

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

AN UNUSUAL FARM HOUSE

The Guide has answered as promptly as possible the demand from a number of its readers for plans for farm houses. We have begun quite modestly with a house of moderate size and fairly inexpensive in construction. But since The Guide tries always to stand for the better part, it was determined to combine beauty with the strictest utility and economy. That the house possesses distinction is apparent from the fact that those who have given a first glance at the illustration have said, "That isn't a farm house, is it?"

"Yes, why not?" we ask.

"It's pretty swell for a farm house, isn't it?" is the almost invariable reply.

Here we have again the old deep-rooted idea of the city person that the farmer likes only big square bare-looking buildings, and that the taste which appreciates charming homes is confined to city people. In planning this very beautiful little house, The Guide has taken for granted that this attitude of mind is a libel on the farming community.

You will notice that there is no veranda over the beautiful group of front windows to shut out the sunlight and the view. Instead of a veranda that looks as if it were pasted onto the front, this house has a porch that fits the design as an old shoe does the foot.

The utility of the interior seems to us equally as commendable as the beauty of the exterior.

The kitchen entrance at the side opens onto a hall so that when the door is opened in forty below zero weather, the blast does not blow straight into the kitchen where the woman is working over a hot stove. From this little hallway you go both down cellar and upstairs, and it seemed to us that in a small country house this arrangement has many advantages. In this way it is possible for the hired man or men to come in and go upstairs without entering either of the living-rooms, and if company arrives unexpectedly when the kitchen is all at sixes and sevens, as happens sometimes in the best regulated families, it is not necessary to take them thru the kitchen at all, as they can enter the front room directly from the hall. It is a most convenient arrangement, too, when entertaining large parties of people in the winter time, as the men can leave their wraps in the wash room and the women can go upstairs and dispose of theirs, so that no one is obliged to enter the living-rooms before they are quite ready to join in the entertainment.

The kitchen has been made large enough—fourteen feet by sixteen—to be used as a dining-room also, and all across the wash room side is a roomy cupboard. If any one cared to dispose of the wash room they could make that space into a compact little kitchen and use the present kitchen for a dining-room.

The living-room is a big homey place—fourteen feet by sixteen in size—with a fireplace at one end and a row of book shelves, and a beautiful group of windows across the front.

The upstairs has been cleverly arranged to get a maximum of room out of a minimum of floor space.

Just one more virtue of this little house must be catalogued. It is that the possibility of enlarging it has been taken into consideration and two ways have been left to do this. The design can be kept just as it is and a room added onto the front, the present porch being used as a hall and a hall being taken off the front bedroom upstairs, or a room can be added where the porch now is, and a door be made to open into the present hall. Upstairs the door would open off the corner where the closet is at present.

More advantages than this it seemed to us impossible to crowd into a house of the size and inexpensiveness of the one illustrated, but we would like to have the opinion of our readers on the subject and the architect has asked us to say that criticisms will be most cordially welcomed.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

The life of Joshua Reynolds brings before one the whole life and history of his time. Born in Plymouth in the year

1723, he was a contemporary of Goldsmith and Samuel Johnson, of Gray, author of the immortal elegy "In a Country Churchyard;" of Garrick, the famous actor; of Harriett Moore and Sheridan, actor and successful playwright; of Smollet, Gibbon, Fielding and Sterne. Most of these notables were numbered among his friends and he has contributed to their immortality by painting their portraits.

Reynolds was a suave and agreeable man with a broad tolerance for other points of view than his own. It was shortly after the return of Reynolds from abroad where he had been studying Italian art that an academy of art for London was mooted and to this project he gave such cordial support that when the Royal Academy was founded in 1768, under the patronage of George III, he was elected to the position of president, an honor which he enjoyed up till the time of his death, twenty-four years later. Three months after the founding of the academy he was knighted.

It is almost exclusively as a portrait painter that Reynolds is known, and yet so gay and fanciful were the times

charm in the work of his brush. It is very regrettable that in reproducing these pictures it is quite impossible to convey any idea of the delightful coloring which in the original adds so greatly to the value of the picture.

DRYING RACKS A SUCCESS

Dear Miss Beynon:—In the issue of The Guide for December 21, there is a letter asking if dish racks are any use, and a foot note from you saying that they are not at all satisfactory. I have used a dish rack for the last year and would not be without one on any account, as it just about halves the work of dish washing. One thing, tho, is absolutely essential if the rack is to prove satisfactory, and that is that the water with which you scald them must be really scalding, perhaps I should be safer to say boiling. Wash your dishes clean, put them in the rack pour boiling water over them as soon as possible, so that any bits that may have settled on them in the water have no time to dry on, and leave them to dry. No one will have



THE AGE OF INNOCENCE

in which he lived that often famous people impersonated some historical or mythological character in his pictures.

He was particularly happy as a painter of children's pictures, but even here we have them representing some abstract idea as "The Age of Innocence," portrayed on this page, and "The Strawberry Girl," which Reynolds himself regarded as one of his greatest paintings.

He was a most industrious painter and as his work brought a high price, his income in his later life was thirty thousand dollars a year. He had a very beautiful home and entertained lavishly, gathering about him the most brilliant men and women of his time.

His dinners were quaint affairs—the table prepared for seven or eight was often made to hold twice that number and Sir Joshua always sat there very calm and unconcerned, while the guests called lustily for whatever they wanted in the way of cutlery and china.

The grace and delicacy of his surroundings has been expressed with rare

cleaner or brighter dishes. I never wipe a plate or saucer of any kind.

I only wish more people could be persuaded to use these racks, as they make a tremendous difference in the never-ending task of dish-washing.

I don't think, however, that it is possible to get them anywhere here. I tried everywhere and finally got mine thru the Overseas Mail-Buying Agency in London, England. They cost 60 cents apiece, and there is, of course, the postage. Each one has spaces for twelve dishes. I got two and used both in the summer when there were more of us, but if you have just a few extra dishes it is easy to slip them in between the others.

I hope your correspondent will get one of these racks and try, as I am sure she will be entirely satisfied.

F. C. GWYN.

I am very grateful to this reader for setting us right in the matter of the drying racks. My information on this subject was second hand and evidently not reliable.—F.M.B.

HONESTY IN AMUSEMENTS

Dear Miss Beynon:—Having read in the last issue of The Guide a letter from a young girl, I feel as tho I must say something to let the readers of The Guide see that some girls, at least, are not of the same stamp as "Truth." Supposing "Truth" were suddenly called from this world, where would she find herself; and supposing her father found out how his daughter had deceived him, what comfort would he have? Would it not make him wonder how many more things she had deceived him in? My idea is that it would be much more proper for "Truth" to tell her father everything before he loses confidence completely, if he should find out. As for her father talking business on Sunday, let me remind "Truth" we are not here to judge our parents, but to carry out their wishes, and if we do not regard their wishes as children should while in their parents control, then we must abide by the consequence, which is (evidently at least in "Truth's" case) a command that brings, if not obeyed, a guilty conscience and the risk of being caught in the act. I wonder if ever "Truth" got down on her knees and asked God to keep her father away till they had enjoyed a few games. They might be able to enjoy their games far better if they had somebody guarding the door, as we are told in the Bible: "Whatsoever ye ask in faith, that shall ye receive."

"Truth" mentions there are no other amusements, but I should say there are a good many. We live farther from town than "Truth" says they do, which does not hinder us from skating. We do not all have a rink—a bunch generally get together and make one wherever water is handiest. We have a good many games in the home that require skill and brains, such as authors, crokinole and fort. "Truth" may say any baby can play these games. So they may, but not with the skill to get the brain working as older ones can. Even if they are baby games, I think it is much better to play these games with a clear conscience and the approval of one's parents than otherwise.

If "Truth" and her companions would start some mutual improvement society, even just among themselves, they would derive more benefit than in secret playing of cards. But of course that would have her father's approval and would also need brains, and as the former seems to be what "Truth" is not in love with and the latter she does not possess, it would not do. "Truth" has the same cry as a good many of the card players and dancers have—"I don't see any harm." I would like to say "I don't see any good." Are you doing anything to help others when you are not getting the slightest bit of good yourselves. It does not require any brain to swing around the room with a man's arm around your waist and it is one of the most natural things in the world to keep time to music. If dancing was indulged in moderately it might be called good exercise, and in decent hours instead of at midnight. I will admit dancing if done properly is very graceful, but we can be graceful without dancing. A young man whom I had met several times while in business asked if he might not escort me to a dance. When he was told I did not dance, he would scarcely believe me. All he said was, "Do you mean to say you can glide across the room as you do and not dance?" I asked him why not. It seems to me more young men than one have the notion that to be graceful a girl must dance. If our girls would set up a higher standard of life, the world might be all lifted higher. As for cards, just let me say (that it is the real gambler's card I suppose "Truth" speaks of) it is the surest destructor of manhood and womanhood, possibly next to drinking. So, as these two go hand in hand, we might ask "Truth" if they have their drink at the same time.

My feelings may have led me to say a good deal, but I feel sure I shall not be so ashamed of this letter as I fully hope "Truth" is of her's, after seeing it in print. Trusting this may have helped to lift any stain laid upon girls by one thoughtless girl, I will sign myself A LOVER OF HONESTY AND TRUTH