



Conducted by "ISOBEL"

TWO INTERESTING LETTERS

NOTE.—Readers of Fireside will be pleased to find popular subjects treated with such ability and broad-mindedness as may be found in the two letters appended.

These subjects are not just mere talk and pastime, but real live questions, and it behooves every reader of this page to ponder upon these matters and take an active personal interest in affairs that concern the community so deeply. This page is open to discussions, which, of course, means expressions of opinions on either side of any question.

NEGROES UNWELCOME

Editor, Fireside:—I see in late issues of your paper much discussion of subjects bearing on women's rights, with a vote inviting men and women of the provinces to join. I would like to contribute. As regards negro immigrants, I am glad to note that some of the women are alive to that social danger which is one of the greatest they will ever have to face. Any honest white man who has substantial experience of negroes living under mono-gamie white laws, with a police system which, though it often punishes, as often fails to prevent, will strive to keep his women kind out of such a country entirely, for it contains a danger of unlimited terror for his women and of the destruction of his family prosperity.

Next I see a proposition that women be allowed to take homesteads on the same terms as men. This is not at all without precedent and it has some strong points to recommend it. It is one of the troubles of the prairies that a one-quarter section of land is much too small for a family to thrive upon. The proper size for a farm did not trouble the early settlers, who all looked to the public range for their grazing and their hay, as many do still, while using their homestead for residence, tillage and winter pasture; nor does it depend on the principles which interest a commercial government; nor on any science of surveying. It depends on the natural condition of its surface and especially on the rainfall. The tough prairie sod requires four heavy horses to break it up, and a certain complement of milk cows and other stock are necessary for profitable settlement, which requires more hay, grazing and crop than an average one-quarter section will produce. The land system further hinders the settler severely by making it difficult or impossible for him to purchase additional land adjoining his homestead, and the only relief that as yet shows on his horizon, lies in this proposal that his wife or daughter should homestead an adjoining quarter section on the same terms as himself. Beyond this there are women who are capable of breaking and making a farm for themselves and against whom there is no sound reason for holding a barrier short of their unfitness for military service. It is true we are not militarized today, but we see that Australia is so, and that we may be tomorrow, therefore, it would be reasonable to require that one man (father, husband, guardian, etc.), be necessary for each four homesteads granted. Further, since annexation is exposed as a live issue, it would be well to provide that the marriage of women homesteaders to foreign subjects involves the sale of improvements to a British subject homesteading or the forfeiture of the homesteads. Under such conditions it would be an act of justice to our women and help to the country by building up strong farm settlements.

Next, I note in your issue of April 19, your report of a deputation of women to the Manitoba government and of their meeting with the law amendments committee. It is impossible for readers to know whether your report gives a true idea of the government and the law committee in the matter, but, taking it as it stands, it suggests that they have

no desire at all to hear or to consider the views of the women on the matter, but merely to make pretence of observing the classical injunction and alternam patrem and to bluff them and use them with contempt. Assuming that the government (men) hold rightfully the position of lawgivers to an inferior class of society it is still desirable to the interests of justice and public policy to discover the opinions and the feelings of the class governed and to order the law in such manner as shall relieve them of all oppression and of all sense of unfairness. The subject would be much simplified by the appointment of a public trustee for all estates, and for a permanent court to revise their disposal whether under will or not, and to which every widow, minor or other claimant could appeal without the necessary intervention of a lawyer, and without cost, beyond legacy duty. Other countries (Roman-Dutch law) provide for widows and children, why not Canada? It seems that the lawyers have, in some respects, secured a monopoly of law, having obtained such a position that they can manufacture laws and administer them to suit their own purposes. Evidently the widow is at their mercy and like other social orders of which drastic reforms have been found necessary, they are in a position they have no right to occupy. There are altogether too many lawyers in politics and it would be well for the women to work for the removal of all lawyers from parliaments. It has always been evident that military, naval and civil service men should avoid politics entirely, and it is also desirable that lawyers should avoid the legislature except when called in a professional capacity.

J. M. LIDDELL.

Pincher, Alta.

WARRIOR VS. INTELLECT

Editor Fireside:—I would like, with your permission, to say a few words, partly in answer to your correspondent, C. H. J. Horne, who, if I have mistaken his meaning will; I am sure, under the genial influence of your "Fireside" be as ready to forgive as I shall be to apologize.

It seems somewhat of a paradox for a "partizan of progress for women" to advise the ladies to "confine themselves within the part which nature has given them." This does not strike one as a very progressive policy. I agree with him that a woman "warrior" is hard to im-

agine, which indicates that the feminine mind is more advanced than the masculine, as only man still retains sufficient of the brute instinct, "combustiveness," to deem it a glorious thing to fight his fellows.

With regard to legislation, is it not natural that a woman should wish, by her power at the ballot box, to do her part in improving conditions generally, so that her family, when beyond her immediate control, shall still feel her beneficent influence?

And in conclusion, is it just that a man should make his wife a receptacle for all his petty worries? If there is any cheering to be done, it is incumbent on the man to do his share.

F. R. SELMAN.

Blackfoot, Alta.

NOT SO BAD

"It's a tough old world," said a friend to me.

As we wallowed in the slush.

"It's a world crammed full of misery, Of trouble and grief and rush."

But just that minute I saw a face

With a welcome smile most glad,

And a hand outstretched in the market place.

And I answered: "It's not so bad."

"It's a tough old world," said a friend to me.

"With nothing but trouble in it"

And with him I'd start to agree

But just at that very minute

I saw Youth offer a helping arm

To Age in the crowded street,

And I answered: "There's much in the world of charm,

There is bitter, but heaps of sweet"

And I can't subscribe to the Kill Joy's creed,

Nor the doctrine the Grouch professes:

For every where blossoms the kindly deed,

And everywhere bloom carresses;

If we'll open our eyes to see,

There are joys that are in-carat fine

Just waiting for you and me.

AND THEY SAY "SHE HAS NO HEAD FOR BUSINESS"

(Mr. Foulke is an Indiana historian and authority on civil service. He was chairman of a special committee of the National Civil Service Reform League, which conducted several investigations of the civil service, and at one time he was a member of the United States civil service commission. He is now editor of a newspaper in Richmond, Ind.)

There is a new kind of conservatism that lies at our very doors—the conservation of municipal resources.

Not long ago my wife said to me: "A city ought not to require taxes from its citizens. It ought to be able to pay dividends on the property it owns."

That seemed to me at first like a will-o-the-wisp, well adapted for the feminine mind to pursue, but the lady argued the case and the more she argued the more she convinced me. Her argument was an application to purely municipal questions of a theory very similar to that set forth by Henry George in "Progress and Poverty."

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She said: "Take this city. The land which underlies it would be worth for farming purposes \$1000 to \$1500 per acre; now it is worth, parts of it, many thousands of dollars for a small fraction of an acre."

"How did that value arise? Why, it arose because the city has come, because people build houses close to each other and started industries. That is the value the city gives. Where the city gives value, it has the right to take value—it has the right to draw its income from the increased value of the land. So that if a city were caught young and the property of the city were conserved for the common benefit, there would be no need of levying any other tax upon its citizens. On the contrary, the city could pay dividends to those citizens. In such a case the city simply taxes the value that it gives; taxes nothing else."

The town of Fairhope, on Mobile Bay, is an example to the point. Fairhope was settled by some people from Iowa. They determined to start the right way. They took the town young. The citizens leased the land from the municipality and built their city, and they have been running it for about 15 years. They are able to carry on their government without any taxes; to pay the state and county taxes; to have a free telephone system, schools, a public library, and a free public dock. The town is said to be prosperous.

Such examples are comparatively rare in this country compared to those abroad. There is in Sweden a town by the name of Orson, which, without any taxation, supports a street railway for the free use of all, a library and a public school,

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