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When writing to advertisers, say: "I am writing you as an advertiser in The Progressive Farmer, which guarantees the reliability of all advertising it carries."



# Our Farm Women

Edited by **MRS. W. N. HUTT**

## GETTING READY FOR THE FALL FAIR

**Begin Now to Study the Prize Lists That Mistakes and Disappointments May Be Avoided Next Fall**

LET us have a confidential little talk about the fair next fall. You know some of you took fruit and soap and all kinds of things to the fair the past September and were a little hurt and surprised that you did not get more prizes. It is to you I wish to talk, because I felt very, very sorry a good many times that year when I had to withhold the award from some one who really deserved it if excellence alone were to be considered.

Let me give one illustration: A woman had a large amount of beautifully canned fruit and vegetables and jams and jellies, pickles, etc., in half-gallon jars. When judging time came the prize list said, "The best half dozen pint or quart jars of canned fruit." The question was, should the award be made according to the prize list or should it be bent to the interpretation of the judges? There was a brief conference with the fair authorities and the prize went to "The best

have them ready for the first spring vegetables and fruit.

Once in a while some one will enter some snaps or corn that has been put up with preserving powder. It goes without saying that unwholesome, embalmed goods should not be in competition with nourishing goods; honestly canned with heat and sugar or salt. Of course, one who knows the harmful effect of these powders would never think of entering them.

Another thing—a jelly is not a syrup boiled down until it is very thick. It is fruit juice that has jellied. A thin covering of paraffine over the jelly will predispose the judges in its favor.

The eggs that are of one color and size, are infertile, clean and packed in a carton, stand a good chance of winning a prize.

In the sewing department the one who has basted her collection of embroideries, etc., on a sheet, or better on a piece of prettily colored cloth, can show them to best advantage. Moreover, she stands less chance of losing them.

The fair can be made a source of income, of pleasure, and of instruction, to one's self and to others.

And it can show up one as a little

## THE KISS

**B**EFORE you kissed me only the winds of heaven  
 Had kissed me, and the tenderness of rain—  
 Now you have come, how can I care for kisses  
 Like theirs again?

I sought the sea, she sent her winds to meet me,  
 They surged about me singing of the south—  
 I turned my head away to keep still holy  
 Your kiss upon my mouth.

And swift sweet rains of shining April weather  
 Found not my lips where living kisses are;  
 I bowed my head lest they put out my glory  
 As rain puts out a star.

I am my love's and he is mine forever,  
 Sealed with a seal and safe forever—  
 Think you that I could let a beggar enter  
 Where a king stood before?  
 —Sara Teasdale, in Harper's Magazine.

half dozen in pint or quart jars," and not the best in any size, sort, shape or condition of bottle. Result—a much abused lady.

Therefore, I beg of you to study the last year's prize list, for there will probably be few changes in next year's, and put up all goods you hope to exhibit according to it. As soon as the new list is published study it well. There are few fair lists that give prizes to half-gallons—the reason being that they do not promote economy and are impractical in the modern methods of sterilizing vegetables.

And do not take a lot of general stuff to the fair just in the vague hope that some of it will get a prize. Work all that out at home.

Suppose there is an award of \$25 for the best collection of pantry supplies. Have in it all the fresh, salted, dried, smoked, canned, pickled and otherwise preserved meats, fruits and vegetables, all the seeds, growing parsley, eggs, honey, bread, and other varieties of pantry supplies that you possess. Suppose you have among this material a pail of lard or half a dozen jars of canned vegetables, say—snaps, beans, peas, asparagus, spinach and corn—do not expect these to compete separately or collectively for the lard prize, or to enter the contest for the best half dozen jars of vegetables. Have another lot to enter for it then there can be no question as to whether you are entitled to the prize or not. It is yours if the goods are the best.

In regard to that half dozen jars—do not depend on quality alone. There may be another half dozen of just the same quality as yours; then the slight difference is in favor of the one whose goods look best.

The clear white glass jars with patent tops cost very little, if any more, than the green screw top jars and more than pay for themselves in premiums won. Now is the time to order your jars and new rubbers and

bit of a quitter, or, as the boys would express it, very much of a good sport, a game loser, undiscouraged, and with the gumption to stick and win.

And last, let us teach the children to take an interest in the fair each year by entering something. Let that something be not embroidery, or anything else that requires eyesight and a continued cramped position, but canned goods, patching, dresses made on the sewing machine, besides rugs, bread, and fly swats.

## Suggestions for March—the Month of Spring

**A**RE your crocuses, hyacinths, tritellias, daffodils, Stars of Bethlehem and jonquils putting up their sunshiny little heads? Spend a happy hour now and then in pushing away the litter from them. Do not carry this away, but leave it on the ground to make plant food for coming generations of plants.

And the garden—are Irish potatoes and early seeds planted? Is the garden fence made—as the advertisements say—"horse high, cattle strong, hog proof and chicken fine?"

If the screens have not been painted—of course, it should have been done in the fall—get a small can of screen paint and paint them yourself, and it will keep them from rusting during the summer. It is not hard to do.

Talking about paint—if you hope to paint your house this summer suggest that your husband do it now before flies and gnats get plentiful.

Take a walk around the house with eye open for the summer's fly and mosquito breeding spots. There is the garbage pail, can it be kept in the kitchen this summer, out of the way of the flies? If not, can a funnel-top tube be run through the kitchen floor

to the bucket beneath? Many a woman is sufficiently handy with tools to do this. And the mosquito spots—can they not be drained or kerosened, or planted in sunflower seed? This, too, is a good time to make typhoid and hookworm contagion impossible when hot weather comes.

Soon the long cosy evenings in the sitting room under the light of the lamp will give place to the warm and the screened porch. Enjoy the cosy circle all you can and make the most of the books not read, quotations not learned, songs not sung.

Plan and cut the crepe work dresses, the gingham aprons, and the summer underwear.

Give the children just one more party this winter. Let it be a taffy pull and in the kitchen. Tell every girl to bring two aprons. One from each is put in a big bag. The boy puts his hand in and draws out one without seeing whose it is. His partner for pulling the taffy is the girl who has the one like it in design or number. Of course, the young folks will want to pop corn too. And listen, mother and father, don't sit smiling as though you were a thousand years removed from the fun of the boys and girls—you two pull taffy also. Your presence will add to the jollity, restrain the boy inclined to boisterousness and draw your own children to you as nothing else may. And when you have all laughed until your jaws ache and eaten all the taffy and popcorn you possibly can, gather around the fire in the front room and sing all the dear old songs you know. The farm home is a grand old place, isn't it?

## The Little Old School House or the Consolidated School—Which?

**W**E ARE hoping to have three of our schools unite this year," said one little woman to me, and from the same community came one who said, "Some people is a-tryin' to git all them schools in one, but if my vote counts for anything they ain't a-goin' to do it. It's jest foolishness." And I said nothing, fearing to hurt rather than help.

But my mind went back to a county I visited several years ago in farmers' institute work. Had I been looking for all that was least desirable in a country school I would have found much of it there—unbeautiful, unventilated, uncurtained, unequipped.

Last week I went back to the same community. The schools had consolidated. The building, a large, clean, white structure, stood in beautiful woods out beyond the edge of town.

There were no dull, staring eyes at each window as we drove up; one of the older students came and greeted us as simply and as cordially as though the school had been his own home. He led us in and introduced us to the lady teachers, three in number. And social ease is no small part of the training a student may gain at school.

The school interior was clean and orderly. It was plainly to be seen that much care had been given to curtains, wall decorations and other things which cultivate the sense of the beautiful in home decoration.

The children marched to music into a fine, large auditorium, where they sang heartily and happily. Every one in the institute party was struck with the decorum, the intelligent and sustained interest in the speeches, of even the little children. When asked to sing or play on the piano between talks there was no hanging back. It was a joy to see.

"Could this be possible in the little single room school house?" I asked one member of the party. "No," was the reply, "for where is the little school that can afford to pay for three such capable and well-trained teachers.

And they had not as yet a domestic