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Canada

Women and Reconstruction

Published by the
Women's Department
Canadian
Reconstruction
Association
November 25, 1918

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WOMEN AND RECONSTRUCTION

An Appeal for the Co-operation of Canadian Women in Solving Economic and Industrial Problems and an Examination of the Relationship of Homes to National Business

Every woman who has the care of a home knows that its income is dependent upon the employment of a worker, using worker in its widest sense. In the great majority of cases that income is derived from the occupation of the husband. Sons and daughters may contribute to it. Occasionally the breadwinner is a woman. But only an infinitesimal number of Canadian homes derive their income wholly from investment. The effect of government action on occupations and on the homes of the country may be regarded, therefore, as a special province of women. Information which bears upon public business and its relation to home life is precisely the means of political education they are seeking.

The entire fabric of national business, all civilian pursuits and in time of war the citizen army, is built up from the homes of the country. In turn all national activity reacts upon the family unit.

The main occupations of Canadians are agriculture, manufactures, building trades, domestic and personal service, civil and municipal government, fishing and hunting, forestry, mining, professional, trade and merchandising, and transportation. A certain number of these occupations are directly wealth producing. They make wealth which helps to establish national stability, contributes to the development and support of other occupations, and enables the country to carry on its

business in the world of nations. Others, sometimes called secondary occupations since they do not produce wealth as directly, are nevertheless indispensable. Both basic and secondary occupations are inseparably interwoven with home life and its well-being. The wife of a civil servant, or of a professional man, or of a clerk in a store, knows that the upkeep of her home depends on the income of her husband equally as compared with the home of a miner, an industrial worker, a fisherman, a manufacturer or a farmer.

It will readily be recognized that, for the welfare of the homes of the country, the wealth producing occupations should be kept at their best, and all occupations should be maintained in healthful balance and co-operation. One of the most important functions of the business of government is to secure this end. The woman voter knows intuitively that these things must be her concern. She means to understand the conditions of national and international well-being for the sake of her own home and the homes of others.

STATISTICS AND HOMES

There are several ways in which occupations and their relative importance may take a living form for women who know that homes and occupations are interdependent. One is by a statement of the numbers of people at work in each employment. Another is from a table of the wealth

HOMES AND WORKERS

produced yearly. A third indication of importance may be found in the volume of the export trade of an occupation. The aggregate amount of wages paid in each is significant. Statistics which follow help to show how national employments are supplied with workers from the homes of the country and how they become in truth the real substance of national business. Some occupations because of their nature can be represented only partially in statistical returns. Other returns are incomplete. Two occupations only, manufactures and transportation, are represented in sums paid for wages and salaries.

	People Employed, 1911
Agriculture	933,735
Building trades	246,201
Domestic and personal service.....	214,012
Civil and municipal government....	76,604
Fishing and hunting.....	34,812
Forestry.....	42,914
Manufactures.....	491,342
Mining.....	62,767
Professional.....	102,616
Trade and merchandising.....	283,087
Transportation.....	217,544

	Value of Output, 1916
Manufacturing products.....	1,381,547,225
Field crops.....	886,494,900
Butter.....	26,966,355
Cheese.....	35,512,622
Forest products.....	172,830,000
Fisheries.....	35,860,708
Minerals.....	177,201,534

	Export Trade, 1918
Agricultural products.....	567,713,584
Animal products.....	172,743,081
Manufacturing products.....	636,602,516
Fisheries.....	32,602,151
Forests.....	51,899,704
Minerals.....	73,760,502

	Wages and Salaries, 1916
Manufactures.....	*283,311,505
Steam railroads.....	104,300,647
Electric railroads.....	8,767,734
Express companies.....	3,786,661
Telephone companies.....	7,852,719
Telegraph companies.....	2,898,230

*For calendar year 1915.

To compare with greater accuracy the numbers of people employed in each occupation and the proportion of homes affected, it is necessary to refer to the procedure followed by The Canadian Census enumerators. "The term 'gainful worker' in this report"—see the Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, Introduction to Volume VI—"includes all workers except women doing housework in their own homes, without salary or wages and having no other employment, and children of ten years and over who worked for their parents at general housework, or on the farm, or at any other work or chores when attending school. But children who spent the major part of their time at home and who materially assisted their parents in the performance of work other than household duties were to be reported as of the occupation in which their time was employed."

The number of homes dependent on each occupation could be estimated more accurately if the Census were to include a return of the occupation of home-making, even if it is unpaid. Consider the interest and value to women voters, and the nation, of such information as the number of homes connected with agriculture, manufactures, transportation, mining, fishing, etc. Such data would be specially valuable with regard to agriculture and would give a clearer idea of the size of the individual agricultural working group. In comparing the 933,735 workers in agriculture with 217,544 in transportation, or 491,342 in manufactures, the comparison to some extent is made between names on a payroll in the latter employments and groups of workers which may comprise a farmer owner and manager, one or two paid agricultural workers, and unpaid workers who are young people at home, in some cases both sons and daughters. Speaking from a statistical point of view, the number

of homes affected by the transportation and manufacturing returns is likely to be greater in proportion than might be expected from the figures given, since the family group is probably represented to some extent at least in the agricultural returns, and only the individual paid worker, not his family group, is generally represented in such occupations as building trades, civil and municipal government, forestry, manufactures, professional, trade and merchandising and transportation. There are numbers of unmarried workers in all these occupations, so the foregoing statement can be made only with a certain degree of reserve, and is not intended to lessen the importance of agriculture as a national occupation.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

The more closely occupations are studied, the more clearly it will be seen how tremendously they affect the homes of the people. The importance they must assume in the eyes of women who find themselves called on to exercise the franchise with constructive patriotism cannot be exaggerated. Not only this, but each occupation is joined to all other occupations. Agriculture is dependent on transportation. So is transportation on agriculture. A similar statement can be made with regard to every occupation. There is not one calling, no matter how basic or wealth producing, which can stand alone. Whatever harms one vitally, harms all; and the well-being of one home in the nation requires the well-being of all national activities.

Of the 491,342 persons employed in manufactures in 1911, 98,361, or about one fifth, were women. The total number employed in manufactures had increased to 514,883 in 1915 according to the 1916 Postal Census. It is reasonably safe to estimate that between 130,000 and 150,000 of these workers are women. The other large paid employments for women in Canada, outside of

home making and the care of children which are not paid, are domestic and personal service, 138,879; professional occupations, 57,835; and trade and merchandising, 42,184.

These women workers are largely native-born, and are not immigrant as has sometimes been supposed. Percentages are quoted here which show how close at the heart of Canadian life is the paid woman worker and how great must be her influence in the social development of the country.

	Female workers	
	Born in Canada	Born elsewhere p.c.
All occupations.....	76.20	23.80
Agriculture.....	75.24	24.76
Building trades.....	83.41	16.59
Domestic and personal service.....	65.45	34.55
Civil and municipal government.....	86.47	13.53
Fishing and hunting.....	97.35	2.65
Forestry.....	61.54	38.46
Manufactures.....	82.43	17.57
Mining.....	83.60	16.40
Professional.....	86.21	13.79
Trade and merchandising.....	81.72	18.28
Transportation.....	80.84	19.16

NATIVE BORN WORKERS

The corresponding maximum percentages of native born men workers are much lower in every case except one, forestry; and in this employment there is a smaller percentage of women at work than in any other. Domestic and personal service is the only employment in which there are more women at work than men; this is, of course, what one would expect to find. It is remarkable, however, that in professional occupations there should be a difference of only 4.10 per cent. in favor of men, the exact figures being 62,781 men and 57,835 women.

Paid employment for girls and women was increasing with some

rapidity before the war. In 1891, there were 111 paid women workers in each 1,000 of the female population of ten years of age and over; in 1901, the number had increased to 120 per 1,000; in 1911, the proportion was 143 in each 1,000. It would be interesting to know what the proportion is in 1918.

Within the last ten years, and especially within the last four years, the point of view of the younger generation of Canadian women with regard to paid work has changed enormously. Ten years ago the paid employment of young women in Canada was considerable. By 1911, the fact that 364,821 women were paid workers in a population of between seven and eight millions of people, with high national standards of comfort and well-being, showed that the women of Canada are naturally industrious and enterprising. But judging from present war conditions, and the stimulus of mind and heart which has come to young Canadian women with regard to useful productive work, the nation must reckon that its girls will be found permanently in every field of employment. The occupations in which it is certain that women will engage in rapidly increasing numbers are manufactures, business, finance and the professions. There will be an increase in women workers for agricultural production, but probably in lines of special employment, such as fruit growing, poultry farming, gardening, beekeeping.

THE FRANCHISE

The woman voter who is a paid worker will study how to use her vote for the betterment of her employment, as well as for the good of her country. Her interest in national business will be practical. On the other hand, the woman home maker, who represents by far the largest element among enfranchised women, is concerned not only with the well-being of the home. She is

definitely interested in her husband's employment and the employment of her sons and daughters. Girls and women who are paid workers come in large numbers from both city and country homes. The woman home maker in the country is as likely to be the mother of a teacher, a nurse, a stenographer, a saleswoman, a worker in a whitewear factory or a munitions plant, as the home maker in the city. The younger girls and women of this war time know that fewer of them will marry since many of the young men with whom they might have married have died to redeem the world at a great price. They will turn to useful paid work, both as a means of service and of livelihood. The occupations of the people will find room for them. Indeed there is a national necessity for every trained and capable woman worker. A lessened marriage rate will contribute to increase the proportion of women workers in occupations. Wherever in the life of Canada, enfranchised women may choose to turn their eyes they will find powerful reasons why they should grasp the meaning of the problems of national business.

THE EMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

The problem of employment is finding work for every individual who is willing to work, with conditions and payment fit for the standards which we should have in this country. The statement is sometimes made that the government must give work to every one who is willing to work. The government, which in the end is ourselves, certainly has duties in this respect, but to eliminate private effort and initiative on the part of the individual would be to invite and ensure disaster. The active effort of each individual is required to solve that individual's problem of employment. The individuals who plan and manage enterprises which provide work for others on a large scale are indispensable. Clear

thinking on the part of enfranchised women with regard to what helps or harms employment will be of great benefit to Canadian occupations. Some of the factors in the problem are inanimate, such as raw materials, plant, money or capital; and some are human factors, such as skilled and unskilled workers, organizing ability and intelligence. The land secures steady employment for the farmer, but he like others is dependent for transportation, clothing, machinery and some of his food. He is dependent as we all are on the home maker, the doctor, the lawyer, the teacher, the law giver and the minister, on merchants, civil servants and many other helpers, increasing in number as civilization progresses. We all owe our present existence and freedom to the sailor and the soldier.

LABOR AND CAPITAL

The problems of labor and capital will have now a new meaning to woman voters. Difficult and complex as they are, there should be a helpful angle from which women may study present conditions so that they may make a fitting contribution to the reconstruction of Canadian life. Labor can never be dissociated from the human factor. To deal with labor means dealing with human beings. On the other hand, capital is a source of potential action from which energy must be drawn to maintain the occupations which support the homes of the country. Capital is something to be used and it is indispensable. To bring about a better understanding of the great possibilities and value in the aspirations of labor, and of the use and characteristics of capital, is one of the main efforts of reconstruction. The woman voter must realize that the more intelligent, stronger and highly developed each element in the life of a nation is, the better it is for all classes. This is certainly true of the womanhood of the nation, just

as it is true of manufactures, agriculture, labor and capital. The intelligence of the organized home makers among the country women of Canada has won the admiration of everyone. It is impossible to believe that these women, and all other Canadian women, will not study the whole field of Canadian affairs and work for the widest opportunities for their sons and daughters, exercising the sense of justice and fair play, and the devotion to common national ideals which are the safeguards of national politics.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Germany is fighting for natural resources, so that she may dominate and rule humanity. This is why she tore Alsace-Lorraine from France. In the same way she has taken valuable natural resources of Russia. If the world is to be free, she must not be allowed to keep them. It is evident that the natural resources of Canada should be used, not only in the war, but in the future after the war, for Canadian well-being and civilization. They should be developed in our own country by means of our own capital and our own labor. By doing this, we will not only serve ourselves, but we will add to the strength and safety of the British Commonwealth and the league of civilized nations. Every country owes to itself and to other countries that it should grow to its full economic strength. We cannot do this unless we develop as far as possible our own natural resources within our own borders. This problem is of tremendous importance to the womanhood of the country, and is a part of reconstruction which will require all the genius, leadership and energy of experts in finance, manufactures, agriculture, construction and transportation, and the gifts, initiative and energy of our workers. Few of the natural resources of Canada have been developed as yet within a tenth part of

their extraordinary possibilities. Some of these resources are coal, iron, gold, copper, nickel, timber and pulp, fisheries, water power, and an uncultivated land area such as exists nowhere else in the world.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

The stability of a country's occupations depends in a considerable degree on its export trade. To some extent such trade is an insurance against unemployment. When the home market is depressed, there is an excellent chance that orders from abroad will keep industries busy. If the trade depression is in a foreign country, the home market may compensate. Before the war, Canada's exports were only about half our imports; the exact figures for 1913 were, exports, \$355,754,600; imports, \$670,089,066. We were then, and are now, a debtor country; our indebtedness is mainly to the United Kingdom. Since the war began, this proportion has been almost reversed; the figures for the year ending March 31st, 1918, are, exports, \$1,540,027,788; imports, \$962,521,847. Munitions and other war supplies, and the greater volume and value of agricultural products, account for the larger part of the increase in exports. But unless our export trade is maintained after the war we shall find it far less easy to meet our liabilities. To maintain and if possible increase that trade is one of the most serious problems before the country.

The enfranchised woman will find that in order to meet our national and war indebtedness by production and export trade Canada must submit to tests of efficiency and fitness. These tests of fitness and efficiency apply to Canadian women just as they do to farmers, manufacturers, industrial workers, labor and capital.

COSTS OF PRODUCTION

In order to export products which will be accepted in payment for what

we owe it is necessary to recognize the factors in the cost of production. These are mainly:

- Raw materials.
- Wages and cost of living.
- Expenses of production.
- Transportation.
- Skill and industry of trained workers.
- Education.
- Ability in management of enterprises.
- Organizing genius and initiative.
- Capital.

A sufficient reward or incentive to make the individual put forth his or her best powers.

In addition, it is plain that the skill of the woman home maker in home management and as a buyer of household supplies is an economic factor of importance. Women have a far-reaching influence in fixing standards of thrift and economy. They have the power largely to control spending for luxuries. The efficiency of the home practically ensures the efficiency of the worker who supports the home through an occupation. The spending power of the woman home buyer should be recognized by herself and the Government as of great national value. At present she is self-taught, untrained, unconscious mainly of her economic national importance.

GREATER OUTPUT NEEDED

Countries like Canada which are resolved that the living conditions of their people shall not be needlessly sacrificed, even by the necessary burdens of the war, must become increasingly productive and efficient. The cheap labor of Germany, the unified control of its trade by the German Government, and lower living conditions in oriental countries, will have to be met by higher production in Canada, partnership between labor and capital, by education especially for occupations, and the most intelligent management on the

part of home makers. Every nation is realizing that its whole citizenship, occupation by occupation, is being tested to the utmost. The whole-hearted effort of Canadian women is essential if the high standards of living in Canada are to be maintained.

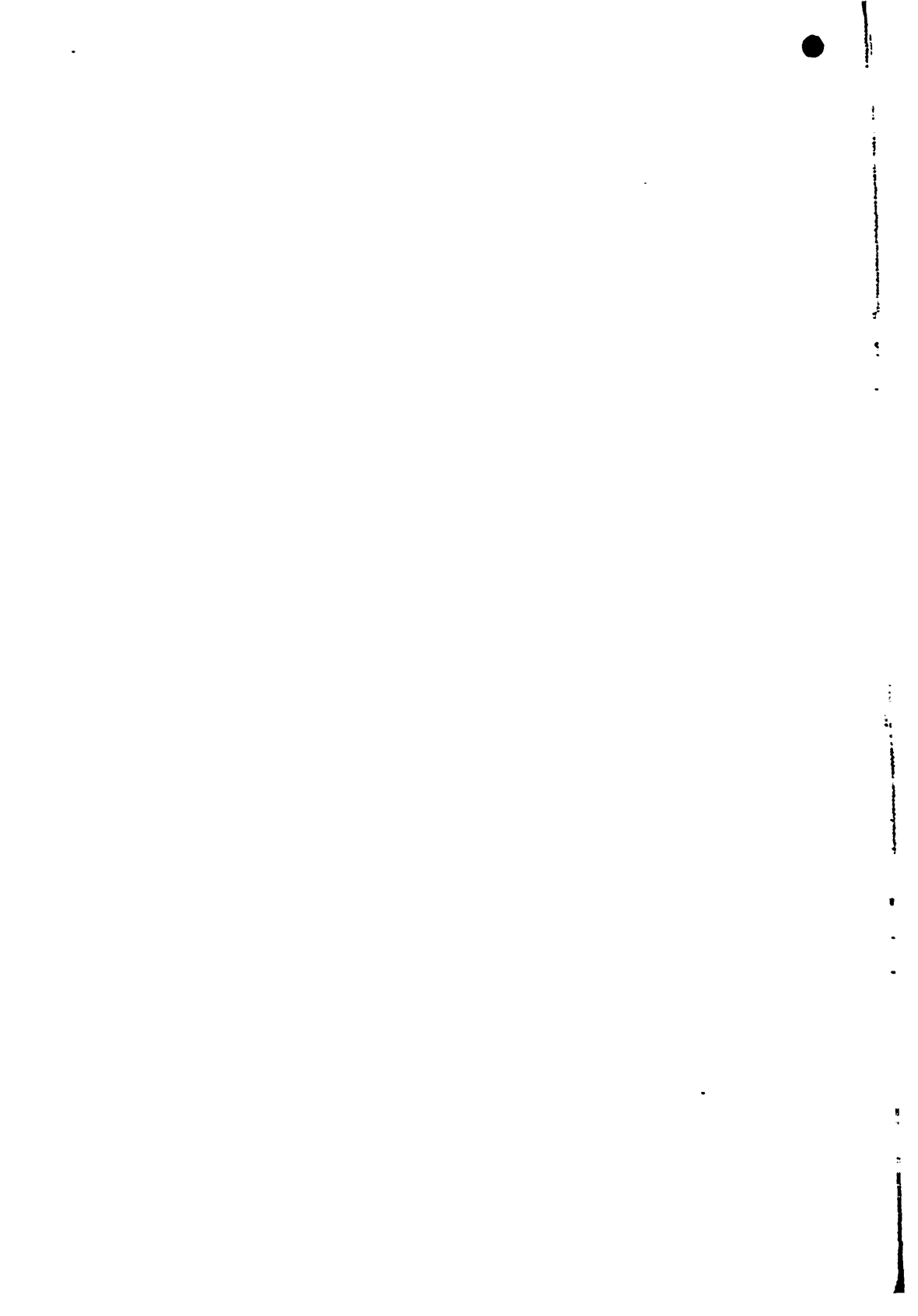
Not only are the Governments of other leading Allied countries making extensive and carefully thought-out preparations for trade expansion, but the people of these countries are coming to such a determination to make good the ravages of war that it can be compared only to a silent and irrevocable vow. War has taught them what they are capable of, what they can do, how they can work, to what extraordinary feats human intelligence can be brought when driven by necessity. Production and thrift, energy, vision, education and hard work are the programme of every nation. What we need to do in Canada is what our soldiers have done and are doing, carrying on in the vanguard never less than equals of the best.

CO-OPERATION ESSENTIAL

The Canadian woman elector must become an active helper in national productive efficiency. Merely to refrain from definite economic thought and action, or from becoming as personally efficient as is within our power, is to fail the country. The only safety for the future is in a common unity, based on fair

dealing, justice and a fair opportunity for all, supported by the honest best work and intelligence of every citizen. These are political, social and economic questions which, one is certain, the woman elector will not fail to learn by heart. The world is to be made safe for democracy, but the world must be made safe for family life which is another, perhaps better, word for democracy.

Expectation of intelligent help from Canadian women in the problems of reconstruction is justified. There has never been any division between men and women in Canada. No one is as proud of the part Canadian men have taken in the war as Canadian women. The men of Canada have been as profoundly moved by the labours and sacrifices of their countrywomen. The war has revealed inexhaustible reserves of national character. It is a natural conviction that enfranchised Canadian women will apply themselves intelligently and with energy to the basic economic problems of national existence, production, the development of natural resources, the compensating balance of industries, national solvency, export trade, education, and a fair economic standard of living for all which cannot be secured except through the solution of the first named problems. It is only through the help of women that the future can be made secure. The co-operation of Canadian women in industrial life and reconstruction is indispensable.



The Women's Department of The Canadian Reconstruction Association has been established to co-operate as opportunity offers with women's organizations in investigating and improving conditions which affect the social, domestic and economic welfare of women. It seeks to improve the position of women in paid employments, and will endeavour to assist in the study of economic problems by women. The Women's Department has already completed arrangements for three Fellowships of Economic Research. Canadian women graduates during the present academic year are to investigate phases of women's work at McGill University, the University of Toronto and the University of Manitoba. Two of the subjects chosen are "Women in War Industries," and "The Employments of Women and the Minimum Wage in Winnipeg." The era of women's co-operation in economic and social work is developing with extraordinary rapidity, and the aim of the Women's Department is to assist in this development.