

# SHALL WOMEN PRACTICE PARTY REGULARITY?

## Opinion Among Suffragists Is Divided, Some Maintaining That Independence Would Be More Effective as a Political Factor—Four Types Among the New Acquisitions as Voters

IS it to be "my party, right or wrong," or the individual? That was the question which recently arose in a discussion of women and party regularity. Mrs. Arthur L. Livermore, Chairman of the Republican Women's State Executive Committee and Alternate at Large to the coming Republican National Convention, was the advocate of party loyalty; Mrs. Charles L. Tiffany, Chairman of the Manhattan branch of the League of Women Voters and a member of the Democratic Party, was the advocate of independence.

In interviews subsequently, the two women elaborated on their points of view.

"A humble two-spot which occupies its position in a straight flush is better than a queen in the discard," said Mrs. Livermore. "That, to my mind, is the best argument for affiliation with and loyalty to political parties. The two-spot is a poor ineffectual thing when it stands alone, and greatly overshadowed by a queen, but place it in a position where it can round out a hand and that humble two-spot most certainly gains in importance."

"Seriously speaking, the question boils down to a matter of co-operation. Women have learned the value of that during the war. They came to appreciate that no matter how willing they were and how patriotic they were and how ennobled by war ardor they were, they could do mighty little unless they tied up with an organization or a group which was directing its concentrated effort toward one single attainment."

"This same lesson was illustrated in the makeup of the armies. Nothing of value was gained until all the armies of the Allies were placed under the leadership of one man. It was mass action that counted, mass action that was powerful, mass action that turned the trick. It should not be forgotten that during the drive of this one-man

leadership many ideas and ideals and principles of men who, it may be, possessed equal abilities, equal foresight and equal wisdom, had to go by the board. Everybody appreciated that in order to arrive at any vantage point the individual must be forgotten and the ideals of the big movement remembered. Just so long as these ideals and principles were sound and fine the men felt that they could afford to take a chance in placing power within the hands of the one who represented them. How greatly justified they were in taking this stand the war has proved.

### Lessons in Co-operation.

"In spite of the fact that the war was a series of illustrations of co-operative movements, many women are still in a position where they cannot see the forest for the trees. They make wholesale judgments through virtue of their experience with one or two instances. The question will be put to them, 'Why have you decided to stay out of this party irrespective of your avowed interest in the success of its principles?' and the answer will be, 'I don't agree with so-and-so on this question,' or 'I don't like the way so-and-so conducts his office.'

"They forget that these are individual instances. They forget, too, that what they are condemning is very often not a lack of party principle but a lack of human principle. You cannot condemn the ideals of an organization because one or two or three members of that organization are lacking in some way. Once assured that the platform of the organization is sound and true, you must take your chance with the human beings who make it up."

"In order that you may gain the power of mass action you have got to surrender something in the way of individual likes and dislikes."

"Women are too prone to judge ques-

tions of this nature emotionally and illogically. There is a vast difference between a close-up view and a distant view. This holds true of political parties in the same way as individuals. Details have a habit of marring the complete whole. It is the wise man or woman who can see beyond the details and recognize the force which can be utilized for good purposes.

"I have met a good many women who do not think that political parties amount to much. They do not see why they should join. They cannot understand why they should hide the light of their own importance behind political action. There are others, too, who think that political parties are rotten and that anybody who joins is immediately contaminated."

"In my contact with various types of women I have discovered that, so far as party affiliations are concerned, they fall into four classes."

"First of all we have the saints. They live on a very high moral plane. To them political parties are anathema. They have ideals and ideas which no political party is good enough or noble enough to incorporate. They would serve humanity. Humanity, however, is considered from the heights. They look down to get the true proportion of its needs. They see the suffering and the injustices and then decide to stay up there and talk about them. They are the kind who insist that this world needs change; that our social order is all wrong, that our sense of justice is perverted. And that's where it ends—with talk and argument. They never come down from the heights and set their hands and their minds working at the solution of all the problems which they can elaborate upon so beautifully. They never soil their clothes by getting into the crowd. Politics is rotten, they say, and content themselves in occupying their position of isolation."

### Female Pharisees.

"The second group are the Pharisees. They are a little better than the first group inasmuch as they do come down and get to work in the big body, but they can't get the point of view of any other organization but their own. They are the political pessimists. Whatever they do is right; whatever is done by their opponents, real or imagined, is wrong and should be decried violently, with sounds of brass. There are Pharisees inside a movement as there are Pharisees outside a movement. There are women who will condemn everything that the men's branch of an organization does, and there are women who can see no value in the programs urged by an opposing political group. Women expect understanding from the men but forget that they must give understanding in return. Condemnation of means and methods will not gain them anything. There is, unfortunately, a group of women who will never see that. There may be something to be said about this in relation to men in politics, but we are not discussing that now."

"The third group are the political puppets, the blind party pawns who re-echo religiously what is turned on their mental phonographs. That type, like the poor, we always have with us. They are open to no argument, open to no reason and no individual judgment. Once they have been assured by somebody who has some control over their emotions—their reason never once enters into their judgments—that certain things are true, neither God nor man can move them. We find them among the wives, mothers and sisters of men who are affiliated with political organizations. We find them among members of clubs who declare themselves either in favor of or opposed to some individual member of a political party. At first meeting they may sound sensible. They can repeat beautifully the arguments which have been doled out by their more intelligent teachers. They remember dates and figures; provided, of course, pains were taken to have them remember these things. Once, however, you delve more closely into

their mental background, you find there is very little there but the machinery which makes it possible for them to respond to the turning of special records."

"The fourth class of women voters are the political patriots. Those are the ones who are the hope of the country. Instead of standing aloof and condemning, instead of criticizing the methods of others, instead of voicing opinions on things about which they have no personal knowledge, they get right into the midst of the movement and set things going in the direction they want them to move. They appreciate the truth that the better the party the better the

interested in women; and so long as that is true she ought to step in line and make the most of the opportunities offered to her."

"The value of party affiliation lies in the fact that through the party organization women can put into effect the ideals and principles for which they have been clamoring so long. Some of them will say in answer to that, 'Well, we have joined the party, we have proposed certain changes. What has come of it? Nothing.' Very true. Nothing. Nothing as yet. They forget that big bodies move slowly and that changes are not enacted overnight. Getting out from under won't help. Staying in and

to clean them up. She can work from within and make the path ahead of her a clean one. Getting up on the fence and calling people names will never get her anywhere."

"Women are not primarily office seekers. Therein lies their value in a political organization. They can sit on political committees and lend their efforts toward shaping the principles which will be followed by the members of the party."

"Without affiliation, the way is long and roundabout. With affiliation, they can strike their blows where they will do the most good. The thing to be remembered above all is this—party affiliation and loyalty means national affiliation and national loyalty."

### Mrs. Tiffany's Views.

According to Mrs. Charles L. Tiffany party affiliation is necessary and valuable, but she draws a distinct line of demarcation as to where loyalty to a party may end.

"Women are a new force in the political life of the nation," she said. "Some men recognize that fact; others do not. Until all of them, or at least a majority of them, do, it is foolish for them to insist upon women's loyalty to a program with which they have had nothing to do. No political party should depend on the entire loyalty of its women members if they have not had a voice in shaping the platform of the party and helping to select the candidates."

"It is a wise party that knows its own women. It is the wiser one that will the most quickly incorporate them into the management of the organization. Women are enthusiastic; women ask for no office returns in payment of their service; women work for the community with no other aim than its good, and therefore they are interested in party ideals and the reform of party methods. They want to be aligned with an organization whose performances and platform they can conscientiously indorse."

"Political parties take notice. Women are inexpensive helpers. For instance, in Rochester one of the women workers of her party who was making an effort toward getting the vote of good Republican women was sent for by her Captain, who thrust a bunch of two-dollar bills into her hands with instructions to use them to the best advantage. She was not quite sure what to do with them, but went out clutching her bag with its roll. Later she came back and deposited the same greenbacks on her Captain's desk, reporting that the women did not respond to that kind of urge. You cannot use such methods with most women."

"There is no analogy between the group of electors who come into the party each year as they come of age and the great body of women who have within the last few years been admitted to the franchise; and those of the latter class ought not to be asked to work their way as laboriously as the young electors are expected to. Our women leaders are by no means novices in the political movement. They came into the vote mature women of mature minds and mature principles. They do not have to learn the ropes. They know what party organization is, and they know what they want in the way of party reform and party power; and they cannot be made to grow sentimental over party slogans that cannot be translated into action."

"It has been poor policy on the part of the National Committee of the Democratic Party to postpone until months after it voted to do so the appointment of seventeen women to its Executive Committee. It was almost six months ago that it was decided to include these women on the committee, and even yet the full number has not been appointed."

### Demand for Responsibility.

"Women must have responsibility if the parties expect their confidence and whole-hearted allegiance."

"I have heard Republican Party leaders try to impress upon the women vot-

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Mrs. Charles L. Tiffany, Democrat.



Mrs. Arthur L. Livermore, Republican.

nation will be. They know that the political party is not an end in itself but a means toward an end, and that it is within their power to shape and utilize these means. They have learned that woman, in order to take a vital part in affairs closest her heart, must choose between individual and social welfare and that her choice must be guided not by the idea of personal aggrandizement but by the greatest good for the greatest number."

### Patriots in Politics.

"Political patriots never sneer at politics. They know that politics is contemptible only when the citizens who make up the political mass are contemptible. They understand also that in a republican form of government politics is the only exercise of sovereign power left to an individual and that it is up to her to make the most of the power."

"A good many women say they are not interested in politics. Well, the point of the matter is that politics is

continually hammering away at a point will, however, make a mark eventually. 'Eventually' is too late for some of them and they change their affiliations as a man changes his dinner coat. They go to another party, utter vain, inarticulate sounds there and are again disappointed because nothing happens. Of course, nothing happens. Nothing will until they have learned from history the lesson of concentrated effort, until they have learned how to be loyal to a party that has something worth while to offer in the way of constructive reform. The party that uses fly-paper methods to attract votes will make full use of the fly paper and let the women stick there. They will get so far and no further."

"In order to make full use of the ballot, a woman, once she has decided which side of the fence has the best to offer in the way of humanitarian and political ideals, should stay on that side of the fence. If there are things she does not like she can use her influence

# WOMEN AND PARTY LOYALTY

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ers the need of team play, and it has amused me that they should think they could make the women vote the now discredited straight ticket on that ground. The old-time demand of the leaders to the voters of their party that they must vote only for the candidates of their party is simply re-echoed in the team-play argument of today.

"The women will soon grow impatient if they continue to be left out of the management of the parties. Unless they are made members of the important committees which shape the platform and nominate the candidates they will be urged by their own women leaders to organize within the party. To their way of thinking it would be for the party's welfare. Here they can work for the insertion of desired planks and the nomination of more desirable candidates. Women do not choose to have their votes divorced from men's; they do not believe in a separate party, but if they are barred from membership on vital committees they will have to use their united votes to force their way into places of power and responsibility.

"The intelligent woman voter will vote for the candidate who will give the best service. Until she can choose the names of the candidates who will appear on her party ballot, she will probably be obliged to split her ticket. There is one point I want to stress on this subject:

"In splitting her ticket, she will make a distinction between the administrators and legislators. Let me make myself more clear by giving a hypothetical case:

"If her party drew up a ticket wherein the candidate for Governor was satisfactory and the candidates for Assemblymen were not satisfactory, she would probably vote a straight ticket. The legislators, you see, are in position only to inaugurate laws. She could trust them to follow the principles of the party in which she had enrolled. If, on the other hand, the party drew up a ticket in which the opposing candidate for Governor was more satisfactory, she would, for the good of the community of which she is a part, split her ticket and vote for a good Executive and for the legislators who represented her ideas of government. What she is most interested in is getting the best type of man elected in administrative offices."