



# The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Wat's News

## The Dance of the Christmas Tree

In the land where Santa Claus keeps house,  
Where Jack Frost creeps as still as a mouse,  
There is a whispering and a rushing  
Like small rain falling, like full streams gushing,  
To the horn of the wind, to the flute of the breeze;  
'Tis the dance, the dance of the Christmas trees  
In the far-off Christmas Tree Country.

In that far land, where the snow lies deep,  
Men go stamping, with teams that creep;  
With creaking sleds and with axes keen,  
They go to gather the Christmas green.  
Little green babies and sturdy trees,  
Down they rush like a wild young breeze,  
"Good-bye, my Christmas Tree Country!"

At night when the silence is profound,  
The others foot their solemn round  
With many a sparkling wreath of ice  
And flaunting snow-plume point device,  
And the little stars in their night-gowns white,  
Sit up late to stare at the sight  
In the far-off Christmas Tree Country.

The Northern Lights on the hills so bare  
Tiptoe eagerly here and there,  
Over tree-shoulders, trying to see  
The Christmas trees dance solemnly;  
The trees which did not go to town,  
Keeping the feast among woods so brown  
In the far-off Christmas Tree Country.  
—Florence Evelyn Pratt.

## With Our Readers

Just now, we are all so intent upon making the Christmas holiday season a rousing success that we scarcely take time to glance at the printed page. In most of homes, the cookery book, the fancy-work manual and the holiday-goods catalogue hold the place of honor, while the favorite paper or magazine is laid away for reading at a more fitting season, or, if looked at at all, it is to see if any new and better recipes are given, or original suggestions for the gift-box offered.

In sending you our home greetings, I am going to remind you that there is still a vacancy in my "Letter-Box," where a letter or postal from each of you will fit in beautifully. The reading of those messages of cheer may be the only dissipation I shall be able to indulge in, for the life of a "writing woman" holds few vacations. Through these messages of the moment, we catch delightful glimpses of your beautiful home lives, and in thus growing in knowledge of your needs and tastes, I am better enabled to give you what you want. Will you send me a "Christmas message?"

For our readers, we send heartiest good wishes, in the spirit of the season of Good Will.

## For the Toiler

The art of letter writing is said to be dying out, and especially so since the advent of the telephone and the trolley car, with the rural postal delivery. But do you ever think of the woman who sits, it may be hours every day, and sometimes far into the

night, talking through the typewriter that you may read? Do you ever think that to her, the 'phone and the trolley car may be but dreams, while her only touch with the outer world comes to her through the letters the carrier lays on her table from her unseen friends? Do you ever think what bright spots these letters make on the dull, gray background of the life lived in the gas or electric lighted office, bringing to her visions of homes that she knows only as dreams? In the great cities, there are thousands of such shut-ins—many whose names are never known to their readers, and whose readers are unknown to them. Many of these women are wives and mothers, working for invalids or little children—sometimes both; each striving by her work to keep the home-hearth bright for the ones she has to leave during the daylight hours, seeing them only in the glare of the winter lamp-light. Only by this constant toll can she keep a shelter over their heads and food for the little mouths. So, I am going to speak for these toiling shut-ins, who can not speak for themselves. If you know of one of these—whether personally or by hearsay, will you not spare a moment of your time to send them a kindly greeting? Just a few words on a postal card, or one of those pretty, inexpensive holiday cards to be found in every store. Your remembrance may be their only "Christmas gift." If you could send them a letter, how much better it would be; for they are women—"even as you and I," with all a woman's longing for sympathy and appreciation. Your little, encouraging word will brighten and bring smiles to the faces which may be only too often washed with tears. Many of the girls and women struggling in the tread-mills of the business world are mere machines, grinding out a living for some one dependent on them, while their whole hearts are one big ache and longing for the home-hearth and the happiness of being loved and cared for. Women and girls do not work for fun and finery alone. Remember these lonely lives.

Wherever the Christmas spirit is found, there are wreaths and garlands and strings of holly and evergreen; but whether or not the little folks know the meaning of these symbols, why they are used at this particular season, the reason for the good wishes, good will and present-giving depends largely on those who make the spirit of the season in the home. If the children go to Sunday school and read Sunday school literature, they may be very wise in these matters. But there are many little boys and girls in the great cities, and even in the country in some sections, whose knowledge of such things is very vague. Dear little boys and girls into whose homes The Commoner goes each week, do you know of such children? Could you tell them the story, and point them to the Star?

Will M. E. W., who wrote about her unfortunate young friend, please send me her address, as the matter is of too personal a nature to answer in the Query Box? I will be glad to advise her by letter.

## Christmas Candies

Nut Macaroons—Shell, chop and pound to a paste one cupful of walnut meats; these may be black or

English walnuts, but there must be a cupful of the meats. Beat to a stiff froth the whites of two eggs, and lightly mix in with them four ounces of confectioner's sugar and the pounded nuts. Drop on sheets of paper in tiny heaps about the size of a half dollar. Bake very gradually in a slack oven until they begin to color. While still warm, stick them together in pairs with a little white of egg. Other kinds of nuts may be used instead of walnuts, if wished.

Fudge—To a cup three-quarters full of milk allow one-fourth pound of chocolate cut into small pieces, a lump of butter as large as a good sized brazilian nut, and three cupfuls of granulated sugar. Put all on the fire together and stir constantly from the moment the mixture begins to boil until a little dropped in cold water hardens, then remove from the fire and add a few drops of extract of vanilla, beat until creamy and turn into a buttered pan. Cut in squares before it hardens.

Small Meringues—Tiny meringues are very easily made, and may be varied in many different ways. They look very dainty in little paper cases with a bit of crystallized fruit or flower on top. They are usually much liked when made of cocoanut. Beat the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth, and stir in lightly two ounces of confectioner's sugar and half a grated cocoanut (any good dessicated cocoanut is suitable for candy making, but should be soaked in a little milk for some hours and then strained well before using). Drop in small spoonfuls on sheets of paper, place a bit of glace cherry on top of each and bake in a moderate oven until they begin to color. Place each meringue in a tiny paper case (to be had at the confectioner's).

## For the Cook

Roast Turkey—When the turkey is properly prepared, fill it with a stuffing made with bread-crumbs, egg, butter and sweet milk; fold the wings backward upon the back, secure the legs to the sides, dust the fowl with pepper and rub the breast with butter put on quite thick. Put the turkey in a deep pan, placing on the breast; set in a hot oven, without water, basting with the melted butter and fat that cooks from the fowl, and allow twenty minutes cooking to each pound of turkey, not counting the first twenty minutes; sprinkle with salt about half an hour before taking it from the oven; put the gizzard, liver and heart in a stew pan and cook until soft, then chop fine, add the water they are cooked in and let stand on the stove. Take the turkey from the pan, rub into the gravy in the pan three tablespoonfuls of flour, blending smoothly. Put in the chopped mixture, stir and cook three minutes, adding boiling water to make gravy the desired thickness, then cook again three minutes.

Sweet Potato Stuffing—For a change try this as stuffing for the turkey: Cook, mash and sift (rub through a sieve or colander) one quart of sweet potato; mix a cupful of bread-crumbs, a quarter cupful of butter, a beaten egg, one teaspoonful and a quarter of salt, a little paprika and a teaspoonful of poultry seasoning. When the fowl is ready, stuff with this, truss, rub with butter, and a slice of ham or pork, and bake as above. Garnish with sausage, and sprigs of celery.

Roast Goose—Select a fine, tender goose, singe, draw, wash well and

wipe the inside very dry with a cloth. Have ready a chestnut stuffing, as follows: Peel a good-sized shallot or onion, chop very fine; place in a saucepan on the hot range with two tablespoonfuls of butter, and let heat for three minutes without browning, then add a quarter of a pound of good sausage meat, cook five minutes longer; then add ten finely chopped mushrooms, twelve well pounded, cooked and peeled chestnuts, stir well together. Season with a pinch of salt, small pinch of pepper, half a saltspoonful of powdered thyme and a teaspoonful of finely chopped parsley. Let first come to a boil, then add half an ounce of fresh bread crumbs with a few whole cooked chestnuts, mix all together, being careful not to break the chestnuts. Let cool and fill the goose with the mixture. Close both ends of the fowl, truss well, sprinkle a pinch of salt over, envelope in buttered paper (if desired) and put into a roasting pan. Cook for one hour and a half, or until tender, basting occasionally. Remove from the oven, untruss; skim all the fat from the gravy in the pan, add a gill of water, let boil up well, strain and serve.

## Rabbit Pie

Cut the dressed rabbit into small pieces, taking out what bone you can; let lie in cold, salted water for one hour (boiling the bones meanwhile). Drain the meat, strain the bones out of the boiling water and put the meat into it, and let boil until perfectly tender, adding a bay leaf, half a dozen peppercorns, a sliced onion, and a stalk of celery. When the rabbit is done, remove from the pot, strain the liquor, add to it one cup of cream or rich milk, and thicken with two tablespoonfuls of flour rubbed smooth in two tablespoonfuls of butter. Add more seasoning if liked. Remove all bones from the meat, and arrange the latter in a deep pie dish, seasoning each layer lightly with salt, white pepper and a very thick walnut catsup. Pour over the thickened gravy, and when quite cold cover with a rather thick layer of rich paste. Cut an incision in the center to allow the steam to escape, and bake in a hot oven. Other catsup may be substituted for the walnut, if preferred.

Celery Salad—Take a large, fine head of celery, removing all the yellow leaves and part of the small green leaves; chop as fine as possible, put into a salad dish and pour over it a dressing made as follows:

A small, level teaspoonful of salt, a little pepper, three tablespoonfuls of salad oil, four tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Place these over the fire and keep constantly stirred until thoroughly blended, then scald for three minutes, and pour hot over the chopped celery. Stir well together and put in a cold place until wanted.

## Some Christmas Suggestions

At the holiday season, it is well to remind the adult members of the family, whether living near or far, that they can do no greater kindness to the dear old parents than to turn their faces homeward, if but for a few hours, to assure the old father and mother that you love them, and remember them at this season of merry-making. Old people are apt to feel very lonely on the holidays, for the circle of their friends and companions are constantly narrowing, and they live more with their memories than with people. They particularly miss the children at such times, and their hearts are sore with hungry longings for dead joys. Do not be-

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY  
Mrs. Winslow's SOOTHING SYRUP for children while teething. It softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents bottle.