



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McVey

OCTOBER'S WEATHER

O suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye can not rival for one hour
October's bright blue weather.

When loud the bumblebee makes
haste,
Belated, thriftless vagrant;
And goldenrod is dying fast,
And lanes with grapes are fragrant;

When gentians roll their fringes tight
To save them from the morning,
And chestnuts fall from satin burrs
Without a sound of warning.

When on the ground red apples lie
In piles like jewels shining,
And redder still on old stone walls
Are leaves of woodbine twining;

When all the lovely wayside things
Their white-winged seeds are
sowing,
And in the fields, still green and fair,
Late aftermaths are growing;

When springs run low, and on the
brooks,
In idle golden freighting,
Bright leaves sink noiseless in the
hush
Of woods for winter waiting;

When comrades seek sweet country
haunts,
By twos and two together,
And count like misers hour by hour,
October's bright blue weather.

O suns and skies and flowers of June,
Count all your boasts together—
Love loveth best of all the year
October's bright blue weather.
—Helen Hunt Jackson.

Home Chat

Now that the summer's work is about finished, the country boy is wondering what he will do next, especially the one whose education, so far as the country school house is concerned, is ended. He thinks he would like a change, he is tired of the farm, and the ceaseless grind of the farm work and chores, where no appreciable recognition is given his talents and energies, and no material advancement seems probable or possible. If he could only go to the city, now! He is very sure he could work up to something, he doesn't know just what, yet, but the work will be waiting for him; the opportunity will find him, once he is in its way. So, to the city he goes. It may be well that he does, but the chances are that it is not. If he has himself well in hand, has a brave heart and a courageous will and a firm determination to succeed, come what hardships may, and is willing to plod, to pave the way with hard, ungrudging toil, to turn a deaf ear to the allurings of the tempter in whatever guise it may seek him, he may find the opportunity, gain the recognition, and, later secure the advancement. But there are many things he must consider before he takes the irrevocable step, for once he takes the plunge into the maelstrom, he will hardly come out of it the same.

He will find life in the city very different from that of his country home; he will exchange a life of comparative freedom for one of uncompromising restraint. He will leave the beautiful, healthful out-door of field and woodland for the confinement and foul air of the dark, dingy city building, office, store or factory,

or at best, for the dust and turmoil of the overflowing streets. Instead of the beautiful sunlight he will toil under electric, gas, or, in some places, oil lighting, or his workshop may be lighted only by the dirty, dingy daylight which no place but the crowded city streets can know. He must become accustomed to foul smells and uncongenial surroundings; small, dingy rooms, not always with pleasant companionship; cheap, poorly-cooked foods in limited quantities and of unpalatable kinds; a lack of many things he has always held as essentials, and self-denial along many lines will become a burden hard to bear. The salary which, to his country-bred fancy, has seemed so large, will be found barely sufficient for his daily needs, if it suffices, even for so little. Room rent, board bills, laundry, car fare, lunches, and the inevitable "incidentals" which no one can avoid, will leave little enough for the necessary wearing apparel, however cheap it may seem. On every hand he will find temptations, many of them so subtle and seductive that, try as he may, he cannot resist them, and there will be snares and pitfalls for his feet, whithersoever he may go.

The competition, too, is something beyond all reason. He will be but one of a vast army of struggling young men, and, do the best he may, many things will occur to throw the advantage on the side of his fellow laborer. Competition, in all lines, from the merest labor to the highest skill, whether of brawn or brains, will be most keen. It is all a battleground, and the victory is not always to the brave or the strong.

Once in the whirlpool, he will learn to cease to trust, it may be, even in himself; to shut his sorrows in his own heart; to ask no sympathy, to seek no aid; to depend solely on himself and his developing powers. He will learn to stand alone, level-eyed and set mouthed, as his destiny exposes him to the buffetings of the world. If he fails of the test, he will find the whole, long pathway through life but a repetition of failure and discouragement, and at last he will lie down, heartworn and soul-weary, with a pitiful longing for just one last look at the country home from which he now goes forth in all the courage and high hopes of his ignorance and untried strength.

"A Good Cup of Coffee"

We have all read of the man who, when told by the restaurant waiter that he would be served with coffee "like mother used to make," replied that he would take tea. To many people, the magic words "like mother used to make" recalls a memory of a strong, long-boiled beverage that, though then regarded with such favor, is now associated too closely with indigestion and dyspepsia to be very enticing. We are learning, through much tribulation, to find what best agrees with the inner man, and in most cases, strong, boiled coffee must be tabooed, while the well-made cup may be partaken of with less bad results.

To be had at its best, many things must enter into the making of coffee. The coffee pot must be washed as often as it is used, thoroughly cleaned and aired, every day; the water to be used must be fresh from the spring, well, cistern or hydrant, and the tea-kettle must also be regularly washed and aired. The water must be just boiling—not boiled; boiled water has

lost its life and flavor, and will not make good coffee or tea. A "drip" coffee pot may be used, or the ground coffee may be merely steeped, like tea; or, it may be allowed to boil up for a minute. Each of these processes has its advocates. There are many good brands of coffee on the market, more or less expensive in price, but a very poor drink can be made of the most expensive kinds by a poor or careless cook, while a careful cook can make a really delightful cup from inexpensive material. Now-a-days, very few people think of roasting coffee at home, but if it could be evenly and properly done, it would "make up" much better flavored. As it is, it should be bought as freshly roasted as possible and would be better ground as used, though if it is put into an air-tight receptacle, such as a self-sealing jar or can, it will retain its aroma quite well. A tablespoonful of ground coffee to each cup wanted and one for the pot is the invariable rule, the water must be fresh, and freshly boiling, and the coffee pot and tea kettle must both be clean when used.

A Fine Cooking School

Experience in a real kitchen, with only the utensils usually to be found there for family use, with real meats and vegetables, such as the family pocket book or taste may provide, flanked by the often unavoidable shortages in supplies, is what will teach the girl or woman to do real cooking. If the mother, or other friend who has an interest in the development of the housewifely abilities of the beginner, be capable of instructing, it beats playing with the chafing dish in a make-believe kitchen fitted up with everything necessary for experimenting and demonstrating, and where the presiding genius wears regulation bibs and caps, with some one at hand to wash dishes, etc., and do all the "chores." The "Class in Cookery" is a good move, but the girl who takes the course, from scullion to chef, in the home kitchen where all sorts and conditions and varying quantities and qualities of supplies are to test one's abilities, to say nothing of "emergency" calls and "short notice" orders recklessly sprung upon one by unexpected company, which tax one's executive ability sometimes to the uttermost, will usually be the one who "wins out" in the housewifely race for honors. Whatever station in life one expects to fill, a knowledge of cookery will never come amiss, for even though a woman has no need to do the work herself, she should know enough to order others, and there will always be some time in every woman's life when such knowledge will be a great gain. This is true as well, of a man, and many men who would laugh at the idea of themselves doing cookery, can yet get up as nice a meal as any woman they know. If they did not get the knowledge through "helping mother," they got their education through stress of circumstances, and, say what they will, they do take a sneaking little pride in the accomplishment.

Mushroom Growing

Several of our readers have asked for more light on the subject of mushroom growing; how to start in the business; if the start is expensive; what to do with it when it is started; whether it is profitable in a financial sense; if a woman can do the work alone; where literature on the sub-

ject may be obtained. As I have never given attention to the subject, and have met no one who has attempted the work, and as newspaper and magazine articles on the matter are not always either truthful or reliable, I would like some of our readers who can write from experimental knowledge to tell us about it. I will condense the information thus gained into a comprehensive article which, I have no doubt, may greatly benefit some one or more of our friends who are seeking ways by which to increase their income while confined to the home by the cares of the family. Mushrooms are an expensive article on the market, and if they can be as certainly and as easily made profitable as many would have us believe, we ought to know it.

Meantime, I would advise that our friends write to the secretary of agriculture, Washington, D. C., asking for Farmer's Bulletin No. 204, relating to mushroom growing, and at the same time asking for any other printed matter available for distribution. The department of agriculture will send to any one who desires it a monthly list of all the published matter, free or otherwise, if asked to do so. Most of the documents are to be had free, a few have a small price attached, and the Year Book in the department is an education in itself. Reports of experiment stations are also free. The reports of the various state horticultural societies, as well as of the various state departments of agriculture, are to be had for the asking, and now is the time your supply of such reading matter should be gathered up, as the leisure of the long evenings will permit of their being read. You cannot know too much about your business.

Query Box

Mrs. S. M.—Falling hair is a symptom, not a disease. Remove the cause, and the hair will stop falling. Local applications do very little good, in some cases.

Lottie.—Warts come and go without any known cause. They may be safely removed by several simple methods. Moles are of soft growth, warts are hard; they cannot be treated alike.

Laurel.—Scars that reach through the skin to the flesh cannot be removed, although skin specialists claim to reduce them somewhat. Ordinary treatment will do no good. (2) We cannot recommend them.

Effie.—Get your druggist to fill a half-ounce bottle with equal parts of tincture of myrrh and alcohol, and apply this to the gums three times a day on going to bed at night. This is claimed to heal the gums and tighten the teeth.

Ada S.—If the Eton is becoming to you—and it is, to most persons—you can wear it, because it is one of the styles that seem always in vogue, year after year. Though not in the extreme of fashion, there will be many of them worn this winter.

Housewife.—Why not have your kitchen floor painted or oiled? Have the rough places planed down by a carpenter, give the boards a coating of oil and ochre, then apply two coats of yellow, brown or gray paint, which can be purchased ready for use, and is easily applied.

Distracted.—For the hair parasites, saturate the head with coal oil for two or three hours, then wash thoroughly in warm soap suds; when the hair is dry, wash again in strong vinegar and let hang until dry. Then wash again in warm water and rinse in clear tepid water. Do this one or

BETTER THAN SPANKING

Spanking does not cure children of bad ways. If it did there would be few children that would do it. There is a constitutional cause for this. Mrs. M. Summers, Box 118, Notre Dame, Ind., will send her home treatment to any mother. She asks no money. Write her today if your children trouble you in that way. Don't blame the child. The chances are it can't help it.