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The Country Homemakers

DOMESTIC HELP FOR FARMS

I have been urged by Mr. William Thompson to agitate for a livelier interest in the question of domestic help for farms. Mr. Thompson has just been to the United States to arrange for men to come up and put in the seed and a similar work will probably have to be done again in the fall. In order to get men to take off the crop but the government has neglected to make any provision for female help to enable the housewife to carry her added burden. No railway concession has even been secured to enable married men to bring their wives at the same reduced cost of transportation. Year by year this gets to be a more vexatious problem in our rural districts. It is so acute now that I have had to refuse space to any letter offering employment to girls of my department would have been turned into a free advertising bureau.

It is quite in keeping with the relative value governments always put upon life and property that the minds of the officials should have been concerned only with the business of getting the crop into the soil and out of it regardless of the human side of the question entirely. And yet this is the great tragedy of the prairie, this overworking of the farm women to the place where they break down and are gathered into little country cemeteries or, much worse, into asylums for the insane.

One solution of the problem is to get the same transportation facilities for them as for men and then to pay the hired girl the same wage as the hired man. But that is one of the great stumbling blocks in the way of relieving the situation. Many farm women would rather work their fingers to the bone than to pay the same wage to a hired girl that is paid to a hired man. I think I understand that perfectly and it seems to me very natural that they should feel that way at first thought. Many of them are only just emerging, if they are that, from the early days of pioneer hardship, when every cent had to be counted. They have had almost no money of their own to spend upon themselves and it seems to them outrageous to pay a girl from twenty to sixty dollars a month for the work which they did for nothing. But the question is whether it is not better to pay even that for hired help when one has it to pay, than to break down in health and leave one's little ones to the mercy of strangers.

And so we would like to see something practical done about bringing in help to lighten the woman's end of the load if it is at all possible. What do you think about it?

EDITOR COUNTRY HOMEMAKERS

CONSCRIPT WEALTH ALSO

Dear Miss Beynon:—After reading your letter on conscription in The Guide of May 30, I felt that I would like to just say a little on the same subject. Regarding conscription of wealth, I think it would be the proper thing to do, as the more a person has the more protection he is receiving, therefore he ought to pay in proportion to what he has.

Regarding conscription of man power I think this should have been done over a year ago. I am against a vote being taken on conscription and several people I have spoken to say that after all the thousands of loyal men and boys have gone away it would be a disgrace to let a referendum decide whether they will let things drop now or carry the thing on to victory.

WALTER CHUWE.

Answer

Obviously you and I mean something quite different by the conscription of wealth. Apparently you do not mean conscription of wealth at all but a graduated income tax, whereas I mean literally the conscription, or taking over by the government of all real property, the people who owned farms and businesses being permitted to carry them on as before, but paying rent to government for the use of them.

Why? First, because those who are coming back from the front maintain for life, and their dependents, and also the dependents of those who will never come back are the ones who ought to live in luxury in this country if anybody is going to do so in the next decade.

Secondly, we have already had too much vicarious patriotism in this war, people who take great pleasure in dedicating the lives of other people to the service of the country while they themselves are not prepared to make a single sacrifice that is worthy of the name. If we would put their sincerity to the test by a referendum which would provide that all the people, whether men or women, who vote to send men to war would also vote to devote the use of their property to the winning of the war we would then know whether they were sincere in their protestations of patriotism.

Francis Marion Beynon

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have been a reader of the Homemakers page ever since. The Guide started and enjoy it very much. I think the editorials are good; the contributions by readers are also interesting. Well, William's letters are very interesting. Wish she would write often, even if I do not agree with her attitude toward the foreigner. I feel like extending the "glad hand" to every one of them, regardless of creed or color and telling them to make themselves at home and I am always glad to hear how they "did things" in their home land and always ready to adopt their methods if I find them easier than my own. I am a Canadian, through and through, my grandparents were born in Canada, but just the same I have a feeling that "the earth is the Lord's," and that any one of His children who come here, behave themselves and try to make an honest living have a right to do so.

In The Guide of May 15 I appeared in a letter from "Reformer" to which I would like to put my hearty Amen. I was rather amused when I saw one of her critics using a quotation from St. Paul to club her with. St. Paul, of all men, who was so particular how women should behave themselves in public and in private to have some of his sayings



The Little Mother

used to defend the practice of picturing women in their underclothes was to me, the limit.

I think if the owners of these catalogs would enclose a few samples of the cloth they advertise instead of those pictures they would be of more use to us than the semi-nude picture. Not many of us are worrying about the fit of Jersey knit underclothes but when we see gingham advertised from 15 cents per yard we often wonder what it is like. Samples of print, denim, shirting, etc., would be very acceptable and women like "Refugees" and myself would not be in danger of having our evil minds stirred up by the reminder of "land fellows."

Just one more word. Would you allow me through this column to say a few words to our western millers. I would like to ask them to be so kind as not to put red dye on their flues and rolled oats sacks. Blue is just as good and will come out with very little soap and no coal oil. You will save us a lot of trouble and expense if you will act on this suggestion. Yours for saving the pennies,

M. J. McKAY.

READ MIXER SATISFACTORY

Dear Miss Beynon:—In reading the Homemakers page in The Guide of May 25, I notice Mrs. A. Mel. asks some farmer's wife, who has used the bread mixer and found it satisfactory, to write. I have used the mixer for five years now and would not like to be without it. I would rather use the mixer than knead the bread by hand. Mine is especially good for making small loaves, but I often make 12 or eleven loaves and also a pan of buns. I started going by directions with mixer but as I got

used to it, I increased water and flour till I got the size of a baking needed for our family. My bread mixer was a wedding present and I consider it has been a very useful one. I would like it if some one could tell me how to dry-clean a printed satin-down comforter. I will give you my address and anyone that would like any more information about the bread mixer can write and I will be glad to give it.

Cymric, Sask.

Mrs. ANDREW SCOTT.

ANOTHER PROTEST AGAINST TOBACCO

Dear Miss Beynon:—In The Guide of May 2, I noticed a letter from "Mother of Soldier Boys," on "Too much tobacco for soldiers." I certainly agree with her. There are lots of boys who never smoked before they enlisted, my brother for one, and I think the money could be well spent on something that would benefit them.

FARMER'S WIFE.

THE GREATEST NEWS IN THE WORLD

One of the foremost journalists in the world recently said: "There is only one new thing left. We know all about men. History is the story of men's minds. We know what men will do under any given set of circumstances. But women's minds, their actions and reactions under world pressure, we do not know. What women forced into economic independence will do, is the really great news now in the world."

Considered from the journalistic viewpoint alone, this is an important statement. But looked at from the woman's angle it has even more value. Women do not themselves know what their actions and reactions will be as labor and educational conditions force them to become world citizens. It is not a question of choice. A quarter of the women in America today are breadwinners, most of them because they must be.

Women have a gigantic task. They must learn within the space almost of a single generation how to do what has been considered men's work; and most continue women's work at the same time. They must learn to bear children and to care bread and to keep the home intact. They must learn to keep level the qualities within them that make for the spiritual and physical welfare of the race. They must play Columbus to their own souls.

Now, as never before, women are the race leaders. Such a condition has unprecedented news value. It stands, a unique event in the history of the world. But the mission of journalism in this instance is far heavier than that of newsbearers. Nowhere does the responsibility lie more heavily than with the journals of the world, with the newspapers and the magazines, to see that whatever light may be shown to women is shown clearly, patiently, unclouded by a yellow desire for the sensational, with a deep conviction that now, for the sake of the race, truth and only truth will do.

Scarcely so higher reward could be made by any journal for the new year and for the new era than that, with whatever strength of purpose may be within it, with whatever vision the years may bring it will emancipate itself to helping women in their wise search for wisdom. Almost in a single night old ways have passed and—

In your basis a new perfection trends. A power more strong in beauty, born of us! And failed to steel us, as we pass in glory that old darkness. —The Illustrator

THE NEW YOUNG WOMAN

All women's citizenship will formulate in the public mind the higher ideal which will develop the young girl's of the future. They will no longer grow up, to be, outside the years of motherhood, mere drudges or passive ornaments. They will no longer try to satisfy their ambitions by seeing who can parade the most extreme buffooneries of contemporary fashion on the public highway. They will grow up to be interested and living individuals and satisfy their ambitions only with the highest prizes of adventure and achievement that life offers.

We hear a good deal about "child-welfare" in these days and we hear the business of child-welfare advanced as one of the arguments of woman suffrage. To me it is almost the heart of the argument, but it works in my mind a little differently from what it does in the minds of the people who write the child-welfare pamphlets. I do not want women to have, for the sake of their children, the control of the milk supply and the food laws, half as much as I want them to have for the sake of their children, all the knowledge by experience that they can possibly get. That is the vital connection between child-welfare and woman suffrage—that is the deeper ideal.—Max Eastman