

## HOUSEHOLD SCIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOLS.

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"I don't know what's the matter with Betty," complained my Aunt Margaret the other day when we were comfortably seated on the porch with our knitting, "she seems to literally hate the very sight of cooking. I can't understand it. I always was fond of it. And look at Eleanor, her cousin from Toronto, she likes nothing better than to be left alone in the kitchen to prepare a meal. Now, why is it?"

The answer is very simple. Eleanor has had lectures at Collegiate for three years in Household Science. Betty has had to do without them and why? Just because she has not been fortunate enough to be registered at a Collegiate but only at a village High School.

It is not obligatory to teach Household Science in High Schools but it is obligatory to teach it in Collegiates, unless they want to lose their annual grants. According to the report of the Minister of Education for 1916 there are registered in the High Schools throughout the province only 171 pupils who are studying Household Science as opposed to 3108 who are studying it in Collegiates. So although it is permissible to teach it in High Schools apparently very few do so.

It hardly seems fair that only city and town girls should have the advantage of Domestic Science teachers when the girls who come from the country and village homes are just as able to assimilate it and certainly need it quite as badly. The course may be a bonus, its principles may be elementary enough, but they are sufficient to give the girl a certain self-confidence and skill in the kitchen—and in the rest of the home too, for that matter—that will not be attained elsewhere.

Years ago it was different. Our grandmothers had to help with the housework and of course that "helping" included cooking, when they were as young as ten years of age. School work was not so heavy. Homework didn't take up every spare minute. Nowadays, as soon as a girl gets into High School almost invariably she has to drop everything but school studies. Music lessons must give way to history, algebra, botany and what not. There is no time to do much work in the kitchen; her time is full. So, naturally it falls out that she learns what she learns at school and at school alone. It seems a very simple thing in Collegiates to devote two or three periods a week to cookery but what a difference it makes in a girl's whole attitude towards home-keeping!

I know Canadian women over thirty years old who couldn't make a batch of palatable bread if their lives depended on it and for them, as the war continues, the ever-increasing thrift problems grow daily more menacing. There was no Household Science classes when they went to school and they were not naturally inclined toward that sort of thing so they drifted along without learning the importance of them. Of course there is no law against a woman sixty years of age beginning to learn how to cook—to bake bread included. Nevertheless it is a recognized fact that it is harder to learn to do the homely simple things after one grows up than when one is young. There is an added zest in the young days that makes learning half-play.

Aside from the school part, the main reason for the complaint of the "Aunt Margarets" today—that the "Bettys" "simply hate the sight of cooking"—is because the "Aunt Margarets" have failed to be accurate in their teaching methods. The dearth of good cooks among the younger generation is due—paradoxical as it may sound—to the abundance of them among their mothers and grandmothers. For so many years the older people have done their cooking by the "rule of thumb" that it is next to impossible for them to measure ingredients. You eat a particularly delectable cake or pudding at some home; you ask for the recipe hoping, if you are unsophisticated, to dulpicate it at home next day, only to be told "Mother or Grandmother made it." Therefore, they think it is obvious you should understand how impossible it would be to give you the recipe! If you asked grandmother herself the coveted recipe would probably run something like this: "Well, my dear, I take two eggs, or three if they're plenty, a handful of sugar or a little more, a moderate quantity of butter or lard or sour cream which ever happens to be handy, a pinch of soda, etc., etc." All perfectly intelligible no doubt to the veteran but baffling and exasperating to the tyro. And what a different concoction from grandmothers' would be turned out if these directions were followed! Young people learning to cook need accuracy in their rules the same as they have it in their French grammar. And how infinitely more important it would be to teach it to them in a subject nine-tenths of them will use all their lives rather than in learning how to say "My grandmother lost her pens" and similar informative effusions with an accent that no native Frenchman would ever spot as anything he'd ever heard before.

Since the Household Science course has been