

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

THE 5,000 WAR WIDOWS

There seems to be some inclination on the part of the National Council of Women to endorse the proposal to bring out five thousand war widows and settle them in the Dominions. The special locality selected for establishing these unfortunate families is the small town, where it is supposed they will be able to support themselves and families by doing charring.

It is quite comprehensible that the Salvation Army and the government might feel disposed, for the most patriotic of reasons, to help the women and children in the old land whom this war has deprived of their breadwinner. It is very questionable, however, whether this scheme would be helping them. Has our average small town enough charring to be done, that is not being done already, to support two or three more families? It seems more than doubtful.

It is true these women will have pensions, but if the pension is inadequate to support them in Great Britain how much less so in Canada where one does not buy a few coals, but tons of coals, where heavy clothing is a necessity and food costly?

Again, it is not fair to expect that all of these five thousand widows will make competent charwomen, for even in charring there are degrees of excellence, and the woman who can wash or iron or scrub well may be employed and the less efficient woman left to get along as best she may. Then what? Then the support of this woman and her family will fall upon the small town, or she will move to the city and swell the great army of the unemployed there and become an object of charity. Lastly, hasn't Canada some duties nearer to hand that need doing more urgently than this? What about our own disabled soldiers and their wives and children, also our own war widows? Some weeks ago it was pointed out on this page how inadequate is the pension system of Canada where disabled soldiers are concerned. I understand it is no better for the widows of soldiers.

As was stated on a former occasion, it has been the history of all past wars that the much lauded heroes who have been incapacitated for work have been left to eke out a miserable existence on a mere pittance of a pension. The government is contemplating raising the pension for disabled soldiers, but it is our duty to see that it is raised to a sum which will enable these men to live in reasonable comfort for the rest of their lives. At the same time the pension for our war widows should be made sufficiently large to enable these women to support their families decently.

These two good works performed, there almost certainly will not be any money left for the support of five thousand war widows and their families. Nor can it be said Canada is shirking in hesitating to assume this responsibility. Canada has done well in the war and the old country statesmen have expressed their gratitude on more than one occasion. But in this matter it does seem that her first and greatest duty is to her own people.

Until we have made arrangements to reward in some fitting degree the sacrifice of our own soldiers who have gone to the front, and of their wives and children who have spared them, it would be preposterous for us to assume any other burdens.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

MAKING MONEY ON THE FARM

I am very anxious to hear from any farm woman or girl who is making money by raising celery, strawberries, wheat, pigs, cattle or horses, or who by canning or pickling or by any method whatsoever is making money on the farm.

I should like to have a letter from her giving as accurately as possible her initial and yearly outlay and her yearly profits. Whenever possible this letter should be accompanied by photographs of the product. Two dollars will be paid for each letter and fifty cents for each photograph accepted.

All letters should be sent in before the first of June and addressed to Francis Marion Beynon, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

A FURNISHING PROBLEM

Dear Miss Beynon:—Would you, thru the Homemakers page, please give us some idea of how to decorate these three rooms of which I am sending a plan.

Now, in the line of furniture I have piano and music cabinet of mahogany, please suggest more, for front room; a dark oak bookcase and desk combination, three rocking chairs, sideboard—expect to get new

table and chairs. What kind would you advise? What color would you prefer walls, woodwork, floor covering and curtains? Would you think it best to finish these two rooms in the same color?

A READER OF THE GUIDE.

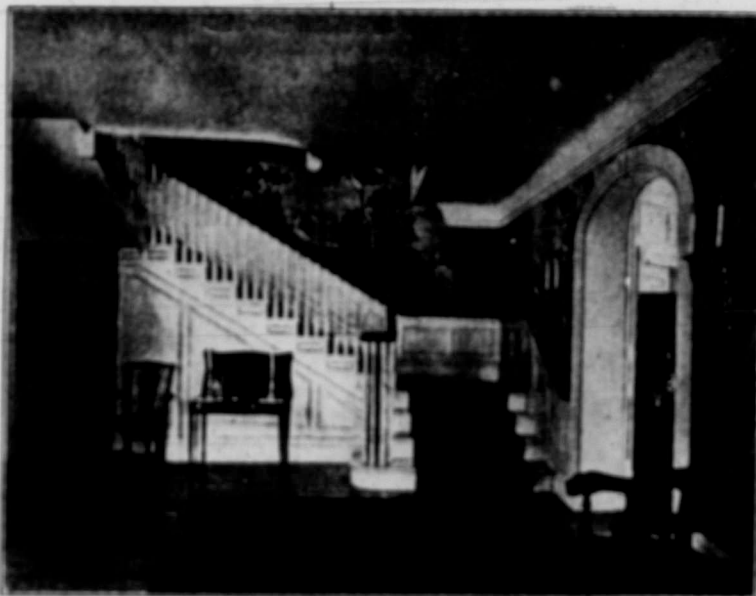
Answer

What beautiful big rooms you country folk do have. I suppose it is because you don't have to pay such a big price for the frontage.

I think your rooms would be more attractive if finished alike, since they open one into another, but if you would prefer you can do the front room in a pale olive green and the dining room in a rich buff, so that the colors of one room will decorate the other. Or you can do both rooms in pale olive or putty grey or even a very mellow pinkish, rather than a yellowish, buff. If you care to send ten cents in stamps I shall be glad to send you samples of each of these shades and you can choose the one you like the best. Since your furniture is mahogany and dark oak it would be best to finish your woodwork with black oak stain or ivory enamel, certainly ivory enamel if you decide upon the pale olive wall.

If you select the putty color your rugs and curtains should have much old blue combined with putty color; if the pale olive, much dull gold and reddish purple with the same shade of pale olive; if the buff, either green and rose and buff or green and blue and buff shades.

With the buff or olive green room a plain brown or green rug would be attractive, of course on the same



Notice that the light and dark in this beautiful hall are in great masses, not in little spots about the room.

shades as the wall, but as a plain rug has a tendency to show the foot-marks it may be thought advisable to choose a patterned rug and in that case one with a very small design should be chosen.

I am not quite clear as to whether the mahogany piano and music cabinet are the only pieces of furniture you have for the living room, or whether the dark oak rockers belong there also and whether these rockers are of mission design. If they are and do belong in the living room I would recommend you to get some more pieces to correspond with them, if not I should advise willow chairs and a dark oak or mahogany table. For the dining room you would be wise to complete your set of dark oak furniture.

The kitchen should be painted buff and have dark brown woodwork.

F. M. B.

SERVED IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Miss Beynon:—I felt like crossing swords with you after reading your article on the modified conscription bill passed in England, but after reading your article on soldiers' homes I decided to let you off easy on the first offence and give you my opinion on the second, which I think is much in keeping with your own.

In regard to conscription, no true Britisher likes the sound of that word, but we all, or most of us at least, have unbounded faith in Kitchener, and when he says it is necessary few will complain. I myself believe that it is the duty of the single men to go first, or perhaps the single men and the married men without children. Their lives are their own to give and less will be the sufferings in after years by those left behind. The life of the married man is not his entirely to give, but belongs to his family, and if he has little children of tender years his duty is at home. There are many ways he can serve his country just as loyally

there as at the front, tho the risk may not be so great.

These are my own convictions, formed from my own personal observation and rather wide experience. We all learn by experience, which is our best, tho often our most costly, teacher. You will therefore pardon me for giving you a little of my own experience to back up my statements re conscription, also what I am going to write on homes for soldiers.

You will say, "That's a married man." Quite right. I have a wife and four children under seven. I am also a veteran with four medals and seven clasps. A Canadian Alberta volunteer of the South African war, who stayed there until the job was finished.

Any good strong man can be a soldier, but it takes a statesman to heal the broken heart of a conquered foe and make him your staunchest friend as per the Boers of today.

I was sent into the interior on native troubles, suffered all the cruel hardships of the jungles, swamps and sun-baked deserts. Am one of the few survivors of Gen. Manning's ill-fated expedition against our old friend the Mad Mullah, across the burning sands of Somaliland. Volunteered for the Ashantee war and was declared medically unfit to accompany Col. Young-husband on his trip against the Llama of Lhasa in the forbidden land of Tibet in 1903. Was invalided to England and spent over a month trying to get a passage back to my place of enlistment in Alberta, and finally had to pay my own way.

I was unable to do any work to speak of for about a year after. I applied for a pension at the War Office, but would have died of starvation had I waited there for it. I applied to the Canadian government with same result, having no "political pull," altho I had the best of references from most of the officers I served under.

I became discouraged, as my funds got low. I went to Washington, U.S., disgusted with myself that I was ever a soldier of such an ungrateful country and tried to forget it and become an American. My last dollar went for medical treatment during the winter of 1904 and I was forced to the street to beg my living and sell papers, with a shattered shoulder, a running wound that is not healed to this day, a fever leg and covered with desert sores.

I got in with the son of an American millionaire, learnt a trade and started in business. Was on the high road to prosperity when ill health and the panic of 1907 again put me to the wall, and I returned to Canada in 1909 and took up a homestead, having a wife and family, a team and wagon, ten dollars worth of provisions and twenty-five cents. We started life anew eighty-five miles from the railway. I now have the most comfortable home in the settlement.

I was captain and organizer of company 20 of the Veterans' Brigade, a company that joined the P.P.C.L.I. almost to a man, and I have no doubt I would have been with them had I been single and fit, but I could

never trust my family to the mercies of those who place the political becker ahead of the old soldier in peace and in war.

I could fill your valuable paper from cover to cover with facts which I can prove of injustice done to myself and other veteran members of my company, discriminated against on account of being old soldiers.

There is some talk of giving the returned soldiers positions in the civil service. That was the cry in 1900. Did they do it? Will they do it this time, or leave them to the care of the Patriotic Association, that will die a natural death before the grass grows green over the graves of the last hero who falls in this war.

I was called a hero in 1900 and a poor fool in 1903, after public interest had turned to money making, and I see no indication that Canadian history will not repeat itself after this war is over. If it does God help the poor widows and orphans. I do not wish to hurt recruiting, far be it from me, but let us be honest and square with the boys who are going away, perhaps never to return. I have been helping to recruit ever since the war started and some who have gone from here have paid the Great Price.

It is up to us who remain at home and to the government to make adequate provisions for those who return disabled, for the widows and orphans in the way of pensions, permanent positions and comfortable pleasant soldiers' homes for the most disabled.

The patriotism of the soldier is the greatest of all patriotism. He sacrifices everything for the cause, expecting nothing but the honor of serving his country and seldom if ever does he get any more than he expects.

Let every Canadian make a gallant effort to make this war an exception to the rule in that respect.

VETERAN SAHR.