

The Country Homemakers

CONDUCTED BY FRANCIS MARION BEYNON

SORROW'S SHADOW

By Fannie Stearns Davis

Some day, when I am drest in shimmer-stuff,
With yellow roses at my breast and hair;
When just the air and sunlight seem enough
To make the whole world delicately rare;
When people love me, and I them, and all
My heart is like a hill-brook's lilting call.

Then, if I pass Her, in her dim black dress,
With heavy eyelids darkened by old tears,
I feel a sudden clutch of loneliness;
I stare down vistas of unsparking years,
And there behold myself clad close in black,
With tired brows; thin hands, and aching back.

Oh, Sorrow's Shadow! let me be awhile!
Wreck not my happy yellow roses; set
No watch upon my sudden cry and smile.
Why should I not forget—ah, half-forget!—
That Sorrow's Self will meet me some strange day,
And take my hand, nor let me dance away?
—The Youth's Companion.

THRIFT

With the steady drain of the war continuing day by day, week by week, and month by month, the necessity for thrift in the home becomes more and more imperative. In the first flush of prosperity following upon our bumper crop, we people of Western Canada are apt to forget that every shell fired over a war trench in either direction makes the world poorer to the full amount of its cost. Whatever the moral issues involved it is conceded by economists that war is economically a sheer waste. In due time will come the day of reckoning, when the war which is being paid for today in blood will have to be paid for over again in money.

And where is the money to be found? Some people will pay the extra tax out of their abundance and scarcely feel the pinch, but in most households it will be saved by the housewife out of the family budget thru a careful pruning of expenses.

Our past, the happy-go-lucky, care-free life of the dwellers in a new country where work is plentiful and land is cheap has been a poor preparation for practicing thrift and economy in the home. Yet if we are to compete successfully with a nation which has a genius for arranging these domestic matters swiftly and efficiently we must right about face today.

By thrift in this case is not meant niggardly scrimping and saving and doing without those things which are really required to make the home a comfortable and efficient place to live and work in. It refers rather to the elimination of stupid expenditure and wasteful habits. Many of our country families are kept poor all their lives by the man's mania for buying machinery and more machinery, while in other homes there is enough wasted to make all the difference between comfort and poverty.

In order to bring this question seriously before our readers I am going to ask a very great favor of the housewives who read this page. I would like a very large number of them to sit down and write out their family budgets, showing just what it costs to live on the farm, giving the amounts expended on fuel, clothing, household equipment and food of various kinds. If preferred the writer's name will be withheld and a pen name printed.

In this way we may be able to discover where the leaks occur, and women who have made a great success of clothing and feeding their families on a moderate sum may be able to suggest a practical remedy.

FRANCIS MARION BEYNON.

HAWAII

On this page will appear next week the first installment of an illustrated serial article dealing with the industries of Hawaii.

A FURNISHING PROBLEM

Dear Miss Beynon:—Will you please tell me thru the Country Homemakers how to furnish my house of which I will give you a sketch. It is a square house facing the east. There are four rooms downstairs—kitchen, dining room, parlor and den. The dining room is a very light room. It has a bay window in the south. The woodwork is mahogany stain and varnished. The walls plastered. Would you advise me to paint the walls or paper them, and what color would harmonize best with woodwork? What color of curtains and linoleum would be best? The room is 12 by 14 feet. I have sideboard and table and chairs oak finish and some enlarged photos in gilt frames.

The parlor has two windows, one large one in the east, one not so large in the south. The woodwork is the same as the dining room. I have no furniture in it at all. Please tell me how to furnish it not too elaborate. The room is 12 by 12 feet. There is an arch between it and the dining room. What color of curtains and rugs should I use; the rug to be priced about \$20 or \$25.

The den is 8 by 10 feet and has a window in the east. The woodwork the same as the other rooms

and I have no furniture in it. Please tell me how to furnish it and which it would be best, to paint the walls or paper them. I will enclose 10 cents if you will please send me samples.

MRS. JAMES AIKEN.

Carman P.O., Manitoba.

Answer

It is too bad you did not take into account your oak furniture when you decided upon the finish of your woodwork, as mahogany woodwork and oak furniture is a very unhappy combination. However, you can do something to remedy this mistake by doing your walls with the very flat deep buff I am sending you in a marked color card. You may think this too dead a shade, but a color with too much tan or yellow in it would look very ugly with your red woodwork, and especially so in the strong sunlight you have in these rooms.

I looked at several rugs for the parlor and found two that I liked very much in that beautiful Wilton make, 9 by 9 feet square. The first came in brown and terra cotta shades with a pattern of squares about five inches in size set in diamond fashion at \$27.00. There was also a beautiful fawn and green and rose all-over design at \$26.50. As the selection of these rugs is being depleted daily and the cost of them is advancing with every new shipment, it is economy to make the purchase at once if you intend to do it this year.

I should use glass curtains of plain cream scrim, with over-curtains of madras in green and rose if you feel like going to that expense. In the way of furniture I should advise you to purchase a mahogany centre table and willow chairs. These would be prettiest stained a soft green and fitted with cretonne cushions



THE FIRST OF WINTER'S SNOWS
From a painting by Joseph Farquharson, R.A.

in green and fawn and rose. They would cost at that rate about \$9.25 and \$10.25. But if that is too expensive you can get quite pretty willow chairs in natural red willow, which is a pinkish fawn shade, at \$6.26 for the round base style and \$8.50 for the other style of which I am enclosing an illustration.

If you must use linoleum in the dining room let it be a very simple matting design in fawn or pale green; tho I should prefer a stained and waxed floor with a few brown or dull green rugs.

As to pictures, I personally am not much in favor of using photographs, enlarged or otherwise, for the adornment of our walls, especially as copies of great paintings are to be had at such very low prices. Upon application, The Perry Pictures Co., Boston, and Malden, Massachusetts, will be glad to send a catalog of their prints, and very good ones can be had from this company at five cents each. There is also a firm in this city selling colored prints of famous paintings at as little as fifteen cents or seven for one dollar. I would be glad to furnish the name of this firm to any of our readers upon application.

I would recommend the pale olive shade I have marked for the den walls, with thin gold colored curtains having a red or green border. You could use a brown crex grass rug for the floor and two or three of those Japanese grass chairs in natural color, which come at about six and a half dollars.

SHOULD BE PATRIOTIC TAX

Dear Miss Beynon:—Now that the Nicolaeff discussion is almost over, as I judge, I am going to presume to say a word. I do not altogether know what the discussion was about. Like the old woman in Moliere, "He speaks so well I don't understand him a bit."

To come down from the sublime to the suburbs, I have come to the conclusion that most of the unrest, dissatisfaction and discord in Western country homes today is caused by a lack of money. The wife feels "sore" towards her husband, because after all the toil there is so little, and the man feels the same to—he hardly knows what or whom—that is sapping his life for nothing.

The farmer goes into town, creeping in the cold for miles with a load of oats. He doesn't know what he's going to get for them, he hasn't the setting of the

price—whatever "they" will give him. But when he goes to the store to buy things, the buyer doesn't set the price. Oh no! When he sells his grain, too, the freight is allowed out of it. He has to pay transportation, he is the seller. But if he sends to the city for a bill of goods he has to pay the freight. Buying or selling, he is the paymaster. That is why his farm is mortgaged; that is why his house is not finished or furnished; why his wife is shabby.

Now who, who is going to be the Moses to lead him out of all this? I see the implement men and banks forcing men to sell their grain below the cost of production in order to satisfy the indebtedness. Then when most of the grain is out of the farmers' hands up goes the price of all cereals. The mysterious "they" have raised the price of grain, and the humble peasant (or "independent farmer" I mean) shoulders more debt and raises another "bumper crop" for somebody else. His horses do not complain if they get enough hay and oats to keep them working, and I suppose, neither should he if he gets enough to exist on—and is physically able to raise the "bumper crops."

Now I propose that people get their heads together and fix a minimum price for the common cereals, a trifle over the cost of production anyway, below which a farmer cannot be forced to sell his grain. And if any creditor wishes him to settle up while the grain is below that minimum he must either take the grain itself, allowing that price for it, or allow the farmer to keep it until it reaches that price. Carpenters and other artisans have a scale of wages and, of course, they take more when they can get it, but only by union can the trades fight their way and the same with the farmers. Now let us calculate this out—the price at which grain can be raised at a fair profit over production, and all who sell below this be classed as "scabs."

Our representatives at Ottawa do us no good. In fact East is not West, nor West, East any more. We have outgrown the East. Even Winnipeg seems pretty far East to us folks in Alberta and B.C. The West has what one might call a national spirit and life of its own, none the less loyal to the Empire, but feeling that Ottawa is insufficient for it and non-representative of it. I think it is time there was a friendly split-up.

Another thing that I think a great mistake is raising money for the soldiers or the Patriotic Fund in a non-governmental way. The government should do it all and then tax the people to pay for it all. As it is the warm-hearted and generous are being over-bled and great colonies of foreigners, neutrals and aliens, are "sitting tight," piling up the money and it isn't costing them a cent. Besides this, the more voluntary donations there are the less the taxes will be. So we are taking out of our own pockets and putting it into those of these foreigners, and at the same time the soldiers and their dependants are not getting a cent more than they should get.

I thought of sending this letter to the "Mail Bag," but concluded that it was all really the business of the Country Homemakers. Now, Miss Beynon, will you and the rest of your readers consider these "grouches" of mine and show me wherein I am right or wrong?

"WOLF WILLOW."

To put the cart before the horse and begin with your last matter first, I am glad you said what you did about the Patriotic Fund, only I would go further than you and throw in the Red Cross for good measure. It seems to me that when a country goes to war neither the soldiers themselves, when they are wounded, nor the dependents of those soldiers at home should be at the mercy of occasional and spasmodic charity, or indeed subjects of charity at all.

As to the farmer's returns for his labor, I think that Free Trade would do a bit and the education of the voter to cast his ballot in his own interests instead of following like a lamb in the wake of his party would do a bit more.

F. M. B.

EVERYDAY HINTS FOR HOUSEWIVES

Burning Table Scraps

In burning table scraps containing grease or powdery substances, the unpleasant flash and cloud of smoke may be avoided by first placing the scraps in a bag or piece of old newspaper.

To Clean a Food Chopper

Take a piece of raw potato and put thru the chopper after using. Every particle of food is forced out, leaving in the machine only the raw potato, which is much easier to clean out than anything else.

Saving Steps

The modern housewife knows that time and strength must be saved if she is to perform all of her duties. To economize both she should have on hand a tray to take with her on her first trip to the cupboard as she starts to prepare a meal. On it she can place everything that she will need for her cooking, thus saving many trips to and fro. She can use the tray also in setting the table and clearing it, and she will find her work considerably lightened.