



Changed

O, days that grow so chill and white,
Beneath the gray December's pall,
I watch you, with a sickening sense
Of something gone, beyond recall.
The hours drag by—funereal train,
With mournful step and drooping
wings,
And to the russet garb they wear
A dull, cold sense of heartache
clings.

Was it but yesterday the sun
Rode up the sky with joyous pace,
And touched with flame the banners
gay
The woodlands flaunted in his face?
The hillsides flamed and flared with
light,
The valleys glowed with tyrian dyes,
While golden gleamed the ripened
fields,
And blue as sapphires shone the
skies.

The lark sang on the morning air,
The quail piped from the garden wall,
And from the wold the whippoorwill
Sent forth his lonesome, plaintive
call.
All through the lonely, nocturn hours,
The insect world, in wild unrest,
Shrilled loud with varied orchestras—
A medley grand, from Nature's
breast.

Now, all is changed. Through russet
woods,
The low winds sweep, with mourn-
ful sigh,
The noisy insect world is hushed;
The late birds, silent, southward fly.
The stubble where the partridge piped
Is gray as garb of cloistered nun,
And all the life and light seems fled
From out the earth and sky and sun.

O, fading day! O, sinking sun!
O, sky, so clouded, cold and gray!
How like art thou, to heart of mine,
From which all warmth seems passed
away!
What matter all the princely gifts
The dying year to others bore,
Since it has robbed me of my all,
And left me old and lone and poor!
H. W. M.

Home Chats

When this number of The Commoner reaches our thousands of readers, the fading twilight of the dying year will lie about us; the dawn of the New Year, close at hand. While we lift hopeful, longing hearts to greet the new, many of us will look through tears at the passing of the old, remembering the blessings the twelve-month now closing has brought us. It is a blessed provision of Nature that, in saying goodbye there lingers few memories of any pain; we remember only the good. We know that our memory-house holds many rare gem—many a priceless picture.

Into all lives, however, sheltered pain and discouragements have come, and to many, the shadows have been heavy with heartache; but the sun-

BETTER THAN SPANKING

Spanking does not cure children of urine difficulties. If it did there would be few children that would do it. There is a constitutional cause for this. Mrs. M. Summers, Box 169, Notre Dame Ind., will send her home treatment to any mother. She asks no money. Write her today if your children trouble you in this way. Don't blame the child. The chances are it can't help it.

shine has been warm and heart-cheering, and in its glow and comfort the chill of the shadow has been tempered. Lessons have been learned; successes and failures have blessed us, for if we read them aright, we must see that failure carries with it blessings as often as do successes. It is not always blessed, or even best, to have our own way; we do not always know.

Sitting at my desk, today, the earth without white and glistening with snow and ice, while within, the pale radiance of the low-lying winter's sun strains warmly through the tangle of green foliage that fills my south window, I am thinking of the many rays of heart-sunshine I have to thank you for—my wide-scattered band of helpful readers. And the longing to repay you in the only way I can do so brings the thought of you very close to my heart. And there is such a multitude of you! Did you ever think of it? From the borders of the sunny summer seas of the far south to the ice-bound islands of the frozen north; from the stormy coasts of the Atlantic to the still waters of the Pacific, our "wireless telegraphy" reaches into many, many homes; and I know that in these many homes are warm, true hearts and home-keeping instincts. And I know a few of these home-keepers are not women, but they are home-keepers, and as such they belong to the home band. Down in the hearts of each of these is cherished "a dream of fair women," and the hope that some sweet day, a woman's bright presence may share their joys and profit by their homely endeavors. Shall we not help them to prepare the new home, or to brighten the old, in all the ways we can?

And to that end, I am going to ask you again, to help me by your suggestions, for which I shall look earnestly, expectantly. I know you all wish the Home Department to be ideal. I am sure I do, and to that end, I shall welcome criticism as cordially as kind word of approbation. But I want to hear from you. May I not? And in token of this, I wish each of you a heartily Happy New Year.

Query Box

(Many "Querists" forget that it is impossible for an answer to appear in the Query Box under two weeks from date of receiving their queries. If the answer is wanted sooner, it is best to send a stamped, addressed envelope, or at least, full address, that I may answer by mail. I am always glad to help you, and hope you will give me the opportunity of doing so, often.)

Mrs. C. H. W., Oregon, Mrs. M. A. M., Kansas, and several others, will please accept thanks for timely recipes, and for kind words.

Sara M.—Sorry, but your letter reached me too late to benefit you.

Edma.—After washing the face, neck and arms well in hot, soapy water, rinse in hot water, dry with a soft cloth and rub into the skin freely cocoa butter, just heated to melting. Do not use vaseline or castor oil.

Alicia.—Teaspoonful of cream of tartar in half a glass of water, hot or cold, every morning before breakfast. Teaspoonful of pure olive oil every day before breakfast and after supper. This for sallow complexion.

John H.—A monthly list of the pub-

lications of the agricultural department will be mailed you regularly, if you send name, address and a request for it to the secretary of agriculture, Washington, D. C. Many of them are free.

Mrs. M. C. W.—For rose sachet powder, mix three ounces of corn starch with one ounce orris root powdered, and pass through a fine sieve; pour on this eight drops of attar of roses and mix well. For violet powder, four ounces of orris root powdered, twenty drops essence of bergamot, and twenty drops essence of ambergris.

C. B.—Write to superintendent of documents, Washington, D. C., asking for Bulletin No. 88, bureau of chemistry. The pamphlet contains 46 pages, and will cost you five cents. As stamps will not be accepted, get a piece of pasteboard, cut in it a hole the size of a nickel, put your nickel in the hole, paste thin paper over both sides of it, put it in your letter and it will go all right.

Busy B.—For stuffed beefsteak, get a nice, thick, tender piece of round steak, make a dressing of bread crumbs as you would for stuffing a turkey, spread it over the steak, roll it and secure it with skewers or tie it with twine. Put it in the oven as you would roast, a cupful of boiling water in the pan, cover, and bake forty minutes; take off the cover, set it on the top grate and brown. Thicken the gravy and serve hot.

Beatrice.—For sage tea as a simple tonic, one large teaspoonful to a teacupful of boiling water and steeped for an hour at boiling point, is right. When the scalp is not diseased, this will stop falling hair if persisted in. Sage tea formula given in issue of December 2, is both a stain and a tonic. (2) For an egg shampoo, beat a fresh egg into a pint of tepid water; no soap; wash the hair as you would with water; it will make its own lather and cleanse; rinse in several waters. (3) Kerosene (coal oil) is recommended as a tonic, but there are pleasanter ones. (4) No permanent value. (5) Use cocoa butter instead of vaseline. See reply to Edma. (6) See article, "For the Hair" in another column. (7) Do not find recipe asked for, but give another: One gallon of rye in the grain; wash; cover with water in which small handful of salt has dissolved and bring to a boil; when boiled about five minutes, drain off water and let dry. Parch as you would green coffee, and grind as wanted. For a family of four, take about a pint, pour boiling water over it, boil a few minutes, let settle, and serve as you would coffee, with sugar and cream, if liked. Many thanks for cordial encouragement.

For The Hair

So many friends have asked for help in keeping the hair nice, I am going to "lump" a few of the best things I have been able to gather, and ask those interested to clip the article and paste it in a scrap book, where it will be available when wanted. The recipes may not be alike beneficial to all, and I would advise you to ask your druggist's advice before using. They are all highly recommended. In order that a tonic may benefit, the scalp must be in good condition and free from dandruff.

For Dandruff.—One ounce of flowers of sulphur to one quart of water; let stand several hours until it will set-

tle, stirring occasionally. When settled, saturate the scalp with the clear liquid every morning until relief is obtained. Sulphur in solution is considered one of the best hair tonics.

2.—One ounce each of gum camphor and borax in a pint and a half of cold, soft water. When dissolved, wash the scalp with the solution, rubbing well but gently, let dry, and afterward, rub into the scalp a little pure oil.

3.—Ten grains of corrosive sublimate to five ounces of distilled witch hazel. If this is considered too strong by your druggist, use five grains of the sublimate to five ounces of witch hazel; the cure will be effected in a little longer time. The corrosive sublimate is poison, and it must be used as directed, "a little at a time," and must be kept safely. Apply morning and evening with a bit of old soft linen or a bit of absorbent cotton, a little at a time to the scalp only. If the scalp is very tender, before using the dandruff lotion at night rub a little cologne into the scalp very gently. Do not wet the hair, or use a fine-tooth comb, or brush it much. After the first week, use the lotion only once a day, gradually lengthening the interval between uses until the scalp is well. Once in two weeks, wash the head with the yolk of an egg beaten into a pint of tepid water; rinse well in clear water and dry, putting the hair up loosely. Some claim that the scalp should be wet before using the shampoo, but there is little difference.

Tonic for the Hair.—After the dandruff is cured, try this for a tonic: Forty grains of quinine, scant half-cup of table salt in one quart of good bay rum. If the hair is oily enough, use this alone, but if dry, add an ounce of castor oil to the formula. Use twice a day, wetting the scalp well with a sponge. Use the egg shampoo once in three or four weeks.

Jaborandi Tonic.—For restoring gray or faded hair to its former color, have your druggist put up fifteen grammes of tincture of Jaborandi, nine grammes of lanoline and sixty grammes of glycerine. Apply to the scalp every night, and in the morning wet the hair with sage tea tonic made of a teaspoonful of sage (powdered) to a teacupful of boiling water; apply with a sponge, and use the egg shampoo every two weeks.

Coal oil applied to the scalp at night, rubbing thoroughly into the roots of the hair, is recommended as a scalp tonic, but is not pleasant to handle.

Mistakes so often occur in the printing of matter, that it would be well to submit all recipes calling for drugs to your druggist before using.

Plants in Winter

To the flower-lover, a sitting room is not furnished without a few plants in the sunniest window. They are the only bit of green life which most of us see for half the year, and to keep them in health is not only a necessity, but a duty, if we ask of them the pleasure they are so ready to give us. But they are too often "killed by kindness" rather than neglect, and this cruelty is more often due to ignorance than to undue solicitude on our part. In the quiet time, when there is little growth, they do not need much water, and should have no stimulants. They are often subjected to violent transitions of temperature, and especially excessive heat. They must not be chilled, but fresh air is essential, and the air we breathe, charged with the carbonic acid our lungs give off, is what they like best; they feed on it, retaining the carbon if they are growing in full light, and thus their cultivation is, physically as well as aesthetically, beneficial to human occupants.

The dry air of our sitting rooms makes evaporation rapid, and water enough to keep the soil in the pots moist should be given them; but they