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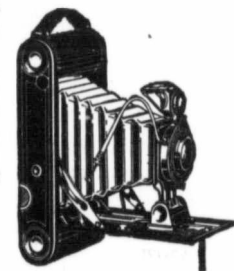
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Suggestions for Home Economics Societies

Jane F. Yemen

ONE Saturday afternoon in an idle moment I turned to the children's pages of the Free Press and read a few letters, coming at length to one written by a lonely fourteen-year-old girl living in the popular bluffs about a foreign school. Her sister, the teacher, and she lived in the community house built for a home for the teacher. Having lived in such a wooded place and having taught little and big foreigners I sympathized, so I picked up my pen and wrote the homesick lassie a letter.

It brought this reply:

"I received your letter yesterday. I was very much pleased indeed to get it. It seemed to come just in time too. My sister Margaret was very sick in bed and had been sick for seven days and she is still in bed. The doctor came on Wednesday morning, he said she was not fit to teach for at least two weeks, and so I was feeling very blue. When I received your letter it seemed to cheer me up ever so much, just as if it were a message from God.

"We are in a foreign district, the people can speak no English, or very little. This is the first year they have had a school here so it is very nice and clean, new desks and new furniture through and through.

"It was certainly not very nice to come here at first. The school was not properly furnished. There was no stove nor any kind of furniture, not even a bed. However we had enough bed clothes with us, so we made a bed on the floor, soft and cosy there as you can imagine. We built a fire outside and cooked our meals out there Indian fashion. We had been here three weeks when our stove came, and about two weeks after that our bed arrived. A week ago our furniture came so we are nice and cosy now.

"My sister has her piano with her so we had that if nothing else. We did not even have lamps. The reason for all this discomfort was that the shipment had gone astray for there is no agent at Clover Leaf to which the stuff was shipped.

"My sister began teaching August 20th and now the children are in Grade 1 readers and they could not even speak a word of English first when we came. I think it is wonderful how they pick up.

"I think the scenery here is beautiful, the woods, the animals and the flowers. I could spend hours in the morning listening to the birds, the wolves and the different noises I never heard before. There are some bears here but few, lots of wolves and deer. I have never seen any of these so far, but have been told they are about.

"Mother was afraid to let my sister go out into the wild woods as she did not my sister said: 'I am interested in this work and I find it my duty to go and help Canadianize these people who are just simply growing but no more.' They don't get any education and will grow up to be ignorant and bold.

"The people in this district surely have confidence in my sister too. They have asked her to sew nice clothes for them, 'nice like yours,' and teach them to bake, etc. She baked some cakes for the threshers for our closest neighbor. A few days later everybody in the neighborhood were saying that Miss Teacher makes lovely cakes. They always call her Miss Teacher. These people are not very good workers or housekeepers. They have not the slightest idea how to take care of the sick. The poor little child will have to suffer without any attendance. For an example take this one: One little girl got a terrible burn, it was a real deep burn, and what do you suppose they did for her? They put ink on it and did not bandage it or anything, just left it exposed to the air. Margaret went over and did what she could for them.

"We have a few books here which my sister brought with her but outside of that we have very little reading. She takes the Atlantic Monthly, The Weekly Free Press, The Teacher's Monthly, The Grain Growers' Guide, but when winter comes I am afraid we shall be lonesome."

The Secretary of our Home Economics Society had occasion to write to the Official Trustee in Winnipeg regarding a case of books for a foreign school, and the following are suggestive extracts from Mr. Stratton's reply:

"Now if your organization has not expended its money yet you can aid this

teacher in her work in any one of three or four different ways. You could, for instance, purchase—under perhaps the advice of the teacher—a collection of books for supplementary reading in the school. The children master the ordinary texts so soon that the book becomes stale to them before they have worked up through the grade in other respects. Then again they need quite a range of reading to widen out their vocabularies.

Let us make another suggestion and perhaps this would be my favorite for this school. The women among these people are illiterate for the most part, but they realize that houses must be kept. Now, where I am establishing a teacher in a little house I am introducing all that I can of proper housekeeping. I am furnishing these houses plainly, but I hope to see them neatly kept, and I hope the teacher's residence will become a gathering point for numerous talks between the girls and the teacher.

This teacher is anxious to put on a warm lunch, or at least some warm dish or drink at noon but I have not the funds available just now to purchase a suitable outfit. I would like to establish a kind of Domestic Science circuit nearby taking in two roomed and three roomed schools. It would put Miss J. in a position to carry out an idea which she cherishes if some organization would put her in possession of a nice lot of equipment for this purpose. I would be delighted if somebody would donate an outfit suitable for the warm lunch and a little domestic science work.

"I am also proposing to develop the teaching of sewing in as many as possible of these schools. I believe a sewing machine will shortly be an essential part of the equipment.

"One other idea—I am just about purchasing a first-class gramophone, and hope to stock up with a large range of records. Two or three of my teachers at different points have instruments of their own.

I shall loan them groups of records, something like a circulating library. Now this isolation to which those teachers are subjected is a bit wearing in itself and the instrument could be made companionable, and it could also be made the nucleus for a little social gathering, and the means of a conversational lesson."

Do you see a vision of patriotic work in which our Societies might help—the Canadianizing of the foreign people in conjunction with the teachers? What tremendous service all our Societies could be able to render and what very interesting and pleasant service it would be for us! Supplementary Readers with beautiful pictures and charming sentences, kettles, pots, pans, dishes, spoons, etc., for school housekeeping, a sewing machine, the effort of three or four societies together, gramophone or records in the same way, are full of the finest possibilities. Let us all talk about these things, so that if we can not do much at present, when the need for socks and shirts for our soldiers is past, we shall be ready to assist energetically. Even now perhaps the work may be begun.

Hartney H.E.S.

Hartney, Feb. 13th, 1918.
Dear Mrs. Hamilton:—We have just finished the Short Course School given by the Extension Department of the Agricultural College. We think it one of the best advantages that the ladies of the Hartney district ever participated in. At our January meeting of the Home Economics Society a lively busy, enthusiastic committee had been appointed to make arrangements for the coming treat and privilege.

The few ladies who had taken advantage of a former demonstration in dressmaking given by Miss Smith, felt that many who had not been present had missed a great privilege of getting pointers on dressmaking, and when Miss Smith was expected this time special efforts were made to have it known throughout the district with the result that 40 to 50 attended her demonstrations.

The second week of demonstrations under the supervision of Miss Clark on "Home Nursing" and Miss Atkinson on "Cooking" were even better attended than the first week's lessons, about 75 ladies being present at some meetings.

Great credit for the success of the meetings is due to the good management of the committee in charge. Mrs. Mc-

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