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WHILE WRITING ADVERTISERS MENTION THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

left before we did, being freight, it was delayed.

To-morrow Evan will be here, and we will have a festival and set the dial; that is, if we can agree upon the place, and it is good weather. Ah, there is a red streak in the west, and it is widening. It is almost train time. I will drive down for Evan myself, and tell him that our talisman has come.

VII.

A BIRTHDAY BREAKFAST.

November 1. Why has no one written a November rhapsody with plenty of lilt and swing? The poets who are moved at all by this month seem only stirred to lamentation, giving us year end and "melancholy days" remarks, thereby showing that theory is stronger than observation among the rhyming brotherhood, or else that they have chronic indigestion, and no gardens to stimulate them.

Of course I do not know what November might mean to someone living away from his kind without love, in a cheerless house, lacking adequate means of heating or light, with no bath-tub, and a well low from summer droughts, the sort of being whose intelligence dries away in autumn like the leaves, and whose breath of life merely flickers half dormant until the spring sun forces it to quicken in spite of itself.

The strange part of it is that so many city folk associate this state of woodchuck existence with the real country life, whereas the intelligent country life, if it is lived, and not merely toyed with in an amateurish manner, is a full, sparkling, strenuous course, calling for a more inventive brain and greater activity than that of the city, in proportion as its satisfaction is greater. The difference is that in the city, at best, one lives the life of others, the life of the shop, the street, the crowd, while in the country one must live one's own life. A selfish, warped, narrow life, some say? Doubtless it might be; but if one has a home to keep, a husband weaving his web daily to and fro, and a country doctor, vibrating with sympathies of many lives, for a father, the pulse can never beat slow, nor the heart grow cold.

I am daily realizing that it is a liberal education of both heart and head simply to be Evan's wife and my father's daughter. Father's private means, though small comparatively, enable him to keep abreast of outside affairs and the newest methods of his profession, so that he can do the best possible for his poorest patients, regardless of fees or criticism, thus carrying comfort and hope miles beyond the usual limited circuit when controlled by mere pay.

The saying that shoemakers' children lack shoes is simply a criticism of the relations between the children and their cobbler parent. The parental attitude toward his trade evidently was not such as to make it interesting in his children's eyes, otherwise they would not only have thought shoes desirable, but have learned to make them.

Father's attitude toward his profession has always made it seem to me like the highest expression of the religion of humanity. To do the highest duty amid the scenes in which his life is set from lonely farm to the hovels of factory and brickyard workers in the town, the healer of the body must also at need become the soother and strengthener of the soul. Was it not this revelation of spiritualized humanity that the Master preached and practiced when he cleansed the lepers, bade Lazarus come forth, and comforted the dying thief with the positive promise of things beyond?

I think, also, that a certain knowledge of the processes of natural law, so that the facts of it come to one unconsciously and as a matter of course, prevents many shocks and jars that would otherwise meet a woman on entering the world that lies outside of the protecting doors of home. While a knowledge of the evil of breaking these laws, as seen

by the results, even in one little hospital, must make one's relations to the race more sane and sound.

Surely the country life is not as wholly compounded of vegetation as the city dweller imagines. The cockney who thinks that he has summed up the essence of torpidity when he speaks of people who "vegetate in the country," simply illustrates his own ignorance and that he does not even know the life-history of a turnip. For, taking the term literally, few things live more hurried and pushing lives than vegetables.

Vegetables are chiefly articles upon which the very life of the world depends; they do a great deal of work, and do it in private—a method of which most people have no conception, as not to live in public is to them the equivalent of death. Also, to be a successful vegetable requires great energy; for not only must it work hard during the growing season, keeping its health and digestion in order often on scanty and variable rations, but it must provide, either by seed or the storing up in bulb, tuber, or rootstock, enough strength to insure its further existence.

To return to November and its praise: mine is conclusive, being both material and sentimental, and stated in a few words. To-day has been one of the happiest days of my life, and it is November 1st. True, Aunt Lot surprised us by coming in by the evening train, Reverend Jabez being now located at Centreville, thirty miles off, to get some winter flannels that she left packed away and offer me advice as to household management. But she has not damaged the day, for father has kindly lured her into his study; she merely acted as a sort of nightcap under whose influence, together with the result of an entire day out of doors, Evan and I crept somnolently into our den to sit in the big armchair in front of the wood fire, and whisper about things that could be perfectly well spoken aloud; but to make people tiptoe and whisper is Aunt Lot's effect upon everyone.

"Why are we sitting here, instead of entertaining your Aunt Lot?" Evan asked contentedly, without making any effort to move.

"Because we are rude and perfectly frank heathens. We don't care to see her, for she wasn't nice about our being married, and so we do not pretend we do. We do not care a bit because the roof of the parsonage pantry leaked and spoiled her season's jam and jelly; we don't care that the 'four youngest' are badly disciplined and a trial; instead, we feel very sorry for them."

"Then she is sure to have speeches to make about my duty to you, quite forgetting that in her wrath two years ago she summed you up as 'one of those foreign adventurers.' Yet I suppose I must go in," I said dubiously.

But I didn't go. Evan said it would be undutiful to him.

I wonder if she and the Reverend Jabez ever sit in the same chair in front of the fire! Evan says they probably have an oil stove, and, of course, no one would care to sit by that!

The day began for me at half past six o'clock. Not that I got up then. I merely roused sufficiently to go over to the window-seat and see if the weather promised well.

It has been an opalescent day. When I looked out this morning, the opal was dull, with barely a flush; everything was a mysterious pearly gray. Season, location, time, equally veiled by the fog that remained to tell of yesterday's downpour. One thing, however, this fog surely indicated—that the weather was still mild, as a cold, north-west wind would have swept the world dry, while the first thing that the window revealed would have been the top of the bare, gray maples that bound us on the lower side of the hill. The silence was complete, not