

sitions in the government— They themselves must answer the question.

LITERATURE FOR THE MOTHER

If the mother of the family has not had a good training in home-making she should avail herself of the very best literature on such subjects as Household Economy, Hygiene, and Child Nature. The importance of these subjects is not sufficiently recognized although the intelligent and economical management of the home, and the health and training of the family depend on a knowledge of them. Some women "throw as much out the back door as their husbands bring in at the front"—they are poor managers, poor cooks, and altogether incapable of running a home. If all our Canadian girls had to pass reasonable examinations on the general management of a home before getting married, quite a number of them would die old maids, and in the end it might be well for the country. The care and training of the child is the most important task which can be entrusted to any individual. It is a great truth that "Who rocks the cradle rules the world," and it is from the mother in particular that the child receives the bias and training which fits or unfits it for life. The home is the basis of a nation's greatness, because it is there that her people get the most important part of their training. No other organization can take its place, not even the school or the church—they may supplement it but nothing more. The child has received its bent before ever it comes under the influence of the school. The mother especially has charge of its previous health and training in that period when it is in the most plastic condition—when it is most easily made or marred. How important it is, then, that she should have the best possible training for her duties! Reading is one means of getting this training; in some cases, the chief method.

RECIPROCATING OF IDEAS

Although I treat of reading for the mother separately I do not mean that she should keep rigidly to her own sphere and the husband to his. If they wish to get the most from their reading and to keep in harmony with each other, there should be a reciprocating of ideas. They will have the fruits of their reading better fixed in their minds by so doing, and if they are really helpmates they will work out their ideas in harmony—together. Still I do maintain that the mother has very little time which she can afford to devote to such matters as politics.

But the father and mother may follow out the suggested lines of reading and still not be well equipped for the battle of life. They should know themselves, and have an intelligent knowledge of their relations to each other and to their fellow-men. Their past training, their friendships, and their reading from childhood have been important factors to this end, but the unfoldment of truth is progressive, and they may still do much to help it along by reading the great men and the great women who have given forth from their experience and wisdom for the uplift of humanity. The writings of these men and women are a noble heritage of the past, put on record for our guidance and development. This life is too short to learn all by the bitter lessons of experience; it behooves us, therefore, to profit by the successes and failures of others. The company of the great is elevating in our libraries, just as it is in our drawing-rooms.

READING FOR THE BOYS AND GIRLS

Having treated the question of reading for the father and mother we must now turn our attention to the most important consideration—reading for the children, the boys and girls in the home. I say the most important consideration because it is in childhood that the taste for reading is developed and the habit formed. Not

(Continued on page 10)

FAVORABLE OPINIONS REGARDING RURAL FREE DELIVERY

The Seventeenth of a Series of Articles Written by an Editorial Representative of this Paper, who Recently Visited the United States, with the Object of Studying the Free Rural Mail Delivery System.

THE best method of ascertaining what free rural delivery means to the farmers of the United States is to go out into the country districts and talk with the farmers. They know what rural delivery means to them. They are in a better position than any other class of people to decide whether or not the service is worth what it costs. Ninety-five per cent. of them will tell you that the service pays for itself many times over. Their government officials, were they so inclined, which is far from being the case, know better than to try and convince them to the contrary.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, which adjoins the city of Washington, a large proportion of the farmers are engaged in dairy farming. In this section as well as in the others that I visited, the farmers were much interested when I explained the object of my visit and asked them for their opinions in regard to free rural delivery. A considerable number of them were surprised to find that our Canadian farmers still lack this great convenience. They had enjoyed rural delivery for so long they had concluded that the service must have become universal.

Mr. M. J. Laughlin, is a dairy farmer, at Langley, Va. He owns a 100 acre farm, all under cultivation. Last October the prevailing price of milk, at the farm, in his section was 12 cents a gal. in summer, and 16 cents a gal. in winter. This is a good deal less than the farmers around our leading Canadian cities are receiving for their milk, and therefore I was not surprised when Mr. Laughlin said, "I have thirty to forty head of cattle and find that I can't make any profit out of milk at 12 cents a gal." Mr. Laughlin was very much interested in the account of the Toronto milk producers strike last summer, that I was able to give him.

The way I look at this matter of the cost of rural delivery," said Mr. Laughlin, "is on the basis of what it would cost me to get my mail if I had to go or send for it. Our farmers nearly all take daily papers as well as numerous magazines. I take two daily papers, four agricultural papers and eleven magazines, including Scribner's, Century, World's Work, McClure's, Review of Reviews, Harpers Bazaar and Hoard's Dairyman. Naturally I like to get my mail promptly. Our post office is a mile and a half from here. Were we to walk for the mail it would take an hour or an hour and a quarter. Were I to send my man with the horse it would take about twenty minutes. Generally, however, he would loaf and it would take longer. A hired man costs us \$30 a month with board. I figure that I could better afford to pay 20 to 25 cents a day than to break into the day by losing the man's time and the time of the horse. Were we to say that I save only 20 cents a day by having rural delivery that is equal to about \$60 a year. Rural delivery, therefore, would have to cost this country a good deal more than it does before I would be willing to see the service discontinued."

It was long after dark when I left Mr. Laughlin's comfortable farm home. As I passed the side windows of the next farm house the family were noticed at their dinner. My knock at the kitchen door was answered by a darkey, who, with his wife, was enjoying his supper in the kitchen. The owner of this farm, Major A. M. Palmer, of Louisville, Va., soon went to the point in giving his views. "Every little touch of civilization," said Major Palmer, "adds to

the value of farm property. Electric railways that run out into the country increase the value of the farms they pass by 15 to 50 per cent. depending upon their distance from the city and other conditions. Rural Free Delivery, on the average increases the value of our farms by four or five per cent. It adds to the value of farm property, because it brings civilization nearer. Such an increase in the value of the farm property means a great deal to our farmers and in itself is sufficient to pay the full cost of rural delivery for many years. All our farmers are taking daily papers as well as country and farm papers."

A GREAT CONVENIENCE

At the farm of Charles R. Simpson, who was away from home, I was entertained by Mrs. Simpson, a young mother who was busy looking after the wants of her little family preparatory to putting them to bed for the night.

"We have not had free delivery long," said Mrs. Simpson, "as we have lived here about only a year. I used to live in Florida. My husband and I lived in Florida for about five years. We were 14 miles from a post office, and consequently, we went for our mail about only once every two weeks. My mother-in-law came down from Virginia to visit us. She was accustomed to having mail daily in Virginia and she found it a terrible hardship not to get it delivered more often down there. Here in Virginia I like to see the mail come every day as I get my letters from home promptly. It is much nicer than what we had in Florida."

PENNSYLVANIA FARMERS' VIEWS

In Bucks county, Pennsylvania, a number of farmers were interviewed. Near Somerton, Pa., a new route had been established about a month before I visited the section. The farmers along the route were not fully accustomed to the new order of things, but they were greatly delighted with them. In this section of country, although it is near Philadelphia, the farms are no nearer together, and they are not on the whole as well tilled, nor are the farm buildings as large as is the case in many counties in Ontario.

While tramping up a muddy country road looking for information, Frank Shaffer was met. "We have had rural delivery only a month," he said. "Before, we used to go for our mail about once a week now we get it every day. I like the service because we do not have to bother going for the mail; all we have to do is to step out of our front door, and there it is."

Mr. John D. Erwin, of Montgomery county, and his father, live on the same farm. Both were found busy at work in an out building. "We used to go to Somerton, about a mile from here, for our mail," said the son, "now our mail address is Huntingdon Valley, R. F. D., Box 29. This new mail route was started by the storekeeper at Huntingdon Valley. Some say that he started it in order that he might get business away from Somerton, as our mail is now delivered from his post office and some of the people are now buying goods from his store."

"My father used to go for the mail every day. He was not very busy and it took him about an hour. I do not know, therefore, just what it did cost us to get it in that way." "Well, I can say," broke in Mr. Erwin, Sr., "that I was not overly fond of going for it as when the horses were busy I had to tramp it."

(Continued on page 10)