

man from what he had been a week ago; his old buoyancy and heartiness had departed from him and his appetite had decreased alarmingly. So she lay with aching thoughts, feeling very wretched and helpless.

In the dawn Peter arose and, deeming her to be still asleep, dressed himself in silence. Presently he procured paper and pencil and seated himself at the kitchen table. Now and then a half-stifed groan escaped him.

Later he came to the bedside, humbled and hopeless. "It's over big a job for me," he said despairingly. "It bates me completely. . . . Can ye no' help me, wife?"

"Oh Peter, I could never mak' a speech."

"Try," he implored. "I dinna want to affront ye on Friday, Marget. I dinna want to affront masel'—nor yet the meenister. Try, wumman, try! Though I was angry last night, I seen that ye kent mair about it nor me. Try!"

She shook her head. "But try," he persisted. "Ye've a' the day, when I'm at ma wark, to be tryin'; an' at night we'll try again together."

She shook her head again; but this time, without looking at him, she murmured:

"Weel, I'll try, Peter."

Mr. McBean had work at a distance that day, and did not as usual, come home at noon. On his return in the evening he found his wife in a hurried state, and, for the first time for many years, the evening meal not prepared.

"I'm vexed to be sae late," she said apologetically. "But I'll ha'e the tea ready in twa-three meenutes."

"Is anything wrang?" he inquired. "Oh, na, na! There's naething wrang," she answered, and let a plate fall on the stone floor, where it was smashed to fragments. "Oh, me!" she cried, "I never done that afore."

"Ye've been thinkin' ower hard aboot the speech," he remarked with a rueful grin, as he helped her to collect the ruins.

"Oh, dinna fash yersel' aboot yer speech, Peter," she said. "I've got it done for ye."

"What?"

"At any rate, I—I had a try at it. Ma han'writin's awfu' bad."

"Let's see it, wife," he eagerly cried.

"Ye maun get yer tea first."

"Never heed the tea. Let's see ma speech."

But she was firm. It was not until the meal was over, the dishes washed, and the kitchen tidied, that she let him have the sheets of foolscap.

He read them over with a critical air while she regarded him uneasily.

"It's no' bad," he observed at last. "I didna think ye was that clever, wife. I think maybe I'll be able to pit this into shape. The chief fau't is that ye dinna say enough aboot the meenister. I'll need to butter him up a bit."

"Oh, but, Peter," she said nervously, "d'ye think he wud like that? He's an awfu' modest man, ye ken. Ye wudna like to be buttered up yersel' afore a' the congregation."

"That's true; but it's the corree' thing to butter up meenisters at social gatherin's. Still, the speech ye've made, Marget, is no' sae bad, an' I'll mak' the best I can o' it."

Once more Mr. McBean fell to with his pencil. He soon found, however, that he could make little improvement on the original manuscript, and finally contented himself with copying it out and spelling a few of the words differently.

That night he slept soundly, but his wife was restless, and the following day she complained of her old enemy, rheumatism. Mr. McBean had to go to the presentation gathering alone.

He returned swelling with importance, glowing with satisfaction.

"Weel, Peter, hoo did ye get on?" Marget asked unsteadily.

"Splendid, jist splendid! I was receivin' compliments for the rest o' the evenin'. Maister Drummond—him that gied the five pound—said it was the natest speech ever he heard."

"Did the meenister seem pleased?"

"Deed, ay! An' nae wonder! The applause was tremendous, as they say in the papers."

Mrs. McBean gave a sigh of relief.

"An'," continued her husband jauntily, "I've been requested to deliver a speech at the Oddfellows' getherin' next month."

"Oh, Peter, promise ye'll no' dae it. Promise me ye'll never, never mak' another speech."

"Hoots, wife! It's the first plunge

that's the warst. I've confidence in masel' noo. I could face ony audience in the world."

Then he saw that she was very serious. But even then he would not give the promise desired. If folk enjoyed his speech-making, why should he refuse to pleasure them?

By the morning, however, his enthusiasm had cooled considerably.

"After a'," he remarked, casually, at breakfast, "I think I'll gie up the speechifyin', Marget. I—I'll rest on my laurels, as the sayin' is."

She could scarce speak for thankfulness, but she managed to say: "Is that a promise, Peter? Ye see, I—I'm gettin' ower auld for the excitement."

"Havers!" he said, laughing. "But it's a promise a' the same."

After he had gone to his work she sat awhile by the hearth—an unusual proceeding for her in the daytime. But the reaction had been a severe one.

Rousing herself at last, she rose and from a drawer, which she unlocked, took a folded paper. She opened it, and glanced over the lines of small, clear writing. Then she placed it on the fire and watched it burn.

"Oh," she sighed, "he's a kind man, the meenister; but, though it was to save ma life, I could never ask him to write another speech for Peter."

Manitoba Agricultural College.

It will be of interest to the young ladies of the province to know that arrangements have been made to provide living accommodation for a limited number of Home Economics students in the main buildings of the Agricultural College. Rooms, which heretofore were occupied by men, are being repaired and equipped with new furniture, and a large sitting-room, available for study, is being provided in the same building.

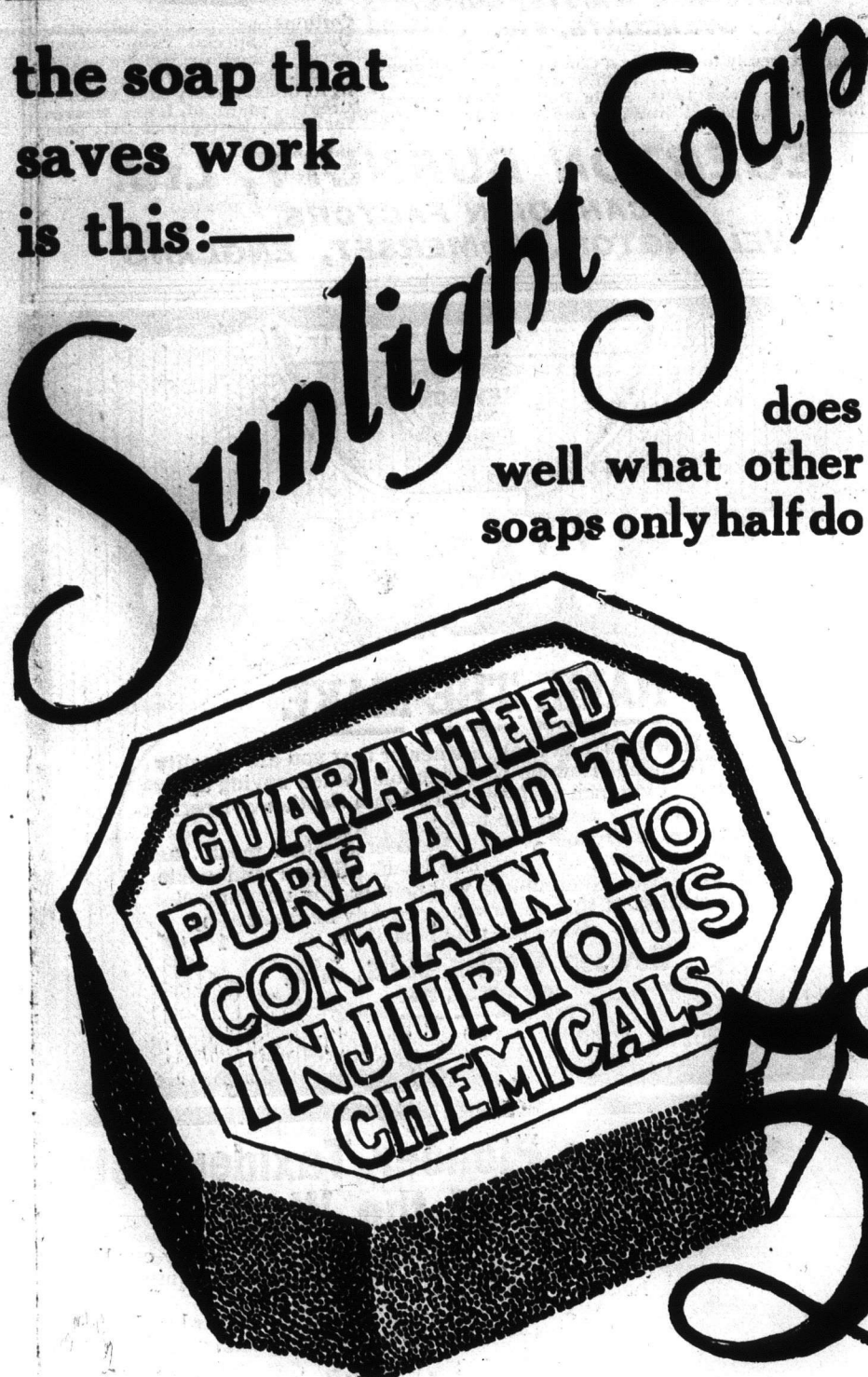
The next course in Home Economics opens on Oct. 24th and continues until March 28th.

A Scholarly Pauper.

A few months ago the head-master of one of the largest schools in London asked me about a case in which he was greatly interested. A certain boy had been brought up in his school. This boy had been the head boy, and the most brilliant scholar of his time. He had carried off every prize and distinction within his reach. On leaving school he readily obtained a situation, having a good position and a large stipend. All went well until he fell a prey to strong drink. Soon his prospects became utterly wrecked. He had to give up his position and go home, wrecked in reputation, fortune and in health. He went home to his father, a clergyman in the country, who was so affected by his son's wreck that he utterly broke down, and I have heard since, died broken-hearted. And this young fellow, the brilliant boy of a large school in London, is now, I was going to say, a beggar on the streets of London, begging from his old school-mates, but it is worse than that; he is now—when he ought to be in the prime of his vigour and manhood—a pauper in St. Pancras Workhouse, and was brought before the magistrate by the guardians, who considered that he ought to be able to earn his own living. Surely it is the wisest and safest course to educate our children early in habits of self-control.—Rev. N. Dawes.

Mr. Herbert Spencer once drew a very neat distinction between billiards as an amusement and as an occupation. Dropping in at his club, he met a young friend, who invited him to play a game. The philosopher led off and left the balls in a good position for his opponent, who dexterously ran out, not allowing his companion another shot. Then the young expert naturally looked at Mr. Spencer for the customary compliment. "Sir," remarked the vanquished player, "a certain proficiency in such a sport as this is a sign of a good education of the eye, the nerve, the hand; but the mastership of billiards which you have exhibited could have been acquired only by an ill-spent youth!"

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