

Plan to Beautify The Farm Home

Once Planned the Work Can Be Spread Over a Period of Years.

One has said that a house is a place in which one can exist, a home is a place in which to live. Even though it may lack paint, although the roof may leak and the rooms be small, it is still home. The same place may be a home to one person, but to another simply a house. A house then, to become a home, depends upon the people who live in it.

Home folks make happy homes. One need not be rich to be happy, but improvements about or in the home may make one live with greater satisfaction. Satisfaction in life is what we are all striving for. Flowers, plants, shrubs and trees are means of adding satisfaction to one's life through natural beauty. Many farm homes, over fifty per cent, in fact, are devoid of shrubs or plants to help make them more pleasant places to live.

Every person has within them a sense of pleasure in seeing a thing of beauty. Most people take pleasure in caring for plants, either in the home or outside. If shrubs and flowers have not been used, it is generally because of lack of time or fear of planting them out in a place unsuited for them, or not knowing the right thing for the right place.

SUFFICIENT AREA.

A home includes not only the building itself, but a properly planted yard about it and the other outbuildings. This area may vary widely. It is better to have a well cared for place than a poorly kept large one. However, considering the extent of the surrounding fields, the farm home yard would look pinched if no larger than the city lot. One hundred and twenty-five to 250 feet make a very satisfactory area for frontage. Too large a place means an increase in the unproductive acreage of the farm, as well as too much time to properly care for it, time that should be used for more productive work.

The house, with its surroundings, should make a pleasing picture, with

the house the centre of attention. Plant shrubs about the foundation so as to tie the house with the lawn. This is called foundation planting. The height of the shrubbery used should vary with the height of foundation and the house itself. The strongest plantings should be placed at the corners. All plantings should be at least two feet from the foundation, giving plenty of room for each individual, varying the distance with the size of the shrub when mature.

CARE IN PLANNING.

Choose kinds of shrubs with care. Have a variety, yet do not mix them. Have a background, say of spirea, with barberry in front. Shrubs should not be used individually about the lawn, as this lessens the seeming size and gives a museum effect to the place. Shrubs, other than foundation plantings, are best used in masses about the borders to make the frame or margin of your picture. They are used also to separate different parts of the grounds, as well as to screen unsightly objects, such as outbuildings, wood-piles, and fences.

Trees must be used with caution, as it is easy to have too many, and yet, a few are very essential. Trees are used for shade and to frame the house and give distinction to the whole. Trees, as well as shrubs, should not be planted in straight lines or equal distances from each other. Trees planted in groups give the effect of being planted naturally. This should be the aim of all plantings as the formal method is not adapted to country homes.

It is not necessary to do all of the planting about the home at one time, although this is desirable. In any case, a planting plan is the first essential. Know from the beginning just where you are going to put the trees and shrubs. Locating these on a sheet of paper is a very good way. Have the plan laid out to scales. Then, although one may be five years in completing the plantings, the whole will look like a finished picture in the end.

Rations for Beef Cows.

A herd of beef-breeding cows must be kept in thrifty condition during the winter for best results.

The type of ration that can be used to best advantage is one that consists very largely of farm-grown feeds. It may be necessary at times to feed a small quantity of grain, but generally speaking, the ration should consist very largely of rough feed. If alfalfa, clover or other legume hay is fed there is very little necessity for feeding concentrated protein feed. If the ration is made up of carbonaceous feeds, as silage or bundle corn, it is necessary to allow some protein feed. Such a ration, unless supplemented with legume hay, is likely to be low in mineral, especially calcium and phosphorus.

A very efficient and economical ration for breeding cows that are in good condition of flesh when put into winter quarters consists of about thirty pounds of corn silage, five pounds of good clover or alfalfa hay and one pound of oil meal or cottonseed meal per head daily. The cows should have access to straw or corn stover. Salt also must be fed.

A steel-bristle brush, intended for cleaning files, is just the thing for working on a dirty spot to be soldered. The steel points cut into the bright metal and, if acid is used, you can count on a good job.

The fully grown sheep can be docked very readily by the use of a regular docking-pincer. This is heated to a dull red heat and the tail is severed one and one-half to two inches from the body. The stubs should be watched for a little while, but usually no disinfectant is needed. A little vaseline over the stub will promote rapid healing. Young lambs should be docked when one or two weeks old and male lambs castrated before three weeks of age. You can secure docking-pincers from any livestock equipment house.

Shavings for Nests.

During the present time, when very cold temperatures may be expected, it is well to choose for the nests some material which will partly cover the eggs and help them retain their animal heat.

There is nothing better for this purpose than fine planer shavings. They can be purchased by the bale or by the bag from a local mill. Fill the nest boxes to depth of three or four inches with them. Besides protecting the eggs the shavings absorb the moisture from droppings and keeps the eggs clean. The birds do not seem to scratch shavings out of the nests as they do hay or straw. It is also important to collect eggs frequently in very cold weather to avoid chilling. Two or three times a day is none too often on very cold days, especially if the eggs are to be incubated.

Fertile Eggs.

Sun.—The breeding flock should be allowed outdoors every sunny day during the winter and spring. Use a glass substitute in the windows that will permit the ultra-violet rays to pass through.

Milk.—The liberal use of milk in the ration for breeding stock is of proven value.

Green Feed.—Green feed should be available to the birds at all times. Green second cut alfalfa hay, lettuce, and sprouted oats are the most useful.

Double Mate.—Alternate the males in the breeding pen. Allow one male to run the pen for two days, while the other is confined in an elevated coop in the same house, then change them, alternating three times each week during the season when hatching eggs are required.

When you are through with the disk harrow for the season, roll it upon a wide plank. This will keep the disks out of the soil and prevent rusting. Better rub the disks with oil, too.

Sunday School Lesson

February 8. The Practice of Christian Stewardship, Matt. 25: 14-30. Golden Text—Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.—Matt. 25: 21.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE ENTRUSTED GIFTS OF GOD, 14-15. II. THE OPPORTUNITIES OF INVESTING THEM, 16-18. III. THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF GOD.

INTRODUCTION.—St. Matthew, by placing the parable where he does, gives it the closest relation to the last judgment. Christians will be judged according to the use which they make of the entrusted gifts of God. St. Luke, in his version of the same parable, says that it was spoken "because Jesus was near Jerusalem, and because they (the disciples) imagined that God's kingdom would immediately appear." Luke 19: 11. Thus in Luke it acquires the meaning that, though God's kingdom may be long delayed in coming, the immediate task of Christians may not be postponed. They must get to work, making the best use they can of the opportunities of doing good which God puts into their hands.

The parable describes the gifts entrusted to Christians as so many sums of money which Christians have to invest in profitable ways. The talent is a sum of money equal to about \$200. But, as we shall all feel, it is not merely the use of money that is intended. God gives us a spiritual capital and spiritual opportunities, what St. Paul calls the gifts of the Spirit (see 1 Cor. 12: 7-11). The great question is, What use are we making of our spiritual opportunities by prayer, by service, by diligent employment of the capacities which belong to us?

I. THE ENTRUSTED GIFTS OF GOD, 14-15.

V. 14. The words, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," which are printed in italics, which indicates that they are not in the original, but are supplied to fill out the sense. The original might be rendered, with Dr. Moffatt, thus: "The case is that of a man going abroad," etc.

Merchants were often required to go abroad on business ventures, and their absence was often prolonged, for they had not, like us, the advantage of swift railways and steamship transport. The merchant in this case entrusts his business temporarily to three employees, who each receive control of part of his capital.

V. 15. Note that the division of capital was not equal, but was in every case proportioned to capacity. It and experience, as well as different degrees of natural ability, should be taken into account. But note also that every servant got something. God does not give to all Christians the same amount of spiritual opportunity, but every Christian has some gift put into his hand. We have not all the same ability, the same force of character, the same eloquence, the same health, the same winning manner. But there is no Christian who has not some special trust from God, some choice gift to use.

II. THE OPPORTUNITIES OF INVESTMENT, 16-18.

Vs. 16, 17. The first two servants at once made use of their gifts. They were grateful for having received them; they were proud to be entrusted with them; they were diligent in using them. And the result was that each doubled his capital. Spiritual gifts, such as love, faith, sympathy, the capacity to serve, grow with exercise. They become twice as strong. Love wins love. Service inspires to service. Where there is gratitude, a sense of responsibility, a willing spirit, there will always be results.

V. 18. But for want of gratitude and real earnestness a man may make nothing of his gifts. This was the case with the third servant. He thought his gift a paltry gift. He hid the precious money in the earth, where it could do no good. He was, as we might say, a malcontent, who had a constant grievance about something or other, and so he hid no good.

III. THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF GOD, 19-28.

V. 19. The time of opportunity, though long protracted, comes to an end for all, and men have to appear before the judgment-seat of God.

Vs. 20, 21. The first wise and industrious servant is able to point to the rich increase of good in the world which his faithful use of his gifts had produced, and he receives his master's "Well done!" Not only so, but he is given a vast extension of opportunity. Note that his great quality, the secret of his success, has been his faithful-

ness, and compare St. Paul's words in 2 Tim. 4: 7-8.

Vs. 22, 23. The same congratulation and the same brilliant acknowledgment are awarded to the second servant, who, with less opportunity, was similarly faithful.

Vs. 24, 25. With the third servant it is different. He has no results to point to, and he takes refuge behind excuses. It at once appears that he has misjudged his master. He accuses him (of being hard, a skin-flint or cheese-parer, and so he says that he lost nerve, and could find nothing better to do with his talent than to hide it in the ground. Some people get so much into the complaining habit that they never see their blessings, and so the blessings never are allowed to fructify. They have always a grievance against the universe, and this blights their life.

Vs. 26-28. But the master will not accept these excuses. He says that the servant, if he was afraid of his master, should have striven all the more to make a diligent use of what gifts he had. And for this reason he must now forfeit all further opportunity. Opportunities are for those who make use of them. At the same time, Jesus warns us against unworthy thoughts of God. Wrong thoughts of God lead men to neglect prayer and to be grudging in service. The result is their own irreparable loss. Whatever we have, money, influence, power, spiritual capacity, is to be used for the increase of good in the world. Otherwise expended, it is thrown away.

"IDEAL
Fashions"
by
Jessie Bell Hamilton



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Refreshments for the Evening Party

BY FLORENCE TAFT EATON.

COLD WEATHER DISHES.

For an evening party where games, music, charades or something similar is to be the entertainment, a little supper should be served about ten o'clock. The table should be arranged beforehand and the food planned so as to be practically ready to serve. One or two helpers (a member of the family or an outsider), will be needed in the kitchen to accomplish the last-minute jobs.

Arrange the table as attractively as possible, and see that the silver is polished and glasses bright. A bare table, partly covered with an ornamental square or dolly, is prettiest. Let the artistic member of the family attend to the decorations. A big colored (or glass) bowl, in which the seasonal flowers are gracefully arranged, makes a charming centerpiece. Use a flower-holder in the bottom so the sprays need not be crowded. A glass basket, which you can buy for 25 cents, makes a lovely container. Four smaller ones (from the 5 and 10 cent store) can be added if you wish; or four tall, slender glass vases (also from the "5 and 10"), each holding a single tall blossom, will be attractive. Or nothing is prettier than a candle-light table. Glass candlesticks and tall colored candles can be obtained from the same invaluable emporium.

Something fairly substantial served hot is used for the main dish. It can be prepared in a chafing-dish on the table, or in the kitchen and brought in at the last moment, in gay bowls or on fancy platters. Arrange a pile of plates (heated) at each corner and on each pile place a few folded dollies or paper napkins. Arrange forks and spoons in fan shape. Plan places for sandwiches, cakes and other dishes to be brought in just before serving. Knickknacks, such as home-made candy, salted peanuts and candied orange peel, can be placed on the table when set. Cold water and glasses are placed on the sideboard or serving-table, and in warm weather an iced drink can be planned for. In cold weather, serve hot cocoa or coffee (poured in the kitchen). Place a marshmallow in each cupful of cocoa.

Should you wish to serve just ice cream and little cakes, with a few knickknacks and beverage, this is sufficient and proper. Following is the recipe for a home-made ice that looks most professional. This is the "packed" sort, that needs no previous freezing. I have often made it myself, with or without help, for as many as 60 young people.

CONCORDIA ORANGE ICE.

One cupful of cold water and 1 tablespoonful of gelatin; let stand 15 minutes, then pour over it a boiling syrup made with 1 cupful each of water and sugar, boiled together for three minutes; stir. Add the juice of 6 oranges and 1 lemon, stir to dissolve, pour into a two-quart brick or other mold. Whip 1 pint of cream until stiff, sweeten to taste, add 1/2 teaspoonful of vanilla, and pour into the mold. The mold should be full. As the cream stays on top and there is a difference in the amount of juice in oranges, it may be necessary to add more orange juice and water. This can be poured in at the side. Rub a little lard in the crack where the cover joints the mold and pack solidly in finely cracked ice and salt (three parts ice to one of cream salt) and let stand about five hours. Blood oranges make most attractive ices by this recipe—or strawberry or raspberry juice can be used. This amount should serve twelve. If you do not have a brick mold, use the can to your freezer.

For a delicate cake follow this recipe: One tablespoonful of soft butter, 1 cupful of sugar, 2 well-beaten eggs, 3/4 cupful of milk, 1 1/4 cupful of pastry flour, 2 1/2 teaspoonfuls of baking-powder, a pinch of salt and 1 teaspoonful each of lemon and vanilla extract. Combine in the order given and bake in very small gem pans. Cover with white and with chocolate frosting, decorating the latter with nut-meats, the former with halved cherries and leaves cut from citron.

In cold weather, serve a substantial dish (plenty of it) with sandwiches or fancy bread and a few trifles.

Ringum Tiddy will please. It requires 1 pint of tomato, highly seasoned and cooked like a sauce. Place in a saucepan or chafing-dish and add 1/4 pound of diced cheese; stir and cook until cheese is melted, adding 1 teaspoonful of mustard and a few drops of Worcestershire sauce (if at hand). Lastly, stir in a beaten egg; cook for a minute and serve hot on toast. Accompany this with plates of thinly sliced brown bread, spread with cream cheese moistened with catsup or milk. Arrange in a wreath of overlapping slices. Plates of any favorite sandwiches can be added, or thin baking-powder biscuits, reheated, buttered, with perhaps a thin bit of crisp bacon in each.

An equally inexpensive menu follows. This requires more time for preparation, but also affords more variety.

Croquettes with Peas and Carrots
Vegetables or Tart Jelly Sandwiches
Sherbet
Fancy Cakes
Coffee or Cocoa

Croquettes can be made of any preferred ingredient. The best brand of canned tuna fish makes delicious croquettes, and is all ready to use—a great advantage. Rinse, drain, flake rather fine the contents of a large can, and mix with a liberal amount of very stiff, highly seasoned cream sauce (about a pint). Spread on a large platter, and when cold and stiffened take off croquette-sized forkfulls, roll with a fork in fine crumbs, then in beaten egg to which two or three spoonfuls of water can be added, then again in crumbs on a board, to shape. Fry in very hot, deep fat; drain on soft paper and repeat for serving. Arrange on a hot platter around a mound of peas and carrots (carrots diced the size of peas), garnish with parsley and serve very hot. This quantity will serve 20 people. Don't try to make the croquettes too large.

Vegetable Sandwiches are made with lettuce or thin slices of tomato or cucumber sprinkled with salt and thinly spread with mayonnaise dressing. Use thin slices of buttered bread, trim off crusts and cut into triangles. Cover with a damp cloth and set in a cold place until needed.

Milk Sherbet is delicious. To make, put 1 quart whole milk in a freezer and pack with salt and ice. When milk is quite cold (so lemon juice does not curdle it) add juice of 4 medium-sized lemons and 1 1/4 cupfuls of sugar, beaten together until sugar is dissolved, then freeze as usual. When fruit is in season, serve the sherbet in glasses and top with a spoonful of crushed and sweetened fruit or berries. A good brand of evaporated milk can be used instead of fresh milk, in making this sherbet. You could also buy plain vanilla ice cream (half the usual amount) and top liberally with whipped cream mixed lightly with quartered strawberries, raspberries or sliced peaches.

Fruit Gelatin is an attractive substitute for ice cream. It is nothing more than a plain lemon jelly, made by the recipes found on the box, with chopped figs, dates and nuts and any fresh fruit or berries added when it begins to stiffen. Serve with boiled custard or whipped cream.

If lemonade is selected as your drink, add a few berries if in season, a little cold tea or a bottle of ginger ale if you wish, and add a bunch of tall sprays of mint to the mixture, converting it into a simple, but delicious, fruit punch.

Eggs are money this month. Make the hens lay. Treat 'em right and they'll themselves.

It is a mistake to cut ice blocks too large. When ice is thick we are apt to overdo this matter and get cakes that weigh more than the average man should try to handle. We cut them a foot each way, and they are heavy enough. Blocks of that size pack well and last long.

MUTT AND JEFF—By Bud Fisher.

