



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
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## National Anthems

They're getting up a princely purse, and they will give it to the bard who writes some patriotic verse—who hits his lyre, and hits it hard. The anthems that we now possess are clanging things of brass and zinc; they cause the singers great distress, and drive the listeners to drink. And hence they're digging up a roll to stir up some Byronic sharp, to cause some nobly gifted soul to knock the stuffing from his harp. And now the poets in their dens will gird their loins in proper style, and charge their trusty fountain pens, and turn out anthems by the mile. And when the judges sit in state upon these hand-made songs to pass, they'll doubtless find that none are great, and all resemble sounding brass. A man may write such dope as mine for money, marbles, chalk or fun; but when he'd rise to strains divine, he will not do it for the mon. Some day, some tiller of the sod, unlettered, toll-worn and obscure, alone with Silence, Night and God, may write a song that will endure.

—Walt Mason, in "The Eastern Trade."

## Solving the Problem

A writer in the Farm and Fireside tells us how she simplified her housework by availing herself of mechanical helps when the "human" element failed her. It is probable that the story is written from actual experience, but many would say it was simply "theory," written as a "pot-boiler," and grasped by the editor as at least a helpful suggestion. In the majority of cases, I am sure the rule would work, but in a few, it would be a waste of money. It depends on the woman. The writer says she figured up the cost of a woman helper, wages and board, and found it amounted to \$5 per week, and the help was neither easy to get, nor entirely satisfactory when gotten. Then she counted the cost of mechanical labor-savers, and compared the two. For a year's wages, she set aside \$260, and this sum, counting everything, we all know, was a very reasonable amount. She charged nothing for her own worry and disappointment over the inefficiency of the human help. By much corresponding and gathering up of catalogues and price lists, she found that she could, for less than that amount, get a furnace to take the place of the several heating stoves in heating the house and water, saving a great deal of personal labor as regards the transportation of fuel and ashes; following this, came a gasoline engine by which to run the washing machine, sewing machine, churn and mangle, all of which could be bought, with motor attachments, for a reasonable sum. A fireless cooker was an indispensable, and, perhaps, if she had been less limited in pocketbook, she would have included several other things. But she tells us that she bought one hot air furnace installed, one one-horsepower gasoline engine, one washing machine, wringer and mangle, and one fireless cooker, for \$2 less than the cost of the "help." Such machinery should be in every home, and it seems to be the only solution to the problem of the housemother doing her house-work and still keeping well. With a little care-taking, every one of these inventions will last for years, and their first cost is practi-

cally their only one. But that will depend on the care given them. Our readers should think over these things, and decide to accept the "better part", even if the money for their purchase must be borrowed. Give it your thoughts, sisters.

## Household Chats

It is hard to realize that less than two months ago, we were having real "woolen-wear" weather, with so much rain that many of us began to grumble. Then came upon us, almost without warning, the hot, scorching days that really belong to July, and the rains practically ceased. The effect of the belated spring and the sudden dry heat can be seen on every hand, and felt in every household in the scarcity of fruits and vegetables, while the orchards and field crops have also been much damaged. It is possible, of course, that the "latter rains" may give us an aftermath, but we must avail ourselves of every advantage that can be found for starting a late crop. We must do the best we can with the little or much that falls to us, and if we are careful and painstaking, we shall find that much will be given us.

A reader asks that we say a good word for the old sunbonnet, or even the straw hat, as a head-covering greatly to be desired if we wish to preserve our hair and our complexion. The old-fashioned sunbonnet was a hot, uncomfortable affair, and kept the hair in a chronic state of "muss." But there never was or can be lovelier complexions than the old bonnets turned out. It is essential that the hair and face should be protected against the heat and glare of the summer sun, and there are so many ways of making pretty, protecting headgear, if only we could persuade the girls to wear them. About the house and lawn, the comfortable, broad straw hat is excellent, but many really lovely head-covers can be made of linen, lawn, pique and even heavy muslin. Some of these are hat-shape, of one, or of two pieces, and the patterns can be furnished for ten cents each. The edges may be simply bound, faced, or finished with needle-work, braid or embroidery, or frills of muslin. They are neither hard to make or to launder, and may be bought ready to wear, if preferred. Some kind of covering for the head should be worn by any who wish beautiful hair or complexion.

## For the Home Seamstress

Generally, the housewife will now have her spring sewing well on toward finished; but there is always a demand for garments, and the sewing machine is never put away. In the average family, it is never out of commission. It always pays to do the sewing for the family, if one has the time, strength and skill to do it. Especially is this true of dresses for ordinary wear. In cutting out silks, it is well to remember to lay your pattern on the silk always with the large end of the pattern toward the lower edge of the silk; cut upwards, never downwards, and do not cut through the whole breadth of the silk. In cutting a gored skirt, lay your pattern with the wide end of the gore at the end of the material, and cut upward into the piece. At the bottom, the narrow end of the strip cut from the side of the gore will probably be

two inches wide. Leave this strip, not cutting clear across the breadth, and lay your next gore, large end down, cutting as before. In this way, all the small pieces will be in a string, joined together, and you can use the portions for making bias strappings, or pipings, having the left-over silk in one long strip. It would be well to practice this economy with other goods.

For summer wear, nothing is better than linen or crash, gingham and chambrays, dimities and lawns; organdies, cotton voiles, batiste, embroidered mulls and swiss muslins are much used, and very little starch or stiffness is noticeable in the pretty frocks for the summer time. Linens, tailor-made, are much liked, with a perfect cut and fine stitching. Linens call for bands of self-colored materials.

## A Friend's Secret

When a secret is entrusted to a friend in confidence, it should, to be properly kept, be locked up even from his own thoughts; the recipient should not be content with merely refraining from betraying it to others; he should also refrain from betraying it to himself. If a man consigns a casket, containing a treasure, to the care of another, he will justly feel that his confidence has been in a measure violated if he comes to know that the latter has been in the habit of unlocking the casket and pouring over its contents as if they were his own. So, with a secret. The secret still belongs to the friend who has confided it, and who had his own reason for so trusting the other, and to have the confident continually holding it before the mind is not only making another's property his own, but is exposing it to the danger of escaping in some unguarded moment, although it may be in but a form to give grounds for surmises bordering dangerously near the truth, and this may lead to much trouble.

## Hot Weather Comfort

The question of comfort in hot weather depends upon one's realization that the body should be protected from the hot outer air, not exposed to it. Physical science teaches that when the outside air is hotter than the inside of the body, light wool is cooler than cotton, because wool is a poor conductor of heat, and protects the body from the outer air. Nun's veiling or challie are cooler than dimity, lace, or thin cotton wear, and the wise one will refrain from exposing the body to the heat covered only with the thin goods. The very light-weight woollens are cooler than the cottons. A thin soled shoe in summer exposes the foot to the hot pavements, causing callouses and discomfort; a thin lace or white straw hat invites the heat and favors freckles, while lace gloves do a like service for the hands.

## To Clean a Parasol

A writer in an exchange gives the following method of cleaning a parasol: Do not rip off the cover; open the parasol and leave it on the frame. Wash thoroughly, using a brush and a suds made of luke-warm water and a good white soap, and when clean, rinse in clear water, using the brush, then in water slightly blued. If white, set in the sun to dry. If colored, keep in the

shade. By this means, the frame will not rust, and the shade will be like new. White and light colored silk parasols can be cleaned out of doors in the shade away from all flame or fire with gasoline and a brush, the same as with suds, and should be left to air until the odor is gone.

## Floral Notes

For the plants in the garden, especially the rose bed, mulching is necessary, during the hot, dry months. Cover the surface about the plants with the lawn cuttings, and keep all the moisture possible. They are not unsightly, and water may be poured over them at any time without injury to the plants. When showing signs of decay, dig the clippings into the soil, and pile fresh ones about the plants, covering the whole surface of the ground, if you have clippings enough.

The surface of the soil where anything is grown should be kept stirred, as the well-stirred soil acts as a sponge, absorbing whatever moisture there is in the atmosphere, while a crusted, hardened soil repels moisture. Keep the soil light and mellow.

Don't neglect to water the plants in pots or tubs; keep the surface stirred, and water freely every evening, covering the soil with a mulch of moss, grass cuttings, or other protection against the hot sunshine.

Remember to give the tall plants, especially the dahlias, a good stake, to prevent a sudden strong wind ruining them. Dahlias have a very brittle stalk, and they should be tied with a soft strip of cloth, rather than wire or twine.

Don't neglect watering the plants intended for the window next winter. Keep them growing thriftily. Remember to gather the sweet pea blossoms every day, if you want plenty of bloom. Do not allow going to seed, as bloom will stop when seed begin to form. Nature's plan is to propagate the plants, and the blossoming will continue in order that seeds may be set.

## Good Things to Know

For renovating old oak furniture, try this: Half a pint each of malt vinegar and raw linseed oil, mixed with a couple of drams of butter of antimony. Shake well to mix, and before using, shake well again; rub on the old furniture without fear, as it will not spoil the color, and with plenty of elbow grease, it will give it a bright and glistening result. Nothing is better than the elbow grease.

To clean zinc, use whiting made into a paste with turpentine. Whiting mixed with water or cloudy ammonia is excellent for cleaning tin-ware, especially tin dish covers.

Paper plates, as well as wooden ones are excellent for the picnic basket. They are cheap, and when done with them, they can be thrown into the campfire. If care is taken, they may be used several times before destroying.

Aluminum is being more and more used in our kitchens, and should be simply washed, inside and out, with a good suds as soon as possible after use. If treated thus it will hold its whiteness for years, and only need rubbing up occasionally with whiting mixed to a paste with water. Soda and ordinary metal polish will ruin its polish.

## For the Housewife

To clean bottles that resist all ordinary efforts, pour into them a little strong sulphuric acid, put in the cork and shake the bottle for a few minutes, then rinse in clear water. The bottle will be beautifully clean.

Brass articles can be cleaned by