

Woman Senate Candidate a Regular Fellow

Mrs. Mary Grey Brewer of Staten Island Has Time for Home and Politics Too

By ELEANOR BOOTH SIMMONS.

"FINISH that ice cream now. The idea of leaving two mouthfuls of sweets to be thrown away in war time."

It was State Senator Mary Grey Brewer of the Twenty-fourth district who was speaking—well, perhaps not exactly Senator yet, but after the style in which she romped away with the nomination in the primaries it seems as if she must go under the wire first on election day. If the new women voters of Richmond and Rockland counties do their duty by their sex they ought to tip the balance, now pretty even between the parties there, in favor of Mrs. Brewer.

Not that she's making a handle of sex. She's a regular fellow, is the Republican nominee in the Twenty-fourth, and is making her campaign on straight out issues that concern people, not just women. Her male constituents won't be neglected when she goes to Albany.

But to return to the ice cream. This is not so trilling as it may seem, because a mouthful of ice cream may show how a Senator will vote. Well, it was in the Women's City Club where she was to meet me at 2 and I was fortifying myself for the interview with ice cream and other things.

Had to Finish the Ice Cream.

She came on the stroke of the hour, and I rose, leaving two mouthfuls uneaten. It grieved me to do it, but it didn't seem to me that it would be etiquette to keep an almost Senator waiting while I gobbled. She, however, fixed me with an eye out of which the habitual twinkle had momentarily departed.

"Remember Hoover," her tone said. Not till I had scraped the dish was I permitted to rise and go with her into the lounge and ask her questions about her candidacy.

The first thing I noticed about Mrs. Brewer that made me confident of her election was her hat. It wasn't too expensive looking, there was nothing about it to make the quiet farmers and townspeople of Rockland and Richmond think her extravagant; but it had an air.

There was a perky red rose on it that stood up with an engaging, confident expression as if it said, "We're in this fight to win." I feel sorry for John A. Lynch, the Democratic nominee, if he has to stand up and debate with that rose. Not that Mrs. Brewer depends on roses. She's right there with the regular ammunition.

As for the face below the hat and the personality, it's wholesome. No other word will describe Mrs. Brewer so well. Her eyes are dark and shining with kindness and wit, her hair is dark and vigorous with the look of health, her skin is clear, her cheeks rosy, she is plump, but not too plump; in short she has the look of perfect well being that you'd expect from a woman who's one of the crack farmers of Richmond county.

A Normal, Happy Woman.

A normal, happy woman, with a husband and a child and a pleasant home and a garden, and carrying these responsibilities along with one hand while doing all kinds of suffrage and welfare work. They can't call New York's first woman Senator a sour, disappointed woman who has taken to politics because she has nothing else in life.

And they can't say that she's neglecting her family, because she is going to take her little daughter with her to Albany. And as the Legislature sits only from Monday to Friday, she will have the week ends at home with her husband.

"My little girl's 13," she said. "And she has her plans all made for being with me in Albany. I will put her in school there, of course. And Fridays we'll go back to New Brighton. My husband has his work to do—he's principal of the annex to the Curtis High School and a very busy man—so he can get along five days in the week alone."

"I don't consider that I spend any more time in this political work than many women do in bridge parties and other di-



Mary Grey Brewer, who is running for Senator in the Twenty-fourth District.

versions. My husband is interested in the things I do—he was interested enough in my candidacy to cut his vacation a week short to come home and vote for me primary day. I said," laughed Mrs. Brewer, "that I'd have two more votes anyway than my opponent, Mrs. Helen McKelvey of Rockland county, for she and her husband were not registered voters. My husband and I both voted for me."

On the evening of primary day before the result had been announced Mrs. Brewer was sure she had been beaten.

"I wasn't expecting to run," she said. "It was a surprise to me when I was designated. When they called me up from district headquarters and suggested using my name, I agreed on condition that they try to find a satisfactory man to run. If they couldn't find one, I told them, I would run."

Had a Hard Row to Hoe.

"As a matter of fact I don't think they turned their hands over to get one and I was designated. Mrs. McKelvey, as you know, was the Rockland county candidate. I had a pretty hard job, because we hadn't nearly as much money as the McKelvey people. They spent money freely. I don't mean that they bought votes, but they could hire automobiles and arrange meetings and send out literature to a degree we couldn't achieve."

Mrs. Brewer is emphatically with the "drys" and strong for the ratification of the prohibition amendment. She is unqualifiedly against the garbage plant on Staten Island, though she said the day I saw her that she didn't notice the smell quite so much of late and thought maybe it was easing up a little. But she's against it.

"What are you backing for Rockland county? What'll you talk about when you campaign there?" I asked her.

"Well, roads are one thing the Rocklanders are interested in," she said thoughtfully. "I've been up there looking things over and have made some speeches there. I think the State should take care of highways through villages."

"There are several good sized towns in Rockland—Nyack, Spring Valley, Haverstraw, Suffern. The roads through these towns are used a great deal by motorists from outside and the townspeople rightly feel that they ought not to be expected to bear all the burden of maintaining the roads."

The problem of roads is one that the G. O. P. candidate in the Twenty-fourth probably became familiar with early, for she comes from out West, where the mud is ever with one. Crawfordsville, Ind., which produced Gen. Lew Wallace, also produced New York's first woman candidate for a Senatorship. Mary Grey was a little girl when the author of "Ben-Hur" was a man, but she relates one encounter with him which seems to show that the girl was mother of the woman.

"I used to ride horseback a lot and Lew Wallace was a great horseman," she said. "He met me one day when I was galloping along astride my pony, a small girl in bifurcated garments, and he stopped and told me that was the right way for a girl to ride. 'You ride like a little Indian,' he said. 'That's the way to enjoy a horse.' Few women rode astride then."

"So you were radical then, as now," I said.

"I'm not radical now," she informed me. "Mrs. James W. Wadsworth and some others would say you are," I observed. "But tell me about your girlhood. Were you a suffragist from babyhood, for instance, or were you converted later?"

The almost-Senator grinned.

"My first sight of a suffragist," she said reminiscently, "was of Dr. Mary Walker. She came to Crawfordsville in her trousers and frock coat and derby and spoke on something, I believe. It was my introduction to woman's cause. No, I don't believe I became a suffragist then, not through seeing Dr. Mary Walker."

"In college—I graduated from the State University in Indiana—I was particularly interested in political economy. I specialized in it and have kept up the study ever since. As to politics, I began a Democrat; but I believe in a strong centralized Government; I was much influenced by Alexander Hamilton, and I became a Republican."

"I thought," she added, laughing, "that I cooked my political goose when I enrolled in the Twenty-fourth with the Republicans, but now I believe I shall win. It would be more difficult if Francis L. Leman, the Democratic organization candidate, had won out in the primaries. Mr. Lynch is not so well known. I don't know much about him; he's a real estate man in Richmond."

District Called Democratic.

"Our present Senator, George Cromwell, is a Republican, but he is a popular man—was very popular when nominated—and the Democrat he ran against two years ago was handicapped by factional differences. Mr. Cromwell declined the nomination this year. Richmond may be called a Democratic district; Rockland went Republican last election by a very narrow margin."

"And yet you hope to win?"

"Because women will vote for me," said the candidate promptly. "Many Democratic women have told me that they are going to vote for me because I am a woman and because they believe women are needed in Albany to preserve the balance in regard to those measures, child welfare, education, &c., in which women are perhaps more vitally interested than men are."

There isn't a woman on Staten Island better known than Mrs. Francis E. Brewer. She was Assembly district leader there for the Woman Suffrage party for more

Normal and Happy, She Hopes to Take Her Daughter to Albany for Winter School Term

than four years. She was one of the organizers of the W. S. P. I remember her at the birth of the organization, up in the Metropolitan Life tower at Twenty-third street. She was one of Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt's first lieutenants, and her blooming face and hearty, ringing voice carried the message into many a home.

Suffrage was not her only interest. She wore out two pairs of pumps, she says, working for the public markets that Borough President McCormick tried to get installed when he was alive and reigning over there. And she has done a lot of social service work in connection with Public School 16.

Now she is lecturing in department stores and other centres in New York for the Woman Voters' Council. She has given 110 lectures since February. Some of them were at the Women's Health Home at Norton Point, the one founded by William Church Osborn. She said she had eighty mothers and 120 babies for audience; and she managed to make herself heard!

Did Some Tall Hustling.

The day I saw her she had come in to lecture and she told me she had dressed in ten minutes and caught the train in twenty. And yet everything seemed to be on her that ought to be on and everything in its right place.

"I was gardening up to the last minute," she said. "I've got a fine garden at our home at 41 Hamilton avenue, New Brighton. And I planted every seed and did every lick of the work myself."

"It's not so very large—forty by forty-two feet—but the quantities of vegetables we get there would astonish you. My tomatoes are eight feet high—the neighbors say ten feet, but being in politics I do not exaggerate."

"No, it wasn't hard to get the time. I'd come home from giving a lecture, skin up stairs, pull on my overalls and rush down to the garden. Yes, I wear overalls; the neighbors have got quite used to seeing me in them. They're really rompers, made on the same plan as a child's rompers, and they're the most comfortable things."

"Of course, since primary day I haven't done much work in the garden. But the gardening was pretty well over."

"Can you keep house?" I inquired anxiously.

"Certainly. Last year I put up 500 pint jars of fruit and 300 tumblers of jam and jelly. We had a lot left over, so I did less preserving this summer, but I canned corn and some fruit."

From now to election day Mrs. Brewer will probably leave the running of her house to the maid—whom she trained—and devote herself to wiping up Richmond and Rockland counties with her opponent.

"I expect to win by hard work," she told me. "I shall make a house to house canvass and of course speak a great deal. We're already at work, over at my house; I have a secretary and we're pegging away, getting out literature and laying the ground work. I don't intend to leave anything undone and I shall win."

Seeing by Ear

THERE is a machine, the invention of Fournier Dalbe, a French scientist, whereby blind persons are enabled to read an ordinary printed page of a book or a newspaper. The different letters are distinguished by the reader through a telephone receiver, which is attached to a little instrument that may be moved at will over the printed page.

The vital principle made use of in the construction of the instrument is the peculiar property of the metal selenium in strengthening or diminishing an electric current passing through it, according to the amount of light to which it is exposed.

The delicate adjustment of Prof. Dalbe's device allows of an easy differentiation of letters by the varying sounds in the telephone receiver as the detector is moved across a brightly illuminated page. Very little practice, it is said, is necessary for proficiency in the use of the instrument, which is known as the "type reading octophone."