

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

AN EXPLANATION

Miss Beynon is away for her holidays. I mention this that you may not hold her responsible for anything that I may say in her absence.

The letter from Hon. Geo. Langley is most welcome, for it makes plain many points on which the women of Saskatchewan have not been very clear. The franchise bill went thru the legislature of that province so quietly that many women do not yet know that they have the franchise.

In regard to what Mr. Langley says about the Dominion franchise, I must confess that I am not yet quite clear. He says that the women having the provincial franchise will not be able to vote at a Dominion election, and that such right can only be given them by an act passed by the Dominion parliament.

As I understand it, the only way we can be prevented from voting at a Dominion election is by an act passed by the Dominion parliament. I understand that the Hon. Arthur Meighen has said that the women having the provincial franchise are automatically entitled to vote at a Dominion election, so long as the same voters' lists are used.

When a deputation of women waited on Premier Borden some years ago and asked him to pass an act giving the women of Canada the Dominion franchise, he told them to get the provincial franchise, which would give them both, so long as the provincial lists were used. Then when the matter was discussed in the Dominion parliament at the last session, the claim made by Mr. Pugsley, who brought in the resolution, was that by a decision of the courts the women might be prevented from voting. He gave as an instance a woman in one of the eastern provinces who wished to practice law, I think it was, and while the act did not say that only men could, still the courts decided that the act meant only men. I would be glad to know if I am mistaken in this, but I am inclined to think that if there was a Dominion election before the Dominion Elections Act is changed, that the women whose names are on the voters' lists for the provinces could vote. Of course, if an act is passed to prevent us, or the Dominion government makes its own lists, then there will be no question about it.

I have made this explanation, for every woman should be alert when the Federal parliament is in session that every bit of influence possible is brought to bear on the members to give the women of the West full franchise rights, or at least not to make any definite changes to keep them from having such rights.

L. B. T.

WHEN WOMEN VOTE IN SASKATCHEWAN

Dear Miss Beynon:—I read the letter of Mrs. James on the subject of "When Women Vote in Saskatchewan" and your reply thereto in The Guide of July 5, and I am writing you this note to if possible make the matter clear.

Municipal Franchise

Our municipal franchise, that is, the right to vote for mayors, aldermen, Reeves and councillors is a property franchise. In the election of these officials in the month of December of each year only owners of property whose names, because they are taxpayers, are on the assessment roll can vote, but there is no distinction between women and men, and the same applies to the election of school officials.

Parliamentary Franchise

The parliamentary franchise requires no property qualifications, as far as men are concerned it was, previous to our last session of the legislature, and will remain, manhood suffrage, a man votes because he is a man, the only qualifications being, he must be a British subject by birth or naturalization, not under 21 years of age, must have resided in Saskatchewan for twelve months and in the constituency in which he wishes to vote three months immediately preceding the day of election. With these qualifications he is entitled to vote at either a provincial or a Dominion election. The alteration of our law at the last session of the legislature placed women in exactly the same position so far as voting for members of the provincial legislature is concerned, but they will not be allowed to vote for members of the Dominion parliament. That right can only be given them by an act passed by the Dominion parliament.

When the referendum is taken on the liquor question at the municipal

election next December, all persons—men and women—entitled to vote for members of the provincial legislature will have the right to vote and decide whether intoxicating liquor shall be sold for consumption in the Province of Saskatchewan or whether it shall not. If they are not property owners in the municipality they will not be allowed to vote for the municipal or school officials, but that will not interfere in any way with their voting yes or no on the liquor question.

Regarding Registration

In all cities and towns in Saskatchewan of not less than two thousand inhabitants there will be a closed list; some two months before the time for voting, notices will be placarded notifying all persons having the qualifications already stated to attend before the registrar and inform him that they have the qualifications, these will be entered alphabetically on the list, opportunity will be given for the examination of these lists, and any person whose name is not included can make application up to a date that will be stated, after which date the voters' list will be printed and all persons whose names are on the list will be able to vote, and persons whose names are not on the list will not be able to vote.

In the smaller towns and rural districts officials will be employed to make a list for the use of the deputy returning officer at the various polling stations, and any persons qualified to vote living in the polling sub-division whose names are not on the list will have the right to go into the polling booth, state they are qualified voters, and the deputy returning officer must give them a ballot for the purpose of voting. In these cases, however, the scrutineer on either side or the deputy returning officer himself may demand that they be sworn. This will apply to both men and women.

Yours sincerely,

GEO. LANGLEY.

Regina, Sask.

VIEWS OF A RURAL TEACHER

Dear Miss Beynon:—Your short note on "The Rural Teacher" was especially interesting to me as a rural teacher in Saskatchewan.

This district has only been settled about five or six years, and most of the farmers are still in a struggling condition, living in shacks. In my school I have English, Canadians, Americans, Irish-Americans, Swedes, Norwegians, Finns and Germans, almost Anglicized. Of these the Finns hear practically no English at home, the Swedes and Norwegians hear very imperfect English. You will thus see that even apart from the number of children, and their varying ages, a fairly difficult problem confronts a teacher. The irregularity of attendance due to children being kept at home during busy seasons to herd cattle, plant potatoes, do stooking, etc., is a great hindrance to progress. Nevertheless the work is intensely interesting, and the work at home and on the farm certainly develops self-reliance in the children, who are generally very eager to learn. To an Englishwoman the children all seem old for their years—one finds children of even six and seven accustomed to help in all sorts of ways.

All my children are under the age of fourteen, and it seems to me that up to that age our limited time will be spent most profitably in giving as good

a foundation as possible in reading, writing, arithmetic and composition with a little grammar, geography and history. Naturally these last two subjects can only be attempted in very broad outlines and by means of good reading books, maps, etc. This year I am trying to take some simple nature study by means of a talk for about a quarter of an hour at the beginning of afternoon school. We have been studying the weather, winds, clouds, etc., parts of flowers, formation of seed, fertilization by insects, etc., shapes of leaves, kinds of roots, and I am hoping to go on to a study of weeds, grasses, cereals, etc. The children report on what birds, insects, nests, flowers, etc., they have noticed. By means of these verbal reports mistakes in speech can be corrected, e.g., I seen a blackbird, etc. It is a great drawback for the little ones to be taught in the same room as the bigger ones, as it is necessary to keep them more restrained than is really good for them. However, I firmly believe in what the first inspector I had here said to me: "The rural problem in education is not the children nor even the curriculum, but the teacher." Good, permanent work is utterly impossible so long as these schools are under the care of young, inexperienced teachers, and so long as there is such a constant changing of teachers. Planning of work is rendered almost impossible, and after all we must remember that children's capacities are limited, that they assimilate knowledge slowly, and that comparatively little can be done in seven months. Technical instruction is quite out of the question for such young children and could, quite easily be left for a high school course. It seems to me that all that is necessary is some gardening, combined with nature study, together with what kindergarten occupations and drawing can be fitted in by the teacher. Attempting too much we are likely to fail in all; let us be thorough in what we do. In spite of all I have heard and read of, "Brown Mice," etc., I do not see how it is possible for one teacher to superintend the cultivation of five acres of land plus the cultivation of even twenty or thirty young minds and characters. I would also deprecate the introduction of too much of a commercial and merely utilitarian spirit into our educational methods and system.

With "Wolf Willow" I protest against the plan of so much practice in agriculture in our rural schools. Such methods will not necessarily tend to keep the rising generation on the farm—rather let us try to open their minds to the beauties and grandeur of nature, and to enlarge their horizon as much as possible. My idea is: Get a good, permanent teaching staff in the rural schools and the difficulty of the curriculum will soon tend to be solved.

I quite agree with the writer of the letter in your issue of June 21, a bigger grant ought to be paid by the education department, and thus the poorer districts would not be influenced and retarded by the cry of cheaper education and lower rates. The education of the youth of the nation is too important to be left to the mercy of small committees as a merely local affair. The idea of co-operation suggested between inspectors and trustees, and, may I add, teachers, is very good.

With regard to the hot lunch plan, I scarcely see how it is feasible under present conditions, and certainly ought not to be left to be carried out by the teacher. I fail to see how a hot meal for twenty or thirty children can be prepared, eaten and cleared away in half an hour or even in an hour. Who is to do the cooking and where?

It is not necessary even under present conditions when the children bring their own lunch that they should be allowed to eat when, where and how they please. This can be made part of the school training, especially as most teachers also eat lunch at school. Personally, the children know they must finish their lunch before beginning to play; they are allowed to eat either in school or out of doors in fine weather; always indoors in bad weather; they also know that no untidy mess must be left either indoors or out.

Sincerely yours,

RURAL TEACHER.

SUCH A PITY

"Can't stand the missus, sur," said a servant in a complaining voice to her master as she gave warning.

"It's a pity, Bridget," said the master, sarcastically, "that I could not have selected a wife to suit you."

"Sure, sur," replied Bridget, consolingly, "we all make mistakes."



Doctor (to wounded soldier who is on "low diet"): "Is there anything you want, my lad?"
 Irishman: "Oh, doctor, if y'd be glaa' me a shew fat goose for me dinner, now?"
 Doctor: "Ah, and I suppose you'd like it stuffed with something special, eh?"
 Irishman: "Indeed, and I would, I'd like it stuffed with another war!"

—From Punch