



The Home Department

Conducted by
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Sunken Bells

Off by the blazing ingle
I've heard the strange old tale,
How under the swell of ocean,
Swung by the wintry gale,
Crusted and tarnished and tangled,
In the holy night of the year,
The bells in the waters buried
Peal out—and the drowned hear.

Above the roar of the tempest
Mystical melodies flow:
The tongues of the bells are tolling
Weird chimes of the long ago.
E'en so, in the heart unfathomed,
Under the ocean of tears,
Crusted and tarnished and tangled,
Lie buried the bells of old years.

Their voices enswathed in silence,
They slumber beneath the wave;
Above them the sea-gull scurries—
Above them the wild winds rave;
And not a buoy nor a beacon,
Nor a dot on the face's chart,
Bewrays to the mariner passing
The sunken bells of the heart.

But once is their slumber broken—
In the holy night of the year,
Their sad strange tones rise tolling,
And the drowned memories hear;
Bells that have slept deep ages,
Far in the ocean of time,
Swung by the swell of the surges,
Ring in melodious chime.

Crusted and tarnished and tangled,
O bells of the long ago!
Grown o'er with the algae of passion,
Choked with the seaweed of woe—
Outriving the roar of the tempest,
In the holy night of the year,
Rises their grand diapason,
Sonorous, solemn and clear.
—By George Seibel.

Busy Days

Spring days are busy days, whether in city or country. The housewife finds some pressing duty at every turn, and it is hardly necessary to tell her what she must do; it would seem better to advise her against doing too much. In the matter of house-cleaning, she should avail herself of all the help, whether by hand or machinery, that she can obtain. There are many things that can be attended to before the real work of house-cleaning comes, and these should be taken in hand as early as possible. It always seems strange to me that men will go on, year after year, letting the furniture go to rack, when a little mending with hammer, nails, tacks, screw-driver and screws, glue-pot and varnish brush will make them "like new." Such work can be done at odd times, and much of it can be done by the house-mother, if she has time and strength; but the boys and girls should take a hand, and would, gladly, if the father encouraged them. Then, there is the spring sewing, which the home seamstress feels very nervous about. If the every-day clothing is plain and serviceable, there may be a little more work put on the "dressy" things. Ready-to-wear clothing is now made so well, and of good material, that much of the sewing may be given up; but quality should be considered before quantity—one really good garment being better than several cheap, poorly made ones. Crowding on the heels of cleaning and sewing comes the garden, and a large share of this work falls to the mother. If the vegetable garden is planted in rows, the heavy part

of the cultivating may be done with the plow, and "mother" should not be expected to do any more of the work than she wants to. She should have her flowers—that, of course; and the flower-gardening is never drudgery to the woman; it is like "tending the baby." Then, there is the poultry; and this often falls to the mother's hands, and she takes up the work as though she likes it. But she should have help here, too. The housewife should learn to save herself. But she is generally so busy saving everybody else that she neglects her own needs.

Water-Drinking

We are constantly urged to drink largely of water, and where the water can be had in a state of purity, no better advice could be given. But we seldom find really pure water in the natural state—some authorities say never. Water is a great solvent, and carries with it to a very great extent, whatever it comes in contact with. Rain water or snow water—called atmospheric water, brings down with it in its course through the air, the solid particles of dust, germs of animals and plants, and also the various gases, and when caught from roofs of buildings, has the additional impurity of all the materials which lodge thereon. Terrestrial waters are also impure, as the water absorbed by the soil as it falls becomes contaminated with the mineral and other matter contained in the soil. The character of spring or well water depends on the character of the soil through which it has passed. Even where water is clear and sparkling, it may be very impure. Lime salts in water cause what is known as hardness. In addition to the soluble and suspended impurities found in water, there are living organisms—animals and plants. Plant life is claimed to exercise a degree of purifying influence on the water, but dead organic matter cannot but be harmful. Ponds, lakes and rivers are generally purer than spring or well water, as water which goes into them generally runs over the surface, and takes up much less impurity than that which strains through the soil. While the solid impurities may be removed from the water by filtration, too much faith cannot be placed in filtration as a means of purification; the security afforded is limited. The process of distillation gives the greatest security, but it is not practicable without devices which are not always to be had, or being supplied, could not be successfully used by every one. Distilled water is not considered wholesome by all authorities.

Economical Making Over

In making over a dress that a child has outgrown, where the waist is too tight and the skirt too short, get goods of harmonious or contrasting color for new sleeves and yoke, and rip the sleeves carefully apart and use for a skirt yoke, seven or eight inches deep to lengthen the skirt. The yoke and skirt look best when made of the same material. The waist yoke and sleeves may be made of harmonious plaids, or of figured goods.

A circular skirt will generally contain enough material to make a very comfortable dress for a small girl, and it should be ripped apart carefully, sponged, or otherwise cleaned,

and well pressed. Follow accurately the directions given with the pattern, and make sure that the perforations for lengthwise folds are laid carefully on the straight of the goods. One cannot have a well-fitting garment unless care is taken in the cutting out. The greatest care must be taken to avoid the bias trend of the material.

In dressing the children, make a study of their peculiarities as to shape and habits. For a chubby, fat little thing with a short neck, a "Dutch" collar is appropriate; for a slender child with a long, bony neck, let the neck of the garment come up higher. The sailor collar is so very much worn that it may be used on any garment, whether high or low necked.

One of the prettiest spring coats for the little tot is white corduroy. Corduroy washes beautifully and needs no ironing—just a good shaking out when hung to dry, which should be done without wringing, as wringing spoils the nap. When it is dry, rub smooth with the fingers to restore the silky look. The gray, fawn, or brown corduroy can be used, if the white is not desirable. The dark colors wash well.

"When Folly Flies"

An exchange says: "Why do the styles in women's dresses run from the dizzy edge to the opposite rim; from the postage-stamp turban to the wagon-wheel hat; from the sleeveless waists and sixteen-button gloves to cuffs and three-button kids; from near-hoopskirts which keep a man far off from the object of his desires to hobble-gowns which tie a woman's feet together like a market chicken?" Why? The answer is easy: Because there is money in it for the milliner and the modist. Every woman knows it, and some men. These violent oscillations in style from one season to another are for the express and particular purpose of making every woman buy a new rig every few months or appear out of date. A lot of women would rather die than appear out of date. No woman really loves the position, hence millions of fools part with millions of dollars every year trying to keep up with the dizzy chase led by the milliners and dressmakers.

Query Box

A. L. M.—It is better to buy a few large, sound bulbs than to invest in the florists' collections offered for a small sum, if you are particular as to results; but if you have only a small sum of money and wish a variety, the collection is worth what it costs you.

Several Readers—This department cannot undertake to find buyers for anything. If you have old coins or heirlooms to dispose of, try advertising in the Subscribers' Advertising department. We cannot exchange addresses.

Ella S.—If your own dealer cannot or will not supply you with what you want, write to the manufacturer of the article, giving him the dealer's name and asking where you can get the goods. He will supply you promptly with the information.

E. W. B.—The word, neurasthenia, means nerves without strength. It covers a large range of nervous symptoms brought on by various causes. The only sure cure for nerve disorders is to remove the cause.

The cause is easier to find than the cure for the condition.

J. L.—Dextrose, or grape sugar is obtained from the juice of fruits. It is not so sweet as cane sugar, or that obtained from vegetation, and is largely used to adulterate cane sugar. The fine, floury "powdered" sugar is largely grape sugar, and not so sweet as the cane sugar, deteriorating rapidly.

Mrs. J. M.—For a cheap filter, take a large earthen flower-pot, new and perfectly clean; put a piece of sponge or clean moss over the drainage-hole in the bottom, and fill three parts full of equal parts of clean sand and finely broken charcoal; over this lay a muslin or flannel cloth, large enough to hang over the sides of the pot; pour the water to be filtered into the bagged cloth and let filter into a clean pail or jar under the pot. This will remove the solids and impurities held in suspension, but the water may still contain objectionable elements. Distilled water is the purest.

Planting Roses

There is no end to the beautiful things one can have in roses. The tea roses are grown now to be hardy, and there are many hardy ever-blooming climbers, thrifty and strong growers.

Before the April rains, dig a hole where you wish the roses to grow, either singly or in beds, and in the bottom of it throw some pebbles, broken crockery, or coarse cinders, over this put a layer of straw or dead leaves, then, with the soil lifted in digging, mix plenty of old, rotted cow manure, which can be had of the dairyman, or at the stockyard, and fill in the hole, rounding it up, in order to get all the soil back in it. The rains will beat it down. Remember, roses are gross feeders. Then, in May, plant choice hardy tea roses from the pots. Be careful to get of a reliable nurseryman, and get plants that are grown on their own roots. Water freely during the season and do not let the plants bear more than one or two blooms the first year. During the hot months, keep the soil mulched and moist.

For the Home Seamstress

The high collars now worn must be carefully boned to keep them in place; three to five bones are used. Five will hold the collar firmly in place by putting one bone under the left end of the collar, and one under each ear, and one at each side of the center front, slanting these toward the ears at the top. If covered feather-bone is used, cut the bone an inch longer than is wanted, then push down the cover a half inch at each end and trim the bone the desired length. Turn in the extra covering and tack it firmly to the bone. Tack the bones to the collar as directed with invisible stitches.

For closing waists and one-piece dresses, cut a strip two and one-half inches wide on the straight of the goods; turn in three-eighths of an inch on all edges; fold through the center and baste. Baste the fly (as this is called) on the underside of the right back with its two edges even with the hem of the back proper; this will bring the fold of the fly within an eighth of an inch of the fold of the back. Stitch through the hem and the fly, making one stitching do for both. Small buttons should always be used with a fly, and placed not further than two inches apart. Make the button-holes neatly in the fly under the hem of the garment.

If the arm-holes are too small, do not cut them out recklessly; snip the lower part of the arm-hole for about three-eighths of an inch, and this will probably ease it enough. If it does not, pare off the arm-hole a