

Country Girl's Ideas

The other day I betook myself, during an interlude of favorable weather, to visit the Agricultural College and discover what other country girls are doing. There are about fifty-six girls there at present taking up the Domestic Science course.

When we arrived the lady in charge of the work was busy with a class in the laundry. They were washing silks, some with soap and water and others with gasoline.

To our benighted minds laundry work probably seems to be one thing that does not require learning, but that is merely because our minds are benighted. If Domestic Science can show us how to wash our clothes cleaner or more

country might have such conveniences to lighten the burden of wash day.

In laundry work the girls learn how to wash silks, cottons, woollens and laces and to clean kid gloves, and as they take up each textile they learn where and how, and under what conditions, it is made, so that this subject has many interesting ramifications.

I am sure it would make a woman's work far more interesting if she thought, when she was stitching up a piece of silk, about the tiny creatures who spin it into a shining cocoon and traced it in her mind on through the weaver's hands, where, by marvellous ingenuity, it is transformed into a fluffy piece of crepe, a stately brocade, or a



TAKING A COOKING LESSON—THE LITTLE ROUND THINGS ARE STOVES

quickly, then it is just that much more useful than we had conceived it to be.

The girls were all in trim cotton uniforms—though unfortunately of rather a trying shade of pale green, which is a bit hard on the dark girl with a sallow complexion. But I like the idea of uniforms. They are cleaner for working in than woollen clothes and for everyday wear at least eliminate the question of competition in dress which has been the cause of much shedding of tears and secret heartaches among girls.

But to return to the work part, which was the real object of our visit. There was a double row of tubs down the middle of the room, each fitted with drain pipes and hot and cold water taps and how I wished as I looked at them that all the back-weary mothers in the

rustling taffeta. Woollen stuffs, cottons and laces each have fascinating stories, which are opened up to the students of that plain, erstwhile humdrum, subject—washing.

From the laundry we passed into the kitchen where a class was busy cooking vegetables. They were serving them plain this day, with butter and pepper and salt and the sample they very kindly offered to the guests was perfectly delectable. The next day they were to have them creamed and the third day scalloped.

The teacher explained to us that they had already taken up steaming, simmering, steeping, boiling, roasting, pan broiling and saute. After Christmas they are to progress into baking, including pastry and bread and biscuits,

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and the proper way to serve fresh and dried fruits, milk, eggs and cereals.

About the walls of this immaculate kitchen are charts showing the proportion of the different constituents of food stuffs and the girls are taught to plan the meals so that they will make a perfect diet. They are prevented, by this knowledge of the properties of foods, from serving all the fat-making foods at one meal and all the bone-making ones at another. The foods should be grouped so that all parts of the body have their daily waste repaired.

You country girls who, I know, have to put up with many inconveniences, would love to look into the trim little cupboards which are ranged along the kitchen walls and those other cupboards under the well-scrubbed tables, where the shining porcelain dishes are kept in bright array. I think we

ter they are going to make a complete baby's outfit, from the plainest materials, so that when motherhood comes to these girls, as it is apt to do to any woman, they will know how to go about making preparations for the little visitor.

Millinery is another interesting branch of Domestic Science work. I was rather appalled when I made this discovery, because I feel that a beautiful hat like a beautiful picture is a real work of art. There are some people with an instinct for tying smart bows and placing them on a hat at exactly the right angle, but there are others of us who have no talent in that direction and I hate to think of the creations we would foist upon an innocent and unsuspecting world. Perhaps when they get into the new college buildings next fall they will make millinery optional. I rather hope they do, for I can't hon-



LEARNING TO TRIM HATS IS ONE OF THE BRANCHES OF DOMESTIC ECONOMY

would all love to take cooking lessons under such ideal conditions.

From the culinary department we went to the sewing room, where a class of girls was working on plain underwear. The garments were made of plain white cotton and trimmed very simply with lace or embroidery, but the machine work was beautifully done. I was so glad that they were not teaching them to do fancy, impractical things, for we all know how much time the average country woman has to spend on fancy work. Sometime during the win-

terly think that all the girls who take lectures at the college are to the manner born.

I would like to devote a whole chapter to the house-furnishing and horticultural branches of the Domestic Science course, but it is getting late, and Christmas is on hand, and there are so many letters waiting this minute to be answered and things to do that not another minute can I spare, but we will come back to this subject again.

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