

Votes for Women: Why and Why Not?

power in their behalf would be immensely weakened. No one will fear a President except those whom he can make fear the elections.

"We singularly believe our own principles in seeking to determine by fixed constitutional provision what the people shall determine themselves and are perfectly competent to determine for themselves. We cast a doubt upon the whole theory of popular government. I believe that we should fatally embarrass ourselves if we made the constitutional change proposed. If we want our Presidents to fight our battles for us we should give them the means, the legitimate means, the means their opponents will always have. Strip them of everything else but the right of appeal to the people, but leave them that; suffer them to be leaders; absolutely prevent them from being bosses. We should otherwise appear to be going in two opposite directions. We are seeking in every way to extend the power of the people and seek to bind them hand and foot by rigid constitutional provision. My own mind is not agile enough to go both ways.

"I am very well aware that my position on this question will be misconstrued, but that is a matter of perfect indifference to me. The truth is much more important than my reputation for modesty and lack of personal ambition. My reputation will take care of itself, but constitutional questions and questions of policy will not take care of themselves without frank and fearless discussions. I am not speaking for my own re-election. I am speaking to redeem my promise that I would say what I really think on every public question and take my chances in the court of public opinion. Again thanking you for your courtesy and consideration, etc."
(Signed) "WOODROW WILSON."

He regards a limitation of TWO terms as an evidence of distrust of the people — ("Put the present customary limitation of the two terms into the constitution IF YOU DON'T TRUST THE PEOPLE to take care of themselves, etc.")

As he says: "We singularly believe our own principles in seeking to determine by fixed constitutional provision what the people shall determine themselves and are perfectly competent to determine for themselves."

Without at this time discussing the merits of the question raised, attention is called to the fact that President's logic, if accepted, abolishes the two-term precedent and leaves a president to aspire to any number of terms.

W. J. BRYAN.

The referendum has been receiving some notable recruits during the last few months. Several senators who were vitriolic in past years in their denunciation of that method of enforcing the public will have been talking in favor of a referendum on the league of nations. As these are few in number, however, a much cheaper and just as effective way would be for the senators to resign and then run for re-election on the platform of the league of nations, no organized effort to maintain the peace of the world, after it has once been secured.



"Now See What You've Done To Me! You Promised Me the World and Look What I Get!"
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— Chicago Tribune.

[By Chief Justice Walter Clark of North Carolina. Reprinted from the Wilmington Dispatch.]

Raleigh, N. C., Feb. 22, 1919.—In reply to your request that I should give some statement of the arguments for and against suffrage, I cannot refuse to give a "reason for the faith which is in me." (I Petter III, 15.) Still it would seem that a measure for which Woodrow Wilson has pleaded, and the passage of which through the house of representatives he procured and has twice appealed to the senate to enact—a cause for which Theodore Roosevelt and William J. Bryan have stood for years—should need no advocate.

It is a plank in the platforms of each of the five national parties. Not only President Wilson, but the vice-president and all the cabinet, two-thirds of the house of representatives and two-thirds of the senate (lacking only one vote) have given it their support. Upon one democratic senator, whoever he may be, the responsibility rests of jeopardizing the next presidential election.

Last November, Michigan, South Dakota, and Oklahoma conferred full suffrage upon their women, making fifteen states in all in which the women have equal suffrage in all matters with men. In the last ten days Indiana, Vermont, and Wisconsin have conferred presidential suffrage upon their women making nine states, including Texas and Arkansas, where women vote in all primaries. Thus in twenty-four states—just one-half the states, and giving nearly one-half the electoral vote—the women will cast half the votes for president in November of next year.

What party can go into the national contest with that handicap against it, besides the influence and the power of women in the other twenty-four states in a majority of which the women already vote in school and municipal elections. In the next thirty days other states will be sure to be added to the number of those in which the women have presidential and municipal suffrage.

When the democratic convention met at St. Louis in 1916 Mr. Wilson, who is more far-sighted than some of his followers, telegraphed Senator Walsh that it was "essential to our success that we adopt a plank in the platform endorsing woman suffrage." This was read to the convention and the democratic party pledged itself to suffrage by a vote 7 to 1. Yet at that time there were only twelve states in which the women could vote for president. Today there are twenty-four, and more will soon be added.

Hon. W. J. Bryan, in a speech at Raleigh soon after the presidential election, stated that, knowing that the suffrage states were the pivots on which the contest between Mr. Wilson and Judge Hughes would hang, he spent his time in canvassing those states and stressing the fact that Mr. Wilson had gone to New Jersey and voted for suffrage, but Judge Hughes had not gone to New York and done the same; that Mr. Wilson had sent the telegram to St. Louis demanding that the suffrage plank should be put in the democratic platform, and that Judge Hughes had said nothing until after the republican convention had endorsed suffrage. He added that upon this plea Mr. Wilson had carried ten of the suffrage states, and thereby been elected. The election returns show that the ratio of increase in the democratic votes was greater in the suffrage states than in any others, and verified Mr. Bryan's statement. By the pledge in the party platforms of both parties their good faith was pledged to suffrage, and on the democratic side there was gratitude due for the election of Mr. Wilson. How has that good faith and that gratitude been shown?

It is proper to notice the two excuses given (for they are not reasons) for this violation of the party pledge and of the ingratitude shown by the defeat of suffrage by men who have been the recipients of the patronage obtained by Mr. Wilson's election, but who have disregarded his pleas for suffrage and his warnings of disaster which would follow had faith in keeping the promises upon which the party has won.

The first excuse is "state's rights!" This was effectually answered by the brilliant young senator from South Carolina, Mr. Pollock, who, in casting his vote for suffrage in the senate, called attention to the fact that when the thirteen states formed the constitution at Phila-

delphia there was guaranteed to the states the right to amend that constitution upon the votes of three-fourths of the states, the sole reservation being that no state should be deprived of its equal representation in the senate. Senator Pollock well observed that to deny this right to them was a denial of state's rights, guaranteed by the constitution.

Nineteen of the twenty-one democratic senators who voted on the 10th of February, 1919, against permitting the state legislatures to express their wishes on the suffrage amendment, as guaranteed by the constitution, were from the southern states. But fifteen of these men were certainly not "state's rights" men in the sense that they were opposed to interfering in a matter far more within the local police powers, for fifteen of these nineteen senators voted for the prohibition amendment, which forced Connecticut to close her bar rooms and drive out her liquor sellers, though that state distinctly refused to ratify the Prohibition amendment.

There have been eighteen amendments to the United States constitution; why not have the nineteenth? But it is alleged that there can be no federal provision as to suffrage. Who says so? Certainly the constitution does not. For more than fifty years every man in this or any other state who has registered or voted or held office, including the senators themselves, have taken a solemn oath "to support and maintain" the constitution, which contains the Fifteenth amendment forbidding discrimination in suffrage on account of race. Why not then one forbidding discrimination on account of sex? If the federal government has jurisdiction to amend as to one it has to the other.

The very senators who refused to let the state legislatures vote on equal suffrage are drawing half their salaries and perquisites from taxes on the property and the incomes of women. They thus denied the fundamental principle on which we fought the American revolution—"No taxation without representation."

The second excuse given against submitting the suffrage amendment to the several states is the old cry always used to thwart any progressive measure in the south of "Nigger!" In no case, however, has that cry been more irrelevant and more illogical than in this. There is no connection whatever between the two. The logic is like the statement, "The little negro boys tie the ostrich's legs to the cocoanut tree, and that accounts for the milk in the cocoanut." Indeed the "vote for women" is the only sure guarantee of white supremacy. According to the census bureau at Washington, there are in North Carolina at present about 70 adult white men to 30 negroes—a majority of 40. On the admission of women to the vote these figures will be doubled, of course, and there will be 140 white men and women entitled to the vote as against 60 negro men and women—a white majority of 80—just double.

The census reports as estimated for the present year show that in North Carolina there are 53,000 more white women who will be voters and above all the negro men and women put together! Besides, whatever efficiency the "grandfather clause" has in disfranchising illiterate negro men will equally apply to illiterate negro women. The Suffrage amendment will not empower women to vote in any state, but merely provides that there shall be no discrimination in suffrage on account of sex, and hence women will be admitted to the vote on the same terms as men, and if illiterate negro men cannot vote, neither can illiterate negro women.

Passing by the fictitious terrors of state's rights and negro supremacy, we should mention the causes of the opposition. These are financial, largely. The fight against suffrage for women has been financed and organized and kept on foot for years by the liquor interests. This has been shown by many legal and legislative investigations and by proofs too well known to be detailed. The brewers and distillers, the bar-room keepers and the blockaders all know that the vote of the women would be against their interests. While we have prohibition in North Carolina, there is a large element who are making profit out of its violation, and too many officials who are lax in the enforcement of the law. These know well that if the

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