

The Countrywoman

Woman's Party Organ

IN the November issue of Woman's Century, is a paragraph which reads: "The Woman's Century, now issued as the organ of the party" (meaning the new Woman's Party), "will print each month a page giving details regarding organization and development." This brief paragraph comes at the end of an editorial dealing with the Woman's Party in which it expresses hope that the Woman's Party will draw many adherents to it.

Woman's Century is the official organ of the National Council of Women. It is owned by the women of Canada, many thousand dollars worth of stock belonging to different councils. It is a stock company and was incorporated in 1915. The board of directors are appointed, but not elected, and are from among the women of every province, and comprise women of many interests. There are at least seven directors from among the women of the three prairie provinces. The National Council of Women itself comprises women of every interest, of every class and religion, of every shade of political opinion. Among its affiliated societies are our three farm women's organizations. They are all a part of the National Council of Women. They all give Woman's Century the support merited by the official organ. The National Council was founded to be a clearinghouse or unifying influence for the various organizations which make up its membership. Now that women have been enfranchised and are entering actively into politics, it is patent that if the National Council is to remain, it must as such avoid commitment to any political policy. The supporters of Woman's Century naturally rely upon the board of directors to keep Woman's Century, the organ, as void of commitment as the National Council.

What must have been their surprise on reading the November issue of Woman's Century to find, as quoted above, that it had become the official organ of the Woman's Party. Censure naturally comes to the board of directors for permitting Woman's Century's pronouncement as the organ of that party. Another surprise is in store. The directors, at least the directors in the West, were not consulted as to whether or not Woman's Century should make such a pronouncement on the Woman's Party. One must not lose sight of the fact that the two editors, the two heaviest individual shareholders of Woman's Century, and two prominent National Council women, are two of the founders of the Woman's Party. Such action on the part of Woman's Century can be interpreted only in the light of an effort to stampede the National Council of Women, involving thousands of women who are absolutely opposed to the principles set down in the platform of the Woman's Party, into the fold of the interests that are the antithesis of progressive thought and principles.

In the issue of The Grain Growers' Guide of October 16, it was pointed out conclusively that the Woman's Party was merely another instrument for the deeper entrenchment of vested interests. This action of Woman's Century, coming in the manner it does, and at a time when vested interests are fortifying themselves for the period of reconstruction is ominous. It carries with it more sinister significance than even the organization of the Woman's Party itself. It is practically forcing a choice on the National Council between the support of a united Canadian womanhood or support of the vested interests. Hints that it has nothing less than wrecked the National Council are heard.

What is exactly behind this drastic action on the part of Woman's Century? Why does it risk the loss to the National Council of a united womanhood when it is most needed? Have vested interests been working while others slept? Has Woman's Century, at the hour when women most needed it given up the struggle against the financial difficulties facing the press of the country as a result of war-time conditions,

and succumbed to the path of ease which vested interests can smooth? Why this effort at this time to stampede Canadian womanhood into a movement distasteful to thousands of them?

Catherine Breshkovsky

On November 3, there appeared in the Christian Science Monitor a letter from Madame Catherine Breshkovsky, the little grandmother of the Russian revolution. The letter was written on May 12, when Catherine was in hiding. It is full of compassion for her misled and ignorant country people. In the latest issue of the Woman Citizen is an article by Alice Stone Blackwell, telling that the beloved Catherine is dead. She passed away on September 14. There were rumors that Catherine had been shot by the Reds on October 27, on the charge of stopping the Bolshevik regime, but Miss Blackwell is of the opinion that Catherine died quietly in her bed. The New York Call says that "The Soviet government gave her a state funeral. Members of

beloved and honored by the peasantry to whom she gave her life. Always reasonable she was a curb to their oft-times impetuosity. Many years of her life she spent in exile in Siberia. When Kerensky formed his cabinet, he brought Catherine out of exile and offered her a ministry without portfolio, but Catherine believed she could do more for her peasants by remaining one of them. Her freedom as she says lasted only for six months. Catherine's death is a severe loss to her many friends in America, but especially to her friends in Russia.

Citizenship Difficulties

American women are experiencing difficulties over citizenship rights. The Woman Citizen quotes this paragraph:—"The extending of the registration of alien enemies to women has developed evidence of the need of a married woman's citizenship bill, such as that framed by Dr. Ellen Spencer Mussey and introduced in Congress by Miss Jeannette Rankin in the House of Re-



Cutting Out the Middleman.

the government were in attendance and gave her all the honors her heroic services merited."

In her letter of May 12, the last to reach America she said, "Notwithstanding all I see around me my health does not fail, and I have much to do and for a long tract of busy days. My heart aches but my soul is full of hope."

Speaking of her retirement she says, "My freedom like that of my best friends lasted for half a year only, and during this time we were so busy that we never had some minutes to spend by ourselves. I am so well accustomed to such a situation that it would be difficult for me to believe in the possibility of enjoying quietly the right to feel quite free forever. Our poor country is in the first class of the Institute of Political Science. And until we pass into the second we cannot be sure of the safety of the friends of our own people. Now it goes better. Perhaps after many and many efforts we begin to be clever and brave; but till now our progress is not so great as we wish. Yet I hope that our allies will not forsake us, and will aid us as they have done all these four years. Now as soon as we are sane (healthy) we can be of use to . . . I see how many people are more quiet, more reasonable and hopeful."

"It is possible, too, that I am not destined to see realized all my hopes and anxieties, but nevertheless, I shall leave the world with my faith in the progress of humanity, of the human soul, as strong as it was during all my life; for neither my reason nor my imagination can believe in the retrogression of a world that was capable of producing individuals like Christ, and all those who have had the strength to sacrifice their own comfort, and even their existence to the ideal that they chose in their heart and mind."

Catherine was a wonderful woman,

presentatives and in the Senate by Senator Sheppard, of Texas. The latest case in point is that of Mrs. Edith Sheldon Stocker Rose Georg, American born and of American descent, active in Red Cross work in Newburgh, N. Y., but married to an unnaturalized German. Mrs. Georg for many weeks stood out against registration, appealing to President Wilson and to Congress against her humiliation as, in her own right, an American citizen. Only when arrested and threatened with indefinite detention did she consent to register herself an alien enemy."

An Epitaph

One of our farm women cut these lines out of the Spectator, and sent them to us with the remark that they must have been written for a farm woman of the West:—

"Here lies a poor woman who always was tired, She lived in a house where no help was hired;

Her last words on earth were 'Dear friends I am going

Where there isn't no scrubbing, nor sweeping, nor sewing,

To a place which appears to just suit my wishes,

For where there's no eating, there's no washing of dishes!

Where all the time loud anthems are ringing,

But as I've no voice I'll be clear of the singing.

Don't mourn for me now—don't mourn for me ever,

I'm going to do nothing! for ever and ever!"

Red Cross Work

Red Cross headquarters recently gave the press a lengthy statement dealing

with the work still ahead of that organization.

Canadian forces will be on active service in the occupation of Germany and at the frontier for a long while and some of Canada's soldiers may require to remain there with other contingents from the allies until a stable democratic government is finally established in all of the countries of central Europe, the Balkans and Russia.

The work of the Canadian contingent in Siberia is only just beginning and no one can say to what length relief in sorely stricken Russia will have to be carried.

These facts can only point to one conclusion—that there must be no slackening in Red Cross effort in Manitoba even though the end of actual hostilities may be in sight. Indeed the enormous task of re-construction and of re-vitalizing exhausted Europe will call for the continuance of the self-sacrificing effort of the Red Cross as long as the scars of war remain, and to the citizens of Canada the Red Cross will probably be the last organized war work to bring its activities to a conclusion.

If the actual demand for Red Cross supplies on the firing front has ceased and the terrible toll of the daily casualty list is no longer the first draft on the resources of the Red Cross, yet the new demands which have come to replace those of the first casualty clearing stations are no less sacred. The soldiers who will soon come marching home to receive their discharge and to be taken back into the ranks of citizenship, must leave many of their comrades behind in field hospitals, base hospitals and convalescent homes in England. The institutions for the blind, for those who have been maimed and disfigured and for the treatment of those afflicted with shell-shock, which are very largely assisted by the Red Cross, are all filled to overflowing with the sad wrecks of war.

Another great new task of the Red Cross has developed with the coming of peace, through its allied organization, the Canadian War Contingent Association, in caring for the comfort, safety and material wants of the men on their way home. The Red Cross faces still another big task in the return and demobilization of its own staff of nurses, transport sections, ambulance drivers and other personnel, besides the disposition of all the paraphernalia and machinery of its tremendous physical organization in England and France. The same careful provision for the return to civilian life of the Red Cross workers must be made by the Red Cross as the government has been called upon to do for the men of all ranks. All in all, it will be many months before any relief from the moral, financial and material demands upon the Red Cross will be in sight, and it will be years before the Red Cross will be able to close its books upon Canada's share of the great war and say "it is finished."

Strange Women's Work

Some of the things that women are doing today, besides making munitions, are almost past belief. In tool and gauge making women who previously thought "a miss is as good as a mile" have mastered the advanced processes and are finishing to measurements that literally correspond to the fraction of a hair's breadth. Quite different from this but equally amazing is the very common sight of women perched on cranes moving among the rafters of the factory roof riding back and forth quite unafraid and guiding the movement of great molten ingots far below. Engineering seems to be woman's work and one competent to judge both sides of the question says that with a year or more of additional training he would not hesitate to build an ocean-going ship entirely by women's work. The Ministry of Munitions is taking action continuously to reduce hours of overtime, abolish Sunday labor and to protect the workers and much of this is made necessary, doubtless by the fact that the zeal of the women workers allowed neither holidays nor Sunday rest periods.

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