

WHY DON'T WOMEN MODERNIZE?

PERHAPS it is not so much what we are going to do in regard to the domestic labor problem, as what that problem is going to do with us. To put it tersely, if inelegantly, "we are up against it." Time was, five, ten, fifteen years ago, when every other home in Victoria and Vancouver had its servant or servants.

Those were halcyon days for the leisure-loving, and although we hope we have risen to the demands of the present, we sigh a little when we remember other times. For it was then that the mechanical little men in their white clothes and their noiseless slippers, with their pigtailed wound about their heads, served us with implicit obedience, producing the most delicious cookery, and delivering it to us in form and style most pleasing to the eye. True, butter was butter then, and eggs were laid to be eaten. Sugar—well, no really self-respecting Chinese cook would give you a cake without an inch or so of icing or a pudding without a sauce. And how they lorded it over the kitchen and over us, coldly proud and confident of their ability to look after things infinitely better than we could tell them! And we used to pay them fifteen dollars a month, or at the most twenty, and they would do the family washing as well as the cooking and housecleaning.

To-day a Chinese cook in a private house in any city in British Columbia is a rara avis. There are a few, to be sure, and they command from forty to sixty dollars a month, and refuse to wash clothes or clean the house, which must be done by outside labor. Is it, then, that there are fewer Chinese here than there used to be? On the contrary. But we will explain to you just why Chinese domestic labor is not procurable, and will mention two or three specific cases that have come under our own supervision. Fifteen years ago we paid a cook fifteen dollars a month to do all the duties of the kitchen, in a large house with a family varying from eleven to sixteen; he was with us for five years, and then went into the market gardening. To-day he owns two farms, and has a store in town, with two teams; he also supports a wife and family in China. Another case is that of a Chinaman who left domestic labor to go into a laundry business. He employs twenty men to-day, and has built an up-to-date laundry house that cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10,000. On one of the principal business streets of a certain western city, where a by-law once forbade the intrusion of Chinese shops, one can count to-day seven stores all run by Orientals. They are not directly down town, but are just beyond the high rent district, and incidentally where they will first attract the shopper who walks to make his purchases. A few years ago the only Chinaman owning a motor car in Victoria, was the Consul, Lee Mong Kow; to-day one has lost count of the automobiles which have become the possession of Chinamen and in which they ride about in placid opulence. It is common knowledge that the market gardening of B. C. is in the hands of the Chinese, and Orientals entirely control the fish business on the Fraser River.

Until last week the proprietor of a neat little

John Chinaman, former expert extraordinary in the household, has left us in the lurch. What are we going to do about the Domestic Servant?

One of the Problems in B. C.

By N. De BERTRAND LUGRIN

grocery shop about half-way down town invariably gave one a pleasant nod from behind his counter as he passed. He was an old-timer, a landmark, one associated him with all sorts of pleasant memories. To-day a smart Chinaman in a white coat and wearing his hair cut in the most approved fashion, beams at one from the old-timer's niche. The latter "couldn't make it pay," and the Oriental bought him out. The man who comes to work by the day charges thirty cents an hour, and he begins his day at six and ends it at nine. He lives in a chop suey house and it costs him twenty-five cents a day to live. He has a wife and children in China.

We make no comment on the above, but perhaps these new facts will help to make it understood in the east of Canada why we women who look back with a little regret to days when living was not the complicated affair it is now, nevertheless do not wish to tolerate for the moment the suggestion that Orientals be admitted to Canada in order to take over domestic labor or the labor on the farms. The importation of Chinese labor is therefore an aspect of the domestic servant problem that we do not consider at all.

BUT, if it's difficult to procure Chinese help in the house, it is practically impossible to obtain women for domestic service. What, then, are we doing about it? Well, the most of us are getting through our housework unaided except by such assistance as can be rendered by small boy and girl hands after school hours, and occasional labor by "day Chinamen" or women who hire out at twenty-five or thirty cents an hour. It's arduous; but the necessity has brought about what will certainly prove a blessing in the long run. It has taught us to live far more simply, to eat plainer foods, to put aside a lot of silly entertaining, like afternoon teas, where women used to congregate simply to sip drinks, and talk about nothings, and it has banished utterly from our daily curriculum the plan for "killing time." We find that the day is not half long enough for the thousand and one duties that confront us.

Some of us, we don't say all of us, because it takes women a long time to "put off the old and on with the new," are seeking out and adopting new methods for simplifying and systematizing domestic labor. Isn't it absurd that so many of us should be using the same old brooms that our grandmothers used, and the same old wash-boards and tubs. We hug the kitchen ranges, and cook on them and heat our irons over them, and incidentally burn up our complexions and produce ineradicable wrinkles from leaning above them, and stoking them. Men are far more advanced and sensible. Look at the farmers. The farmer's wife out West here draws her water

from a well, and carries it into the house to do her housework, her cooking and her washing. Living away from town she is obliged to make her own bread, and do her baking, nor does one find her using a bread-mixing machine or any other labor-saving device. And most heartbreaking of all—apart from the lack of water and

sanitary arrangements—is the fact that she must have lamps, and lanterns in order to "carry on" after dark. But her husband employs all the most up-to-date machinery in his part of the business. He drives around to do his ploughing in the most modern of ploughs; he uses a horse cultivator, which saves him miles of walking, and his threshing machine does the work of ten men. He even has an automatic milking arrangement. It is probably not entirely his fault that his wife, like himself, does not adopt more modern methods of doing her work. Woman is, at heart, very conservative, and the less education she has, the more conservative one will find her.

Even the man in town is far more progressive in systematizing his business than is his wife in her home. He travels to town in a motor car, goes up to his office in a lift; uses a telephone, long distance or otherwise for a large percentage of his work; has an adding machine and cataloguing conveniences; employs only specialized labor, and gets the worth of his money, and finishes his work at six o'clock, and then forgets about it until the next morning.

The crux of the whole situation seems to be this, that woman has got to take an entirely different view of things to-day than she did five or ten years ago. What we need is a man's courage to face issues squarely, a man's power of analysis so that we dare not shirk detail, a man's progressiveness and forethought, and a man's disregard for conventionalism when we believe that conventionalism spells deterioration and dessication. All of these qualities we must bring to bear upon the solving of our different problems, among which the domestic servant problem looms larger than we like.

THE time has come when we cannot in justice to the confidence which has been placed in us as voters, live a life of drudgery. Very well, then, the first step is to systematize and simplify household work. The next step is to see how far we can harness modern invention to do our work for us, and the next to make up our minds to employ only specialized outside aid. Such a course may mean a little more outlay in the beginning, but in the end it will bring results which will more than repay. Some of us already are working out individual schemes, and we find that we have at least three or four hours a day which we can devote to the study of economic and political conditions, a few minutes of French or some other language, a bit of music with the children, an invigorating drive or walk, or some other change of routine which is a complete relaxation from manual labor. This is not too good to be true. It is merely the result of cutting out wasted effort in a home as you would in a factory or an office.

ON this subject I am afraid many mothers differ from me. I consider that the social training is as necessary to the modern boy or young man as either his intellectual or religious training, as it bears directly on both. A young man should not be a "wet blanket" on the hands of his hostess, but should be such a help that she will say, "That is the kind of young man I like to ask to my house."

There are such a number of things provided for the amusement of the young people that if they are only taught at home how to use them they can only be for their good. If they are not taught at home they will always find lots of people in the outside world ready to teach them the improper use. Dancing has been since the world began, and will continue to the end. There are such beautiful, graceful dances, good to develop certain muscles, that

could never be exercised in any other way. Let your boy learn those dances and the poetry of motion, then he will not be so anxious to learn the vulgar ones taught by another class of people. Vulgar dancing is most harmful and should be avoided just as we teach them not to tell vulgar stories, or sing vulgar songs. Card playing has given solace and amusement to millions of people through many gen-

erations, and will still be played when we are gone. There is no more harm in the pieces of paste board with hearts and diamonds on them than in the cards with authors. If there is any harm made of playing cards it is in the people themselves who have never been taught the right way to play. The boy who will gamble at cards will do the same with marbles. The only thing to do is to teach your boys how to play cards and to play them at home, for if not they will go outside

and play with all kinds of people in all kinds of places, and then the harm is learnt. There is nothing more innocent than to see a father and mother sitting down with their boys in the evening for a game of cards, nor is there a better way to keep them off the street. The fact that cards are forbidden at home lends an extra charm; stolen fruit, etc. Parents

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Social Training and Athletics

For the Modern Boy

A Modern Mother's Ideas of Modern Methods

By LUCY S. KELLY

(Continued from the Women's Section in our issue of June 22nd).