

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon.

ARE MANITOBA WOMEN QUEENS?

Perhaps when you read this editorial some of you will say, "There's a woman so contrary she can't even agree with herself." You see I did not hold with our friend from Russia who said that the hearts of all wives were cold to their husbands, and I do not quite agree with Mr. Robson's statement that among the Anglo-Saxon people the woman is queen in her own home.

It is true that her husband does hold the carriage door open for her and he does carry her suit case to the street car, but this is the way he makes laws for her.

He makes himself the only guardian of the children, giving her no more legal authority over them than the next door neighbor. Suppose he should decide that the child should be taken out of school at fourteen years of age and put to work in a factory, even though he was financially well able to pay for the child's education. The child might cry his eyes out and the mother might cry her eyes out, but it would be of no avail. After having suffered all that a mother must suffer to bring a little one into the world, she is no better than an unpaid nurse in the eyes of our law.

Now suppose that this child dies without a will, every penny of his property goes to the father (naturally, you see, because the mother has no legal claim on the child whatever). It still goes to the father even if he has deserted mother and child and left her to raise him as best she can by her own hard labor.

Now here is the most cruel part of the law. Suppose a man deceives a young girl and persuades her that marriage is of the spirit, regardless of form. The illegitimate child thus brought into the world belongs wholly to the girl. Where there is dishonor and shame associated with a child, men have not chosen to assume the guardianship, so they have handed it over to women.

You might think, then, that when this illegitimate child died without a will, his property would go to the woman who had had the guardianship of him. Trust upon her and who, in consequence, had borne shame and remorse and social ostracism. But no. His property goes to the state. Someway they always manage to get women going and coming.

It was only the other day that a law was passed in one of the Southern States giving a married woman the control of her own wages and the right to make business contracts independent of her husband and some of the states have not even reached this degree of freedom yet.

In England, if a husband dies without a will, only one-third of his property goes to his widow, but if a wife dies without a will, all her property goes to the husband.

The husband may, by will, disinherit both wife and children, but the law, which up to this time has refused to admit that the wife had any claim on the children, now suddenly rises up, and demands that she support them.

Worst of all there still exists on the statute books of England what is called the law of coverture, which suspends the civil and legal existence of the woman during marriage and puts her under the guardianship of her husband. He is entitled to prevent her from indiscriminate intercourse with the world and to punish her when she has displeased him.

In view of all these facts, being a fairly able-bodied woman, I would prefer to open the carriage door for myself and be given a square deal in the laws of my country and the right to vote for such changes in those laws as I happen to see fit.

As conditions are today, women are not queens in their own homes. They are dependent upon the good-will and generosity of men and it is a degrading position for anyone to hold.

The woman who keeps a man's home and raises her children; I beg your pardon, his children, well, does add to the wealth of the nation, but she is not legally or sentimentally recognized as an earner.

Perhaps someone will protest that most of these laws do not touch the

average woman. Granted, but what about her financial position in the home? A man and woman stopped before the suffrage tent the other day. The man was opposed to and the wife in favor of the movement. I showed them some brooches which cost twenty-five cents. The woman looked at her husband and seeing there refusal murmured that she wouldn't have one. Then I brought out some at five cents and he said grandly, "You can have one of those," and when she hesitated, to make sure that he really meant it, he continued, "Go on, take one," and handed me the nickle with a most lordly air. Said a successful business man to me the other day, "When my wife wants anything and I think she should have it, I get it for her."

Again, take the words of a certain professional man, "When we build again I am going to have the house laid out this way," illustrating with a few strokes of the pencil. "My wife wants it this way, but that would be a silly plan." Another professional man told me of a dispute between himself and his wife, of whom he is really very fond, about the purchase of some furniture. It resulted in their buying what he wanted, though she had to live with it all day and every day and he spent most of his life in the office. "You see," he explained guilelessly, "it is my money and I have a right to say how it will be spent."

If you think that I have chosen a few exceptional cases to illustrate the

women. Let us hear from as many as possible.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

LAW MUST BE ENFORCED OR BECOME INEFFECTIVE

Dear Miss Beynon:—I must congratulate you on the clear, forcible and common-sense view of the law, in the matter of the cruel murder of an innocent child, as given in The Guide of August 6.

That the man was a foreigner, the citizen of a country where life is not held as sacred as in Canada, is no extenuation of the act.

The laws of Canada must be obeyed and any capricious enforcement of that law would only lead to a state of things that a person with sufficient money or influence might evade it altogether. We read enough of that sort of thing in the republic to the South of us.

I suppose it was only a coincidence that you should print a letter (in the same issue) from an educated Russian lady about the position of women in the family.

While the remarks of "Worker's Wife" may apply to ladies in Russia, they do not apply to the Anglo-Saxon of Canada, in the U. S. A. or Great Britain.

Let us examine her assertion that "wives are simply left at the fickle fancy of their husbands to use them justly or otherwise."

This assertion is certainly not true of the Anglo-Saxon race in any part of the world. In the U.S.A. the wife and mother is queen of the household. Her



Our Utilitarian West is not without its Lovely Playgrounds

financial dependence of women, watch the faces of an audience of women some day when a suggestion is made that they undertake some enterprise that will involve a considerable expenditure of money. Have you ever seen the shadow of uneasiness and discomfort that passes over the room? I have, scores of times, and yet I never get used to it and have always the same deep sense of hurt and indignation.

HOMEMAKERS' HORTICULTURAL SHOW

We are deeply indebted to Mrs. Niblock, of Grand Coulee, Sask., for her report of the Horticultural show held by their Homemakers' club, on August 13.

I am exceedingly sorry that lack of space makes it impossible for us to print in full the list of the prize winners she was at such pains to send us, but we are anxious to take this opportunity of saying that the reports of meetings of Homemakers or Home Economics' Societies or Women's Institutes will be as gladly received by the editor of this page as reports of the doings of Women Grain Growers.

From the very full prize list of this Horticultural show, I fancy it must have been a huge success and it was certainly a very enterprising move on the part of the originators. Good luck to them, say I, and to all other organizations for

word is law. She steps into a carriage while her husband holds the door.

In any of the Anglo-Saxon countries, if a man acts unjustly to his wife, he can be punished by the law. As a matter of fact hundreds are punished every year.

While a wife and mother may desert her husband and remain unpunished, a man deserting his wife and children is very deservedly punished by fine or imprisonment or both.

The assertion that force is right may be questioned. If capitalists do any injustice to Canada, let us remember that they get their power to do the injury by the votes of the misguided individuals of labor.

Is it wrong to give a bonus to a railway? Then the classes who voted the men into power who gave that bonus are just as responsible for the gift as the capitalists.

Finally take the assertion in the letter, "The majority of the women live with their men without any love as business companions only, with false smiles on the lips and stones in the heart." Is this true in Canada of one married couple in a hundred? I think it is not. I would rather believe that the words of their great ancestress is still true of the married daughters of our Israel: "Entreat me not to leave thee nor to return from following after thee, for where thou goest I will go, and thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

THOMAS C. ROBSON.

THE NEED FOR CO-OPERATIVE BUYING

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have been a reader of The Guide ever since it came into being and think that for anyone who reads many papers, it should be one of them, and for anyone who reads one only, it should be the one. Of course I like your pages best.

The only thing that has caused me to "chip in" has been your remarks on co-operative buying. No doubt people in Manitoba think they are "done" to some extent, but if they lived where I do, a few hours east of Edmonton, they would think Manitoba one big bargain counter. Especially do I notice it in this preserving time of the year. I am paying \$6.00 per cwt. for B.C. sugar and Eaton's grocery catalog quotes \$5.00 for best granulated sugar. It would be more profitable to pay the freight rate on sugar from Winnipeg, and then have a little margin.

Bread, with a mill in the town, is 10 cents a loaf, or two for fifteen cents, fourteen for a dollar. Different from twenty loaves for the same in Winnipeg.

On the other hand farm products are very cheap. Milk is fourteen quarts for a dollar, and butter sixteen to twenty cents a pound, eggs twenty cents a dozen—but ice-cream, the smallest kind of a cone or dish, 10 cents.

Here is where co-operation is needed; some means of handling the farmer's products to the best advantage and buying for him those things that he must buy at the lowest possible price. Just so long as the farmer suffers himself to be robbed in both his buying and his selling will we see huts in the country and palaces for loaning concerns in the towns. Co-operation, as our editor so forcibly and admirably expresses it, is our only hope. "United we stand, divided we fall."

We have been here only a short time and while we were waiting for our buildings to go up in the country, we lived in the town. Rather we stored ourselves and our belongings in a small house, for which we paid seventeen dollars a month. I think if the partitions were let down it might make a good farm kitchen for size. With the neighbors' children fraternizing on the front and back porches, a little of it went a long way with me. I thought of the many farm women who repine for the town, and I made up my mind that one would need to have a mint of an income before one could be made as comfortable in the town as in the country.

I remarked to myself, "If I were to settle down in town I would want a good piece of land, well fenced, for lawn and garden (as the average little town back, or front yard either, is stifling) and an auto to get around in, or a horse and rig, anyway."

Then in these little towns the wearisome little division into sets and hair-splitting as to social distinction is sickening, were it not so laughable. What a shame to destroy the spirit of the big, glorious West with such performances. It reminds me of the Lilliputians tying down Gulliver.

Everyone who calls on you leaves some recipe or something, I notice, Miss Beynon. Mine is this: To make childbirth easy and to insure the health of both parties concerned, take a couple of tablespoons of flaxseed (better unground), well steeped in warm water and flavored with either salt or sugar, every day for the final three months. It is easy to take and very beneficial, oiling and nourishing the muscles and making it startlingly easy. This is a very, very old recipe and there is no better. But help must be at instant hand as there is no labor of any account.

"WOLF WILLOW."

I am so glad you wrote to me, Wolf Willow, because when I wrote that editorial on co-operation, I was afraid my readers might not be interested.

F. M. B.

A soul that dwelleth with virtue is like a perennial spring; for it is pure, limpid, and refreshful, and inviting, and serviceable, and rich, and innocent, and impervious.—Epictetus.