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THE COLORED WOMAN VOTER

We have more than once stated in these columns our belief that the colored women will be less easily intimidated and kept out of the right of voting than the colored men have been. This has been realized all along by the opponents of Suffrage, especially those in the South. Senator John Sharp Williams said on the floor of the Senate, "Negro women will not be as easily handled as Negro men have been."

But as courageous and determined as the colored women may be, they cannot succeed even as voters unless they have the necessary information and knowledge. They should begin everywhere at once to learn all the preliminary steps to voting and to get the actual practice of marking a ballot. To this end study classes ought to be formed in every community. The groups that make up these classes ought not to be too large. The persons in each community who already have a knowledge of the machinery of government and politics should get together and begin to organize these groups.

Careful attention should be given to each section of the city or the county. The study classes should rotate from church to church, from hall to hall and from home to home. Every colored woman who can possibly be reached should be brought into these classes. The work can be made quite interesting if the leaders will thoroughly prepare themselves. The classes might open with twenty to thirty-minute talks on the structure of our government, from the town on up through county and state to the national. There should also be talks on the machinery of politics from that of the precinct up to that of the national convention. However, the leaders of the classes ought to avoid any temptation to display how much they know about these subjects; rather should they strive to make everything they say as simple and understandable as possible. They should get down to the A. B. C. of it.

Then there should come painstaking instruction in the requirements and qualifications for voting in the community and the state. Information regarding registration and the places for registration, about marking a ballot and the proper polling place at which to vote should be given.

It may be that those who would like to begin and carry out the work outlined above do not feel that they possess the requisite knowledge and information to do it as well as it should be done. Any such lack may be easily supplied: The National American Woman's Suffrage Association began the publication of a comprehensive course in "The Woman Citizen" in the issue of April 3, 1920. Each lesson is followed by an amplification of the subject from the program of lectures delivered before the School for Political Education, conducted under the direction of Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt. State laws vary; party customs and usage vary in the different states. In these lessons will be found the laws and political usages for each state. "The Woman Citizen" is published monthly in New York City.

The New York League for Women Voters

has also issued a splendid course of study for groups, each lesson being prepared by an authority on the subject treated. These lessons are made very simple, but are none the less extremely interesting. The course embraces the following topics:

Politics and Woman's Interest;
Town and County Government;
State Government;
National Government;
Political Parties;
How Candidates are Nominated;
Elections;
Direct Primary or Convention: Which?

These lessons are issued in pamphlets which are sold at ten cents a copy or fifty for three dollars; they are, therefore, within the reach of all.

This matter of forming groups for civic and political education offers just now the most useful and interesting service that well-informed colored women can undertake. Of course, there is no reason why they should not permit the men to assist them in it.—New York Age.

THE HON. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who is running for the vice-presidency on the Democratic ticket, gained considerable publicity by saying in a recent speech that the United States could outvote Great Britain in the League of Nations on account of the Latin-American republic which it controlled. He stated that while he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy he held two of these republics and their votes in his vest pocket. He added in a burst of indiscretion that he himself wrote the constitution of Haiti.

Colored voters will be interested in the assertion of Mr. Roosevelt that he was the author of a new constitution which was forced upon a neighboring, friendly and formerly independent republic. But, after all, Mr. Roosevelt's assertion may be a bit of boasting. Perhaps he did have a hand in shaping Haiti's new constitution. Perhaps he only approved what was done. Naturally the author of the work did not sign his name to it; and Mr. Roosevelt is now denying that he ever made any claims to the authorship.

However, there is another document to which Mr. Roosevelt's official signature is affixed that will be of greater local interest to colored American voters than the constitution of Haiti. This document was made public four years ago, to be exact, August 8, 1916. At the time it was widely commented on by the colored press of the country, but, naturally no particular importance was given to its official sponsor, for he was not then asking American voters to make him vice-president.

Today, this document will have such a new interest for colored citizens that we reproduce it here in full exactly as it was issued in official form and promulgated by Mr. Roosevelt.

COPY

OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM FROM THE
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY Ca.
9353-171 O-Si Sent Aug. 8, 1916.

There are forwarded herewith, mimeograph copies of a letter from the Superintendent of the State, War and Navy Department Buildings, dated August 7, relative to the allotment of toilets in the State, War and Navy Department Buildings for the use of women, white men, and colored men. These copies are for the information

and guidance of the bureaus and offices concerned.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

COPY

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
STATE, WAR AND NAVY DEPARTMENT BUILDINGS

Washington, August 7, 1916.

The Chief Clerk,
Navy Department.

Dear Sir:—

Beginning Wednesday morning, August 9, 1916, the toilets in the State, War and Navy Department Building will be allotted for use as toilets as follows:

FOR WOMEN: 1st Floor—1A; 2nd Floor—2B; 3rd Floor—3B; 4th Floor—4B.

FOR WHITE MEN: Sub-basement—0A; Basement—B, C, D, E, F, G, H; 1st Floor—1B, 1C, 1D; 2nd Floor—2A, 2B, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2H; 3rd Floor—3A, 3C, 3D, 3F, 3G, 3H; 4th Floor—4A, 4C, 4D, 4E, 4G, 4H, 5th Floor—5G, 5H.

FOR COLORED MEN: Sub-basement—0D, 0H; Basement—A; 1st Floor—1E; 2nd Floor—2G; 3rd Floor, 3E; 4th Floor—4E.

Please note that this assignment does not prevent the use before 9 A. M. by either white or colored messengers or laborers of the nearest men's toilet equipped with a slop sink for filling and washing water bottles, slop jars, etc.

It is requested that you have the necessary instructions issued to those connected with your department. The Watch force of the building has been directed to render every assistance in enforcing this order.

These toilets have been reconstructed at considerable expense to the government and are now in excellent condition. The hearty cooperation and assistance of all is asked in an effort to maintain them in that condition.

Very respectfully,

WM. M. HARTS, Colonel U. S. A., Supt.

As we said above, perhaps Franklin D. Roosevelt did have a hand in writing the new constitution of Haiti, and perhaps he did not; but there is no doubt about the fact that four years ago he did promulgate an order regulating the use of toilets.—New York Age.

Not since the organization of the county of King of Washington have the county commissioners done as effective team work in the interest of the taxpayers as they have for the past two years. When Claude C. Ramsay consented to be a candidate for commissioner he did so with the full determination of revolutionizing the workings of the board and he has succeeded in his determination beyond even his own sanguine expectations, but before attempting anything he had a heart to heart talk with Tom Dobson, who became a member of the board two years after Ramsay had been elected, and Dobson acquiesced in Ramsay's determination and then the two of them got their heads together and for the past two years have been running the affairs of King County on business principles and as a result the financial affairs were never before in such perfect condition. Of course the taxpayers and voters appreciate the efforts of both Ramsay and Dobson as members of the board and will show their appreciation by reelecting them in November that they may continue their good work. You, however, can not vote for either of them unless you are registered and if you have not registered then you should do so before October 14th.