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EDITORIAL.

Household or Home?

A pretty delicate but most important subject is touched this week by our old friend Sandy Fraser, regarding whose silence these months past some concern has been felt not only by the editors, but by many readers as well. While our correspondent has illustrated his text with some exceptional examples, his strictures have an undeniable basis of fact. We yield to none in admiration of country life as it may be, and in some cases is, but it must be admitted that the comparative isolation of farm life, the lack of social and educational privileges experienced by many; the economy necessary, or at any rate practiced in many rural households, and the exacting nature of farm work, have tended to produce and perpetuate among some of us a degree of uncouthness and reserve which bears with crushing force upon the finer instincts of the gentler sex. We do not say that such conditions are inseparable from farm life, for they are not; nor would we imply that they obtain generally, in all their iron-clad rigor, but there are instances where they do, and traces of them can be seen in a good many rural homes. Conditions are improving, but there is yet room.

It has been said, with some considerable degree of truth, that the way to keep the boys on the farm is to keep the girls there; but if the lasses of to-day are to be wedded to the land, they must have a more alluring prospect spread before them than some of their mothers have had. The picture of love in a cottage is all very well, but if the cottage becomes a white-slave domicile, animated only by a grim determination to make money, the picture takes on another aspect.

The twentieth century is emphasizing the gospel of leisure—leisure not only for rest, but for culture, intercourse, and pleasure. Like most other developments, this idea has reached the city before the country, but gradually it is permeating the rural districts. The modern farmer buys an increasing variety of implements to expedite and also to lighten his labor. Man-like, we think first of ourselves, of the additional dollars we can make, and the easier time we can have. Does not the wife deserve first consideration? Abstractly, we concede that she does. In reality, do we act as though she did? Too often not. We are inclined to think that if she has a washing machine and a new churn, and doesn't have to milk, she should count herself pretty well off. It would do some of us good to take a look into a modern city home, with its bathroom, sewage arrangements, soft and hard water, both hot and cold, in the house; laundry-room, cooking pantry, rugs on the floors, and other appointments designed to make housework easier and life more livable.

But I cannot afford these things, you say. Perhaps not in all instances, but many of us could, while substantial improvements could be added in the majority of cases. Indeed, some country homes are already equipped with nearly every convenience found in a city residence.

And if you cannot provide your wife with all the facilities you would like, you can give her one thing she will appreciate vastly above all these. Give her your sympathy. Evince a practical interest in her work and her special concerns. Crops and stock are not the only things worth while. The children are at least as important as the cattle, and the kitchen rather more essential than the stable. One of the pathetic features of hu-

man existence, not only on the farm, but in the city as well, is the spectacle of a man and wife, trudging along side by side, yet treading in different paths, separated by a barrier of reserve. As a rule, we believe the responsibility for such a situation rests largely with the husband, and upon him it devolves to make first advances. It is awkward enough at first, but Sandy gives us a neat touch when he says it will not hurt one after the first two or three times.

Open out to your wife, get outside yourself occasionally, and try to converse habitually on the subjects in which she is interested. A touch of sentiment will make the family kin. Brick, mortar, lumber, trees, flowers and spacious grounds do not make a home. It is the family life, the love, affection and considerateness that are within. These virtues exist, of course, in the majority of families, but we would like to see them take on a little more practical form. Family affection is not a sordid thing, but love that is never manifested in a tangible expression is of doubtful quality, and shrivels with passing years. It is the speaking of thoughts to each other, and the doing of things one for another that rekindles the flame of passion or the warm glow of affection, and the doing of a few little acts of thoughtfulness, the lightening of a burden of labor, and the speaking of a few words of kindness, would transform many a household into a home.

Provincial Police System.

The need for a change in Ontario's rural constabulary, as suggested in "The Farmer's Advocate," is steadily gaining approval. The delegates to the recent convention of the Fairs and Exhibitions Associations left no doubt as to their desire for a more efficient system for the protection of the rural population. Representing, as they do, the intelligence of agriculturists in all parts of the Province, the enthusiastically unanimous resolution, advising that a rural mounted police force be adopted, or that the present system be so changed as to insure better protection, should bear weight.

Following the action of this representative body, come comments from the press in different parts of the Province, pointing out the necessity of a more efficient constabulary. In the Mail and Empire, a letter from Lieut.-Col. Graveley presents memoranda for the organization and operation of a police-force system for Ontario, whereby qualified men would be enlisted or employed as policemen or constables on a semi-militia basis, to enable each city, town and rural municipality to be supplied with the number required for the maintenance of law and order. The Province would be divided into districts for organization purposes, the chiefs of these districts forming the executive and advisory board for the whole, under the direction and control of the Attorney-General, as supreme head, or such other officer as he may appoint. The following districts are suggested: London, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston and Ottawa. Other officers and men would be responsible to and governed by their respective district heads. By way of payment, the proposed plan is to have the force paid, clothed and maintained directly by the Province, and that, indirectly, the Province should be recouped by a special assessment on each municipality to cover the expenses of the number of constables required in that municipality.

Regarding the efficiency of operation of such force, Lieut.-Col. Graveley says: "A crime is committed in any one municipality where a Pro-

vincial policeman is stationed; he at once notifies the head of his district, with full particulars, description, etc., of the culprit; these are at once communicated to every station in the Province; the whole force then being on the alert, the chances of escape are reduced to a minimum, and the law is vindicated. It is well known that numberless criminals have gone free and unpunished for want of such a system as I suggest."

In the main, the suggestions are along the line of the idea outlined in our columns recently. Gradually, the feeling is growing that the present system is obsolete and inadequate for the protection of those in rural sections against criminals of divers kinds. All that is necessary is to convince the Legislature that a change must be made. This should not be difficult.

Profit from Poultry.

Many farmers are inclined to look on poultry-keeping as a small business, worthy the attention only of women and children. It has been customary to refute this impression by citing statistical aggregates, and by reference to scientific or experimental data. But such answers, while quite in order, are liable not to carry strong conviction home to the doubting mind. The actual accounts of farmers keeping poultry under everyday conditions are decidedly more stimulating, and certainly more instructive, when details of management are conjoined with the financial statement.

It may, perhaps, be just as well for a farmer not to become wholly absorbed in his poultry-yard. Better to specialize on cattle or sheep. On the other hand, a fair-sized poultry flock, say 50 to 100 birds, or perhaps 200, well attended, will help to develop in the owner a beneficial capacity for detail, and will be liable to lead to increased care of the other farm stock. In short, while poultry should not, as a rule, become the specialty, it makes a first-class side-line, which should receive attention on almost every farm.

That there is good profit in poultry, is attested by the experience of many keepers, published in "The Farmer's Advocate" this winter. Of course, it is the successes, rather than the failures, that are recorded, but we rise to observe that if the farm flock received the care it deserves, the failures would not be so serious or numerous. So many flocks are kept in filthy quarters, ill-fed, unexercised, neglected, and allowed to become badly infested with lice or disease, and then the owner writes telling us his hens are dying, and wondering what is wrong. The trouble generally lies in the management.

A dollar profit a year per hen, used to be the slogan. Nowadays, with eggs ranging from 15 or 18 cents to 40 or 50 cents a dozen, and market poultry also high in price, it is possible to better this considerably. It is comparatively easy to secure 120 eggs per hen, worth in the neighborhood of \$2.50. The expense for feeding a farm flock should not exceed \$1.25 per hen, which would leave \$1.25 for work, housing and profit, throwing in the manure. Taking these facts into consideration, it is not difficult to establish the hen as our most economical converter of cereals and by-products into wholesome human food.

Few farmers but would be surprised at the showing of their poultry were they to give it a fair chance, put the flock on a business basis, and keep strict accounts. Quite a number of our readers are doing this. Why not you?