

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

BEAUTY IN THE HOME

It has been a pleasant surprise to find the number of people who are interested in making their homes attractive. Since the appearance of a little note in this page a few weeks ago offering to supply suggestions and samples for those who are decorating their homes, many letters have come in from people in a great variety of circumstances.

The other day I sent suggestions for window curtains to a woman who has a steam-heated house, with an oak-paneled den. This morning samples of wall paints and scrim have gone out to a woman who has a small two-roomed prairie home. I am particularly glad that this last woman wrote to me, because there is such a mistaken impression abroad that it isn't worth while trying to have a beautiful home until one has a big house and plenty of money, which is all nonsense.

I would say that beauty is about seventy per cent. color harmony, twenty per cent. form and ten per cent. texture. Now it doesn't cost a cent more to choose a plain, restful color for the wall than to adorn it with a gaudy blue, green or red. As to form, there are many inexpensive pieces of furniture which are excellent in design and some that are very ugly, which cost a great deal of money. Texture, the richness of fabrics, is the only quality of beauty which is really costly and it only plays a very small part in the making of a beautiful home.

So if one begins early enough in the undertaking to plan the color scheme, it is just as inexpensive to have it beautiful as ugly. It is because I am convinced that there are few people in such straightened circumstances that they cannot have a beautiful home, providing they are willing to undertake some hard work, that I am prepared to give every assistance to those who have a desire for tasteful surroundings, but who have had little opportunity to make a study of the question.

But as I have already said, you will have to take me more fully into your confidence if I am to help you successfully. The lady whose letter appears in this issue sent me a diagram of her room, but neglected to mention her furniture, so the advice had to be given more or less in the dark. I can only help you best when you tell me all about your rooms and send a diagram on which is marked the size, shape and direction of windows. In addition to this I want to know the color of the woodwork, the number of pieces of furniture and the finish of it, including upholstery, if any; also please mention what rugs, curtains and pictures you have and your own preference in the matter of color.

I can help you still better if you will write to me before the woodwork is finished, when I will be glad to send samples of the wood finish and wall color best suited to the lighting of the rooms and the furniture you possess, if you will enclose ten cents in stamps to cover cost of postage. Don't bother sending a self-addressed and stamped envelope, as it requires a large envelope to forward samples.

Finally, in asking advice about rugs or curtains, it would help if, instead of saying, not too expensive, you would give me a fairly definite idea of the amount you feel you can afford to pay. You see, what one person would regard as inexpensive, another might consider wild extravagance.

And once more please note that I take as much pleasure in helping the woman with only a kitchen and a lean-to to choose her wall color wisely as I do in assisting the builder of a large and imposing house who has accumulated a fat bank roll.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

CONCERNING WALLS, CURTAINS AND RUGS

Dear Miss Beynon:—Will you please tell me thru the Country Homemakers, how to finish my livingroom, of which I am enclosing a sketch. It is an unusually light room, the woodwork is stained a light oak and varnished, walls and ceiling are plastered, and am uncertain what color to paint them. I prefer buff or light green, but would

paint the color that would harmonize best with woodwork. Please give me some advice about curtains and rug also at a medium cost.

MRS. F. C. NIBBE.

Stenen, Sask.

Answer

If your woodwork is a very light oak, giving a yellow rather than a brown color, I would recommend a light green wall as being better suited to the south and west exposure of your room, but if your woodwork has a decidedly brown tone, you will find that buff or buff stone shade will harmonize with it better than light green and you can cool it down by using a green or blue rug and curtains.

With the light green wall I would recommend a green rug a shade deeper than the wall, and scrim curtains at the windows, with over-curtains in ivory, light green and mulberry cretonne (mulberry is about the shade of fresh raspberries after they have been mashed up in cream).

Investigating the rug question for one of our readers the other day I found that the only moderately priced rugs in which good designs are procurable are the Scotch wool rugs, ranging in price from fifteen to thirty dollars, and the Brussels rug at from eighteen to thirty-five dollars. In either of these makes very delightful designs can be found.

If you will forward ten cents in stamps to cover postage I will be glad to send you marked samples of paints in buff and pale green, with curtain materials suitable for each wall, so that you can

try to rear a family to make good men and women and, following that, good citizens, why should I be denied the most effective weapon—the vote—to guard them while young? Questions of wages, household sanitation, child labor, etc., should all be regarded from our viewpoint as well as from the man's. The Creator placed woman as man's help-mate. He did not restrict her and say only in certain lines should she help. Some people seem to think the Creator meant by that "one man's servant." If we are to be help-mates, why not in every sense of the word. But then the papers have been full of arguments, so my scattered thoughts will be of little interest to the public.

I would like to see some really lively debates thru the medium of the Homemakers page, on subjects that would be educative as well as interesting. There have been some interesting articles on the war, also on amusements, but do you not think it would help us to keep bright even tho on a homestead if we would discuss literature more? Longfellow's Evangeline, Hiawatha, or some of Shakespeare's plays, Tennyson's In Memoriam, Will Carlton's Farm Legends, and, oh, we could cite many more—any or all of these would afford such interesting topics for discussion. My idea would be that Miss Beynon might choose a topic and invite discussion, then perhaps two or more would take different viewpoints. This is only an idea from one who never tires of good reading.

By the way, Socialism, the much

of coming to the Valley, they need not take a ticket right thru to Vancouver, as they can get off at Harrison Mills station and cross in the ferry to the city of Chilliwack, which is the centre of the farming district here. Now that the C. N. R. is open for traffic she can take that line direct into Chilliwack. We have just got a neighbor today from Winnipeg—has got twenty acres and a nice modern house. If Rose wants any more information she can write direct to me.

KATE.

BETTER TO HEAR BOTH SIDES

Dear Readers of the Page:—This discussion about married life, which has been going on lately in this page, is very interesting to me. I do like to hear different views on an interesting subject, and I do not expect Miss Beynon to keep out of the page all letters which do not express her own views, for in that case we should have only the views of one person and that would not be half as interesting and instructive as the present method is, viz., putting in even extreme views. Now I should call the article, "Marriage is Slavery," rather extreme, yet it has good points in it.

There is no use denying the fact that if women, married and unmarried, had larger rights (and only her own vote will bring these it seems), they would be a happier, more independent lot of beings. Now I know lots of dear little married women who cling to their husbands both physically and mentally. That his wish is their wish, his word is law, his reasoning always just, and his decision final. To be forced into an attitude such as this would be harrowing to my own spirit and I believe to thousands of other women. And yet, does not the law presuppose all women to be of that class?

Marriage should be a real partnership. You all agree in that. What sort of a business partnership would that be which allowed one of the partners to do as he pleased with any or all of the firm's assets? That's the sort of partnership marriage appears to be. There is, of course, in a true marriage, a feeling that both are working for a common cause and this produces a sense of union, but when it comes down to brass tacks and the man thinks one way is best and the wife thinks another, which one has to give in? Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the woman. And why? Because after all the man owns every single thing, his wife included. Now I do not mean to say that a man ought to do his wife's bidding. Far from it; but give the wife an equal chance. She will prove as reasonable and fair in her judgment once given a chance to use it as any man.

I was intending to head this letter: "Making a little tin god out of work," but am afraid it will be too long. In a nutshell it makes my blood boil to see how everything has to stand aside for the "man's work," while the woman's work in the house is belittled, or, as I often hear women out here on the farm say, "I couldn't go to the meeting that day, the horses were all busy," or to hear them say, "I haven't been out of the house for months, the men are so busy." I notice that the same men are very well able to get away when they want to, to any meeting they wish to attend. Supposing it does mean the loss of a few dollars to let a woman take the horse, isn't it worth it to your wife and indirectly to you. Oh, you short-sighted man! Give her the choice of the dollars or the outing and see which she takes. (Only the man generally gets the dollars.)

A few little things like these would be, I believe, entirely different if this much talked of equality between man and wife were a reality instead of as at present, rather a myth.

DINAH.

WANTS PLACE ON FARM

Dear Miss Beynon:—I was wondering if you could assist me in securing a situation in the country. I have worked on the farm for seven years.

Would like to be where there is a Women Grain Growers' Association. ADDIE.



A splendid example of dignity and simplicity in furnishing

see for yourself which you like best.—F. M. B.

INTERESTED IN POLITICS AND SOCIALISM

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have read with interest the letters on the Homemakers page. I liked your attitude regarding the minister problem. I think some of our writers were unjust. I spent a few years in a parsonage—the home of my sister—and if anyone wants to disillusion their minds of any idea such as of the easy, lazy life the ministers live, I would advise them to spend a few months in a parsonage. But be that as it may, let us not disparage our ministry because we may chance to find a few unfaithful, for surely their's is a noble calling and our Master said: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." But this is not uppermost in my mind now.

At present political conditions in Manitoba have a peculiar interest for me, altho I am not of that province. Oh, women of Manitoba, grasp your opportunity now! Do not let one single woman forget or neglect to help the cause along.

Now I want my girls when ready to go out into this wide world to be protected by such laws as only the hand of woman can frame. We do not want to cause discord, but harmony in homes, and I am sure where man and woman have equal rights their comradeship is bound to be closer. I know I enjoy discussing political questions of the day with men and I don't see why I should not be capable of registering at least a fairly intelligent vote. If I conscientiously

discussed topic, is one brimful of interest if one gets good books on the subject. I used to have very false ideas of what Socialism was and I believe that a great many of the so-called Socialists really know very little of true Socialism themselves. I have a friend who has been lending me good books and I have found the subject very interesting. Engels' books appealed to me. However, I must stop, for already I have taken more than my share of space on the page.

Thanking you, Miss Beynon, for your many beautiful and helpful ideas—your home decoration ideas in particular, as we have been building.

LASCA.

LIVES IN BEST PART OF B.C.

Dear Miss Beynon:—My husband is a subscriber to The Grain Growers' Guide. I am writing you in order to give "Rose" information regarding British Columbia, having just read her letter in The Guide of October 20. We are of the opinion that we live in about the best part of B.C., and we know quite a bit about the country. I think this Chilliwack Valley can't be beaten for a mild climate, and we have good roads, rural mail delivery, water laid on and electric light all in the country. She can either get a fruit farm, dairy farm and poultry, or a mixed farm. This is a thickly populated part of the country, but there's room for more. Of course, if she wants a homestead she would have to go more north, up by Prince Rupert, and it would be almost as cold as Manitoba up there, but they would get land cheaper.

If Rose and her husband ever think