

### At Home Come in & Chat Awhile —Ruth Raeburn.

Dear Ruth Raeburn:  
I would be greatly pleased to have you continue the review of books throughout the year. I have procured a number of those mentioned on the "At Home" page and hope to get more of them.  
The past year has been a very happy one for me and I hope this new year will be a pleasant year for you and all the readers.

Dear Prudence:  
I thank you for your good wishes and will do my best to give you an account of books worth reading and owning.

I hope, too, that some of the readers of this corner will be kind enough to send in an account of some of the good books they have read. There is such a vast variety of books that it is impossible for one person to touch only a few of the many.

This time I will give a synopsis of a very interesting and instructive story of life in the northern part of our great Dominion.

#### "Hunters of the Great North" by Vilhjalmur Stefansson

The last two years Stefansson was in Harvard University he used all his spare time reading books about Africa and expected to become a field investigator of anthropology in tropical Africa.

One day at the dining table the discussion was on the accounts then in the press about a new polar expedition being organized by an American, Leffingwell and a Dane, Mikkelson. Because Stefansson had written and published the year before an essay on how Norsemen discovered Greenland about 900 years before, and how they were the first Europeans who ever saw Eskimos, they thought he would be interested but he said he had no keen personal interest. A day or two later he received a telegram from Leffingwell asking him to come to Chicago at his expense to have a talk about his polar expedition to study the Eskimos in Victoria Island, who had never seen a white man. Excitement ran high. He talked with Leffingwell, he agreed to join his expedition, not at Victoria, B. C. where the ship was being outfitted and where all the rest of the staff were to gather, but at the mouth of the MacKenzie river. The expedition was to sail north up the Pacific, through the Behring straits and then to follow the north coast of Alaska eastward to the whaling station at Herschel Island.

In April, 1906 he started on his journey across the Canada and down the MacKenzie river. From Winnipeg he was under the care of the Hudson's Bay Company arriving at Herschel Island in August.  
The expedition did not arrive that winter, only getting as far as Flaxman Island on account of ice. Stefansson spent the winter living as an Eskimo among the Eskimos. His varied experiences make a most pleasant story, and his many descriptions of the way our neighbors, the Eskimos, live is information too few Canadians possess.  
The ship belonging to the expedition sprung a leak and had to be abandoned. Thus the expedition was over for that year.

Vilhjalmur Stefansson was born in Manitoba in 1879. When two years of age the family crossed the frontier into the United States and he grew up on a Dakota farm. His experiences on the prairie during the rigorous winters were a good training for the winters he spent in the Arctic zone.

The stories he has told of learning to live on a diet of fish without salt, learning to dress to suit the climate, learning how to build a snowhouse and to be comfortable in one, only gives the reader the desire to read more of his books. "My Life with the Eskimos" and "The Friendly Arctic".

If a group of people wish to read and study a book together, I feel sure they would find any of Vilhjalmur Stefansson's works of absorbing interest.

And now, Prudence, accept my good wishes for another happy year. We will both look forward to hearing from some of the readers giving us a glimpse of what they like to read.

RUTH RAEURN.

#### WHY CLOTHES FAIL IN THE TUB

Clothes sent to the laundry are often lost to the sender even though the article may not have literally gone astray. Experiments show that it is not always her fault or the fault of the laundry. The cause sometimes lies with defective materials which should have been tested before made into the various garments and household items.

Recently a test of 336 articles of clothing which were spoiled in the wash was made, and it was found that more than half were composed of materials containing dyes that were not fast. Another large percentage of the failures was due to improper weighting and an over-stretching of the fibre on the loom in its original manufacture sufficient to make the garments unwearable after their first experience at the laundry.

Of these unsatisfactory garments, the ninety-two remaining cases were due to poor laundry methods. One of the causes of failure in this case was the insufficient use of soapsuds, resulting in black flecks on 8 per cent of the clothing washed. Incorrect use of the hot iron or the sun caused scorching and fading. Other bad results were due to the felting or matting of woollen fabrics caused by rubbing, twisting or the excessive heat of either the water or the flat iron. All of these errors in laundering should be avoided for the best results in the soiled woollen garment. Wool is also inclined to stretch, especially when washing, and two of the articles tested were so badly stretched that they were in no condition to be worn.

The lesson to the housewife is obvious. Before you buy material for a washable item, test a sample to make sure it is satisfactory. In buying ready-to-wear clothing, of course, your problem is more difficult.

You have only the word of the retailer as to the washability of your clothing, but if you buy from reliable dealers there is no reason why you cannot get the genuine product or your money's worth at least.

There is a possibility that your own methods of laundering need to be improved. So many ways of washing are approved ways that every woman must work out her own problem according to her equipment, her circumstances and her individual needs. With modern machinery, labor saving methods and the careful and intelligent use of cleansing agents, washing should be a comparatively easy matter. But even if you haven't the advantage

### STRANGE ANIMAL INSTINCTS

Henry Chas. Suter, Ph. D.

It is recorded that an hour before the Thames flood in London, recently, mice were to be seen running up a curtain on the ground floor of a house in Westminster. Some have attempted to explain this by saying that water was already penetrating the mouse-holes in the basement, but that is not likely, for it will be remembered that the flood came with one rush when the embankment wall gave way.

There are other cases of premonition, as it is called, on the part of animals, which cannot be explained away, but must be credited to these creatures as a strange and a singular instinct. One day in August, 1922, an army of squirrels, numbering several hundreds, was seen travelling through the trees in the Fox Hills near Aldershot. They crossed a road and took up their quarters in a wood half a mile beyond. Two days later a fire broke out a mile away from the wood which the squirrels had vacated and reaching that wood it burned it out completely, but stopped on reaching the road which the squirrels so short a time previously had crossed.

In November, 1922, an appalling earth quake shook Chile. At Copiapo half the town was totally destroyed. Hundreds were killed, and 35,000 people left homeless. Eighteen hours before this disaster cats at Copiapo became strangely uneasy. They wandered about, mewing pitifully, many of them ran out of their homes while some were seen to go up the hill above the town. Undoubtedly they had some instinctive warning of what was going to happen.

There are sounds that are so faint that no human ear can detect them, but which run into the waters of an aquarium, will stun and kill small fish. An earth-worm can hear well below the soil the tread of a thrush above, and so keep out of harm's way. A human being may see a slug in a pansy bed, but other insects and animals can hear it munching away as it makes its meal.

Birds, of course, have a certain amount of foreknowledge of weather conditions and will migrate in advance of cold water. Swallows have another peculiar quality, for it has often been noticed that they will abandon any place where plague has broken out and will not nest there. Not a swallow will be seen until the epidemic has passed.

Cattle that graze on the moors always go up hill before rain, and fish (trout, especially) will cease feeding some hours before the rain comes on.

But the strangest of living weather prophets are certain small yellow ants, common in Florida, which build their nests in the sandy soil. Twenty-four hours, at least, before a rain, these creatures become busy, carrying their grubs up from their underground tunnels into the upper stories of their mounds. How these eyeless insects are aware of the coming change is beyond man's understanding, but their instinct is certain, and it is an instinct that never fails them.

There is many a quiver in the air that means nothing to human beings, but has a message for the insect or the bird. Since the beginning of time electrons have rushed through the ether at the speed of 186,000 miles a second, but we never knew of their existence until a few years ago, when "wireless" revealed it. What remains in a world unknown to human senses may readily respond to the acute sense of animal instinct.

of mechanical aids, the intelligent use of soap and hot water will do much to lighten the burden of your work.

#### THE GRADING OF SEEDS

For the past five years the trade in farm and garden seeds has been regulated and carried on according to the regulation of the Federal Seeds Act, which has provided for the proper grading of all classes of seed sold to the growers. Changing conditions, more particularly in the production of cereal grains, has made it necessary that the Act be amended in certain particulars in order to conform more nearly with present day requirements. The Act with the changes has been issued as Acts, Orders and Regulations No. 24 of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa.

The development of the production of seed classes as "Registered" has led to the providing of extra grades. In the original act this class of seed was covered in two grades only, namely, "Registered" and "Extra No. 1". These have been changed to "Registered No. 1", "Registered No. 2" and "Registered No. 3", all of which are thoroughly reliable for seed purposes, but the two lower grades have been provided to take care of pure varieties of seed damaged in appearance by weather conditions without impairing the vitality. By this modification large quantities of perfectly good seed, that would otherwise have been lost to commerce, has been preserved.

Another change provides for the refusal of the Minister to issue a license for new varieties of cereals of inferior quality.

The Act, among other things, names the many varieties of the weeds that are regarded as noxious in the interpretation of the Act.

# New Things Are "News"

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