

WOMEN IN THE NEW TIME

Canadian womanhood today is at the threshold of full enfranchisement. In the progress of democracy and especially through the patient and persistent efforts of the Political Equality League, the G.G.A.'s and kindred bodies a status equal to that of the men has been accorded them in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario. And the extension of that status in federal affairs is definitely guaranteed by the Union Government to be made at the close of the war. This means enlargement of sphere and of opportunity and the new situation is a challenge to the courage and the personal power of the women of the nation in the taking up in an effective way of a set of interests and responsibilities which up to the present time have been made a matter of personal concern to only a comparatively small number.

While the responsibility of getting into touch with the new environment and preparing to fulfil the new duties will lie upon every individual woman, it must be recognized that in such an association as the Grain Growers, which advocated the progressive step and which has a vital interest in promoting its success, there must be recognized a special responsibility for sympathetic and practical assistance to the womanhood of the country generally in equipping themselves for effective service. Since women enter the association and work in it on equal terms with men it may be expected that in the immediate future they will use their influence to secure in connection with the work of the association the study and discussion of questions of public policy in which women have special interest.

Specific Interests

Within that sphere lie such problems as the safeguarding of the family as an institution, the repelling of influences which threaten its integrity or mar its peace, purity and effectiveness, the care of infant and child-life and the securing of wholesome conditions for the normal development, physically, mentally and morally of the youth of our population, the establishment of a common moral standard as between the sexes, the securing of equal treatment in business and industry and the professions in certain cases where that is still denied. Possibly there should be associated with these the urgent problems connected with the prevention of certain forms of disease, the care of feeble-minded and defectives, the modernizing of our treatment of criminals—especially the humanizing of the system by larger emphasis upon reformatory and redemptive agencies—the final uprooting of the traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs and the means to be taken for establishing and maintaining peace among the nations of the world.

In these things, not because they do not concern men, but because in many cases the neglect of them falls with bitter consequences upon women and children, it may be hoped that women's influence in public life will stimulate and hasten progressive action.

Changes Through War

Not only the course of progressive democracy, but the phenomena of war have had very material effect upon the status of women in the community. In the home countries across the sea and to a degree in Canada as well women have been entering lines of occupation hitherto exclusively held by men. They have evinced such magnificent courage and patience and resourcefulness, such willingness to toil and to suffer in these years of world tragedy that they can never again be treated in the patronizing and inconsequential fashion of former times. After the war conditions will not drop back again to the status quo. There will be a new degree of economic independence for women which will give her new and wider powers in the world of commerce and of industry.

Among the studies fitting for the development of woman's capabilities to meet the needs of the new conditions would be that of the work done by the leaders of the various movements for progress in which women have been specially concerned—Mary Wollstonecraft late in the 18th century, Frances Wright early in the 19th century, who began to agitate for women's rights; Florence Nightingale, the good angel of the Crimean war and the inspirer of the modern profession of nursing; Clara Barton, who nobly followed her in the American Civil War and in the Franco-Prussian War, laying the foundation for

modern Red Cross and relief work; Harriet Beecher Stowe, the champion of negro emancipation; George Eliot and Jane Austen among novelists; Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Frances Ridley Havergal among writers of poetry; Frances E. Willard among temperance workers and educationists; Jane Addams in city settlement work and community reform. The work done by these and others in the noble succession is well worthy of careful study and bears instruction and inspiration for those who follow in their footsteps.

Local and Individual

What work women may do for the community must for the present largely be decided by local conditions and individual aptitudes. The great governing principle is "Whatever they hand findeth to do, do with their might." Every woman in every rural community can find some means of helping the common life of the people. It is "up to" the community to bring her into touch with its life, to acquaint her with her opportunities, to invite her co-operation and to reciprocate in every helpful relationship. The Grain Growers are facing one of the great opportunities of the movement in moving purposefully toward the securing of a great army of reinforcement in the thousands of women who should be enrolled in their membership within the next three months. Make them record months. It's "up to" you.—W. R. W.

AN IMPERATIVE NECESSITY

If the work of the association is to advance in the immediate future as it should there must be concerted and carefully planned effort on the part of local officials to enlist before the New Year a very large number of the rural women of the province. It has to be confessed that in very many branches the inclusion of women has never yet been seriously considered and in many others some three or four or half a dozen have come in just because it happened they were interested. Now what is needed is that the working force of our male membership should be supplemented by a force practically equal in numbers of the women of the various communities in order that the actual working power of the association may be doubled.

What is needed is a definite and purposeful campaign for women membership. For this purpose the following specific propositions are commended for consideration of association officers:—

1—Women make successful canvassers for all sorts of good causes. Why shouldn't the association be employing them?

2—In church work very much depends upon the loyal co-operation of faithful women. They would be just as loyal and useful in the association if given a chance.

3—Women are people, citizens, with full interest in all the ideals for which grain growers stand. Why should they not be given a chance to further those ideals?

4—Women have natural talent for program-making, persuading people to contribute, filling in with a solo or a recitation or an instrumental. What wisdom can there be in persistently attempting program-making without them?

5—Women are proverbially keen of intuition. Their intellectual and moral qualities will add zest and insight and interest to discussions that else might be prosaic and dry-as-dust. Are we wise to think of excluding them longer?

6—Women are effective debaters. In some branch associations they proved their worth along this line last winter. Will you arrange a woman's debate in your branch for this winter?

7—Women have shown marked ability and achieved signal success as directors and officials in association work. Will you elect half of your board for 1918 from among the women?

8—Young women attract young men. If you want an energetic and live association you will see to it that both classes are included.

9—Every branch occasionally wants the women of the community when a "festival" or a "lunch" is wanted. Why

not have the women always in the association as well as on festival nights?

10—Men were never meant—at least in a community organization—to segregate themselves away from mothers and sisters and wives and the better half of the community generally. Why should they attempt it in a G.G.A.?

11—The general association has given women equal status with men. It is up to the local branch to second this movement by making it locally effective.

12—Since church and state have given women their rightful place, a G.G.A. which does not see to it that they are brought in must soon come to be regarded as an anachronism—altogether medieval and out of date.

If local branches and their officers take up this matter with true Western energy and do their best it will mean that 5,000 Manitoba women and girls will be reported to the Central office at the close of the year as members in good standing and in A1 working in the G.G.A. Will your branch do its share?—W. R. W.

TECUMSEH GRAIN GROWERS

Tecumseh school, four miles south-west of Stonewall, has been during the past year or two attaining a favorable prominence from the fact that under its capable and progressive teacher, Miss Stafford, it has been doing conspicuously excellent work in the department of manual training. The people of the Tecumseh district, being progressive Canadians, appreciate that work, and during the past year have been improving the school premises by raising the building and placing it upon a substantial stone foundation, which will not only mean more adequate heating of the schoolroom, but also the securing of adequate space and accommodation for the necessary plant for more extended work in the line already so successfully inaugurated.

On October 25 a meeting of citizens was held to discuss the organization of a G.G.A. for the district. R. S. Comberbach was called to the chair, and S. Baer appointed secretary. After a brief statement by the chairman, M. J. Stanbridge, district secretary, addressed the meeting, announcing the policy of the district executive. Their hope is that within the next few weeks a group of local branches may be arranged in school districts adjoining Stonewall, including Tecumseh, Blackwood, Grassmere and Centre, which will act in business matters in association with the Stonewall branch, the group having a central executive committee, and at the same time each branch will form a local centre for general, social, educational and community work and for the promotion of the ideals of the Grain Growers' movement.

After an address by W. R. Wood, of the Central office, on the movement, its achievements, ideals and prospects, the meeting proceeded with organization. W. Harris was chosen as president, A. H. Matthews, vice-president, and S. Baer as secretary-treasurer. Messrs. T. Marcus, S. Bowler and Richard Comberbach were elected as members of the directors' board, the three remaining directors to be elected at a meeting to be held shortly. Mrs. W. F. Wieneke then was called on by the chairman and addressed the meeting on the work of the women and their organization in the movement. The new association begins its work hopefully in a live and progressive community and expects to add largely to its members within the next few weeks. With an Orkney man—a Westray man too we believe—as president and pilot, there is every assurance that the vessel will be steered judiciously and successfully to worthy achievement.

Selkirk district is to be congratulated on the foresight and initiative which led their executive to formulate the federation plan above mentioned. We hope in a few weeks to report the successful organization of the proposed branches. Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Stanbridge and Mr. Wieneke are on the job and are also busy preparing for the district convention soon to be held.

FORREST SOCIAL NIGHT

Forrest Grain Growers had a very successful gathering on October 30. To

the full capacity of the hall they gathered—men, women and children with some visitors from Oak Lake and Little Souris. A bright program of literary and musical numbers was much enjoyed. J. S. Wood, of Oakville, spoke at length on the co-operative work done in the Oakville branch, and W. R. Wood, of the Central office, dealt with the aims and ideals of the movement. Refreshments followed and closed a most enjoyable evening.

OAK RIVER CONTRIBUTES

The sum of \$75 was received this week from the Oak River G.G.A., being the balance of the returns from the Patriotic Acre scheme. This with remittance last year makes a total of \$1,051.50 received in all from the Oak River G.G.A.—a very creditable showing.

GRAIN GROWERS AND "PRINCIPLES"

The nobility of the moral standard set up by the farmers' organizations is well expressed in a paragraph in a letter written some months ago by a prairie farmer. It is as follows:—

"We must emphasize the principle which underlies such words as 'Equity' and 'Co-operation.' In some instances these words will mean cheaper commodities and economic gain, yet they may mean in some instances economic loss; but once we have seized the principle, or rather been seized by it, economic loss or gain will not concern us."

It is not money or possession that is the objective; it is not even "better conditions" considered by themselves, but a square deal, justice between man and man, between interest and interest, between nation and nation. That may mean lessened receipts in some departments of work and increased expenditure in others, but it will mean the greatest good to the greatest number, it will mean the obliteration of segregating distinctions of class, it will mean a wider prevalence of the three constituents of the coming kingdom—Righteousness, Peace and Joy.

QUESTION COMMITTEE

Many high class newspapers have a "Question Column" in which they furnish answers to questions of public interest which are proposed by their readers. Why shouldn't your Grain Growers' Association be a teacher to the community in some such way? A competent committee is appointed into whose hands questions of common interest, briefly put, legibly written and signed may be entrusted, either being collected in the regular meeting or sent by mail to the chairman of the committee. As a part of the program of each meeting, not to occupy more than 15 or 20 minutes, the committee presents brief and authoritative answers to the questions. In this way points of law or administration, questions regarding international relationships, economic conditions, moral problems, municipal affairs might be decided for enquirers to the advancement of general intelligence and well being. Which association will be first to make the question committee a pronounced success?

QUOTABLES QUOTED

"In the world of yesterday the great word often spoken in the hard tone of defiance was 'Nationalism.' The far greater word of the world of tomorrow will be 'Internationalism.' Yesterday the emerging people of the new-born democracies asserted themselves in what they lustily called their 'Independence.' Tomorrow when the horizons of life shall have been immeasurably widened, and when the meaning of life has been incalculably enriched, the dominant idea of the world will be broadened into 'Interdependence.'"—J. A. MacDonald.

"Canada and the United States being allies in a great cause, the people of the two countries should be permitted by every law of justice to trade freely with each other and the tariff wall should be absolutely smashed."—The Voice, Sept. 28, 1917.

"Legislators of this generation should realize that the time has passed when vested rights are to be accounted high and holy and human rights of little concern."—Bigger.

The fifty odd countries that have reasserted the primeval right to their high ways have met and overcome every variety of beast which the railway kaisers have set up to scare the timid."—Bigger.