

Where the Red Suffragette Aids the White



The Determined Battle That Has Been Made By the Oklahoma Women, Including Many of Indian Parentage

THREE centuries ago some wandering Spaniards penetrated into what was then the wild, but is now Oklahoma. Thirty years ago the whites of neighboring states and territories began to notice that what had been considered an Indian camp was land of wonderful productivity. Less than twenty years ago the real influx into the "baby state," then content to be a territory, began. Talk about a transformation! In only two decades has grown up a state of 1,657,155 population, a flat increase of 109.7 per cent over the census of 1900. What had been a wilderness was quickly changed into magnificent farms, prosperous factories and thriving, up-to-date cities. Hardly a vestige of the old-time redskin remains. The Indian population is somewhere around 72,000, but most of it is of mixed blood.

And, wonder of wonders, the women, who have barely escaped the serfdom involved by being known as squaws, are now full-fledged suffragettes! Along with their white sisters, they are battling hard for ballots. Quite a power, too, are these descendants of the Creeks, Choctaws and other powerful tribes, because they are appealing to fully 15,000 red voters.

Only a few weeks ago the allied feminine forces carried their cause up to the ballot box. They lost. But they are going to keep on fighting until they get what they want. It's woman's way, whether she's red or white.



choice when they care to take husbands. United, then, the races waged a determined but losing battle before the last election for an amendment to the constitution giving them full voting rights. That they lost does not discourage them, because they believe they will have a better chance at a special than at a general election. In Oklahoma a question submitted by initiative must have a majority of all votes cast in order to carry. Thus, although a ballot may not be marked at all upon a certain question, it is counted against that question, while only those marked "yes" are counted for it.

Now it is argued by some that, at a special election, only those interested enough to vote one way or another on the questions submitted will turn out, whereas at a general election many will vote for state or national officers who will not vote either way on general questions. The ballots of these indifferent ones are counted against the question.

In this last election both the old parties were on the fence, naturally, while the Socialists and the

labor union element were adherents of the suffragists. All through the hot Oklahoma summer the women worked. What made them the more determined was the fact that, in the main, they were merely trying to regain a privilege of which they had been deprived. In the early territorial days the feminine contingent was permitted to have as much a voice as the male element in such crude municipal government as then obtained. Having assisted in the virtual building of a new empire, the aforementioned feminine contingent failed to see why, when the constitution was adopted, it should shear its wings to the extent of confining it to a voice in local school affairs. A goodly share of the women were not content with the crumbs from the political table. Besides, did they not daily read of the doings of the London suffragettes? Why should they be more content in Oklahoma City, which had proved its progressive spirit by a 54 per cent increase in population in ten years, than their English sisters?

No more were they. From the very time they were deprived of their equal share in the government, they started to get it back again.

In 1909 they sought unsuccessfully from the legislature a referendum submitting the question of votes for women to the whole people.

Not discouraged, the suffragists set to work and last spring secured 35,558 signatures to an initiative petition. The entire clerical work of this task fell upon Dr. Ruth A. Gay, an Oklahoma City physician. A mere handful of tireless women secured the names.

A GALLANT OFFICIAL

Then, with the petition ready, the remarkable discovery was made that the women, having no political entity, could not take a receipt for this, their work, from the secretary of state. So J. Luther Langston, state secretary of labor, stepped into the breach and accepted for the document.

The question should have been submitted to the people at a special election in August. But an obscure legislator questioned the validity of his signatures. The case was later thrown out, of course, because the remonstrant failed to file his brief, but not until too late for the special election.

So every effort has been concentrated on the fall campaign. Through the summer the suffragists held farmers picnics throughout the state; they held parlor meetings at various homes in the cities. They secured, through a press committee, 400 papers in the state which agreed to print suffrage matter, and in October they had a special edition of the Oklahoma News in which a double page was devoted to suffrage argument.

For the wind-up, the suffragists held street meetings, at which they made speeches, just as the men did at theirs.

They conducted their campaign with courage and with dignity. They have as state secretary Mrs. Ida Porter Boyer, formerly of Centralia, Pa., and widely known as a very able suffragist. Mrs. Kate H. Biggers, of Marlow, Okla., is state president of the suffrage association. She is a clubwoman and the wife of a farmer. Mrs. Biggers was a candidate on the republican ticket for the office of state commissioner of charities. She was opposed by two other women, Mrs. Winnie Branstetter, Socialist, and suffragist, and the incumbent of the office, Miss Kate Barnard, whose political faith is Democratic, but whom no one has ever been able to commit to the suffrage cause.

So do women seek and hold office in a state where so far they have no franchise.

Unlike Oregon, the clubwomen of Oklahoma are not actively allied with the suffragists. Many individual clubwomen are, of course, but the state federation of women's clubs has never officially endorsed "votes for women."

Many Indian women have endorsed suffrage. In tribal days the Indian woman was effective in council, and the line of descent was through her, not through the man.

An interesting bit of campaign literature was the memorial sent out to them by the state suffrage association. It is issued to the five civilized tribes and is printed in three languages—one for the twin tribes of Choctaw and Chickasaw; one for the Creek and Seminole, and one in Cherokee. The first four nations use the Roman alphabet, but the Cherokee has eighty written characters of its own.

The privileges of the initiative and referendum, such as the Oklahoma women enjoy, are, at first, easy to invoke, but considerably harder to call forth once a measure has failed. A part of the constitution relating to the initiative reads:

Curious Facts

AN ENORMOUS pearl, of perfect shape and valued at \$30,000, has been found in the western Australia pearl fisheries and brought into Grooms, from where it has been shipped to England.

Among the exhibits at the twenty-fifth show of the London and Provincial Ornithological Society, held in the Lambeth Baths, was a pure white canary. Both its parents were ordinary colored Yorkshires.

An Italian engineer has invented a cinematograph apparatus which can be connected with objects liable to be stolen in such a fashion that, as soon as a person lays hands on them his every movement is photographed.

The annual service was held under the Polstead "Gospel" Oak on a recent Sunday. This is believed to be the oldest oak in Suffolk, England, and the tree under which the Christian missionaries preached to the heathen Saxons, A. D. 490-700.

Thomas Benstead, of Tong, Sittingbourne, England, who is 85 years of age, attended on horseback the opening meet of the Tickham foxhounds. He has hunted with the pack for sixty years, and has not missed an opening meet for half a century.

The run of M. Edmond Rostand's play, "Chantecler," at the Porte Saint Martin Theater, Paris, came to an end recently. Produced on February 8, it has been performed 323 times in Paris and over 500 times in the provinces, the receipts approximating \$750,000.

After being lost for over 800 years a mutilated charter of Edward III, given to the burgesses of Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1328, has to be restored to that corporation by the corporation of Preston. The charter had been in possession of the Preston corporation for many years, but British Museum experts have proved that it belongs to Newcastle-under-Lyme. Preston borrowed the charter for its guidance between 1342 and 1372, and forgot to restore it, thus forcing Newcastle-under-Lyme to apply for a copy.

If all the money in the world were equally divided among civilized people every person would get \$39 as his share.

A marriage advertisement is published in a Zurich paper by a "rich Swiss philosopher" who wants a wife who must fulfill the following conditions: She must be beautiful in body, face and mind, and possess beautiful teeth and hair of her own, and not bought articles. Besides German, she must have a knowledge of English and French, be a musician and have an irreproachable reputation. "Other faults," the philosopher of 40 years states, "will be overlooked."

In a small plush-lined, especially made coffin, covered with white velvet and fitted with ornate silver handles, Jerry, a Scotch collie dog belonging to Mrs. W. H. Schafer, of Minneapolis, was buried in a lot across the street from Layman's Cemetery, and fifty feet from the burial lot of the Schafer family. A hearse drawn by plumed black horses carried the corpse from the Schafer home to the grave. A closed carriage containing the mourners—Mr. and Mrs. Schafer and their son Harold—completed the funeral procession.

At the present day smoking is common in South American churches. A recent visitor to Peru records that in the church of La Merced, Lima, he noticed one of the congregation enjoying a cigar while the service was going on, and through the open door of the sanctuary he caught a glimpse of a bishop who was about to preach indignation in the same luxury. The preacher was attired in full episcopal robes, and had tucked a handkerchief under his chin to prevent them being soiled by ashes. In Lima Cathedral smoking is so far recognized that a spittoon is placed in each of the stalls set apart for the chapter.

SINCE its admission, but three years ago or thereabouts, the "baby state" has proved itself a lusty infant.

The first thing it did was to put out a state constitution of 60,000 words, the longest known. And so advanced was it that even the then president, Roosevelt, remarked that about the only thing it hadn't provided for was the color of the tooth powder the people should use.

"Uncle Joe" Cannon, whose wit was more appreciated then than now, was of opinion that it might be worshiped without sacrifice, because it was like nothing in the earth, in the heavens above or the waters beneath.

Yet the people most concerned, those who lived in Oklahoma, were proud of their work. They had gone about it with no lack of deliberation. The constitutional convention had spent ten days' time, at \$1000 a day, deciding whether the name of the Supreme Being should be in the preamble. It was finally placed there, and then the government makers got down to the question of rights and suffrage. As to rights, they bravely affirmed the declaration of independence, allotting to all the inalienable right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." As to suffrage, they took care of the males by providing that none should be deprived of the voting privilege because of "race, color or previous condition of servitude."

When it came to the feminine element, it received but a small portion of the 60,000 words, and its political rights were defined as follows:

Until otherwise provided by law, all female citizens of

New Year's by Tommy

And call it watch-night meeting, and Why do the church bells ring?

Pa says they got the number of The year by adding one Each New Year's to the year before, And when that year was done, By adding on another, till They piled it up to here, It must have taken awful long To count just once a year.

They tell me when I go to bed The last December night, I'll have to go without a meal

Until the next year's light. Some people think they're awful smart. But I know what they mean: The next year has to be next day— There's nothing in between.

A New Year's day's a happy time For almost every one. It seems a sort of start of things, With nothing quite begun, And everybody's feeling young And spry, just like a boy. I hope your happy New Year will Be spilling-full of joy.

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