

Kansas' Four Legisladies Are Home-Makers

Not Only Have the Fair Voters Been Shown How to Mark Ballots—They Have Been Instructed How to Scratch Them!

WHAT woman will do with the vote is no longer a matter of speculation. During the month immediately preceding the first national election in which women were permitted the right of franchise, the National Good Government Bureau mailed out approximately 40,000 Good Citizenship leaflets to women inquirers. One hundred thousand political platforms and leaflets were supplied them by the Democratic and Republican parties.

Many states, acceding to popular demand, had their own bureaus. Especially noteworthy is the achievement of Missouri. The Missouri State League of Women conducted a political information campaign which embraced the sending out of explanatory information concerning the marking of ballots and the scratching of them; and the conduct of a political information bureau which really informed. This bureau kept on file records concerning the candidates from each party, the information being obtained through questionnaires sent to the candidates themselves. These records told where each candidate stood on questions vital to women and children, and something of his record as office-holder. Even his religious affiliation was given.

Thus through this nation-wide informative movement and its resultant good upon the election which followed, woman proved her fitness for the ballot, and the whole has been, as some one trenchantly put it, "A wonderful contribution to forward citizenship."

But the holding of political office by women, particularly such office as has to do with legislation, is, comparatively speaking, as yet in its tentative stage. The states have proceeded cautiously here. But two women have been elected to seats in the Lower House of Congress. No state has had a woman representative in its Upper House.

Conservative Connecticut leads with five women members in its legislature. Kansas and Colorado come next with four each. California and Utah each have three. New Hampshire, New Jersey and Oklahoma have two apiece. Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Vermont, North Carolina and Washington each ventured one. Thus it will be seen that less than half the states have woman representation.

Why this notable lack? Is woman afraid of the venture for herself? Do men fear that she will spring too much sob stuff, or over-much freak legislation?

The women members of the Kansas legislature may be said to be "safe and sane" on these lines. Kansas "tried it out" with one woman member last term and liked the brand she picked so well that three more were added this year.

A Kansas newspaper woman happily coined the term "legisladies," as distinguishing the Kansas women members from the male members of the House. The name fits. They are ladies. They are essentially feminine. All are home-makers, who put home first. They have attempted no freak legislation. One of them even voted for the repeal of the state's drastic anticigarette law, on the grounds, not wholly feminine—many male members accounted for their votes in the same way—that it "didn't work in her town." One complains that the Topeka sidewalks hinder her in the wearing of high heels. Another begged a member addicted to lengthy flights of oratory, to let up a little that she "might get home in time to set her hens." Still another boasts of the fact that she helped to pick more than \$400 worth of strawberries from her home garden last year.

At least two of the Kansas legisladies have judicial minds. One acquired hers by association with her lawyer husband. The other is a lawyer. Miss Nellie Cline studied law with her father, and was admitted to the Pawnee County bar in 1912. Although her county gave 1,000 majority to the opposition ticket, Miss Cline defeated one of the most prominent attorneys of her county.

While a number of women have been admitted to practice in the state courts, they have confined their activities largely to office service. Miss Cline is the daughter of G. Polk Cline, one of the most widely known criminal lawyers of Western Kansas, and was associated with him in the firm of Cline and Cline. She is a brilliant young woman as a first-er. She was the first woman in Kansas to practice before the supreme court of the state, the first to appear on the program of the Kansas Bar Association, the first and only woman Democratic member elected to the House, and the first unmarried woman to sit in the legislative body in Kansas. Although she possesses many fighting traits inherited from her father who is a veteran Democratic leader and old-time legal warrior, she brings no fads nor isms to her work. Rather her interest lies in the problems of good roads and transportation, as related to her section of the state, which is a garden spot for wheat-growing. She has been given place on many prominent committees, where her legal knowledge has proved of much help.

Mrs. Minnie J. Minnich, of Sumner County, is the

By LILLIE GILLILAND McDOWELL

wife of H. J. Minnich, of Wellington, a local Santa Fe engineer. Mrs. Minnich was born and raised on a ranch in New Mexico and received her education in the public schools of Raton and at the Ladies' College, Liberty, Missouri. Immediately upon finishing the course here, she became her father's assistant and associate in business on the New Mexico ranch. Needless to say, the live stock interests of her section have in her a warm supporter. She has never run for public office before, but her fine business training and experience stand her in good stead in her legislative work, and she is honored with a place on many important committees, such as employes, public utilities, state institutions, cities of the second class, and agriculture, of which latter she is secretary. Mrs. Minnich be-

school. She worked faithfully during the World War in the various local activities. She is now serving her third term as recording secretary of the state W. C. T. U. She was president of the Kansas Federation of Women's Clubs for two years. She organized a number of counties in Northern Kansas in Belgian and Near-East Relief work, and is now state director of woman's work for Near East Relief.

Mrs. Walker has a keen mind and sound business ability, and serves on many important committees. Not a brilliant orator, she yet has the happy faculty of summing up the situation in a few words, in striking contrast to the jazz oratory so often found among men members.

Mrs. Walker mothered the State Bonus Bill, of which she is joint author, and which has won favorable comment over the state. It not only provides for the soldiers of the late war, but for the Spanish-American veterans as well.

Mrs. Minnie J. Grinstead, of Seward County, was elected in 1918 as the first woman member of the Kansas legislature. The male members, while scrupulously courteous, did not particularly welcome the innovation. They were afraid the woman member would be "fussy" and full of fads and isms. But the sound sense she displayed throughout the trying ordeal of her term as the only woman member, won not only for herself a warm welcome to her second term, but for her woman colleagues as well when they entered upon their first term.

Mrs. Grinstead is the wife of Judge Grinstead, former county attorney of Seward County, and now judge of the Thirty-fifth District. She has a wide grasp on public affairs. She is an ex-school teacher, a forceful speaker, a licensed evangelist, and has been lecturer for the National W. C. T. U. In the House she has never from the first sidestepped responsibility. She is active in debate and has introduced her full share of bills. On several occasions she has served the House as relief speaker. Although the mother of four children, who with her husband were in Topeka throughout her first term as legislator, and for whom she acted as housekeeper, she never once was missing from her seat at morning roll call.

Mrs. Grinstead's first campaign was full of thrills. She opposed one farmer, a real estate merchant, who had served the previous term in the legislature, and had proved to be "ferminal" every "fad or ism" that came up, and had voted "no" on every question save one—that of the segregation of Negro school children in cities of the second class. Mrs. Grinstead stood pat for every measure she thought right—and they were many, as might be expected from her previous career. She was elected on the Republican ticket by a small majority, but was given the second term without opposition.

Mrs. Grinstead holds almost the record for service on committees in the House, especially such as relate to welfare and reform measures, and is the only woman in the United States who ever served on a legislative judiciary committee.

But all has not been clear sailing for these women members on the legislative seas. Mrs. Minnich has found herself between two waves. Backed in her campaign by the Railway Brotherhoods, they are now protesting more or less mildly against the firm stand she has taken for the industrial court. Mrs. Walker is particularly good at checkmating attempted put-overs in legislation, in which matter even guileless Kansas is not guiltless. This wins for her, of course, some passing resentment. Miss Cline is keen in debate and repartee, and no man likes to be

worsted by a woman. Mrs. Grinstead introduced a bill making it possible for a married woman who might be hurt in an accident to collect her own damages, instead of the money going to her husband, as under the present law. This bill brought upon her an avalanche of letters, some in praise, many condemnatory. A woman from the effete East wrote: "For shame! Suppose I lived in Kansas and should hurt my hand while at my housework. I could then sue my own husband for damages."

The bill, being too advanced even for advanced Kansas, was killed.

Mrs. Grinstead also mothered the Girls' Dormitory Bill for state schools. In an eloquent plea for the measure, she spoke of the possibility of the allotment provided for covering the cost of a kitchenette for the various groups of apartments, in which kitchenettes the girls could make fudge. But the farmer members would have none of this "tomfoolery," and the bill was killed, whereat Mrs. Grinstead, in a fit of temporary discouragement, exclaimed, "Oh, fudge! what's the use?"

But on the whole, the Kansas legisladies look upon their work as well worth while, since it has many compensations to offset its trials.



Above—MISS NELLIE CLINE
From Pawnee County.

Above—MRS. IDA M. WALKER
From Norton County.

Below—MRS. MINNIE J. GRINSTEAD
From Seward County.

MRS. MINNIE J. MINNICH
From Sumner County.

believes that each member of the House should for the most part confine his activities to forwarding the interests of the section he represents. The bills she has offered for passage have all been of this type. One, which has attracted wide attention, and which doubtless other sections will copy, is known as the Wellington Foundation Bill, and was passed without opposition. It provides for the lending of money by the city at a low rate to those wishing to build homes. Thirty such homes have already been completed since the bill was passed. Wealthy citizens have donated liberally to the fund provided for in the bill and the city is just finishing a successful \$25,000 drive to add to it.

Mrs. Ida M. Walker, of Norton, is a newspaper woman. She is an associate editor of the *Real Westerner*, of which her husband, C. B. Walker, is editor. Her department, "On the Impulse," is widely quoted in the Middle West.

Mrs. Walker was born in a sod house in Western Kansas, in which section she has lived ever since. Thus she is a real westerner, imbued with the breezy, progressive ideas of the West. She began her career in her teens as teacher in the country schools. Later she taught in various city schools of her section. In her home town she has served on the local library board, as president of the city federation of clubs, and is now superintendent of the Methodist Sunday