

# The Farm Home

## My Library.

By MEGVRA.

Being among the unfortunates who have no special room for a library and also having very little ready cash to spend in handsome furnishings and in reading matter, but having a love for books and journals, in a few years I have collected a decidedly mixed lot, which, stored in boxes and out-of-the-way places, were almost useless. As handsome writing desks cost money, which might be spent in fresh reading matter, I decided to build my own desk and book-cases. Of course a woman's substitute for walls is a curtain, therefore I curtained a small room in the best lighted corner of the upstairs big room. With its back to a wall and one end beneath a window which throws the best light along it I placed my desk. This is home-made of wide boards, closely fitted together and of suitable dimensions; instead of legs as a support for this table top two narrow boxes of the proper height and equal in size and shape were placed and nailed. These open towards the front and conveniently hold a goodly number of home-bound volumes of women's journals, etc., while there is still plenty of room between them for the writer to sit.

Above the desk and resting on the back of it is the book-case proper. This is a sectional affair composed entirely of starch boxes, soap boxes, to be gotten at the grocers, and whiskey cases and light boxes procurable at the druggists. In the centre of the lot is placed one in which several small compartments for holding cards, envelopes, blank books and other small matter have been fitted. In most of the others one shelf only is placed, in the upper divisions small and in the lower large books fit snugly. In other boxes there is just room for one row of farm reports and magazines. When completed the shelves reach the low ceiling, though there is room to add others as more books accumulate.

What to do with the piles of farm journals is the next problem. They are not sufficiently stiff to stand alone and it costs a great deal comparatively to get them bound, and there are times when one wishes to turn up some back number. After getting them into assorted piles boxes of the right height were chosen and upright divisions fitted to each; between these the journals were set on end, and when the compartments are numbered or dated it will be comparatively easy to find that required. Three of these boxes were placed one above the other at the other side of the window and the whole surmounted with a small, old style sloping-lidded writing desk. The whole makes a fairly convenient standing desk.

To the window-frame is secured a lamp bracket, and the only other furniture consists of a comfortable lounge and a chair while the curtains are decorated with maps. There is not any beauty nor anything stylish about this room and its furnishings, nor is it even in a very convenient place, still it has its advantages. The book-case can be taken down and moved by one person without lifting cut a book, which is a consideration in its favor on house-cleaning days, or if moving to another house a few slats can be nailed on each box and they are already packed. The cost is, I can safely say, less than one dollar. It is not for the few who have money for luxuries, but for those who are compelled to be economical I write, and some may be able with these suggestions to construct something handsomer.

## The Teaching of Domestic Science.

At the meeting of the National Council of Women held last month at Hamilton, Ont., Dr. James Mills, president of the Ontario Agricultural College, in giving an address on the above topic, among other things said:

In the general course of instruction given in this country a good deal has been done to fit people for the discharge of social and civil functions, and to take a broad, intelligent, sympathetic view of life in its varied aspects; and in that part of the course which is embraced in the teaching of reading, writing, arithmetic, and perhaps one or two other branches, valuable contributions have been made towards the equipment required for bread winning; but I am strongly of the opinion that we have not yet given anything like sufficient attention to the bread-and-butter side of education; and this, I think, is especially true of the education of our girls. We are, it appears to me, educating our girls as if they were all going to be ladies of leisure. From five to sixteen or eighteen years of age, they study arithmetic,

grammar, geography, literature, history, etc., and are much benefited thereby; but during all this time they do not receive from their teachers a single lesson nor even a hint that would assist one of them in darning a stocking, putting a patch on a pair of trousers, washing a piece of flannel, cooking a steak, setting a table, or furnishing and looking after a room. This may possibly do for the daughters of the rich; but it is a lamentably defective training for the thousands of noble girls who will have to take complete charge of their homes, and do the whole or most of their own work from the day of their marriage. I cannot help feeling that we who shape the educational policy of the country are largely responsible. In fact, I do not hesitate to say that it would be much better, if necessary, to confine the education of our girls to the three R's—reading, writing, and arithmetic—than to rear them in ignorance of the ordinary household duties, which have so much to do with the comfort and happiness of the people.

What benefit is it to a poor man to know that his wife has completed the public or even the high school course, if she cannot cook his food properly, mend his clothes, and keep his home clean and tidy? It is not necessary to multiply instances to show the great need of instruction in domestic economy. Nothing could be more manifest; and the only question is how long the people will tolerate the present system of education—how much longer they will allow trustee boards, boards of education, central committees, superintendents of education, and ministers of education to proceed on present lines, spending such vast sums of money for general scholastic education, and little or nothing for any of the special kinds of training so much needed by the rank and file of the people. The people must strongly and persistently demand that the scholastic ideals of education be abandoned so far as to provide ample instruction and training throughout this country in such practical and supremely im-

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