

# The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts Meyer

## The God of Clay

I watch each day my singing sisters  
GO  
Lightfooted to the temple on the  
height,  
Bearing fair gifts, trailed blooms of  
rose and snow,  
To please the golden gods of their  
delight;

The golden gods that, in their lofty  
place,  
Stand in their flawless might for all  
to see,  
Bearing each one upon his perfect  
face  
The pride of his infallibility.

And ever on their way and singing  
thus  
They pause sometimes to urge me  
or deride,  
"O sister, wilt thou never come with  
us  
To worship where the gods of gold  
abide?"

They never know that, ere they pass  
the gates  
Of bronze and ivory, I take my  
way  
To where, in his unlighted darkness,  
waits  
My desecrated, shattered god of  
clay.

Before their golden gods my sisters  
cast  
Their fleeting blooms, the gladness  
of their years;  
I bear to my degraded god this last  
Great gift of silence and of awful  
tears.

—Theodosia Garrison.

## Social Chat

During and since the closing of the  
holiday season, I have been given a  
real "shower party"—books, letters,  
postals, cards and kindly remem-  
brances, which make me feel more  
deeply my responsibility toward the  
thousands who hold an interest in our  
mutual work on the Home pages. To  
be deserving of this kindness, I must  
strive to give a good return. I would  
be glad to write to each dear friend,  
personally, expressing as much grate-  
fulness as words may convey, but to  
do so would sorely cripple my work  
on the department, so, dear friends,  
let my work for you prove how much  
I prize the happiness of being your  
editor.

Let us begin the new year and the  
new volume of The Commoner with  
a determination to make every day  
of our lives count for good. Let us  
believe the best of each other and  
of ourselves, and let us work upward  
and forward toward our beautiful  
ideals. In the main, life is what we  
make it, and every day and hour is  
but a part of the building. In order  
to do our best, we must make the  
best of ourselves. Goodness and hap-  
piness are largely a question of  
health, and one of our strongest  
duties, not alone to ourselves, but to  
others, is that we take care to be  
well, bodily, and to keep well. It is  
told of a mother of little children that  
she insisted that she must take her

regular daily naps, happen what  
might; some one suggested the possi-  
bility of "things" happening to her  
little ones while she "napped." She  
met the question with astonished eyes:  
"Why," she said, "what could happen  
to them worse than that I lose my  
little naps?" So, I must ask you,  
what could happen worse to your  
family than that you should lose your  
health, bodily and spiritually, because  
of overwork and anxiety for them?  
Among other things, let us resolve  
that we will not whine, if things go  
a little wrong; let us shut our lips  
tightly on the unkind criticism of our  
neighbor; we do not know her bur-  
dens, or why she fails to reach our  
criterion; let us treasure up the pleas-  
ant things and strive to forget the  
unpleasant; let us, in short, open wide  
the doors and windows of our souls  
and let in the light and sunshine,  
banishing all the foul broods which  
occupy the dark and musty corners,  
and in every way possible, prove by  
our struggling for the "better things,"  
that we are, ourselves, children of the  
light, loving not the contagion of  
darkness.

## For the Garden

Too many farmers and others who  
live far from a large market are con-  
tent to subsist three-fourths of the  
year on bread, meat and a very  
limited supply of vegetables—most of  
which have to be bought away from  
the home, when they could just as  
well have plenty of the best right at  
their door, or in their own cellars or  
root houses. If the garden were  
planted in rows, so the horse and  
plow could be used in it, or even those  
handy little wheel hoes, the task of  
pulling the weeds from between the  
plants would be very small, and could  
be done by a child. The time given  
to the cultivation would hardly be  
missed, and even though it were, the  
wholesome and palatable sustenance  
to be drawn from it would more than  
make up for the labor. Vegetables  
and canned or dried fruits are greatly  
to be preferred to drugs and doctor  
bills.

Remember that spinach is a medi-  
cine as well as a food, and the seeds  
should be sown as early as the ground  
can be worked, for the summer crop,  
the ground to be heavily manured and  
trenched, and the seeds to be sown in  
drills early in March. Sowings at  
intervals from April to August should  
be made for a succession. Two ounces  
of seed will plant five rows, thirty  
to forty feet long, and the plants  
should be thinned out as soon as  
strong enough to draw, leaving them  
six to nine inches apart in the row.

A half dozen good roots of rhubarb  
should be set out very early and  
heavily manured, spading the manure  
in the soil before setting out the  
roots. If well cared for, a few usings  
may be made the first year, but it  
is best to wait until the second.

Very few farm or village families  
grow asparagus, yet it is very easy  
to raise. It is best to get strong  
roots in the spring, but it can be  
raised from seeds, one ounce of seed  
producing a thousand plants, sown in  
a bed twelve feet square. A bed of  
seedlings will not generally be fit for  
use until the third year.

## "Simple Syrup"

A physician's prescription usually  
calls for "Syr. simplex" in addition  
to the drugs to be used. This means  
"simple syrup," made of a given  
amount of sugar and water. To make

it, pour two pints of boiling water  
over a scant two and a half pounds  
of dry white sugar; set the vessel con-  
taining it on a hot stove and stir  
occasionally until it starts to boil,  
when it must be instantly removed;  
if allowed to boil it will become thick  
and sugary. One ounce of fluid ex-  
tract to three ounces of simple syrup  
make the usual medicinal syrup.  
Some drugs are mild, and in these  
cases, two teaspoonfuls of the medi-  
cated syrup may be used; others have  
a great deal of strength and action,  
and one-half teaspoonful will be suf-  
ficient. The usual dose is one tea-  
spoonful.

Some stomachs revolt against every  
form of syrup, yet cannot take in-  
fusions; under such circumstances a  
vehicle for fluid extracts may be pre-  
pared by adding two ounces of gly-  
cerine to twelve ounces of a rather  
thick mucilage of gum arabic. This  
is an excellent vehicle to be used in-  
stead of syrup when administering  
remedies to persons suffering from  
diabetes or obesity. Alcohol may be  
used instead of glycerine, but it in no  
way adds to the curative properties  
of a compound, but only serves as a  
preservative or an extractive.—Dr.  
Reeder, in Chicago Inter-Ocean.

A good healing cream is made of  
one pound of best mutton tallow, two  
tablespoonfuls of spirits of camphor  
and a little of any favorite extract  
to perfume. Fry out the tallow over  
a slow fire; strain through several  
thicknesses of old linen, add the cam-  
phor and beat as it cools to a cream,  
adding the perfume, if desired. This  
is inexpensive and will cure "chaps"  
for the boys as well as for the girls.  
If you do not keep sheep, get a  
nice piece of "leaf fat" from the  
butcher.

## Grafting Wax

Answering "A Subscriber:" Five  
parts of resin, one part of beeswax,  
one part of tallow. Melt together over  
a slow fire. When the ingredients are  
melted and thoroughly mixed, pour  
into a vessel containing cold water;  
as soon as cool enough, work and  
pull with the hands, until it is en-  
tirely pliable. It may be used at  
once, or kept for years. Apply the  
warm wax to the graft with a wooden  
spatula, covering thoroughly to ex-  
clude air and moisture. No bandage  
is necessary.

For "Splicing Graft"—Melt equal  
parts of beeswax and tallow together,  
stirring in a little chalk, if handy,  
but can be used without; while hot,  
dip in some strips of rags; then tear  
them into strips suitable to bandage  
the stock and cion. Let the stock  
and cion be so covered as to prevent  
the escape of the sap or the introduc-  
tion of water, and the work is finished.

A superior quality of wax may be  
made of four parts white resin, one  
part beeswax, one part linseed oil;  
put together in an iron pot and set  
over the fire until they can be easily  
worked together by stirring with a  
stick. The mixture should then be  
thrown into cold water and manipu-  
lated by hand until the color changes  
from a dark brown to a light straw.  
It may then be formed into sticks  
and preserved in any cool place until  
wanted for use. Using linseed oil  
instead of tallow makes a wax quite  
as lasting, and more easily worked,  
especially early in the season. If but  
a few grafts are to be set, it is quite  
as cheap to buy a stick or two at any  
horticultural store.

Another Method: Wax is made ac-  
cording to the following formula: Four

pounds rosin, three pounds beeswax,  
and two pounds of tallow. These in-  
gredients heated and well mixed form  
commercial grafting wax. A conven-  
ient way to use grafting wax is to  
dip in it strips of calico or thin mus-  
lin cloth, which can be torn into strips  
easily, dried, and when wanted  
wrapped around the graft to exclude  
the air.

## Sachet Powders

A good sachet powder is made by  
sifting together eight ounces of pow-  
dered Florentine orris root, ten ounces  
of powdered roseleaves, ten grains of  
musk, two ounces of lavender flower,  
and ten grains of civit. This is called  
a rose powder. This for sachets for  
shelves and bureau drawers and  
clothes closets.

## For the Baby

"The range between necessities and  
luxuries for a layette is so wide" says  
the Liliputian Bazaar, in speaking of  
the new baby, "that a list of the most  
necessary articles only can be given,  
and the mother must decide upon the  
quality and number of each of the  
garments. Bands, shirts, pinning  
blankets, flannel skirts, night dresses,  
flannel wrappers, dresses, blankets,  
socks, napkins, and bibs are  
the essentials, while there are many  
other garments and articles of wear  
that add materially to the comfort of  
both mother and babe. Upon the  
quality and quantity of these gar-  
ments, and the additional bits of  
daintiness which every mother longs  
to add to her baby's belongings, will  
depend the cost of the outfit. These  
little garments can now be had ready  
made, so cheap in price and so daintily  
fashioned, that in many cases it is  
unwise for the expectant mother to  
attempt the fashioning of the tiny  
garments with her own hands. For  
both her own and the baby's sake,  
she should carefully avoid all con-  
fining occupation and strive to in-  
crease, instead of exhausting, her  
strength by every available means.  
It is best, too, not to get too many  
articles of each kind, as baby will  
grow so fast that others will soon be  
called for, and it would seem wise  
to begin with necessities, adding  
others according to our like, as the  
darling demands them. Nearly every-  
thing, now, can be had, ready made,  
and from the plainest to the finest, at  
reasonable prices."

## Baby's Basket

The nursery basket is intended to  
hold the articles needed for the baby's  
toilet, and may be made up as plainly  
or as prettily as time and taste shall  
allow. There are many kinds of  
baskets on the market, the tall ham-  
per with the inside tray and space  
beneath for the dainty clothing; the  
square, flat, or round basket, trimmed  
with ribbons and laces, with pockets

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