

# A Woman Looks at Smith



A clear-eyed annalist whose histories have borne fruit

By  
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*The Life of Abraham Lincoln*

**V**IEWING the situation from the side lines, as an ordinary citizen; I should say women have exceeded in the comparatively short period that they have been admitted to full citizenship even the wildest expectations of those who promised that their activity would be beneficial to public life.

This judgment of an "ordinary citizen" deserves more than ordinary attention. It comes from a man who has spent eight of the nine years since women have been admitted to full citizenship on the front line as governor of the state which contains a larger number of women of voting age than any other in the Union. Also it comes from a governor who, throughout this long period of service, has done his best to meet women halfway in their efforts to fit into public life.

It is doubtful, indeed, if any man in office in the country has gauged more accurately the contributions women are fitted to give in government, or had a profounder instinctive sense of their natural interests or of their capacity for direct and disinterested service when those interests are aroused than Governor Smith. For Alfred E. Smith of New York is the "ordinary citizen" quoted above.

Luckily for them and for him, his idea of the chief aim of government fits in with their natural interests. The welfare of all the people—their health, safety, education, steady employment, care when ill, support when broken in mind and body—this is a state's chief business, according to Governor Smith.

There is no doubt of the genuineness of his sympathy with these ends, his joy in every step which leads toward their realization. To appreciate just how deeply he feels about it all you should hear him explaining what he calls his picture books to one unfamiliar

with what New York State, under his prodding, is doing to make life more tolerable for those dependent upon her care—the crippled, the feeble-minded, the blind, the criminal, the insane, the shattered veterans of the World War—as well as to serve the convenience, the safety, the opportunity, the health of her active citizens.

"Figures and talk aren't enough these days," he will tell you. "People have to have pictures to understand, so I decided to make picture

books where they could see what we are doing with their money."

It's something worth while to look over these books with the responsible author. Opening them on his big desk, he will go over the illustrations one by one, explaining each with an enthusiasm which would almost convince you that he had never seen it before.

"Look at that," he says, pointing to a long, open, two-story structure at the West Haverstraw Hospital for Crippled Children. "That's what they call a solarium. They can wheel the kids out where they can sit all day in the sun and air. I don't know how many beds are in the picture, but they can put fifty or more on that roof. Never had anything like that before in New York State.

"And see here. You wouldn't believe it, but at Matteawan they were so crowded the patients had to sleep on the floor. Think of a rich state standing that! Well, we're going to stop it. There are more than 1,200 new beds in those wings.

"Then look at what was happening at Rome, in the State School for Mental Defectives—beds in a cellar! You wouldn't believe it. Look at the fine place that we are building there."

And so it goes—not missing a picture—giving you the impression of a man who is actually gloating over what he is showing. As a matter of fact, he is.

"Governor Smith's great gifts," says Mary Hun, the head of the State Commission for the Blind, "are his imagination and his sympathy for all human beings. To him an insane man is a man whose mind has gone wrong; a blind man is merely a man in the dark; a cripple, one who cannot walk. The state must cure the man if possible; if not, he must be cared for. The governor never thinks or talks of people as mere defectives.

## Wedding Bells: Open Sesame

**H**OWEVER, you do not have to be afflicted to arouse interest and sympathy in Governor Smith. He is just as keen for those who are happy. That is why a bridegroom who takes in Albany on his honeymoon is always able to introduce his bride to the governor. No matter how crowded the schedule, the secretaries know they must make a place for the newlyweds.

"It's the greatest day in a man's life," he will say soberly. "Of course I'll see them."

This warm, genuine feeling for human beings makes the governor the natural ally of the women working in the state for human welfare. They found this out long before he was elected governor, however, just as he found out their persistency and distinterestedness when seeking legislation which they believed to be for the good of men, women and children.

It was a discovery on both sides.

They discovered that a "Tammany politician"—as all the reform element considered Al Smith back in 1903 when he first was "tidied up" for the Assembly at the direction of the chief of his district, Big Tom Foley—could be as sincerely concerned over workmen's compensation, an eight-hour day for women, widows' pensions, better housing, as they were.

## Friends in Every Port

**H**E DISCOVERED that these various measures which he was hearing about—most of them for the first time—struck at handicaps that he was only too familiar with in the lower East Side world of New York City, where he had been born and had always lived. He was for them from the start—that was something worth while, and he backed the women who so valiantly in season and out of season returned to their attack.

He served with them on commissions, conferred with them, learned to know their temper, their caliber, their ideals and needs, their dependability.

When finally, after twelve years of active service in the Assembly and four in the city of New York, he was made governor, he knew he wanted Frances Perkins on the State Industrial Commission, for he had learned about her eight years before when a famous factory commission was at work in the state.

She remained one of his first lieutenants in labor matters and is now chairman of the State Industrial Board.

He knew he wanted to retain Mary V. Hun on the Commission for the Blind. He did, and Miss Hun now heads that commission.

He knew he wanted Mrs. Henry Moskowitz as an unofficial adviser. She had aided in his campaign; he knew of her long unselfish social service. She is now the director of publicity for the Democratic State Committee and one of his most trusted counselors.

In his first year as governor, Smith named over 30 women to positions he believed them fitted to fill; in the eight years since the number has risen to over 140.

One interesting early appointment was to a place hitherto sacred to the male. There was a vacancy on the State Civil Service Commission, naturally coveted by more than one man, but the governor warned, "Hands off"—he was going to give it to a woman.

And this he did—gave it to a woman he had never met, who never was a candidate but of whose fitness and ability he had convinced himself by inquiries not only from Democrats who knew her but also from his Republican friends and counselors in her town—he has them in every port! This woman, Mrs. Charles Bennett Smith of Buffalo, is now the head of the commission.

But Governor Smith has done more than fill offices with women—he counsels with his appointees, keeps track of their work, helps them by suggestion, listens to their ideas. He does this too with women, whatever their party, who come to him with their causes.

Presenting your case to the governor is not the fearsome business that it is with too many public men. Your reception is cordial, from the orderly at the outside door through the succession of experienced attendants and secretaries who sift the applicants. And if you reach the governor's office—you may get what you want en route—you do not find it the usual frigid and impersonal office of the powerful.

It has all their fittings—the standardized mahogany and the walls lined with yellow sheep-bound records, but the formality is broken by pleasant personal objects—family photographs on the mantel: the chief a familiar one of his smiling self with his adored granddaughter, "six months old on the twenty-fifth of January and weighs 19 pounds"; photographs of Mrs. Smith on his desk; a little bronze G. O. P. elephant; a Democratic donkey; a funny peanut man; handsome notebooks—gifts no doubt—all carefully placed where he can enjoy them, but where they will not be in the way of his pad, his heavy pencils, his big ash tray, his glass of water, the space which may be needed for records, for documents.

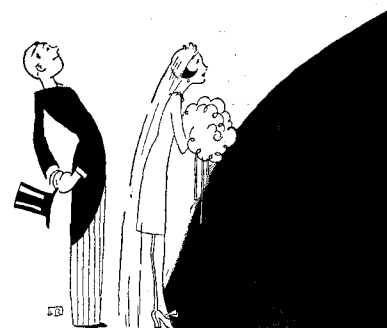
Everything shines and everything is in order: his idea of their order. Apparently he couldn't live with them if they were off the angle which satisfies him. No attendant, however careful, ever quite gets it. The first thing the governor does when he enters that office in the morning is to line up the elephant, the donkey, Mrs. Smith, the ash tray, and all the rest to please himself. "Now we're all set," he will exclaim, and plunge into his work.

Personally the governor of New York is as orderly and shining as his office. He dresses immaculately—likes modish, well-fitting suits and all the nice accessories which go with them, and wears them naturally, and, when off duty, with just a touch of swagger—but not when on duty.

## Al Smith and Alfred E. Smith

**A** MAN could not be more of a governor and a gentleman than the one who greets a stranger, admitted because he believes him to have a case to which he should listen.

His face is a surprise. The newspapers have insisted for years in giving us but one Governor Smith—the happy-go-lucky, laughing, frequently guffawing Al Smith. That is not the man who receives one on a first visit to his office to discuss something to which he has been persuaded he should listen. This is a grave man with clear, unwavering gray eyes and a firm but fine and flexible narrow-lipped mouth, who greets you





soberly, impersonally—listens attentively and decides promptly whether he should or should not give you more time.

As he listens he wheels his chair around facing the big window through which you look over the treetops on the city of Albany. As he stares ahead he chews hard on a fat, usually unlighted cigar—a cigar which serves him in his thinking process as fumbling with a watch chain or a paper knife, folding and tearing up sheets of paper, serve other men—a kind of nervous outlet.

You can almost see his mind seizing your point, if you have any—deciding what he can do about it, if anything.

"Is this what you mean?" "Is this what you want?" he asks abruptly—and then in vigorous, correct, precise English he will state your case, give his opinion,

make his decision. If he has a doubt of your understanding what he means—if he wants to clinch the facts back of his answer—he is apt to wheel back to his desk and, seizing a pad of paper, with a fat soft lead pencil, draw a diagram, make an outline of what he wishes you to see clearly.

#### Places for the Ladies

THE question of women on juries has recently been up at Albany.

"Here's how I see it," says the governor, picking up his pad and tearing off the top sheet (on which there are geometric diagrams, or something which a previous caller has perhaps profited by). "Here's the law now. There are certain *disqualified*"—and he scrawls

the word, following it with a sign of equality, and tells you who they are. "Women, like men, would be disqualified for those reasons. Then there are the *liable* and the *exempt*"—writing the words. "Men are exempt who have professions or duties from which they cannot be excused without detriment to society—*lawyers, doctors, ministers of the Gospel*—all on account of work," he writes under Exempt.

"I would add women"—and he writes "*and women.*"

"How could a woman who has children and no help" (he knows all about that situation) "be expected to sit on a jury a month? Then there are the young women—good women. I don't want my daughters to sit in a New York criminal court listening to the endless stories of wickedness and filth. It isn't right.

"But give women the right to serve if they want to. Of course there are women who don't have much to do and might like to serve. Let them do it."

Governor Smith has not only taken women into camp as far as the law permitted but he has worked steadily to remove their political handicaps. When he came into office in 1919 there were 79 positions under the state Civil Service Commission for which a woman was not allowed to take examinations. She could not be an inspector on a state hospital commission; she could not be a water analyst in the department of health or a chemist in the public service; she could not be a bank examiner, an elevator operator, a bacteriologist, a specialist in English in the education department. In less than a year after Governor Smith was inaugurated, the law was amended so as to open to them the examinations for these positions.

They have used their opportunities—standing up well in the tests. Instead of no women as bacteriologists in the health department there are now 9; instead of no women physicians in state institutions there are now 10.

There are, to be sure, civil-service positions for which women are not fitted.

"You could not make a woman head of Sing Sing Prison," the governor says. "And, then, you could not put a man in many of the positions in the Bedford Infirmary. You have got to have sense about these things."

Year after year his annual message

has recommended that any unjust discrimination against women should be removed from the statute books. He has utterly refused, however, to interfere in the slightest degree with any statute that protected the health or well-being of a woman whether in her home or in her industry. Once, when a delegation from the opponents of the eight-hour law came to him, pleading that it was an infringement of equality, he made a famous answer:

"Equality! I can't nurse a baby!"

"This bill," he said of one pensioning widows with children, "ought to be called 'A bill for the protection of the American home.'"

He knew what it meant for a woman single-handed to keep her children together. At thirteen, he, the oldest child, had seen his mother come home from the funeral of his father, with only a few cents in her pocket, give the children their supper and go out to get a job as an umbrella maker, bringing back her bundle of sticks when she came. And he, now her chief supporter, had gone out next morning and begun his career as a newsboy. If his mother had had a pension!

#### Party: the People's Tool

GOVERNOR SMITH'S greatest service to the women of the state has been to awaken many of them to the higher meaning of political parties. It is hardly their fault if they have pretty generally regarded victory at the polls as the chief end of a party. They inherited that notion and have not yet emancipated themselves in any great number.

Now, loyal a party man as Governor Smith has always been, past master of organization as he unquestionably is, party to him is—a tool, not an end.

"The reason for the existence of political parties," he told the Constitutional Convention thirteen years ago, is to bring about "what goes the farthest to do the greatest good for the greatest number."

And again, when advanced labor laws were being fought on the ground that the state should not enact class or privilege legislation: "What is the state?" he cried. "Green fields and rivers and lakes and mountains and cities? Why, (Continued on page 46)



*His face is a surprise: no guffaws; the grave, clear convincing eyes of the governor who listens to all*



*Mrs. Alfred E. Smith, who wants to be what she is—a busy wife and mother*



# The Emperor of America



*A traitor is dealt  
with in approved  
"Zone fashion"*

**T**HE point is," said the captain, "that although I am honored to place my cabin at your disposal, I can't hold the Ruritania in her dock three seconds after one o'clock. It is just 12:30."

Sir Harry Bristol was a charming host. He was also a very truculent specimen of mercantile skipper.

The big politician smiled soothingly. For a big politician he was a small man; but his lined and humorous face conveyed a definite impression of power.

A faint vibration communicated itself to the party assembled in the captain's room. It ceased.

"They're turning the engines over," Sir Harry went on. "My first officer will report inside two minutes. We carry mails, and we sail on time." He looked at the clock. "If the missing member isn't here soon, your conference will be a short one, madame and gentlemen."

He glanced around at his guests. They were a notable company: one woman and seven men. The woman was charming: a dainty design for a magazine cover miraculously come to life; one of those elusive creatures commonly supposed to live only in the imagination of artists. The men were Commander Drake Roscoe of the United States Navy; Dr. Stopford, ex-surgeon of the Ruritania; Ned W. Regan, most famous private detective outside the pages of Conan Doyle; Deputy Commissioner Burke of Police Headquarters; Page Sutton, one of America's wealthi-

*Roscoe rapped  
sharply and  
opened the  
door*

est citizens; Peter Champion, the Lumber King. And the big politician. To a deaf man with a blind eye it must have been apparent that this conference in the captain's room of the Ruritania was no mere excuse for conviviality.

"I appreciate your position entirely, Sir Harry," said the politician.

**H**E WAS interrupted by a rap on the cabin door.

"Yes?" cried the captain. The door opened. The first officer, standing in a shadowy alleyway, saluted.

"O. K., sir," he reported laconically. "Very good. Carry on, Mr. Graham." The first officer withdrew.

"You understand, Captain," said Re-

gan, his voice more than ordinarily gruff by reason of repressed excitement, "that this party couldn't have assembled in any other place. Two of us are booked to sail. You know how we got aboard. You know how we aim to get ashore. This is a British ship, and unless they bomb us we can reckon we're safe here from the Zones."

"That is, for another twenty-five minutes."

"The criminal known as the Emperor of America is operating in New York again," said Peter Champion, and brought down a large, gnarled fist on the chair arm. "It's costing me and Page Sutton a big piece of money to buy the information we are expecting tonight, but we have suffered enough. So has all the country."

"Excuse me buttin' in," said Stopford, "on such scanty information. But this sportsman, who seems to have been

unavoidably detained, how does he come to be at large? I've been away from your peaceful country. My impression was that there'd been a big bust-up of the gang, with long terms of imprisonment and what not."

"Some of the worst of the bunch slipped through," explained Regan, removing a vast cigar from the corner of his grim mouth and gazing reflectively at the cone of ash. "The newspaper reports you read in Europe didn't lay undue stress on this point. They're operating again. We've established touch several times."

"It seems to me—" began Stopford.

There came a loud rap on the door. It was thrown open. A big man, heavily muffled, his hat brim pulled down to shade his face, burst into the cabin.

**I**N a vault which I must have suggested to one entering it that he had been translated to medieval Spain, a horrible figure was seated.

The vault, which appeared to have been hewn out of living rock, was roughly oval in shape; it was, in fact, a natural cavern artificially perfected. The rock com-

posing its walls and roof was dark green serpentine; so dark that it appeared black, having been refined to a glossy surface. A central column seemingly upheld the roof. Actually, it was part of the virgin rock, but had been most exquisitely fashioned.

It resembled the trunk of a date palm, and on the vaulted ceiling it spread out six geometrical branches which conformed to the curves of the gleaming walls and were caught up and supported by six slender pillars. The floor, slightly uneven, was uncarpeted and composed of polished serpentine. Arched doorways, uncurtained, showed dead black against the sea black of the walls left and right and slightly east of the central pillar; another gaped, ominous, like the mouth of Moloch, at the eastern end of the vault.

A greenish but adequate light pervaded the place. Its source was not apparent. Somewhere—evidently a long way off—as though echoed and reëchoed through innumerable caverns, a sound of falling water was audible.

Except for a long and narrow table set before the western wall and a high-backed Spanish chair ornamented with stamped leather, there was no furniture. In this chair the solitary figure was seated. Strange enough the vault—a serpentine bubble, a geological phenomenon in the bowels of Manhattan—the figure who occupied the place was stranger yet. It was that of a man wearing a black robe. The yellow, hairless face, the slitlike eyes lost something of their horror but nothing of their mystery when one realized that the man wore some kind of rubber mask. Rubber gloves lent to his hands the same smooth inhuman appearance.

On the western side of the central column a speck of red light glowed.

"H. Q.," said the voice. "Report of Divisional Chief C, in charge of party