S. Africa Trains for Homemaking

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S. Africa Trains for Homemaking

By Marie Vermeulen

Scattered over the miles and miles of South African "veldt" are the farmers living in their quiet homes. The farmer is a cheerful and friendly host to all strangers and travelers, but he must also be a hardworking father to build up and keep his home going regardless of the hard times caused by drought, locusts and new diseases.

Realizing that the farmer forms the backbone of the South African nation the government started to assist him in fighting his natural foes, and in giving him advice and a better chance to secure success. Therefore attention was given over to the very important factor of home life.

On government expense women were sent to England and Canada, and later to the United States, to study home economics. Twelve years ago they started their work as the Division of Home Economics in the Department of Agriculture. They tried to organize the women into branches but that was very difficult at first because of prejudice which was a result of their suffering in the past from overseas influences. Only after much struggle and effort did these first leaders succeed in organizing a few branches and in gaining the confidence of a small section. Today the organization has grown to about three hundred branches over the union.

Each home economics branch consists of at least 10 members with a president and secretary to lead them. They meet monthly and have discussion or demonstrations on a definite home problem, and usually some form of entertainment. They compete through exhibiting at the different country and province shows, and spend considerable effort in enlivening interest in correct and efficient work.

Twice a year home economics extension officer visits each branch for one or two days, lecturing and demonstrating on a desired subject. The women are interested in all problems arising before the homemaker. They are beginning to live correctly and are keen to know about correct dietary standards. Previously they trusted, in ignorance, to chance in getting the requirements essential for living, and the only reason that the nation's health remained good was the use of the many natural food materials. Now, however, with all the modern changes the need for definite knowledge and guidance, especially that which regards the feeding of babies and growing children, is very great.

With the increase of interest in home economics the school had to do more in teaching the subject and changes were made, but it is still very far from being satisfactory and practical. They have called on colleges and universities to train teachers and leaders to do the work, and eight years ago they started to clear the ground and lay a foundation in standards and methods for home economics education applicable to South African atmosphere and requirements.

Does Your Dress Fit?

(Continued from page 1) There is a lengthwise grain line indicated. Draw a line at right angles to this lengthwise line, joining the points at the opposite sides of the pattern which will come together at the under armseye. These lines represent the crosswise and lengthwise grain of the sleeve and should be used thus in laying the pattern on the material. Be sure your sleeve is long enough for your bent arm, wide enough at the elbow and forearm and that the cap—the area between the horizontal line and the top of the sleeve—is long enough and wide enough.

If the cap of the sleeve is too short, as in figure 3, the grain of the material is drawn up out of its normal horizontal line. To remedy this, either let out the shoulder seam right at the top of the sleeve or take a deeper seam on the sleeve only just at the under arm, and ease in the fullness.

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