



## House Cleaning Time

Many a quip and jest and humorous cartoon announces the arrival of that dread period, the toil-worn house-keeper, of the annual spring house cleaning. Not much fun does the farmer's wife get out of this extra heavy demand upon her resources of physical strength, especially as it arrives simultaneously with the spring rush of seedling, when every man's hand is fully occupied out of doors so that she gets less than the usual aid from that uncertain source, and has also to cope with the imposition of extra "hands" to feed during this trying time. Added to this accumulation of difficulties she is made conscious that there lies at the back of the usual masculine mind the conviction, more or less exposed, that "house cleaning is a nuisance anyway," for which all women, especially his wife, are unjustifiably and personally responsible. When he "was a bachelor he had no house cleaning troubles," and now "it's nothing but scrub this and beat that" till he has no peace, and no man can view with equanimity a broken peace, unless indeed he choose to do the breaking himself.

The question that every house mother does well to consider in this connection is: Are the complaints of the husband well founded? Is there more toil and stress and disorder and actual household misery while merging from the throes of the annual purification process (or, as one evidently a sufferer, expressed it, "an orgy of cleaning") than the ease warranted? If there cannot be "rhyme," at least let there be "reason" in our house cleaning methods.

"Every one to his taste," as the old lady said when she kissed the monkey cow, and no doubt there will still be those incompressible women with superfluous energy and steel-clad determination, who, without fair warning to the unfortunate inmates that they may flee to the mountain tops for safety, drop with "a fell swoop" upon the indolent house and proceed ferociously to tear up carpets, to tear down curtains, beds and bedding, the furniture is strewn better shelter in the yards, book flapping in the threatening breeze, fires are out, dishes unwashed, mistress dishevelled, air heavy with dust, children scolding into corners and even the cats take to the tree tops, if any, work, chaotic and discomfort and disorder reign conjointly—a truly "reign of terror"—and to what end?

Some man, not without ample cause, doubtless, wants to issue a proclamation for the abolition of house cleaning as an inevitable annual event, for, he maliciously argues, she must be a most incompetent and deficient house-keeper who needs to clean house as a necessity. This man does well to remain "inevitable" for the feminine affinities of spring house-cleaning will bear no obliteration of their time-honored custom, rather, indeed, they prefer to obliterate him.

An old house-keeper, so old indeed as to have tried both the cyclonic and the sane methods of spring cleaning proceeds leisurely thus: All the fur of the household are hung on the clothes line some bright day and are thoroughly beaten with a rattan carpet beater in small light, smooth stick will do the work, but it takes much longer than if there is any suspicion of moths a pan of fine lake sand is heated until the hand can just work in it comfortably and the furs rubbed in this—or, rather, the sand rubbed into the fur and shaken and then again beaten; then they may be boxed or tied securely in papers and put away in some safe place; the lace and muslin window curtains, white bedspreads, pillow shams, and other extras are washed one day by themselves and "done up." It makes the general wash quite too large to add these specials and there's not time to properly care for them unless they

have a day to themselves. If there is no regular curtain stretcher which is a great aid in spreading the curtains upon which depends entirely "their hang," then a quilting frame with a sheet stretched upon it will answer. Failing even the quilting frame, many lay a sheet on the carpet and pin the curtains upon that. Several may go on at once. They dry quickly. When all these articles are stretched or ironed as the case may be, put them carefully away in some drawer or box until the fury of dirt is over and the rooms are settled again.

Beat and brush every cushion, that can be spared, tie them in a sheet and hide them out of the way. Wipe carefully all nicknacks and pack in a basket. Per-

have a lengthy disorder or overwhelming exertion.

If new paper is to be hung, it will pay to have a paper-hanger, if the ceiling is to be done. This is very hard work and an inexperienced woman is very apt to injure herself, perhaps seriously. Far better not try the ceiling—the walls are not particularly difficult if there is a second person to hand up the strips. Kalsomining on the ceiling is much easier than papering. If the old paper is to do for another year, but two or three bunches of cotton batting, take chunks of this and wipe the paper off carefully, wiping all the same way (never back and forward), and tracing carefully so as not to rub with a dirty side. It is claimed this is a most successful means of wall paper cleaning.

By preparing the regular meals in the usual way, securing the men's help at meal time for moving the heaviest pieces of furniture, calmly planning out the day's work and doing not more than two rooms a day, manfully resisting the enticement to over-exertion, the lure of the last of victory which is the complement of satisfactory work, the grim age of spring cleaning retreats to his lair in the past, and peace and satisfaction preside in the rural home even during the erstwhile strenuous term that all good housekeepers welcome on arrival and heartily speed in departure.

### ARBOR DAY IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Arbor Day will soon be here. Could not some Samaritan or the trustees in



MRS. NORQUAY

Aged Widow of the late John Norquay, first Premier of Manitoba

tures and books may be wiped (book by book, for dust is very injurious to books) and covered. All worn out clothing, coats, flannels, etc., can go pell-mell into an empty apple barrel to await a "sorting" on the grass when time is not so precious. Now the decks are cleared for action, so to speak, and the real house cleaning operations begin. Better leave the kitchen till the last, and don't forget the old saying: "One keep-clean is worth a dozen make-cleans." It is infinitely easier for the men folk to clean their boots outdoors than for the house mother to track them over the house with brush and dustpan. Insist upon that if necessary. The children, too, may be quite as happy cleaning their shoes and carting out dirt as they are in bringing it in; a very little persuasion convinces the average child that it is a pleasure to be useful.

Up to this stage there has been no disorder, for the absence of curtains, shams, spreads and cushions is not material for comfort in the busy spring.

With a little preparatory baking, the previous day, two workers can, without distress, do two rooms a day and not

each district furnish trees for the children to plant and celebrate Arbor Day by a work of some real value? Let each child plant a tree, under proper guidance, and care for it during the season. If the pupils feel that the trees are really their own, they will take a much keener interest in them. Growing trees are such a pleasure and benefit that it seems wrong not to indulge the children and encourage them in this kind of work. If the teacher and pupils are earnest in bringing the matter before the proper parties, much may be done to improve the bleak and lonely prospect of the rural school grounds.

### CANADIAN HANDICRAFTS GUILD A Delightful Money Maker

Under the above name a band of earnest workers have joined their energies and contributions toward the formation of a society, the purpose of which is to revive and foster hand-work of nearly all descriptions, such as weaving, lace, embroidery, leather-work, rugs, wood carving, basketry, metal work, book binding, sewing, knitting, pottery, etc.,

among the various nationalities that are finding homes in Canada, as well as among Canadians themselves.

It is felt by this determined-to-be-useful committee that a vast amount of happiness will be given to workers throughout the country, as well as a most desirable stimulation to craftsmanship, were some recognition of their work maintained.

It is claimed and believed that the majority of people express themselves in their work of opportunity offers, and in the homes of those who have no other possible recreation or satisfying labor, the Guild hopes to bring some gladness into those lives by providing the means of profitable recreations. The scheme that this Guild has been working upon with considerable success for years, is to try to come in touch with the individual worker who is required to forward his completed article to the home of the Guild in Montreal, where those in charge hold regular bazaar or sale days of all goods received and the price is sent on to the maker of the article. No commission or charge of any kind is made for the trouble of selling. Those handling the goods are all free volunteer workers.

Besides selling as many as possible of the articles received, the Guild occasionally sets a day for competitions and valuable cash prizes are awarded to articles of merit. Many philanthropic persons who appreciate the objects of the Guild give liberally to the prize list.

The Guild has sent out dozens of exhibits to country fairs and provincial fairs throughout the Dominion, and Great Britain. At all these fairs the exhibited goods are offered for sale. The Guild has established a regular shop as a permanent depot for the sale of hand-made articles from workers throughout the Dominion, neither creed nor race of the craftsman being considered, only the quality of the work sent. In cases where the work is not up to the required standard to merit a good price, the worker is given instructions (free) and samples to improve his work. In the matter of dyes, etc., full information is given.

It is expected that from this common salesroom of hand-made goods, "a healthy friendly intercourse and understanding will grow among people widely separated by distance but united in a common effort to perpetuate the skilled labor of early associations in various lands, to be occupied in interesting and remunerative work, which will relieve the monotony of daily routine—an all important concern to the ruralist."

To make beautiful things adds to the happiness of living and experience teaches that to sell beautiful things when made encourages the craftsman to new and better efforts.

It may be added definitely that a paragraph copied from the annual report of the Guild, dated Jan. 25, 1910, \$5,054.74 was the amount paid to workers by the Guild for that year, \$785 of which was won in the prize competitions.

If any reader of Fireside wishes further information on this interesting matter of making fancy and useful articles at home of the kinds already indicated, to be sold at fair prices without any charge for the selling, a letter to The Guide, this department will furnish it.

### THE NEGRO

Fireside would like well to know what the people, especially the country women of the west think about the negro invasion that is now pouring into the Canadian west and receiving free land grants from the Dominion government, and farming large settlements contiguous to and among the whites.

There can scarcely be anyone who is not aware of the atrocities committed by members of these terrible communities, the only corresponding punishment for which is the lawless lynching, and even burning at the stake. Already it is reported that three white women in the Edmonton and Peace River districts have been victims of these outrages accomplished in peculiarly fiendish abandon.

Where will the end be?

White settlers in those districts have already appealed to Ottawa to have the entrance of the negro barred to the West, or at least heavy restrictions upon his entrance be made such as restrict the Chinese.

Ottawa has done nothing so far. How many of these industrious, courageous, unprotected, country women must be sacrificed to the horrors of a negro attack