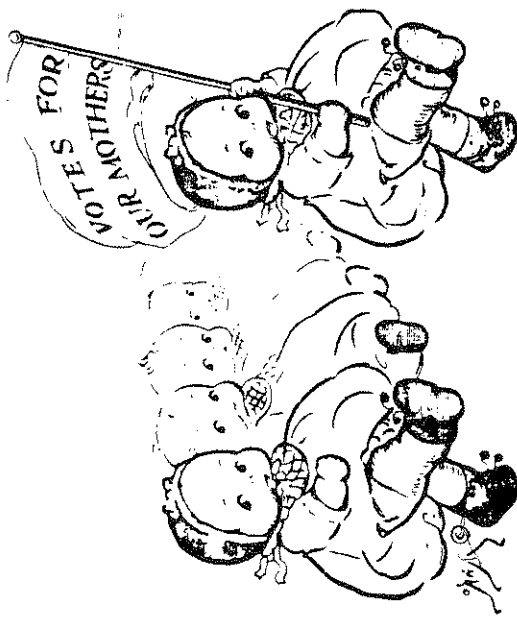


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This cartoon, published in the satirical magazine *Judge*, remarks on the foreign policy of President William Howard Taft. The cartoon is a play on the saying "the pen is mightier than the sword."



# GIVE MOTHER THE VOTE WE NEED IT



**OUR FOOD OUR HEALTH OUR PLAY  
OUR HOMES OUR SCHOOLS OUR WORK  
ARE RULED BY MEN'S VOTES**

Isn't it a funny thing  
That Father cannot see  
Why Mother ought to have a vote  
On how these things should be?

## THINK IT OVER

51,010 Teachers

72,261 Saleswomen  
and  
Clarks

50,000 Stenographers

7,362 Telephone Operators  
N.Y. City

12,877 Trained Nurses

371 College Presidents  
Professors

16,000 Waitresses

152,771 General Servants

6,509 Charwomen

22,309 Clothing Trades Workers

33,000 Book Keepers

100,000 Sewing Machine Workers

Woman's Place Is in the Home. We're Going Home. 1915



## 1. Exposing the Meat Packers (1906)

*In 1906 Upton Sinclair, the youthful and prolific socialist writer, published his novel The Jungle, a damning exposure of conditions in the Chicago meat-packing plants. Seeking to turn people to socialism, he succeeded in turning their stomachs. The uproar that followed publication of his novel caused President Roosevelt to initiate an official investigation, and the following sober report was hardly less shocking than The Jungle. It confirmed the essential truth of Sinclair's exposé, except for such lurid scenes as men falling into vats and emerging as lard. Which aspects of this official investigation revealed conditions most detrimental to the public health?*

... Meat scraps were also found being shoveled into receptacles from dirty floors, where they were left to lie until again shoveled into barrels or into machines for chopping. These floors, it must be noted, were in most cases damp and soggy, in dark, ill-ventilated rooms, and the employees in utter ignorance of cleanliness or danger to health expectorated at will upon them. In a word, we saw meat shoveled from filthy wooden floors, piled on tables rarely washed, pushed from room to room in rotten box carts, in all of which processes it was in the way of gathering dirt, splinters, floor filth, and the expectoration of tuberculous and other diseased workers.

Where comment was made to floor superintendents about these matters, it was always the reply that this meat would afterwards be cooked, and that this sterilization would prevent any danger from its use. Even this, it may be pointed out in passing, is not wholly true. A very considerable portion of the meat so handled is sent out as smoked products and in the form of sausages, which are prepared to be eaten without being cooked. . . .

As an extreme example of the entire disregard on the part of employees of any notion of cleanliness in handling dressed meat, we saw a hog that had just been killed, cleaned, washed, and started on its way to the cooling room fall from the sliding rail to a dirty wooden floor and slide part way into a filthy men's privy. It was picked up by two employees, placed upon a truck, carried into the cooling room and hung up with other carcasses, no effort being made to clean it. . . .

In one well-known establishment we came upon fresh meat being shoveled into barrels, and a regular proportion being added of stale scraps that had lain on a dirty floor in the corner of a room for some days previous. In another establishment, equally well known, a long table was noted covered with several hundred pounds of cooked scraps of beef and other meats. Some of these meat scraps were dry, leathery, and unfit to be eaten; and in the heap were found pieces of pigskin, and even some bits of rope strands and other rubbish. Inquiry evoked the frank admission from the man in charge that this was to be ground up and used in making "pot-  
ted ham."

All of these canned products bear labels, of which the following is a sample:

ABATTOIR NO.—  
THE CONTENTS OF THIS PACKAGE HAVE BEEN  
INSPECTED ACCORDING TO THE ACT OF  
CONGRESS OF MARCH 3, 1891.

*[The agitation and investigation inspired by Sinclair's The Jungle had much to do with bringing about the passage by Congress of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906.]*



## How the Other Half Lives

by Jacob Riis

*Jacob Riis, a Danish immigrant, worked for 12 years on the Lower East Side of New York for the New York Tribune. In 1890 he published How the Other Half Lives, a shocking glimpse of slum life, documenting the sights, sounds, and smells of poverty in New York tenements. (Printed in McDougal Littell, The Americans: In-Depth Resources, Unit 4, p. 47)*

Be a little careful, please! The hall is dark and you might stumble over the children pitching pennies back there. Not that it would hurt them; kicks and cuffs are their daily diet. They have little (5) else. Here where the hall turns and dives into utter darkness is a step, and another, another. A flight of stairs. You can feel your way, if you cannot see it. Close? Yes! What would you have? All the fresh air that ever enters these stairs comes from the (10) hall door that is forever slamming, and from the windows of dark bedrooms that in turn receive from the stairs their sole supply of the elements God meant to be free, but man deals out with such stingy hand. That was a woman filling her pail by the hydrant you (15) just bumped against. The sinks are in the hallway, that all the tenants may have access – and all be poisoned alike by their summer stench. Hear the pump squeak! It is the lullaby of tenement house babes. In summer, when a thousand thirsty throats (20) pant for a cooling drink in this block, it is worked in van. But the saloon, whose open door you passed in the hall, is always there. The smell of it has followed you up. Here is a door. Listen! That short hacking cough, that tiny, helpless wail – what do they (25) mean? They mean that the soil bow of a sign of recent birth you saw on the door downstairs will have another story to tell – a sadly familiar story – before the day is at an end. The child is dying with measles. With half a chance it might have lived; but it had (30) none. The dark bedroom killed it.

"It was took all of a suddint," says the mother, smoothing the throbbing little body with trembling hands. There is no unkindness in the rough voice of the man in the jumper, who sits by the (35) window grimly smoking a clay pipe, with the little life ebbing out in his sight, bitter as his words sound: "Hush, Mary! If we cannot keep the baby, need we complain, such as we?"

Such as we! What if the words ring in your (40) ears as we grope our way up the stairs and down from floor to floor, listening to the sounds behind the closed doors – some of quarrelling, come of coarse songs, more of profanity. They are true. When the summer heats come with their suffering they have (45) meaning more terrible than words can tell.

Come over here. Step carefully over this baby – it is a baby, spite of its rags and dirt – under these iron bridges called fire escapes, but loaded down, despite the incessant watchfulness of the firemen, with (50) broken household goods, with washtubs and barrels, over which no man could climb from a fire. This gap between dingy brick walls is the yard. That strip of smoke-filled sky up there is the heaven of these people. Do you wonder the name does not (55) attract them to the churches? That baby's parents live in the rear tenement here. She is at least as clean as the steps we are now climbing. There are plenty of houses with half a hundred such in. The tenement is much like the one in front we just left, (60) only fouler, closer, darker – we will not say more cheerless. The word is a mockery. A hundred thousand people lived in rear tenements in New York last year. Here is a room neater than the rest. The woman, a stout matron with hard lines of care in her (65) face, is at the washtub. "I try to keep the childer clean," she says, apologetically, but with a hopeless glance around. The spice of hot soapsuds is added to the air already tainted with the smell of boiling cabbage, of rags and uncleanness all about.





from "The Status of Woman"  
by Susan B. Anthony

*For more than 50 years, Susan B. Anthony worked for woman suffrage. As you read this excerpt from an article Anthony wrote in 1897, think about her assessment of women's status before and after the Seneca Falls Woman's Rights Convention.*

Fifty years ago woman in the United States was without a recognized individuality in any department of life. No provision was made in public or private schools for her education in anything beyond the rudimentary branches. An educated woman was a rarity and was gazed upon with something akin to awe. The women who were known in the world of letters, in the entire country, could be easily counted upon the ten fingers. . . .

Such was the helpless, dependent, fettered condition of woman when the first Woman's Rights Convention was called just forty-nine years ago, at Seneca Falls, N. Y., by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. . . .

From that little convention at Seneca Falls, with a following of a handful of women scattered through half-a-dozen different states, we have now the great National Association, with headquarters in New York City, and auxiliaries in almost every state in the Union. These state bodies are effecting a thorough system of county and local organizations for the purpose of securing legislation favorable to women, and especially to obtain amendments to their state constitutions. As evidence of the progress of public opinion, more than half of the legislatures in session during the past winter have discussed and voted upon bills for the enfranchisement of women, and in most of them they were adopted by one branch and lost by a very small majority in the other. The legislatures of Washington and South Dakota have submitted woman-suffrage amendments to their electors for 1898, and vigorous campaigns will be made in those states during the next two years.

For a quarter of a century Wyoming has stood as a conspicuous object lesson in woman suffrage, and is now reinforced by the three neighboring states of Colorado, Utah, and Idaho. With this central group, standing on the very crest of the Rocky Mountains, the spirit of justice and freedom for women cannot fail to descend upon all the Western and Northwestern states. No one who makes a careful study of

this question can help but believe that, in a very few years, all the states west of the Mississippi River will have enfranchised their women.

While the efforts of each state are concentrated upon its own legislature, all of the states combined in the national organization are directing their energies toward securing a Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The demands of this body have been received with respectful and encouraging attention from Congress. . . .

Until woman has obtained "that right protective of all other rights—the ballot," this agitation must still go on, absorbing the time and energy of our best and strongest women. Who can measure the advantages that would result if the magnificent abilities of these women could be devoted to the needs of government, society, home, instead of being consumed in the struggle to obtain their birthright of individual freedom? Until this be gained we can never know, we cannot even prophesy, the capacity and power of woman for the uplifting of humanity.

It may be delayed longer than we think; it may be here sooner than we expect; but the day will come when man will recognize woman as his peer, not only at the fireside but in the councils of the nation. Then, and not until then, will there be the perfect comradeship, the ideal union between the sexes that shall result in the highest development of the race. What this shall be we may not attempt to define, but this we know, that only good can come to the individual or to the nation through the rendering of exact justice.

*from Susan B. Anthony, "The Status of Woman, Past, Present, and Future," Arena, May 1897.*



## 5. The Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire Claims 146 Lives (1911)

*One of the most grisly catastrophes ever to befall American workers occurred at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company's New York City garment factory on March 25, 1911. Trapped in a burning building in which many exit doors had been locked to discourage workers from taking unauthorized breaks, 146 laborers, mostly young women, perished. The resulting outrage encouraged the enactment of more stringent building codes and fed the growing movement for laws regulating working conditions, especially for women. (For more on women's labor laws, see the documents in Chapter 32, section D.) In the account of the fire that follows, what conditions seemed most responsible for the high loss of life? How might they have been remedied? How much of the public outrage about the fire owed to the fact that so many of the dead were young women?*

At 4:35 o'clock yesterday afternoon fire springing from a source that may never be positively identified was discovered in the rear of the eighth floor of the ten-story building at the northwest corner of Washington Place and Greene Street, the first of three floors occupied as a factory of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.

At 11:30 o'clock Chief Croker made this statement:

"Everybody has been removed. The number taken out, which includes those who jumped from windows, is 141 . . ."

At 2 o'clock this morning Chief Croker estimated the total dead as one hundred and fifty-four. He said further, "I expect something of this kind to happen in these so-called fire-proof buildings, which are without adequate protection as far as fire-escapes are concerned."

More than a third of those who lost their lives did so in jumping from windows. The firemen who answered the first of the four alarms turned in found 30 bodies on the pavements of Washington Place and Greene Street. Almost all of these were girls, as were the great majority of them all. . . .

Inspection by Acting Superintendent of Buildings Ludwig will be made the basis for charges of criminal negligence on the ground that the fire-proof doors leading to one of the inclosed tower stairways were locked. . . ."

It was the most appalling horror since the Slocum disaster and the Iroquois Theater fire in Chicago. Every available ambulance in Manhattan was called upon to cart the dead to the morgue—bodies charred to unrecognizable blackness or reddened to a sickly hue—as was to be seen by shoulders or limbs protruding through flame-eaten clothing. Men and women, boys and girls were of the dead that littered the street; that is actually the condition—the streets were littered.

The fire began in the eighth story. The flames licked and shot their way up through the other two stories. All three floors were occupied by the Triangle Waist Company. The estimate of the number of employees at work is made by Chief Croker at about 1,000. The proprietors of the company say 700 men and girls were in their place. . . .

Before smoke or flame gave signs from the windows, the loss of life was fully under way. The first signs that persons in the street knew that these three top stories had turned into red furnaces in which human creatures were being caught and incinerated was when screaming men and women and boys and girls crowded out on the many window ledges and threw themselves into the streets far below.



They jumped with their clothing ablaze. The hair of some of the girls streamed up aflame as they leaped. Thud after thud sounded on the pavements. It is a ghastly fact that on both the Greene Street and Washington Place sides of the building there grew mounds of the dead and dying.

And the worst horror of all was that in this heap of the dead now and then there stirred a limb or sounded a moan.

Within the three flaming floors it was as frightful. There flames enveloped many so that they died instantly. When Fire Chief Croker could make his way into these three floors, he found sights that utterly staggered him, that sent him, a man used to viewing horrors, back and down into the street with quivering lips.

The floors were black with smoke. And then he saw as the smoke drifted away bodies burned to bare bones. There were skeletons bending over sewing machines.

The elevator boys saved hundreds. They each made twenty trips from the time of the alarm until twenty minutes later when they could do no more. Fire was streaming into the shaft, flames biting at the cables. They fled for their own lives.

Some, about seventy, chose a successful avenue of escape. They clambered up a ladder to the roof. A few remembered the fire escape. Many may have thought of it but only as they uttered cries of dismay.

Wretchedly inadequate was this fire escape—a lone ladder running down to a rear narrow court, which was smoke filled as the fire raged, one narrow door giving access to the ladder. By the score they fought and struggled and breathed fire and died trying to make that needle-eye road to self-preservation. . . .

Shivering at the chasm below them, scorched by the fire behind, there were some that still held positions on the window sills when the first squad of firemen arrived.

The nets were spread below with all promptness. Citizens were commandeered into service, as the firemen necessarily gave their attention to the one engine and hose of the force that first arrived.

The catapult force that the bodies gathered in the long plunges made the nets utterly without avail. Screaming girls and men, as they fell, tore the nets from the grasp of the holders, and the bodies struck the sidewalks and lay just as they fell. Some of the bodies ripped big holes through the life-nets. . . .

Concentrated, the fire burned within. The flames caught all the flimsy lace stuff and linens that go into the making of spring and summer shirtwaists and fed eagerly upon the rolls of silk.

The cutting room was laden with the stuff on long tables. The employees were toiling over such material at the rows and rows of machines. Sinisterly the spring day gave aid to the fire. Many of the window panes facing south and east were drawn down. Draughts had full play.

The experts say that the three floors must each have become a whirlpool of fire. Whichever way the entrapped creatures fled they met a curving sweep of flame. Many swooned and died. Others fought their way to the windows or the elevator or fell fighting for a chance at the fire escape, the single fire escape leading into the blind court that was to be reached from the upper floors by clambering over a window sill!

On all of the three floors, at a narrow window, a crowd met death trying to get out to that one slender fire escape ladder.

It was a fireproof building in which this enormous tragedy occurred. Save for the three stories of blackened windows at the top, you would scarcely have been able to tell where the fire had happened. The walls stood firmly. A thin tongue of flame now and then licked around a window sash. . . .