



Women, Radio, Vote

COLONEL Straw Ballot and his good friend Joe Doaks were talking politics when Mrs. Doaks interrupted with a tray of refreshments.

"Gentlemen," said she, "don't forget that I vote, too!"

"Yes," said the Colonel, "and since women have been voting, the elections have been more—er—spectacular."

"Now how can you say that, Colonel?" asked Joe, after his wife had left the room. "Surely the elections of pre-suffrage days were more exciting than they are now."

"That depends," the old gentleman replied, his eyes twinkling. "It depends on what you consider exciting. I grant you, sir, that the presence of ladies at the polling booths has done much to dampen the exuberance of the old-fashioned election fisticuffers. But I like to judge an election by the ballot count. Looked at in that light, all elections have been more spectacular since women began voting. With the single exception of Teddy Roosevelt's victory in 1904, no Presidential election before 1920 showed as much as a 10 per cent difference between the popular vote polled by the Democrats and that polled by the Republicans. Since that year the percentage differences have changed sharply."

"And all because of women suffrage?" asked Joe.

The old gentleman smiled. "Well, not exactly," he declared. "I should say there have been *two* factors, Mr. Doaks. One factor has been women's suffrage, which began in 1920. The other has been radio broadcasting—whose birth, by the way, was marked by the reading of election-return bulletins over station KDKA in 1920.

"Rather a long time ago, sir. Certainly long enough to have caused a sweeping political change. That's what I mean when I say the vote seems more spectacular today—in terms of statistical percentages, the party shifts and swings between elections are more violent than ever before."

At this point Colonel Straw Ballot reached for his big black hat and walking stick. "I must be on my way," he said abruptly. "I've a large polling task afoot right now. In fact, by this time next week, I'll have some interesting results for you—all pointing to November."