



"And ev'ry bird and ev'ry tree,  
And ev'ry opening flower,  
Proclaim His glorious victory,  
His resurrection power.  
The folds are glad, the fields rejoice,  
With vernal verdure spread;  
The little hills lift up their voice,  
And shout that Death is dead."  
—Easter Hymn.

### A Western Sheep Story.

[By a Farmer's Wife, in Assinibola.]

When we left our city home in the far east to start farming in this country, I had very dim visions of what it would be like on the vast prairie lands.

Born and raised on an old Ontario farm of the average size, fenced with stake-and-rider or zigzag rail fences, and with a delightful piece of woods at the rear, where we could ramble in spring to hunt the early spring flowers, and, later on, to gather red and black raspberries on the edge, where there was a pasture full of dear old stumps and brush heaps, from the tops of which the largest and most luscious berries protruded, tempting us higher and farther, mayhap to suddenly dash our hopes and our pail of berries down to a seemingly bottomless abyss, I found things here very strange.

One of my recollections was that when a child of somewhere about seven or eight years of age, my dear father used to take me in the sunny days of winter to a large old barnyard nearly enclosed with barns and sheds. On one side there was an old log, where he used to seat me to hold a dish of salt, while he opened the door of the sheep-pen, letting out a flock of soft, woolly creatures, which came at first very cautiously, while I held my breath for fear of frightening them. One old ewe would eye me cannily, then nibble a taste of salt out of my pan. After that there would be such a hustling that I had hard work to keep my seat and my dish, and, forgetting all need of caution, would scream and laugh till almost exhausted with the fun.

What was a farm without sheep? It could not be. Thus I thought, and thus I planned "the best concerted schemes, etc." Reality—a ten-by-twelve shanty, standing, a single lonely object, on a limitless expanse bounded by a distant horizon, peopled only by gophers, jack-rabbits, coyotes and foxes. Was that a place for sheep? Not, certainly, without a herder and "shaggy-nep" and a good corral, and we had none of these. That part of my dream was shattered then. Time wore on. We arrived at the eleventh year of settlement of our prairie farm, with all the successes and failures of that period behind us. We had comfortable buildings for ourselves, cattle and horses, besides a fenced-in pasture. Now surely we could venture on some sheep. The only kind that were available at that particular time were some nearly pure-bred Merinos. We bought four ewes, and brought them proudly home; they were an almost ceaseless curiosity to our children, with their pretty, curving horns and funny "tricks and manners." They were not tame enough to stay in the pasture with the cows, and the three-wired fence would not, of course, keep them, so we tethered them, not to a stone, as our old ballad in the National Reader used to run, but to an iron screw stake. For a few days the poor things spent most of their time in starting from the stake on the full run, ending with a jerk, which would throw them down breathless, but, undaunted, they would walk deliberately back and try it over again. It seemed as if they would break their poor necks, but no damage was done, and they soon became used to the tether. Before the summer was out we more than doubled our stock, for there were some twin lambs, and what fun they and the children had together! We bought some sheep shears, and my husband started to renew his acquaintance with them, with the result of bringing almost as many wrinkles on his face as there were wrinkles on the skin of the Merinos. Our first crop of wool was not very heavy, but we were proud of it, and after washing and picking, it was made into various cushions and other comforts. Then we had a lamb or two to kill, which was a nice change in our meat diet. The next year, we bought some good Shropshire sheep and added them to our flock, at the same time fencing a small pasture with five wires, as we had too many to tether, and we also built a nice sheep-pen or stable for them. Now, just here let me whisper a caution into the ear of anyone who contemplates doing likewise. Do not be cajoled into buying a nice tame old ewe which has been a special favorite and pet. We did, to our sorrow. She would

not stay anywhere, except as she wished herself, but would just put her quiet old head under the lowest wire and shove herself under, and when we saw her in the oat field or in the garden and started to drive her back into the pasture, she would lift her head, giving us a knowing look, and before we reached the spot where she had been in mischief, she would be back eating her own pasture so innocently that no one would suspect she was the well-trained marauder.

Did I hear you say that sheep were stupid things? Well, then, you have not had much experience with them, or else you have not taken much notice of their ways. We had a big dog which was very fond of all our domestic animals, and he took kindly to our sheep at once, driving any stray dog out of the field very savagely and trying his best to protect the defenceless things. When the young lambs came, he endeavored to make friends with them, but their mothers drew the line there, even chasing the poor brute into the open door of the kitchen and butting him down in a corner, till our laughter turned to pity and we came to his rescue.

To return to our old ewe. She taught the other sheep her trick of slipping under the wire, so that even though she was relegated to the butcher, her deeds lived after her. Her sins were visited even to the third and fourth generations, so that, eventually, they proved their ruin. We were very much interested in all that pertained to sheep raising and keeping. We sent to Ontario and brought out the old spinning-wheel, with its companions, "reel and swifts," bought a pair of cards, and were then equipped for business. We visited a kind neighbor who knew more than we did along that line, and learned to card our wool into rolls, also to spin it, and felt we had gained an accomplishment. It was a pleasure and welcome change from our other work to turn our soft, clean wool into fine or coarse yarn at our will, color it to our taste, and knit or crochet it into many useful articles of clothing, which added much to our comfort. We improved and increased our flock, until our average shearing ran up to fourteen and two-thirds pounds a fleece, and the mutton weighed about one hundred pounds to a carcass.

About three years ago, our men declared themselves tired of seeing their oats cut off in the vicinity of the sheep pasture, and so we parted with our woolly pets, until the time comes, if it ever does, when we may have a Page wire fence or something of that sort which will succeed in keeping sheep within their proper enclosure. We miss the fresh mutton in summer, when it is so difficult to procure fresh meat from a distance, and we miss the good mutton for winter, which I consider preferable to beef or pork. And I still maintain my former opinion that a farm is incomplete without a flock of sheep. They are easily fed and tended, and are sure to be profitable in this country.

Cottonwood, Assa.

### Foods.

[By a Trained Nurse.]

We use the word "taste" in the general sense of fitness. We say a woman has good taste when she can arrange a room to look attractive, when she can put on her gowns in a becoming fashion, or when she can choose suitable gifts for her friends. Let us not forget that this artistic, genteel expression owes its existence to that commonplace, or, as some would have us believe, "lowest sense" from which it is called. The fact is, because we have not esteemed it more worthy, most of our number have unconsciously cultivated our sense of taste in a wrong direction, so that we prefer foods which are unwholesome.

F. B. Meyer says: "The pleasure which accompanies the gratification of appetite is one of the greatest driving forces of human life. We expend time and strength in procuring our daily bread, not only because we dread the pangs of hunger, but because of the zest and enjoyment which associate with appetizing food. . . . Because this pleasure is so great we are apt to seek it as an end in itself." It is just here that we women have been failing our men folk. We have been aiming to give them food which would please their palate, oftentimes not even questioning whether it would nourish their bodies or not, rather than aiming to give them food which would cultivate a taste for the agreeable, natural flavors of wholesome foods. Fortunately, the demand for more wholesome food is increasing so greatly that we have a school of domestic science in nearly every city. Instruction in food values and the right proportions of the different constituents required to nourish the human body is within reach of all who desire it. Let us, who eat every day of our lives, who even prepare food for others to eat, awaken to the fact that we have in our power tastes which are growing in a right or a wrong direction. Let us realize a truth very important to most of us, that we can cultivate an appetite for strength-producing foods in those for whom we labor as well as in ourselves. Ask any medical man who has studied the subject and he will admit that most people eat too much. Take for instance bread, and he will tell you that to get an ordinary amount of nourishment out of it as it is generally prepared at present, one is obliged to take more than would be abundance were all the component parts of wheat allowed to have their place in flour.

Many people "eat to keep up their strength," but such eating merely clogs up a system already suffi-

ciently burdened and doing its best to keep more material from being forced upon it. For such persons to regain healthy appetites, one very good plan is to go without one meal a day, giving the other two better mastication than usual, until the zest of a normal appetite returns. Not until the animal system has reduced the surplus of old, unused material can one expect to have an accurate sense of what is really required to build up vigorous appetites. But a thoroughly normal appetite is a true guide—what else could it be?

To gain the best results from food, we have to begin with the children in our homes; and begin by teaching them to chew their food well, and to scorn taking too much. If, to make this worth their while, we prepare food such as will nourish them, while being none the less pleasing to the taste, we shall have the satisfaction of seeing our children grow up strong, well-formed and vigorous. We shall find that, under such a regime, children will not often call for "a piece," and that their mental faculties will be more alert and roundly developed than those of their too-much-starch-fed neighbors. The unpurged taste of a child will in every case be found to guide to foods which are suitable for him. For instance, to a child who craves too many sweets give a moderate supply of honey at his daily meals for a time, and watch how he improves. A lady of our acquaintance, by adding a little lime water to his ordinary drink, effectually cured her little son of eating plaster, which he used to detach whenever he could from the walls. The rule simply is to give a pure form of the substance his appetite calls for, thus supplying the real need which his taste points out. A child should never be urged to eat, but if he lacks appetite, lead him to exercise in the open air. Oxygen is, for the time being, the food he really requires. It is almost criminal to force food into a child's stomach, where it must needs ferment and cause childish ailments or lay the foundation for dyspepsia in future years.

A noted authority says the required proportions for the common wants of the animal system are about nine of fat, twenty-two parts of muscle-forming substances and sixty-nine of starches, with sugar and mineral salts. Experiments have shown that a constant deficiency in any one of these component parts results in a weakened or diseased condition of the system. The following are a few suggestions for supplying these parts of food at an ordinary table:

Whole wheat contains all the properties required of food in nearly their correct proportions, besides a waste product, which assists materially in their digestion. In the ordinary white bread that is used on most tables, we have removed the other constituents and left only the heat and force producing parts. We restore the muscle-producers by the use of fresh, lean meats, but these are neither available nor desirable all the year round, and this diet alone would leave our table deficient in mineral salts. Vegetables contain the latter food, but in the usual way of cooking vegetables—boiling and pouring off the water in which they have been boiled—these salts have been lost.

Considering these things, it is not difficult for anyone, though not deeply versed in the science of food values, to have them prepared in such a way that her household will get the best of nourishment. First: By having whole-wheat flour in constant use, and letting it gradually take the place of the common white flour. Second: By boiling vegetables in very little water, so as not to require to drain off the mineral salts; or, better still, by baking or steaming them. Try a Hubbard squash cut in halves, and turned severed side down upon a baking dish, with sufficient water to prevent burning while it bakes. When it is done, scoop out from the shell and mash with butter in the usual way. A little variation of this sort in the same line will spoil one's taste for the half-flavored vegetables which are usually served, and this way of cooking is not in the least more difficult than the time-honored methods which we have been following with rather poor results. The use of a liberal supply of pure drinking water should also be encouraged between meals.

With these simple changes, and with moderation in the use of food, a certain class of ills affecting our well-to-do farmers' families would vanish. Their cause is simply an over-supply of food-stuffs and a lack of some which are needed, but which are within easy reach of all. It is good taste which calls for wholesome foods. It is good sense which supplies them. S. Z. R. Winnipeg.

### The Spring Awakening.

The little gray squirrel is rubbing his eyes,  
For his sleep was long and sound,  
And the woodchuck peeps at the glowing skies  
From his chamber underground.  
Old bruin is shambling from out his den  
With a dazed and stupid air,  
And song-birds are flying back again,  
A message of spring to bear.  
The butterfly crawls from its chrysalis,  
The beetles rouse from their nap,  
And blossoms awake at the south wind's kiss  
And the rain-drop's gentle tap.  
From their icy fetters the streamlets leap,  
The woodlands with music ring.  
All things are awakening from winter sleep,  
To welcome the merry spring.

—From Our Dumb Animals.