

Cheyenne, Wyo.
December 28, 1916.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt,
171 Madison Avenue,
New York City.

My dear Mrs. Catt:-

Mrs. Carey, in answering some questions which you forwarded to her, suggested I should write to you. If my letter does ~~nothing~~ more, it may revive in these holidays an old acquaintance.

Late in the eighties, being a member of the United States House of Representatives as a Delegate from Wyoming, I commenced the ~~agitation~~ *agitation* of the passage of an Act, admitting Wyoming as a State. In the end I introduced a bill for the admission of Wyoming with a Volunteer Constitution, not made or ~~ratified~~ *ratified* under the authority of any territorial or federal law.

This Constitution, the same that we now live under in the State of Wyoming, gave women full political rights as to suffrage, holding office and property. Susan B. Anthony, a great woman, had kept up a constant agitation for many years and had created a public sentiment in favor of suffrage, yet Congress was inclined to ridicule the aspirations of women, to be clothed with full political power.

Wyoming was admitted July 25th, 1890. This was the first recognition of women's suffrage by Congress and President of the United States. A great assistance to me in securing the admission of Wyoming with suffrage was the fact that the Supreme Court of the United States had previously in effect decided that there was nothing in the constitution of the United States to prevent a State from giving women the right to vote. In other words, it was fully recognized that the question of suffrage, outside of the limitations in the constitution, growing out of the Civil War, was a matter for the State.

You and your associates have made a great fight and, I should say, a very successful one. Great things cannot be accomplished in a day, nor are they all accomplished in different sections in a short time. As I understand it, women have suffrage in twelve of the American States and if the women would do intelligent work and not divide up, they would soon secure suffrage ~~in~~ in a number of other States. Where women have ~~obtained~~ obtained the right to vote, the opposition is crumbling away.

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I am in favor of women suffrage. I think that those who have known me would acknowledge that I have left no leaf unturned where I could assist in securing it for women. I believe in it. I believe in the obtaining of suffrage for women in any way in which it can be secured by rightful means. I believe women are losing ground in their agitating it now through an amendment to the federal constitution. Conditions exist in the Southern States and in the States that sympathize with the Southern States that will delay the submission of an amendment to the constitution of the United States and its ratification by the requisite number of States for many years. These conditions the present generation are not responsible for but the present generation, seeing the conditions as they are, are not willing to complicate them or aggravate them by further interference with suffrage in the States. You may rest assured that a delegation from a Woman Suffrage State will not oppose suffrage in Congress. If you had the requisite number of States now, it would be easy to secure suffrage in the Southern States provided the women were earnestly for it.

With reference to the political campaign just closed I know you will permit me to say a word. There were many things that influenced the great vote that was given to President Wilson in the States west of the Mississippi River. Progressives generally voted for him. Governor Hughes prejudiced himself very much in the West. As far as I am informed, I heard him twice, his speeches were a severe criticism of the Wilson Administration without giving a course of action which would have improved the ways and methods of the Wilson Administration. He appeared more or less at sea on the questions that concerned the people. So far as the suffrage question is concerned, Wilson had gone farther than any other President had gone as he had declared in favor of suffrage, leaving the matter to the individual States. Hughes only defined a different way of giving suffrage that is through a United States Constitutional Amendment, which many, as myself, believe is impracticable at this time. I personally thought the declarations of both of them were matters of policy as neither of them seemed to have given the matter much consideration or were greatly interested in the subject.

Before the campaign had advanced at all and before the sentiment in favor of Hughes or Wilson had crystallized, certain women appeared in Wyoming and they grossly misrepresented the purpose of their coming. These women called a meeting in Cheyenne and requested the Governor of the State and others to talk at the meeting. The Governor acceded to the request, made speeches and even contributed to the expenses of the women. Others did likewise. The women stated that they merely were here to create public sentiment in favor of women suffrage and that they were sent here by the Congressional Union. They were accused, however, of being out for partisan purposes. This they denied with a great deal of vehemence but we soon learned that they were all in what is known as the Hughes Alliance. They had taken the moeny of Democrats as well as Progressives to help to promote the ideas of the

Hughes Alliance. This action was bitterly resented not only by Democrats and Progressives but by Republicans who believed in fair play.

Then the wide and diversified advertisement that certain women, after a breakfast at one of the fashionable hotels in New York would start out in a special train to convert the West to their way of thinking. This was most bitterly resented by women who had exercised the right to vote for many years. The description of this caravan of women on the "stump" was somewhat amusing. They were described as "Female Silkstocking Millionaires", women who went to Newport in the summer and went with the birds to the South in the winter; that they knew no more about political rights than they did about the stars of Heaven and that they knew no more about the raising of children than the hen did of the chicken that was hatched in an incubator and trained in a brooder. As one speaker said, he would not give a good woman, living on a ranch, who helped her husband and took care of a family of children, for the whole caravan and the cost of the special train. The women of Wyoming resented the coming of these women as they felt they were not sincere and were not capable of teaching them. If these women could all have been kept home, not advertised, and Hughes could have been kept in a cloister, it would have been better for Hughes and the cause of woman suffrage. I believe it will be better for the women to keep out of partisan politics.

All my life I have been a Republican. Since I became a Progressive I have been willing to make any sacrifice to help unhorse the reactionaries who to-day control the Republican Party. I did all I could for Wilson as I looked upon him in every way superior to Hughes and for the first time in my life I voted for the Democratic electors.

Sincerely yours,

JMC.W