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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday,

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Books for the Homemaker." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A. and Better Homes in America.

Leaflet available: "The Homemaker's Own Library," by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter. Order from Better Homes in America, 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.

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Time was when the reading of women in the home was confined largely to poetry and novels. Today homemakers are also very interested in books about their job. If you don't believe it, you should have a look at the letters that come in on our mail every day. Some come from young wives, just beginning housekeeping, who want to read up on the many different phases of their new occupation. Some ask about good books on budgets or house-furnishing or marketing. Others ask what to read on food and cooking or running their new homes efficiently. Letters also come from young mothers who want books on baby feeding or child guidance or clothing their families. Older homemakers want to keep up with the latest developments and hear about new ideas and methods in housekeeping. They inquire about the latest literature on nutrition or household management or social problems of the family.

No one can tell me, after all those letters, that homemakers today are not alert and up-and-coming. Doctors, lawyers, engineers and business men have had their professional libraries for many years. They have kept up in their own special fields by reading. So why not homemakers, who are engaged in the biggest business in the world?

A neighbor of mine has set aside a book shelf near her desk for what she calls her private library. On this shelf she keeps literature on the home--her books, the helpful bulletins and pamphlets she has collected, and her housekeeping scrap book. That shelf is both a convenience and a decoration in her living room. Since pamphlets, because of their size, are likely to slip about and look untidy on the shelf, my friend keeps hers in attractive pamphlet holders--those cardboard boxes made for offices that are about the size of a large book, but are open at the back and top. A row of these holders looks much like a row of books and is most convenient for holding pamphlets and leaflets of different sizes and shapes. My friend has covered hers with decorative paper that harmonizes with her room and adds an attractive touch of color.

It doesn't matter where you keep your homemaking library--whether in the living room, on your desk, or in the sunny rest corner of your kitchen. The point is to have one--to have a collection of literature in some convenient spot



that you can turn to easily when you need to solve some housekeeping problem. Collect for yourself, year by year, books worth owning that you will want to refer to again and again.

Today I'm going to answer some of your queries by telling you about some volumes for your home library. These books, let me say in advance, are written to meet the needs of the average American home operating on a moderate income. Of course, I can only give you a few of the many excellent books on the market, and more are being published constantly.

Just a minute. My neighbor wants me to add one suggestion before I proceed. She advises keeping your household bookshelf where the man of the house will see it. In fact, she thinks it is worth while to tempt him to read some of the books himself.

"There's nothing like letting husbands and fathers in on modern ideas of keeping house and raising a family," my friend declares. "But if often needs to be done tactfully. Family men should read especially the newer writings on child guidance and family relationships. Unless fathers understand and cooperate with mothers in such matters, successful family life is difficult."

Now, if you have a pencil nearby, you might get it out. I'm going to give you the titles of some books you might like to own or draw from your public library to read. These books--and others-- are all listed in a leaflet for homemakers recently published by Better Homes in America.

First, let's talk over some good books on the house. And, as Benjamin Franklin would have said, let's consider a firm financial basis to begin with. How should the family income be spent? How can the young housekeeper plan a successful budget and keep household accounts? How can she learn to buy wisely?

Many books have been written on these subjects. I'd like to mention two today that I think will be especially helpful. One is a small volume called Spending the Family Income. This has been a standard and much-used volume for several years and is a reliable guide to managing the family pocketbook. Then there's a book entitled Successful Family Life on the Moderate Income. That ought to be useful to most of us. It contains information on both budgeting and buying.

A book that has provoked much thought on the subject of buying, and that will be especially interesting to your husband is Your Money's Worth -- a plea to the housewife to consider whether she is really getting value for money spent.

Next, what books shall we read on modern household management? All of us want to know how to apply the principles of scientific management to the everyday tasks of housekeeping. We don't want to be so tied down by household chores that we have no time for satisfactory living. There is a volume called Efficient Housekeeping or Household Engineering that takes up such subjects as efficient arrangement of equipment, planning and scheduling duties, and labor-saving devices. You will also be interested in Mrs. Lillian Gilbreth's book, The Homemaker and her Job. Mrs. Gilbreth is an industrial engineer who has for years been training efficiency experts for factory and industrial work.

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She is also the mother of eleven children. In this book she discusses how women can apply business organization to the home, thus saving time, effort, and money and getting greater returns both materially and in happier living.

If you are planning to build or buy a home now, or one of these days, you will be interested in the House Beautiful Building Annual-- that large, beautifully illustrated book of which is a practical manual full of information on materials and methods of construction. For the artistic side of the house--arrangement, decoration and so on--there is a book called "Art In Everyday Life."

Of course, every homemaker's library will contain some volumes on the all-important subject of food. What to feed the family? How to prepare it? How to purchase it? How to serve it? Homemakers ask more questions about food than any other subject.

One of the best, most interesting, reliable and helpful books for the housewife is Feeding the Family by Mary Swartz Rose. It discusses correct meals for different ages and gives much readable information on the fundamentals of nutrition.

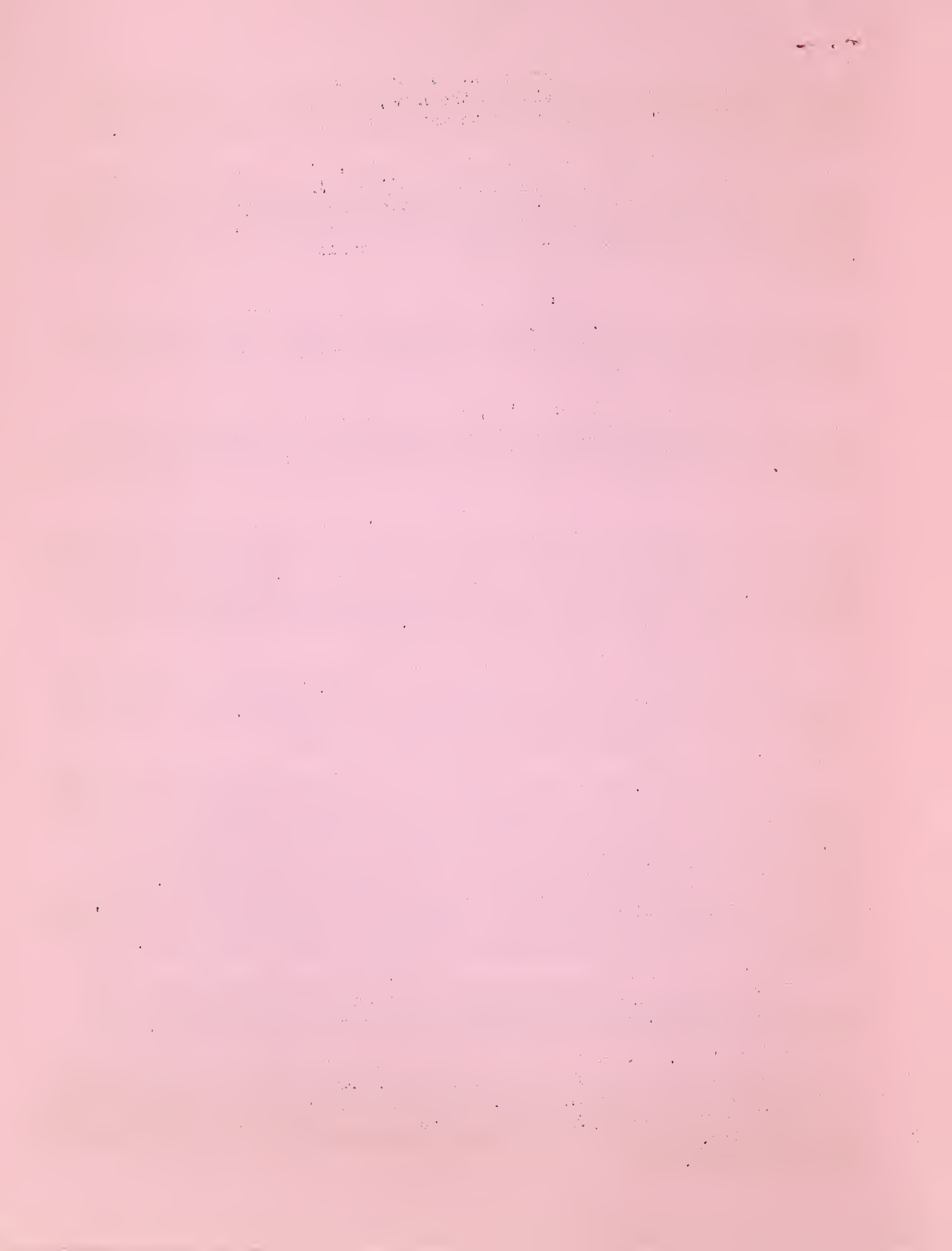
As for cook books, the world is full of them. They are published in almost every language and country today, but America leads the world in quantity. There are many small cook books. There are many fat, comprehensive ones. Most homes need a standard cook book, large enough to take in recipes for many different foods. Two I might suggest are The Delineator Cook Book, and that old stand-by The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book.

Purchasing food? That's a subject well worth studying. You can read about it in a volume called Food Purchasing for the Home. How to buy meat is a special question that many housekeepers ask for information on. There's a helpful book called Essentials in the Selection of Meat.

Now let's talk about the literature on children--literature for fathers as well as mothers to read. For reliable and practical information on the care and development of the normal child, read Child Care and Training by Marion Faegre (pronounced Fay-gree) and John Anderson. This book discusses the physical, mental and emotional life of the child and gives suggestions for habit training, constructive discipline and handling of special problems. Some of the chapters deal with the development of curiosity, with imagination, truth and falsehood, and with play. Such reading provides parents with a good background for directing the social and emotional life of the child wisely.

Most valuable in this changing world with its changing ideas is the book called Parents and Sex Education. Though written especially for the parents of young children, it is valuable reading for parents of all ages.

Before I forget it, I want to mention a book on health. Every home needs a first-aid manual of some sort for ready reference. And every woman needs to know something about caring for the sick. Let me suggest that inexpensive and most helpful little volume--The American Red Cross Textbook on Home Hygiene and the Care of the Sick.



Turning to reading matter for the home dressmaker and for the mother interested in clothing her children correctly. For general information there is Principle of Clothing Selection. For home sewing and dressmaking there is The New Butterick Dressmaker.

Well, that's enough to start with. If you want the complete list of titles, as well as publishers and a brief review of each book, write to Better Homes in America for their leaflet, "The Homemaker's Own Library."

Tomorrow: "More Household Questions." And, of course a menu.

