



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKays

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

God never would send you the darkness,

If He felt you could bear the light;
But you would not cling to His guiding hand,

If the way were always bright;
And you would not care to walk by faith,

Could you always walk by sight.

'Tis true He has many an anguish
For your sorrowful heart to bear,
And many a cruel thorn-crown
For your tired head to wear;
He knows how few would reach heaven at all
If pain did not guide them there.

So He sends you the blinding darkness,

And the furnace of seven-fold heat;
'Tis the only way, believe me,
To keep you close to His feet,
For 'tis always so easy to wander
When our lives are glad and sweet.

Then nestle your hand in your Father's
And sing if you can, as you go;
Your song may cheer some one behind you

Whose courage is sinking low;
And, well, if your lips do quiver—
God will love you better so.

—Selected.

Home Chat

Not long ago, I called on a friend, the mother of a large family, and found her worrying over the "daily bread" necessary for the sustenance of the many bodies. She said: "Do you know, I worry myself nearly into my grave, trying to cater to the varying tastes of my husband and children. Of some dishes we are fond, but in other directions, no two will eat the same thing, or, if they do, it must have a different preparation. Those who are in school must have a different menu from those who are in the office, while the out-door workers must have a food of their very own. It keeps me planning all the time."

"The market seems abundantly supplied, just now," I ventured. "That's just it," she said. "If I had but one choice, it would greatly simplify matters; but with so much at hand, I am constantly on the rack to meet the really reasonable demands for a variety. The only way in which I see the least relief is to set each one to doing his or her own marketing. It will be but a small matter to get it ready for the table."

Now, I wonder how many of you ever stop to think that your editor is situated very much as this conscientious mother is. There is no lack of material, and it would be a comparatively easy matter to prepare and place a suitable menu on the table before you, if I knew just what you would like—just what you do not easily get tired of, or had some idea of your individual tastes. Even our favorite dishes may become unappetizing if served too often, while one does not always relish stale victuals, though many delightful dishes may be evolved from even the left-overs, with the right sauce or dressing. But I must know your needs, in order to serve you properly and profitably. There is but one way that I know of in which I may obtain the knowledge, and that is, like my friend, to ask you to "do your own marketing." I want you to write to me—the more the better, suggesting subjects and passing your ideas along, and I will do my best to serve you profitably to both

of us. I may not be able to answer every letter, but I think I will; anyway, I shall make the endeavor, and I shall appreciate every word you write. Do not be afraid to criticize; do not be averse to pointing out mistakes—they are of the head (or it may be, the hand), and not of the heart. You know it is our aim to make our Home Department a constant source of helpfulness, and we can do this by passing along our little items of knowledge, or asking for help from others; we are all willing to bear each other's burdens, and we have among our readers some wonderfully wise and kind people. Write me, and always send your letter to me at The Commoner office, and, wherever I am, the letters will find me. Do not forget. I shall depend on you.

Care of Palms

The best variety of palm for general culture is *Kentia Belmoreana*. This sort has large and graceful foliage of a rich, dark green, borne on long stalks which rise gracefully above the pot to the height of four and five feet, in three-year-old specimens which have been well cared for. Soil is not of so much importance as many think, for good specimens can be grown in any garden loam if it is enriched by the application of a good fertilizer, but it is well to take some pains in preparing a compost for the plant. Two-thirds ordinary loam mixed with enough sharp sand and old, well-rotted cow-manure to make up the other third, will give excellent results, and such a soil is within reach of most amateurs. If the cow-manure can not be obtained, use more sand, and substitute bone meal as a fertilizer, using in the proportion of a table-spoonful for an eight-inch pot. This will last for three months or more. Then add as much more of the bone-meal to the soil, working it in well about the roots of the plant. Perfect drainage is very necessary. Have at least two inches of broken crockery or something similar in the bottom of the pot. More palm troubles are due to defective drainage than anything else. Too much water at the roots, or undue retention of it there will almost invariably result in unhealthy root action, the first indication of which is seen in the browning of the tips of the leaves. Therefore, make sure to have good drainage. In watering, observe the old rule of waiting until the soil looks dry before applying anything. Then use enough to make the soil moist all through. An even, moderate amount of moisture is what should be aimed at.

Currants

Where they can be obtained, a very delightful fruit for sweet pickle is the currant. For seven pounds of red currants (not too ripe) use half a pint of strong vinegar, half a pint of currant juice, four pounds granulated sugar, two ounces stick cinnamon, and one ounce whole cloves. Bring the vinegar and the juice to the boiling point, adding the sugar and currants, and add the cinnamon and cloves, each in a separate bag; let boil until it jellies; then pour out into earthen bowls known as fruit bowls. It will require an hour, or a little more, to boil down to the proper consistency. This "spiced" jelly is as beautiful as it is good.

Respecting Self

The girl who is credited abroad with

having a remarkably sweet disposition should endeavor to be just as sweet when no one is present but her family. Her voice should be just as soft, her patience as great, and her willingness to help mother as manifest when no one is around to applaud, as though the whole neighborhood constituted an admiring audience in the door yard. This may require some effort, but every victory we gain makes it easier for us to gain another. To be just what we seem is an evidence of strength. To be otherwise is to be deceitful. If a girl has an ungovernable temper, let her proceed to correct this serious evil, but she should make as serious an effort in the privacy of home, as when she is among strangers. There is something fine about the girl who makes no endeavor to put her best foot foremost, who would rather have people know her as she really is, than to pose as something she is not. Her determination to be thoroughly honest, however, need not hinder her in correcting her faults.

A girl is very apt to grow lax in her personal appearance if much alone. There is no excuse for this. One should always look one's best, whether on a desert island or in the midst of many people. The girl who comes down stairs in the morning with her front hair done up in curling kids, her back hair uncombed, and wearing a morning gown fit only for the rag-bag or the wash-tub, is sure to be surprised some day by visitors. No excuse she can offer for her appearance will remove from the minds of her callers the impression she makes on them. Even though she says the usual thing, "Oh, don't look at me; I've got on every old dud I have," and the visitors offend their own intelligence by replying, about as usual, "Oh, you look all right; nobody would ever notice it if you didn't say anything," she will drop one-half in their estimation. It is always best to look as neat and clean as we know how, if for no other reason than for our own personal satisfaction. We will be inspired with a much greater respect for ourselves, if, on glancing into a mirror, we behold neatly arranged hair and a fresh white collar, than if we see an Americanized edition of a Hottentot.—Ex.

Lace Making

Bruges lace, which is fine and will be used to trim the sheer linen, has been made in the convents of Bruges by old women whose hands have grown stiff clicking the bobbins back and forth, who learned it when they were children, from other old women, who had in their youth, learned it from other old women, and so on back for hundreds of years. Almost the same might be said of Cluny; and the Princess Louise, which is more nearly new than the others, is but a close imitation of duchesse. What is comparatively new about these and other laces which women make nowadays, is the fact that machines really do the most of the work for these so-called hand-made laces. Few American women will sacrifice their eyes to this tedious work, and none could be found who would sit as the forty French peasants sat, for seven years, to make the wonderful lace gown shown at a Paris exposition, and valued at eighty-five thousand francs, (\$17,000).

Yet they must have lace to wear that is not all machine-made, so the machine has come to the rescue for the difficult part, and there are end-

less varieties of braids, varying from an inch in width, for some of the Cluny patterns, to the finest pearlings. With the aid of a stamped design, almost any woman can put these braids together with a very few stitches, thus preserving to a gown so trimmed at least a part of the distinction which all hand work gives, and which no machine work can more than imitate. These laces will be used not only for trimming, the Cluny for heavy materials, and the Bruges and Princess Louise for light, but there will be shoulder-collars, entire waists and jackets of them, and even hats, and possibly some covers for parasols. Cluny, like the English embroidery, will also be used for tea-table covers, centre pieces, scarfs, and all decorative linens.—Good House-keeping.

Simple Remedies

It is often necessary to wash out the bowels of a sick infant, and this is best done by using a small rubber catheter with a small glass funnel attached, into which the fluid may be poured. Oil the catheter before inserting it into the rectum and use normal salt solution for washing out the bowels. Normal salt solution is made by dissolving a tea-spoonful of salt to a quart of boiling water; use warm, but not hot. Babies often have the colic, and a good way to cure it is to inject half a pint of warm water with three or four drops of essence of peppermint. It is better given this way than by the mouth. Water used for the baby's bowels should be carefully tempered, so as to be perfectly comfortable, and be neither too warm nor too cold.—Conkey's Home Journal.

Lemons

When persons are feverish and thirsty beyond what is natural, indicated by a metallic taste in the mouth, especially after drinking water, or by a whitish appearance of a greater part of the tongue, one of the best coolers, internal or external, is to take a lemon, cut off the top, sprinkle over it some fine white sugar, working it down with a spoon, and then suck it slowly, squeezing the lemon and adding more sugar as the acidity increases from being brought to the surface from a lower point. Invalids with feverishness may take two or three lemons a day in this manner, with marked benefit. Lemon taken thus at tea-time would give a good night's sleep.

Hygienic Breads

Every housekeeper should learn to make good brown bread, and then make it often. When I hear any one say, "I don't like brown bread," I wonder what kind of brown bread they have been accustomed to. I never yet have cooked for any one who did not appear eager for it, and visitors act as if it was a luxury. If the members of your family are reluctant, try them with warm brown bread, then with toasted brown bread, and with toasted brown bread cream-toast—the brown bread will counteract the evil effects of the thickened milk—and when they get a little used to it make the brown bread into brews, simmering in a little water, and stirring until stiff and free from lumps. Then there is Johnny-cake, the sweetened kind—and the old-fashioned hoe-cake. The latter when made just right is delicious. The meal—coarse, granulated Indian meal—should be salted and well scalded, perhaps cooked a little on top of the stove until it is of just the right consistency to spread on the hot griddle, then well-browned on both sides. There are also many varieties of hot gems—those with rye or Indian meal

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY
MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children
teething should always be used for children while
teething. It softens the gums, allays all pain, cures
wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea.
Twenty-five cents a bottle.