



Those Suffragettes

"Be sure to vote early, dear," reminded her husband as he hastened out the door to catch his car that morning. "Remember, the polls close at six o'clock," he added as a testy warning.

Like the dutiful housewife she was, she set about her morning's work with deftness, for that must be done before she would *think* of going to the polls. This delicious, new right of hers must in no way interfere with her home. "Hubby" first, politics afterward!

At nine o'clock the telephone rang. It was Mrs. Harri-man-Champ Clark-Smith.

"Voted yet?" she called. "I was the first woman there and you should have seen the mob of newspaper photographers on the scene," she chattered. "You want to be sure to vote for a *dry* town—of course you *will*—but be careful not to make a mistake by pressing the wrong button—you know this temperance question is the big issue of the day. A dry town, a dry town, I say! Down with the sopping taps that undermine our young men to the very mire and infamy of the city!"

"Exactly right," affirmed Mrs. Blair, trying to edge in a remark without collision.

"Right! I should say so! And yet this city teems with pie-faced bleats whose rum-blossom noses will pry into the very earthworks of our campaign for a moral community. Smash the villains! Oh me! Oh my!"

Here she paused for breath and Mrs. Blair pounced upon the opening like a martyr. For the first time she felt the true spark of suffrage. Ah! She had suddenly become a living part of the polls! She must rally to this noble cause without delay; which she did by quickly and tactfully hang-

ing up the receiver before another outburst might detain her.

The spectacular part of it all filled her mind—the novelty, the child's play of simply pressing a button, or levers, or whatever one called the things; and the delight of returning home a VOTER! These thoughts, together with her home duties, were so engrossing that she gave no serious heed to the volley of "suffragette politics" that had really set her in motion. It would be all so easy and thrilling! Only one slight precaution stood in her way—she must remember not to make a slip and rashly vote "wet" instead of "dry."

Almost before she knew it the grocer came. As he set down a bottle of vinegar upon the kitchen table, his face became serious. He scratched his head for a moment.

"If this town goes dry, it—it'll be hard times," he said ominously.

Mrs. Blair half swayed toward him with unfeigned attention, her pretty hands clasped eagerly.

"Hard times?" she breathed, in her usual coaxing manner.

"You bet! It'll be uncommon hard on everybody; taxes 'll go up with saloon-license revenue cut off; folks 'll be thrown out of work—scores of 'em; and men 'll simply choke in the summer. Now, I ain't no drinker, you understand, but mark me if it won't be a sorry lot here! Take, for instance, them O'Tooles over there. He can't do anything but tend bar; and with the bar closed—Lord! what 'll become of the family? Six little O'Tooles all a-cryin' for victuals and none comin' in. It's a bi-ig proposition, I tell you!"

A shadow of uncertainty settled between Mrs. Blair's brows, for she was face to face with the startling fact that the question might have two sides.

"Why, er—it is a big problem," she replied, controlling

A satirical look at suffrage by Viola Gandrup, from the San José Normal School's 1912 yearbook.

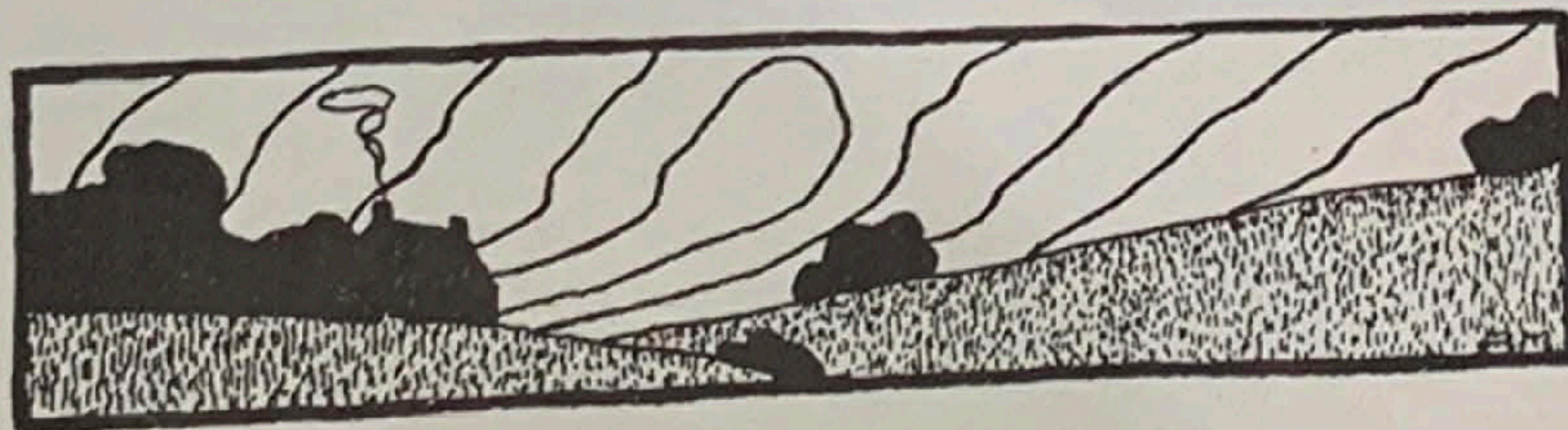
herself admirably. Compassion for the O'Tooles filled her heart. She bit her lip doubtfully. She was one of those little "wifey" women who have implicit faith in the judgment of their worthy spouse, whether or not those beings are blest with imperial brains and common sense. Oh, Jack! If only he were here! What did *he* think?

Feverishly she prepared luncheon for "precious." At the stroke of twelve she walked to the gate to wait for him. Fifteen minutes passed; still no Jackie. Horrors! Now she remembered. He was not coming home for lunch today—"Business too urgent." Should SHE go to HIM? He might think her foolish. In this state of excitement he certainly should. No, she would not make a goose of herself. She would thrash it out alone!

All afternoon she thrashed. But her brains were not accustomed to working independently and she made no headway. Five o'clock came. The polls would close at six. Only one hour left! She put on her hat and gloves and sat down, in affected calmness, to wait for Jack. A quarter of six! Mercy! She started down the street. One continuous watch to see if Jack were coming yet—and—the car slipped by! Oh, well, he might come while she was waiting for the next.

But Jack did not come. She reached the polls without meeting him. At last her mind was made up! She would vote "wet." She walked up to the booth proudly.

"Too late," snapped the clerk. "Six-two," looking at his watch. "Sorry."



She turned away with shame. For a moment her wounded body tottered and then—no! she would *not* faint. The papers would make a glaring headline of it, and then Jack would know. As she wandered homeward her thoughts ran glibly. What if the town should stay "wet"?—she thought of Mrs. Harriman-Champ Clark-Smith. But if it should go dry? Well, she could not help it. She had nothing to do with that.

Supper was hardly started when Jack came home.

"Hungry as a bear," he said, in his big, breezy way that she generally admired.

"Supper isn't ready," she volunteered with her back turned toward him. "I had to go to the polls."

Jack took her in his arms with a mighty hug.

"My little wifey a voter!" he exclaimed with genuine admiration.

She nestled quietly against his shoulder for some seconds to hide the blush.

"Jack," she asked faintly, "which way did you vote, 'wet' or—'dry'?"

"Dry, of course!" he blurted out frankly.

There was a flutter of delight that she could not conceal.

"Good!" Her vote—or failure to vote—had not offset his worthy voice in the way in which the town should go, but she did not tell him *that*.

VIOLA GANDRUP.



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