



Prize Beaver Drawing.

The Beaver Circle.

Dear Beavers.—Out of nearly two hundred compositions on "The Beaver," that of H. M. Colbeck has been chosen as most worthy of the first prize. Others were, perhaps, as good—or better in some respects—but they were not as original, because they followed too closely the text of the books from which information was obtained. For instance, nearly one hundred reproduced almost word for word, that "lesson" about the beaver in the Third Reader. Of course, we are not really blaming you for this; the fault was pretty much ours in giving you a subject dealt with in one of your readers. It stands to reason that you should have every word of that old lesson at your tongue's end, and that, therefore, sentence after sentence would come to your pen's end in spite of you. However, we just gave you that subject because it touched upon our new department heading; in future we shall be more careful.

We must tell you, too, that several of you forgot to tell your age, so that we did not know where to place you. . . . Several others, again, wrote on both sides of the paper. This makes it very awkward for the printers, so please do not make such a mistake the next time.

Do you know, we felt ever so sorry about having to discard so many letters, especially as all were so neatly written—in fact the tidiest and best set of letters that has come in yet. But then everyone could not get prizes, and there is one consolation for those who did not—that they have "lots" of company.

The Drawing Competition.—About fifty drawings were received, the prize going to Albert Berry. The next best were drawn by Roberta Hayes and Luella Killough; then came beavers of all grades, shapes and sizes, from one resembling a great big black bear down to one like the one (we suppose) which wasn't sent at all, because, as the little girl said, it "looked more like a pig than a beaver." Upon the whole, however, our drawing competition was a great success, so we will have another before long.

THE PRIZE LIST AND ESSAYS.

Composition—H. M. Colbeck, Colbeck, Ont.

Drawing Competition—Albert Berry, Berryland, Ont.

Prize for the Younger "Beavers"—Myra Harding, Thorndale.

Honor Roll—Lucy Routledge, Phyllis Warner, Elizabeth Wilson, Norma Gilbert, Glen Holterman, "Blue Eyes," Myrtle Thomson, Arthur Milne, Stuart Tuckey, Jennie Malcolm, Gladys Kells, Mary Elliott, Mary Andrews, Eva Scott, Lavina Erb, Harold Rose, Hester Fisher, Ethel Alves, Katherine Finlayson, Muriel Perkins, Ruby Laughlin, Minnie Scouler, Annie Armitt, Eldon Hunsberger, Leo Holland, Mary Armitt, Cora Stenabaugh, Willie Hemstreet, Edna Sutton, Hilda Baldwin, Gertie Rankin, Charles Platt, Winnie Gavin, Ethel Harwood, Lorna Schmidt, Helen Teepell, Luella Killough, Lila Nicholson, Phoebe Hyland, Norman McKinney, James Robertson.

The Little Beavers—Leslie Ashton, Bertha Scott, Elsie Banting, Hannah Long, Mollie Hassard, Edna Lawrence, Margaret Dawson, Roberta Hayes, Isabel Smith, Grace Williamson, Annie Silver-smith, Merle Arrand, Isabelle Thompson, Carl Simpson, Alvaretta Killough.

Prize Composition.

North America is the principal country where the beaver is found, but it is also common on the Euphrates, and along some of the larger European rivers, as the Rhone and Danube. The houses of the beaver are built of mud, stones and sticks. They are placed in a stream, and their entrances are always below the surface. As a severe frost would freeze

up their homes, they are obliged to make the ice deep enough to prevent the frost from reaching the entrance. This object is attained by building a dam across the river to prevent the water until it is so deep that the beaver's purposes. The dam is made of branches which the beaver cuts down with its strong, sharp teeth, and mud and stones worked in among the branches. The beavers throw these branches into the water, and sink them to the bottom by means of stones, and by continually throwing in fresh supplies a strong embankment is soon made. As many beavers live together in one society, the formation of a dam does not take very long. By their united efforts they rapidly fell even larger trees, by gnawing them around the trunk, and they always take care to make them fall towards the water, so that they can transport the logs easily. The mud and stones used in their embankments are not carried on their tails, as some say, nor do the beavers use their tails as trowels for laying on the mud, the fact being that the stones and mud are carried between their chin and fore paws. The mistake respecting the tail is evidently caused by the slap that beavers give with that member when they dive. In order that their pond may not be too deep they always leave an opening in the dam to let the water escape when it rises above a certain height.

During the severe winter their mud-built houses freeze quite hard and prevent the wolverine, their greatest enemy, except man, from breaking through and devouring the inmates. Every year the beavers lay a fresh coating of mud upon their house, so that after the lapse of a few years the walls of the house are several feet in thickness. Many of the houses are built close together, but no two families can communicate with each other, except by diving below the walls and rising inside their neighbors' houses.

When in captivity the beaver soon becomes tame, and will industriously build dams across the corner of a room with brushes, boots fire-irons, books, or anything it can find. When its edifice is finished, it sits in the center apparently satisfied that it has made a beautiful structure to dam up the river—a proof that the ingenuity of the beaver is not caused by reason, but by instinct.

The fur of the beaver, like that of many other animals, consists of a fine wool, intermixed with long and stiff hairs. The hairs are useless, but the peculiar construction of the fur causes it to penetrate and fix itself into the felt, which forms the body of a hat. In making the hat, the only method required to fasten the fur into the felt is to knead the fur and felt together. The hair is toothed on its surfaces, and makes its way into the felt, just as an awn of barley will travel all over the body if placed up the sleeve. The length of the beaver is about three feet and a half.

H. M. COLBECK.

Colbeck P. O., Ont.

Selections from the Compositions.

"The beaver is valuable for its fur, and for a peculiar substance called 'castoreum' which it yields. . . . The incisors, or cutting teeth of the beaver, are very strong. The front of the tooth is of hard, orange-colored enamel. The back of the tooth is formed of a softer substance, which wears down very easily. The teeth of the beaver are continually growing."

E. WILSON.

"Trappers say . . . that when swimming, beavers use their tail as a rudder, or oar, it being turned under the body at a right angle, and swung rapidly from side to side."—Lucy Routledge.

"Right here I shall quote Longfellow on the beaver, in 'Hiawatha':

"But he reappeared triumphant.
And upon his shining shoulders
Brought the beaver, dead and dripping,
Brought the king of all the beavers."

Perhaps many of our Circleites have not had the privilege of seeing their work. On our farm we have what is called the Beaver Meadow, while some fifty feet further, on my uncle's farm, are their dams, built on each side of what used to be a small island, called Duck Island, extending to the high ground on either side, the one dam being seventy-five feet in length and the other one hundred and fifty."

PHYLLIS WARNER.

"The beaver is the best emblem Canada could have. This poem shows us how we should try to be industrious like the beaver:

"So honor be to the beaver's name,
And praise to the beaver's skill,
And in the labors that make far fame
May we all be beavers still!"

GLADYS KELLS.

The Next Competition.

Our next competition will be on "How I Spent Christmas Day." Please send your letters in time to have them reach this office on or before January 20th. Address, "The Beaver Circle," "The Farmer's Advocate," London, Ont.

Beaver Club Notes.

Leila Cass, L'Orignal, Ont., and Phoebe Hyland, Kars, Ont., would like some of the members to correspond with them.

The Ingle Nook.

Women's Institute Convention at Guelph.

(Continued.)

Mr. C. C. James is a much esteemed speaker at Women's Institute Conventions. The spirit of his address this year, "Problems of the People," was that we are paying too much attention to the material things of life, to the sacrifice of higher things. "How can we help the farmer to make more money?" we have been asking, and we have often forgotten the things that tend to the truest development. There are at present \$600,000,000 in the Banks of Canada, but there are 6,000,000 people. We have been thinking chiefly of the things that go to maintain that \$600,000,000. We have been making grand problems of the questions of transportation, immigration, the development of cheap power, of Government, of Imperialism. These are important problems, but they concern more particularly the men—what are the problems for the women?

Forty years ago people were startled by the founding of a women's club in New York. Women's organizations are no longer a novelty, and with them has come the question, "Shall Women Vote?" . . . If the questions enumerated above—of transportation, immigration, etc.—are to be settled by women, then women should vote. But should women be concerned more with the \$600,000,000, or with the 6,000,000 people? Are not problems connected with humankind of more importance than questions of money, and are there not many interests of this kind with which women may well concern themselves? . . . Among these are problems (1) of the home—the greatest, furthest-reaching of any problem that presents itself to any nation to-day. (2) Of the school—should not these be on the programmes of the Women's Institute? The school comes next to the home. (3) Of health—how to prevent deterioration of the national stock. . . . Mr. James here quoted excerpts from an address by President Roosevelt, calling attention to the fact that preventable death, preventable sickness, preventable low grades of mind, preventable ignorance, are among the most pressing questions of the day. During the last ten years \$46,000,000 had been spent by the Department of Agriculture of the United States in combating diseases of plants, etc.; not one cent had been spent for the prevention of pneumonia. Thousands upon thousands had been spent upon checking disease in elm trees, yet nothing had been done by the Federal Government towards saving human life, and yet the white plague is one of the greatest drains of the nation.

Mr. James closed his address by a strong appeal to the women to take up the subject of the health of the people, "our greatest national asset"; and urged upon them the value of an organized effort in preaching the doctrine and inculcating the principles of pure air, pure water, pure milk—the sanitation of homes, schools and churches.

ADDRESS BY MISS VAN RENSSSELAER.

Miss Van Rensselaer, of Cornell University, N. Y., attractive in personality, and practical in thought, was closely followed throughout her talk on "The Value of Farm Life." She took up first the question of woman as an important factor in the home and farm. Of necessity, women are the spenders of the money which the men earn, and one of the bright signs of the times is the educational movement which is sweeping over the land to teach them how to spend wisely. Women should understand how to handle raw material in the most scientific way; balanced rations for the family are quite as important as balanced rations for the cattle.

Farmers' wives must depend largely upon their own resources to meet all emergencies, hence they should be the most highly educated of women. Some spoke of the isolation of the country, but books and magazines, rural telephones, trolley-lines, etc., had largely done away with that possibility. Meetings like those of the Women's Institutes should be encouraged. They put women in touch with others and keep them up with the times.

The problems brought up by the Women's Institute, she thought, might be broader than anyone can tell. They involved scientific study. Women to-day are asking the "whys" of things. They want to know the scientific reasons, and as soon as they begin to know them, improvement in methods is very marked. "If you only knew what is back of such movements," she said, "you would not be discouraged over programmes."

THE SECOND DAY'S PROGRAMME.

During the first hour of Thursday morning (Dec. 10), a demonstration on "How to Conduct an Institute Meeting," by Miss S. Campbell, Brampton, led to some lively discussion. During the course of the demonstration a little lack of business methods on the part of some of the ladies was evident. Although an Institute may pull through without the regulation procedure of the ordinary business meeting, much is gained by adopting it, were it only the added expedition in disposing of business; and the ladies unfamiliar as yet with parliamentary procedure, or, at least, with as much of it as has been found advisable for public meetings, might do well to read carefully the handbook especially prepared by the Department for the conducting of Women's Institute meetings.

HOUSEHOLD CONVENIENCES.

A second address by Miss Van Rensselaer on "Household Conveniences," proved not less interesting than the first. The speaker believed in saving women's time and strength. This might be done, first, by simplifying. Superfluous ruffles might be dispensed with; less fussing might be made over guests with no diminution of hospitality; one cake might be made do instead of three, although women shall keep on making pies "as long as there are any men in the world."

Passing to household machinery, she observed that housekeeping is the most backward industry in the world. In other institutions there is no waste, either of time or material. The factory manager does not want to pay for labor that is not needed; machinery is employed and financial interests conserved. In the "house" a similar wisdom is not exercised. Woman's work is not counted among statistics, but it should be, unless the woman simply has "a steady job and her board and clothes." Woman IS an economic factor, and housework SHOULD BE regarded from a business standpoint. Time, and strength, and hired help, might all be saved by a little attention to household conveniences.

Among these she mentioned: (1) The small kitchen arranged to allow a minimum of steps; (2) The mangle, one kind of which needs no heating; (3) The use of farm power for running the laundry, etc.; (4) A drying-room to obviate the necessity of hanging clothes outside in cold weather; (5) The bread and cake mixer; (6) The potato parer; (7) Denatured alcohol as a fuel for heating irons in summer, or for specially constructed lamps which require no cleaning; (8) Co-operative laundries.

An interesting discussion in which the possibility of having a co-operative laundry in connection with the cheese-factories was brought up, followed Miss Van