

Manitoba Grain Growers

Local Study Topics

As this goes to press a package of study topic leaflets is being sent to the secretary of every local. It is hoped that they will be considered by the officers and that plans will be laid for using them in the association so that they will be of practical advantage. Further copies may be had on application to the Central office.

The December topic is woman in citizenship. Three articles on this page are designed to give some assistance in preparing for discussion of the topic. Another article will appear in next week's issue.

If health conditions permit, it is hoped that every local will succeed in getting into line with the study of the December topic.

Women and Service

How can we best serve our country in time of need? We have now entered a new era—the reconstruction age, the rebuilding and the reforming of a nation. Women have measured up to the standard demanded of them while the war was raging; now that it is over new responsibilities face them which they must not fail to shoulder resolutely. The unselfish service and the willing sacrifice of our men on the battlefields should stimulate within us the impulse to go forward and present our best service to the nation.

Democracy has proved its right to live in this present war. The assurance that it will continue to live and triumph can only be made secure as we as citizens devote our loyal service to the state. In service woman's best qualities and highest powers are developed. Never before were such opportunities open. Women have emerged from the femininity of the drawing-room into the business life, the industrial life, and are discovering that here they can render equal service with men.

Woman's service is primarily in the home, and from it her influence emanates to the community and finally to the life of the nation. The home is the foundation of the nation and children are the nation's greatest asset. When we consider that over half of the women that are capable of work in Canada are married, most of them are engaged in two primary employments, home-making and caring for children, why should these employments not be recognized by the government in making its census?

It has been found that all work is best accomplished where there are skilled workers. Many young women and girls are now in training, seeking an education that will make them efficient for life in the business world. But training for the home, which most of these young women will enter later, is being entirely neglected. The war has shown what women in homes can do in their leisure moments through organization and co-operation. These women have felt repaid for their work because it was state recognized. Women are not now willing to drop back to conditions where their work apparently does not count. Should not education, then, be broadened out to include training for the two primary employments of life, so that home-making will not fall below the standard of the other fields of labor?

Wider Opportunities

Why should there not be departments where women can study the economic service they can render through their homes to their country? Few women realize that the money that they spend at home affects anyone outside of their own household, but the fact is that half of the Canadian income is spent by women. Therefore if we would maintain and build up the strength of the nation, women must be efficiently trained in national economics. This end will be attained when the provincial and federal governments establish home departments to look after the best interests of the home.

Another great factor in the nation's strength is the health of her children. The birth-right of every child should be health, yet how can we expect healthy children where there has been little

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W. R. Wood, 306, Bank of Hamilton Bldg., Winnipeg

training given to the caring of them except where the mother is a trained nurse? Why should not this training come within the scope of the home departments of the government and provision be made to train girls in the care of the child? Then not only would women feel that the two primary employments of the home are worth while but the country will be raised to a higher level because of better and healthier children.

Much of the work that was formerly done in the home is now being carried on in factories and large establishments. Women have followed their work into the industrial world. The realm for service in this world has gradually expanded till women are now admitted into almost all the fields of life. We find open to them the great nursing profession, agriculture in all its branches, teaching, training of the deaf and blind, domestic science, social service, literary work, the arts of painting, drawing, dress-making and millinery, handwork in modeling, weaving and sculpture, and other branches too numerous to mention. Women must enter these fields of labor with insight and determination if they would contribute their best worth to the state.

Woman's work in the world extends to all spheres, but more especially is her influence felt in raising the moral and social standards of life. Much work has been accomplished already in striving to check the white-slave traffic, advancing prohibition and bettering health facilities. Now, with the privilege of enfranchisement granted, her influence and responsibilities are greater than ever. Such problems confront her as government reform, our present criminal code, and laws affecting women and children. The women's problem is to improve the quality of life and its conditions. To this task she must devote her service to help establish a country worthy of the great sacrifices that have been made for it on the fields of France and Flanders.—M. E. F.

Women in the New Time

Every true democrat rejoices at the splendidly rapid progress of the emancipation and enfranchisement of women during recent years. Every real progressive expects more rapid advance in social and general betterment because women have been added to the number of those who share constituted and recognized power in the commonwealth.

Exploration and Survey

Just what may we expect the women to do in their new sphere? When a people come into possession of new territory the first task is in the direction of exploration and survey. So the women will require to investigate their new sphere. Thousands of them had not expected to be called into enfranchised citizenship. Thousands more have never given careful thought to the significance and the responsibilities of the new position. Probably nine-tenths of them have not yet in any way estimated what they ought to attempt or what they might expect to accomplish in the first five years. For all those who take citizenship seriously, one of the first duties will be that of finding out what evils they may hope to lessen or eradicate, what conditions seem possible of improvement, what influence they may exert for the realization of their ideals and what leverage citizenship gives them for the amelioration of things generally. Only when they know the ground on which they stand, the forces, progressive and reactionary, at present operating, and the general conditions of legislative and governmental action, may they expect to do effective work. It is a big task, not specially attractive, and demanding a good deal of patient drudgery. But it is fundamental and worth while.

Putting In "The Housewifery"

Coincident with this task of exploration

must be placed the task of stimulation of the civic consciousness and the civic conscience. The ever present danger of democracy has been the indifference of a large proportion of the electors. This has been frequently the cause of tragic failure and of constant inefficiency when the voters were men. The women will not escape the necessity of combating from the beginning the same paralyzing inertia. There will be many who "care for none of these things," who have "no faculty that way," who "leave all public matters to the men." The women will require to organize and to write and to speak and to meet patiently and persistently and sympathetically in order to rouse to an appreciation of civic duty those who do not want to be bothered. It is a big task, not specially attractive and demanding a good deal of patient drudgery. But it is fundamental and worth while.

Reforms Pending

A third specific area of activity that cannot be delayed is the taking up of the great causes for which progressive workers have been laboring for some decades past. The elimination of special privilege by which a few are enriched and many are exploited, the abolition of unjust forms of taxation, the eradication of common forms of political corruption, the removal of the glaring inequalities and injustices of our present attempts at representation of the people—these and similar reforms, long fought for, long overdue, ought to enlist the active interest of the women voters from today onward. Getting in touch with conditions in regard to these, knowing what the evils are, learning what is being attempted, estimating the wisest courses of auxiliary action, enlisting the sympathy of women citizens generally for the most effective action—is a big task, not specially attractive and demanding a good deal of patient drudgery. But it is fundamental and worth while.

Activities of Woman's Sphere

Beyond these lie those social activities which are probably first in the thought of most present day workers in the woman's movement—the exerting of woman's uplifting and purifying influence, and especially her ministry of comfort and nurture and healing, through the new channel and in the new area opened by her enfranchisement. By the use of the word "beyond" it is not intended to suggest delay, but it seems clear that the fundamentals of general citizenship must be grasped if any really effective service is to be rendered, even in those departments which are generally regarded as belonging more particularly to woman's sphere of thought. Having acquainted herself with the general responsibilities of the new position, she will be fully qualified to enter effectively upon the special tasks. The improvement of home conditions, the lightening of physical toil, the extension of participation in the finer things of life, the securing of more practical results from our educational system, the establishment of new facilities for imparting knowledge of child-care and home-making, the development of more effective means for care of health and preservation of life—these and kindred aims will as early as possible occupy the attention of women electors. They will need to popularize these causes by educational propaganda and then by careful and persistent organization to press them upon the attention of government till they are provided for in the legislation and administration of the province.—W. R. W.

A Frenchman on Women in Citizenship

Woman suffrage is advancing. On the introduction of a bill to enfranchise women in France, an impressive speech

was made by Senator Louis Martin. The following paragraphs will be read with interest:—

"Of all the human sentiments none is as powerful or as irresistible as maternal love. Instead of its being weakened it is that which will guide woman's vote towards the best solutions. Never before has France been in greater need of developing hygienic institutions, measures for the protection of children, of young girls. These are the tasks that woman will impose upon the candidates. Legislations will be purified by her electoral act. As for saving discord between husband and wife, their amicable discussions on the choice of candidates can but result in a better selection.

"Women will attend public meetings! Not a great deal. But where would be the evil? Has it not been observed that where feminine influence has been brought to bear it has been for good? History offers a valuable testimony in that regard; it is to the consideration for woman that in the Middle Ages we owe the institution of chivalry, which illumined the profound darkness of that era. As to the fear of rendering her masculine: if the desire to please is, next to the maternal sentiment, one of the most indisputable of woman's charms, of her profoundest instincts, it will continue to characterize her with equal force.

"The truth is that, consciously or unconsciously, all the objections raised against women voting are reducible to a single one; namely, that we are not accustomed to see them vote. All the arguments employed in the past in favor of men's electoral rights are applicable with like force in the case of women, as Fawcett justly observed.

"And let it not be objected that there is one tax she can not pay—the tax of blood; for the mother pays it through her son, the flesh of her flesh; and our splendid nurses have shown that they are ready when occasion arises to offer up the direct blood-tribute.

"Granting women the vote will be an impetus to develop their minds, to acquire broader knowledge. Man is quite conscious that his happiness depends in great part upon his mate, and that he will fare better the wider her knowledge. The woman with serious attainments makes the best housewife—in governing her household, collaborating with her husband, and raising her children properly.

"This great moral truth is gradually penetrating the legislation of the most democratic countries. The United States counts 19 States where women have the full right of suffrage. England, by the law of February 6, 1918, accords the vote to more than 6,000,000 women. Canada has over 1,000,000 female electors; Norway, 600,000; Finland, 800,000; Denmark, 800,000. I am firmly convinced that France, which revolted in order to give every man a vote, will not delay in inscribing her name upon the progressive list, where her place is marked in advance."

If You Must Wait

It may be that in some districts health conditions and restrictions will delay the fall rally and the early entrance upon the organized activities. It is suggested that this delay may furnish opportunity for additional preparation and planning on the part of directors. There will be a few places where the directors may not meet. Where they can get together there should be some straight discussion of what can be done when the local rally under way. Heart to heart talk, mutual expression of opinion, co-operative planning—that is often the secret of success. One meeting is good. Two might be better. Thus while you wait, real foundation work may be going on.

We believe that the people must control the corporations, not the corporations the people, and that the great highways of the nation, its iron and steel muscles, and the electric wires of the nation, its nerves, must be under the control, if not the ownership of the body politic.—Lyman Abbott.