

# The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

## HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS

A letter came to this desk in answer to Miss Bynon's editorial on "Dreams." The writer did not wish the letter published, but she gave an account of a boy whose special gift was made apparent to him by an ignorant mother, and his life was robbed of much that might have made it richer and better, or perhaps the whole course of his life would have been changed had his mother understood.

The parents who think they know all about their children are the ones most likely to make mistakes. Neither parents nor teachers know all about the children they are with every day, nor do the little folks running around their homes know about themselves. They are largely creatures of environment and heredity, but no one understands all about environment, and heredity goes back to Adam and Eve, and no one even professes to understand the human emotions all the way back.

The one thing with which heredity seems to have but little to do is brains. Strong brain power may be found any place—gifts of song, of an appreciation of color and form, of the power of expression—may all be found in the humblest home and in the richest. No mother but may be nursing at her breast a child that will be a leader of men, but it will never be that if parents refuse to find out the natural talents of the child and cultivate them. Every child has its dreams, and educators should have an ear close to the dream wires to learn whether dreams and power to accomplish are not on the same line. L. R. T.

## NEED HOT LUNCHES

Dear Miss Bynon:—I was very much interested in Mrs. T. A. Cavers' letter in The Guide of July 12. I think it will be a long while before the rural schools adopt her plan, but if we could only work out the hot school lunches, especially in winter, I think it would be a big help to children who have to drive two or three miles. We all know the case of children in winter on the road to school before the sun is up, with hardly any breakfast and nothing hot to eat or drink until 5.30 p.m. It surely could be changed if we could only all meet and discuss matters. Our school is heated by a furnace and the children cannot warm milk or soup on it. We all know how a hot meal in winter helps one on for the day's work, and it would be a great benefit to the children.

I am going to ask The Guide readers if anyone wants a baby girl of fourteen months old to adopt? She is a bonny girl with blue eyes and fair hair. We will write and give particulars to anybody interested in her. Would prefer a home in the country or farm for her.

SISTER MARTHA.

## MADE IT HOME-LIKE

Dear Miss Bynon:—I think all the readers of your page enjoy your hints on home-decoration and your kind offer to help them out in individual cases. But sometimes circumstances are such that the woman herself has to think it all out for herself, and, if successfully, she should follow your example and pass it along.

For instance, this spring we spent considerable money in improvements—beaver boarding and paneling the walls and ceiling of a living-room 12 feet by 20 feet, putting in a mission staircase with built-in bookshelves under it, a dormer window upstairs, etc.—but my kitchen remained as before, only it looked worse, as the rest of the house was laughing at it. Altho almost new it is intended to be used only temporarily, as there was a mistake made in pitching the roof too low to "hitch on" the cottage roof of the main building. It is 11 feet by 20 feet, shanty roof, with a large window at one end and another running longways along the low side of the kitchen. It has a good double floor. But slack, there were just the boards on the walls and the bare studs, the boards and rafters overhead. Temporary or not, I spend a lot of my time in it, and I determined to lighten it up somehow. There were my good big range, kitchen cupboard and oval extension-table, and such a background. I was "forbidden" to use whitewash, and there I was. But "where there's a will there's a way," as a wag-gish friend used to remark, so I "mediated," as Samantha Allen would do.

I went and got a roll of cream building paper, containing 400 square feet, and costing one dollar in these parts; also a package of alabastine, cream color, at fifty cents, and two boxes of tacks and some grey floor paint. I did the ceiling with the alabastine, as the shingle nails were too thick for the paper, laid it on good and thick until it looked creamy and nice. Then did the studding on the walls with the alabastine, then tacked the cream building paper between the studding on the walls. By this time the room looked nice and clean and light. The floor got a couple of coats of paint,

the windows little white cheesecloth curtains—no blinds. My range showed up nice and black and nickelly, and I felt proud as could be.

But I did not like the raw look along the border, so I fared up into the attic, where lay a pile of Saturday Evening Posts. You know what nice cover designs they have. Well, I cut out a lot of these carefully—little girls skipping, boy unwillingly washing his feet, boys making snow men, etc.—and these I pasted at regular intervals in a sort of frieze all around the room. The same colors are nearly always used in these covers, so it is quite



A British, a French and an Italian war orphan—Jacky, Martha and Alberto. Can you tell which is which?

harmonious. At a trifling cost the kitchen is cheerful and pleasant and I am quite proud of it. Whether I use it six months or six years it will save me many a fit of the blues, also, I suspect, sparing the rest of the family the effects.

Perhaps some of the rest of your readers are at the "temporary" stage of things, and my experience may be of some benefit. I remain,

Yours truly,

WOLF WILLOW.

## THE RURAL SCHOOL

The article on the rural school by Miss Bynon in The Grain Growers' Guide of May 17, appealed very much to me. Being an ex-teacher, I can grasp her idea at once. Very much do the new theories of education appeal to me, but in the average rural school, where the subjects for eight grades are to be taught, the teacher will have a difficult task to make out a time table which will include all the new subjects. However, the teacher should endeavor to spend a short time each day on such of the new subjects as the pupils will profit by and yet not rob them of the instruction in the very necessary subjects. Agriculture, nature, industrial work for the smaller children. The songs and singing exercises are very important and have many things in their favor.

Dr. J. Franklin Brown says that, "The hardest task of the new education is to find a teacher who can reach the heart and understanding of each pupil and at the same time stimulate him to the greatest activity and power."

For our children the best education is none too good. Teaching is a great profession and is growing to be more and more of a profession. It is, or at least should be, a self-sacrificing one. Success is a tonic—everyone works better in a joyous atmosphere—therefore it is necessary for education. The personality of the teacher appeals very much to the children, and especially the wee ones—some are tots when their mothers rush them off to school—and the teacher who brings cheerfulness, love and thorough knowledge of his subjects into the schoolroom will not meet with an inattentive spirit among the boys and girls.

I think the primary grades should have a thorough training, and as they are promoted to higher grades will find it much easier to grasp the new thoughts and the different subjects.

Some parents are much opposed to the new-fangled notions in school teaching. Why? Some perhaps have no interest in the school at all, some cannot spare the time to read or even talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the new theories,

and others become disgusted with teachers who spend overtime on gardening, storytelling, taking rambles to study nature, and, alas! forget the primary grades.

It is not long until the primary children grow tired of school. The mind refuses to attend where interest is lacking. Not long ago I asked a little girl of the first grade how many lessons she had on this particular day. She said, "I had one lesson." And the rest of the time she sat in her seat idle except recess and noon hour. Would you say that teacher was self-sacrificing? No. The dear little soul had such a tired, worn look as she said to me, "Oh, the teacher whipped that little girl on the hand, with a strap, until he made her cry, and she is only seven years old." My indignation was aroused and the thought came to my mind, "Mere clothes and license to teach do not fully equip him for the schoolroom." "Adaptation is nature, you cannot buy it." Fear of failure, fear of reproof, fear of any kind weakens the will power and undermines the character of the child.

The industrial occupation for little children is satisfying to the little minds and will occupy the time the other grades are having their instruction. The young children love the story period, and it can be held successfully with all classes by selecting short stories suitable to the grades. "Brevity is the soul of wit."

It is the teacher who must make the school. Character-building is the important thing in our school work, and each day the teacher impresses each child toward the development of the child's character. If we take the finer things—courtesy, friendship and religion—out of life, what is left?

School equipment and sanitation are badly attended to in some districts. Such requirements should be looked after by the trustees regularly, or immediately after the first notice given by the teacher, whose eye should be open to the necessary requirements of the school and surroundings. Extra taxes should be paid ungrudgingly by the rate-payers when it is necessary for the promotion of education.

When it comes time for lunch hour the teacher should insist that each child should wash face and hands before partaking of lunch. Each pupil should have his or her own drinking cup and a small white cloth to spread on the desk. If the teacher would encourage this method the children would find pleasure in it and their lunches would prove beneficial to them. In this way no dust is made by the children as if they were moving about the room and scattering crumbs around the floor. In this way tidiness and manners could be cultivated. The hot lunch idea is growing in favor in some districts. I think the average teacher does not approve of the method. The noon hour passes quickly, and to prepare a meal, partake of it and tidy up after will require much planning. It will take at least twenty minutes to prepare the simplest meal, then twenty or thirty minutes to partake of it, and what time is left to wash and put away the dishes? If the teacher lives within the school grounds he will prefer having his dinner at home. I think the average mother, if she is interested in the welfare of her children, can prepare a dainty lunch for them. No doubt in the graded school the hot lunch method would be successful, but as yet I fail to see the advisability of it in the rural school.

EX-TEACHER.

## A COLONY OF FARM WOMEN

Dear Miss Bynon:—Re Topsy's views on farm help. Like her, I have worked on a farm, and I'd rather have the outdoor work than be shut up in a heated shack from morning till night making meals out of nothing and no thanks. I can handle an outfit from a plow to a binder, and stack or make hay, to running the mower, to stacking. I have had experience with rearing young stock and love the work, and have had luck in that line, too. I am going onto a farm again as soon as suited and can find one suitable for mixed farming. I think you'll find there are quite a number of women capable of doing most kinds of work there is to do in these western farms and do it right and also keep their womanhood. Still be able to put up a dainty meal or make a dress, or a shirt for the man, and the one hundred and one other things that a woman is supposed to do. Like Topsy, I'd like to hear from other women, too. Why not form a colony of women farmers and give those that care to be housekeepers the chance to keep house.

TRIXEY

"Papa," said Tom, "was it true that George Washington couldn't tell a lie? Our teacher told us he couldn't."

"Yes," my son, he was a great and good man." After a moment of study Tom asked: "Papa, did you ever know what was the matter with George Washington that he couldn't tell a lie?"

—From the Delineator.

## DEFINITE

At a special n representing the the city of Edm 7, the following Wood, president Dunham, Rice Woodbridge, of Alberta; Mrs. V R. W. Barrett, of the United P and Messrs. G W. J. Jackm improvement dist palities' boards After a full d definite policy, tion, was decided adopted by all their respective

1—Resolved, t of the Province divided into dis poses, according natural boundar tion also for the The districts sho make the erecti the hospitl cas payers, but not cessibility. We standard district equal to that of

2—Resolved, t districts have upon, a referen each district as able to construct tal within its boi time must be all but a definite d before which d taken. A major hospital district district.

3—Resolved, t made for gather district covering (a) The taxab (b) The estim and equipment s (c) Probable based on figures rural hospitals (d) Any other necessity and d enterprise.

This informati free in the distri We recommend t Municipal Affair for the gatherin and that the gov assume the cost 4—Resolved, t under this sche and controlled by it is located.

5—That the fo the necessary wo porated into an Alberta, and tha be submitted to soon as possible.

A standing co H. W. Wood, an behalf of the U berta and the U Alberta, and M Greenfield, repr ment districts an was appointed to the government tails or possibl might require att

## SOME

Wm. H. Blatch Norte Local No. dom, if ever, ha community had tending a more the second ann Norte Local of Loree school on J ly attended, not their families bu Loads of gaily adren and veteran arrive early in the time the ath ing of some eigh ed, the grounds county fair the prairie. Some contented events splendid prizes, ing event of al when the U.P.A. pull any team tunately they to tory, and altho