

'Tween You and Me

MY OWN PAGE

Whereon I will Discuss with You the Livest Issues of the Day
as They Affect You and Me in Your Home and Mine

Joan Blewett

The All-Important Home Help Question

NEEDLESS to say, it is the leading one. Go where you will, you hear, either from the lips of mistresses—lips drooping, as a rule, with discontent and self-pity, or from those of the maid, who seems to be smiling at something good she holds in anticipation, the words—higher wages, shorter hours, rights and privileges and so forth.

"There's no pleasing a domestic any more," sighs one. "I offered nine a raise in wages, by way of holding her, but she shook her head. 'The work isn't so very heavy I'm sure,' said I, and what do you thing she flung back?"

"Dear only knows," sighed her friend. "Their impertinence passes everything."

"It's not so heavy," returned she, "as it's lasting. All the day long I've no time for reading or loafing with my own soul."

"That girl must be out of her mind," and the friend's hands were lifted skyward.

"No, just spoiled for being any good where she belongs—in the kitchen—by the foolish teachings of would-be reformers. Depend upon it, once a maid joins a club and begins to feel her work is beneath her, she ceases to be a good servant."

Then the quiet little woman over by the table spoke up. "By the way, the new 'Association of Domestic Helpers' object to the habit the mistress has of calling her helper a servant. It is a word not used in any other calling or business. The merchant employs a salesman, the mechanic an assistant, the manufacturer a labourer, the professional person a clerk, and so on and so forth. Our home-makers are the only ones who engage 'servants.' It is high time the girl in cap and apron arrived at the determination to raise her status by raising the standard of her calling—or to try something else."

The Better The Helpers, The Better the Homes

"THE Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady Are sisters under the skin," says Kipling. But are they? Farther and farther away from each other have travelled mistress and maid for long enough. There is not a doubt of it. The new plans formulated by domestics and their friends for uplifting housework into a science does not appeal to the average mistress of a home to-day.

Three classes of employers are ranged against the promised reforms among home helpers—those to whose narrow vision change and chaos mean one and the same thing, who think there can be no change for the better—that there is no "better" these days; those too exacting to own even to themselves that a mere maid has any rights—even the right to become more efficient; and those who refuse to consider "hired help" as anything but puppets put into the world to do their bidding. "What is the aim of your organization?" we inquired of the head of the "United Work Women." "Is it a matter of work and wages?"

"It is—and more, much more," came her answer. "As to the work, we claim utter freedom from it for certain hours each afternoon; the evenings to be our own. Not only a living wage, but the right to live like other people. Our aim is to make the 'Home Helpers' of this country, a trained, thinking, disciplined army of workers, winning their way to better and higher household ethics and to the respect of all, even of those who at present term the refusal to serve afternoon tea a mark of utter depravity on the part of the 'hired girl.' Housework a science, indeed!"

The better the class of home helpers, the better the homes; the better the homes, the better the country. Eventually, then, employer and employee are bound to meet on a platform of mutual fair play and respect, don't you think?

Tour Canada's Beauty Spots First

DO you know that as Canadians we have one very bad fault, or shall we say habit? When we go off on a holiday, instead of trying to get acquainted with our own country we cross the line. Atlantic City, Colorado Canon, Pike's Peak, these and many more places are just as beautiful as the advertisements—and returned Canadians—portray them. Far be it from us to belittle the glories of nature, but these places are not a whit more desirable than the home places we neglect. Catch our cousin across the way belittling his own country by preferring (and praising) ours! He sees his own country first, and if later opportunity offers, comes over and makes a few comparisons. He isn't too mean to pay tribute to Canadian beauty spots; in truth, he is more appreciative

than many a native-born, but his own country holds first place, as it should.

I write this plea, protest—call it what you will, in our own Algonquin Park, under the shadows of our own forest, already taking on its autumn glory. You could not surpass it in grandeur no matter where you journeyed. You could not look on it without thrilling to the thought that it is part of your heritage as a Canadian.

The oak has a song, the cedar only a breath, but the breath carries farther than the song. A big white moon shines warmly down upon a world of woods and waters. Someone is singing Dixie to the strumming of a guitar, the latest of the Fall bridal couples to arrive supplies the sentiment, and the whole lovely scene the romance. It is that incomparable thing—a silver crested, scented, perfect September night in Algonquin Park, OUR Garden of Allah.

"Citizen of no mean city," says Paul. This means us. Ontario stretching out fair and fertile, has her beauty shrines innumerable. East and still farther east to the sea lie provinces as fair and fertile—almost. West, and still further west, to the sea stretches a land of promise, the home of millions yet to be. North, and still further north,

The Highland Shepherd

O, the little hills of purple heather
And the skies so warm and gray!
O, the shimmer of the sea-mist
In the sea-wind far away!
O, the singing of the waters—
Sweeping down Ben VorChich's side—
And my white ewes faring foldward
In the hush of eventide!

JEAN BLEWETT.

where the great Peace River sings its song on silver sands:

Her hills are singing to the skies—
The wild flowers deck her virgin soil—
So much of nature in her lies
She must be near to nature's God!

Let us be proud of our own land and love its beauty spots well enough to seek them. Other lands are fair, but home things first is a good motto.

What Women Can Vote in Canada?

IN reply to many queries from Canadian women re the right to vote in Dominion elections, we quote from a letter just to hand from the Deputy Minister of Justice:

"The Women's Suffrage Act is none the less operative because the War-Time Elections Act is still in force. The enumerators' lists govern, and women should see to it that their names are on these lists. The Provincial lists are adopted as a basis, and the names appearing in these are entitled to vote in a Dominion election."

All that the woman who desires to cast her ballot has to do is to see to it that her name is in the Enumerator's list in good time and that she reaches the voting place—also in good time.

Query No. 2.—No, it is not a property vote, nor is the right to wield it based on educational fitness. Canadian women possess the right to vote under the conditions that they are British subjects, twenty-one years of age and upwards, with the usual restriction as to period of residence in the country, and provided that they are not disqualified by nationality, race or blood.

No. 3.—Under the Women's Suffrage Act, the wife of an alien is denied the right to vote.

Undue Preparations for the Newcomer

"ONE trouble with young married women is that they think too much about the little stranger due to arrive in the near future." Thus the country cousin breaks in upon the sentimental lady's discourse concerning pre-natal influence, parenthood, and other perfectly good but worked-to-death subjects. "Yes," she goes on, in answer to a deprecating murmur from the half-dozen of us who have been listening with all our ears to the sentimental lady, "and they talk too much. Lord love their poor husbands, I say. Unfeeling?—Not a bit of it—just human. The most loving young man in the world must get mortally sick of hearing nothing but 'baby.' I haven't a doubt he'd be happy to have his wife take spells of talking

along that line in a proud and gladsome sort of way if only she'd ever talk anything else at other times.

"You know that little bungalow back of us—the nest the groom built last year for his bride? The stork will be calling there after a while, and the fact seems to be worrying them a lot. In fact, Lelia has about forgotten how to laugh; says her mind is always on her coming duties. She thinks baby, dreams baby, and heighho! talks baby. I'm not sighing for myself, but for that nice little, troubled woman and her nice big, miserable man. She won't go anywhere, on account of the baby that's expected, and he can't for the same reason. She was reading aloud to him from a book bound in white when I dropped in last evening. He was doing fairly well as a listener, only the shouts of the neighbourhood baseball team gathered for practice in our meadow kept him as uneasy as a young hound that hears his brother's 'give tongue' on the hunt. 'Advice to Young Mothers' was printed in gold on the cover of the book. He wasn't a young mother, and consequently didn't need the advice, so I told him to skip off to the game—and skip he did, while Lelia and I had a good talk."

Bring Sensible Sentiment to Bear

"WHAT did you tell her?" we asked in a body. "What rules did you set forth?"

"Not a blessed rule. 'Lelia,' says I, 'there are some of the fattest, sweetest thimble-berries ripe in our pasture. Bring along your five-quart pail and we'll go pick them.' 'I don't know as I'm able,' she returns, 'I've not been extra well of late.'"

"And won't be until you act yourself, so come along," I urged. "It isn't fair to Hubby to be moping around, afraid to act natural, afraid you're going to die, afraid if you do some other woman will take your place, afraid—"

"Oh! Who told you what's in my mind?" she cried.

"Bless you, I don't need to be told," said I. "I've been through it myself. Listen. You don't want your man to be sick of his life, do you? No; then get hold of a few other subjects besides symptoms, anticipations, and all the rest of it. He's of the male persuasion, and being a father isn't the same as being a mother. But it's as far as he can go. Between paternity and maternity there's a heap more difference than between the letter 'p' and the letter 'm' used in spelling them. Pater doesn't want a continuation of eugenics, Holt's advice to mothers, or wife's doleful ditty. He wants a happy and normal atmosphere, a happy, normal mate, a happy, normal—"

"I believe you," she cries, reaching for the five-quart pail and her sun hat, "and it's what my man is going to get, though—with a sigh—it seems hardly fair to the little stranger who—"

"The woman who wants to have a lovely baby, a happy, contented, healthy baby, an up-and-coming-forward baby, must herself be that kind of an individual before the boy of the house or daddy's daughter arrives on the scene." I resumed.

Lelia's face got all aglow—not even when she came home a bride did she appear quite so worth while. Her lips moved. I believe she was saying a little prayer. Then off she started for the pasture lot singing one of her old gay songs—or rather the very core of love and laughter set forth in free verse, without stops or metre, to an old air.

Up from the meadow came the shouts of the players, the katydid called for rain, the wind sang through the millet—the world seemed a good place in which to live.

Canadian Textbooks for Canadian Schools

SOME day, someone is going to write a little book for use in the schools of this country. It will contain things interesting and instructive to our boys and girls. Most of the feats recorded in the books at present in circulation are of the United States. Not that we mind our children realizing the cleverness of our neighbours when it really is theirs, but we grow a trifle weary of having them lay claim to more than is their due. This text book will contain in brief form the history of things calculated to create pride of country and faith in our countrymen.

A New York publication, in giving one of Bliss Carman's spring songs, calls the author "our summertime bard." He is not their summertime, wintertime, or any other time bard. He is a Canadian product. So is Charles D. Roberts, Arthur Stringer, George Pattullo, and other clever story-writers on the Saturday Evening Post are ours, too. Let our young people learn these facts, not for the purpose of boasting, but because knowledge is power.