

sign minister at a public meeting held in honor of Premier Venizelos at the Mansion House. The question of the freedom of the seas was among those raised at the outset by our American allies. The formula is an ambiguous one, capable of many inconsistent interpretations, and I doubt whether it will be seriously contended that there is no room for profitable discussion, that an attempt should be made to bring about the kind of pact suggested in section 5, and, I believe, common ground to all the belligerents, and probably to all the neutral powers.

"If it be once established that there are no insurmountable difficulties in the way of agreement upon these points, the political horizon might perhaps be scanned with better hope by those who pray, but can at this moment hardly venture to expect, that the new year may bring us a lasting and honorable peace."

## The Great Suffrage Victory

[From The Philadelphia North American.]

Nearly three-quarters of a century ago a small group of American women, in convention assembled, put on record the declaration that this nation could not fulfill its professions of being democratic until it granted to women equal political rights with men.

Although the proponents of this doctrine were persons of prominence in intellectual circles, their utterance was received with derision. Some "advanced" writers and students of public affairs supported their contention, and the cause won the advocacy of such leaders of thought as John Stuart Mill; but it made no concrete gains until 1869, when full suffrage was granted to women in Wyoming, and it was not until the last decade of the nineteenth century that three other states—Colorado, Utah and Idaho—conferred the same right.

All these were sparsely settled regions, remote from the populous and more highly civilized parts of the country. This circumstance led the people of the east to frame an explanation, or an excuse, for the drastic innovation. It was said that in the far west, where the conditions of life were primitive and its exactions rigorous, women naturally developed some of the rugged characteristics of the pioneer; they lost the soft charms of helpless femininity, became masculine in their attributes and demands, and acquired the electoral right as a consequence of their peculiar status.

Another popular idea, not without some foundation, perhaps, was that equal suffrage had been adopted as a means of state advertising, devised by ingenious promoters and land boomers to attract new population. But most easterners dismissed the phenomenon as a product of the untutored, erratic habits of thought prevailing in the far west.

Most of us can remember when a man from a suffrage state was regarded in the sophisticated east with a sort of mild curiosity. If he proved, as he usually did, to be normal in his conduct and mental processes, he was classified as an exception, confirming the belief as to the abnormal character of his fellows "back home." A woman from a suffrage state, on the other hand, was considered in much the same light as would have been a visitor from Mars; even within recent years she was likely to be interviewed, for the benefit of an interested public, and asked to tell candidly how it felt to have the right to vote.

This impression that equal suffrage was an evidence of the "wild and woolly" character of the people adopting it persisted until a short time ago, and was not wholly eradicated when California, which was considered more highly developed than some other distant states, enfranchised its women. Despite the admissions of disapproving newspapers and the almost universal opinion of statesmen that the granting of ballot rights to women was only a matter of time, there remained a deep and widespread belief that the change would become general only when the suffrage states, which were wildernesses when the movement began, became collectively powerful enough to impose their radical views upon the "conservative" regions of New England, the central states and the middle west.

That politically backward Pennsylvania defeated the proposition on a referendum two years ago by only 55,000 votes out of a total of a million did not change the conviction that suf-

frage was a "prairie" issue. When Massachusetts, Maine, New Jersey and New York went the same way, the result seemed a reflection of the popular judgment, as expressed at the time by a leading New York newspaper:

"Only one state east of the Mississippi has woman suffrage, limited, and that by no popular mandate. Most of the suffrage states in population would not make a sizable city. The east, the great states of the east—there is the suffragists' difficult field of labor. So long as the woman suffrage territory consists, for the most part, of thinly settled or radical western states, the belief or prejudice that it is unsuited to eastern conditions will not be shaken."

Only when the returns began to come from New York a week ago last Tuesday night did multitudes of observers begin to comprehend that the suffrage movement was something more than a tide from the west beating against the breakwater of eastern conservatism. Both city and state had given their verdict for the women, and equal suffrage had become overnight a fact where it had been regarded as a distant if not impossible dream. The result was a stunning surprise. Although an intelligent and vigorous campaign had been waged by the suffragists, this undertaking was viewed elsewhere as merely one of the annual demonstrations of activity. Even the practical political strategists of the state were oblivious of the mighty sweep of sentiment that was to carry the cause to victory.

It will no longer be possible for rational minds to persuade themselves that the demand for equal suffrage is a sectional question or a product of the thought of imperfectly developed communities. For they face the fact that the movement has captured the citadel of conservatism and reaction—that more than 2,000,000 women have been enfranchised in a state where the political machines have never given the cause a respectful hearing, where it seemed to be antagonized by public sentiment, and where the political influence of liquor has been powerful enough to make both the great parties regard it as a natural enemy.

While the result was a tribute to the courage, ability and resourcefulness of the campaigners, and a striking vindication for the organization which seeks to gain suffrage by states, the magnitude of the victory surprised the most sanguine. That at no remote time equal suffrage would prevail throughout the nation has long been a foregone conclusion; but the addition of New York to the group of suffrage state will immeasurably hasten that result.

While the methods which the women have employed with such marked success in the past will no doubt be used in the future, the character of the contest will be changed in that it will have a political significance which it never

had heretofore. At the next presidential election, even if no more states fall in line, 7,000,000 women will have the right to vote for president. In every state which has adopted the system they hold the balance of power between the two old parties; and in such close states as Washington, Oregon and Colorado a small proportion of the women's vote will decide. Furthermore, the last 2,000,000 women enfranchised will cast their ballots in New York, which is considered a pivotal state in national elections, which has forty-three members in the house of representatives, sends ninety delegates to each of the national conventions and casts forty-five votes in the electoral college.

Henceforth it will not be so necessary for the women to appeal to the politicians; the politicians will be busy trying to appeal to the women. A majority of the country's statesmen have put themselves on record for equal suffrage; but hitherto the practical politician has been indifferent or incredulous to the movement. He will awake now to the fact that he must exert himself to invite the woman vote just as he has schemed to attract the "old soldier" vote, the "foreign" vote and the "church" vote. And, of course, a suffrage victory in no other state, in no two states, would make such an impression upon the practical politician as the result in New York.

Not only statesmen and political leaders, but the national administration, will be found taking a more active interest in the movement. Five cabinet members indorsed it in the recent campaign. The sweep of sentiment has had a noticeable effect upon President Wilson; last year he was charged with being inimical to the cause, but this year it had his open support in New York, a circumstance which undoubtedly influenced the result.

The administration plays politics every day in the year, and will not overlook any opportunity to ingratiate itself with the swiftly growing army of women voters. And the republicans will not permit their opponents to capture this strength by default; they will urge upon the women that the republican west was long a stronghold of suffrage, while the demand has been obstinately opposed in the democratic south.

Five years ago, when the Progressive national convention declared that equal suffrage was an essential factor in the establishment of true democracy, the action was assailed as radical, and even irrational. Yet in the short interval the cause has advanced to a position where it no longer has to plead for, but commands, the attention and support of the old parties.

It is probable that a federal constitutional amendment will be submitted by congress to the states before the next presidential election. But even if this should not be done, nothing is more certain than that both parties in their platforms will declare for equal suffrage. Thus swiftly and peaceably do revolutions accomplish themselves in these days.

If world affairs were normal, early and complete triumph of the movement would be assured. But the great war has given to women an unprecedented opportunity to which they have gloriously risen; they have taken their places along with men in virtually every activity of life, and have demonstrated their fitness, their indispensable capacity, for carrying on the work of civilization and aiding in the defense of human liberty. In the face of what they have done and are doing it is impossible any longer to interpose against their demand for political justice the outworn arguments of past days.

But apart from this consideration, the war has awakened and intensified the spirit of democracy and brought to the peoples of the earth a realization of its high significance. It has demonstrated to the American people and to all mankind the truth of the declaration of the suffrage pioneers three-quarters of a century ago—that the political system which disfranchises women defies the principles of democratic government.

Congress is again in session and apparently capable of doing business. One of the big jobs it has on hand is that of seeing that the broadest shoulders bear the greater burden of the war. There are hundreds of business men and manufacturers who are deliberately and designedly utilizing the war for the purposes of adding to their wealth. The time to show effective resentment against men who coin money out of the blood and tears of their fellow-countrymen is before they make the money.

### PUTTING IT UP TO UNCLE SAM



"I've done my best to raise it. Will you put an end to liquor-making and conserve this grain?" —From The American Issue.