



CHARITY is a virtue of the heart; not of the hands.—Addison.

## The Too Prosperous Overtons

(National Stockman and Farmer)

(Continued from last week)

THE cold weather dragged along for the people in the fine house on the hill, but life was all animation and fun for the young folks of the neighborhood, the young people who had lived there all their lives. After one or two feeble attempts to include Grace and Robert in the general social affairs of the community the efforts died out and they were practically left out, and the older ones fared still worse. The ladies were busy, and the men hardly felt like going alone to call, so the formal greetings on the road and at church were about the only attempts at sociability on the part of the neighbors. They were good people and never meant to be unkind, but they felt that they had nothing in common with rich society people from the city who were merely living in the country a year or two for the novelty of it. The stylish young and middle-aged people they saw coming and going from the village depot to the old Slade mansion confirmed the reports that in the city the Overtons were in the smart set, and with company from town every week or two they could hardly have much time to visit their country neighbors, so the time went on and in the entire winter only five ladies had braved the elegance of the Overton parlor.

"Lucille, you and your mother stop on your way home from town and leave these receipts with Mrs. Overton," said Mr. Forrest one exquisite melting day late in March, a day that might almost belong to May, so tender and beautiful was it. "He bought some corn of me and paid for it in cash, so I'll have to send a receipt. Don't forget it."

"I wish papa would send it by mail," said Lucille petulantly when they were ready to start. "Quite likely we'll run into some of the fine city people if we stop there."

"It will only take a minute," said her mother soothingly. "I'll take them in and you can hold the horse."

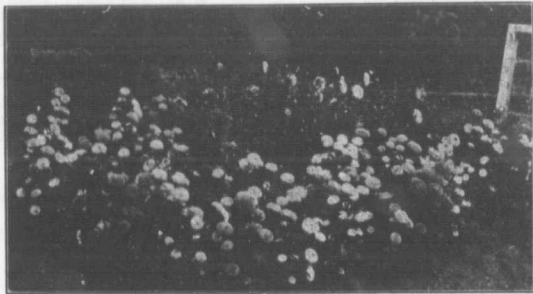
When they drove under the fine old trees and up to the Slade mansion, Lucille noted with joy that Grace was on the lawn with her mother raking away the dead leaves of the fall before. They would not even have to get out of the buggy. Mrs. Overton and her daughter came over cordially to see what was wanted, dropping their rakes and seeming in no way embarrassed because they were wearing stout shoes, heavy aprons, and old gloves to protect their hands.

"Won't you come in?" asked Mrs. Overton when they explained their errand.

"No, thank you, we must hurry home, Mrs. Overton," said Mrs. Forrest. And then she could not help

saying, "What a wonderful change you have made in this old place! It is beautiful now and last summer it was so forlorn."

"It is kind of you to say that," said Mrs. Overton. "It is a beautiful place and we have all worked hard to make it so. In one way we will be sorry to leave it, for we have learned to like it very much."



### Fine Decorative Effects are Easily Secured with the Common Aster

The aster is such a common plant that we do not value it as we should. A bed of asters, however, such as the one here shown, grown by J. Gadbury, Westworth Co., Ont., is a thing of beauty and a prolific source of the finest kind of cut flowers. When planning for next year's garden don't forget to provide for a generous bed or border of asters.

"Are you going to move?" asked Mrs. Forrest in surprise.

"Yes, we go in three weeks. The Rolles want it for themselves. You know we only moved here to get it ready for them and to take care of Mrs. Rolfe's mother. She was run down and melancholy, so her physician recommended a year or more in the country. Mrs. Rolfe could not come herself, and she hired us to move out here. Mr. Overton was brought up on a farm and loves the work, so he has had no trouble in putting the farm in shape."

"And don't you own the place?" stammered Mrs. Forrest, curiosity getting the better of her breeding.

"No, indeed," said the hostess with a smile. "We don't own anything. We have had a great deal of financial trouble in our family and lost all our property. Mr. Overton would like to stay in the country, but there is no opening for a man without capital. Even the furniture in this house belongs to Mr. Rolfe. They have been most kind to us and have paid us good salaries, but now that Mr. Overton will have to go back to office work we will not be so well off."

"Mrs. Overton, what have you been thinking of your neighbors all this winter?" asked Lucille impulsively. "We've been thinking that you did not care for us and that you have had

rich company from the city and—"

"We have had guests to see Mrs. Rolfe's mother," said Mrs. Overton. "They have been coming and going all winter, but nobody has visited us. Mr. Overton has always talked to us about the great pleasures of country life, but we have found it a little dull this winter."

"I should think you would," said Mrs. Forrest with emphasis. "I'm going straight home and tell my husband about Mr. Overton. He knows a man who wants a manager so he can spend a year with his son in California. I'm going to have him come right down here and talk to Mr. Overton about it and they can go together to see Mr. Williams. I won't make any promises, Mrs. Overton, but I'll say this, please give us an opportunity to show you that we can be friendly and hospitable to strangers!"

"Oh, do you mean it?" cried Mrs. Overton with tears in her eyes as she impulsively reached out her hand in its torn glove. "Grace, come here! Maybe we won't have to go back to the city, and we've found some good friends this afternoon." "Really?" cried Grace, who had taken the receipts into the house and was just coming back. "Do they really want us to stay among them, mother? Isn't that wonderful? Papa! Papa! Come out here! You

until a late hour. The only reference made to the lonely winter was when the company broke up and the Overton family went to the door with them.

"The moral of this story is," said the host as she shook hands all around, "that there is such a thing as being too prosperous. I never believed much in the old saying, 'Blessed is he that hath nothing,' but maybe there is something in it after all."

### A Woman's Ideas

By E. L. McCahey

"Woman has not the business capacity of man."

How often we men have deluded ourselves and flattered our vanity with this comforting phrase. How often we hear the statement. And how unjust it is. It is my observation that half the farmers in the country would "go bust" if it were not for the economy and industry of their wives. We men lose much by not consulting our women folk more. What we get by slow and labored reasoning they come to quickly by intuition. They have moneymaking ideas from which we never profit because they never asked nor encouraged to express themselves.

This philosophizing is the result of a visit that I paid recently to a neighboring farm. The farmer was comfortably well-to-do. He had inherited a good farm free from debt, and had added a little to his bank account each year. When turning the separator for his oldest daughter I found that if the proprietor was satisfied with things as they were his daughter certainly was not.

"If I had my way," said she, "we would soon do away with these scrub cows of ours and fill the stable up with about three times as many good dairy cows. We have been selling wheat off this farm until the soil won't produce good crops any more. Anyway, there's not much money in wheat. We can't expect to compete with the west."

Much more she said along the same line, and all good commonsense. Just the kind of advice that I had been looking for an opportunity to drop into my neighbor's ear for a long time. One remark in particular stays in my mind as it struck me at the time as being very much to the point. "A cow is a farming," said this young lady, "is not made by toasting one's feet on the kitchen stove five months of the year. Some good cows would give us profitable work all winter."

This is only one case. There is no telling how many good ideas the mothers and daughters on every farm could express if they were given the opportunity.

Nay, speak no ill, but lenient be to others' failings as your own. If you're the first a fault to see Be not the first to make it known; For life is but a passing day—No lips may tell how brief its span; Then, oh, the little time we stay Let's speak of all the best we can.

O, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh thoughts nor words, but pouring them straight out, chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take them and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with the breath of love and kindness blow the rest away.—Geo. McDonald.