding office? Do you believe that a woman, for no other reason than because she is a woman, must necessarily lack the energy to perform the duties of an office? Or do you believe that things could go worse in the administration of our national affairs than they now do? Try the experiment merely of entrusting a woman with the performance of official duties, and if you find that your interests suffer by so doing, the power will still be retained by you to retrieve your mistake.

"But do not imagine that you can entirely ignore a movement which does not rest merely on the law, but which also brings into the contest the best and soundest cosmopolitan ideas.

"Will She be Admitted if Elected?—Neither need you entertain any apprehension that Congress will withhold my seat from me if I receive a majority of the votes. It is a part of my object to make this a test; and there
is, up to this date, no law which either forbids the people to elect a woman to an office, or which forbids her to accept it.

"Corruption and bribery, if not indeed foreign to the nature of women generally, are in any event foreign to my nature. And, without having to resort to means which are prevalent among politicians, who stuff the ballot-box and pay repeaters, I shall step into the arena as a candidate for the office of Representative of the Eighth District in Congress, commending myself entirely and exclusively to your favorable regards."

At the conclusion of the speech, the hall rang again with cheers and applause, in the midst of which Miss Claflin was presented with an elegant basket of flowers, arranged with exquisite taste, the initials "T. C. C." being formed in monogram in the center, with "M. C. 8th Dist." around the outside. On receiving this beautiful token, which was understood to be a gift of her Wall Street friends, Miss Claflin retired from the stand.

Had she been a man she would certainly have been elected.

As an acknowledgment for her public services, she was asked, after the death of Jim Fisk (of the firm of Jay Gould), who was colonel of the 9th Regiment, one of the finest regiments of the States, to accept the place vacant. To give another example of the ability of woman, and so continue the work of their cause—she accepted the post of colonel of the 61st Regiment (Coloured), which was one of the poorest and required to be improved, which she did, and at her own expense. Often she was seen going to the drill.

Articles and sonnets were written about her, songs were sung, and caricatures were made. But all was not serene in the profession of defender of the country, and for this breach of the rules society had made for women, she got the doors of her hotel, The Gilsey House, closed on her, and her luggage turned into the street.

After a few weeks of this work she tendered her resig-
nation, having shown that women were, in case of urgency, as good soldiers as men.

Several times she and her sister had opportunities of making use of their great influence over the masses. The following is one instance of them.

After the death in Paris in 1871 of the celebrated communards, Flourens and Dombrowski, a funeral service and a colossal procession, as a homage to them by the working people of New York, and the exiled communards, were being organized. The authorities and the police, seeing the danger of such demonstrations, refused to allow their taking place. This refusal irritated the spirits of the working people, and still greater dangers were entertained as the result.

Tennessee Claflin and her sister, who were then at the head of the 12th section of the International Working party of New York, and were justly considered the leaders of the whole working people, undertook to settle the difficulty. They went to see the chief-inspector of the police and asked him to grant the authorization of the demonstration, and they would guarantee its being carried out peacefully. Confident in their great power, he granted it, but on the condition that strong forces of policemen and soldiers should be hidden at different points during the passing of the procession.

Next, the sisters went to the working party which was assembled to discuss the question, and said they would accept the offer that had been made to them to lead the procession, and would also carry the flags, if it was solemnly promised that all would behave peacefully, carry no arms, or give rise to the slightest disorder. The promise was made and kept. The procession, consisting of about fifty thousand people, passed quietly, headed by Tennessee Claflin and Victoria Claflin Woodhull, who, loaded with huge flags, walked the whole distance, which was more than five miles. Both sides of the passage were crowded with hundreds of thousands of spectators applauding at every step. On the arrival of the column at its destination, the two sisters had to disappear to avoid the ovations that awaited them. That day, said the papers, Victoria Claflin
Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin had once more deserved well of their country.

Tennessee Claflin and her sister also started the first clubhouse for women in America, which created a great deal of stir, but which was to be, later on, the instrument of much slander. Nevertheless, these institutions are so generalized all over the country that to-day they can be counted by the thousands.

Insults and odium almost beyond belief were theirs because they championed the cause of the downtrodden and oppressed. A strange incident illustrates this. Having been accustomed to frequently dine with their parents at Delmonico’s, the famous New York restaurant on the corner of Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, one of the most expensive places in the world for a meal, Tennessee Claflin and her sister, leaving their office at the bank rather later than usual one day, drove to this restaurant for a meal just after seven o’clock. Soup was ordered. None came. The order was repeated, and at last, becoming impatient, Miss Claflin called the waiter rather sharply, and asked him what he meant by not obeying her orders. “Miss Claflin,” he said, apologetically, “the rules are, not to serve ladies after seven in the evening unless accompanied by a gentleman.” “Fetch Mr. Delmonico,” said Miss Claflin, furious at such treatment in a restaurant where they and their parents were familiar visitors. Mr. Delmonico came and in an apologetic voice said, “It was the rule,” and could not be broken before his waiters.

“‘We might be having any women coming in from the street if I did.” “You know very well that not half a dozen women outside in Fifth Avenue could pay your charges for a dinner, and your rule shall be obeyed,” was Miss Claflin’s retort. The world-famed proprietor went back to his office, and Miss Claflin with a brief, “Stay here,” to her sister went outside and saying to her coachman, “Come with me,” piloted him to the dining room and reaching her table gave the order in a clear voice “SOUP FOR THREE.”

That incident proved the beginning of the breakdown
NEW YORK HERALD, NOV. 8TH, 1871—MRS. VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL AND HER SISTER, MISS TENNESSEE

EXERCISE OF THE FRANCHISE

CLAFLIN, PRESENTING THEIR BALLOTS AT THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY, BUT ARE DENIED THE

Exercises of the franchise.
of the unwritten social law that deemed a woman an outcast and a pariah, who sought to take an evening meal in a restaurant unaccompanied by a man.

Yet a woman who sought to earn her living at a profession held by the masculine sex was deemed equally beyond the social pale. There are still a few avenues of work and learning that deny their big prizes to woman, but she is not a social pariah because she treads those avenues. Thanks to Lady Cook (Tennessee Claflin) and her sister in those forgotten days. To-day a woman's reputation is not so easily stripped from her.

The next move for women's cause by Victoria and her sister, Tennessee, was to present their ballots at the poll.

*New York Herald*, Nov. 8, 1871.

They would have been accepted by the Republicans, but the Democrats refused them. After a good deal of argument, and a show of great indignation, the ladies went away, but only to commence a suit against the inspectors of the polling place for illegally preventing legitimate voters from exercising the right of suffrage. The writs for a counter-suit for illegally attempting to vote, were served on them by the public prosecutor, as an answer to their attack. But the action did not come off, as such step would have given such a great stir to the woman movement, that the only issue to it must have been a complete victory for women's rights.

Thus Victoria Claflin Woodhull was keeping herself constantly before the public for her election for the Presidency in 1872. She lectured and distributed her celebrated Memorial and Argument all over the country, from Maine to California, from Minnesota to Texas. And through her great exertions she succeeded in forming a political party, called the "Equal Rights party," which was distinct from the Republicans and the Democrats. This party named with the greatest enthusiasm Victoria Claflin Woodhull for the Presidency, a nomination which was supported by 500 delegates, representing 26 states and 4 territories. This important demonstration drove the Republican party in its Cincinnati convention to profess, as part of its creed, "that
CONVENTION IN APOLLO HALL, NEW YORK CITY. VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, 1872.
the just powers of a government are derived from the consent of all governed, and that the honest demands of women should be treated with respectful consideration”—which is admitting the whole question of Equal Rights and Equal Suffrage.

If this was not altogether the great success desired, it was notwithstanding a great victory, a victory much greater than could ever have been expected.

The many jealousies that Victoria Claflin Woodhull had to contend with, jealousies of persons who ought to have been really her friends, were nevertheless a cause of impediment to her work. But she had got so popular that there is no wonder at her success, and if she did not go to the White House on that occasion, it was often expected she would be carried there by *vox populi*.

We give the following, quoted from the *Evening Telegram* of Louisville (Ky.), July 8th, 1872, as one of the many instances of that popularity: “The Hon. Samuel Cassey, ex-member of Congress from the Thirty-second district of Kentucky, arrived in this city yesterday, and declares that Kentucky would give Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull twenty thousand majority over either Grant or Greeley.”

Still indefatigable, they went on their work of lecturing. But as their teachings had taken another form, a great outcry was raised.

What could have been found in their new teaching to give such an alarm?

They said that “the vice of government, the vice of education, the vice of religion is one with that of private life—it does not hold men *sacred*—that is, man and woman. All worthy reform of a people must begin with their domestic life; and, since almost all the diseases of Society have their root either in the ignorance or abuse of the true relations of man and woman, so must their eradication proceed from a recognition and readjustment of those relations.”

Their appeals were most stirring. We quote from the *Boston Herald*:—“Who that boasts an acquaintance with the matter, will dare deny the fact, that one-half of our young men are dying of disease, induced by igno-
rance of the axiom, 'Know thyself'; seven-tenths of our
girls arrive at maternity unfit, totally and entirely unfit, for
the functions of a woman and a mother. The evil began and
perhaps reached fruition at a boarding-school. We inquire,
'Is this so?' and receive the answer, 'Yes, but don't speak
of it,' and thus it goes on. How many intelligent parents
dare tell their children the truth about the first question
that a child thinks of asking?' The speakers then pictured
a child asking its mother the question, 'Who made me?'
and being told to 'Hush, and never talk so again,' how that
child learns the fact upon the street, and acts upon it
secretly, and learns to conceal its knowledge from the par-
ent who taught it concealment. Then drawing another
picture of the child's receiving the information it sought,
from a holy woman, a pure mother—'Who made you, dar-
ling? Mamma carried you under her heart days, weeks,
and weary months, and at last went into the Garden of
Gethsemane to bear you into the world. Now my precious
child you can see why mamma loves you so; why she should
give her life to save yours'—and basing its whole after-life
and the current of its thoughts and actions on that frank
avowal, that child would never commit an act of which it
would not dare tell its mother, because its mother had ren-
dered concealment unnecessary and out of the question.
When people understand this mighty problem of proper
generation, all the mock modesty will die.'

All that was called respectable, moral, all that was con-
sidered good, was shaken in its foundation. Never before
had anybody dared to speak about these things in public,
ever had the people listened to such things. The revolu-
tion was great.

Victoria Claflin Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin had
raised the thunderstorm. But in comparison with the
enemies they had thus created themselves, they were weak.
They were first to be struck; then crushed.

The following article was printed in Woodhull and
Claflin's Weekly, Nov. 2, 1872, and caused the writer,
Tennessee Claflin, now Lady Cook, and the entire staff
of Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly, to be arrested for
obscenity. The government tried to convict them and send them to prison, but despite all their indictments and trials they were never convicted.

It must be remembered that when the following article was written, not only were all hotels and places of public resort closed to women—no matter how respectable they might be—when unaccompanied by a man, but also that the employments then open to women were limited to some ten or twelve in number. It is a remarkable fact, too, that at the period in question no women who desired to preserve their characters for respectability, no matter what their age or station in life, could venture on crossing the Atlantic without placing themselves in the captain's special charge, or under the escort of some man passenger.

BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

BY TENNESSEE CLAFLIN, NOW LADY COOK.

With the causes which have led to the subordination and abuse of women we have little to do beyond the aid they may afford in reversing the present order and restoring to one-half the race the rights which belong to them by virtue of their individuality, responsibility and relation to the common laws of nature. It is our business to deal with the remedies, and thus, if possible, effect a radical cure. To do this well we may be compelled to probe the social and evil gangrene to the very core. Of course society, and especially upper tenantry, will be shocked, and some persons will be seriously hurt.

Nothing is plainer than that the whole social and civil fabrics are rotten from base to capital—that society has utterly failed to accomplish its legitimate purposes, and that one-half of the whole mass is not only disabled politically, but robbed, oppressed, abused and slandered without remedy or redress.

We pause then to say, that the religions of the world are HE religions. They have all masculine gods—priests and services; the mother or woman element has no recognition; even the angels are all of the masculine gender, usually
endowed with wings, the countenance of women and enrobed in feminine habiliments that they appear more becoming ideals of what angels should be.

The various forms of civil government, theocratic, autocratic and democratic, are all built on the idea of masculine entity and feminine non-entity. The woman is for the man, and not the two for each other, equal in all that is common and independent in all not common. These are the parents of the spawn we are trying to strangle, and shall as surely succeed as that the citadels we attack are weak from sheer rottenness.

One little mistake must be corrected before we proceed further. The lords of creation have assumed that in all that pertains to virtue (continence of passion) woman is the weaker vessel. Nothing can be further from the truth. Woman's power over men, as well as over herself, is greater than man's.

Perhaps to this we owe the laws for the protection of weak young men, and still weaker old men who lack the power of continence and bow down at the shrine of Venus, where her altars are served by the debris of our rotten civilization, and are thus liable to the infections with which respectable men have inoculated the currents of their life, poisoned the sources of existence and added physical degeneration to social and civil rottenness.

Instead, then, of protection for men, we demand protection against men—men without principle or self-government, who take risks solely for the gratification of the physical senses, without one noble or manly impulse, without any regard for society or posterity—and after they have become constitutionally diseased with a virus that is never eradicated, consort with pure, respectable women, and give to the world a progeny fit only for the slums of society, diseased in muscle, brain and morals.

What we ask and demand is equality everywhere. We plead no weakness on the ground of sex. We demand the justice of equality on the grounds of individuality and sovereignty, and require that this standard shall rule in church,
state and society in all their phases; and this we will have if we should in the effort uproot all foundations, and precipitate revolution and chaos.

If equality and justice result in these things, then they must be right. We want no expediency, no compromise, no sheltering of the guilty—let justice be done though the heavens fall.

If the loss of virginity is a disgrace to unmarried women, then the same should be held of men; if the mother of a child out of legal wedlock is ostracised, then the father should share the same fate; if it is wrong to mother such a child, it is equally wrong to father it; if a life of female prostitution is wrong, a life of male prostitution is equally wrong; if Contagious Diseases Acts are passed, they should operate equally on both sexes; if women are inspected, men should be inspected; if the names of women are recorded and open to inspection, the names of men should stand on the same record, that respectable women may know the character of the pretended male virgins; if women are taxed, let the men be taxed the same rate.

On the other hand, if the male debauchee is allowed to circulate in respectable society and marry women with unsullied robes, then the female debauchee should be allowed the same privileges and be treated in the same manner. This is justice—not mercy, not charity! Away with such stuff! We flaunt it in the face of the male prostitutes who have the power, and having it use it to trample under their feet, into the dust of civil and social degradation, the companions of their vices, and curse society by the methods we have already described.

There is but one way to reach the justice of this case, and that we are now ready to adopt. We shall proceed to detail facts with more particularity than will be pleasant to the parties who are to make the great atonement for the wrongs done women in all the past and present.

We are now prepared to state the facts on which we demand a change in the existing status of woman, and claim for her equal protection, by law, with the corresponding
male offender, who now deems her his lawful prey, and makes her person, property and rights pay loot to his passion, thereby incurring little or no legal responsibility.

We select, as examples, first of all—the common prostitutes. This class are, all of them, at the mercy of policemen in all cities; are used by them and compelled to pay tribute both in personal favors and money, for the privilege of escaping arrest. In this way, large sums of money are drawn from them by men whose sworn duty it is to protect society.

We need only cite the case of LOTTIE STANTON, whose wrongs would never have reached the light of day but for the fact that her life was in imminent danger. The cowardly ruffian who struck her down with a piano stool and beat and kicked her nearly out of life, would back down from any equal combat; but a woman of the town can lift no hand or voice of defence. Should she recover and be maimed for life, as is likely, who will redress her wrongs? Echo answers: “Who?” Already, while she lies still in a precarious condition, the brute who felled her walks gaily abroad, under bail. Had it been a man, his equal, whom he had assaulted, he would have been held at the Tombs, to await the result of the injuries.

If such an one as this Mrs. Stanton makes complaint, the courts treat her with harshness, and contempt is the justice she receives.

Even Judge Garvin impugnes the testimony of Mrs. Mansfield, because she traded on her virtue. We wonder if Judge Garvin never struck any bargains with women who sold their wares!

But we pass on to another phase of the social evil and public injustice represented by a gentleman of great wealth and high standing in respectable society and business circles. For years this man lived with a mistress, who was to him both mother and wife in her devotion. Not this alone, but he lived on the proceeds of her business. Having by the assistance of his paramour arisen to position and the accumulation of property, he came in contact with a young, beautiful and pure woman, whom he married.
Friends of the bride were apprised of his life and character and yet permitted this villainy to be consummated. The prostitute has no rights any one is bound to respect, but the “whoremonger” may marry a pure woman, move in good society, and be generally respected.

Another case, Mr. ———, is now a man of wealth. There are many who remember when he was poor. He had a mistress who kept a “respectable” house of prostitution.

The business of this miserable varlet was to solicit at hotels and reap the harvest. One of his resorts was the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Here he had an ample field for his peculiar calling. Strangers visiting the city were regaled with laudations of the superior accommodations of her house. Now this fellow of the baser sort, this procurer and steward of vile hospitalities, is allowed to loaf around all hotels, and the men who are known to patronize her place and similar ones are entertained unquestioned at them.

Again, it is a well known fact that a certain rich man who married a woman with a blemished reputation, was denied hotel accommodation when his wife was with him, and was obliged to rent a house in order to be free from proscription.

Thus, the sins of the woman are made to follow her into every path she enters, and even legal wedlock does not exempt her husband from discourteous treatment on her account when she accompanies him.

Thus, it is plain that society is determined that she shall on no account rise out of the ruin into which that sham society has precipitated her.

While this state of things exists, there can be no peace and no permanent improvement. Women must come up, or men must come down. Our mission is but commenced; the battle is opened. We ask no quarter and take no prisoners. Having set our hands to the plow, we will not look back, nor turn aside until our work is done.

The world shall know the wrongs women suffer, and the men who inflect them.

We propose to tear off the hypocritical mask and expose their moral deformity to the gaze of all eyes.
We know who they are and what they are and shall not hesitate to write and publish their history so definitely that all men shall know them.

* * *

Another circumstance also is said to have contributed to their persecution. Every opportunity offered was always seized by them to show off the rotten state of society and prove the necessity of a reform. The Beecher scandal was one of them.

Then began a series of persecutions of such intensity that would have killed anybody but a Woodhull and a Claflin.

Once, twice, three, four, five, six, seven, eight times, the prisons open their doors to close upon the ladies. Every means was used to paralyze them. And when finally they were released it was only on giving heavy bail.

The indignation of the working people at such treatment was very great, and was to be feared. One day, Victoria Claflin Woodhull had called at the offices of several newspaper to beg their support in postponing their trial, and to allow them to bring forward their evidence. She was heartlessly refused. On reaching home she fell down in a state of unconsciousness. She was believed dead. The editor of the Sun, who heard this, announced in his paper the death of Victoria C. Woodhull; the news spread like wildfire among the press and people, who said Victoria had been killed by the persecution, and roused their spirits to such an extent that masses of men and women went about and threatened to pull down and burn the government offices, the prisons and the churches. But after a few days Victoria C. Woodhull recovered and the fury abated. Through this incident six months passed before the judges dared to call their trial.

During the imprisonment of the sisters, their bank, which had been undermined, was closed, and the publication of their paper stopped.

All this damage to arrive at this only possible conclusion of the learned Judge of the United States District Court.
VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL AND TENNESSEE CLAFLIN IN COUNSEL WITH THEIR LAWYER IN LUDLOW STREET JAIL, 1873.
ACQUITTAL.

"Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin were arrested some time ago, charged with offence against the United States, and finally released on giving heavy bail.

"Their business is broken up, and they were put to much inconvenience and subjected to many indignities.

"The prosecution opens—it proceeds—it closes; then what? Why, then, the learned Judge of the United States District Court who presides at the trials, informs the accused that there is no occasion for them to introduce any evidence in their defense; that no case has been proved against them; and he instructs the jury to render a verdict of not guilty, which they immediately do without leaving their seats.

"For the wrong which has been done to these women, they have no redress. THE INJURY IS IRREMEDIAN.

There is none legal. A demand of 500,000 dollars compensation was asked of the Senate, but it was of no avail.

For a long time weak and sick, they were obliged to find repose, and it was only in 1874 that they could resume their hard work. They lectured again in the chief towns of the United States, and were received with acclamations and tears. Many of the noblest eminent men and women of the country, deeply touched by their admirable courage and perseverance, came forward in the support of Victoria C. Woodhull and her sister, Tennessee Claflin. The poet William Cullen Bryant addressed a touching sonnet. The venerable lady, Lucretia Mott, embraced them in the midst of public enthusiasm. The well-known Mrs. Stanton declared: "I have worked thirty years for woman suffrage, now I am made to feel that woman suffrage is but the vestibule of woman's emancipation. Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin have done a work for women that none of us could have done." And Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker, sister of the Rev. H. Ward Beecher, said: "Mrs. Woodhull
THE ACQUITTAL OF VICTORIA CLAFLIN WOODHULL AND TENNESSEE CLAFLIN, 1873.
and Miss Tennessee Claflin have, with their prostrate bodies, bridged a chasm over which womanhood shall walk to freedom."

And during these trying times, when their lives were constantly in danger, when their fortunes were being swept away and even their fair names attacked, there remained an element, a saving bulwark. It was the faith and love of their real friends. It required more than ordinary courage in those days to profess or even to secretly maintain a friendship with Victoria Claflin Woodhull and her sister, Tennessee Claflin.

From hundreds of letters received during that period, one letter has been selected. The selection was made for several reasons. First it seems to express the combined sentiment of all the others and secondly it shows that even the staunchest of their friends recognized the need for secrecy. The following letter is from the wife of United States Senator from Rhode Island, Davis:

Providence, R. I., U. S. A.

Dearest Victoria,

Sweet, loving, beautiful as your two letters have been to me, I can only say just a word in reply, and that is, you stand in my heart foremost among the living. I have been with you in prison, in bondage, and in sickness. My heart yearns over you with more than a mother's tenderness, but I am a helpless invalid, waiting for my hour of departure; then, when I have laid aside the worn body, then I shall be near to help you; till then let me have rest. Believe in me, believe that I never betrayed a trust, never was false to a friend, and that at times truth is dearer to me than aught else in this life, but there are times when silence is all there is for me. My heart turns to you with tender, longing love. I remember you in the bitter Gethsemane in Philadelphia; then I saw that you and your sister must tread the wine press alone. You must not publish this till I have passed beyond the veil, for I can not enter into controversy and can not endure letters.

Lovingly yours, Paulina Wright Davis.
This letter was written to Mrs. Woodhull a few months before the death of Senator Davis' wife.

_N. Y. Sunday Mercury_, Nov. 17, 1872.

"Cell No. 11, now well known as the residence of Woodhull & Claflin was a perfect camp meeting yesterday. On a small table was an appetizing dinner served for Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin, who had eaten no breakfast. Just as they began their dinner a woman entered and whispered, 'Your food is being poisoned,' and their appetite fled."


"Yesterday morning Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin, accompanied by two deputy sheriffs, were driven in a closed carriage from the Ludlow Street Jail to the United States Attorney's office to meet their bondsmen, who, on the previous day, executed bonds in $16,000 each for the release of Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin; they were there awaiting the decision of the District Attorney as to their capability to become sureties. In a short time the bondsmen were informed that they had been accepted.

"While the women-brokers were in the District Attorney's office a gentleman stepped up to Mrs. Woodhull and told her that it was his duty to tell her that there was a conspiracy against her and her sister. He said that it was understood between certain officials and prosecuting parties that Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin should be forced into Jefferson Market Prison and while there, the prison would be fired and they left to perish in the flames. He added that the parties referred to were determined to be rid of them at any cost.

"The women-brokers then entered their coach, and an officer of the Jefferson Market Police Court stepped up to the door and placed his hand on Miss Claflin's shoulder, said in a loud tone, 'Stop!' A gentleman hastened to the rescue, and pushing the officer aside said, 'No, you don't. Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin are still United States prisoners, and you can not arrest them again, as they have been warned of your infamous plot.'"
"The officer wilted. The women-brokers were then taken back to their old quarters in Ludlow Street Jail. Tomorrow they will probably take their departure from that jail and procure bail in the other suits.

"The authorities seem determined to do their utmost by placing every obstacle in their way, to prevent them from obtaining their freedom."


"Mesdames Woodhull and Claflin were taken again today from the County Jail to the Federal Building, preparatory to giving bail. They were accompanied by their counsel. Soon after their arrival they were conducted to the office of Commissioner Shields, where the bail bonds were prepared. When the case was called, the counsel said they were prepared to give unexceptionable bail, but it would be useless for them to do so, as an officer of the Jefferson Market Court was outside in the hall, waiting to re-arrest them. He thought it would be better that his clients remain in the County Jail than to go to a cell in the Jefferson Market Prison. He had heard that the judge had been spirited away for the purpose of preventing the prisoners from being bailed."


"Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton says 'Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin’s acquaintance would be refining to any man. In their characters and persons there is never anything but refinement in word or movement. The ideal of spirituality. They have done a work for women that none of us could have done. They have faced and dared men to call them the names that make women shudder. They have risked and realized the sort of ignominy that would have paralyzed any of us who have longer been called strong minded. Leaping into the brambles that were too high for us to see over them, they broke a path into their close and thorny interstices, with steadfast faith that glorious principle would triumph at last over conspicuous ignominy, although their lives might be sacrificed; and then, with a meteor’s dash,
they sank into a dismal swamp, we could not lift them out of the mire or buoy them through the deadly waters. They will be as famous as they have been infamous, made so by benighted or cowardly men and women. In the annals of emancipation the names of Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin will have their own high places as deliverers.’ ”

Mrs. E. A. Meriwether wrote:—“Mrs. Woodhull has driven everything else for the nonce away. She is grand! she is great! she is good! She has wonderfully improved since I heard her in ’72; then she was at bay with the world, and threw her gauntlet down and dared it to battle. The battle has been waged, the most unequal battle ever fought on earth.

“On one side, the prejudiced world; on the other, a woman! And a woman has conquered! Never was so tremendous a revolution! I will send you the Memphis Appeal with its plaudits. The theatre was crowded from pit to dome; she held them spellbound for two hours. I saw men and women weep, so passionate are her pleadings for the downcast.”

Their lectures on the “Human Body the Temple of God” has been repeated over many thousand times.

But this new success over a certain class of the people was the cause of the other persecutions, and the history of the battles fought by Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin becomes thrilling, so thrilling indeed that the fiction of the story of a heroine of romance could not bear comparison. All the halls, all public places were closed to them, so much so that lecturing became almost impossible. And to be heard by the people they had to resort to stratagems, as they were continually in fear of being rearrested. Jan. 9th, 1873 it was announced that they were to lecture at the Cooper’s Institute, but in the evening the policemen were awaiting at the door, and scores of detectives were watching if they could perceive them to arrest them. The hall was crowded with people up to its summit, but there was no Woodhull or Claflin there. A lady came on the platform to announce that Victoria C. Woodhull or her
sister could not come to deliver the lecture that night, as there was an order of arrest for them, and to apologize for their absence. Among the audience an old Quaker lady, of the style of Rip Van Winkle, got up from her seat, and with an unsteady step walked on the platform, to the general amusement and wonder of the public, and disappeared behind one of the big pillars supporting the roof of the hall. The speaker proceeded, saying that although Victoria C. Woodhull could not appear, she had succeeded so far as to get the lecture read to them. At that moment, with the celerity of a flash of lightning, the old Quaker lady dashed from behind the pillar. Old age, coal-scuttle bonnet, and gray dress disappeared like magic. Had a thunderbolt fallen upon the audience, they could not have been more surprised and astonished. There stood Victoria C. Woodhull, an overwhelming inspirational fire scintillating from her eyes and beaming from her face. William Cullen Bryant writes of this occasion: “Her look and voice came unexpected and sudden as the lightning’s scathe; ‘twas as fire to heather set,’ igniting with an animated and undefined surprise to each and every heart present. It was Otis in the fire of revolution; Garrison breaking the shackles of the slaves; Phillips in the alarm of labour; a Parker in the throes of religious despotism. The heroism, bravery, and truth of the woman swept with inspired credentials into all the hearts; and, half in awe and admiration, the audience listened spell-bound to the great persecuted.”

Then the thunders came, peal after peal, of joyous applause and intense delight. People saw nothing, knew nothing but Woodhull, and only Victoria C. Woodhull! She had so captivated the minds that the policemen and the detectives forgot their duty until the “Naked Truth” was told. Only then they remembered the order of arrest, and Victoria C. Woodhull left the rostrum to join her sister, who was also under arrest and waiting in a carriage outside.

Persecution grew stronger and stronger. It got so persistent, so intense that it would be impossible to find another such instance in the whole history of the world. There
is no crime of which Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin were not accused; and so ostracized were they by the people that they could not get a room, a bed to lay their heads upon; they could not get a meal served to them. The persons that were known to have the slightest relation with them were treated the same, and through it lost what they possessed. Even the little child of Victoria C. Woodhull received no pity. She had to be sent to school under an assumed name.

Driven from everywhere, broken down, ill and dying, they had to fly from the country for which they fought so hard, and which they loved so much. They reached England, where they found good friends. For a long time they lingered between life and death; but their robust constitutions got the better of their illness, and they survived.

In 1877, they delivered lectures in St. James's Hall, in London, on the "Human Body the Temple of God," which were listened to with astonishment by large and fashionable audiences. Other lectures were successfully given in several large towns of England.

And, if we find now such ideas getting root in the minds of many leading people, it can be said that the example of purity and greatness of soul of the two American women leaders is not stranger to it.

Yet such great devotion and love for the people was not to remain without touching deeply many hearts who have confidence in the greatness of these martyrs.

In fact, if we look at the position of Women in America fifty years ago and compare it with the present, we cannot be astonished at the wonderful progress made. Women then could die of hunger with money in their pockets; they would not be served a meal at a restaurant after a certain hour of the day; they could not walk alone in the street, go to a shop, to a theatre, to an hotel, or, in fact, anywhere without being accompanied by a gentleman; a woman had not even a moral way of earning her living. One can easily imagine the amount of mischief that must have arisen from this state of things—mischief of which immorality had its large share. The revolution
in the principles ruling the customs of the country is
great indeed when we see now women free of all ridiculous
prejudice, treated with more respect, doing their own busi-
ness, going about with as much liberty as men, and employed
in every trade and profession where men are employed.

Do women know to-day to whom they owe this liberty?
And will the generous abnegation, the self-sacrifice of
the persons who have given them this liberty ever be
acknowledged?

Will people for the welfare of whom so much was
wanted and so much has been done, ever have hearts noble
enough to understand that such a work must not remain
unappreciated?
IN THE PRESS

The Life of Tennessee Claflin
NOW LADY COOK

Together with her ESSAYS, LECTURES
and other WORKS

Applications for above and those published can be obtained through your local NEWS-AGENT, BOOKSELLERS or

From M. F. DARWIN

241 West 37th Street
NEW YORK CITY

Dear Sir:
Please advise me of the works of Lady Cook (published) and when her LIFE and other WORKS will be ready.

Yours truly,

M. F. DARWIN, Esq.
care of Caulon Press
241 West 37th Street
New York City

Digitized by
Printed by Caulon Press, 241 W, 37th St., N. Y. City
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN