

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

VOTING AND SOCIABILITY

Funny that nobody ever thought before of making an election the occasion for a great neighborhood gathering of a social nature, instead of leaving it to the corrupt influences to provide all the entertainment that set the day apart from others. It's a great idea. It may be that some people, of a conservative turn of mind will profess to believe



that the women who go to the polling booth to vote and stay to serve lunch or supper will be corrupted by coming into contact with doubtful characters. This is a species of hypocrisy. They haven't the least fear of these same women being corrupted when serving these same neighbors with eatables at a fowl supper to raise money for the church.

So then, why should not all the country districts follow the example of the district one of our correspondents tells us about, where the women served a hot lunch to the voters who came in cold and hungry to exercise their right of citizenship? It would help to impress upon the mind of the voter the fact that he was part of a self-respecting community which expected him to use his franchise for the welfare of his country. He would be much more ashamed to go drunk to vote. It would certainly make for sobriety and decency in the exercise of the franchise, for the electorate to meet together in a social way and bring the influence of the home to bear upon the problems of the nation.



It would also help to solve the problem of getting the voters to go to the polls. If people knew that neighbors from far and near would be there it would be a much greater inducement for them to hitch up and drive to the polls. If the woman of the home knew that at the

other end of the long drive a kindly woman would be at hand to take the baby from her and warm its little toes, and if the man was reasonably certain that a distant neighbor whom he wanted to see anyway on a matter of business, would be there, probably smoking a comfortable pipe in the shed, voting would assume more the aspect of a pleasure and less of a duty.

THE CARTOONS ON THIS PAGE

The Guide artist has made some sketches illustrating the difference between the dark prophecies that were made concerning the effect upon the home of women voting and the actual fact.



They said the baby would be neglected, but when there is nobody to leave him with, the mother takes the baby along, just as she does when she goes to church or to town.

They said women wouldn't use the vote if they had it, but one of our correspondents walked miles thru the snow and cold to cast her first ballot.

They said that the company at the polling booth was so rough that it would unsex women to mingle with them, but women found that it was only going to be the folks who lived round about, so they arranged to serve lunch to them.

THE NEW CITIZENSHIP

Canada's greatest need today is a thinking electorate. A large body of public opinion is made up of those who only feel about things, who, in fact, are convinced that it is wicked and unpatriotic to

apply common sense to certain matters of our daily life, such as religion, politics and international relations.

But emotion is too unstable a quality to make a sound basis for good government. Emotional rule in short, is mob rule, uninformed, unintelligent, yielding to primitive passions. The crying need of the day is for people who are dominated by reason rather than passion, for people who read to inform themselves not to feed their narrow prejudices.

Too many elections in Canada have been won on shibboleths which may mean anything or nothing, "Vote for the grand old party," "It's time for a change," and other like silly catch phrases which don't offer a single argument to the intelligence, but are directly aimed to appeal to the emotions.

Surely the people of Canada are going to outgrow this political childishness some day and demand from the parties appealing for election sound constructive policies which will lay the foundation for future good government. Surely the day will come when the stupid cry, "The grand old flag," will not sweep them off their feet.

As a matter of fact the flag of Canada, or any other country, is only grand in so far as it stands for clean just government in the country over which it floats. It is merely a symbol standing for our highest ideal of government at the moment. The ideal for which the flag of Canada stands is continually changing, it has changed during the past year to include a broader conception of democracy, and those reactionaries who foster the idea that

BE STRONG

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift. We have hard work to do, and loads to lift. Shun not the struggle; face it. 'Tis God's Gift.

Be strong! Say not the days are evil—Who's to blame? And fold the hands and acquiesce—O shame! Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be strong! It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong, How hard the battle goes; the day how long. Faint not, fight on! To-morrow comes the song.

—Maltbie Davenport Babcock.

any change in the institutions of the country is in some mysterious way an insult to the flag are the worst of traitors. It would be a poor and worthless ideal of government which did not grow and change as the vision of the citizens broadened out. The great political agitation in Canada just now makes timely the reminder that the flag of Canada can never be dishonored by defeat on the battlefield as it can by the failure of its citizens to support justice, freedom and good government at home.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

WALKED TO THE POLLS

Dear Miss Beynon:—I saw a notice in The Guide saying, send in your experiences of voting day, so I thought I would send mine.

I had read a lot about women voting, yet was surprised when it dawned upon me that I must vote. My husband was away at the time, so I asked my son if he would drive me to the polling place. He said he did not believe in women voting. Then I thought perhaps my husband would not like me to vote, as boys generally get such ideas from their fathers. I knew my husband talked against woman's rights, especially mine, but did not think he meant all women. Well, as he was not home I could not ask him, and the law gave me the liberty, I decided to walk.

We have been on the homestead over four years. I have had poor health all that time, but had managed the housework for five of a family fairly well, so thought the same strength would take me to the polling place. The day was bitter cold to me, as I seldom went any distance in cold weather. I wrapped up well and started. There was not much snow and a good trail, so I got on all right as far as the school house, three miles from home. I went in, thinking it was the voting place, and found the teacher and pupils busy with their school exercises. The teacher informed me the voting was being done one and a half miles further up the

trail. I returned to the trail and wondered if I was able for it. The ladies of our district were serving a "Tea" in aid of the Red Cross Society, so I encouraged myself, knowing I would get a lunch, and went on. Arrived safe, I received a warm welcome from the ladies in charge. Some were sorry I had not been better informed, but they had received such a short notice, and with so many things to do, had not been able to canvass all the district. I met some friends and made some new acquaintances, then did my voting, which seemed rather amusing and yet very serious when I thought of the wasted money and unhappy homes and lives of misery.

I then sat down to a sumptuous lunch. My tea looked very strong, but the young lady who waited on me was good natured and patient. She diluted it and added sugar and cream just to my taste.

One of the ladies spoke to me and said she knew of a chance of a ride for me within a short distance of my home. After a few more handshakes and introductions (for people were coming and going all the time) I was told the sleigh was at the door, and I was soon going at a rapid pace towards home. It was much easier than walking, yet I was glad I had walked. My son greeted me, saying, "Liquor stores have to go—one of a majority," as if my vote had done it all. I was pretty tired for a few days, but I had often been more tired thru doing my home work.

I do believe with Rev. Dr. Bland, that the church must not only preach the Gospel, but also expose and rebuke sin wherever it is found, for in a sense we are our brothers' keepers.

Wishing you success in all your undertakings for the correcting of sins of society and public life.—JESSICA.



WOMAN OF SEVENTY DROVE EIGHT MILES

On December 17 many of us had a new experience, we went to the polling booths and marked our ballots. When I stopped to analyze my feelings I found uppermost "satisfaction." My father and mother worked long for the temperance cause, but they did not live to see the result of their efforts, so I felt satisfaction that I was able in this way to carry their work towards success. Then came the idea of responsibility, for what I was doing was going to affect not only the neighborhood but the whole province. I understand now that if I would do my duty I must study carefully the problems of our country.

I was surprised when I found that I had developed new interest in the discussion of public affairs in the newspapers and magazines. You see, I have a feeling of power because I am not now an on-looker but an actor. Going to the polling booth seemed a perfectly natural procedure. The men that I met were friends that I had known for years. They removed their hats when we entered, and everything was carried out in good order.

The weather was very cold and I was proud of the women who came, in spite of difficulties, to help close the liquor stores. One woman of seventy years drove eight miles to mark her ballot. This event has not lessened my interest in my home, because it was to protect the home that we went to the polls.

ELIZABETH.

