

The Home Department.

Conducted by Helen Watts McVey.

The Conductor of this Department will undertake to answer questions that interest Housekeepers. Address care Commoner.

Her Choice.

She writes: " 'Tis a weary head that wears

This wreath from the hand of fame;
I bartered the peace of a yearning heart

For this, and an empty name,
A weary head and a famished heart,
A hand that has nerveless grown!

I walk with the restless, surging throng
And feel that I walk alone.

I look on a picture of sweet home love,
And envy its simply fare;
For I bartered all when I chose the crown

Ambition bade me wear.
Love came to me; but his shining eyes
Were eclipsed by this costly thing;
I would not fetter my spirit proud
In the space of a wedding ring.

So I chose to walk—as I walk today;
O, desolate, hungry heart!

And the path for me has ever led,
From my sweet, lost love apart.
Yet I hear the cooing of baby lips
In my dreamings, day and night;
Glad eyes flash up from their sinless depth,

And I cannot bear the sight.

For they waken a dream of the olden time—

Of days I would fain forget;
O, foolish heart! can your costly crown
But yield you this vain regret!
A weary life. Yet, a brief, sweet while
This glittering toy was fair;
Now, under its glitter, my starving heart

Faints sadly, with none to care.

And I sigh for a day in the far, far past

Ablaze with its matchless glow;
In the beautiful aisles of the future life,

I shall find it again, I know.
Dear eyes, with your soft love-light ashine,

We shall never meet again;
The passion dreams of the olden time
Lie dead in a sea of pain.

We shall walk no more in the twilight gray,

'Neath the silent, watching stars,
Nor hand touch hand, 'till the warden grim

Undoeth the golden bars.
And then, in the light of the clearer day,

When each shall have found our part,

I shall, may be, wear in its golden sheen,

A crown worth a woman's heart.

Aimless Reading.

I quote from a friend who is very observant, in regard to how some women abuse the privilege of reading. "and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

"I notice this peculiarity among a certain class of city women—the more they read, the less they know. Reading does them more harm than good—not because what they read is not good; it is the best of its kind, generally, as they have the choice in the public libraries; but, because they read for entertainment only, their minds are like a colander; nearly everything passes through it; but little is retained and that little not of the best. They make no effort to grasp an idea and retain it, or a fact, to quote it.

"Ask them, half an hour after the book or paper is laid aside, what was the central idea? They cannot tell you; what was the thread upon which the events were strung? they do not

know; who was the author? they don't remember; what lesson was it intended to convey? they haven't the least idea! And even if they do make an attempt to tell you anything about it, they are oftener wrong than right! Their morbid, craving for 'something to read,' is insatiable.

"These women are mental dyspeptics; they suffer from a chronic indigestion of the mind, just as the glutton suffers with his stomach. They are sadly lacking on the useful side of life; are restless, discontented, filled with morbid longings and distorted ideas; they cannot converse intelligently upon any subject, and their time is spent principally in retailing the latest scandal, neighborhood gossip, or complaining about the unsatisfactory state of their home affairs, and their only interest in their husbands' business affairs is in getting what money they can out of him, and spending it upon the most injudicious purchases their morbid fancies might suggest."

Unhappily this is too true, and we find this morbid taste not only among women, but there are men, also, who care for no other reading than that recorded by the trashy, sensational stories published in cheap weekly or monthly papers and flung broadcast about the land. These people are generally considered—by their own class—as "great readers." One lady whom I know, was often referred to as a "great reader," because of her acknowledged intelligence, excellent conversational powers, and the possession of a large fund of general and special information upon many subjects. But this misnomer she resented bitterly.

"I am not a 'great reader,'" she would say, pointing to her small and select stock of books, and limited supply of first class periodicals; "I am a student, and I read only the best I can get. I am careful to read only what will strengthen and develop my thinking powers—often but a sentence or a paragraph in a day, carrying this about me with my work, analyzing, digesting and assimilating. I have no time for trashy, useless stories, and only touch such things when troubled with insomnia and wishing for sleep. To me, they are simply narcotics, deadening the mental faculties, and to be used with the same care and caution with which I should handle other poisons."

How long will our sisters be in learning that such "reading habits" are highly pernicious, and, instead of being a mark of large intellectual culture, are a sure sign of the deterioration of the mind.

"Past the Experimental."

Let us not be afraid of the current rallery concerning the "new woman." She has been found not to be such a terrible creature after all. Many of us, whether conscious of it or not, belong to her class. About the only difference between the old woman and the new is, that the new woman knows more, is more alert, has better command of her mental faculties, has stronger nerves, and is younger at sixty than the old woman was at thirty. She keeps in touch with the world about her, and seems to possess within herself the fountain of perennial youth.

Even the man is losing his terror of the creature, and has been known to have married her—when he could get her consent to it—and it has transpired that she is no more—if as much—a failure, domestically, or maternal-

ly, than was her sister of the "good old days." Conjurally, there does not seem to be any discredit attached to her.

Science, art and literature are alive with interests of vital importance to women, of whatever station or occupation, and it is all nonsense to try to restrict the idea of the "woman's sphere" to the confines of the dishpan or the kitchen range. It is allowed, now-a-days, that a woman may even write books—good ones, too, or talk intelligently of the affairs of the nation, without its seriously detracting from her efficiency in any department of domestic economy. The "woman movement" is no longer an experiment, and the history of those who have devoted themselves to the uplifting of their sex is full of most notable examples of true, helpful wives, wise, loving mothers, excellent housekeepers, and charming companions, and whose home life has been as beautiful as their public work was broad and sympathetic.

True, a few have failed; have gained notoriety rather than public approval, and have gone through the divorce court because of domestic infelicity—not always solely their fault; but there are thousands upon thousands of the noblest of women working, not only before the world, but silently, within well-kept homes, beside well-cared for cradles, and the carefulness with which they have kept the royal robes of pure womanhood unspotted, attest the single-mindedness with which they devote themselves to the betterment of the world.

Pop-Corn.

The little folks have just brought in a pan full of buttered pop corn, and I am sure the little boys and girls who read The Commoner would like to know how they make it. Have you a corn popper? One will cost you five or ten cents, and, with careful handling, will last you several seasons. It is no trouble at all to pop corn in a popper, and it pops so much better, too.

After you have popped a panful, warm a tablespoonful of butter to every gallon of the popped corn; pour the butter over the corn and stir all together; sprinkle a little salt over it, and stir again. After a few trials you will know just how to do it. Meat fryings, from nice fresh pork, is preferred by some, but either is nice.

Pop-corn balls are easily made, too, and everybody likes fresh pop-corn balls.

Boil your syrup until it will harden in cold water, then pour it over the popped corn. Butter your hands and work the corn into balls; you will soon learn how.

When Dinner Is Late.

In the best regulated households, there are, at times, a few minutes' delay about meals, and at such times, instead of a man pacing up and down the room, glaring at the clock, scowling into the kitchen, or demanding with an air of outraged dignity, "how long he is to be kept waiting for his breakfast," "how soon is he to have his dinner," or "why, in halifax, supper is not ready," he might, with a great deal more credit to himself, take up the paper and read until the meal is announced. Or, if he is a particularly nice man, and loves his wife, he might catch up the baby, out of her arms, or from under her feet, and leave her free to get things in shape a little faster; or, if there is no baby, it should not

be at all beneath his dignity to finish setting the table, help dish up the victuals, see that the water pail is freshly filled, or add a stick of wood to the famishing fire.

When the viands are placed on the table, and the family seated about it, don't take the trouble to tell the cook that the bread is burned, or the meat scorched, or the potatoes underdone. She knew it before you did, and the knowledge did not add to the tranquillity of her overstrained nerves. She just had to "hurry things, out of fear of your temper, and you are far more to blame than she is in the matter.

If the coffee is lacking in strength because the water was not boiling hot when used, don't startle her by shouting, in a voice of indignant inquiry, "Are you out of coffee?" No, sir; that is not the way to make her believe in your masculine superiority. Why, even a foolish little woman could get out of temper and make the air blue with scolding. It don't take brains to do that! Just make her believe that she married an angel by saying not a word, and if she tearfully offers an excuse for the shortcoming, just tell her you don't mind—that it don't oc-

For Singers and Speakers

The New Remedy For Catarrh is Very Valuable

A Grand Rapids gentleman who represents a prominent manufacturing concern and travels through central and southern Michigan, relates the following regarding the new catarrh cure, he says:

"After suffering from catarrh of the head, throat and stomach for several years, I heard of Stuart's Catarrh Tablets quite accidentally and like everything else I immediately bought a package and was decidedly surprised at the immediate relief it afforded me and still more to find a complete cure after several weeks' use.



"I have a little son who sings in a boy's choir in one of our prominent churches, and he is greatly troubled with hoarseness and throat weakness, and on my return home from a trip I gave him a few of the tablets one Sunday morning when he had complained of hoarseness. He was delighted with their effect, removing all huskiness in a few minutes and making the voice clear and strong.

"As the tablets are very pleasant to the taste, I had no difficulty in persuading him to use them regularly.

"Our family physician told us they were an antiseptic preparation of undoubted merit and that he himself had no hesitation in using and recommending Stuart's Catarrh Tablets for any form of catarrh.

"I have since met many public speakers and professional singers who used them constantly. A prominent Detroit lawyer told me that Stuart's Catarrh Tablets kept his throat in fine shape during the most trying weather, and that he had long since discarded the use of cheap lozenges and troches on the advice of his physician that they contained so much tolu, potash and opium as to render their use a danger to health."

Stuart's Catarrh Tablets are large pleasant tasting lozenges composed of catarrhal antiseptics, like Red Gum, Blood Root, etc., and sold by druggists everywhere at 50 cents for full treatment.

They act upon the blood and mucous membrane and their composition and remarkable success has won the approval of physicians, as well as thousands of sufferers from nasal catarrh, throat troubles and catarrh of stomach.

A little book on treatment of catarrh mailed free by addressing F. A. Stuart Co., Marshall, Mich.