



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
Helen Watts Meloy

## "The Force of Little Things"

How easy it is to spoil a day!  
The thoughtless words of a cherished friend,  
The selfish act of a child at play,  
The strength of a will that will not bend,  
The slight of a comrade, the scorn of a foe,  
The smile that is full of bitter things—  
They all can tarnish its golden glow,  
Can brush the grace from its airy wings.

And easy it is to spoil a day  
By the force of a thought we did not check;  
Little by little we mold the clay,  
And little flaws may the vessel wreck;  
The careless waste of a precious hour  
That held the blessing we long had sought,  
The sudden failure of wealth or power,  
And lo! the day is with ill wrought.

How easy it is to spoil a life—  
And many are spoilt ere well begun—  
The home-light darkened by sin and strife,  
Or downward course of a cherished one;  
By toil that robs the form of grace,  
And undermines till health gives way—  
By the peevish temper, the frowning face,  
The hopes that go and the cares that stay.

A day is too long to be spent in vain;  
Some good should come as the hours go by;  
Some tangled maze may be made more plain;  
Some lowered glance may be raised on high.  
And life is too short to be spoiled like this—  
If only a prelude, it should be sweet:  
Let us bind together its threads of bliss,  
And nourish the flowers around our feet.

—Selected.

## Thanksgiving Day

We all have much to be thankful for concerning the year that is now passing away; more than many of us, in our moments of discouragement, are willing to admit. We do not all approach the feasting and rejoicing of the day set apart for acknowledgements of God's goodness with grateful hearts for blessings bestowed, and in many instances, the joys of the moment are all that distinguish the day from the many others.

We can not all have the roses and lilies, and in many cases, the flowers that fall to our hands are few and faded. We treat them with neglect because we wanted something else—the something, perhaps, that was given to our envied neighbor. Yet, many times, it is the common wayside weeds that grow along our pathway that bear the healing which our hurts so sorely need. If we could only realize that often the shadow is sent in mercy, because our tear-washed eyes could scarcely bear the brightness of the sunshine! Let us learn to give thanks for the shadows. Let us try to be thankful for the things that are withheld, as well as

for those which are given. The "silver lining" may always be found, but in many instances it must be sought; otherwise, it would not be appreciated. Let us all count our mercies, as well as our blessings. If we do this, we shall be better able to meet the coming year, and better able to help our brother and sister bear their load of both joys and sorrows. "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord."

## Money Troubles

There are evils which are far worse than those which result from having money, or the lack of it. Money matters are, however, a fruitful source of contention and bitterness in the average family circle, and are therefore a subject which merits discussion. One peculiarity in the matter of money in the family is that its abundance causes as much trouble, seemingly, as its scarcity. Friction in the family over money matters is usually the result of selfishness, stinginess or dishonesty, in some quarter. Where the noblest motive is the family good, the question of individual income or expenditure is not raised, but the general income and expenses are the consideration. It is not individual expenses, but the necessary outlay which is the cause, if any, of worry in the family where everything is shared in common. In many families there is a sort of communistic association, where each individual puts in as little as possible and takes out all he can get. The result is constant friction and jealousy. Such forms of living can not be too severely condemned.—Ex.

## Being Independent

One of the chief troubles in the family is often the mistaken desire on the part of sons and daughters to be independent. It is quite common to hear the young people talk about getting their own living, as though that were all that was required to make them independent, forgetting that their parents have boarded, clothed and educated them, often through great self-sacrifices, for many years. As society now is, there is no independence. We must do more than support ourselves. We can not shirk our responsibilities to our parents or to our children. Among a certain class of public teachers, the idea of individual independence is discussed on these grounds: The fact that the child was allowed no voice in the matter of its being born, relieves it from any duty of obligation, and the parents owe to the being called into the world all the material comforts because of having brought it into life without any violation on its part. They contend that the physical tie between parent and child carries with it no obligation for consideration on the part of the child for any benefits bestowed. That obedience to the parent's command is not obligatory, although they admit that the child should be under some authority; that the parent should understand that the commands given should be because of the obligation which he owed to the child to train him for his highest development; that the obligation is on the part of the parent, rather than of the child. This would be a "sorry" doctrine to teach to the youth of today, and in it there seems to me to be no room for the developing of the highest ideals, or even of inculcating the doctrine of "loving one's neighbor as one's self."

There seems to be something utterly selfish and unfeeling in the spirit of its utterance.

## Fashion Notes

Skirts are trimmed flat and band trimming is used almost exclusively upon those which are at all elaborate. These bands which match the material of the dress or its furnishing often carry out the lines of the bodice adornment or are run about the skirt in graduated widths. Long Empire skirts are usually trimmed in vertical lines, adding to the graceful effects so much sought.

The short boleros are still in good taste upon house and evening gowns. Sleeves of wraps, unless of actual tailor persuasion, are voluminous, and tend to the dolman and cape shape. All sleeves that are shaped to the arm have cuffs, and there is a tendency to elaborate the cuff finish.

The straight, hanging box coat is considered the best style for small maidens, as it will serve for any purpose, go on over any frock without crushing it, and is simple enough for youthful wearers. The neck may be closed snugly to the throat, with a shield having a low standing collar, or it may be worn without this accessory, or with the rolling collar. The cuffs are of the smart, turn-back variety.

## The Problem of Living

"The struggle for existence in our large cities, and in many of our smaller places, grows keener and keener, and many families feel like giving up in despair. The expenses of living are continually rising, while the wages, except in unionized trades, either stand still or decrease. The cost of living for the average wage-earning family in 1905 was \$48 per month, while in 1906 the cost of living has risen to \$57 per month per family, and it is claimed that in 1907 it will be still higher—so high, in fact, that a very serious problem will have to be met in some way. In many large cities, it is claimed that parents, finding the struggle for existence no longer bearable, owing to the large increase in the cost of rent, food, and other necessities, are seeking to place their children in institutions. During the first three months of 1906 it is said nearly two thousand children were proposed for commitment to institutions, the parents finding it impossible to support them. This is an increase in number from 1905 in exact proportion to the increase of living expenses.

"The parents of these children are not paupers; they are honest, hard-working people, who earn from \$10 to \$12 per week, and who make great sacrifices in order to raise their families, but if the income is \$10 a week, and the expenses \$12, what is to be done? You will say, curtail the expenses; but you can not curtail the cost of a five-cent loaf of bread, when it is five cents, and with meat at almost prohibitive prices, the poor in the cities get very little of it. Rents that were \$12 per month are now \$16, and so it goes all along the line. The poor have squeezed their few dollars until they could squeeze no more, and they took their children to the bureau of charities and asked that they be taken, as they could no longer support them.

"The increase in the cost of living is due to a condition, and economic conditions that break up homes and

separate parents from children should not be tolerated if anything can be done to break them up. Honest, hard-working people always managed to live fairly well in this country, except in periods of great trade depression, and it was only the shiftless that had to be looked after; but now, when it is claimed to be a period of great prosperity, we see many honest toilers giving up the struggle in discouragement, while homes are being broken up because of the conditions which are almost intolerable."—Literary Companion.

## A Woman's Duty to Herself

"Every woman has the right—a right so inalienable as to become itself a duty—to cherish and comfort herself; to let flowers bloom in her heart; to lighten her burdens by allowing, or, if need be, requiring others to share the weight of them. It will be found that a household, all of whose members share alike in the daily routine, is more cheerful and charitable than one conducted on the single-slave plan. It is more agreeable, all around, to contribute something than to accept everything; and it produces better hearts and minds and manners. And even if the housework does get neglected occasionally, that is better than a neglected life; and it may sometimes be wiser to buy a new garment than to patch the old one."—Julian Hawthorne.

## Small Economies

"If one becomes a business woman, it behooves her to know that she can not succeed if she fritters away her energies on too many small economies. She can not work in an office all day and then sit up half the night to make her own dresses. If a man earns only \$5 a week he doesn't try to save by stitching up the seams of his own coat or trousers; if he did, he never would earn any more than the \$5; he puts his head into his business and schemes to make himself more valuable; then he buys coats and trousers with his increased salary. A woman saves at the spigot and breaks down."

## Potting in Tin Cans

For many plants, tin cans are the best, as the soil dries out much more slowly than that in earthen pots; but care must be taken not to keep the soil too wet, or it may sour and either kill or badly damage the plant. The cans may be painted some sober shade, or paper of various kinds may be used to wrap about them. The paper should be of a neutral color. The matting which comes about tea is also good. Cans of all sizes may be used, from the milk can to a very large lard bucket. When a plant requires shifting, lay the can on a table, letting the plant hang over the edge of the table; with a can-opener begin near the bottom of the can and cut a slit clear through to the top, press the cut edges apart, slip a table knife all around close to the tin, and the ball of roots and soil will readily fall out into the hand.

## Floral Notes

The practice of filling all cracks about the windows and unused doors during cold weather is a commendable one, for several reasons. It prevents the plants from chilling, and saves fuel. Hygienists may object to this, on the grounds that the pure air is necessary for health, and that the size of drug bills is greatly increased thereby. Plenty of air may be obtained by throwing open the doors for a few minutes, two or three

**AN OLD AND WELL-TRIED REMEDY**  
MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children's 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 cent bottle.