



The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts Meyer

The Old Toys

Where are the toys of yester-year—
Trumpet and monkey and ark and drum?
Scattered in fragments, far and near.
But fate to their whereabouts is mum.
For the monkey is dust and the horn is dumb,
The ark is a wreck and sunken, I fear;
And gone is the drum to kingdom come,
With the other toys of yester-year.

Blithe was our child on Christmas day,
Viewing the tree with treasures hung;
Still in his "nightie's" pure array,
Shrieking aloud with gleesome tongue,
How he reveled his things among!
"Little cherub." "The little dear."
Swelled the paean from fist and lung—
But alas for the toys of yester-year.

"Look," spake the drum, "at his fingers cute?"
But only the once such words he said,
For he right soon went by the back-door route
With his strings all cut and a hole in his head.
By a hasty tread was the trumpet sped,
The ark was razed to its bulwarks, sheer,
The monkey was smashed in the trundle-bed,
Alas, for the toys of yester-year!

Aye, big with hope were those bright young toys;
How sweet to gladden the childish heart!
And they thrilled with pride and they brimmed with joy;
And he tore them, joint from joint, apart.
Explored their inwards with rapid art,
Stripped them of varnish and paint and gear—
Strewed them wide through the household mart!
Oh, hapless toys, of yester-year!

—Puck.

Home Chats

As the excitement of the holidays subsides we begin to look about us for more worlds to conquer, and among the first things that confront us is the necessity for getting down to the spring sewing before the semi-annual house-cleaning season overshadows us. On overhauling the boxes, bags, closets and other storage rooms, we find many things—if there are children in the family—that may be made over, cut down, or otherwise made passable to serve "along the line." Nearly everything will call for some little expense—a spool of thread, a card of button, a bit of new lining, braid, trimming of some kind, a scrap to "piece out," or a yard or more for combinations, and thus we turn our attention to the annual "spring bargain sales" for the necessary materials. Everything is said to be "marked down," and many things really are a few cents cheaper, while some articles are "bargains" in truth, if one has the good fortune to get first choice of them and has the

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necessary amount of experience to enable her to know a good article from a clever sham.

If the article in question is really needed, or would be wanted soon, it will be no extravagance to buy it. Many remnants of materials, buttons, trimmings, etc., can be found a few cents cheaper than the goods in stock, and by the time our needs have been supplied we will have saved quite a few cents by our "bargain" rummage. But the trouble lies in the fact that we are prone to keep on buying; the goods are so alluringly advertised, and they seem so desirable at the price asked, that we are tempted to buy many things that we may never use, and that certainly we do not want, just now.

Before we realize it, our funds have given out while we are still "short" on many real necessities. Besides all this, all marked down sales are not real bargains—to us. In confirmation of this, one has but to look at the long line of parcel-laden women at the credit or exchange desk of any of our large department stores on the morning after special bargain sales. The majority of these have found that their yielding to temptation at the bargain counter has not turned out so well when viewed in the light at home; others have awakened to the fact that other things were much more needed, and they have no more money for necessary shopping, and hence seek the aid of the exchange desk.

Before venturing from home, it is a sensible idea to write out a list of everything we want to buy; then look over it carefully and check off all superfluities, or articles not now needed; go over the list again, and mark off all except the must-haves, and suit these in number and price to the amount you have to expend for them. When the stores are reached, keep steadily in mind the length and breadth of the abbreviated list, and get these things first, and when the last article is checked off the list, if the money holds out, and there is anything left, one might indulge in the few things she is sure to need later in the season, keeping in mind the fact that it is a "bargain" only to us when it is something we both need and desire, and for which we can find a good use. Because it is "marked down" is no assurance that it will be a wise investment for us at the time. If the least doubt exists, it is well to pass it by, to be visited after "second thought," if we still desire it.

Our Feet

Style in foot-wear undoubtedly is to blame for 99 per cent of the cases of flat-foot. The tendency of those who wear roomy, common-sense shoes is to wear away the outer portion of the sole; that is as it should be. It is the natural, weight-bearing surface side of the shoe; but the wearer, as a rule, doesn't know this; he thinks it is a habit that should be corrected. So, to meet this opinion the manufacturer makes shoes that throw the weight-bearing surface to the inner border. Of course, to wear this style of shoe any length of time means flat-foot and physicians. If one very perceptibly wears away the inner portion of the sole, it is an indication of weakness, and ought to have attention. Women's shoes have little to recommend them for the preservation of perfect feet. Seldom is the sole wide enough or the shank high, broad or

stiff enough; the inner border is invariably curved to accentuate the great toe displacement.

Until we are sensible enough to demand sensibly shaped shoes, we must continue to suffer; but for the sake of the future generation, we should begin to demand them now.—Selected.

Query Box

Woodsman.—For chilblains, soak the feet in warm, strong lime water; not more than two or three applications are necessary. Burns from frost are similar to burns from fire.

Annie M.—To make a Russian suit for a boy of four years, will require two and one-half yards of material one yard wide, with three-fourths yard of contrasting material for trimming.

Maude.—One with red hair and brown eyes may choose gray-blues, bronze-greens and copper-browns. One with black or dark brown hair, blue or gray eyes, can wear all shades of gray, dark blue, clear greens, dark wines and some shades of brown.

George R.—To cure tetter, ringworm or barber's itch, take one ounce of sugar of lead, one ounce of lac-sulphur (common sulphur will not do), and eight ounces of rosewater. Mix thoroughly. For external application only, applying no oftener than is absolutely necessary, as sugar of lead is poisonous.

Marie.—For a skirt made of thick material, use a seven-gore pattern, fitting smoothly about hips without darts, shaping by the seams. The closing is made at the back under two inverted plaits that are flatly pressed. Extensions may be set in seams at the side gores below the knees, inverted box-plaits. These may be either taped or flatly pressed and allowed to flare widely about the feet of the wearer.

A. L. R.—The price of ordinary diamonds is about \$15⁰⁰ per carat weight, but many diamonds are more valuable because of rare shade or unusual brilliancy. A "carat" is a jeweler's weight for weighing diamonds and other precious stones, and has a fixed weight equal to three and one-sixth Troy grains. Goldsmiths and assayers also use the term carat as a means of stating the proportion of pure gold contained in any alloy of gold and with other metals, but not as a fixed weight.

"Out-Doors."—For cracks in the fingers there is nothing better or less expensive than common shoe (not harness) wax, quite a lump of which may be had for five cents. Hold the lump over heat until soft enough to drop, and apply at once to the crack. Hold the crack over heat and stick a bit of strong tissue paper over the wax while hot. Tie wool yarn around the finger several times and let stay until worn off. This will heal at once.

Requested Recipes

Sliced Beef.—Get a hank of beef (large or small, according to need) season with pepper, salt and powdered garden sage, roll up tightly and tie with a string tightly; place in a kettle of hot water and boil five or six hours. When done, take out and put in a pan,

but do not take off the cord; place a clean board on it and pile with heavy weights and leave all night. In the morning remove the weight, take off the cord and when wanted slice thin with a sharp knife.

Buttermilk Biscuits.—Sift a quart of flour into a mixing bowl; work into the center of this one teaspoonful of salt and one of soda, pour into this a pint of thick sour milk and mix until it becomes a stiff dough. Do not put a bit of shortening into it; pinch off small pieces of dough and mold into shape with as little handling as possible. The biscuit will be lighter and fluffier than when rolled on a board. Put a heaping tablespoonful of lard in a pan, let it get smoking hot, roll each biscuit in this and bake in a quick oven. Report success.

Baked Trout.—For a trout four to six pounds in weight, dress and let lie in salty water over night; make a dressing of stale bread, seasoning with butter, pepper, salt and sage, turn boiling water over, cover and let stand until soft. Mix well and fill the fish with the dressing and sew it up neatly; lay in a granite baking pan, cut several gashes in its upper side and put a small slice of fresh fat pork in each gash. Dredge with flour and lay thin slices of lemon over; add a pint of water and a generous lump of butter. Bake one hour or more, basting often, when the water should all be cooked out and the trout nicely browned. Carefully slip the fish onto a platter and garnish with slices of lemon. Add butter and a spoonful of flour to the liquid in the pan with nearly a pint of water, boil up once and pour around the fish.

Nice Waffles.—One quart of thick, sour milk (home churned buttermilk is just right), one cup of sour cream (if to be had), and flour enough to make a stiff batter, with a teaspoonful of salt. Stir in the beaten yolks of three eggs; beat the whites stiff and add last, with a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a little water. The secret of having good waffles is in baking them right. Have a good fire and the waffle iron well greased and one side smoking hot; pour enough batter in to fill the iron and quickly close it, and as soon as the batter has spread, filling the iron, which will be in about a minute, turn the iron and leave until brown; by raising the edge of the waffle from the iron one can see if it is brown. Do not turn the iron back and forth, as this will dry the cake instead of baking it. The eggs must be beaten

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