

## ....The Home Department....

### The Lamb Without.

Whene'er I close the door at night  
And turn the creaking key about,  
A pang anew assails my heart—  
I think, "My darling is shut out."  
Think that beneath the starry skies  
He wanders, with his little feet,  
The pines stand still in glad surprise,  
The garden yields its welcome sweet.

Through every well-known path and  
nook

I see his angel footsteps glide,  
As guileless as the Paschal lamb  
That kept the Infant Savior's side.  
His earnest eye, perhaps, can pierce  
The gloom in which his parents sit,  
He wonders what has changed the  
house,  
And why the clouds hang over it.

Within the darkened porch I stand—  
Scarce knowing why I linger long;  
O, could I call thee back to me,  
Bright bird of heaven, with sooth  
or song!

But no—the meanest wretch may  
pause

To bless the shelter of my door;  
Kinsman and guest may enter in,  
But my lost darling—never more.

Yet, waiting on his gentle ghost  
From sorrow's void, as deep and  
dull,

Comes a faint breathing of delight,  
A presence calm and beautiful.  
I have him, not in outstretched arms,  
I hold him, not with straining sight,  
While in blue depths of quietude  
Drops, like a star, my still "Good  
night."

—Julia Ward Howe.

### Centralization of Rural Schools.

Much interest is being awakened in the matter of providing better educational facilities for the children of farm homes. The burden and shame of illiteracy have long and unjustly been laid upon innocent and helpless shoulders, and it is time the state and nation were awakening to the fact that the farmer is a citizen, and as much entitled to care and consideration as those of the cities and villages.

The country schools are now practically "experiment stations" where boys and girls, themselves of inferior education generally, are allowed to teach their "first terms," regardless of fitness for the place or position. To these schools a few small children are sent, as the weather, or work on the farm permits, and by the time they are of an age to take an interest in educational matters, they have reached the limits of the teacher's ability to teach, or lost interest in the monotonous routine, and so stop at home, through preference.

What the farmer needs is not more schools, nor more months of the usual sort of teaching, but better schools and abler teachers; schools to which the large boys and girls can go with

some assurance of being benefited by the attendance.

Heretofore the only way for the average farmer to do, in order to educate his children was to leave the farm and settle in the cities, villages and towns. But this method has not always worked for the benefit of either the parents, or the children. In sending the children away from home to schools, the worst feature is that this course weans them away from farm life, because of the tendency of the average "boarding school" pupil to ridicule and deprecate the occupation of farmer.

In many states, much attention is given to the subject of the centralizing of rural schools, the purpose of which is "to provide the best schools possible for the children of farmers, and, second, to reduce the average annual expenditures of school corporations. The experimental period is past, and rural communities in many counties and states have found the relief so anxiously sought."

To these consolidated schools, the farm children are conveyed in hacks, at the public expense, and, instead of many little, poorly equipped "cross-roads" school houses, with a teacher whose ability was in keeping with the equipments, there is one good school within four or five miles of the home, and the "health of the children is better guarded, being conveyed to and from their homes in comfortable vehicles, instead of having to travel through mud, rain or snow for a mile or more, to reach a cold, draughty, badly ventilated 'cross-roads' school house."

Better teachers, better equipments, better classifications, larger classes, larger attendance, increased interest, greater punctuality, longer and more regular terms, greater incentives for attendance from older pupils, study of special branches, and many other advantages are claimed in its behalf.

### Hair Wash.

A useful wash for the hair, especially for those who easily take cold, is made by taking five cents' worth each of powdered camphor and borax, and pouring over them one pint of boiling water. Let this stand until cold, then bottle. When washing the hair, add a tablespoonful of this solution to the warm, soft water. It is very cleansing, and the camphor prevents any chill being felt.

### Present For a Gentleman.

A never ending question among women who are skilled in the use of needle or brushes is, "What can I give that is a suitable present for a man." Now-a-days, men prefer to buy their slippers, gloves, neckties, etc., but every man is delighted with some sachets which will hold his gloves, handkerchiefs and ties. Men do not like faint tones, but the deep purples, bright crimsons, and rich browns and

greens please them. Three different sizes may be chosen. The long one, for ties, the almost square one for gloves, and the large one for handkerchiefs. A pretty set made of a combination of colors is one half the outside crimson, the other half green, while the lining is purple. Crimson, purple and green sounds very gaudy, but these are deep, not bright, tones, and there is not the slightest touch of femininity about them. And decoration by needle or brush must also be in designs wholly masculine.

The pocket pin-cushion is old, but it is nevertheless greatly appreciated.

### It is "Lady" Again

For a decade the word "lady" has been tabooed by polite society, says the New York Herald, but from London comes the tidings that Queen Alexandra has declared herself in favor of a revival of the word. "Woman" formed an excellent substitute for that frequently abused word and "lady" became almost the slur that "woman" was 10 years ago.

The queen of England has voiced her objection to the word "woman" on the ground that it sounds harsh and indelicate, and that, inasmuch as the English for hundreds of years designated their gentlewomen as "ladies" the impulses of a squeamish set should not alter the dictionary.

Americans returning from London say the queen's declaration is manifesting itself, and the most fashionable persons in England use the word "lady" enthusiastically. It is assumed in New York there will be a revival of "lady" in sympathy with the London decrees.

### Before the School Days.

It is conceded by all that the foundation on which to build all later education is laid in the home. It is here that the dawning intelligence receives its first and most lasting impressions, and the first teaching is all done by example. These are the lessons easiest to learn, and the child will learn these lessons with no urging, from the first moment of its life, from its nurses and surroundings. How important, then, that the mothers should realize this truth and strive earnestly to instill into the awakening mind only lessons that will benefit and bless the growing intellect!

A child of average intellect need never be lonely, and should be taught to find food for thought in everything about it. There is much to be learned outside of the printed page; the book of nature lies always open to our hand, and the child should be, from the very first evidence of interest in things about it—the "taking notice"—taught habits of observation.

A few days ago I asked a bright boy of twelve years to tell me how a bird walks. He did not know, and was surprised, on noticing the home canary, to see that it did not walk at all, but, as he expressed it, "got around by hops." When told to find out the difference in the lying down and rising up of the cow and the horse, it was a revelation to him.

A child should be frequently asked

to describe things, or animals, or localities. The powers of observation can be greatly increased by intelligent direction. There is much that they do not know, simply because they have never thought of it. There are thousands of things that may be taught to the child before its school days begin, and if it have wise training, the early lessons for the school room will have special significance for the little pupil, because it has been taught to think, and can realize what the simple sentences may mean. It should be taught to name the birds and study their habits; and bees, beetles, the various house-flies, the different kinds of moths, spiders, cocoons, etc.; the difference between the fur of pussy and the hair of Ponto.

Teach it to ask questions. If you cannot at once answer them, tell the child to try to think out its own answer by a certain time, and, by that time, do you look up the answer yourself, and help it to the solution of the question. Let them learn to trust you. Do not tell it "just anything," and let it go. It will soon learn to doubt you, if you do. A child will often ask questions that would puzzle a savant.

Do not tell your child an untruth. If you do not know the answer required, and cannot "find out," tell it what you do know, and stimulate it to search out the truth for itself, from books or from others.

By all means, be your child's best, wisest friend. Let it feel that it is free to bring to you all its little worries, griefs, perplexities, confessions of wrong-doings, or enthusiasm over new-found ideas. Make the home-school a place of perpetual enrichment of the little mind in every way you can. Here is the wonderful a b c that will enter into all after education. See that it is learned aright.

### Save the Screen Wire.

Every housewife worthy the name loves to have her home supplied with those numberless little conveniences that may be made by skillful fingers, costing little but time and patience. Few, however, are aware of the possibilities contained in a yard or two of screen wire when managed with good taste and a pair of old scissors.

For a waste-basket use an old hoop from a wooden pail, a round board for the bottom same size as the hoop (which is used to strengthen the top) and a piece of screen wire eighteen inches wide and long enough to reach around the board and lap one inch. Sew the screen wire together at the lap, and bind it top and bottom with a strip of mohair braid. Wind the hoop with a strip of red calico and sew it to the inside of the screen wire close to the edge, sewing through the braid. Cover the board with the red calico, and slip the screen wire down over it. It should fit tight and be tacked in place with a row of brass upholsterer's tacks.

When one has made successfully one useful article from screen wire a dozen others will suggest themselves to an ingenious mind. A very neat and convenient work basket for spools,