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Frederick Winter's Home Coming

By HILDA RICHMOND.

"As far as getting off is concerned, I can go in the winter as well as in the summer," said Frederick Winter thoughtfully. "The firm is always glad when the office force splits up a little on vacations. It doesn't want too many vacations in August, for that is a busy time for us. If you and the children can go, I can manage."

"I've always wanted to see your boyhood home," said Mrs. Winter. "Of course, we must think of the expense, but your sister must have some special reason for asking us to come now."

"Poor Nellie!" said Frederick. "I suppose she has become a part of the old brown farmhouse by this time. How time does fly! She was a slip of a girl when I left and I've never seen her since. You know I was down sick with typhoid when her father died and did not get to the funeral. She must be twenty-six now, or thereabouts. I've never wanted to go back to the old place. It was nothing but chore, chore from morning till night, and as soon as I was old enough I ran away to town. All the boys worth while did the same thing. My stepfather was honest and just and he gave me my share when he saw that I wouldn't come back off the main road. Sometimes I think it would be a good thing for our children to see the old place so they could know how much easier they have it than I did."

Fourteen years before, young Frederick Winter had set out from his country home to try his fortunes in the city, leaving his aged stepfather and his half-sister in the tucked-up farmhouse under the elm trees. He did not know that his stepfather had to mortgage the farm to give Frederick his portion of the estate. His recollections of the old home were not pleasant, because he had always longed to get away from the loneliness and quiet of it all. Therefore, he had not kept in close touch with Nellie during the years that had whirled over his head since leaving the farm. He was working for a good firm and received a good salary, so he felt that the old farm had no attractions for him.

After some further discussion the invitation was accepted, and one bitter cold day just at twilight Frederick Winter found himself, with his wife and three children, standing in the familiar sitting room, drinking in every detail of the house that looked as if time had dealt very gently with it. There was a roaring fire in the bright shining stove. Beyond, in the kitchen, another shining stove held an array of pots and kettles that sent forth appetizing odors.

"Well, I'm glad to see you all!" said Nellie Barton, greeting them all round several times. "Come right out to supper. You must be getting hungry after your long trip."

Nellie was a tall, good-looking young woman, neatly dressed in a dark skirt and white shirtwaist. Her every movement spoke of capability and energy. After supper Mrs. Winter and Evelyn helped Nellie to do the dishes while Frederick and the two boys enjoyed the warmth of the sitting room stove while he told the boys of old times.

"Papa, I thought you said this was a horrid place to live," said Hugh Winter the next day. "I think it is the best place I ever saw. Auntie, let me help feed the chickens and put down hay for the horses, and I'd like to stay here always."

"So would I!" said George. "There's the dandiest coasting place you ever saw back of the barn."

"That's right, there is," said Frederick, suddenly alert. "You can coast nearly half a mile down the hill. Maybe I can find my old sled up in the barn. We boys used to hitch old Fan to the sled to draw it back up hill."

"Old Fan has been in her grave these ten years," said Nellie, "but you can take Dick."

"I think this is the nicest house I ever saw," said Evelyn. "Auntie let me rummage in the attic and I found the nicest old dresses. She said I could use them for an old-fashioned entertainment when I go home. I wish we could stay here always."

"You would soon get tired of it, daughter," said Frederick. "It's all right for a day or two, but very lonely after that."

"I'm going to help Nellie get her eggs ready for the market," said Mrs. Winter. "Just think, Frederick! Forty cents a dozen! She ships direct to the city customers."

"My check for the eggs last week was $10.90," said Nellie. "I think that is pretty fair for cold weather, but I have a warm poultry house."

"And she had almost as much for other produce," said Mrs. Winter. "She gets twenty cents a pound for country sausage and seventeen cents for lard. My! I wish I could go into the chicken business."

"Frederick, I'll not keep you in suspense as to why I wanted you to come to the farm now," said Nellie flushing slightly. "I am to be married this week and I wanted you and your family to have charge of things while I am away. I thought perhaps you might like to buy the old farm for a summer home. A week or ten days' visit will make you well acquainted with it in every way, and your wife and the children can decide whether they would like to be here in the summer."

"Married! To whom?" gasped Frederick, staring at his sister.

"I suppose you don't remember Billy Richards," said Nellie. "It's to be a very quiet home affair, and as you folks are my only relatives I wanted you with me."

"Freckled Billy Richards that we used to tease you about! I guess I haven't forgotten him. What is he doing now?"

"Farming," said Nellie, briefly. "He is on the home place."

(To be continued.)

WAGE WAR ON RATS.

This Very Destructive Animal Should be Exterminated.

Rats are traditional enemies of mankind. They are the chief carriers for cholera, plague and other epidemic diseases which have at various times in history, wiped out millions of human beings. Fortunately, man's knowledge of science, coupled with his superior cunning, has made it possible to control these scourges. But ceaseless vigilance on the part of the health officials at all ocean ports will always be necessary—at least until rats are exterminated.

Man has another heavy score against these pests. They destoy enormous quantities of agrilultural products. It was estimated, before the war, that rats destroyed $75,000,000 worth of such products annually in Great Britain alone. A recent estimate based on war-time prices, places the loss at $200,000,000. The latter figure is practically the same as the pre-war estimate of loss in the United States from the same cause. These animals possess remarkable fecundity, which, when coupled with their natural cunning, enables them to thrive and even increase in numbers in a great variety of environments. Every good citizen, particularly agriculturalists and grain and food dealers, should wage a ruthless war on these noxious pests.

BRITISH DOGS OF WAR.

Made Great Record on Battlefields of Europe.

England's dog army rendered gallant service in the war. Many a soldier owes his life to some poor, uncared for, stray dog. For nearly two years dogs were employed by the British as messengers, as sentries, and as guards.

Early in 1917 a war dog school of instruction was established by the British War Office, and Lieut.-Col. Richardson, who has devoted his life to training dogs for military and police purposes, was appointed commandant of the school. Gamekeepers, hunt servants and shepherds were called up from the army to assist in the work.

After a thorough training in England the dogs were sent to France, and on the battlefields their skill, courage and tenacity amazed the army. Often wounded in the performance of their duties, they never faltered while strength remained to carry on. The official record of their heroic work tells of successful message-carrying through darkness, mist, rain and shell fire over the most difficult ground. In a few minutes' time dogs have brought messages over ground that would take a soldier hours to cross.

For Muddy Boots.

The old broom has apparently outlived its usefulness, but saw off the handle eight inches from the broom, bore a hole in one of the back steps and insert the eight-inch stub; then trim the broom off square and you have an exceedingly satisfactory scraper for muddy boots and shoes.

July 1 is set for the date when it is hoped to have the Provincial stockyards at Prince Albert, Sask., in operation.

Milk-Fed Kiddies.

"Why don't you keep a cow?" asked Aunt Anne the morning after her arrival at her niece's house, as she heard the rattle of milk bottles—five of them—on the verandah.

"I would," gaily answered her niece, "if only we were back in the country, instead of temporarily housed on a fifty-foot city lot."

"But who in the world ever drinks it all?" persisted the aunt.

As if in answer to her question, into the room bounced the two roly-poly youngsters, Teddy, the four-year-old, and two-year-old Belle, bright and smiling and ready for breakfast.

"My, don't these children look well?" exclaimed Aunt Anne, greeting them with a hug and a kiss. "I don't see whom they take after, Ruth," turning to their mother. "Neither you nor their father has any health to boast of. What's your secret?"

"I want my milk," shouted Teddy. "Milk! Milk!" echoed Belle. Their mother smiled.

"That's the answer," she said. "It's no secret."

"But do you mean," asked the Aunt, "that they drink milk in any quantity? I should think they were old enough to eat solid food."

"Oh, of course they eat solid food, Aunt, but their diet is based chiefly on milk. Here, kiddies," placing their chairs at the table, "your breakfast is ready."

With a merry scramble, the children were in their chairs, and the next moment, two little noses were concealed in the cups of creamy milk. Not till every drop was drained did they turn to the waiting cereal, toast and fruit. Before they finished each had demanded and received another cup of milk.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Aunt Anne. "Why don't you give them part water instead? They'd drink it just as easily."

"Truth is, Aunt," her niece laughed, "water is refreshing, but it hasn't very much food value. They drink plenty of water between meals. At present, they are having breakfast."

"But how can you afford to let them drink so much with milk costing what it does here in the city?"

"Because I know how necessary it is for the children's well-being. I know that nothing so well provides all the necessary elements of growth for the young child as milk. Therefore, I make it their mainstay. The cost per quart is high, I know, but when breakfast and supper consist almost entirely of milk—I usually make cream soup, creamed toast or some other such dish not only for their supper but for our own—so few other foods are used that the cost is greatly reduced. Practically all cakes, crackers and cookies, which altogether too many children make a practice of filling up on, are excluded entirely. If a lunch is required between meals a slice of bread and a glass of milk suits them admirably, while milk desserts take the place of pie at dinner and a glass of milk reduces the quantity of meat consumed."

"But I fail to understand," continued Aunt Anne, "how you get them to take it so well. Most of the children I've seen detest milk after they are a year or so old, even children living on dairy farms."

"Yes, I know," replied her niece, "but it's the mother, not the children, who is to blame. Weaning time to most women means jumping from babyhood to manhood, skipping by childhood altogether, so far as diet is concerned. As soon as baby begins to take solid food, the mother decreases the milk supply. She lets him have tastes of all the victuals the grown-ups have, and his stomach gets too full for milk. Yet all he has eaten is not half so beneficial as a much smaller quantity, supplemented by a glass or so of milk.

"Of course, if a child really dislikes milk it may be necessary to do a little coaxing, but a little ingenuity and patience will usually have the desired effect. Let the mother make cocoa or cereal coffee entirely of milk, using only sufficient boiling water to dissolve the powder, and offer it to the child in winter. In summer, a bit of sugar or syrup with a few drops of flavoring, added to the milk and the concoction termed 'liquid ice cream' may go down when milk alone wouldn't.

"One mother I knew used to paste a pretty picture on the bottom of a tumbler, then fill the glass with milk. Her little girl gladly drank the milk in order to see the new picture. Another mother induced her children to drink milk by using pretty, odd-shaped tumblers and cups, while still another kept on hand a supply of small hard candies, one of which she dropped into each glass. You can readily believe the children never refuse to drink the milk when the last swallow meant a piece of candy.

"After all, it rests with the mother entirely whether or not the children drink milk and grow strong, rosy and healthy," with a look of pride toward pink-cheeked Teddy and Belle. "If she understands how vitally important milk is to her children's health, and realizes that a dollar spent on milk for them could be invested in no better way, she will teach them to drink milk and they'll never acquire a distaste for it and think it just for babies.

"You are right about our children not having especially healthy parents to take after, but we are bringing them up right, and, Aunt Anne, do you know any healthier children than these?"

"Indeed I don't. I always said how lucky you were to have such healthy children. Now I know it wasn't luck, but good care and milk."

Banish the Fly.

The approach of warm weather brings with it the discomfort of fly-time. During the season this household pest thrives and multiplies by the millions, and quickly. The housewife must wage a definite war against the fly if she wishes to banish this death-dealing, disease-breeding parasite from her premises.

The fly not only carries poison, but also typhoid, infantile paralysis and many kindred disease germs. Food that is exposed in warm weather offers a very desirable breeding place for this dangerous pest.

Clean up the premises and yards and see that all garbage cans are disinfected and kept covered. Do not allow any piles of rubbish or waste to accumulate. Do not take a chance on leaving the windows and doors open in warm, sunny weather, without placing in the screens. See that all windows and doors are securely screened. Cover all foods that are exposed with wire or mosquito netting; these screens can be made by removing the ends of a box and then proceeding to cover it with wire or netting.

Do not permit milk vessels or cooking utensils to stand around; rinse them with cold water and then cleanse them with hot water very thoroughly. If there are small children, watch them carefully when they are eating, so that no food is left by them to attract flies. The baby should be kept carefully screened with netting to prevent flies from coming near him during the early spring and summer.

First and last of all, swat the fly. Swat him early and late. It is possible with very little trouble to keep the house absolutely free from this menacing pest.

First—Keep the house screened.

Second—Kill each and every fly in the house.

Third—Do not allow food to stand in an exposed condition.

Fourth—Keep the garbage pail well covered.

Fifth—Disinfect the garbage can twice a week.

Sixth—Do not allow rubbish to accumulate.

Seventh—Repair all breaks in screens and doors as soon as they appear.

Eighth—See that the screen door has a good catch for a quick closing.

Ninth—Fresh air, sunlight and clean premises prevent disease.

Household Hints.

Children require a special diet up to ten years of age.

Hot drinks are better than cold for old people.

Delectable dumplings are made with dried fruits.

Clean lard will remove wagon grease, stove and shoe polish.

In hanging clothes see that they are pulled straight on the line.

A dustless mop can be made from the fringe of an old bedspread.

Instead of grating cheese for some dishes that are to be baked, slice it thin and save time.

Two heaping teaspoons of boiled rice contain as much nourishment as two and one-half boiled eggs.

Egg stains may be removed from spoons by common salt.

It saves time and fuel to cook a whole pumpkin at once.

Creamed potatoes with cheese make a pleasant change.

A flannel bag filled with hot sand is a good substitute for a hot water bag.

A bread sponge made with yeast is light enough to use when it is full of bubbles.

Molasses cannot be used in metal utensils, as it acquires a tiny taste.

Never use butter to fry fish; it burns before the fish can have time to cook.

Instead of dicing the vegetables, cut them in as long and thin strips as possible.

A wire brush with some gritty cleanser cleans the roasting pan in two minutes.

Save an old white kid or chamois glove if your corset steels and bones have a habit of wearing through. A mend with a bit of this will last a long time.

When the little girls' dresses of embroidered flouncing are too short, lengthen them without taking off the band, in this way: Stitch to the under side of the scallops a double fold of lawn or batiste about three inches wide. This gives the appearance of a hem.

The "notions" counter in most shops has readymade button holes to offer. They are sold in strips, and are great time and labor savers. But for pick-up work there is nothing like having a strip of button holes of your own making on hand.

NEW WONDERS EXPECTED

Marvellous Inventions Inspired by War May be Surpassed in Peace.

Subjects of increasing interest are telephoning without wires and flight by airship across the ocean. Both ideas are in such a hopeful way that they may be said to be virtually assured and likely to be soon put in operation. These matters are better worth thinking about and spending money on than is poison gas or cannon with a range of eighty miles, though guns of that calibre promote antimilitarism by rendering useless a girdle of fortifications around a city.

In the recent war Paris was saved twice by battles on the Marne, which was quite as near as hostile batteries could be allowed to approach. In proportion as the spirit of militarism is banished from the world the constructive forces of peace get to work. Their possibilities were never more interesting.

It is hard to say how rapid the march of important inventions will be when nations agree to go forward amicably instead of with deadly cross purposes. Carrying on a conversation audibly between distant points anywhere on the globe is an almost startling conception. But it seems near at hand, and so does air flight over indefinite spaces at a speed of 300 miles or over an hour.

How about telephotography, or the visualizing of distant objects with the aid of the electric current? It has been waiting for development since 1881, when it was first brought to notice. Experimental results were favorable, but the invention has not been pushed as have the telephone, airplane and wireless telegraphy, all of which are in practical use and have been advanced by the expenditure of billions.

Telepathy, or the supersensory transfer of thought and feeling, is more recondite and nebulous. But with peace, new wonders will doubtless unfold.

"A time comes in most men's lives when the bell rings for prayer, and unhappy are they who, when it does, have nowhere to carry their heart's supplication."—A. Birrell.

Cane-seated chairs that have sagged can be tightened by washing them in hot water and soap and rinsing them in clear water. Dry in the open air.

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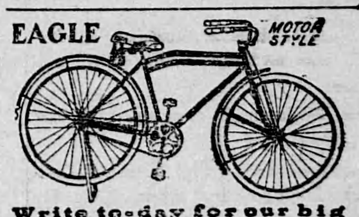

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