

ment, so that all women of voting age may vote for President in November. Again Senator Harding sits up and takes notice. He is roused. He assumes what a dispatch to the Sun and New York Herald calls "a new role—that of vigorous, authoritative leader of his party." His "patience is sorely tested." He is "wearied with efforts to make partisan advantage out of this situation." He boldly says that twenty-nine Republican and six Democratic states have ratified the amendment. He adds, still more boldly: "I hope there will be ratification, and I don't care a fig whether it is secured through a Republican or a Democratic state." Perhaps this utterance has struck Senator Harding as overbold. It is not quite in the key of his assurance to a group of anti-suffragists that he will give them a hearing. "I do not mean," he says in his letter, "to be a candidate who is the partisan of any particular group in our American activities."

Yes, there is already a difference that separates the two candidates. Mr. Cox is willing to talk about what ought to be done next. Mr. Harding is most at ease when he can talk about what has been done in the past by the Republican party. He prefers the past tense to the future. Contrast his pride in what the Republican party has done for woman suffrage with his readiness to have either party finish the job. Yes, it has been possible to learn a little, a very little about the two candidates even from this early part of the campaign, and to take a mild interest in one's discoveries. But how much better copy the papers got out of those poor old supermen!

State's Wrongs

SENATOR HARDING'S patience has been "sorely tested sometimes over the persistent misrepresentations of the Republican party, its State Governors and Legislatures, in this matter of woman suffrage." He could not help resenting it "whether it emanated from mere mischief makers, or from partisan desires." Presumably he resents it when it emanates from Republican Governors. But it is precisely the weakness of Senator Harding's position that he must resent misrepresentation from such sources in private. He has adopted the role of "listening candidate." He will hear, he will watch, he will ruminate, but he will not lead. If the Governor of Vermont wishes advice on the suffrage issue he may interview Senator Harding at Washington. But the Republican nominee will not act to bring the Governor of Vermont to terms. He will not make a public issue of the Governor's intransigency. He will not dominate his faction.

He is the leader of a party which exists to maintain its existence, and his function in politics is conciliation. He must find himself in "fundamental agreement" with every important group. Matters of difference are simply ignored.

But differences which are also "misrepresentations of the Republican party" are ignored with pain and vexation. They try the patience of the coolest front porch observer. And Governor Clement's proclamation of refusal to call a special session of the Vermont legislature is undoubtedly a misrepresentation of Republicanism. Did not the State Party Convention ask for a special session? Did not the State Committee urge it? Did not the Chairman of the National Republican Committee advise it? And what did the nominee of the party suggest in that interview at Washington? Ratification surely. The Republic wants suffrage. The Republican Governor of Vermont obstructs suffrage. This is assuredly a false representation of the party's policy. And yet—one wonders. There is no doubt of Senator Harding's sincerity in advising ratification. He would be more inept than he is if he opposed it. There is no doubt of the sincerity of the National Committee. But the policy of the party is not ratification. The policy of the party is harmony and peace. And victories within the party cannot be won if warfare among the factions is forbidden. Governor Clement may have misrepresented the sincere sentiment of his party, but his position truthfully expresses its major policy and creed. Sentiment must not be indulged at the expense of solidarity. A bird in Vermont is worth dozens of problematicaleggs in the country at large.

That Governor Clement understood the dizziness of his position is evident in the intellectual vertigo of his proclamation. He must justify himself to the National Committee and to the women in one and the same document. He must boom and he must tinkle. It is no small tribute to feminism that he failed. To meet the objections of his party he retires to the rock of principle. He wraps himself in the flag of Vermont, grinds his heels against the throat of the Supreme Court and quotes from the Constitution of his state. He enunciates such magic phrases as Organic law, Our Liberties, the Foundations of Free Popular Government. He has been "asked to overlook these considerations as a matter of party expediency, but this is a matter of principle not expediency."

For the benefit of the suffragists themselves he descends to argument. The whole matter is reducible to syllogism. First: Amendments to the Constitution of Vermont must be submitted to the free-men of the state. Second: Amendments to the Constitution of the United States may *not* be submitted,

by the state legislature, on referendum. (So the United States Supreme Court). Third and therefore: there is a conflict between the Constitution of Vermont and the Constitution of the United States—and the Governor's hands are tied. The argument is perfect in all but logic. Undoubtedly there are divergencies between the federal and Vermont Constitutions in method of amendment. But there is no conflict. An amendment to one is not an amendment to the other. The nineteenth article will change the suffrage in Vermont—but not by amendment to the Vermont Constitution. And the provision for ratification by the freemen of the state applies only in alterations of that instrument.

Even if the Governor's propositions did express an antagonism between the state and federal Constitutions his conclusions would still be unconvincing. There would not be a conflict between the two documents because there cannot be a conflict between the federal Constitution and any state Constitution or law. Witness the sixth article of the original Constitution "This Constitution . . . shall be the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, *anything in the Constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.*" Had Governor Clement missed this paragraph? Or did he hope the suffragists would be ignorant of its provisions?

The tone of the whole proclamation expresses only too clearly the true basis of the Governor's opposition to suffrage. He has not, it appears, a favorable opinion of the intelligence of women. He could not otherwise have presented a so preposterous argument for their conviction. And he could not have garnished it with such astounding obiter dicta. The decision in *Hawke vs. Smith*, he says,

—leaves the people at the mercy of any group of men who may lobby a proposal for a change in the Federal Constitution through Congress and then through the Legislature of the States.

Before such a group the nations of earth would lie defenceless.

As it stands and is interpreted by the Supreme Court today, the Federal Constitution threatens the foundation of free popular government.

Has Governor Clement followed the reports of the Department of Justice? And yet he goes farther. The institution of representative government is even less to him than the Constitution.

If the people of Vermont in accepting a place in the Union of States, inadvertently lost in whole or in part the right of self-government and *conferred it on a Legislature*, there is all the more reason,—etc.

Does the listening candidate hear these utterances? And do they test his patience there in the rocking chair at Marion?

What Was Gained at Spa?

OPINIONS differ: a great deal was accomplished, or little or nothing, according to the observer's expectations. Those who had expected the settlement of the really big problems, reparations and an economic *modus vivendi* between the late enemies, are naturally disappointed. The conference set a new time limit for German disarmament and revised the coal requirements, fixed in the Treaty. The new requirements are about as much below those of the Treaty as they are above the actual deliveries in recent months. They are not inherently impossible—two millions of tons monthly out of a total output which could be kept at ten millions, if the mines are managed and worked efficiently. For this coal Germany is to receive an allowance on the reparations account determined by the German domestic price, and a premium of five marks gold per ton to be applied to the feeding of the German miners. In addition, the Allies hold themselves ready to advance to Germany credits equal to the difference between the world price of coal and the German domestic price, thus placing Germany in a position to procure considerable quantities of foodstuffs and materials from abroad if she lives up to her agreement. Further, a commission, on which the Germans shall be represented, will oversee the distribution of the coal of Upper Silesia, thus insuring to Germany a share of it whether the plebiscite goes against her or not.

These are material concessions, offset, it is true, by the explicit threat that if Germany falls short in her deliveries the Allies will occupy additional territory, either in the Ruhr mining basin or elsewhere. The concessions are important, but in their substance they represent only a short step in the direction of European reconciliation. Their chief importance lies in the kind of negotiations out of which they resulted.

The Allied statesmen found themselves forced to abandon the position that it was their prerogative to give orders and the Germans to hear and obey, or make show of obeying. The Allies had to recognize that German consent and cooperation were indispensable, if any real progress was to be made. It is true that they did avail themselves of the threat of military intervention to goad the Germans to a more generous consent than could be won from them by argument. But they listened attentively to what the German representatives had to say on the difficulties of extracting more work from the miners by governmental agreements based upon force alone. They took seriously the argument of the German representatives that the present German government could not survive an agreement