

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon.

ANOTHER WORD ABOUT HOUSE INTERIORS

Last week we published a picture of a tastefully furnished livingroom, and in the Christmas number we are showing an attractive house design in answer to a request from some of our subscribers to hear more about good taste in furnishing.

I revert to this subject just now because so many of you are busy making Christmas presents for your friends and I would like to suggest, if it is a centre piece or a sofa cushion, that you take stock of the kind of room your friend has and the prevailing color scheme of it. It is a real heart-break to a woman of taste to be given a bright, pink drawing room cushion to use in a quietly furnished livingroom.

House furnishing is a science for which a few people have a genius, but which the rest of the world has to learn by painful experience or long study.

Its two main factors are color and light. South rooms can take dark colors or cold shades like grey, green or blue. North rooms should be decorated in warm tints, browns, buffs, pinks or even red if the room is flooded with light. But red absorbs the light and can be used only in very bright rooms.

This sounds very learned, but as a matter of fact it isn't. I have studied the problem of house planning and decorations more or less for years and have just got to the point where I realize how hopelessly little I know about it.

One article I read which interested me greatly said that a room flooded with light was not as beautiful from a decorative standpoint as a room broken by shadows, introducing contrast. Now the lay mind is not apt to think that the garish-looking room probably needs dark curtains at the windows to subdue the blaze of light, but it is true.

Having arrived at the right color scheme to harmonize with the quantity and color of the light in your room plan all the furnishings in that shade and in ones that blend with it. This is mainly useful to the people planning new homes or refurnishing old ones, but often wonders could be worked by removing some impossible cushion covers and vases and nick-nacks generally.

Did you ever try going into one of your own rooms with your eyes tight shut and your mind made up to try and look at it as if you had never seen it before? If it is like most rooms something will stand out conspicuously from all the other things about. It is well to consider the thing that rises up and hits you, to consider it carefully. There is something wrong with it. It may be ugly in itself or it may only be in the wrong place.

Only a very few of our readers can afford to repaper and refurnish their homes, but quite a number could slowly work out a color scheme, replacing old things with new ones of one general character.

I doubt very much if these generalities will help any of our readers, but I submit them in good faith.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

AN OPTOMIST

Dear Miss Beynon:—My husband takes The Guide and as I see by the Sunshine page you have a booklet for sale on maternity. I am enclosing five cents for same.

I agree with "Paul" in last week's Guide in her championship of husbands. We are just starting on our homestead here and I know it seems good to me to try and help all I can. It takes a lot to get a start, but we hope for good health and strength and I think by "pulling together" we will come out alright. I am English, have only been out a year and like the West fine, though I miss the pretty country lanes and the hedges which are so lovely all spring and summer. Still there is lots to admire out here if one only looks around.

Thanking you in anticipation for book and with best wishes, I remain

PROUD SALOPIAN.
No. 3.

We're glad to have you join us and wish you success in your new home.

F. M. B.

WIVES UNPAID SERVANTS

Dear Miss Beynon:—I am glad to have seen some letters on this subject in your valuable paper lately and have often wondered why it was not taken up before.

I also wish every woman had her rights in this country. Some women, myself included, are told by their husbands that they will be left a mere living when all they get now is what they eat and wear, and rise at four and five o'clock in the morning. Surely the wife is earning something waiting on a lot of hired men.

The most of the homesteaders out here started in one room, as we did, and lived in it a few years and barely existed. I am sure that I did not have more than five dollars altogether the first two summers. We had all our horses to pay for and paid twelve per cent. interest on them besides owing for our building and owing for everything on the place.

Who has helped to earn the property, the wife or who?

I used to help outside when we were too poor to hire a man. My husband's relations did not show up then, but as soon as we get something ahead they come and get the highest wages, and raise trouble, and tell my husband to leave them the property. It is quite time something was done to improve matters.

Another thing is this, that wife-beaters should get the lash in the West. If a man wants to fight, why does he not fight a man instead of fighting his wife? He is a coward and is afraid to tackle a man. After putting up with abuse

of us think of spending a cent without talking it over together and I have my say about things inside, my husband outside.

We have been married six years and so far have had no trouble in our home, only sometimes we have been pretty hard up for clothes and money to pay off our debts, but when you meet these both together, one helping the other, they are not so bad.

I would like your little books, "How to Teach the Truth to Children" and "The most Beautiful Story in the World." Enclosed find twenty cents. My girls are only four and six but some day they will be older and I may not be able to get the book then so now is a good time. Wishing success to all homemakers I will sign

CHUBBY.

It's real good to hear of married lovers such as this and I hope there are more of them in the world.

WOMAN'S INFLUENCE THROUGH THE HOME

Dear Miss Beynon:—I wish to reply to Halifax. I think that the Canadian ladies are misled by the suffragettes of this country. If they do get votes for women it will be for all. Now that is not what the suffragettes want. They are married ladies and want to be somebodies. Now if they grant the vote to all look what it will cost the country for polling and again, there is only one lady in ten who is fitted to vote and those that are do their share by their home

MY GARDEN

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Fern'd grot—
The veriest school
Of Peace; and yet the fool
Contents that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign:
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.
—Thomas Edward Brown.

from time to time I am told that I can go if I am not satisfied, but that I will get nothing. You city people know nothing of hardships on a farm and being deprived of necessities.

The property should be fixed so that a wife can get her share and not be cheated out of her hard earnings. The law should be changed so that a man cannot turn the property out of his hands when there is trouble.

Is life worth living when it is only hell on earth and wives are to have nothing when they are old, after years of toil and deprivations? Surely something will be done and done speedily.

A SUFFERER.

You evidently did not read this page when I first took it over or you would know that I have lived on a farm in the West for a very large part of my life and we came here in the early days when wheat had to be teamed twenty miles. Indeed I do know the hardships of farm life pretty thoroughly, having learned in the hard school of experience.

F. M. B.

NEVER ASKS FOR A CENT

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have been reading with interest the Country Homemakers and Sunshine pages of The Guide and find useful and helpful hints therein. I am a happy wife on a homestead. We have two girls.

In reading about women talking or writing about having to ask for all they spend, I feel sorry for them because I never have to ask for a cent. We have one purse and I take what I want and when I want, if it is there, though neither

influence. For instance, if a wife or mother is great on politics she both influences her husband and children and others besides. Now I am not married but I have got a few to vote Liberal, so you see really ladies have a great hand in the ruling of a nation without going up to poll.

Now I know one lady who has a large income which is derived from stocks and shares, who says Lloyd George ought to be hung because he has put a tax on unearned incomes, but she would not mind paying extra money on all the food she eats by having tariff reform. Says that would not affect her income. Now I ask you, is she fit to have a vote?

Trusting you will pardon me for writing.—Yours truly, an

ENGLISH LADY.

Our friend to the contrary notwithstanding, women up to the present have had very little influence in politics through the over-glorified medium of the home.

F. M. B.

TOLD BY PLAYMATE

Dear Friend Miss Beynon:—My brother-in-law is a subscriber of The Grain Growers' Guide and I sometimes get it from him to read. I see you are offering a little book entitled, "How to Teach the Truth to Children" for five cents.

Now, kind friend, I would like to get one of them for I have two boys, the oldest one is 4 years old. My mother did not teach me the truth until I was about 8 or 9 years old, but a girl friend told me the truth when I was about 6 years old and it never harmed me.

I want to tell my children the truth myself before some child tells them, for some boys have such vulgar ways of speaking of such things that I would hate to have a young boy taught in such a vulgar way.

If you think this letter is of any good to any person you can publish it. I wish you every success in your good work and hope that you will be able to keep it up for many years. I remain, your friend and

SUBSCRIBER'S SISTER-IN-LAW.

HOW WOULD YOU HAVE SETTLED THIS CASE?

There is a woman in Michigan to whom the State Supreme Court, at her husband's request, has said: "You must go out of the sheet music business, and you must stay out of it."

Among the legal puzzles created by modern changes in family life, this Michigan case (decided last year) has few rivals.

Mr. and Mrs. Root were in the sheet music business at Ann Arbor. They conducted their store together. They both of them worked in it. They prospered.

At one time there had been a quarrel; and Mrs. Root had sued Mr. Root for divorce, charging him with cruelty. That suit had been withdrawn. It was followed, however, by another quarrel. Mr. Root told Mrs. Root that he could run the sheet music store by himself. He told her to keep out of it. Mrs. Root felt aggrieved—perhaps on the ground that the store was just as much hers as his. But she obeyed.

She obeyed too much. Once started on the outbound path, she kept going. She not only left the old store, but she went till she started a new one. There were now two sheet music stores in the family. The Mr. Root store and the Mrs. Root store—competitors.

There could be only one finish. The superior masculine commercial ability of Mr. Root would force the Mrs. Root store into failure. No! No!

After a while, instead of competing further with Mrs. Root, Mr. Root petitioned the courts to restrain her from competing with him.

The lower court said: "One does not often witness a more puerile or cowardly act on the part of a husband toward his wife than this attempt at coercion."

But the highest court said: "The husband, as a matter of law, is entitled to the services and society of his wife." With his consent, she has the right to conduct a business on her own account. But "we have been unable to find any decision which affirms this right to her when her husband withholds his consent." We have already decided, in a former case, that husband and wife can not be partners in business. Commercial partnership would interrupt conjugal peace. If, then, it is illegal for them to be partners, it is still more illegal for them to be competitors! How is a husband to enjoy the services and society of his wife if she gets up in the morning and tries to take business away from him all day?

So Mrs. Root stood enjoined from buying and selling popular songs and finger exercises.

How would you have settled that case?

A FALSE ALARM

"You ought to have seen Mr. Marshall when he called upon Dolly the other night," remarked Johnny to his sister's young man, who was taking tea with the family. "I tell you he looked fine a-sitting there alongside of her with his arm—"

"Johnny!" gasped his sister, her face the color of a boiled lobster.

"Well, so he did," persisted Johnny. "He had his arm—"

"John!" screamed his mother, frantically.

"Why," whined the boy, "I was—"

"John," said his father, sternly, "leave the room!"

And Johnny left, crying as he went: "I was only going to say that he had his army clothes on."