

LOWER BRANCH OF CONGRESS PASSES SUFFRAGE RESOLVE

United States House of Representatives Votes 304 to 89 for Amending Constitution to Give Women Right to Vote

Special to The Christian Science Monitor from its Washington News Office

WASHINGTON, District of Columbia —By a vote of 304 to 89, the United States House of Representatives yesterday passed the joint resolution introduced by James R. Mann, of Illinois, providing for submission to the state legislatures of an amendment to the Constitution which will give women in the United States equal voting privileges with men.

Only two hours were allowed for debate, one hour to each party, and obstructive efforts, notably feeble as compared with those made during consideration of similar resolutions in other sessions, were swept aside with a celerity that showed how dominant the sentiment for woman suffrage had become.

Indeed, it was apparent that the Republicans, in making the adoption of this resolution the first business of the extra session, were seeking to place their party in the forefront of the movement to enfranchise women, while the Democrats were also active in advancing their party's claims in this respect, although the bitterest opposition to the resolution came from Democratic members.

Changes Voted Down

The last time the House voted upon a similar resolution, Jan. 10, 1918, it passed it by a vote of 274 to 136. Thus, the affirmative vote yesterday was increased by 30 votes. In 1918 the resolution was adopted by only one vote more than the two-thirds of those present needed to pass it. In the test yesterday, there were 42 votes more than a two-thirds majority. Of the 89 voting in opposition, 70 were Democrats and 19 were Republicans. Of the 304 voting in the affirmative, 202 were Republicans and 102 Democrats. There were 35 members absent, paired or not voting. Two amendments to the resolution were voted down overwhelmingly and an effort to record the votes by yeas and nays upon these amendments was defeated so decisively that those familiar with the long fight for woman suffrage commented upon the changed attitude of the members. In other sessions obstructive tactics found strong support, whereas yesterday the debate was noticeably restrained and, as a rule, much less sarcastic and vigorous.

Frank Clark, Representative from Florida, the leading opponent of the resolution, presented an amendment that would require three-fourths of the states to ratify the constitutional amendment within seven years to make it valid. E. W. Saunders, of Virginia, proposed an amendment that would require ratification by popular vote in each state.

Debate on Resolution

When Mr. Mann called up the resolution for passage, there was some arguing over the time to be given for debate, but the House evidently desired to dispose of the resolution with as little delay as possible. Edward C. Little, of Kansas, opened the debate with a speech in favor of the amendment and his remarks about Republican support of the amendment brought out the retort from Claude Kitchin, former leader of the Democrats, that it was not until the Democratic Party came into power that there was a Woman Suffrage Committee in the House.

Champ Clark, former Speaker, spoke for the amendment and asserted that the Democratic Party and President Wilson, who, he declared, "was universally acclaimed as the foremost man of the world," had been most influential in making possible the passage of the resolution.

The sensation of the debate, however, was the speech by Nicholas Longworth, Representative from Ohio, who reversed his former stand by speaking for the amendment. Mr. Longworth explained his change of heart by stating that his opposition in the past had been on the ground that the time was not opportune for woman suffrage, but now he believed the situation demanded this extension of the franchise.

Mr. Mann Is Cheered

Mr. Mann, in closing the debate, was cheered heartily by members of both parties.

"The time is ripe, the people are ready and the beneficiaries of this amendment are eager, willing and able to perform the duties of citizenship."

Among the members who conspicuously opposed the resolution in the House on former occasions and who voted for it yesterday were Samuel E. Winslow and Frederick W. Dallinger of Massachusetts, Augustin Loneragan of Connecticut and David H. Kincheloe of Kentucky.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, said:

"Never was there a more splendid response to the movement for justice to women now sweeping the world than the quick and gallant action of the House of Representatives. Ratification will follow in the various state legislatures, I am convinced, with the same generosity, and thus release American women from a further struggle to secure political freedom."