

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon.

SUFFRAGE IN ILLINOIS

You will be interested in the passage by the Illinois legislature of a limited woman's suffrage bill. It gives the women of that state practically municipal franchise with the right to vote for presidential electors—not a very magnificent measure of liberty, certainly, but one small sausage and a pickle is better than no sausage at all, and it enfranchises about a million women.

It must have been interesting to be in the Illinois legislature at the time of the reading of the bill and to have felt the thrill of the intense excitement, for it just scraped through with a few odd votes to spare over the required majority.

It is interesting to note that a certain man who said that his constituency was "wet" and he could not support the measure when it came to the test did vote for it. The only negro in the house broke away from a group of anti-lobbyists and voted "Aye!" The women of his race should be proud of him.

An anti-suffrage speech, which nearly killed the bill, raised a most remarkable objection. The speaker warned the members of the house that it meant the death of the dear old political parties—that the women would not vote Democratic or Republican, but as they saw fit. A most amazing complaint surely. The discussion dragged on and on. Some hungry soul cried out for recess and was seconded by others who felt that the immediate satisfaction of the inner man was vastly more important than the passage of any mere female suffrage bill. They were voted down and the roll calls began. Men—the creatures who are popularly supposed to have a god-given instinct for business—voted against the bill when they honestly meant to vote for it and had to be put right by the women lobbyists.

At last when the final count was made about three-thirty in the afternoon and it was found that the measure had carried, loud cheers went up from the floor of the house and long-distance hand-shakes were extended to the women in the gallery by their sympathetic brethren on the floor.

Then tired and hungry they bethought them of the luncheon long over-due and hastened away to attend to the needs of the flesh. Thus do the petty affairs of life tread close upon the great issues of the day.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

THE EXHIBITION BOARD ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS

The Political Equality League of Manitoba had made great plans to have a tent at the Winnipeg Exhibition this year where their friends could come in and chat and look over their literature. It all sounded so simple and pleasant until the Exhibition Board was approached concerning space. They were emphatic in their refusal. But our women nothing daunted waited upon them again at a meeting of the board and asked their reasons. They said that they did not allow anyone there who did not make an exhibition. Someone who had attended it for years spoke about the Fraternal Orders and the people who had booths and the newspapers.

They said that the Fraternal Orders were there by special courtesy, the newspapers in return for the advertising they received. "And the booths?" questioned someone. "They are a necessity," was the reply. "Then," said a capable Leaguer, "we'll make ourselves a necessity by running a tea room." But no, they would not have us within their boundaries at any price or on any conditions.

But we will be at the Stampede in Winnipeg in August. They have given us a good stand and promised to do anything in their power for us. The booth is to be at the back of the grandstand, and will be in charge of various workers during the whole week. I will be there for a day or a part of a day myself and will be glad to meet any of you—men or women—who care to call.

I might mention that the League needs new memberships and subscriptions to carry on its summer work and small contributions would be thankfully received.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

WOMAN GRAIN GROWERS' ASSOCIATION AT KEELER

Dear Miss Beynon:—I wish to say that Keeler has at last organized its local W.G.G.A. Our first meeting was poorly attended, but we made a start by electing officers pro tem. At the next meeting last Thursday there was an attendance of fifteen and most of them joined and we elected the following officers: President, Mrs. S. V. Haight; vice-president, Mrs. Gordon; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. H. L. Pearsons; managers, Mrs. W. F. Fowler, Mrs. Wm. Anderson and Mrs. Jno. Willson.

We had a demonstration of the vacuum washer and some good talks and a good time all round. We have made a good strong rule that no member must serve an elaborate menu at any meeting. At the first meeting here I only served bread and butter, two kinds of cake and tea. The second meeting at Mrs. Pearson's the same rule held and a fine of 50 cents will be imposed for any one who serves more. We have planned a picnic at one of the school houses (Bigstone, as it is centrally located) for July 1 as there is to be no near celebration for the children and everyone will be invited to come and bring baskets.

We hope to have some fine times during the summer and when winter time comes perhaps we can have joint meetings with the "good men" of the G.G.A. and lots of things may present themselves later.

We would like to see more reports from the various W.G.G.A. locals as

A STAUNCH DEFENDER OF MOURNING

Dear Miss Beynon:—In last week's Guide you said you disliked people wearing black. Now I like it. Those who don't know what trouble is can well say that, but perhaps if they had it for a few years, steady sickness and death, they would not be so very nice. It is nothing but pride and want of common sense to speak of it in your way. Even if the custom is old, perhaps if you look back you will see that the old ways are better than your selfish new ones. True, it does the departed no good, but it is the last and least respect that you can show.

People can wear black and not make all others around sad. To my knowledge it is kinder to those that are left to show that you have a human heart to feel for the departed and for them. People who wear black because of their sorrow are respected a great deal more than if they went about in brightly colored garments as a laughing stock for all who know them.

INTERESTED.

ANOTHER VIEW ON MOURNING

Dear Miss Beynon:—While looking over the columns of The Grain Growers' Guide I noticed a letter on the subject of wearing mourning. This strongly appeals to me, as I have always considered this a heathen practice. I say heathen because I class it on the same line as worshipping idols, etc. I think when a person suffers from the loss of a friend the sorrow is severe enough without having a black dress to bring the memory upon

The Little Feet

By Grace Imogen Gish

Dear little feet, that all the day
Run in and out at merry play,
That wander 'mong the grasses deep,
Or clamber up the hill-path steep.

They may be slippered little feet
That skip through gardens, flower
sweet;
Or brown, and briar-scratched and
bare,
That roam about 'most anywhere.

And some are wilful feet, that stray
Down paths forbidden, day by day;

And some are eager feet that run
To help and comfort everyone.

Some loiter when they most should
speed,
And some are never near at need;
Others have gone so far away
They never do come back to play.

But mother-love will always know
The long road little feet must
go,
And find inestimably sweet
The sound of pattering little feet.

we would find their experiences useful to us in our work.

We found your article "Woman's Clubs in the Making" so useful. We read the article in full at both meetings. More like it, please, Miss Beynon. Hoping to hear from other locals soon.

I am, yours truly,

MRS. S. V. HAIGHT.

WOMAN GRAIN GROWERS' PICNIC

Dear Miss Beynon:—Our W.G.G.A. picnic yesterday held in Bigstone school yard was a great success. When we started the picnic idea we had \$3.50 in our treasury and we agreed to spend it all on lemons, but the bachelors of our neighborhood hearing of the idea quickly made it \$11.50. One good grain grower sent a load of ice to the grounds; cream came in from all sides and all the ladies contributed to the lovely dinner and supper, so we had ice cream, lemonade, peanuts and candy, all free and we did not lack for sports either. One kind neighbor brought and put up a merry-go-round and swings. Several ball games were arranged between the boys of the different schools. Willson beat Bigstone at football and Keeler beat Willson at baseball.

Our local W.G.G.A. meets Thursday, July 3, and I am sure they will all be more than satisfied with the report of the picnic committee. We hope to make this an annual affair.

Yours for the W.G.G.A.,

MRS. S. V. HAIGHT.

that subject every time you look at your black, gloomy garments. I for one have taken the step and have never indulged in wearing mourning of any kind, though people may have thought me out of date, or ridiculous, or whatever they liked. I knew that if the friend who was gone could come back to life again he would not wish to see me in black, deathlike attire.

I think it would be another step toward broadminded civilization if this practice could be completely done away with. Of course a great many of the old people, who have been used to the practice all their lives, would feel that they were slighting the memory of some dear one, and perhaps would feel like clinging to the old way. I remember of hearing a child once say he hated to see his father who had died being put into the hearse all draped in black. He said it looked to him as though he was prepared for the evil one, who had always been pictured to him as black, with great black hands, and he thought it looked as though he was somewhere near.

A REFORMER.

A NEW STYLE IN BABIES

(By Robert H. Moulton in The Housewife)

The fertile state of Iowa, so long justly proud of its prime pork and abundant, high-grade, corn, now proposes to set a new style in babies. That's rather a big order these confident residents of the Hawkeye State have given themselves, isn't it, especially in view of the fact that the cry "Healthier babies for all" is a slogan

that has only recently been considered anywhere? Nevertheless, the work is going forward and one of the big features at Iowa State fairs today is the Baby Health contest.

The whole matter started with a little woman living at Audubon, Iowa,—Mrs. Mary Terrill Watts, who is also a prominent member of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs. Not only has she the backing and encouragement of the Federation, but also the enthusiastic support of the Mothers' Congress and the women physicians of the Public Health Committee of the American Medical Association. They are scientifically seeking how the perfect child, that is, the healthiest, best proportioned and strongest, may be produced and reared.

One day Mrs. Watts noticed on a neighboring farm, a curious contrast that struck her most forcibly, the hogs on the place looked remarkably plump, prosperous and lively; but the children of the family were peaked, thin and scrawny looking. It seemed criminally absurd that this state of affairs could possibly prevail, or that any one would leave a stone unturned to bring about an equality of conditions between the pigs and the children. Why, if a pig died, it could, relatively speaking, easily be replaced, and yet so valuable a creation as a child was permitted to grow up "any old way." So there sprang into her head the grand idea of a state-wide contest in which proud parents could enter their off-spring, and have the youngsters rated according to stamina, physical development, etc. Mrs. Watts showed by the method she selected for calling attention to the need of care for babies that she understands human nature. Everyone knows how mothers will enthusiastically rush to enter their children in a beauty show. It's a natural and praiseworthy instinct, this mother's pride, that impels them to pit the excellent qualities of their babies against those of the same age. Only, of course, Mrs. Watts did not have beauty, but health, as the basis of considering the merits of the entries.

In 1911, the Iowa State College wanted someone to take charge of a "woman's hour" in their building at the State Fair held annually in Des Moines. The Woman's Federation, asking for a week instead of an hour, seized the opportunity that had presented itself and launched the big idea that had started in the brain of Mrs. Watts. She was naturally chosen to have charge of this unusual exhibit. Three hundred dollars in prizes were put up; entries were classified according as the children lived in the rural districts, city or town. The entries were also divided according to age, ranging from one to three years.

The enterprise proved a big success. The babies were there in large numbers; so were the spectators to witness this novel display. There was a whole tentful of the lively, crowing little creatures, with several women doctors in attendance to look them over and to take care of them. Pink toes would kick out, chubby faces would wreath in smiles as with their garments first removed the little boys and girls were carefully examined.

An official score card, very compactly gotten up by Dr. Margaret Vaupel Clark, of Waterloo, Iowa, furnished the basis for the markings. They were gone over as to chest development, height, weight, circumference of head, etc. In fact not a point of any sort is overlooked on this score card.

The system adopted has the approval not only of the National Congress of Mothers, but of the Iowa Public Committee of the American Medical Association, and the Department of Agricultural extension of Iowa State College. It is invaluable in that it furnishes an exact standard on which parents may go in correcting the physical defects of their children.

In the first contest, Charles Elmer O'Toole, city born and city bred, aged two and a half years, won the grand championship.