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The New Force in Politics

THE women of the United States have at last been granted the vote, the object of a long battle, fiercely fought, and won almost in a stride during the past few years. Many, no doubt, believe, hope or fear that a considerable political change will be brought about by the new voters.

Suffrage for women, however, comes into the United States as no untried thing. It has been tested again and again in the states which have granted women the vote and the change has been found to be slight. It has been seen that with a possible single exception, women have been politically actuated exactly as men, and that the proposition of votes runs approximately the same.

It has been claimed that on issues involving moral questions, such as liquor, vice elimination and so on, women vote more strongly on the side of reform than men, but there are no figures to substantiate this. Liquor has been fighting a losing battle many years, and was beaten finally on the economic features rather than the moral features.

On the whole, the women's vote is a conservative and well considered one, perhaps a trifle more conservative than that of the male voters. In the states where women have voted, it has been a suggestive rather than a driving force, and there is no reason to believe that in the national field it will be different.

A Campaign Worth While

HERE and there in the world, the dread scourge of the bubonic plague flickers up. The rat-carried pest is found in Texas, it appears in Paris, and elsewhere. Only a few cases show up but one case is enough for vigilance, and two for rigorous measures.

This plague has never in modern times gained a real grip in entirely civilized countries, though there have been minor epidemics, mostly confined to seaports where it was carried from the Orient. But the relaxed state of Europe after the war, the breakdown of civil machinery in many countries, makes the possibility of a severe epidemic not a remote thing. In its pneumonic form, the pest is a difficult one to check once it gains headway.

Typhus has already taken its toll in Russia and Poland, and made fierce inroads in what once was Austria-Hungary. It can be fought by de-lousing and sanitation and since it is carried from man to man can be stopped completely.

The flea, equally at home on rat and man, carries the bubonic plague. Its spread is usually due to rat carriers, and a ratless city would never be troubled. There is no such city, but it is obviously the duty of every port threatened even in the most remote way to fight the plague in its furthest outpost—the rat.

Twenty-Dollar Coal

WHEN the farmers of the United States raised the cry of "Dollar Wheat," it was recognized that a most important industry was endeavoring to raise itself to a position of economic security which its service deserved. "Dollar Wheat" was not regarded as an attempt to profiteer at the public expense; it was not regarded as the expression of excessive greed. Indeed, it has been frequently contended that if a bushel of wheat and a dollar of money could be made the standard, it would go far toward stabilizing some schedules which of late have appeared to be very elastic.

Now, however, the people of the United States are confronted with a new price ideal, a new campaign to

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increase a certain cost to an heretofore unheard of figure. The coal barons of the country are shouting "Twenty-Dollar Coal" with as much lusty zeal as ever the pioneer shouted "Pike's Peak or Bust!"

Twenty-Dollar Coal is purely a trade ideal; it is just as unreasonable as would be a clothing trades slogan of "Hundred-Dollar Clothes."

There is no doubt whatever that a deliberate attempt has been made in the United States to push prices so high that the recession will not be great, and then, by interference with production, maintain prices at a high level long enough to make them crystallize into a standard.

If coal can be pushed to \$20 or, in order to make \$20 the permanent price, if coal can be pushed to \$25, and held there long enough to compel the entire population to adjust their whole living expense around \$25 coal, then, if pressure occurs, coal can be dropped to the \$20 rate, and that standard can be maintained long enough to make it the accepted standard for all years to come.

You see, there is no "economic law" about it. There is simply an agreement among men who control the coal to boost their business to a higher financial level.

They can do it—unless something happens. People must have coal. In order to get coal, they must go to those who have it. If those who have it use the fact of possession to oppress the people, then the people may submit from very physical necessity, or they may exert another power and remove the barrier which is interposed between them and the fuel which they must have to keep alive.

There is nothing to show that \$20 is a necessity for the producers, whether they be miners or managers.

There is nothing to show that \$20 coal is anything but a raid on the people's winter budget.

And this present moment would seem to be the worst possible time to try any experiments with the public patience.

How Mandates Work Out

THOSE persons who gave any thought at all to the proposed mandate system of governing peoples unable to govern themselves probably contemplated some manner of standard by which all the mandatories could be measured.

The utter inconsistency of handling subject peoples, and the complete lack of any substantial plan in common for all the powers are well exemplified in three significant cases where the British, masters of the art, control affairs.

The British are exercising directing authority in Palestine, where a high commissioner has been sent to supervise erection of a Jewish national state, in Egypt and among the Arabs of Mesopotamia. These are chosen because they are literally three neighboring and practically next-door peoples. Of these the Jews are the most advanced in civilization and the Egyptians, while far behind the Jews, are themselves much superior to the Arabs of Mesopotamia, a very backward people.

To the backward Arabs Britain has promised an Arab as governor and a parliament elected by popular vote; in fact, a generous degree of self-determination. But this same degree of self-determination is refused the Egyptians, who are more capable of exercising those functions than the Arabs. While to the Jews there can be no real self-rule at all since they are a minority in Palestine and therefore can be sustained as a state there only by a decree, which the British have issued. Thus, in the three examples, you see democracy in inverse ratio to the political intelligence of the peoples concerned.

The three policies are wholly inconsistent, although for each there is a sufficient reason to justify the British to themselves. Precisely because the Egyptians are sufficiently advanced to run themselves—part of the way, and therefore might conceivably interrupt British control of the Suez Canal, they cannot be given the self-determination accorded the Arabs who, in turn, with all the self-determination in the world, must rely on their mentors for instruction and constructive assistance. The Jewish position has been explained: a minority existing on the authority of an arbitrary decree.

Even with this national justification, from the viewpoint of British policy, it is easy to see how jealousies spring up among these subject peoples, and how difficult it is going to be to judge a mandatory's work, since each mandate is applied by rules peculiar to its own case and may have nothing at all in common with any principles of any other mandate.

Philippine Independence

ANOTHER congressional committee has returned from the Philippines and probably will report against the granting of independence to the islands. The Philippines have been a problem since they became ours, and they will continue to be a problem as long as they remain ours and when if ever they are freed they will still be a problem.

There has been little criticism of American rule there, the question of their freedom being ostensibly that of whether they are ready to be freed and whether Japan would or would not gobble them up if they were turned loose. Both answers are so much a matter of opinion that they are not valid.

If one means by "ready to be free" that they would carry on a government approximately on American lines in an orderly manner, the answer is, no. Comparatively few countries are doing that now. If one means that they would make shift for themselves and not fall into a pit of savagery, the answer is, yes. And neither answer means very much. Whether Japan would seize them is between Japan and its opportunities and its desires, and nobody knows or can know about that, not even Japan.

Meanwhile commercial ties, stronger than political will keep the Philippines under the American flag many a year, and if they ever are freed, force the United States to take a constant and protective interest in Mr. Taft's "little brown brothers."

What the Olympic Games Reveal

THE declining supremacy of the two great sporting nations, Great Britain and the United States, has been evident at the Olympic Games at Brussels. Not that they are not still at the forefront, but the European nations have taken to games with a vengeance while the overwhelming interest that sport once aroused in the two Anglo-Saxon countries is obviously declining.

Great Britain will withdraw because of the lack of interest, and while this is not so pronounced in America, one has only to compare the quiet interest of today with the fierce absorption of the Stockholm and London games to see the decline. We have other fish to fry, and though this interest may some time revive the trend at present is toward the playing rather than the seeing and supporting of games.

In Europe, it is quite the other way. Sport is fostered in every way, as the entries and winners of the Brussels games show. In every branch, except baseball, which has found a foreign home only in Japan, we are faced with close competitors and sometimes superiors in foreign lands.

In a way it is a pity that Germany is barred from these games, for a sport madness seems to have gripped our late enemy and every form of game is flourishing there. It is only natural that the Belgians would not extend an invitation, but this intensive fostering of sport in Germany may, by the next Olympics, have bridged the gap between foes.

Danzig Makes Trouble

THE free city of Danzig looks like a fine hotbed for future trouble. The flare-up over the refusal of Sir Reginald Tower, the Allied high commissioner, to permit French munition ships to unload is only one of the many recent difficulties. His statement that he had not enough troops to prevent disorder if the ship with munitions for Poland were unloaded sheds a bright light on the situation.

Danzig was made a free city because it was obviously unjust to give it to Poland, and the need of the Poles for a port was extreme. Had it been left to the Germans, discrimination and trouble would have resulted regardless of what guaranties were given that the Poles would have fair treatment. So it was made a free city, its citizens having a sort of dual citizenship, Danzigers at home, Poles abroad. A corridor entirely Polish, was attached, and there you are.

Germans have charged that the Poles have used their control of the citizens of Danzig abroad as a lever to obtain advantage, and since this is entirely human it is probably true. This has caused friction and worse. Poles and Germans and other strong elements of population clash, and the life of the high commissioner is not a happy one.

The whole arrangement is so clearly makeshift that it is unlikely it will last. In the end, the city will attach itself to a hinterland, and the outworn medieval governmental unit will be a thing of the past.