

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

A WORD OF THANKS

Subscribers are always so grateful when I am able to do them any little service that I cannot, in my turn, refrain from thanking the two ladies who wrote so promptly to tell of their experience in painting oilcloth. As it is against my principles to give advice without first putting it into practice, or knowing someone who has done so, I was at a loss how to answer the question as to whether oilcloth can be successfully painted. Doubtless many of our readers will be glad to know that it can be done quite satisfactorily, though a little more time will be required to allow the oilcloth to dry.

And An Explanation

Some little time ago a reader questioned my sincerity because I had published letters on the Homemakers' page in direct contradiction to my editorial on the subject concerned, so I take this opportunity of making it quite clear that the letters on this page do not necessarily express my own point of view. I have a theory that any reader of this page has a right to have an opinion, quite different from my own, and has a right to have an opportunity of expressing that opinion. It is even possible that she might differ from me and still be right.

At any rate it seems to me that if we are ever to arrive at the truth we must hear both sides of the question, no matter what the question is, and the people can generally be treated to decide wisely and well if given the plain facts without prejudice.

CROSSING AN IMAGINARY LINE

The difficulties of a camel in getting through the needle's eye, a rich man in achieving heaven or a Canadian in entering the United States are all very much of a muchness these days.

I had occasion the other day to accompany a lady of excellent repute in this country to the immigration office to secure a passport. She entered jauntily feeling that, being a respectable wage-earning adult, the neighbors across the line would be very glad to have her as a citizen. As a beginning they fined her eight dollars for daring to cross the boundary into their territory and then they held an inquisition. How old was she, how much money had she, where was she born, had she ever been across the line before, when and what for? Were you ever asked quite suddenly, like that, the date of some distant pleasure excursion, only to find your mind a complete blank as to the year it happened? That was this lady's predicament and it was regarded as a very dark and suspicious circumstance by the immigration officer. The whole proceedings were held up until she made a guess at the year when she had spent a couple of innocent days in Seattle.

After that things ran along quite smoothly for a question or two. The lady had a husband, he was already in the United States, he was working and he did export her, the last part of which required documentary evidence. Then came the quite simple question which nearly put an end to the whole negotiation, "Your husband is, of course, paying your way?" Being under oath and also rather pleased with her financial independence the lady confessed that she, who happened to be a successful wage earner, was paying her own way. The immigration officer was scandalized, and wavered for about ten seconds on the verge of putting a stop to her going altogether. Apparently a woman capable of supporting herself was not nearly so desirable a citizen as one who had to depend upon some man for support.

That bridge crossed the interrogator went on to inquire into the number, names and addresses of the lady's Canadian relatives, the color of her eyes and her height, and she was about to be passed along into the doctor's hands when suddenly the officer, pen poised in air said, "You have never been across to the old country?" Unfortunately she had. The officer seemed intensely interested in this fact, though she had sailed from and returned to Canada. When had she gone, and on what boats had she made the journey? A time satisfactory to both parties was fixed upon, but seasickness had obliterated every other impression from her mind. They nearly came to a deadlock when she could not remember the name of either boat. Obviously Uncle Sam could hardly go on doing business until that momentous fact was ascertained. It was only after considerable humming and hawing that the point was waived.

Ultimately she was passed on into the doctor's office, where she was asked such intimate personal questions as one might expect from one's own family doctor. The doctor performed his duty as courteously and inoffensively as possible, but it occurred to one that Uncle Sam would be well advised

to have a woman doctor to examine women travelers.

Thus does one have to struggle and labor to pass over what we have always been told was an imaginary line, but which, with the increase of national feeling is growing daily more tangible.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

TOO MUCH FALSE MODESTY

Dear Miss Beynon:—Here is another woman who sees nothing objectionable or offensive in the advertising as it appears in the mail order books. "To the pure, all things are pure." "Nothing is unclean, but thinking makes it so." False modesty is doing more harm to our growing generation than most any other thing.

"ANOTHER COMMON-SENSE"

THE HIRED MAN PROBLEM

Dear Miss Beynon:—Have just read your article and those of Rev. W. Ivens and Mr. J. S. Woods-worth on the hired man problem, in a recent issue of The Guide, and as all good articles do, they create a controversy. With wages at \$60 a month, which is likely to be the average, though I know one man in this community is paying \$75, and board and lodging at a dollar a day, the average from April 1 to September 30 is \$30.50 a month, and with laundry at \$5.00 a month a hired man's wages will be \$95.50, and in nine cases out of ten this will be for unskilled labor. I feel quite sure no city employer will pay the same wage for an unskilled

vertising" in mail order catalogs, and I wish to say that any person who finds the figures in the illustrations offensive must have unclean thoughts themselves. Really I could not let it pass without comment. I see nothing whatever wrong in the catalogs, for as "Amused" says, they are only models and convey no meaning to the average healthy mind. Imagine anyone bringing up such a resolution before the Farm Women's Convention. I expect it would make them smile to know that there are some women still in these enlightened days who carry around with them such false modesty notions. In order to see bad in a picture it must first be in the mind. We must learn where to draw the line between real and false modesty.

APRIL RAIN.

THE BODY IS BEAUTIFUL

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have just noticed a letter in your column referring to advertising in catalogs, which the writer considers shocking. I have heard a great deal of false modesty, but this seems to me to beat anything I have ever heard yet, and I am going to write you a few lines as to what I think about it, and if my letter doesn't find the waste paper basket I would be glad to have other views on this subject.

"A Reformer" must have a very small amount of respect for God's work on the human body if she thinks that a woman's body is such a vile thing that it should be kept so closely under cover that not even an outline can be shown in a catalog.

I would be glad to know what she sees about the body of a woman or man that seems to be so shocking that it would shock anyone to see the full figure on the page of anything. Would it not be just as sensible to take a pretty horse and cover up his body and be shocked if one of his legs were to show through? Is the human body less beautiful than that of a horse? Why is "A Reformer" not shocked at pictures of horses or at pictures of a person's face just as much as any other part of the body, which is only natural and beautiful?

I think there is nothing so beautiful as the human body, and I cannot see anything vile or shocking about it, and I think that it is a wicked thing to teach children to laugh and make a foolish fuss over any garment worn on or about any part of their body. It teaches children to regard their body as something bad—they don't know why and become curious to see anything that a fuss is made about. Any child who is taught a

lot of nonsense along this line generally turns out to be a bad boy or girl unless they happen to get in with some friend at school who has been taught to be sensible on the subject and who tells them about it in the proper way, or as near as a child can. The child who is taught a lot of nonsense like this is not to blame for its badness, but the one who taught it to them, and the sooner parents learn to teach their children to be natural and stop teaching them that their bodies are something of a joke, the sooner the children will tell them the truth and stop hiding things from them that they should know. False modesty belongs to the dark ages of the past and cannot be called reform work.

"A NATURE LOVER."

EGGS COOKED TO BE MOST DIGESTIBLE

There are over one hundred ways in which eggs may be cooked. That may sound like an overstatement. However, there are two classes of people who will vouch for its accuracy: One is the professional chef, and the other is the person who, for reasons of health, has been forced to eliminate meat from his or her diet for long periods of time. Milk, eggs and vegetables are the staple foods for persons who cannot eat meat, and if one lives for a couple of years or longer upon such fare the housewife, in order to rule out monotony of diet, needs to exercise all her ingenuity to devise new and attractive methods by which the egg may be made gastronomically appealing. In our tests we studied the digestion of eggs cooked in the following ways: Soft boiled, soft cooked, hard boiled, fried, fried on both sides using excess fat, poached, scrambled, scrambled using excess fat, shirred, pickled, deviled, plain omelet, Spanish omelet, bacon and eggs, and scrambled eggs with "frizzled beef."

Our studies show that a soft-boiled or a soft-cooked egg is digested rather more rapidly and satisfactorily in the stomach than is an egg prepared in any other way. The margin is favor of the soft egg is nevertheless slight, since the stomach gives a hearty welcome to all kinds and conditions of eggs, even the much maligned cold storage and "frozen" egg being made to feel at home.—From the Ladies' Home Journal.



The interior of a Prairie Farm Home. That of Mrs. E. W. Poole, Sarsento, Alta.

or inexperienced employee. We had a hired man last year who for physical strength and willingness to work was all that could be desired, yet he knew absolutely nothing about stock or keeping his implements in repair. He did not even know when the machinery was not working properly, and through his ignorance sweened two horses in the very beginning of the spring work, which cost his employer at least fifty dollars. Yet he got the average wage for last year.

The majority of hired men are unskilled. Skilled farmers have farms of their own. Again, most hired men are positively unscrupulous about leaving you just when you need them. As soon as the big harvest commences and they can draw three and four dollars a day, they will get up and leave, regardless of any previous agreement you may have had with them. A great many of the western hired men are boys from the cities, who want to try the summer in the west, or are attracted by the big wages, and haven't even physical strength to do farm work. They often do not want to spend more than the summer months in the country, preferring loafing in a city pool room. Those who wish to remain on the farm can get work the year round. The writer knows of many instances where the hired men migrated south or east during a spell of bad weather in the fall, regardless of the fact that they were being boarded and would be needed as soon as the weather improved. City employers do not board their employees when they cannot use them.

The board and general surroundings the hired man gets in the country are superior to what the same class of man would get in the city. Considering the difference in house rent, cost of food, the better clothes a man in city employment must wear, and the money spent in car fare and amusements, the hired man on the farm will have more cash at the end of each month than the city employee.

E. B.

"TO THE PURE—"

Dear Miss Beynon:—I enjoy your page very much; there are always so many interesting letters. I have just been reading The Guide of April 4, in which appears the second letter re "offensive ad-