

# Land Settlement for Soldiers.

SOME SOUND ADVICE TO WOMEN WHO HAVE MARRIED CANADIANS.

By Lt.-Col. J. OBED SMITH, Commissioner for Emigration.

(Fourth Article.)

It is not my intention in this article to offer advice to women farmers who can run and own their own farms, as they, by experience and ability which is already theirs, become very nearly, if not quite, able to decide these matters themselves.

Something over 23,000 Canadians on military service have married over here since the war started, and it is advisable to make any suggestion that will help wives (and other women) who have never been in Canada, to make their settlement therein, particularly on the land, more agreeable to themselves and acceptable to their husbands. The Women's Land Army has proved itself beyond peradventure to be an institution of national importance, and one that has, by virtue of daily outdoor life, materially improved the physique and capability of thousands of young women. Already a large number are asking to be sent to Canada, determined to adopt farming as their life work, and it is hoped that they also will find something helpful and of interest in this article.

It is thirty-seven years since I first saw the prairies of Western Canada. There were plenty of buffalo but no railway trains, and I have had so much to do with the settlement of men and women since then that one feels justified in asking a few plain questions that will at least by inference point a moral and teach a lesson. It is not natural and economically more correct to have a true help-mate on a farm than two farms without a wife, and is it not better for a farmer to have a contented and happy family about him than unlimited broad acres that he can only plough by operating his own tractor? Surely everyone has a right to live and be happy, and, after all, a petrol engine has no soul to save!

What always amazes me is the calm—if not indifferent—way in which public men relegate to a second or third-rate position the altogether important question of the emigration and settlement of their fellow human beings. Surely in every land, young or old, men, women and children are of first importance, and the question of their settlement must be placed first in the category of events. Did not our King say, "The strength of the Empire is in the homes of the people"? Canada is trying to live up to that royal opinion.

What can be said of the man who tries to make a home and farm successfully without the fitting help of one who has the temperament, natural or acquired, to be content with the things of Nature as she finds them under the blue skies of Canada? He is on the wrong track; as a Canadian would say, his trolley is on the wrong wire, and a Government which does not realise that a permanent, progressive and contented community can never be secured without a proper proportion of experienced and educated women, receiving and deserving their fair share of the good things and bounteous profits that Dame Nature bestows on a diligent husbandman, is altogether missing its common duty to a new and rapidly developing country.

The general duties of women on the land, whether they be helpmates of farmers, or working for a wage, embrace a good many

duties that a woman can obviously do better than any man. Not only are there household duties so essential to the good health of a family, but one sees such splendid results from the magnificent care that women take of live stock, particularly the young stock on a farm, and I know they will succeed in that branch in Canada as well as they have done in the Old Land. There is no reason why to these general duties should not be added hay-making and even sheep-shearing as reasonable tasks for women on farms in Canada and elsewhere. They, too, can help to produce butter and cheese for the friends they left behind in the Old Land, who will always have to look to Canada for these and other necessities, and for the woman farmer in Canada there is money in it.

In many cases it has not been possible to give fair play to women on the farms, sometimes from lack of means, sometimes from lack of help, and sometimes from lack of thought, but it is not too late to realise the investment in political economy, physical development, moral uplift and general welfare, which will return a hundredfold and properly mate the broad fields of Canada with the smiles of real homes, in which a future and permanent population may even call the great war a blessing in disguise, because it will have produced, not a miracle of development, but the certain evolution of ordinary success.

I recall driving over almost uninhabited plains and asking a bright young wife on a farm far removed from other women and from stores, how she reconciled her apparent loneliness, and she replied, with the air of a woman that any man would be proud of: "Well, the first thing I do is to come out in the morning for a breath of fresh air, and I find my arms involuntarily going upward in thankfulness as I realise that all these acres, which we could obtain nowhere else, belong to us."

Surely the wife and mother should feel she is in a partnership on the farm and not merely a servant for all in the household, and a cook for a threshing gang of from seventeen to twenty men during the broiling days of the harvest time. Then she ought to be near where social intercourse with other women and other decent human beings is possible and not be placed so that her children seeing only strangers once a month, shrink even from them. Children ought to be able to go to school without the risk of being lost in a snowstorm, as without the privilege of education the children are not likely to stay on the farm when they grow up. Healthy mothers produce moral and physically healthy children, steadfastness of character is developed, and why should the mother be content with a cotton dress when wheat is selling from \$1.00 to \$2.00 a bushel? If a farm is attractive to her and her family, they will stay and be happy, and no other means can be devised to secure that permanency of occupation which is so desirable. Have a small flower and vegetable garden near the house, and a little plot for each of the kiddies when they are old enough.

Much depends on the man who is—or is to become—a farmer. He must select what will be fitting for a home for a good decent

woman of sufficient education, so easily obtained these days, in order to make her a capable partner and a real "pal" on a farm. Thus he starts right, but there are some things a good many Canadian women, apt as the world knows them to be, do not know, because they have never learned the necessities of their share of work on a farm, and therefore have not gained half the incentive to live a life of health and comfort with other surroundings than streets and street cars. Canadian wives should learn (as their husbands must learn their business), and for such women there are eight hundred Women's Institutes in Ontario alone in which women meet to discuss household affairs, exchange recipes, form a community of interest, and help one another; for technical training Agricultural Colleges and kindred institutions are available.

For the woman from overseas who wants to be a real partner in her husband's agricultural enterprises, the Khaki University of Canada, with Canadian professors and teachers, opens its doors and offers advantages already in the area of greater London, with its four hundred square miles of homes and streets. Under the Department of Home Economics, cookery classes and laundry classes are already in operation at Stanhope Street School Cooking Centre. Under the Department of Agriculture, lectures in dairying, poultry, gardening and bee-keeping are being given at the Khaki University Headquarters, 49 Bedford Square, W.C., as well as at various Canadian military camps, where already it is such a pleasure to see a husband and wife start arm-in-arm to spend their evenings in one class of education or another.

From the London area trips will be made for practical purposes and demonstrations to various farms near at hand.

Evening classes are held at Exmouth Street Women's Evening Institute, Hampstead Road, N.W. 1, on dress-making, needlework, embroidery, home upholstery, tailoring, first aid, home nursing, health lectures, citizenship, home planning, home furnishing, textiles, millinery, physiology, boot repairing and infant care. Day classes are now being arranged at Netley Street School. No registration fee, entrance fee or tuition fee is payable by or required from any woman intending to go to Canada. These classes are open to those women who purpose marrying Canadians as well as the wife of any Canadian soldier married here or in Canada.

This is a good start. Just how much the movement can be developed will depend entirely upon how much this excellent opportunity is appreciated. There are labour-saving devices in plenty in Canada that take a lot of drudgery off the housekeeper, and of these much can be learned from the teachers.

Farming is not—and never was—an easy life, but it is a healthy one. It is better to live 70 years than 50. Make friends with other Canadian women, they will respond with generous impulse to the honest good woman. The way Canadian women do things in and about their household has been proved the best for Canada, and one cannot succeed against established facts and proved results, so please don't tell anyone in Canada that you did thus and so in this and that way in England. Canadian people know that without your telling them, and you waste your time mentioning it. Learn to make a pie—a Canadian pie. The Canadian way is best in Canada, so learn it where and how you can.

"English girls are so used to having all household work done for them by servants or older women, or else done out of the house

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