

ARGUMENT

in favor of

EQUAL SUFFRAGE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

OFFICIAL BALLOT NUMBERS

For 302

Against .. 303

Issued by

OREGON EQUAL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION.

WHAT EQUAL SUFFRAGE MEANS.

A government of men and women by men and women, instead of a government of men and women by men alone—that is what equal suffrage means. Could anything be more fair, more reasonable, more just? "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none" is the principle which must be at the foundation of a just system of government. Whether suffrage be a right or a privilege, therefore, it belongs to women equally with men, in a true republic.

In the establishment of the first permanent colonies on the hostile shore of an alien land, which marked the beginning of this nation; in the conquering, two centuries later, of the great West and in its transformation from an unbroken wilderness into great and powerful states, women have shared equally with men in the labor, equally endured the hardships, equally faced the dangers. The principles of justice and fair play demand that they share equally with men in controlling the destinies of the nation which they have helped to create. Long ago Abraham Lincoln said, "I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens, by no means excluding women."

THE HOME AND THE GOVERNMENT.

The questions which are settled at the ballot box are questions which concern every home, and they are not merely questions of banking and currency and tariff. Pure food, pure water, pure milk, clean streets, proper protection against disease, proper protection of the rights of children, good schools, good influences and surroundings in which to bring up children—all these are questions of government, all these specially concern women, and all these are settled through the ballot box. While banking and currency and tariff and other commercial questions specially touch man's side of life and need his brain and his interest and his vote for their solution, these other questions specially touch woman's side of life and need her brain and her interest and her vote for their best solution. The state is but the home on a larger scale. It is a one-sided, imperfect home which has no woman in it, and it of necessity must be a one-sided, imperfect state which shuts women out from participation in its affairs. The interests which men specially care for in the individual home are well cared for in the state; the interests which women specially care for in the individual home are neglected in the state.

We lead the world in manufacturing, but 15 per cent. of the food we eat is adulterated; we have a great navy and are ready to appropriate untold millions for a canal to aid commerce, but the census of 1900 showed that 10.7 per cent. of our population could not read or write, and in our great cities thousands of children are every year turned away from the schools because there are neither seats nor teachers for them. If all the interests of life are to be well cared for, women must stand side by side with men in the larger home of the state as now they stand side by side with men in the smaller home of the household.

THE WAGE-EARNER'S NEED OF THE BALLOT.

The revolution in industry which has been brought about by the use of machinery has compelled large numbers of women to go out from their homes to work in factories—not to take men's work but to do work which from the beginning has been done by women, work formerly done by hand at home, but which now must be done in the factory by the aid of machinery. Formerly, all spinning, weaving, knitting, making of soap and cheese, and innumerable other things were done at home by women. Now they are done in factories, and women, forced to earn a living, have followed their work from home to factory, to find much of their work taken by men, yet much still left for themselves, so that, according to the 1900 census, there were 5,319,912 women wage-earners in the United States, over 4,000,000 of them engaged in occupations other than domestic service. These women work side by side with men, at the same kind of work, in the same factories, for the same employers. The men with whom they work are not their fathers or brothers, ready to protect them, but are their rivals and competitors, each seeking advantage for himself. If women are to be protected, they must protect themselves. Because they do not possess the power of the ballot which men possess, they are forced to accept conditions which men cannot be forced to accept, and everywhere they are paid but one-third or one-half or some other fraction of the wages paid to men for similar work. Being competitors of men, they help to drag down wages and conditions for men too. Never until the fundamental law of our states and of our nation ceases to place women politically with the idiot and the criminal, the other disfranchised citizens, never until women are lifted up to the political level of sane, law-abiding men, will they be recognized as equals in industrial life. Never until women have, through the ballot, the power to affect economic conditions, will they be properly protected, and never will men be free from the evils which inevitably grow out of the competition of political inferiors, a fact recognized by the American Federation of Labor, which has over and over again declared for equal suffrage as a "measure of justice to women" and "as a necessary step toward insuring and raising the scale of wages for all."

RESULTS OF EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

Equal suffrage is no longer merely a theory. It is a fact. Women vote on municipal questions in England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Norway and Sweden; they have equal political rights with men in New Zealand, the Isle of Man and throughout the Federation of Australia, a nation equal to the United States in territory. Women have some form of suffrage in 22 states of the United States and have every political right possessed by men in the four states of Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho. In these states, statistics show that women vote as generally as do men, and the overwhelming testimony is that equal suffrage has been a benefit to the state. Those who claim otherwise, almost without exception, refuse to give their names or else are not residents of any of these states, and hence not familiar with the conditions. The National Woman Suffrage Association has had a challenge out for years, asking for any two respectable citizens of Wyoming or any ten respectable citizens of Colorado who will say over their own signatures, thus making themselves publicly responsible for their statements, that equal suffrage has been a detriment; and that challenge has never been answered.

There has been no radical revolution in these states. Women have not banded together against men to oppose measures desired by men, but there has been a quickening of interest and a marked improvement along those lines which are especially the lines of life in which women are most interested and which they are most fitted to direct; and women themselves have become broader, finer women from their participation in a broader life. A cleaner personal life is demanded of candidates for office and the party ignoring this demand courts defeat. Primaries are held in respectable places, and the polls are clean and attractive. Public libraries have multiplied and educational interests of every kind have been greatly furthered. The school system of Wyoming has no superior, and Colorado leads every state in the amount of money per capita appropriated for its schools, in the high requirements of its compulsory educational law, and in the strict enforcement of that law. Above all, the children, the future citizens on whom the welfare of the nation will depend, are made the objects of special care and consideration. The Colorado Juvenile Court Law, enacted through women's votes, serves as a model for all the world. The wages of women have taken a trend upward, and the child labor law is enforced as it is not enforced in any state where the mothers have no voice in the making and enforcement of laws.

Moral, social and educational interests have been advanced, and material interests have not been neglected. Equal suffrage is a live issue throughout the civilized world, and people in Europe who have never heard the names of many of our states know about Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho, because women vote there. People in

eastern states have their attention called to these states in the same way, and they become familiar with their resources and with the opportunities which they afford. Parents look for good schools for their children and they find them in these states. Thus population and capital are attracted into the states. The United States census for 1900 shows that, for the preceding decade, there was, in all of these states, a remarkable increase in population, in the amount of capital invested in manufacturing and in the value of farm property. The great resources of these states are primarily responsible for their progress along material lines, but equal suffrage has had some hand in it by attracting attention to these resources. Political fraud has not been abolished, but women have almost entirely refrained from taking part in fraud. The President of the Honest Elections League of Denver said in April, 1904, in a published letter: "As a result of my own experience in the work of the League, I find that women have practically nothing to do with the fraudulent voting."

Wyoming, after 21 years' experience of equal suffrage, as a territory, adopted it as a fundamental part of its constitution when it applied for statehood in 1890, and when it looked as though either statehood or equal suffrage must be sacrificed, a mass convention of men of the state sent this message to Congress: "We value statehood, but we will stay out of the Union a hundred years rather than come in without our women." Before such testimony as this, from an entire community, the criticisms of non-residents or the alleged criticisms of citizens afraid to give their names weigh as nothing.

THE UPLIFT TO CIVILIZATION FROM EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

In granting suffrage to women and thus establishing a government resting on the "consent of the governed," these states are but putting into practice the fundamental principles of our government, the principles enunciated in our immortal Declaration of Independence. Adherence to lofty principles inevitably gives loftiness to individual character and injects into the life of a community a moral force which, in time, makes itself felt in practical life. In these states, the first step toward a higher plane of civic life has been taken. There are frauds in Colorado, as there are in every other state, but Colorado alone, so far, of all the states, has produced a public officer with honor so keen that he voluntarily resigned his seat in Congress when convinced that fraud had entered into his election. In one of our states, a few years ago, when one candidate was seated as governor, on the face of the returns, and the friends of the other candidate prepared to go behind the returns to seat him, bloodshed, murder and feuds followed. In Colorado, in 1904, in a similar situation, the candidate against whom the decision of the legislature went, bowed quietly to the majesty of the law. These instances are indicative of the future of Colorado, when public officers will no longer believe or say, as a former United

States Senator once said, that "the Golden Rule has no place in politics."

To some men there has already come, and it will come to all in time, the uplift which is given by adherence to principle, the uplift due to the consciousness that they deny to others no rights which they claim for themselves. To women has been given the self-respect which comes from the knowledge that they are no longer classed with idiots and criminals, the uplift which is found in the thought that they are independent, self-governing, sovereign citizens. There is no force so potent for individual development as is individual liberty. As are the individuals, so the nation is. Therefore, where liberty is greatest, there civilization is highest; and those states which give to women full political liberty will reap in full measure the glorious fruits of liberty, the liberty which knows no sex, the liberty which means not merely free men, not merely free women, but a free humanity.

GAIL LAUGHLIN.

Judge Lindsey, of Denver, the highest authority in the country on Juvenile Courts, wrote in "Progress" for July, 1904: "We have in Colorado the most advanced laws of any state in the Union for the care and protection of the home and the children, the very foundation of the Republic. These laws, in my opinion, would not exist at this time if it were not for the powerful influence of woman suffrage, which, at all times, has been back of them, and those who have conscientiously and faithfully administered them."

"No unprejudiced person who has actual knowledge of the working of woman suffrage in Colorado can say aught but that it has been for the good of the state. To be sure it is not a panacea for all the evils with which the country is afflicted, but it has curtailed many of the greatest evils of municipal life and created a better standard of education for the children."

U. S. SENATOR T. M. PATTERSON.

"The exercise by women of the right to vote and hold office has caused no disturbance of the domestic relations; there has been no diminution of social order. All the tendencies of equal suffrage in Wyoming are for the good of the state."

U. S. SENATOR FRANCIS E. WARREN.

"Woman's presence in politics has introduced an independent element which compels better nominations and better officials."

HON. JOHN L. SHAFROTH.



