

The Farm Home

Information Wanted.

By way of opening up a discussion that we think will be very helpful to all concerned we would like to have as many short articles as possible from the readers of these pages, dealing with the following topics. Contributors can write on any one or all of the subjects, as they see fit:

1. How can the long winter evenings in the farm home be most profitably spent?
2. What are your ideas as to entertainment for young people in the country?
3. What would be the best plan for arranging a reading circle in the farm home so that every member of it who could read could take part?

Dear Farmist,—In reply to your "Information Wanted," I shall not discuss any of the subjects, but shall tell of some ways some of the young men spend the winter evenings. Picture, if you can, the country store and in it, seated on nail kegs and soap boxes, perched on the counter, and with chairs drawn up to the wood fire, a group of men—young men and some not so very juvenile; men married, and men single. They are taking a certain amount of pleasure from the society of their neighbors (Man is a social animal!), but are they profitably spending the time? The intelligent host in one of these general stores said to me: "There are men and boys come in here night after night from the surrounding farms. They talk and smoke, and during the whole evening they never once get out of the barn-yard."

Girls and boys, let us get out of the barnyard, and join the Farm Home Circle around, I was going to say, the open fire-place, but I suppose around the library register would be more appropriate. You have ideas; please don't be selfish, but pass them on, as the boys at school do with the apple, so that we each may have a bite. What old school boy or girl will be next?

MEG.

Home Department of Farmers' Institutes.

By Anna Barrows in American Kitchen Magazine.

Usually this is called the "Woman's Section," and is held at the same time as the main institute in another hall, but the general verdict is that the men as well as the women should have an opportunity to hear and discuss such papers.

In the past there has been a tendency toward essays of a sentimental order, of which the following sentence is a type: "The model housewife

never gets tired, but always looks sweet and well dressed on a small allowance; she should always be gentle and never dictate." Fortunately, now, more practical topics are treated in a sensible fashion. Where State appropriations are made for this purpose annually, it is not too much to ask that at least one-tenth of the whole amount be expended for expert instruction in home science.

In a two days' Institute the evening may well be devoted to lectures, illustrated by the stereopticon if possible, on the "Home Garden," "Care of the Sick," "Bacteriology in Farm and House," "Plans for House and Grounds." Such lectures would be as entertaining, if rightly handled, and much more instructive than the usual evening programme of music and readings. The forenoon session of the second day, where numbers warrant it, may be held in two sections—one for the men, the other a demonstration in cookery for the women. In the afternoon time may well be spared for a brief demonstration before the whole assembly, with question box and general discussion afterward.

Perhaps to follow this some local club or grange will assume the expense of additional lessons in cookery, but it is seldom wise to have these entirely free, for they may be confused in the public mind with those intended merely to advertise some new food product.

The lecturers should have had most thorough training, and be specially practical and familiar with the details of everyday life. One can seldom explain a process clearly unless it has been worked out with both head and hand.

The utensils should be simple, but the best of their kind; there should be charts for illustration of food values.

The danger of arousing prejudices is slight under an experienced teacher. Subjects should be adapted to the locality. Every process should be reduced to its lowest terms.

There is a demand for this work, although the need of food study and sanitation is less felt in country than in cities. In the country families may exist under conditions where life would be impossible were there less fresh air. Less money would be spent for patent medicines in our land if the people understood better how to feed themselves.

There is a commercial aspect, also, which we do well to consider. The farmers yet will find it pays to go further still in the preparation of food where it is raised. A southern railroad has found it worth while to equip a train with all manner of appliances for the preparation of crops for market and send it through the South

with trained workmen to show the people how to make the best use of their crops. Many manufacturers of food products have sent out graduates of cooking schools to show the people how to use their wares.

The educational side of this work need not stop at the close of farmers' institute. In several states farm home reading clubs have been arranged and in others travelling libraries on household economics are available.

The Cow that Kicked Melinda.

She went to milk the cow with her hair fluffed round her brow,

And a happy little smile upon her lips;
Her hands were brown and strong, and she trilled a happy song,

But—how many of the safest of us slips.
The hired man ran in and made a fearful din,
As he hammered on the little cook-house window,

And he filled the house with fright as he yelled with all his might,

"The cow has kicked Melinda!"

That silence for a while could be heard for half a mile,

And the horror of it sunk in every heart;
But when the shock was over, like bull calves into clover,

You ought to've seen that little household start.

They found the story true, for she was black and blue;

And her granny piped an order thro' the window:

If the milk she milked is spilled, then the animal must be killed,
The cow that kicked Melinda.

In splendid halls adorning you sit to-morrow morning,

And spread your little napkin for a feed;

If you're disappointed much and your teeth do frequent touch

Something that is very tough indeed;

As you struggle and you sigh, to masticate you try,

And the trolley gong is sounding thro' the window,

Your spirits I might sear if I whispered in your ear,

"That's the cow that kicked Melinda!"

—The Khan.

The Farm Reading Room and its Contents.

By Megyra.

How few are the farm homes that contain a study, library, or reading room! Among all the farm houses I have visited I can recall not even one that had a convenient room, sufficiently large to accommodate two or three people when engaged in reading and writing, though often a room that would answer this purpose is set aside for a guest chamber, and is used only two or three times a year.

I have met with the small office for the private use of the manager. I have sometimes seen a writing desk and a few book-shelves in the dining or sitting room, and have often seen the paper rack in the kitchen, where the entire family wait until the supper