

The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

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THE FULL CITIZENSHIP OF WOMEN.

(Concluded.)

Laws Affecting Women.

By the British Nationality and Status of Aliens' Act, the British woman whose husband is an alien, may not keep her nationality, but her husband may change his. Paternity is the thing that matters. Maternity is of no account so far as this Act is concerned, e.g., the children of a British father may not hand over their nationality to an alien stepfather, but the British mother must give up her nationality on taking a second and alien husband. This Act applies to the British woman of Australia and New Zealand, who if married, rests under a disability, which links her on the Statute Book with the minor, lunatic, or idiot. ("Christchurch, Star," Mar., 6, 1915.)

The powers of a British Consul resident in foreign countries *to assist passengers and crews of shipwrecked vessels make evident at all times the importance of nationality, but in times of war especially, when racial hatred is at its height, nationality becomes a matter of great moment, yet a British woman married to an alien has no choice, she loses her nationality, and belongs to whatever nation her husband may choose to adopt.

A husband is compelled by law to give his wife some kind of food, clothing, and shelter. He may take back the pres-shelter. He may take back the pres-

ents he has given her. If she saves the allowance for the washerwoman or charwoman, and does the work herself, he can claim the money she has thus saved. Savings from the house allowance are either the property of the husband or the wife, according to the arrangement between them. If the arrangement is that the husband gives to his wife the allowance on condition that she keeps the house, the balance is hers. If he hands her an allowance to keep the house, the savings are his. The wife may not give presents without her husband's consent. In all matters connected with the children he has the casting vote. She must, if he is incapable of being their guardian, go to court and prove it, otherwise he is their legal guardian. On the death of the father, the mother may become the guardian, but she must act jointly in connection with the guardian appointed by the Court. In no case is she sole guardian.

In regard to the guardianship of children, at common law the father is the only guardian, and he can by will leave the guardianship away from the mother. Let us suppose a case: A Roman Catholic woman marries a Protestant. She has a fortune. He has none. The husband agrees in the marriage settlement deed that all the children shall be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. He can refuse to be bound by his solemn agreement. Similarly, if the man is of the Catholic faith and the wife a Protestant, the father can demand that the children be brought up in his faith, notwithstanding a solemn agreement to the contrary. The theory of the law is that the bringing up of the children in the father's faith is a right

of which he is incapable of divesting himself. (See Infants' Act, 1908, sec. 2-11, Consolidated Statutes.)

The father of an illegitimate child need not give information concerning the birth of the child, his name is not entered on the birth register, except at the joint request of himself, and the mother, in which case, they must both sign the register. Failing his consent, the word "Unknown" is written in the column for "Name of Father." On the other hand penalties are imposed on the mother for concealment of birth. But by the Destitute Persons Act, 1908, sec. 15, when a paternity order is made it is now mandatory on the Magistrate to register the father's name against the register of the birth of the child. An investigation of the Statute Books, especially of the Old Country, will show that the words, "person" and "we" are sometimes meant to include "woman," yet in actual practice it is often interpreted to exclude her when a privilege is in question, and to include **her** if a **penalty** is involved.

Doubtful Privileges.

Under the Education Act, certain privileges as regards length of service are granted to women teachers. Under the Factory Act women work 45 hours a week as compared with 48 hours worked by men. Employers must give notice each time girls are employed to work overtime. Women workers in these classes of employment should consider whether these privileges are real advantages, and whether they militate against their being made eligible for the better paid positions. While in America women

*See Encyclopaedia Britannica.