

AL/300

Committee of Women Graduates of the Scottish Universities (Parliamentary Franchise).

THE Election of Parliamentary Representatives of the Scottish Universities gives rise to a question of fundamental interest to women.

This is the first contested election in the Scottish Universities since women became Graduates, and the enactments which regulate the election of Scottish University Representatives are different from those which regulate any other Parliamentary Election, so that the case is different from any in which a woman has hitherto made claim to be a Parliamentary voter.

Contrary to general belief women are not expressly excluded by statute from voting at Parliamentary Elections, and the ground for denying this right in previous cases has been founded on custom.

The Women Graduates of each Scottish University are on the Register of the General Council of that University, which is the Register of Parliamentary voters for the University candidates. The voting is done by letter, and the Women Graduates hold that voting papers should be sent to them as Members of Council. These have been applied for and refused.

They consider that an appeal by Women Graduates would tend to rouse public sympathy, whereas inaction on their part at the present juncture would prove prejudicial to Women Suffrage in general. A Committee of Women Graduates of all the Scottish Universities has been formed and has resolved to take legal steps to establish their claim.

They consider that if the question is to be finally decided, they must be prepared to face full legal proceedings, anything short of this being inconclusive and unsatisfactory. If it can be established that one group of women are competent to vote, it alters the whole aspect of the Franchise for women. It therefore seems advisable that this opportunity of bringing forward a good test case should not be lost.

To carry on the action £1000 is estimated as required, and it would help materially if this sum were forthcoming within two months.

As this is a question which affects not only Women Graduates, but all women, those who are peculiarly interested in the movement for extending the Franchise to women are earnestly invited to send contributions. From societies and individuals sums of from 1/- to £50 have already been received.

FRANCES H. SIMSON, M.A.

In name of the Executive Committee.

Donations may be sent and cheques crossed "British Linen Co., West End Branch, Edinburgh," made payable to Miss J. CHRYSTAL MACMILLAN, M.A., B.Sc., Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, Corstorphine Hill House, by Murrayfield, Midlothian.