

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon.

"SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER AFTER," ETC.

I have a beautiful inspiration—or what feels like an inspiration—bubbling up in my brain this morning and I want to submit it to the cold light of your reason and find out for very certain whether it really is or no.

Shall we start a department for the reports of the Women Grain Growers' and other women's societies? The question is would the women of each province want to have their reports printed in this new department or would they want them to appear in the page of The Guide devoted to their own province.

As I said at the beginning, "Speak now or forever after hold your peace," but please don't hold your peace. If you have a Women Grain Growers' or a Home Economics Society or a Homemakers' Club in your district or if you mean to have one I would like you to say whether or not you would care to report their meetings to The Guide.

I am sure you will do this to oblige me, because I have never yet asked a favor of my women readers in vain. I am quite sure also that I don't deserve so much goodness, but in the past you apparently have not taken that into consideration and have poured your kindness upon me regardless of desert.

I don't want to start this department if it is not needed or wanted by my readers, but if it interests you there is nothing I would so love to do as to further the organization of such clubs.

And now just one more little request. If this applies to your district will you please write at once so that I will know the opinion of my readers at the earliest possible moment.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

TEXAS MARRIED WOMAN'S PROPERTY ACT

The Delineator tells this month of the passing by the legislature of Texas of a new property bill. It gives the married women of that state certain rights and privileges in regard to their holdings which even we women of the Canadian Northwest have always assumed that a woman really must have or start a revolution.

The woman who hustled about and did the necessary lying awake nights figuring out how to get the politicians to cast their votes as she wanted them to was Mrs. Ward, of Houston, whose picture appears in this issue. Getting politicians to listen when one represents several thousands of votes and when one is utterly voteless are entirely different things, and Mrs. Ward had a very strenuous time before she aroused public opinion to the point where it demanded the changes introduced by the new bill.

Here in the words of the Delineator writer is the substance of the new piece of legislation.

"Anyway, it may be that House Bill 22, as finally passed and signed, does, after all, empower married women to make contracts. It does not specifically say that they may make them. But it so amends all previous laws as to withdraw from the statute books the command that they shall not make them. And, in giving them the general 'control and disposition' of their property and earnings, it implies that they will make them.

Such is Senator Vaughan's view of the matter. And such is Mrs. Ward's. Which is perhaps the reason why she was in such a hurry to get that bill enrolled.

Contracts or no contracts, however, House Bill 22 is a big bill. It gives to the married women of Texas the genuine ownership of their separate property, of their personal earnings, of the rents from their lands, of the interest from their bonds and of the dividends from their stocks, checked only by the requirement that before they can actually convey or encumber their lands or actually transfer their stocks or bonds they must seek their husbands' consents. No longer can a husband in Texas maintain a right of disposition over his wife's income by force of law. He must maintain it by force of character.

Wherefore we call the Spear-Vaughan-Ward law, of the Commonwealth of Texas, one of the quicksteps of the woman movement in America this year."



MRS. HORTENSE WARD, OF HOUSTON

THE "BUSY WORK" AT THE FAIR

They didn't call it busy work, of course. It was dignified by appearing in the school exhibits, but if anyone was scared away from this room by the fear of encountering crude and primitive efforts at art then they were assuredly the losers.

What caught my fancy the very most of all was the paper cutting, because I thought how well you could apply it to keeping the small folk out of mischief on stormy days. The very weeniest folk had cut animals out of white paper and pasted them regardless of arrangement on blue cardboard. The next step was a crazy winding trail drawn on the blue cardboard with white ink and down this trail were parading gaily a combined farmyard and circus of animals and birds cut out of white paper and pasted on flat. White cardboard with a black ink trail and any colored animals would do quite as well and it would not be a serious calamity if the elephant's trunk was not quite plumb or the giraffe's neck a little stubby for a giraffe.

Still more original and clever was the big card illustrating the days of the week. For Monday a wash tub and clothes line; for Tuesday an iron and ironing board; for Wednesday a low rocking chair, table and mending basket; for Thursday, visiting day, a handbag and parasol; Friday the broom and dust pan and Saturday the rolling pin and bake board.

Even more difficult was the furnishing of the rooms with paper furniture: in the living room a little paper couch, tables and chairs; in the bedrooms tiny paper beds, dressers and stands.

In a rural school exhibit there was a round piece of cardboard to represent a pond and little yellow cardboard ducks, one with the head stuck through to suggest diving.

The older pupils in the Kelvin Technical school exhibited some exceptionally clever color work, the dainty wallpaper designs and borders, in water colors, being especially worthy of praise.

But I wish all of you could have seen the work. I am sure it would have been an inspiration to those of you who have small children coming to ask plaintively, "What can we do now, mother?"

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness or else forgiving another.

CHILDREN'S CONFIDENCE AND TRUTH

Dear Miss Beynon:—I am interested in your page and am sure that not only is it helpful, but encourages us to press on when we hesitate. I am the mother of three children and I feel the responsibility of training them very much. I think children should be taught from babyhood to come to mother with all their little troubles and no mother should be too busy to listen and sympathize. Better to let the work go and listen than to turn the child away, or say, as I have heard some mothers say, "Oh, don't bother me. I'm too busy." They will too soon learn to go elsewhere and often in later life refrain from telling mother the things she ought to know.

One lady said to me, "Oh, don't tell your children anything pertaining to themselves. I remember how dreadfully disgusted I was when I first found out for myself the origin of life." There is the whole trouble, children are left to find out too much for themselves. We should study the disposition of each child and we shall soon know how much each child needs to be told and when best to tell it.

I often have a talk with my little girl of eight years. Of course at first she was shy to talk of such things, but I told her how wonderfully and beautifully God had made her and what a sweet, pure little thing a baby was. I do not believe in telling children they were found in cabbage leaves. I always told my little girl that God had provided a most wonderful bed where they were kept warm until such time as He sent them to us, and when through hearing stories from another child she came to me with the question, "Mamma, where do the babies come from?" I took her in my arms and told her something about it and she said, "Well, mamma, it was right what you said about the bed, wasn't it?" Outside of this question it is so sweet to know that I have their confidence, which throughout life I mean to keep. I am afraid I am taking up your time, but I felt I must write and secure your books, "How to Teach the Truth to Children" and "The Most Wonderful Story in the World," for which I enclose 15 cents in stamps. Wishing you all the success you deserve. I am, sincerely yours,

LILLIAN BLACKSTOCK.

THE WHITE SLAVE TRADE

Dear Miss Beynon:—For several weeks I have kept silent, but Prairie Lover's letter caused me to break the spell. Prairie Lover, I liked your noble defence of our maids and I for my part know that any we have had have been satisfactory. Mother always treated them as members of the family as did we girls.

But, Prairie Lover, how about our fallen sisters? You say we should say nothing about them, but pray in silence. I truly believe, in the wonders brought about by prayer, but man or woman must work as well. If this were not the case why do we have ministers and missionaries if silent praying would save the world? O, no. God had other intentions. He meant us to do our share.

Now I think we should be up and doing and if we could save them without publishing their shame I am sure I would think that it would be best. But in the words of the sage, "Half the world knoweth not what the other doeth." Many people do not realize the serious condition of our young womanhood.

Last Sunday I listened to a splendid sermon on this very subject in which truths were very vividly portrayed. Many people were shocked, but I think he did perfectly right in so laying bare the actual facts.

O, sisters, it seems to me that we should be up and doing when there is such a great traffic going on among the white slavers. Fifteen thousand Canadian girls enter a life of shame yearly. Think what that means when our population is only about seven million.

I used to be a staunch disbeliever in woman suffrage, but I have been changed and realize that when woman gets a vote then only will virtue and truth reign supreme.

Let me give you a few facts. In my home town there are two or more houses of ill-repute, which half a year ago were closed owing to the strong feeling against them. This spring an incident occurred. Two girls were pursued by a drunken man when the girls were returning from a visit at the minister's. The police were set on his trail and he was caught before he could harm them. Shortly afterwards a council meeting was held to decide what could be done to make the streets safe for girls. They decided to open the above mentioned houses, they said in order that innocent girls might remain unmolested. The true reason was that those same men who passed the laws are the ones who felt the need of the houses. Sisters, shall we let such degraded beings, I will not call them men, govern us? No, I say, and I am sure you will agree.

Three years ago they voted on local option here with the result that the saloon-keepers stayed. Our mayor is the largest saloon-keeper here, so you may be sure it is a good town. Here I must remark that I have nothing to say against the mayor, he has fulfilled his office with satisfaction to all, but the mere fact that he is a saloon-keeper does not speak well for our town.

Miss Beynon, I have too long taken up your valuable time, but the vileness of the world overpowered me. Good luck to you all and with a prayerful wish for better conditions. I will close.

Yours truly,

BRUN KULLA.

P.S.—For fear I will be misjudged I will add that I am a school teacher and still in my teens.

REAL SORROW NEEDS NO TRAPPINGS

Dear Miss Beynon:—I feel as you do about wearing black. It has not been worn in our family for several generations as both my grandparents and my parents thought it almost as bad as the savages who stabbed themselves or jumped into the fire to show their grief.

Death entered our home only recently, but I could not wear crepe. My loss seems too sacredly my own and I could not proclaim it to the world with black clothes any more than I could talk of it in public. I have seen crepe worn that I considered an insult to the dead. Nothing but time can soften the ache at one's heart and your nearest and dearest know it's there and need no telling.

ANON.