

long or close-fitting cloak, for nothing spoils a gown so much as wearing it beneath a mantle.

Tea-jackets are one of the prettiest novelties of our modern days; they can be worn with any skirt for either morning or dinner wear. Louis XVI. brocades, plain soft silks, striped velvets, soft brocades, are all used for them; but the colourings are generally faint and subdued. The jackets are lavishly trimmed with lace, the sleeves reach to the elbow, and lace borders the basque, and the paniers too, if the basque, as often happens, is caught up in that form. Sometimes embroidered velvet is used, and then the jacket is made with flap pockets, turn-back cuffs, and an embroidered satin waistcoat. Occasionally a wide sash of soft silk is tied low down beneath the waist, and has a huge bow and fringed ends at one side.

French people seek their fashions far afield, and there is hardly any time or style which they do not

repeat. Old Venetian modes are modernised, and velvet skirts and high stiff bodices, with ruffs and bow, embroidered vests and petticoats, which might have graced the shores of the Adriatic when Venice claimed the sea for its bride. Paul Veronese, Raphael, Vandyke, and Holbein, have all furnished fashions, which are now copied; and the slashed gowns have a revival wholly or in part. Of course evening dress affords most scope for such vagaries. The Directoire, however, is first favourite, and white sashes and belts have appeared in leather with elaborate metal mounts. The embroidery on such dresses is so open that a colour is laid beneath.

Shoes are worn low and pointed, showing embroidered stockings, which match the bouquets in the patterns of dress stuffs; and odd gloves have been often seen, though it is to be hoped they will not be generally in favour, such follies detracting from personal dignity.

THE NEW COUNTY PARLIAMENTS OF ENGLAND

FOR the first time in its history every county in England and Wales now possesses an elected governing body, called the County Council. The change from the old order to the new has been effected very quietly, but it is so real and extensive that it may well be called a "bloodless revolution." Down to the present time all our county affairs have been managed by county magistrates sitting in Quarter Sessions, and it is not denied that, on the whole, these duties have been discharged efficiently and economically. But Justices of the Peace are appointed by the Lord Chancellor, and though they may not have been unmindful of the ratepayers' interests, they have been under no obligation to consider the ratepayers' opinions or wishes. In these days, however, those who pay the piper claim the right to call the tune; and it was to meet this claim that the Local Government Act, 1888, was passed.

The Act occupies one hundred pages of the Statute Book, and it would have been much longer if its scope had been as extensive as that of the Bill which was first placed before Parliament. The original idea was to transfer to the County Councils, and to the District Councils proposed to be formed under them, most, if not all, of the duties now discharged by the Poor Law Guardians, licensing authorities, vestries, and other bodies. For the present such complaints as Mr. Goschen once made, that in one parish he had received eight rate-papers for a total demand of 12s. 4d., will continue to be heard. But the ratepayers will reap great advantage from the operation of the new law; and the governing bodies created by it are endowed with powers and burdened with responsibilities almost as large and varied as those undertaken by Parliament itself.

Every county has at least one Council, but some counties have more than one. Yorkshire has a separate Council for each of its three Ridings, and Lincolnshire has one for each of its divisions. Suffolk and Sussex are likewise allowed dual Councils—one for the eastern and one for the western division of each county. The Isle of Ely has a Council to itself, quite independently of the rest of Cambridgeshire; and the Soke of Peterborough enjoys the same privilege, although it is part of the county of Northampton.

The County Councils vary considerably as to numbers. The Act itself fixes the number for London—two Councillors for each Parliamentary borough or division, and four for the City of London. The Local Government Board is empowered by the Act to settle the number of Councillors for all other counties. Yorkshire has 210 members—90 for the West Riding Council, and 61 and 59 for the other Riding Councils respectively. Rutland has only 21 members, while Lancashire has 105, the other Councils varying in number between 50 and 60 members.

For electoral purposes every county is mapped out into divisions, and one Councillor is elected for each division. The County Council is not properly constituted until a County Chairman and County Aldermen have been elected. The number of Aldermen is one-third the number of Councillors, and both Chairman and Aldermen may be elected either from among the Councillors, or from those outside the Council who are qualified to be Councillors. All Councillors are elected for three years, and they retire together. County Aldermen are elected for six years, one-half retiring at the end of three years, and the other half at the end of the six years, the half to retire first being determined by ballot at the date of their election. If a Councillor is elected to and accepts the office of Alderman he vacates that of Councillor, and

another election is held to fill up the vacancy. The County Aldermen for London must not exceed one-sixth of the whole number of County Councillors.

A candidate for the County Council need not live in the county which he aspires to represent, but he must not live more than fifteen miles beyond it; and for London, his abode must be within seven miles of the borough or division he stands for. The persons eligible for election as Councillors are:—

1. All those having the burgess qualification.
2. Peers owning property in the county.
3. All those registered as Parliamentary voters in respect of the ownership of property in the county.
4. £10 occupiers.
5. Clergymen and other ministers of religion.

No one, however, can be a Councillor who holds any office or place of profit in the gift or disposal of the Council; neither can a partner in any firm employed by the Council or under contract with it. This disqualification does not apply to a lease, sale, or purchase of land, or to an agreement for the loan of money, or to the proprietor of any newspaper in which the Council's advertisements appear. A Councillor may be a shareholder in a company which contracts with the Council, but he cannot vote or take part in the discussion of any matter in which the company has any pecuniary interest.

By the County Electors Act, which was passed in connection with the Local Government Act, the burgess franchise of municipal boroughs was extended to county electors outside municipal boroughs, the effect being that all persons on the Parliamentary register, *with the exception of lodgers*, and with the *addition of women ratepayers*, are entitled to vote as county electors. The first election of County Councils throughout England and Wales was fixed by the Act to take place in January, but not earlier than the 14th, the exact date to be arranged by the Returning Officer, and notice of the election to be given by him in December. A period not exceeding six days must be fixed between nomination and election.

The nomination of a candidate is a very important matter, and must be made in strict accordance with the terms of the Act. He must be proposed and seconded by two electors, and "supported" by eight electors, all of whom must be electors for the particular division for which the candidate stands.

The election must be conducted by ballot, the poll being open from eight a.m. to eight p.m., as in the case of Parliamentary and municipal elections. The costs of the Returning Officer are to be defrayed as County Council expenses, and they are not to exceed £10 for every 1,000 electors. Each candidate's expenditure is limited to £25, with an additional amount of 3d. for each elector above 500 on the register.

The first meeting of the newly-elected Councillors was fixed by the Act to be held on the second Thursday after the election, and their first business the election of one of their number to act as Chairman of that meeting and of the one following. At the second meeting they are empowered to elect Aldermen, and thus constitute the Provisional Council, who are

then directed to proceed to elect as their Chairman "a person qualified to be Chairman of the County Council." The Provisional Council must next take the necessary steps for bringing the provisions of the Act into full operation; they must make arrangements for "taking over" the offices and officers of the Quarter Sessions, and in general make adequate preparation for entering upon the full discharge of their duties as the County Council on the day named in the Act. That day is the 1st of April, but on the application of the Provisional Council a day earlier or later than that may be appointed by the Local Government Board.

The Act provides that the various officers appointed by the Quarter Sessions, or by any justices of the county—from the Clerk of the Peace and County Treasurer down to public analysts and Inspectors of Weights and Measures, &c.—shall forthwith become the officers and servants of the County Council. The machinery of local government will in this way be kept in working order, and no violent wrench will be experienced in the transition from an irresponsible to a responsible and representative governing power.

Within the limits available in these pages it is impossible to set forth adequately all the powers which are entrusted to the County Councils, and the important functions they will have to perform. They enter at once upon a most valuable heritage. All county buildings, asylums for pauper lunatics, reformatory and industrial schools, county bridges and roads, pass into their legal possession and under their absolute control. They have transferred to them the administrative business of the Courts of Quarter Sessions; they have to make, assess, and levy all county rates, police rates, and highway rates, and see to the proper application and expenditure thereof. They can appoint Medical Officers of Health if they see fit, and County Coroners must now be elected by the County Councils. They may, with the consent of the Local Government Board, borrow on the security of the County Fund and of the revenues of the Council, such sums as may be required for purchasing lands or buildings, and for any other purpose authorised by the Act. The division of the county into polling districts for the purpose of Parliamentary elections, the appointment of places of election, revision courts, and the costs of registration, are also matters transferred to them. The registration of the rules of scientific societies, the registration of charitable gifts, the certifying and recording of places of religious worship, and the confirmation and record of the rules of loan societies are comprised henceforth among the duties of County Councils. County Councils are also authorised to make advances to any persons or bodies of persons, corporate or otherwise, in aid of the emigration or colonisation of inhabitants of the county, with a guarantee for repayment of such advances from a local authority in the county or the Government of any colony.

The proceeds of certain Licence Duties, and a portion of the Probate Duties, which have hitherto been received by the Imperial Government, are now

to be transferred to the County Councils, the amount estimated to be received from these sources being about five and a half millions; while, on the other hand, certain grants in aid of Local Taxation, amounting to two and a half millions, which have heretofore been paid out of the National Taxes, are now withdrawn.

The vexed question of the control of the police is disposed of under the Act by the appointment of a Joint Committee of the Quarter Sessions and County Council, the Committee consisting of an equal number of justices appointed by Quarter Sessions, and of members of the County Council appointed by that Council. Besides these great, varied, and most

important tasks directly imposed upon the County Councils by the Local Government Act, there are certain other powers which may be entrusted to them under Provisional Orders issued by the Local Government Board. In this way the County Councils may have transferred to them many of the powers and duties now belonging to the Privy Council, the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, the Education Department, and other public authorities. Thus the County Councils may soon become, without further legislation, real County Parliaments, to a seat in which the wisest and most capable of British citizens may well aspire.

J. T. G.

OUR NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSEWIFERY.

SECTION IV. — COOKERY.

HOME-MADE BREAD.



WE are quite ready to admit that it is far easier now-a-days to obtain good, wholesome bread than it was a few years ago, and that it is not necessary to make and bake bread at home in order to insure purity; but as the improved gas-stoves, as well as cooking-ranges generally, afford every facility to those who are

anxious to acquire the art of presenting at table a home-made loaf, we will endeavour to make the process clear to the least initiated of our readers.

A word as to the flour; this, whether white or whole meal, should be of the best quality; not the least of its advantages is that it will absorb more moisture, good flour being dry; hence, in the long run, it is more economical than inferior qualities, which feel damp and sticky, smell unpleasantly, and produce bread only distinguished by its "ropiness;" that is, when cut, it has a "stringy" appearance.

Whole meal bread—which, as its name implies, is made from flour from which nothing has been removed—will, in the majority of cases, be found more agreeable, as well as easier of digestion, if finely ground; sometimes the coarser grain proves irritating to the stomach. A very nice loaf may be made from white flour and whole meal in equal parts, especially suitable for those who hitherto have eaten white bread only, and contemplate the substitution of brown; as the latter will sometimes prove unpalatable if the change be made too suddenly.

Before giving any actual recipe for bread we would impress upon our readers that the following rules must be carried out in order to insure success; that is, so far as fermented bread (made from yeast) is concerned; the unfermented kinds require totally different treatment. Dried yeast, French or German, is now obtainable in most towns; a brand known as "pure rye yeast" is good and reliable.

Rule I.—The yeast must be fresh, sweet, and crumbly, *i.e.*, it should drop from the fingers freely; if it sticks and smells sour it will not make good bread.

Rule II.—Never add water to the yeast without "creaming" it first (as hereafter directed); hot water kills it, and cold water chills it; hence, in either case, its rising properties are diminished.

Rule III.—Pass the flour through a sieve, and in cold weather let it stand near the fire for an hour or two; the vessel used for making the dough in ought also to be warm and perfectly dry.

Rule IV.—The water used for mixing the dough must be tepid, namely, a mixture of one-third boiling and two-thirds cold water; a hap-hazard trial with the fingers is no test at all when accuracy is a desideratum.

Rule V.—Salt should be mixed with the dry flour; if added to the yeast and water it checks the rising.

Rule VI.—A warm even temperature is very necessary during the rising of the dough, for if allowed to get cold it is liable to be heavy, and *too much* heat sours it, and causes it to harden on the surface.

Rule VII.—The exact measure of water that a given weight of flour will absorb cannot be stated, as flour varies so much; but a general rule is a pint and a half for a quarter of a stone of flour.

Rule VIII.—The softer the dough (so that it can be handled easily without sticking) the nicer will be the loaf, and it will remain moist longer than if made from stiff dough.

Now for directions for a trial "batch," which shall be a small one; the ingredients required being half a stone of flour, two ounces of dried yeast, a level table-spoonful of salt, a dessert-spoonful of moist (white) sugar, and tepid water—quantity sufficient, *about* three pints.

Mode.—Put into a large vessel the flour and salt, and make a hollow in the centre, leaving some flour at the bottom—this forms the bed; in a separate basin put the crumbled yeast, add the sugar, and rub them