

# The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon

## MARRIAGE AND NATIONALITY

A British subject today and an alien tomorrow is the experience of many women, and that because of no greater misconduct on their part than happening to marry a foreign resident of their country who has not become naturalized.

The cheerful readiness with which a country hands over the citizenship of its women to other countries is, to say the least, disconcerting.

Should a Canadian girl, born of Canadian parents, chance to marry a Dutchman, she becomes in the eyes of Canadian law a Dutch woman.

Just such an experience has befallen one of the most distinguished suffragists in the United States—Miss Inez Milholland—who married Eugene Boissevain, an unnaturalized Hollander. Mrs. Boissevain is a lawyer and it seems likely that she will lose a suit for one thousand dollars because thru her marriage she has lost her nationality.

The same thing happened to one of the most ardent workers in the campaign which secured the franchise for the women of California. This lady, after having worked early and late to gain this privilege, was never able to vote because just before the law became operative, she married an Englishman and became thereby an Englishwoman, even though she continued to reside in the same place.

Undoubtedly this law dates back to the time, not so far distant, when it was assumed that a woman, upon marriage, became the ward of her husband, if not his actual property. But it would seem that it might at last be conceded that a woman is an individual, quite apart and distinct from the man she marries, and that, having been born and educated in a country, she might be allowed to retain her nationality irrespective of marriage ties.

If the woman were in no sense a contributor to the prosperity and culture of her country, but only an incumbent upon her men folk, then indeed there might be some justification for this arrangement, but with her marriage the woman usually enters upon what men are always pleased to describe as the highest field of usefulness to the country—that of motherhood.

It seems, then, that there is no excuse for such a discrimination against the women of the country except that it was so arranged a long time ago and men, not being the ones who feel the pinch of it, have not bothered to change this law.

Some defender of the theory that men look after women's interests better than they could do themselves, will be quick to declare that the matter has never been brought to their attention, but this is easily disproved. At the special war session of the Parliament, which has just closed, the naturalization law was amended making it possible for a married woman to remain a British subject if, after her marriage, her husband should become an alien, tho in order to do this it is necessary for her to make a declaration that she desires to remain a British subject.

It has also been made possible for a woman who has been divorced from or who is the widow of an alien to regain her British nationality if it should be the pleasure of the Secretary of State to grant her this privilege.

But if a woman, who is a British subject, marries an alien, she becomes an alien and must remain so until her husband dies or she gets a divorce from him.

So it is evident that the honorable gentlemen who make our laws have considered the matter and have come to the conclusion once again that a woman is not a person but an adjunct to some man.

It is strange, knowing with what ardor they themselves hug their nationality, that it does not occur to them that it is a little trying to their women folk to be so lightly tossed over to another country. You will observe also that this is another one of the laws which does not work both ways. Does a Canadian man who marries a French woman become a Frenchman? Most certainly not. Why should he?

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

## A TRUE PROGRESSIVE

Dear Miss Beynon:—Enclosed you will find the money for those three little books, "How to Teach the Truth to Children," "Maternity" and "The Most Wonderful Story in the World."

I would just like to say how much I appreciate the work you are doing and also the work the Grain Growers' Guide is doing among the farmers. I hope the time will soon come when everything that seems to stand in the way of our women having an equal right and share in the making of our laws and the ruling of our country, will be broken down and peace and love shall reign.

I am a friend in all the good work.

M. H.

## CROPS FAIRLY GOOD

Dear Miss Beynon:—I am an interested reader of your page. I enjoy it very much and look forward to it each week. This is my first letter to you and hope it does not find its way to the W. P. B. The crops are very good in this part of the country considering the backward season we had. I am sorry to learn that so many have lost their crops altogether, as I think this will be such a hard winter

beautiful surroundings, are ambitious to be just as the rich, the "Beau Monde." Therefore they imitate the "tres distingués" to such a degree that the imitation becomes their misleading passion, to which they sacrifice all their efforts. They want to be a high standard, civilized people. They merely have stylish dresses and furniture in their homes. In many cases it leads them into debts and the ridiculous position of a "bourgeois gentilhomme," represented in the immortal comedy of Molière.

Finally, I saw the overwhelming majority, living in an endless distress. Their life is a continual drudgery. They are the producers of all wealth. They work in the fields, they work in the factories, they work in the mines, they build the palaces, the hotels, and the private houses. They get wages or they sell their grain and other land products, but they get a poor reward for their toil. They work to get just enough to have a shelter, to eat, to cover their bodies with cheap clothes, and to feed their families. Their life is "work" and "need." Their products are taken away from them by the clever privileged masters, who enjoy all that the workers

stylish, to hold the high standard of the exterior civilization.

To read serious books? To study? What? You'll laugh at them. They cannot spend their precious time for such things! They have to do their share in making money for the sake of privileged ones. Then, ah! What is the matter? The life, moving forward slowly, jumps and runs like a waterfall, and puts before the women such problems as votes for women, which means knowledge of politics and sociology; the war and its consequences; the unavoidable great change of international life—the disarmament, the eternal peace, the endless progress of human kind.

But how are they to start all this without any knowledge of social science? The most responsible work of our life cannot be accomplished because we are not able to do it at once. We are as the gospel girls, who had no lights when the groom was coming already.

You write me about patience. I guess we are too patient. As the great French writer, Voltaire, expressed himself: "Patience is the vice of the working masses." This patience demoralizes the privileged ones indeed.

We have no time to lose. We have to start at once the study of the social science called Socialism. Joseph Andrews, in his beautiful, powerful style ("The Question of a Third Party," Mail Bag, Guide), advised us to do so. I don't know Joseph Andrews personally. I never heard of him before, but his letter is his image, and I wish to say to him "Dear Comrade!" This word "Comrade" means the best, highest feelings toward our conscious organized fellow-workers, regardless of their color, age or sex.

Yours for beauty,

MARY NICOLAEFF.

## HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

The Mother's Magazine has a department for the exchange of ideas, from which we clipped the following:

**Odorless Sauerkraut**—Sauerkraut and boiled cabbage can be cooked in the oven by putting them in a pan or boiler and covering them with water. They will cook just as thoroughly in the oven as on the stove and there will be no unpleasant odor from them.

**When Using a Double Boiler**—The contents of the inner vessel of a double boiler will cook much more rapidly if the water in the outer compartment is salted in the proportion of half a cup of salt to two quarts of water.

**Durable Buttonholes**—I always work the buttonholes in my children's everyday dresses with the soft mercerized crocheted cotton which can be bought for five cents a spool. They can be made more quickly and are stronger than when worked with ordinary sewing thread.

**An Ironing Hint**—Try using a brick for an ironing stand, and you will find that the irons will retain their heat much longer than when the stand is used.

**For a Burned Saucepan**—Never fill an enameled saucepan, that has once had the contents burn, with soda and water. Instead fill it with cold water, add two or three tablespoonfuls of salt and let stand over night. Then bring the water slowly to a boil and the saucepan will be perfectly clean.

**A Helpful Hint**—Some mothers might try my plan of getting the little ones to take their afternoon naps, willingly. When they protested I explained that the mind and body require rest as well as food, and especially a great deal of rest while growing, so the youngsters willingly consented to lie down to rest, letting it be distinctly understood that they didn't mean to sleep. I made no objection only suggested that the little eyes be given a rest, too. In three minutes they were sound asleep and so every day they "rest" from two to four.

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The Guide has the following little booklets, of special interest to mothers, for sale at the merely nominal prices of 5c each for "How to Teach the Truth to Children," and "Maternity," and 10c for "The Most Wonderful Story in the World."

## For Those Offering Employment

Last week we told about the Bureau of Work for Women which is undertaking to find employment for those girls who are thrown out of employment on account of the war, and asked those who were needing help to communicate with this organization. There are a few suggestions in this connection that might prove helpful.

Make your letter very explicit. Don't say you would be willing to pay a small wage or a reasonable wage. Name the exact amount you would be willing to pay. State whether the girl who goes to your home will be able to have a room to herself, how far you live from town, how many there are in the family, and whether you would be willing to advance the fare. Address your letter to The Bureau of Work for Women, Industrial Bureau, Winnipeg.

for people who have not very much money.

I raised quite a few ducks, turkeys, chickens and geese this year.

Would you please forward the enclosed letter to Victorine for me?

I do hope this letter reaches you safely. If you don't publish it, please forward this one to Victorine.

PEGGY.

## SOCIALISM IS ONLY CURE

Dear Miss Beynon:—Excuse me! But I cannot keep silent as you challenged my reply. You wrote that I undervalue the comforts, etc. No! I like the comforts; I like the beauty; I like the arts. I am a graduated artist, as I studied the art of drama, the art of poetry, and have a diploma of "Free Artist," following the Russian Education Act. I mention this to make you understand better that I am not a type of a barbarian, denying all that does not mean the common practical usefulness. My first husband was a lawyer and our life was full of exterior comforts and beauty. But since my husband got sick and was helpless during thirteen years before he died, I had to do my best to raise three children, with very small property.

I resolved to work. I went abroad and studied the dairy and creamery business in Germany. Then I got a position as instructor in the creamery business in Russia. The change of life, the independent and responsible position, and the constant contact of the poor working people, influenced my mind greatly.

I saw that there are but a few who are able to enjoy the beauty and the art. Then a lot of people, who, without having really any appreciation of the

produce each day, toiling ten, fourteen and even more hours. Five hours the working people work for themselves and all the rest of the day's toiling is for their employers. I do not know another country where the chasm between the toilers and the exploiting class of the rich is wider than in Russia.

When I understood that my dear little girls might go out in this world and work, work, work, to make a bare living, or marry one of the workers or small owners of the land—so oppressed, so helpless in this merciless competition called life, I shouted: "We have to make a new life where all adult, healthy people will have equal duty to work and equal right to enjoy."

The horrors of the political oppression swept me from my country. I came to Canada. I found here political freedom. Yes, but there is no more social justice than in the old country. On the contrary, the competition, the greed for money, the mercilessness are worse, as the case is always in the new countries. I saw it clearly in British Columbia, where the land speculation and neglect of this poor land are so obvious. Sell and buy, buy and sell—that's all.

The farmers' wives do not toil less than the Russian peasant's wife. Yes, they have some comforts. They have well furnished homes, but do they really enjoy them? Are all these comforts and adornments of their rooms not merely an imitation of the rich, imitation which compels the women to give their very life to be slaves of all their surroundings? They start early in the morning, they stop late in the evening, busy, hurrying, restless. They have not only to work for producing food, clothes and keeping all sanitary and clean, but the custom compels them to be