



Another Home Topic.

A plea for greater simplicity in our mode of living has been aptly called the "Gospel of Wisdom," and the fact that there are now so many voices raised in its favor shows us that we may, with some assurance, prophesy for the new century a return to the reign of common sense in our habits, homes, and social lives, whether amongst city, suburb or country surroundings. Some very pungent remarks, some very sharp criticisms and some very real words of wisdom have been uttered upon this subject. They are all very suggestive too, and attack not only the unnecessary work entailed by this superabundance of furniture and the so-called ornamentation of many homes, but they impugn the taste which inspires it and the positive folly of those who indulge in it. They claim that many women are mere slaves to their furniture, that their lives are "dominated by objects of wood and clothes and silk," of which they make their household gods, and if they do not fall down and worship them it is because they are too busy dusting them to have time for the ceremony.

A clipping from an unknown source has come into our hands, headed "Bad Taste in Furnishing—Ignorance of the Woman of To-day, by a Man and an Artist." Every sentence, from his first to his last, is an indictment, and as he fires shot after shot, one can almost hear his victims groan as they fall. He begins by affirming that "the curse of the modern home is useless bric-a-brac, that a room in which we can freely breathe is so rare that we are instinctively surprised when we see one, and that it is the exception, rather than the rule, when we find a restful room." Furthermore, he claims that to this common error of over-furnishing our homes is directly due the nervous breakdown of so many of our women, and that this rubbish—of a costly nature where plenty exists, and of a cheap and tawdry character in homes of moderate income—is making housekeeping a nerve-racking burden. The man and the artist—for he complains and suffers in both capacities—alludes in no measured terms to "those unspeakable drawing-rooms" which are the outcome of the prevalent folly of setting aside a room for "company," one which is seldom used by the family itself. Who does not know such rooms, and who does not really prefer the privilege of being admitted into that inner circle of familiar intercourse—the "living-room"—of the home we visit? Some of the animadversions are not only true, but inexpressibly funny. Their writer pokes fun at "the puny gilt chairs, upon which no one dares to sit; at the walls, upon which are hung impossible paintings with equally impossible massive gold frames; at the 'elegant' couch upholstered in silk and satin; the gold clock, which never 'goes'; the mantel of solid onyx; the Chippendale cabinet, and the Louis XV. sofa." All of which he sums up as "disfiguring; useless ornamentation."

Our plea, then, is for simplicity, a better understanding of our actual needs and the meaning of the words "comfort" and "rest" in our homes. Simplicity involves utility, for if we only purchase what we want, we shall see that it is good of its kind, and made to last and to serve its purpose for generations to come. Every article bought with a single eye to its purpose will surely be in better taste and of better quality than those purchased for ornamentation only. The woman whose mistaken ambition is to have a more finely-furnished house than her neighbors sacrifices not only her own comfort, but often that of her husband and children too. The boys find, elsewhere, unsuitable playmates for themselves, "because there is no room for us at home," and the girls imbibe altogether mistaken notions, which will influence them when they in their turn become the housekeepers and house mothers of their generation.

The ADVOCATE finds its way into homes of every kind, as well as into so many of the farm homesteads of our broad Dominion, where the problem is but too often how to get enough furniture for necessary comfort, a problem which not seldom finds its solution in the very ingenuity and adaptability to circumstances it develops within the family circle itself. We venture to think that one class of our readers could derive much benefit from the experience of this other class, who, from distance from main thoroughfares, or from other exigencies of their position, have to make a little go a long way, whose question in making a purchase is not how cheap, but how good is it? and to whom the very subject upon which we write must appear not even a mere fad only, but a positive craze about the merits or demerits of which they may have no inclination to trouble their heads. But for the sake of those others whose heads the can may possibly fit, we venture to add to our little group of home topics this plea for greater simplicity in our lives, in the hope that its consideration may not be without some profitable result. There must be a happy medium somewhere. Let us do our best to find it.

H. A. B.

A Word to Our Correspondents.

First of all, let us thank those who have sent to the Home Magazine some of their thoughts in connection with one or more of the home topics, the keynotes for which have been intentionally struck by articles written for our pages. We desire to evoke just such thought, and as far as our limited space permits, we will endeavor to publish them, but we cannot always take the full manuscript as it stands. The editorial scissors must now and then be called into use and the editorial pen do its duty in condensing or adapting the material sent, retaining as far as possible the actual expression of the individual thought of its writer. With this understanding, what our correspondents send us will find a welcome in the Home Magazine of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

An Old Tease.

"The day's work is done,
My dear Biddy," said Pat,
"And why do ye sit
With yer sewin' like that?"

"Yer eyes are too old,
And yer fingers too lame."
But Biddy replied
"I shall sew all the same!"

So Pat got a straw,
For an old tease was he,
And tickled the ear
Of poor Biddy McKee.

Did Biddy get cross?
Why, just look at her face!
Such a smiling old pair
Any cottage would grace.



Though three score and ten,
'Tis their honeymoon still—
May we be as jolly
When sliding down hill!

C. D.

Our Prize Competitions.

I hope you will all try to write, this time, for our subject is a grand one. Three prizes will be given for the best original papers on *How Queen Victoria won the love of her people*. All boys and girls under sixteen may compete. The papers must be short, not containing more than 400 words. Write your name, age and address on the back, and post before April 15th.

Address as usual to Cousin Dorothy, Box 92, Newcastle, Ont.
The prize story in Class III.—sent in by Ruby Carr, Trout River, Que.—is called:

A REALLY GREAT GIFT.

She was a child of the slums, a ragged, unkempt, forlorn little girl of about ten years of age. Someone had given her a penny, and she had hurried away to the penny store, and there purchased a long stick of striped red-and-white candy. She was running along the street, proud and happy in her rare possession, when I saw her.

Suddenly another little girl, equally ragged and forlorn-looking, came limping out of the dark hallway of a dilapidated old rookery of a tenement house. She was very lame, and had evidently suffered much in her short life. Her face had a drawn and prematurely-old look, such as one is always sorry to see in the faces of children.

The two little girls met, and the one with the candy held it aloft, exclaiming: "See what I've got! Just see what I've got!"

"Where'd you git it, Janie?"
"Bought it."
"Where'd you git the money?"
"A man gave it to me for scooting after his hat when the wind blowed it off."
"Gimme some of it, won't you, Janie? Please do."

There was a wistful, eager, hungry look in the drawn little face.

Janie hesitated. Evidently sticks of candy came rarely to her. She looked longingly at the candy and then at the little girl. Suddenly she rushed forward, saying, eagerly, joyously: "You take it all, Maggie; you take it all! You can't scoot after gentlemen's hats and earn pennies, and I can. So you take it all; and if I get a chance to earn another penny, I'll give it to you to buy anything you want to with it."

Generous little heart, in which love of self had not yet found an abiding place! What a lesson it

taught to the grasping and self-centred, who care not for the wants, the weakness or the woes of others.
RUBY CARR (aged 11).

The fourth-prize story will be published next month. I have not yet heard whether all the winners received their prizes.

Frances Pritchard has sent in her name as a member of the Lookout Regiment. She is nineteen years old, and it is a great pleasure to find that others beside the children take an interest in our Corner.

Now, children, don't be afraid to attempt this new competition. It won't hurt you to try, even if you don't win a prize. The competitors may be divided into classes according to age, or the prizes may be given for the three best papers—it all depends on the number and quality of MSS. sent in. The subject is a big one, and if nearly everyone is afraid to attempt it, why you will have all the better chance. My advice is—
Try!
COUSIN DOROTHY.

A Canadian Girl in Dresden.

NO. III.

DEAR NELL,—

This is the last letter from the dear old town, which has become so homelike during the past few months, and now I must gather up the threads and give you a brief account of our later doings.

We have heard so much fine music that, although much of it will pass away from my memory, my heart seems stored full of melody for many a month to come. Of all the masters in orchestral music, to me Beethoven is the master. Surely his being deaf to all ordinary petty sounds and speech of men must have made him only more sensitive to the musical silences of the earth! Do you remember what Carlyle says about "seeing deep enough and you see musically?"

To hear Patti was another treat, though Alice, who has been entranced by Melba and our own Albani, thinks this should "positively be Patti's last appearance." It seems incredible that she is well over fifty years of age, for the voice is still wonderful, and when she sang "Home, Sweet Home," and Wagner's "Traum," the low notes were simply delicious. She was magnificently dressed, and blazed with diamonds; but what should have been an almost venerable grey head was covered with a fuzzy auburn wig. There was a pretty little scene as we were waiting for our carriage. It was snowing hard and there was no covered arcade for the carriages as at the Hof theatre. Suddenly the crowd of cloaked and furred women was parted by two tall flunkies bearing aloft huge silver candelabra. They paused just at the edge of the pavement, and then the pretty Princess Frederic August was handed down the steps by a resplendent officer and passed along between the rows of eager women, smiling and bowing in the sweetest, most gracious manner. The royal family of Saxony is not very interesting to look upon, with the exception of this princess.

Last week we took tea, or, rather, coffee, with our friend Frau Banks. Her mother, a fine old lady, must have found our visit somewhat trying, for she had a weary look as she sat upon the sofa, the seat of honor, trying politely to keep up a conversation, chiefly in ejaculatory Deutsch, with Alice. You would admire that young person's courage in German conversation. What she doesn't know she invents, and the result is enough to make Mark Twain retract what he has said of the difficulties of the German tongue. I entertained the small grandson, Constantine, with an account of our camping in Stony Lake. He seemed vastly and unnecessarily awed, and now I am wondering if my limited power of expression in a foreign language has given him a false impression of our life in Canada. He probably pictures me at home in a dirty wigwam, dressed in buckskin, with ornaments of teeth, selected from the early settlers, and sniping Redskins in my leisure moments.

Of course, we have left ever so much sightseeing for the last few days, and I know we shall leave Dresden without seeing half its places of interest. We spent a long, delightful morning in the Green Vault, and came away fairly dazzled with the blaze of jewels. Room after room crowded with precious curios, invaluable ivories and crown jewels. In some way the Polish crown jewels have come into the possession of the King of Saxony, and the two sets make a show before which even the British insignia in the Tower might pale into comparative insignificance. I could make your feminine soul green with envy if I had time to dilate on the tiaras, necklaces, garters and bracelets, all one mass of diamonds, rubies and sapphires. There were two or three pink diamonds, which the guide told us were very rare.

On Sunday last I saw, as well as the dim light permitted me, a gem of another kind, *i. e.*, the fine altar-piece of the Ascension, by Raphael, in the Royal Church on the Schloss-Platz. The royal family were present on the occasion, occupying the state pew in the gallery.

Well, dear, it won't be very long before I see you. I'm looking forward to the tennis and canoeing, though I shall miss all the excitement and interest of this busy, quaint place.

In the meantime, I remain,

Affectionately yours,

FAN.

Notice.

We would call the attention of our readers to the address of loyal affection to the Crown and Queen Consort which it is proposed to send with the signatures of the women of Canada. This movement has the hearty support of Her Excellency the Countess of Minto. The local papers throughout Canada will be asked to give the full text of the address, and the central point for obtaining the signatures will be arranged. Do not let the women of our firm homesteads be left out.