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EDITORIAL

## “THAT MUD BROUGHT ON THIS DUST.”

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**I**NDIGNATION over the conduct of the Washington police on Suffrage Day—when the women paraders were insulted and physically maltreated by a lot of white hoodlums, the police standing by and encouraging the disgraceful scene with laughter and even brutal ejaculations—has matured in a Senate investigation, before whom numerous witnesses are rehearsing the shocking details of the event.

No doubt of the guilt of the police. But were the police the really responsible factor in the affair? The answer is not far to seek.

The very next morning, the 4th of this month, as the House of Representatives was ventilating the affair—when Representative Hobson of Alabama was indignantly reporting a letter he received from a lady telling how her daughter was roughly and obscenely handled by a ruffian who climbed upon the float on which she stood—what was the observation with which Representative Hobson was interrupted? It was: “Her daughter ought to have been at home!” And where did the interruption come from? from the galleries, perchance? No. The interruption came from the floor of the House. And from whom did the interruption proceed? It proceeded from no less conspicuous and representative a member than Representative Mann, the Republican leader in the House, the representative, accordingly, of the then still incumbent in the White House.

This happened immediately after, did aught of significance happen immediately before Suffrage Day? Yes indeed.

Just before Suffrage Day, the marching suffragettes, at least a goodly number of them, visited Cardinal Gibbons in a body and were addressed by this “Prince of the Church.” There was not an offensive sentence or word in the address, ’tis true; yet, from beginning to end, the address was an offence. It was an obvious reprimand to the women for their suffrage posture and endeavors. The woman whose conduct

is unjustly dealt with, however gently, as improper is a woman insulted. Cardinal Gibbons' address to the suffragettes was an insult, perhaps all the sharper because of the velvet that cloaked the wounding claw.

That mud brought on this dust.

Of all the human props of the Political State, the police prop is the most menial. The soldier may commit iniquities; but when he does, as when he shot Ferrer to death, he does so under immediate orders from superiors whom he is bound to obey. The soldier is a blindly obeying tool—a menial he is not. The menial's character is to adapt himself, his views, hence, his conduct also, to the hand that feeds him. The menial reflects, he loves to reflect, his master's opinions. Such are the characteristics of the police, as a whole. It was this feature of the police that exhibited itself on Suffrage Day in Washington.

The Cardinal Gibbons-Taft-Mann concept of woman excludes from the field of decorum the woman who does not "stay at home." The sight of her suggests thoughts that may find different modes of expression—veiled reprimand, like Cardinal Gibbons'; feathered satire, like those Taft loved to shoot; ejaculations, such as Representative Mann indulged in; and downright obscenity of conduct, such as the hoodlums were guilty of on Suffrage Day. While these modes of expression seem radically different in degree only, not in kind; they proceed from the identical backward, medieval mentality, and they land under the identical category—insult; brutal, indecent insult to Woman.

From the mud of such mentality came on the dust of the indifference manifested by the Washington police, of their amusement at, of their even abetting the disgraceful performances of the Washington hoodlum.

Why investigate the menial police and not the masters whom the police adapted themselves to? Why "kick at" the dust and not at the mud—and dry up the latter quick as possible, by the abolition of a law-made sex inequality that breeds the Gibbons-Taft-Mann hoodlum concept of Woman?

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