

The Greater Glory¹

By Maarten Maartens

Author of "God's Fool," "Joost Avelingh," "An Old Maid's Love," etc.
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CHAPTER VI.—Continued

As the Baroness's piety increased, she would have had all men share it—her particular form of piety, of course. And that is a difficult matter in a world whose good and evil are variously shadowed by each good man's individual eclectic light. Besides, Deynum was officially split up into two colors, Roman Catholic and Protestant. "Catholic and Beggar," the Baroness would have said. For the Romanists of Holland still daily insult their old antagonists with that most honorable byword of "Gueux."

The Baroness pitied all beggars, and would have fed them. But when they refused the communion of any other table than their own, her pity, turning under the thunder of papal anathemas, soured rapidly to wrath. And she made war upon them to drive them forth, as the Rexelaers, having themselves felt the weight of persecution, had never done before. She boycotted them, a very common thing in Holland, although rather an unfair one, because the Protestants, whether more tolerant or more indifferent, do not retaliate in this manner. And as the years went on she perfected her system of repression, cruel only to be kind. "In the choice between a son of the Church and an infidel, why choose an infidel?" she asked. The Baron could not deny that she was theoretically right. But he strove practically to minimize results. "Let us be faithful in little things, dearest," said the Baroness, "we who ask so great a thing of God."

And the hot breath of persecution opened up the blossoms in cold Calvinistic hearts, as is its mission, and there was a revival. There had never been a Protestant church at Deynum, the worshipers going to the neighboring parish of Rollingen, but now it became suddenly manifest that this state of affairs could not be allowed to continue. The difficulty was how to get it altered, for all the available land in the village belonged to the Baron. A movement was set on foot, but it proved unavailing, for, even had his wife not been there to instruct him, Reinout Rexelaer would hardly have consented to so startling an intrusion. "Let them worship as they have worshiped for ages," he declared. "If worship it be," added Gertrude. The dispute spread into the newspapers. And the powerful lord of the adjoining parish, Baron Borck, took it up. He was a man of easy indifference in matters of religion—the more modern name is "tolerance"—but some stories of *Mevrouw Rexelaer's* rigor had reached him, and his wife and daughters had petty grievances against their neighbors, and there had been a dispute about a ditch. Baron Borck was a Member of the States Deputed, which are a small governing body elected out of the States Provincial. He was a man of authority, and he used it in endeavor to get a Decree of Expropriation on the ground of general utility. But the Baroness fought him with dogged pertinacity. "Shall we bring down a curse upon us?" she repeated, incessantly. "We who have such especial need of a blessing?" She dragged up the chancel steps on her naked knees. She sent forth angry glances from her castle turret towards the impudent Protestant steeple of Rollingen. And she sent forth also from that same elevation, into the stormy night, her favorite snow-white carrier-pigeon, that he might lift up the story of her sufferings for the faith to the very bosom of the Queen of Heaven. But the pigeon was a nineteenth-century bird, and went back to his dovecot.

She conquered, whether by these means or others. She carried her cause up to the Privy Council, and there she conquered. Not a single member of that august assembly could see any connection between a church and a matter of general utility.

And then the gift, so strangely, so fearfully sweet to a hope deferred, came upon her as a reward. She accepted it, humbly before God, triumphantly before men. In those

days of calm expectancy, with the smile of Heaven upon her, she felt as Hebrew Hannah must have felt when the Lord took away his handmaid's reproach. She was more than forty years old. She had been married more than twenty. The child was born; and it was a girl.

When they told her, she said: "God's will be done." She said it aloud. And when they offered to bring her the babe, she answered: "Presently." Which shows what her heart said.

A little later its wailing cry broke in upon her faintness. She turned her head from the wall. "Is that the little one?" she asked. And they laid it upon her breast.

She went through the ceremony of her churching, and she regularly attended mass. But during six months she did not go to pray in the loneliness of the chapel, and throughout all that period its altar remained destitute of flowers. One morning she walked into the library and went straight up to the curtain which usually hung down over the book-shelves of the eighteenth-century Rexelaer who had explained away the lion-myth. She pushed it aside with resolute hand, and took down a volume—of Voltaire! She stood turning over the pages undecidedly for a few moments, then she shut it up with a shudder, and went away again. Her eyes were dry and hard.

She loved her baby girl; it was not against the child that her anger was kindled. The miraculous answer which need not have been, yet now was, and was not an answer, struck her in the face like a personal taunt. And she was as one in an open boat that drifts away from the friend he loves, beyond all loving, because that friend has cut the rope which held him moored.

"Reinout," she said one day, before her convalescence, while her life yet hung in danger, "give Baron Borck the bit of land he wants near the mill."

"Hush!" said her husband. "You musn't talk." He thought her mind was wandering.

"Somehow, I don't want you to sell it. Simply give it. Throw it in his face."

She lifted her eyes and looked at him. "You think I'm not—not conscious?" she murmured in surprise. "Reinout, I know I'm in danger. I may be dead to-morrow. Write, to-night, a scornful letter. Tell him it doesn't—matter—how—they—pray."

And he wrote, after some hesitation. It was her answer. A defiance to High Heaven, with Death at her chamber door.

Father Bulbius, who had bravely seconded her during the battle, opened his eyes wide with disappointment; and then he half closed them, as was his habit, and watched.

"My daughter," he said one day, after he had listened—in the confessional—to her recital of various peccadilloes, "you have difficulties of which you do not speak. The sun of your contentment does not shine as it did before."

"I am as you have always known me, Father," she answered. And he saw that that door was closed.

He waited another couple of months, and slept nine hours at night, and an hour after his noonday dinner. And of evenings, when not engaged with the Baron, he watched the Baroness's game of Patience, and he played his own little game of Patience too.

He won it on the day when the distressed Baron confided to him, as the greatest of secrets, that the Baroness had tried to read Voltaire. That evening the Father discoursed eloquently on the infidel writer, of whom he had never read a word, repeatedly regretting the speciousness of his arguments, which only your *deep* thinker, he said, could resist. In the lady's ignorance the name only stood out, a recollection of earliest eschewment, synonymous with Luther or the Devil. But her curiosity was aroused, and when she slipped into the library next morning, the volume containing "*La Pucelle*" came most easily to her hand. She turned from that in horror, successfully biased by a very few pages, and took down a controversial work. These, then, were the thoughts of an infidel. And as she read, carelessly at first, his attacks upon a faith which lay dead within her, that faith awoke in its grave and cried out. These things were false. Yonder accusation was absurd. Against this statement it could be argued— She

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rose from her reading with a flame in her pale eyes. She must reason about these matters with some one. Why, even a woman like herself could see the sophistry of the argument on page 105. She was rather proud of seeing it so clearly. She must tell Father Bulbius about it.

And she did. He showed her, intellectually, the evil ways of infidelity. Her woman's heart rose up against the foolish pride of feeble sense. And under ideal persecution she revived, as surely as the materially oppressed Protestants of Deynum.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts," said the poor lady. "When one learns to understand what a godless man's thoughts are like, it is not difficult to admit that God's thoughts must be better, even when not, or when mis-, understood." The old fervor did not return to her, but there were once more "White Baroness" roses on the chapel altar. Her almsgiving had never changed.

"Who knows what may still happen?" said the Baron, sturdily. "All things are possible with the Almighty," he said. And once, when she had turned upon him, in one of their most rare dissensions, and had burst out with "Not the ridiculous!" he waited until one evening in the chapel they paused before a window gorgeous with a crimson sacrifice of Isaac. "That also was a race," he said, softly, "which Heaven, in its providence, could not allow to die out."

But the Baroness van Rexelaer had nothing in common with Sarah. Not even a liking for the children of Abraham.

CHAPTER VII.

HEUREUX EN MARIAGE

"Should you not have moved your ten on to the knave?" inquired the Father, mildly. "That would have enabled you to get at your ace."

"Yes, but I wanted to free my seventh line," said the Baroness.

The Baroness's game is a very complicated one. It has the true merit of a game of Patience; like its homonym, it hardly ever succeeds.

"How well your little Carlsbad cards wear, Mevrouw!" said the Father, searching, in his restless loquacity, for a subject of conversation. "You have never, I believe, been to Carlsbad?"

"No, I have never been anywhere," replied the Baroness.

"Nor have I. But I knew a young clerical colleague who went there two years ago, for a melancholy he could far better have cured by a religious retreat at the college."

"Perhaps it was dyspepsia," suggested the Baroness. You see, she had read Voltaire.

"If so, he could have cured it by fasting. Besides, it was not the slightest use, his going to Carlsbad, for he died before he got there."

"Indeed!" said the Baroness, with that sudden interest which the final catastrophe always awakens. Then she added, mechanically, "How sad!"

"He died in a railway accident," continued the Father. "And the most provoking thing of all was that, when the doctors opened the body, they were unanimous in declaring that Carlsbad could never have cured him, after all."

"But that did not matter to him then," objected the Baroness.

"Perhaps not," replied Father Bulbius, doubtfully. "But somehow it has always seemed to me so like a case of suicide, without the ghost of a reason."

The Baroness looked at the clock. A couple of logs of wood lay smoldering and flickering on the open hearth. The soft glow of the fire and the softer lamplight played over the delicate lines of the lady's face and over her slender, blue-veined hands, as she sorted her game. There was a gentleness about the warm, quiet little drawing-room, with its subdued, old-fashioned colors, and a glamour of something almost like romance over the stately figure in gray satin with white lace collar and wristbands, white hair, and white cap. In spite of the gray apparel which time had led her to adopt, the Baroness was the white Baroness still.

There was nothing romantic, however, about Father Bulbius, who sat doubled up by the little green card-table, his broad forehead closely knotted over the puzzle of his colleague's *felo de se*.

"He will be coming back again soon," remarked the Baroness, thinking of her departed lord.

"Hardly that," replied the Father. "He was definitely dead."

"Not definitely, I fancy. I merely understood that the station-master expected him to die."

"Oh, but excuse me, my dear lady, I remember nothing of the station-master's opinion. Though there certainly was a station-master concerned, whom everybody considered to blame. As for me, I should prefer to censure the foolish ones who go hurrying through Europe to escape from themselves. I have one insuperable objection to medicines; they all make me unwell. Trust in God and put a cold-water compress where the pain is. That's my cure." The good priest liked the Baroness to leave him master of the field; the Baroness did not listen.

The Baron found them thus amiably consorted when he returned. His face was very grave.

"Dear me, if the man was dying, perhaps I ought to have gone to him!" cried the priest, with tardy compunction.

"He is dying," replied the Baron; "but he need not do so without your aid. It is a foreigner, taken with acute spasms in the train, who finds himself stranded here. Undoubtedly he is very ill."

"Where is he now?" queried the Baroness. "Is he better? Is he a gentleman? Or shall I send him some soup?"

"He is a gentleman. He is very old. The servant told me his name was M. Farjolle; he says he is a Frenchman. They are at the inn."

"At that place?" cried Mevrouw. "Mon cher, you should have asked him here."

"Mon amie, he steadfastly refused to come."

"Ah, pardon! Of course you would do what was right."

"I do not think he understood," said the Baron. "He offered a napoleon for the use of the carriage."

"For shame!" exclaimed the Baroness, who considered that no suffering could excuse such an error.

"I told him that he was mistaken, but that I should be glad to accept a florin for the coachman," said the Baron, coolly. "And then I left him in peace."

"Which means," cried his wife, quickly, "that you came back on the box. Oh, Reinout, how could you? At least say that the weather was fine."

"It might be worse," replied the Baron, and he walked away to fetch the newspaper, sitting down quietly, now, to its Home and Foreign News.

"Aha!" he said, suddenly, in the tone of a man who makes a discovery. "This explains Monsieur Rexelaer's move. 'Appointed to the post of Sub-Comptroller of the Royal Household, Count Hilarius Jan Reinout van Rexelaer.' At last."

"And what is that, Mynheer the Baron?" asked Bulbius, slowly hoisting himself off his chair.

"Oh, it's the man that looks after the larder and but-tery," interposed the Baroness, sharply.

"Well, he has edged himself into the enchanted circle," said the Baron, "and now he wants to cut a figure as a noble and a great landed proprietor."

"And a Rexelaer," added the Baroness.

In the thoughtful silence that followed, the priest took his leave. "Have you got an umbrella?" asked the Baron, following him out of the room.

"No. Why so? It isn't raining."

"Hush! Yes, it is. But it might be raining a good deal harder at this time of year, might it not?"

Mynheer van Rexelaer went back to his wife. She had risen and was standing by the mantelpiece.

"Sub-Comptroller of the Royal Household," she said, slowly, and with increasing bitterness—too scornful not to reveal a little touch of envy. "In all things for the last twenty years has Fortune favored this adventurer, balking, according to her custom, the better man."

He took one of her hands in his. "Not in all things," he said.

"How so?"

He pointed to the cards now lying in a little stream across the table. "*Heureux en mariage*," he said, "*malheureux au jeu*. Let the Count take his share. I have mine. No man, it appears, may claim both."

As he spoke, his look fell on the crumpled newspaper lying against his deserted chair. And his own words struck home to him. "*Malheureux au jeu*."

She pressed his hand, and they stood silent, side by side. Then he broke away, with an exclamation of impatience, to wind up the oil-lamp.

She came after him. "But he has not got Deynum yet," she said, "this Count." Oh, the contempt of the last word from her lips!

"No, he has not got Deynum yet."

"But, Reinout."

"What is it, Gertrude?"

"He has a son."

CHAPTER VIII.

A PRINCE OF THE BLOOD ROYAL

"She has looked them out in the '*Annuaire de la Noblesse*,'" thought the Baron. "Yet what could she care about these people? How inquisitive the best of women are!"

The Baroness had done more, while angry with herself for doing it. Writing to an acquaintance at the Hague, she had casually inquired after those other Rexelaers: "Do you know anything of our namesakes, the Count's family, I mean? There is a boy—is there not?—called Reinout." The unknown Reinout Rexelaer incessantly tormented her unwilling thoughts. Yet she turned to the answer with a sort of irritable pleasure.

"You ask after the Rexelaers," wrote the Hague lady. "Him one meets everywhere. Her I have never seen. I know his brother's family better; the wife there, you know, is one of our own set, a Borck, and I like her very much. Since the Count brought back his nigger spouse and her millions from Brazil, where he was secretary or something, he has worked day and night to recover the position they had lost through their impecuniosity, but the black woman is an obstacle. She locks herself up in a hothouse, people say, and cries for the sun. It is a great pity they should be Protestants—How was that, by the by?—still, now that you, my dear Gertrude, have only a daughter, it must be a source of real satisfaction to you to remember that this other branch is blessed with sons. The Rexelaer-Borcks have two, and there is one boy, one child, at the Count's. Yes, his name is Reinout, like your husband's. I suppose it is a family name?"

"The little that I know of the lad is rather interesting, I think. For some foolish reason, they keep him altogether apart; perhaps that is a Brazilian idea. He is educated, it appears, into a premature little man of the world, and put to bed in a court wig and ruffles. I don't know particulars. But he comes to a gymnastic class with my children, attended by the queerest, courtliest little Louis Quinze chevalier that you ever saw off a snuff-box lid. I met him there once, and he stood aside to let me pass, lifting his cap with the air of a young prince, enough to break the heart of a mother of hobbledehoys. He is a very handsome youth, dark-complexioned, with big, expressive eyes. Of course the other boys do not care for him. He had a violent quarrel with my own Louis, in which I cannot help thinking Louis was wrong. I have run on, but I fancy that is about all. How is Wendela?"

The Baroness slowly, slowly tore the letter up and placed the fragments on the blazing fire.

It was unavoidable that the boys with whom he was brought into such unsatisfactory contact should look askance at young Reinout. "Unbeknown is unbeloved," says a Dutch proverb. Schoolboyhood whispered derision of the little gentleman with kid gloves.

And when schoolboyhood whispers derision, its next step

is to shout it. His companions, as his father fondly called them, began to tease him at the various classes where they met. They would bow before him and address him as "Your Majesty," in never-tiring allusion to the ancestral King Hilarius, with whom Reinout himself had unwarily made them acquainted. All of them had plenty of ancestors of their own, but the King was a delightfully fresh source of amusement. And thence sprang the quarrel with the Louis mentioned above.

This Louis, one afternoon, had made a highly successful joke about Reinout and his dog, whom he nicknamed "the two princes." Carried away by his own wit, he aimed, just as the class was dispersing, a couple of blows with a fencing foil at the lad and the brute, missing the former, but drawing a yelp of protest from the veritable "Prince." Quick as thought Reinout turned, and, first checking himself with a chivalrous "On your guard!" flashed a retort full into his aggressor's left eye. He was carried off in a fume of indignation by his faithful Mentor, who knew not whether to scold or approve, and, on reaching home, he ran straight to his father's study.

"Papa!" he began, impetuously.

"Hush!" said the Count, who was looking over his cash-book. The Count was an admirable, and scrupulous, financier.

"Well?" he asked presently, jotting down some figures.

"Papa, it is all true—is it not?—about Rex Hilarius, and the lion and Wendela, isn't it?"

"Of course it is true, René," replied the Count, with a smile.

The boy gave a great gasp of relief. "I am so glad to hear you say that," he almost sobbed. "Then I may *kill* whoever says it is not?"

His father burst out laughing. "Certainly not," cried the Count. "You may kill nobody. On the contrary, you must be on very good terms with all your companions. There's not one of them but you may want him some day."

Reinout stood lost in reflection. "Life is very difficult," he said, at last. "Do you know, papa, I think it is almost impossible for a man always to know how to act as a gentleman."

"Certainly not," cried the Count again. "Nothing is easier. It becomes a habit, like all others. Like speaking French without mistakes."

"But I don't mean politeness," said Reinout, vaguely. "I mean about doing right."

"Of course," replied the Count, turning to his books again. "So do I, Reinout. Ask Monsieur de Souza. He knows."

But Reinout did not immediately return to his tutor. He went to look for his mother in the conservatory, where she lay, on her lounge, enveloped in heat, a novel of Catulle Mendès in her hand.

"Shut the door, René," she said, without lifting her eyes. Her attitude was ultra-languid, but her soul was palpitating with the heroine's infidelities. The Countess had literary tastes and aspirations, as will be amply proved in the future. She even composed poetry. Private poetry, of course, as befitted her rank.

Reinout stood gazing at his mother in silence for one whole minute. He was searching, confusedly, for explanation and expression. But his heart seemed too full for speech.

With her eyes unalterably intent on her book, the beautiful Creole—she was still beautiful—slowly drew to light from the folds of her dressing-gown a pink-ribboned confectioner's bag, which she held out in the direction of her son. "Take some sweets," she said.

The boy required no second bidding, but plunged his fingers eagerly down. "Are there any of those chocolats with the green stuff inside?" he asked.

She nodded, a little impatiently, and he went away with his hands full, to demonstrate to Monsieur de Souza's not unconvincible ears that he must fight Louis to-morrow, and lick him.

[To be Continued]

The Home

The Mother's Duty

By Alice M. Walker

To keep one's mind on the weary round of household tasks all day long is ruinous to the temper, and more wearing to the health than any amount of bodily labor. The Chautauqua course of reading comes to your very door, and asks you to walk in its ways; and most inviting paths they are in which to tread, bringing a boundless store of information and leading you to look up into the blue heavens and down into the depths of the sea and out into God's world about you. When once one becomes interested in this or any similar course of reading, the question, "Is life worth living?" answers itself.

To those who object that all this takes time I would reply, So does everything that is worth doing at all. Yet when we really desire to accomplish anything, can we not always make or take the time to do it? A housewife and mother can, if she will, do all her own work, be dressmaker and seamstress, and send the boys to school, and sew on the father's buttons, and yet not suffer her mind to rust; can keep up her music, attend lectures, belong to a magazine club, and feel herself up with the times and as useful as anybody; maybe she can even join a grange and be a valuable working member. Of course, to do all this some things must be given up; but to gain such a reward is worth the sacrifice of even several pies a week, or some other as great deprivation; nor will the farmer's family be the worse for it. It is not impossible to write or read while dinner is cooking, and maybe the essay will gain spice from the very surroundings. Singing and washing of dishes go well together, and the former will neutralize the discouragement produced by the sight of a large number of the latter waiting to be attended to. A woman's ingenuity will compass almost anything she may undertake. I have in mind a sitting-room in one corner of which stands the sewing-machine, in another the organ, and in a third an old secretary, at which the mistress of the house has passed many happy moments when not making music on either of the other two instruments, both of which show signs of daily use. To combine housework with self-culture does not take much time, nor much money, nor a teacher. It only requires love of knowledge and a determination to acquire it. All the rest will come of itself.

And now, if the question arises, What effect will all this have upon the boys? hear the answer, tried and tested by actual experience. The home is the child's first school, and upon the atmosphere which surrounds him from infancy depends his future usefulness. This is true no less of his mental than of his moral character. In the homes of many farmers there is almost absolutely no reading-matter, unless the local paper may be termed such, and during the few hours spent in the school-room it is impossible for the teacher to counteract that dampening, depressing, narrowing influence which throws a wet blanket on the mind and keeps the boy stupid in spite of himself. But let him feel that all at home are interested in his progress, that father knows where he is in arithmetic and is ready to help him with a hard example, and mother is just ahead of him in history and can tell him the date which he has forgotten, and ten times out of a dozen he will take to his books without urging, and absorb knowledge without knowing it. If mamma writes at a desk in one corner, little Johnny will tease for a desk in the other, and will want pencils and paper and all complete, and, almost before going to any school at all, will have acquired the rudiments of a good education, and also a taste for books which will go with him through life, will keep him out of bad company, will show him a profitable manner in which to spend his evenings, and help him in a thousand ways.

So, mothers, if you wish to throw around your children a safeguard which shall introduce them into cultured society, and protect them from evil, do your best to make the home atmosphere favorable to their mental development, and such as shall encourage habits of reading and study.

And, to this end, make the most of yourselves. Read, *read*, READ anything, rather than nothing; but, best of all, adopt some systematic course, whatever commends itself to your judgment, and, depend upon it, not only the boys and girls, but father himself, will fall into line, and verily you shall reap your own reward.



Some Mornings at the Fair

By Mary Willis

It was in a room in the Woman's Building, mistakenly called a model kitchen. On the platform stood a motherly looking woman, wearing a black dress with broad white linen cuffs and collar, and long white linen apron. She was giving a bread lesson to an audience of probably two hundred. As she worked she talked, and many were the words of wisdom that were sprinkled in this bread lesson. The following rule was given: To one pint of wetting of equal parts of milk and water, add one yeast-cake, dissolved in a couple of tablespoonfuls of cold water. If you have not sweet milk, use condensed milk, one-quarter of a pint diluted by water enough to make half a pint, and then fill the pint measure with water, all of which has been brought to the degree known as lukewarm. The wetting, to which had been added the dissolved yeast-cake, was in a basin of blue and white enameled ware; into it, with a tin scoop, from a basin of sifted flour at her left, the teacher poured the flour, and mixed with a flat wooden spoon until it was of such consistency that it could be handled with perfect ease. When this point was reached, the dough was emptied on to a bread-board and kneaded with the back of the hands—not the fingers—very lightly; the process would be better described by the word pulled, or stretched, than kneaded. The teacher said that what bread dough needed was stretching; that the hard kneading of the old New England days was not good for the bread. The bread was kneaded until it could be handled with perfect freedom without using flour, no dough adhering to either board or hands. When this point was reached, the bread was put into the basin, which had been greased, and covered with a light linen towel. It was to rise three hours, or until it had risen to twice the quantity of dough first put into the basin. It dropped from this basin, after having risen the required length of time, leaving it perfectly clear and clean. It was then cut into different lengths, some of them forming just long loaves, such as are known as the Vienna bread; some of it twisted into finger rolls, and some of it into what we might know as twist loaves. This was then placed in peculiar tins, or iron scoops one might call them, without ends, and lightly brushed with melted butter. The several sized pieces of dough, after having risen one hour, were put into the oven, which was heated to 370 degrees, and baked twenty, thirty, and fifty minutes, according to the size.

Among the things said by the lecturer during her process of bread-making were these: "When women give as much time to the preparation of foods as men do to the making of labor-saving inventions, we shall be the best-fed nation in the world;" "More women break down through waste of effort than through legitimate work"—and she gave a practical demonstration of this by showing how some women knead bread, and then showed the proper method of kneading bread. She claimed that every woman knows that in the middle classes—that is, in that class of people in our country where the women do their own housework, or a part of it—the women use up their strength and bring on chronic diseases by attempting to lift heavy pieces of furniture or by working beyond their strength and after they are exhausted. It is wasted, not legitimate, effort that is the cause of a loss of vitality in most cases. "When we love our work," said the speaker, "it ceases to be drudgery." She protested, as she removed a light, crisp loaf from the oven, against the practice of covering bread after it is baked. She said that to be perfect it should be laid across a pan, and, if possible, in a draft between two open windows, or an open door and window. She had in her