

WOMAN'S SUPPLEMENT

A FEW PAGES PREPARED TO MY LADY'S TASTE

The Editorial Table

The Superfluous Woman.

NO one needs to be told that there is a superfluous feminine population in Great Britain. It has made itself heard in shrill and unmistakable accents during the last decade, and the clamour may break out afresh at any moment. Fiction, art, politics and society are full of this feminine unrest, which is making a ferment, distressing to lovers of the peaceful life. What is the matter? One explanatory circumstance is revealed by statistics. Figures, we are informed, do not lie, and are frequently a revelation of causes of far-reaching movements. According to the latest figures, there are 1,200,000 "surplus" women in Wales and England—that is, women for whom there can be no provision in the domestic sphere as wives and mothers. Such a disparity in numbers means that many women, unable to turn their energies to the management of a household and the bringing up of children, are exercising themselves in a variety of agitations which are more or less harmful to the commonwealth. Of course, there will be found many self-supporting women who are leading useful and independent lives. But there are all too many who have no definite work or aim and are consequently easily attracted to every passing "cause."

The lot of the British spinster of gentle birth has been one of narrowness and gloom, owing largely to the foolish prejudice against a business or professional career for woman. This prejudice has been disregarded by so many women, during the last few years, that the state of affairs, so far as the educated woman is concerned, is much better than it was in the "sixties." A woman doctor is no longer regarded as a freak, a business woman is no longer a "person" who has descended hopelessly in the social scale.

But, making every allowance for the new opportunities opened to the British women who wish to support themselves, the ranks of womanhood are extremely over-crowded, and there is a vast army of "the unemployed" in all classes which is a constant menace to social order. In France there is always a religious "vocation" for the woman who does not marry and who desires humanitarian and secluded occupation; but in Great Britain, even when religious movements are supplied with feminine workers, there remain many with empty hands and hearts, for whom the world seems to afford no place. But in this instance, Britain's extremity is Canada's opportunity.

The Forlorn Man.

TURNING to the statistics of our own country, we find that in our four Western provinces there is a superfluity of 300,000 in the masculine population. The recent Home Reunion movement, having for its object the bringing out of the wives and children of British men immigrants who are already working in Canada has been supported chiefly by men. It was women's work, and the patriotic societies of Canadian women might well have interested themselves in such an undertaking.

Someone objects that it would be too much like establishing a matrimonial bureau to urge that some of the surplus feminine population of Great Britain be induced to come to our West. No woman should be urged to come to Canada from the British Isles unless she is prepared and equipped to support herself. Canada should not be represented as a paradise for the loafer—man or woman. It is a land of golden opportunities for those who have

health and energy, and it is a country of rejuvenating power to those who are eager for fresh fields for social and industrial experiments. Of course, it is to be expected that, if hundreds of thousands of British women go out to our West, most of them will marry. But, leaving aside the matter of establishing homes of Anglo-Saxon traditions in our Western provinces, that territory is in dire need of just such help as many of these unemployed English women could give. Think of the domestic service so sadly required throughout the whole country and then consider the absurdity of talking about "superfluous" women, when there is not a city of Canada where housewives are not worried over the question of servants. It is the most pernicious rubbish to say that some women are "forced" into most sordid lives because, forsooth, there is no decent employment to be secured. From Halifax to

Vancouver there are respectable and comfortable homes awaiting girls who are capable workers, and there is no danger of domestic service being overcrowded for many years.

Thus, if the prospect of becoming a bride in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba or British Columbia does not attract the maidens of Kent or Middlesex, perhaps the prospect of good wages and opportunities for better may prove more powerful. The best and most practical patriotism is that which builds up our own country with the finest citizens to be procured, and the women of our patriotic organizations cannot be more sensibly employed than in sending wives to lonely bachelors and in securing domestic aid for the over-worked housewives of our Dominion.

The Educated Immigrant.

IT has been said by many modern observers of social conditions in a new country that the scientific study of domestic work and of child training will result in a better class of women being attracted to such employment, thus raising the social status of the nurse and the cook. To mention this, is to start afresh the vexed question of "the lady help" versus the domestic servant. There have been so many changes in social life and customs that this century may see the disappearance of Mary Ann, although present indications hardly point to her extinction.

There are many English gentlewomen, whose incomes are too small to admit of their living "well" in London who would find settlement

in Western Canada opening new fields for activity. Such a desirable settler went to Alberta, bought a small farm property and has made her house a delightful copy of "the place at home," with its chintz-covered furniture and bits of old china. She has turned her musical talent to account and is the highly-valued organist of the little church in the nearest town. Her home is a charming scene of hospitality and she has brought into the new country the old-world softness of speech and manner, without the slightest assumption that she is enlightening the inferior natives. She is not always deploring the crudity and brusqueness of a young nation, but frankly declares that she is much happier on her "ranch" than she was in the old home, where she was regarded with polite tolerance as a dependent and where she employed her spare moments in embroidering altar cloths and in district visiting.

In this broad Dominion, there is room and work for all who will come. Let us think and talk less of our rights and more of our opportunities. If these discontented British women can only reach Alberta the sunshine will transmute their petulance into enthusiasm and Canada will be the richer by thousands of happy homes.

JEAN GRAHAM.



Mrs. Hazen, Wife of the Hon. J. D. Hazen, Minister of Marine and Fisheries. The Hazens Reside in St. John, but Mrs. Hazen and the Misses Hazen are Likely to be, this Season, Among the Foremost Hostesses at Ottawa.