

The Country Homemakers

Conducted by Francis Marion Beynon.

THE WHY OF THE WOMAN'S CLUB

Your neighborhood should not be allowed to peacefully stay dead. If it isn't dead this admonition does not apply to you. But if the years roll around as much alike as two peas in a pod and you and your neighbors have got into the way of not caring whether you ever see each other the time is ripe for a local resurrection. The danger is that in neighborhoods like this people will yawn their lives away while everybody waits for somebody else to start something.

There is another and graver danger—the danger that in such neighborhoods the lives of the women will be so colorless and monotonous that the mind will become unhooked and the certainty that it will lose its vigor and youthfulness.

Having only one life to live we cannot afford to spend it all in drab days of drudgery unbroken by any relaxation. Too many people begin to die at thirty-five and continue the process slowly and steadily until the grave automatically closes over them at the last.

But if one wants to live more completely every year it is necessary to do and think and take an interest in things outside of the daily routine of one's work. It was the realization of this necessity that led to the formation of women's clubs in the cities first, and later in the rural communities. With them a fresh invigorating breath of life swept over the country. The members learned a new spirit of loyalty and a community conscience began to develop among women. The woman's club movement was terribly ridiculed at first in caricature and story and as always the neglect of home and children was dolefully prophesied. And as always woman has used her increased power and broader outlook on life for the betterment of her home and children. Woman invariably does this, but men, while professing to look up to her as a creature raised high on a pedestal above them, never trust her out of their sight. They assert majestically that the fundamental instinct of woman is mothering and home making, but they live in a constant state of terror lest the most trivial incident of life, such as a club meeting every second week will upset this fundamental instinct. The woman's club movement has out-lived this opposition, having demonstrated that its tendency is to make of good wives and good mothers better wives and better mothers.

That is why I am anxious to see the woman's club movement in some form or other spread to every rural community where the state of settlement makes it feasible and I hope that this club number may help in some little measure to give it an impetus.

In conclusion I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who have taken time at this very busy season of the year to contribute to this number and especially to Mrs. H. W. Dayton, of Virden, Man., and Mrs. Edith Thompson, of Pense, Sask., for their trouble in procuring photos of their rest rooms.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

OWN THEIR CLUB ROOM AND THE LOT WHEREON IT STANDS

The Homemakers' Club of Pense, Sask., was organized in January, 1910, by Mrs. Thomas (Lillian Laurie), of the Free Press, this organization meeting once a month in the Council Chamber. The following spring the Anglicans very kindly donated us their old church building, to be moved and fitted up as a club room. But here our troubles began, for as the building (having been built in two parts) neared its destination it fell apart and we indeed faced a proposition, with the building on the street and no funds in the treasury. However, we set to work, had the building torn down and with the addition of some new lumber built a very comfortable

cottage, with a small kitchen at the back, and we now own this building and intend making our last payment on the lot on which it stands this fall. We use this room for all our club meetings and for social evenings, etc. It is also left open during the summer months and all ladies invited to make use of it, particularly those who are shopping in town. We raised money for this work in various ways, such as a bazaar, sales of home-made cooking, ice cream, candy, etc., an entertainment given by the club members in the Town Hall, and the Horticultural Show, which we hold every autumn and which has been a success in every way.

E. A. THOMSON,

Secretary.

Miss Beynon:—I have been unable to procure a later photo of the club room, so am sending an old one. This room has since been painted and vines and trees planted. Perhaps you might just mention this.—E. A. T.

A LONG LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF VIRDEN SOCIETY

Dear Miss Beynon:—It is a pleasure to



A Peep into a Social Corner of the Rest Room of the Virden Home Economics Society.

me to accede to your request for a report from our society for your Club Number. It will help to bring our societies of the West into closer touch and our women's aim is much the same by whatever name we are known.

That our Virden Home Economics Society has been a great help is acknowledged by all. At the annual meeting of our Virden board of trade the men of our town paid a tribute to the good work we have done and we feel we have accomplished much when we have the sympathy of our men, as it is only by united effort that anything worth while may be done.

Our societies tend to bring the women of town and country and of the different churches together for a common aim—to improve our homes and country—and this helps us to better understand each other.

We welcome strangers and invite them to come; our fee is so small no one is prohibited.

Our societies should be conducted with method and dignity, but not oppressively so. We should seek to draw out the timid ones, who should feel that the members were friends and not disposed to harshly criticize, understanding we were there to help as well as learn.

Music is a great help to both young and old, and gives our young women an interest.

One of our first acts here was to give a prize for the best blouse made by a young woman, and last year at our fair we gave a prize for the best laid and decorated

table, which was won by one of our members.

Our members are on our fair board and are directors in different departments and their work is considered invaluable. We hope to extend this work and help our rural schools by giving prizes for garden exhibits and other school work.

Through the united efforts of our society and the town council we have a curfew law which prevents our children being on the streets or in moving picture places unaccompanied after 9 o'clock.

Through the efforts of our society our school trustees have ordered medical inspection, which includes dental inspection. Our H.E.S. provincial directors have asked all the societies in the province to work for this. The parents are pleased to co-operate as they are realizing that the health of the children is of the first consideration. Though Virden is a most healthful town there were many troubles found, some very serious, such as spinal curvature, etc., which if taken in time may be corrected.

Uniting with the W.C.T.U. we maintain rest and reading rooms, which our

PLAN TO HAVE THEIR OWN CLUB ROOM IN TOWN

Dear Miss Beynon:—I saw your request for secretaries of all women's clubs, institutes and other societies to write you a letter concerning their work. As I am the secretary-treasurer of the Webb Homemakers' Club I will endeavor to give you a few notes about our club for the Club Number.

We have not made much progress with our club yet, as we only organized the 14th of July. We have had two meetings since. We meet the second Thursday of each month at the homes of different members. But we intend to have a building in town to have our meetings in this winter. If we do, in that way it will make it more convenient for everyone. For they all say when they come to the club meeting they can do their shopping the same day.

We have not made any improvement to speak of yet, but intend to in the future. But there is one benefit we have found in our club, we have got better acquainted with each other, and find it a good way to exchange different ideas.

We have different subjects to discuss at each meeting. At our last meeting our subject was "Canning and Preserving Fruit." It came in the right time, too, as all the members were right in the midst of doing fruit. We have lunch after our business and talk is over, and then go home in time to prepare supper. We passed a bylaw that there would be a fine if the members served more than four articles for lunch. I think this is a very good idea, as some women would go to so much bother and expense and perhaps make club days a drudgery. I think I have written too much already, so I will close to give other club workers space too. I hope there are a great number of letters, so we can see what other women are doing in their work.

Yours truly,
ETHEL SPOONER,
Sec.-Treas. of Webb Home-
makers' Club.

TWENTY-SIX ENROLLED AT FIRST MEETING

Dear Miss Beynon:—I shall esteem it a favor if you can find a place for this letter on the Country Homemakers' Page. A meeting was held in the Marshall School, Reid Hill, Alberta, on September 16, to organize a branch of the Women's Institutes of Alberta, and twenty-six ladies were enrolled as members. Much enthusiasm was shown by those present and it is expected that there will soon be a larger membership.

As this is a country district with no public place in which to meet, except the school house, it was decided that the meetings should be held in the homes of the members in alphabetical order; 2 p.m. on the first Thursday in every month being the time chosen. It did not seem as if anything were needed to loosen the tongues of the members, but as the homes are so far apart it was thought advisable for the hostess to provide "the cup that cheers," and not more than two kinds of sandwiches and two kinds of cake. The officers were elected, and a program, consisting of a paper, a song and a recitation, arranged for the next meeting. Will you kindly advise me if you think a report of our meetings will be of sufficient interest for a place in your page, and whether you can allow space for any details of the program.

Yours faithfully,

GRACE CHAPPELL,

Director.

We would be very glad indeed to have regular reports of your meetings and think you are to be congratulated on having so many at your organization meeting.

F. M. B.

REBECCA DAYTON.

Continued on Page 22