

THROWING STONES

A Survey of Woman's Responsibilities in Votes for Women

PEOPLE who throw stones, whether they live in glass houses or not, are very apt to damage their own property, but many of us have an extremely vague idea as to what we really possess and our responsibility in this matter.

Two little boys were throwing stones at the electric lamps on a quiet residential street. They experienced a fearful joy when one of the shots struck the mark and a glass globe fell crashing to the sidewalk. They started to run, then hesitated; there was no one in sight, but me, and as I appeared to be a harmless individual, they took aim at a lamp on the opposite side of the street. One of the stones fell short, the other glanced past and struck a large plate glass window in the house beyond. No damage was done, but as the noise was loud enough to be heard by the inmates the little boy who threw the stone ran away as fast as he could, while his companion tried to look innocent, but quailed before my reproving glance and volunteered the information:

"I didn't throw it."

"No," I said, "but it was you who broke the electric light globe. Why didn't you run away then?"

"Oh, they don't belong to nobody!" he said. "No one but the 'cop' can touch you for breaking them."

"You wouldn't try to break a lamp that belonged to you?"

"No m'm."

"Or to your father and mother?"

"No m'm."

"But it does. If your father and mother and I, and all the other people who live in this town did not pay to have these lights put here and kept in repair, the streets would be dark all night. Your father is one of the owners of that lamp. You will be another, as soon as you are old enough to vote, and then, when naughty little boys break it, you will have to pay your share in buying a new one."

I don't suppose he understood me. Duty to the municipality or the state is a matter wholly overlooked in the very schools which are founded and supported by the state which compels parents to educate their children, and the little boys who throw stones at the street lamps are no worse than the grown people who throw them at the government and yet remain indifferent to their privilege and duty of voting and helping to make that government better.

A LARGE number of Canadian women strongly objected to being granted the vote, others devoted a great portion of their time to endeavoring to obtain it, while the vast majority remained totally indifferent, but now, willing or not, we have been given the provincial franchise in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario, while all who have near relatives serving in the army have received Dominion enfranchisement also. This duty and privilege comes to us at a critical moment when the honor of our country is at stake, when party politics have, for the first time in our history, been set aside.

In the exercise of the larger franchise we must not neglect the municipal vote, and to make sure of securing that every woman of 21 years or over who owns property assessed to the value of \$400 in cities or \$300 in towns, or \$100 in villages or townships, or who has an income of \$400, should personally see that her name is placed on the voters' list in the town hall before the 5th of December. The above qualifications apply to Ontario and vary somewhat in the other provinces, but it is important for each woman to ascertain what her voting privileges are, and to exercise them to the fullest extent. The voters' list is compiled from the assessment roll, and many names of women in receipt of small incomes, will be omitted if they do not take pains to see that they are registered. Married women who live in homes owned by, or rented in the name of, their husbands, can obtain a vote

By ESTELLE M. KERR

on property valued at more than \$800, if a new deed is drafted making her joint tenant of the property. A wife might also declare her housekeeping allowance as an income and pay taxes on it.

THE qualifications for the provincial vote are simpler, viz.: an adult suffrage vote with a short residential qualification, but that vote is not an immediate issue. The most important thing to consider is the coming Federal election when every woman who is the mother, wife, widow, daughter or sister of any one (man or woman) who is on active service overseas, who has died while on active service, or has been honorably discharged, may vote.

Enumerators are employed to compile this list, but they are often careless. Perhaps you may be out when they call, or amongst other inmates, your name may be overlooked. It is your duty then to see that the mistake is rectified. Don't talk about the slipshod methods of the government when mistakes occur, but do your best to set them right. In one household the mistress sadly reported that having neither husband, brother, or son of fighting age,

she was debarred from voting and quite forgot to mention the fact that her cook had a son in the trenches. The domestic servant, while diminishing numerically, is increasing in wealth and power, her social position has also improved since many women whose daughters have married and whose sons have gone overseas have now taken up this employment in which they not only get high wages, but are able to live well with no expense.

A canvasser for the Victory Loan who found that the lady

of the house was blind to both the advantages and the patriotic duty of that investment, asked to see the

maids. The mistress informed him that it would be of no use, but she called them in, and to her surprise the cook took 250 dollars worth of bonds and the housemaid \$100. At that the mistress, not wishing to be outdone by them, subscribed for \$2,000. The business girl is seldom overlooked at the time of patriotic collections, and she usually responds generously in spite of the increased cost of living. The domestic servant, untroubled by the soaring prices of foodstuffs, and removed from the daily temptations of the shops, usually has a tidy little bank account but, unlike the business girl, she seldom reads the papers and does not realize her duty as a citizen. She must be stimulated to use the franchise.

WOMEN students of political economy at our universities are increasing rapidly, but education in civics should begin at an early age and a text book on that subject which, through the efforts of the "Daughters of the Empire" will soon be introduced in the public schools, is sure to be a great benefit to the community.

The average school child believes that his is the finest country on the face of the globe, but what makes that country a good one to live in, is not the climate, nor the scenery, nor the wealth; it is the

government, and he should be taught at a very early age that it will be both his duty and privilege later to assist in the making of its laws. He is totally ignorant of the principles of democracy and is only vaguely aware of the existence of such a word; he is much more apt to hear of Conservatives and Liberals and his love of taking sides, instituted by sports, drives him into party politics. When I was at school I had the idea that a politician was necessarily dishonest and when a young man of my acquaintance ran for alderman I thought he had debased himself. It is just possible that some of the children of the present day are equally ignorant, never having been taught that the service of the state is a man's greatest privilege. We must remove this impression by seeing that the best type of men are elected for office.

SINCE our own children are so ignorant, what can we hope from the children of our foreign population, who are increasing far more rapidly than those of Anglo-Saxon derivation? How will we prepare them for future citizenship and voting privileges? How can we inculcate in them our national ideals? In the old country where the race is far less mixed, the teaching of patriotism is considered a vital problem, and surely with us it is doubly important. In their efforts to supply this need the Welsh Board of Education has published a book, on the cover of which the word "Patriotism" appears in impressive isolation.

"In 'our country,'" we read, "every boy and girl, every man and woman, has a share; in serving 'our country' every one must take a part. The symbol of the unity of the scattered peoples who belong to 'our country' is the Union flag. That unity shelters us and keeps the British Empire together. A proof of what we owe to our unity under that flag is the security we enjoy to-day under its splendid protection."

"This, then, is 'our country,' to which we are proud to belong; this the land which we must be willing to serve: these the liberties we should be eager to defend, even to the last drop of our blood. In serving and defending 'our country' we believe we are doing service to the human race. The British Empire—'our country' in its widest sense—does not consist of subjugated nations; it is the home of free peoples: therein lies its strength and the ground of our pride in it. We must see to it that we keep it free: we must strive to make it better."

Here is another admirable passage which follows a list of some abominable acts by the Germans:—

"No man, and no nation, imbued with the true spirit of Patriotism would practise or approve them. Not enough to think we are right in our conduct towards other nations; we must be sure that we do right—must, by our high standard of conduct, convince other nations that we 'play the game' fairly."

Again:—

"A hundred years ago our fathers had to face a terrible danger—as we do now—that of seeing their liberties swept away by Napoleon, whose armies threatened Europe as Germany's do to-day. They rose up and fought until they won, and, by their sacrifices, they gave their children and grandchildren safety for a hundred years. It is now our task to do the same—our fathers' voices are calling to us, 'We did it for you—you do it for your children'; that is why we are at war now. These hundred years of security, for which our fathers paid a heavy price, have given us increased wealth and comforts."

The Welsh Department acts in all sincerity, for, as the Welsh proverb says: "Hateful is the man who does not love the land in which he was reared."

