

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon

THE PRAYER PERFECT

Dear Lord! Kind Lord!
Gracious Lord, I pray
Thou wilt look on all I love,
Tenderly today!
Weed their hearts of weariness;
Scatter every care
Down a wake of angel-wings
Winnowing the air.
—James Whitcomb Riley.

BEGINNING ON TOO LITTLE CAPITAL

So many requests have come to me during the last few days for assistance in the way of clothing that I have been wondering what is wrong with economic conditions out West. Some of these letters were very pathetic and the distress very genuine, but who is to blame for these conditions? Doubtless it is partly due to the high prices the farmer has to pay for machinery and other articles due to the high tariff, but that doesn't cover the whole ground. I have come to the conclusion that it must result partly from people starting house-keeping without sufficient capital. Too many young people get married with just enough means to get along if everything goes well for several years.

I am not blaming these young people, mind you, for often the girl not having been trained to buy has no idea of the limitations of a ten dollar bill in providing household necessities, and no more has the man. Then again, it has been the way of women for generations to have faith that in some magical way a man can always produce money. Some men can, because they have a genius for money-making, but they are the exceptions rather than the rule and frequently they know not only how to make it but how to husband it.

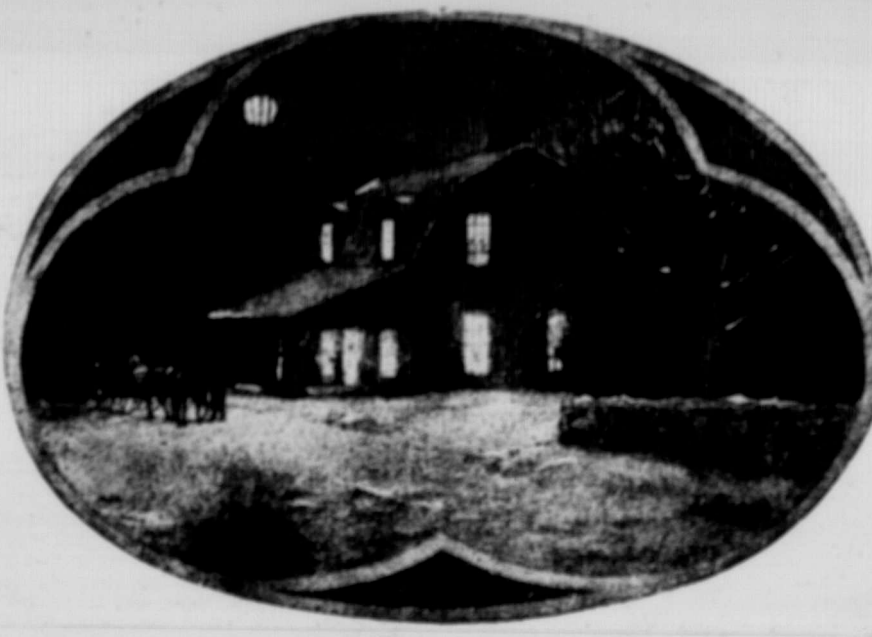
Now, it seems to me that the fault lies with the girl who takes for granted that in some way things will be provided. She should have a pretty fair idea what it costs to keep house and she should know the financial position of the man she is about to marry, and should be prepared to tell him whether it would be safe to undertake it with that amount. It is not enough to be able to buy the little bit of furniture that is really needed. There should be no heavy payments hanging over them which will demand a long series of good crops and good luck for their clearance. Occasionally Fortune does smile without interruption upon some homes for years, but she is a fickle personage and there is no telling when her smiles will turn to frowns.

I believe that this rushing into matrimony pell-mell is one of the factors that make for unhappy homes and poverty. The awful, sordid grind of trying to make ends meet when there isn't a tithe of enough to meet them with takes the very heart out of both husband and wife and leaves little time or energy for the graceful attentions that help to keep the lamp of love burning.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.
Address all correspondence to Francis Marion Beynon, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

THE COUNTRY TEACHER'S STAND-POINT

Dear Miss Beynon:—I have been reading your page with interest from week to week and need scarcely say that I think you are doing a noble work. I am not a matron as most of your correspondents seem to be, so probably for that reason my thoughts may not be of any assistance. Nevertheless, I must tell you an incident in my own experience. I was teaching in a rural school where there were a great many children—boys and girls. There were several big boys, but after being out amongst the children for the first few days I concluded that they were all fairly good children. After this I ceased to go out amongst them, until one day a little girl (aged six) came running in with a look on her face which depicted something more than terror. She had a disgusting story to



A Pleasant Christmas Scene Suggestive of Hospitality

tell concerning one of the boys. I soothed her as best I could and punished the boy, but what good did that do? The harm was done and during the rest of the term the little girl shunned all the boys and especially the one who had so shattered her purity.

I enjoyed very much the letter from "A Northwest Woman." Would that there were many such women as she in Canada. I have no complaint to make on my part for I am unmarried and my father is one of the best men in the West. Never as far back as I can remember did he ever refuse mother or the children anything we wanted. Nay, I have even heard him tell mother to get herself a new coat, or dress or hat when she thought that she did not need it. He would say: "Now, wife, I want to be proud of you when we go out, so please get this and oblige me." Then she would laugh and do so. During my term at High School he always gave me all that he could spare for spending. But let me tell you a little incident to illustrate another class of men.

A young couple were married in this neighborhood. Three years later they had three children. As he was quite clever at carpentering, father engaged him to do some little jobs in that line. I do not remember what all he did, but I remember that he received in payment something over four hundred dollars. He decided to take a trip so he went to Winnipeg and stayed three weeks, leaving his wife and three children with thirty-five cents, while he took the remainder. I am acquainted with these facts, because when she went to town the poor wife borrowed our rig and pony to take her butter and eggs in with. Let us hope that these cases are few and far between.

Enclosed find five cents for which send me the booklet: "How to Teach the Truth to Children"; it may help the mothers of my scholars. I must close wishing you God's speed in your work.

BRUN KULLA.

I fancy Brun Kulla is your pen name. Would you mind sending me a card to let me know whether or not that is the name in which I am to send it.—F.M.B.

WOMEN LAGGING BEHIND

Dear Miss Beynon:—A few years ago the educators were wasting much worry over the fact that farmers' daughters were receiving so much better schooling than their brothers, and they would be above marrying other girls' brothers. Now, anyone need only read a few copies of The Guide to recognize the fallacy of such reasoning. Every issue contains splendid letters from men urging needed reforms and their opinions as to the best method to bring them about. The women's pages contain what? Nothing more soul-inspiring

than complaints about the shortcomings of their husbands, their comparative powers of resisting temptations, when certain important family events are expected to occur; how many children they have who are old enough to read certain booklets, the amount of work to do, and their wages, or lack of wages. There are too many papers now publishing letters that are positively indecent, and I sincerely hope The Guide will not descend to their level. I think all contributors should sign their names. Personally, it would be beneath my honor to write for publication anything to which I was ashamed to sign my name.

We are all obliged to adapt ourselves to circumstances, of course, but if one woman spoken of in the November 13th issue had taken time from other things to properly train her boys, they would not allow their father to speak so disrespectfully to her. I pity a woman so circumstanced, more for the want of character she must have displayed in dealing with the man of her choice, than for the actual hardships she has suffered. Man is a reasonable being, not more inclined to tyrannize, on the average, than woman, nor more inclined to be a spendthrift, and as for downright stinginess, I have known women so far beyond any man in that respect that there was no comparison.

Every few weeks we receive bulletins from the Department of Agriculture containing valuable information on subjects in which farmers are interested. Why could not the proceedings of the Women's Congress, held in Lethbridge last month, have been issued in pamphlet form, and sent free to all those at least who were interested sufficiently to ask for it? And the mothers' Congresses that are held from time to time, how many young mothers to whom the papers read and the addresses given would be the greatest blessing, are able to attend?

Whenever there is an epidemic of typhoid fever, the city or municipality interested make haste to issue the proper instructions for safeguarding against the disease. If the instructions had been issued before the calamity, it would likely have been averted. Then since surely the well-being of our population is as important as the planting of good seed, why could there not be organized a Department of Public Health, which would issue bulletins on the methods of prevention and simple home treatment of all diseases. How many young mothers know that quinine and lard ointment rubbed under the armpits of a child too young to take the quinine internally will sometimes allay fever, or that mustard plasters made with the white of an egg instead of water will not blister? Those simple prescriptions cost us indirectly ten dollars each, for I have used them several times and helped children who were as

sick as our baby was, when we sent for the doctor who gave us those directions. The mustard plasters were applied to the abdomen and the soles of the feet to keep down convulsions.

I hope this gives you an idea of my plans for the improvement of our department, and as I suppose this letter is too long to permit of publication make any use of it you think best.

MRS. LAWRENCE DORAN.
Ponoka, Alta.

I heartily agree with you that many women need to have a broader outlook on life and that is why I am persistently urging the formation of Women's Clubs and trying to interest them in the question of the political standing of women. But it is hard for a woman to find either the time or the energy to look into things beyond her own home when she has a large family and an unsympathetic husband.—F.M.B.

THE MAN'S SIDE OF THE PROBLEM

Dear Miss Beynon:—Have just been reading the Country Homemakers' page and like the letters fine, but the heart aches for the fine people. Now, I feel sorry, yes more than words can express for "A Northwest Woman." I feel very sorry for the women who have such husbands, but, Miss Beynon, let's have a discussion. I think if such letters would not be printed or written it would be better, because there are a number of girls who read your page and it makes them feel hard towards men, even their father and brothers. Now, I'm talking from experience. I know girls who have quarreled with their father because they have not such a nice dress and hat as their chums, and it hurts some noble-minded men who are trying hard to get along. These little things worry them and make their hearts sore, and oftentimes make their loads harder to bear. Now, I know men who would far rather treat a stranger than their wives or daughters, and would think nothing of spending every cent they owned in a barroom and their children starving at home. Now, Miss Beynon, I would be much obliged if you would send me Maternity complete, and How to Teach the Truth to Children, as it is a thing that ought to be considered by everyone. Thanking you for a small space in your valuable page, I remain,

JUST SEVENTEEN.

Just Seventeen, will you please send me your name and address so that I can forward the booklets. As for the fathers and husbands of unreasonable wives and daughters I'm sorry for them, just as sorry as I am for the wives and daughters of unreasonable men.—F.M.B.

CAN A MATERNITY NURSE PRACTICE HER PROFESSION?

Dear Miss Beynon:—We have at last succeeded in getting a certified maternity nurse whom we consider a God-send. She has been busy already and now the doctor tells me she is liable to a heavy fine if she practices down here.

We are forty miles from the nearest doctor and fourteen from one who speaks nothing but French. If the law in Canada is such, it is time your paper took up the question and agitated it till it was altered. The nurse I am speaking about graduated in Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London, England, and came out specially to our district. Kindly let me know if she is liable to prosecution, as soon as possible, and oblige,

Yours sincerely,

SCOT.

I took the trouble to write to the Attorney-General at Regina about this matter, and their answer was that there was no law preventing a nurse from practicing if she did not also practice medicine.—F.M.B.

An aim in life is the only fortune worth the finding, and it is not to be found in foreign lands, but in the heart itself.—R. L. Stevenson.