

## All the Presumptions Favor Woman Suffrage

The man who opposes the extension of suffrage to women on equal terms with men, has upon him the burden of proof to show why woman, who has lived up to every other responsibility, could not be expected to live up to the responsibility that rests upon the voter. Five undisputed facts, among many, may be mentioned, upon each of which rests a presumption in favor of woman's capacity for suffrage.

First—Man manifests his confidence in woman when he gives himself to her. From the time of his marriage she, more than anyone else, yes, more than all others, influences his happiness and his success. If man is willing to put his own happiness and success in the keeping of a woman it would seem to raise a presumption in favor of her capacity for suffrage, unless he regards the ballot as more important than himself, or more difficult to handle wisely.

Second—Man manifests his confidence in woman when the father turns over to the mother the physical, mental, and moral development of the children. If woman can safely be entrusted with the body and the mind and the soul of a child, does it not raise a presumption that she can be trusted with the ballot?

Third—The wife is the husband's partner in the finances of the family and—the more fully she is taken into partnership, the better, as a rule, are the family finances managed. If a man can trust his wife as a partner in family affairs, does it not raise a presumption that she is worthy to be trusted as his partner in politics?

Fourth—Most of the men who vote never have gone beyond the eighth grade of the common school, and therefore all that they have ever learned from books on the science of government they have learned from women teachers, since nearly all the teachers in the graded schools are women. Question—If women know enough to teach men all they ever know of the

science of government from books, do they not know enough to vote themselves?

Fifth—The test of a political theory is in experience under it when tried. Measured by this test, woman's suffrage is successful. No nation that has ever tried it has gone back to manhood monopoly of the ballot. No state that has ever adopted it has ever abandoned it. Why not? It is not everything that is tried in politics that succeeds on the first trial. Take the tariff for instance—it has been a matter of discussion for more than a century, and high tariff and the low tariff each had its ebb and flow. Whenever the tariff is raised there is always a party trying to lower it; whenever the tariff is lowered, there is always a party trying to raise it. Whether it is put high or put low, it will not stay put anywhere. It is a comfort to find something which, when you get it, you have it and do not have to fight to retain it. The suffrage revolution never turns backward. There is not only no return, but there is no agitation for a return.

If woman's suffrage is, as some claim to think, a menace to the home, why have not the women in suffrage states organized for the protection of the homes against this "menace"? When in all history have women failed to fight anything that they believed a menace to the home?

And what about the men in the suffrage states? Would they not be quick to advocate the abolition of woman's suffrage if, in practice, they found it a menace to the home? Why do they, after trial, support woman's suffrage? Will anyone say that these men lack intelligence to understand the effect of woman's suffrage? Or do they recognize it as a menace and lack the courage to oppose it?

The home is safe in the hands of woman, and the ballot increases her power to defend the home and to protect the children, her special care.

W. J. BRYAN.

## Three Good Things

Under the above heading one of the country newspapers (the name has been forgotten) contained the following editorial with reference to three subjects now attracting first importance:

"Edgar Howard, the democratic nominee for lieutenant-governor, is speaking to Nebraska audiences in a language which they understand, and about things in which every Nebraskan is vitally and intensely interested.

"Howard takes the position that the waters in the creeks and rivers of Nebraska belong to the whole people, and should not be alienated to the private profit of any person or corporation. He advocates legislation (a constitutional amendment, if necessary) which will enable the people to form districts and construct plants for the generation of electricity, so that the homes and barns of farmers may be lighted by electricity, as well as the homes and business houses in the towns and cities. Edgar Howard declares that competent civil engineers have told him that the waters in Nebraska creeks and rivers will, if properly harnessed, produce electric current at a cost so low that it will not be necessary or desirable to burn a pound of coal in this state, and that there would be sufficient of the current to heat and light every building in the state, turn all the machinery wheels in factory and on farms, and cook all the food for all the people. If any of the politicians have any doubt about the popularity of this effort to preserve to the whole people this precious Nebraska asset of regularly flowing waters in creeks and rivers, that doubt will be removed if they shall attend any of the public meetings which Edgar Howard may address and note the satisfaction with which the people hear his words.

"Another popular subject in the Howard speeches is the warehouse subject. For several years Edgar Howard has advocated a warehouse law, modeled upon the principle of the bank guarantee law. He contends that if we had been fortunate to have such a law on the books in Nebraska the growers of wheat could have saved more than a million dollars during the past sixty days. Thousands of Nebraska farmers hurried their wheat from the shock to the thresher and from the thresher to market, simply because they did not have any place to

store it. Because of this scarcity of storage many farmers were compelled to sell wheat just at a time when the big speculators wanted them to dispose of it, and at a price far below its actual worth. Howard believes his plan for a warehouse law will enable the farmer to hold his wheat until he gets ready to sell, and not always be compelled to sell when the grain speculators want him to sell. Howard does not claim any patent on his plan for such a warehouse system, although he is quite generally regarded as the father of the plan. But certain it is that the plan is very popular. At the close of his two speeches in this county many farmers waited to shake hands with the speaker and to tell him that they fully endorsed the plan.

"The third subject which Edgar Howard is making popular among Nebraska people is his proposed law to establish a maximum charge for 'long-distance' telephone messages in this state. He calls the present tolls nothing less than highway robbery. He wants the new maximum telephone toll law to be just like our present maximum telegraph toll law. A man can send a telegraph message anywhere in Nebraska for 25 cents. But the monster corporation which controls the toll telephone lines in this state demands a fee as high as \$2.50 and more for a three-minute telephone message between some towns. Howard proposes that the maximum telephone toll for a three-minute talk shall be limited by law. He says 25 cents may not be enough to enable the telephone company to pay present expenses, but he will insist that the rate come down as near to that sum as possible, and still allow the company to pay its telephone girls a minimum salary of fifty dollars a month." Howard says that present high prices make necessary a salary of at least fifty dollars a month for all telephone girls, because they can not buy proper food and clothes for less money. It was interesting to watch the big picnic crowd when Howard was talking about telephone robbery. Nearly every family in Nebraska has at some time or other been robbed by the big company which handles the long-distance telephone business, and every time the speaker would point out some of the meanest features of the telephone robbery you could see many heads nodding approval.

"These three things which Edgar Howard is preaching are the three live subjects in the present campaign. Neither the republican nor the democratic state platforms say anything about the legislation which Howard proposes.

Indeed he does not claim that either is a party measure. In his address here he extended an earnest invitation to our county legislative nominees, both democrats and republicans, to join him in advocating these things so much needed in Nebraska, and in our judgment all our legislative nominees in this senatorial district will soon be talking favorably about the legislation of which Edgar Howard is regarded as the original promoter."

### A SUGGESTION

The following is a copy of a letter that has been sent to the democratic national committee by a prominent democrat of Kansas:

Kingman, Kansas, Aug. 23, 1916.

The Democratic National Committee,  
New York, 30 East 42nd St.

Gentlemen:

I have just perused the last issue of The Commoner, Mr. Bryan's monthly, and I beg to commend it to the consideration of the National committee.

I believe a few hundred thousand of this edition, or, a similar special edition distributed among the voters in a few of the doubtful states of the middle west, would do more good than any other literature that could be sent out. I handed my copy of The Commoner to a voter in Kingman, and it has been going the rounds for several days. I have heard more favorable comments from various parties as a result of reading this issue than from any other source.

Whatever opinion the east may entertain toward Mr. Bryan, we of the middle west know him to be the greatest power for democracy than any other in the nation.

I am sure satisfactory arrangements can be made with the publishers for a few hundred thousand copies of The Commoner as reasonable as for other literature.

I am personally very much interested in the outcome of the election this fall, and I know that people will read this paper if they get hold of it, for I have tried the experiment out fully.

I would be pleased and honored to hear from the committee.

Comptroller John Skelton Williams is a late target for the republican attack. The letter sent out from national headquarters says that "Williams has used his power as comptroller to persecute the national banks, almost ruining some of them, and in this course he has continuously enjoyed the backing of McAdoo and Wilson." The national bankers' idea of persecution is to make them obey the spirit as well as the letter of the law, and this policy of Mr. Williams is so decided a change from the republican way that it is unpalatable. It is safe to predict that Mr. Williams will not step out of office into the presidency of some great metropolitan bank, the usual procedure of his republican predecessors.

Senator Beveridge, when a member of the United States senate, fought in vain for sufficient aid to get a child labor bill passed. He obtained neither help nor sympathy from his republican colleagues or the republican president. This failure to enlist his party support was one of the reasons why the senator left the republicans and joined the progressives. A democratic senate, through timely aid given by President Wilson, has passed the bill. Do these facts constitute any appeal to the former senator?

A stock speculator with sufficient securities in his hands has been able for years to secure from the banks at a low rate of interest the money with which to conduct his gambling. It remained for the democratic administration to open for the honorable operations of the farmers of the country the vast reservoir of cash and credit that republicans barred them from for years.

### THE PENITENTIARY ARGUMENT

The voter needs, above all other things, intelligence and morality; do women lack either? Examine the records of the penitentiaries and you will find that the men are in an overwhelming majority in every penitentiary of the land. More than that—you will not find a penitentiary in the civilized world where women are in the majority. But go to church, and you will find women in the majority there.

Here are the facts, how do you explain them? If women have sense enough to keep out of the penitentiary and morality enough to go to church—who will say that women lack the intelligence and morality necessary to use the ballot wisely?

W. J. BRYAN.