

FOREIGN WOMEN ARE CONTENT WITH CANADA

Have Little "Copy-Book" Patriotism, and Would Leave Europe to Its Wars.

THEY COUNT COST

Handsome Polish Mother Happy That Husband Completed Army Term.

Copy-book patriotism is notable for its complete absence among Toronto's Polish, Bulgarian, Servian, and Slavic women generally. Their emotional husbands are gyrating round from house to house and office to consulate proclaiming their eagerness to go out and kill somebody, but the women are at home counting up the cost.

"My husband serve his time in the army before he come out here," proclaimed Mrs. Stanley Konopka, a handsome Polish woman whose home is on Perth avenue, and she did not say it with ill-concealed jubilation. She said it with a calm-eyed overflowing happiness. She has established a pretty home here, with vines, and three wonderful children, one of whom took the prize at the Exhibition baby show a few years ago. Her husband is a master workman; they are paying for their home; her children are attending the unbelievably free schools of Canada; and the troubles of bloodshed, wrecked homes, and orphaned little ones threatening the land she left five years ago are a tragic story being written by others for her to read.

Type of Primitive Woman.

She, with many of her Toronto fellow-countrywomen, is a wonderful type of the primitive woman; tall and deep-chested, with a racial dignity which makes her very narrow viewpoint of life a species of virtue. To most of these women home and country is the place in which they can love and rear their families in contentment. That place has been found in Toronto. War for Russia or Poland or the whole of the Eastern Hemisphere merely emphasizes to them their happy fortune in choosing to live in Canada.

"Will your husband go back to fight for his country?" she was asked, and opened her meek brown eyes with amazement.

"Why should he go back? He has finished his time. His home is here. No, he will not go back," and she placed a big, firm hand on the heads of the wondering boy and girl standing close on either side of their mother.

Left Only Slavery in Servia.

The Servian women of Toronto, of whom there are not more than twenty, may not be so generally fortunate in life as the average Polish woman, but when they compare the life in Canada with that left behind them they smile with content.

"What can they love of the country they left?" asked the interpreter. "To them their country is where is their bread." The memory of Servia to them is unceasing toil as beasts of burden, with meat four times a year; sons, husbands, and brothers taken from them by conscription and no inch of the earth's surface they could call their own. To them the question of going back to fight would be absurd but for their unmanageable men. They cannot laugh over it, and in the back of their eyes is the pain of those waiting for a death wound. They speak little English. They cannot read the English papers which are floating from hand to hand all about them, and can only wonder and suspect and remember the horrors of other wars which are so easily forgotten by the men who fight. They are a stolid race, of the soil, but they are of the best of the Slavic bottom layer, as they have the energy and ambition which urged them to leave the only home they knew to plunge into the unknown of the new continent.

Ten Thousand Russian Women Here.

Almost ten thousand Russian women are in Toronto. The West classes all who come from Russia as Russians, but there are fiery lines of demarcation which blaze up when disturbed. There are the Jewish Russians and the Polish Russians who study. Their eyes have the lean and hungry look of Cassius, and the Czar's country is glad when they leave for they care not for governments nor monarchies and talk overmuch of brotherhood and sisterhood. Many work in factories where they form unions and make things generally interesting.

"Of course in Canada all these anarchistic ideas die away," explained a young Russian Jewess who is too busy doing social service work in Toronto to worry about blowing up the premier. "In Russia there are four and a half millions who belong to the peace party. They will not fight. They are socialists of course. They belong to the international body and would join in the strike if it were called from Vienna next month. Of course we women are with them. The people of Russia don't want war. And it will be terribly sad for the many Russian women out here, for everyone of us has a brother or cousin or relation of some kind in the army. That is what conscription does for us."

Conscription Sends Women Here.

Conscription is one of the forces which has sent these Russian women to Canada. As sons approach the age when the country will take them they are brought out here. Women are bereft of their brothers, fathers, or husbands, and live in poverty and loneliness till they too migrate.

The true Russian woman in Canada usually comes from the country, and is to be found working as a maid or in a factory, as she is untrained. She is purely Slavic, calm and uncomplaining. A germ of ambition has sent her here, and deep in her big bosom is that terrible thing known as the wrath of the meek, which is best unaroused. She would not know Alfred Noyes from the corner policeman, but she knows his germ of

thought which burns like vitriol through the schisms of politicians.

"At a touch of a silver bell
They plunged three nations into hell,
But the blood of a peasant is not red
A thousand miles away."

In Canada she is happy with the happiness of heaven, and if her young are with her there is no power on earth that would draw her back.

In English Costume, Lose Grace.

These girls, Russian and Polish alike, have discarded their native costumes, are in the uncouth, absurd hats, graceless blouses, and dragging skirts of the West, and are all classed roughly as "foreigners." Some of the married women in the privacy of home still blossom out again in the graceful linen robes with the gay embroideries and fringed sashes of their native land. But the soft head shawls which turned every brown-skinned face into a soft-eyed Madonna are discarded for cheap straw horrors. They are not learning English very rapidly, as they cluster together and only speak their own tongue with their families. The children who attend school are spreading a few smatterings of the new tongue among them, but not enough for free expression, and their clumsy speech makes them shy and reticent. Through the ward and the Queen and King east districts there are many idle men to-day, too restless to work, and their women follow them with anxious eyes, but they speak little. They also scold and watch the small sons, and probably register mental vows that will keep the little ones at least in the safety of Canada.