

The Franchise Corner

The Church and Woman Suffrage

By HELEN M. DETLOR

It is a matter of wonder to those interested in the woman's suffrage movement and its development that the Church has not taken any definite position in regard to it. In the reports of Synods, Conferences, Assemblies and Church Associations that have come under our notice there has been no account of the question of equal franchise having any place in their deliberations, or even having been given passing attention.

We wonder at this, believing as we do that the suffrage movement is a religious one and in perfect sympathy with the aims of the Church for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom. Nor are we alone in this thought. On June 19 large meetings were held in London, England, to consider "The Religious Aspect of the Woman's Movement." Right Rev. the Bishop of London spoke on this subject. Right Rev. the Bishop of Hull spoke on "Our Lord's Teaching About Women," Rev. Wm. Temple, on "How the Woman's Movement May Help Religion." Many other prominent men and women also spoke.

In the reports of these representative bodies of the different churches we find them discussing at length the need of vigorous action and united effort against the liquor traffic, gambling evils and white slave trade—passing strong resolutions and asserting their attitude in regard to these things—but the men behind these evils are not much afraid of discussions and resolutions; they make no outcry that their "craft is in danger" from these pious demonstrations. Truly, "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." The official organs of the brewers, distillers and liquor dealers have ordered their constituencies to "put your foot on woman suffrage wherever you find it, as it means death to our trade." Rev. Dr. B. F. Cray, formerly of Wyoming, where women vote, says: "Liquor sellers and gamblers are unanimous in cursing woman suffrage."

While we have spoken of the attitude of the representative bodies of the churches, we must not forget the many ministers who fearlessly advocate the woman's cause—as, for instance, Rev. Chas. Aked, D.D., of New York, who said a short time ago: "Nothing since the coming of Christ ever promised so much for the ultimate good of the human race as the intellectual, moral and political enfranchisement of woman." Bishop McVickar, of Rhode Island, says: "I hope and pray that we may see the right of women to vote soon come to pass. In this fuller citizenship there is no chance that a woman would unsex herself. I believe the paths she would walk in would not only be brightened by her presence, but straightened." Father Scully, of the Catholic Church, says: "The opposition to female suffrage is a matter of course. All great social and political reforms, as well as religious ones, have always been resisted by prejudices, customs, and the old cry of 'inopportune.' So it with this. It is a battle—reason and justice opposed by senseless fears and selfish notions. The cause is just. It may be defeated to-day but never conquered, and to-morrow will be victorious."

These are but a few utterances of ministers of the United States. Many more could be added of those from other countries and every creed. Aside from what it would mean to the Church in its fight against organized evil to have its womanhood, who compose its larger constituency, with the power of the ballot in their hand, we do expect the Church of God to declare itself on the side of right and justice.

Suffrage News

JANE ADDAMS, the Chicago power among suffragettes, was the one woman among ten seconders to the nomination of Theodore Roosevelt. Miss Addams' social work is widely known.

She believes that the Progressive Party, which she supports, stands for the improvement of social conditions. And that party has pledged itself to the securing of equal suffrage to men and women.

Militant suffragitis, a malady in Great Britain, is experiencing a treatment which remains to be called a check in the five years' jail sentence of those agitators in Dublin, Mrs. Mary Leigh and Miss Gladys Evans. Premier Asquith was the target in both cases. But while hurling a deadly hatchet and attempting to burn a play-house are held to be certainly malicious enterprises, public feeling has stamped the punishments "too severe," and the chances are the "examples" will be pardoned.

Affecting the Woman in Business

By RUBY LILLIAN HUNTER

Do you remember the old saying, "Give a man rope enough and he will hang himself?" It seems as though the Englishman were beginning to hang himself with the centuries-long rope, made up of the abuses, indignities and indifference—to say nothing of the glaring injustice—to the women of their nation.

If I had never been a suffragist before, I think the action of the employers of women labourers in England, in docking them two or so days' pay a week before the Insurance bill was to become law, would have converted me to the grave necessity of providing those women with a sure and direct means of protecting themselves from such injustice and hardship.

Voters are never docked without their own consent.

When the coal miners wanted a minimum wage they said to the law-makers, "We have tied up the traffic of your country and we will keep it tied up until you realize how essential we are to the nation and see that the mine owners give us a measure of justice. If you do not consider our demands we will not let you make our laws." And because they had the power to do as they said, the law-makers bowed their heads and placed a minimum wage law upon the statute books.

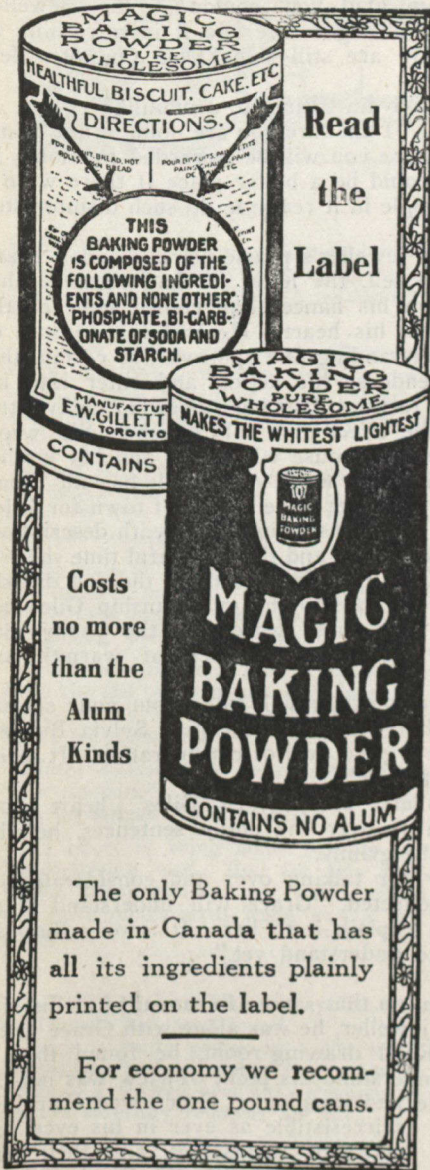
The question of wages is, of course, a very vital one to women in the industrial world. A manager in one of our large stores, a sincere, good man, much interested in bettering the surroundings of his women workers, remarked one day that \$5 a week was a very nice sum for a woman to earn. "A woman is so handy, you know; she can do her own dressmaking and millinery, her laundry and her mending, and she can live so cheaply at one of the institutions, that really she lives quite comfortably on her \$5 weekly." Yes, he said just that and meant it, too.

Women cannot expect to be recognized as workers until the State recognizes them as such, nor can they expect equal pay for equal work as State-recognized workers receive.

It takes 10,000 people to make a city. Right here in Toronto we have four cities of women workers, every one of them earning, producing, consuming, contributing eight or ten hours a day to the upkeep of the country; but without one single representative to guard their interests or express their wishes.

Imagine the furor if four of our cities of 10,000 or 12,000 people were told they could have no say in anything concerning themselves or their surroundings. Think of the 46,000 women in our city alone, working as best they may, with no voice in affairs pertaining to themselves, unconscious as yet of the tremendous power they will surely possess in the near future.

Let all the women's clubs and societies join together in a strong endeavour to reach every one of the women workers that clubs, societies and workers may learn together that higher sense of social and civic responsibility—a sense that develops by use. Union in effort is the growing lesson of our times.



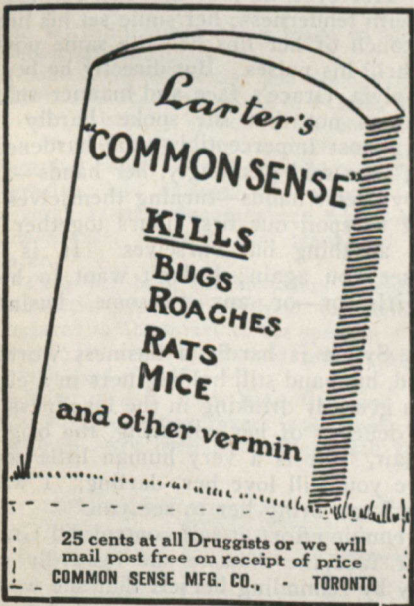
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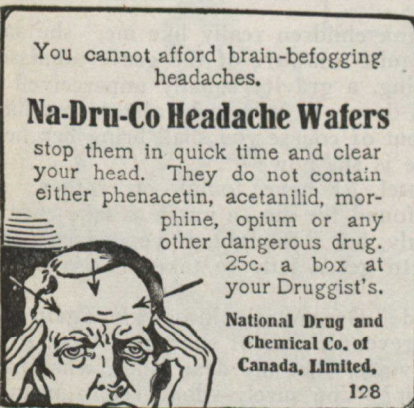
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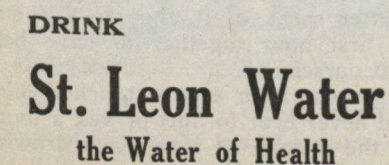
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