

## Welcome, Women

The Commoner extends a most cordial welcome to the women of the Nation who, by the ratification of the Nineteenth amendment, now share with men the responsibilities of the government whose burdens they have always shared with man even when they had no voice in the making of the laws. Many women have desired woman's suffrage because they felt that they were being denied an important political right; many have favored equal suffrage because they thought they could use the ballot for the better safeguarding of the home. Some have opposed suffrage because they thought it unnecessary, some because they did not care to assume new duties and responsibilities, some because they feared that the use of the ballot would render woman less womanly. But whatever reasons may have impelled those who worked for suffrage and whatever reasons may have influenced those who opposed it, suffrage is here and the responsibility must be met. There is no doubt that, whether gladly or reluctantly, the women of the nation will rise to this responsibility as they have to all others and from now on every issue will feel the touch of woman's hand and be affected by woman's conscience.

The result cannot fail to be good. The ethical standards are rising and moral problems are more and more entering the arena of politics. Just now woman's chief interest will center in two questions, the liquor question and war. Both alcohol and war are enemies of the home—they rob the fireside and fatten the graveyard. Woman may be expected to cast her powerful influence against any reopening of the saloon question. Her prayers and tears are too fresh in her memory to permit her to countenance any tampering with this settled question. The saloon is an outlaw and beverage alcohol a fugitive from justice. The politician who keeps company with the wets or gives them any encouragement is doomed. The women know that any increase in the alcoholic per cent of beverages would be a backward step; therefore, regardless of party, they will favor the dry candidate as against the wet, and as between two dry candidates, they will support the driest one. Just as long as there is organized opposition to bone dry prohibition the women will be organized on the dry side.

Women are practical; they will take no chances. Knowing that it is impossible to learn in advance what the result will be in other states and districts, they will see to it that in their state and in their district senatorial and congressional candidates will be pledged before the election to open, outspoken and persistent advocacy of prohibition as the permanent policy of the country and against any increase in the alcoholic content of permitted beverages and against any other weakening of the present enforcement law. They will not be content with a congress that is dry by a mere majority vote; they will insist on the next congress being like this congress, more than two-thirds dry so that it can pass any needed dry laws over a president's veto if that be necessary. And the women, with their high sense of honor, will have no hesitation in demanding the impeachment and removal of any wet president who, by failure to enforce the prohibition law, violates his oath of office.

Women are the enemies of war; the law abolishing duelling would have been enacted much sooner if woman had been permitted to substitute her true sense of honor for the false standard of honor that countenanced duelling. Woman will insist that international disputes shall be settled by reason instead of force. The mercenary reasons that lead many men to support militarism will not influence the wives and mothers; they will not weigh commercial advantages against the blood of their sons and husbands.

Seeing that a state of war is prolonged by an absurd constitutional provision that makes it harder for our Government to end a war than to enter it, they will demand and quickly secure a constitutional amendment enabling a majority to ratify a treaty.

The women will also oppose universal compulsory military training and they demand a referendum on war so that the Nation cannot be rushed into conflict until those are heard from who have to furnish the blood and make the sacrifices war requires.

But besides these issues that appeal with

special force to women there are other issues upon which their judgement will have great value. Having to audit the family bills they have learned economy and will demand in government the same rigid suppression of extravagance that has been necessary in the average home; the public official who stands for waste in appropriation and carelessness in the handling of public money will be retired.

And the profiteer may well tremble for his fate when the women start upon his trail. They will also insist upon a reduction of taxation.

Each year brings its problems. As we rise to greater heights we have a clearer vision and a farther sight and we shall behold new opportunities for progress. Lincoln appealed to his hearers at Gettysburg to consecrate themselves to the "unfinished" tasks. Civilization presents an unfolding view; each generation does its part and then turns the work over to those who follow. If we may describe civilization as cloth we may expect the patterns to be henceforth more beautiful and the work to approach more nearly to perfection with men and women forming the web and woof. Hail to our partners—success to the joint product of their brains and hearts.

W. J. BRYAN.

### THE PRESIDENT'S PART IN SUFFRAGE

In the distribution of credit for the suffrage victory, President Wilson must not be overlooked. He was the first president to declare for equal suffrage. It will be remembered that he went down to New Jersey and cast his vote on the women's side when the question was at issue in his state, and he announced before he voted that he was going down there to vote for suffrage. It was his influence that secured a declaration for suffrage in the last Democratic national platform although at that time the party favored state action rather than action by the federal government. Later when the national amendment came before congress, he came out in favor of the federal amendment, and since that time he has thrown his influence on the side of submission and ratification wherever the question became an issue. He appealed to the Democratic senate to vote for submission; he wired to the Democratic members of legislatures where ratification was in doubt. He cabled from Paris to the Democrats of Texas when the suffrage amendment was before the voters a year ago last spring.

Now that the victory has come and the voice of thanksgiving is heard throughout the land, his faithful and persistent efforts should not be forgotten. He was not only wholeheartedly devoted to the cause of suffrage but he rendered it material aid in every crisis; no one was more steadfast or helpful to the cause.

W. J. BRYAN.

### SUFFRAGE CONGRATULATIONS

Lincoln, Neb., Aug. 27, 1920.

Miss Anna Gordon, W. C. T. U., Evanston, Ill.—My dear Miss Gordon: In this hour of rejoicing, when millions are happy over the triumph of the Suffrage amendment, I do not forget the pioneer work done by those who organized the great movement which you now so ably direct. The women who presided at the birth of The Woman's Christian Temperance union wisely foresaw that the women, the natural guardians of the home, could best be trusted to guard the home against every harmful influence and that they needed the ballot to properly protect their loved ones. Their judgment is vindicated by the almost simultaneous triumph of these two great reforms, each a support to the other. The way is now clear for further steps in advance along the line the W. C. T. U. has followed. Mrs. Bryan joins me in congratulations upon the invaluable assistance that your organization has given to both Prohibition and Suffrage, and in good wishes for the success of its efforts in the future.

W. J. BRYAN.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, American Woman's Suffrage Ass'n., New York City: Accept our hearty congratulations upon the great victory won for the suffrage amendment under your splendid leadership. I am sure that the women of the land will by the wise use of the ballot hasten the triumph of every righteous cause and justify the labors of all who have contributed to this epoch-making reform. You and your co-workers have justly earned the joy that now so abundantly rewards your patient and unselfish efforts.

MR. & MRS. WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN.

## Progressiveness in the South

Two recent events indicate that progressiveness is growing in the south, viz., Senator Underwood's narrow escape from defeat in Alabama and the rout of ex-Senator Bailey in Texas. Senator Underwood is the leader of the reactionary Democrats of the senate. He opposed prohibition in state and nation and was prominent in the fight against woman's suffrage in the senate and in Alabama. His majority of some 40,000 was cut down to less than 2,000 last May. It was so close a shave that he immediately let it be known at Washington that he regarded the prohibition question as settled and would support such measures as the friends of prohibition thought necessary for its enforcement. His fight against woman's suffrage continued until Tennessee became the thirty-sixth state to ratify, and he will no doubt bow to the inevitable and with as good grace as possible accept woman as man's co-laborer in the political vineyard. Reference is made to his experience to illustrate the growing sentiment in the south against the reactionary tendencies for which Senator Underwood has stood.

In Texas the victory is even more complete. Senator Bailey has been one of the national leaders of the fight against prohibition and one of the most unrelenting opponents of woman's suffrage. With the frankness that characterizes his attitude on public questions, he attacked both prohibition and woman's suffrage in his gubernatorial campaign. While other things were included, and doubtless played a large part, still his overthrow by such a decided majority indicates that prohibition has been accepted as a finality in Texas and that woman's suffrage no longer frightens the voters.

Mr. Bailey is one of the most powerful public speakers in the nation, and he threw all his energy into the effort to reinstate himself and his policies in the Lone Star state. When he failed, reactionism met its Waterloo and Candidate Neff, who led the forces of reform, has made himself conspicuous by so complete a victory in such a hard-fought battle.

Let the work go on. A similar fight is necessary in other southern states, and victory will be made easier by woman's advent into politics. The progressive forces having routed the saloon, and, having been re-enforced by the women, can now proceed to capture the remaining strongholds of the enemy. The corporations still control the Democratic machinery in some of the southern states—railroad corporations and their allies which are found in all the centers where big business exerts a political influence.

The Democratic party is the party of the progressives of the nation; the reactionaries may capture it occasionally and hold it for a time but the Democratic masses are in earnest and will assert themselves. The elections in Alabama and Texas give encouragement.

W. J. BRYAN.

### LITTLE TURNING POINTS

Mrs. Burns, the mother of the legislator whose vote decided the action of Tennessee, the thirty-sixth state, in favor of the suffrage amendment is quoted as saying:

"I had no idea that my cheering letter to Harry would prove of such importance. In a moment of leisure, between household tasks, I sat down on that little chair, on the front porch, and penned the few lines to him. I did not know how he was going to vote, but was keenly interested in his position, and had been watching the papers closely, hoping and praying that he would vote 'aye.' Somehow I thought he would vote for it, although he never told me what he intended to do.

"The first news I received of his vote was from him, when he called me over the long-distance telephone and announced what he had done. This was shortly after the House had acted. He said that his vote had decided the issue. That gave me great joy.

"I am sure that no man in the legislature was better posted on suffrage than Harry. He is a great reader of books and current literature, and takes peculiar interest in questions before the public."

When the last man was needed he was there and a mother was there also, advising wisely.