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## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

## About the House.

## SMALL ECONOMIES. THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MEAN

MUCH IN THE END. Paper I.

In these days of growing æsthetic tastes the problem of how to dress well and have one's house look well on little money is one worth some consideration. Dressing well, at least neatly and modernly, is not to be despised. We all act and talk our best when least conscious of our clothes, and how can we be unconscious of them if reasonably sure that we are looking either like frumps or like so many of our "foremothers," as Samantha says, stepped out of an antiquated family album. If all the other women looked like their "foremothers" too it would be all right, but the trouble is that the world has been moving on with never a halt, and clothes have been changing like everything else. Whether the new styles are better or worse than the old is scarcely to be considered. The fact remains that if we do not keep up to them, to some small degree at least, we must be different from other folk, and the very consciousness of being so, and of attracting attention thereby, is sure to make us feel awkward and constrainedand, of course, we must needs act as we feel. . . We are by no means  $a \ensuremath{\mathsf{dvocating}}$ the extreme of fashion. We think many of its vagaries extremely foolish, and the hold which it gets upon some women most deplorable-after all, clothes should occupy but an insignificant place in our lives-but we are stating a fact that, as a mere matter of comfort, one must look reasonably of the twentieth century. Possibly some day a band of strongminded women may arise who will command, "Fashion, stand thou here, as far as we are concerned, until Time shall end !" and possibly-ah, what a faint "possibly"-the rank and file of womankind will drop into line and bother about the changes in frills and furbelows no more: but until this millennium comes we must take things as we find them, only being careful that we follow reasonably, sanely, shrinking from extravagance as sensible women should. To know how we may do this is surely a part of our business.

Again, in regard to our homes. We certainly think no apology is necessary for saying that they should be as beautiful as good taste and careful consideration can make them. Beautiful surroundings breed an atmosphere of refinement. Children shrink, especially when growing into manhood and womanhood, from bareness, hardness, cheerlessness. In the country in summer the great outdoors provides the beauty that the eye loves to dwell upon and the heart to cherish, whether one is young or old; but there is the winter to provide for. If we would keep the young folk at home, safe from the glitter of the city-the two of en

well-dressed, attractively-housed people, it is no secret that those who appear to the best advantage often spend the least money-but the ways in which these careful people (often of necessity careful) manage, number legion. I can only indicate a few of them to you in this series of articles-I do not know the half of them, although I am learning little by little, but if I can impress upon you that there are still many things for even the most careful of us to learn I shall be satisfied. The only way for each and all of us is to be observant, keep ever on the alert for suggestions, and act on such as may fit our needs.

Beginning, then, on clothes-for the cookery department may be deferred until later-it may be remarked that not everything in one's appearance depends upon the mere material texture with which one's nakedness is covered. There are those less tangible, yet vastly more important things-the perfectly-kept body, fresh and sweet from frequent use of water and soap; the perfectly-groomed hair. clean and glossy; the immaculateness of teeth and nails. Believe it, all these count for more than silks and diamonds. It is not enough to keep face and hands, neck and ears irreproachable; the cleanliness of the whole body is reflected in the face. Have you ever noticed how kissably sweet your little lad or lass looks fresh from a bath or swim ?-so much more fresh and wholesome looking than when you  $\operatorname{simply}$  wash face and hands-no matter how much soap you use-and the difference holds good for grown folk also.

Again, how much, how very much, depends on "spick-and-spanness"-the hem that is never permitted to go ripped; the shirtwaist pinned carefully down, with no gaping of the spare, and no yawning division line between skirt and upper; the collar fastened evenly with small buckles or fancy pins, not jammed together at any angle, with the big brass heads and murderous points of ordinary pins revealing the whole construction of the affair; the hat adjusted at the very right angle. with the hair beneath it simply but neatly arranged; the neat, well-blackened shoe; the glove, well mended at least, if not new; the underskirt never showing, or, if visible at an inadvertent step, beautifully clean and whole, with the little feminine touch of lace or ribbon that makes it a pleasure to look upon. Believe it again-these things are a prime constituent of being well dressed-and how much do they cost ?

Money may be saved, too, and one's appearance added to mightily, by the choice and manner of making of one's clothes. It is wise to lean tremendously to the side of simplicity in this matter. You might take a cheap muslin with big flowers on it, buy whole bolts of cheap lace and ribbon to trim it with, top it off with a much-bedecked hat-and ten chances to one look like a frump. It takes an artist to make these fussy things successfully, and a model of grace to wear them. On the other hand, you might dispense with nine-tenths of the trimming, put the same money into a 'piece'' of finer quality, have it simply made, wear it with a becoming hat, quiet in coloring or with just a dash of brightness to relieve it-and look, at least, a lady. Even fineness of quality is not always essential. One of the daintiest little gowns I saw this summer was a ten-cent print, white with black dots, trimmed with bands and belt of white insertion. Especially in the matter of children's clothes does the demand for simplicity hold. Last night as I was going home I noticed on the street a woman with two little girls. The woman bore the marks of hard toil in face and hands, but she was so tawdrily "gotten up" in violent blue voile, with frills and furbelows galore, that the dignity of those marks of honest toil was lost. The hair of the younger child, a little tot, was frizzed to distraction ; upon that of the an enormous bat. Both wore white dresses, much betrimmed with ruffles of poorly-ironed embroidery-sewed on crookedly, by the way-much leflowered hats with long streamers, ribbon sashes, and very much soiled white shoes. It was indeed hard for them to look sweet and innocent. They would have been different looking children, say, in simple cham-

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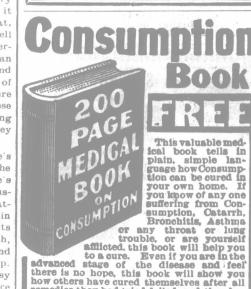
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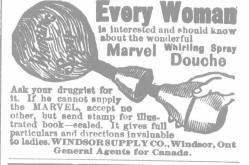
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idle, senseless, if not permiciously seductive glitter of the vaudeville and "Coney Island" fripperies, which filter away from so many young folk not only their money but their capacity for application to things that really count in life-we must make the home attractive. There are beautiful homes and many advantages in the city, but, as a rule, these are behind doors closed to the young man or woman who drifts from the country with no friends and small salary. After months or years he or she may find warm friends and an entrez into loving homes; but the possibility is that the boarding-house may fill up the beginning, middle and end of the chapter-and, mark my words, there is little in the average cheap or moderately-priced hoarding-house to recommend it to any boy or girl. To those who know the whole of its cheerlessness and heartlessness the wonder is little that so many young men and women drift into going anywhere, almost, to get out of it. Granted, then, that country felk are entitled to neat, tasteful dress and beautiful homes, what next? . . . It is elder rested a bow somewhat resembling upon the woman of the home that the responsibility of these things largely rests, but if her means he limited she is so likely to give up in despair. "If I had Mrs. So-and-So's money," she thinks, "I could do something, but with the little bit I have !" and a sigh ends the story. . , But this is a great mistake To those who are privileged to peep be-The Wm. Weld Co., Ltd., London, Ont. hind the scenes in the lives of many bray sailor suits, with sailor hats-and

remedies they had tried failed, and they be lieved their case hopeless.

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