



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Wat is Mackay

A Winter Song

Brown is the fallow, and gray and cold
The furrows glebe; there is rust on the gold
Of the stubble; and naked, and gnarled, and old,
The willows lean over the brook by the wold,
And the brook lies asleep, with a gleam of the sun
On her face; all her gay summer gossiping done,
No more thro' the meadows her merry feet run,
For her neighbors have shut their small doors, one by one.

Thro' the long cheerless night—thro' the brief wintry day,
The chrysalis under the briny spray—
The pretty hedge-rabbit, the chipmunk, the gray
Little field-mouse, are tucked from the Norther away.
The brown-coated sparrow, the blithe chick-a-dee
Still haunt the great boughs of the sturdy roof-tree;
And the field-fits are busy as busy can be—
God's pensioners, seeking by lowland and lea!

Oh, quietly, soberly, down by the low,
Solemn meadows, across the dim woodlands, and so
To the quaint steeped church on the hill, in the glow
Of the morning the feet of the worshippers go!
And drearily, drearily, into the one
Beaten highway the dull village thoroughfares run,
To the church-yard, where, under the rain and the sun,
The weary ones rest, and their labor is done!

—Emma Alice Browne.

Kindness to the Old People

One of the things that should not be neglected, nor in all cases be regarded solely as a "duty," to be gotten rid of as quickly as possible and with the least expense and trouble, is attention to old people. If your parents are living, let them share in your life as far as they may, and visit them whenever you can. If you can not visit them, at least send them the longed-for letter, or the loving message on a postal card. At the holiday season, send them a little remembrance—they will not be particular as to costliness, for its chief value in their faded eyes will be that it comes from the "boy" or "girl" that will always be one of the children, no matter how the world may regard you.

Old people have few pleasures, as their interests are narrowed down by the infirmities of age, and they live more in the past than in the present; they look forward but a little way, and their dulled ears hear the sound of waves breaking upon an unseen shore far more distinctly than they do the roar of traffic or the blare of the battle music. Their world is not our world, but their lonely old hearts follow you, lovingly, longingly. Their companionship may not interest you much, and their garrulity wear upon your patience; but do not forget that their best years

were given to caring for you, and it would be but a small return for their long devotion to give them a few hours of your company, or a moment's time for a "Hail!" as you sweep along the faster current that is bearing you past the quiet haven into which their battered barks have been swept by the swirl of the stream. Some day, the word will reach you that the frail old body has found rest, and remembering the riches of their love for you in the old time, you will not think it much to leave all your business and go back to help lay them away inside the Gates of Peace.

Remember now, while they are still with you, how childishly happy your presence could make them, and—"Don't keep all the flowers for the funeral!"

The Pocket-Book Problem

The "problem of the purse" is becoming so much a factor for good or evil in the domestic life of the home that it should be talked over before marriage, and some understanding arrived at, if not by the two most interested, then by the parents with the young people, and the points most likely to make or mar the harmony of the new home should be made clear to them; the difficult and dangerous places in the pathway leading from the marriage altar should be bridged over as strongly as possible, thus saving much trouble and many heart-burnings later along. A large part of the inharmony of married life comes from the fact that this matter is not clearly understood from the first. No self-respecting woman likes to ask for money to which she feels that she is entitled because of her position in the home, and too often men are either ignorant of her needs and rights, or refuse to recognize them; preferring to humiliate the wife by doling out the necessary household money only when asked for it. Especially is this true of the young women who have been accustomed, before marriage, to filling—and emptying—the purse as their needs or inclinations dictated. If the newly married couple would begin life with a clear understanding of the financial condition of the "new firm," and a clear understanding of the part each must play in the new drama, the lines would be smoother and straighter for both of them.

"Telling Fortunes by Tea-Leaves"

The tea should not be strained into cups, but poured from the pot, leaves and all. After drinking the tea, draining the last drop, as it is part of the plan that the "tear-drops" must not remain to wash the leaves about, the cup is turned quickly upside down in the saucer with a whirling motion, turning around several times, and left until the "reader" gets around to it. The bits of the tea grounds nearest the rim of the cup is considered first; a leaf is a lady; a stick or stem is a man; long wavy lines indicate ill-luck, a resemblance to a four-leaf clover, good fortune, as do horse-shoe shapes. Trees and shrubbery are good signs; a horse is a lover coming, a dog is a faithful friend, while squares mean letters, and if accompanied by dots, contain money. A long, winding line, similar to a road, means a journey, and it is fortunate or unfortunate, according as

its lines are unbroken or broken. If one is at all imaginative, "things" can be seen readily, and many varied fortunes portrayed. Sometimes the "reader" stumbles upon a truth, or something happens just as she imagined it would, and gives a semblance of trustworthiness to the prophecies. It is a harmless way to spend a pleasant hour, and the game can be made very entertaining by the wit of the seeress.

The New Styles

One does not necessarily need to buy theatre tickets in order to see theatrical displays. A walk through the public thoroughfares, in the parks, or even in country lanes, brings before us the most wonderful spectacles! Costumes more fantastic than these worn by our women, these days, are rarely seen in play-houses, and the attire of many of our society ladies out-do the most extravagant dramatic wardrobe. Headgear of all kinds meet the eye; the most astonishing shapes, trimmings and combinations, completely throw into shade the tasteless, gaudy glories of the "mimic scenes." Many women who have not the courage to wear styles suited to their individuality, rush recklessly into shops and, so it is "the fashion," take anything offered, at extravagant prices.

Candy Pulling

After you have tried other things, try the old-fashioned candy-pulling some cold night, when the young folks want some fun. Everybody must come equipped with a gingham apron. Besides the regular old-time molasses taffy, try this: Three cupfuls of white sugar, butter size of a walnut, one-half cupful equal parts of water and vinegar, mixed. Cook for twenty minutes, or until it "spins" or threads, over a brisk heat, but do not stir, or it will turn back to sugar in cooling. When it spins, turn out into buttered tins, or on a slab of marble, and as soon as possible to handle, pull until very white. If cooked too much, it will be hard; if cooked too little, it will be too soft. Try to strike the happy medium. Flavor as liked while pulling, by dropping the flavoring on the pulled strands.

"Misfit Schooling"

"The present tendency of nearly all school life is to fit the boy for a professional or business career, and not for mechanical or metallurgical pursuits. Yet the law, medicine, and business world are today overcrowded, teeming with starving young and old men, while mining, manufacturing and chemical fields are scouring the nation for capable boys and men, and can not find them. Chicago is maintaining two superb manual training schools to awaken American boys to these needs; Dayton, Ohio, is about to raise \$500,000 to establish such a school; Milwaukee has just started one; the Baldwin Locomotive Works has established one; and so has the General Electric company and the Southern Pacific Railway company.

The tendency of the modern school is to make the boy think only of literature and the fine arts. This tendency is accentuated, I am afraid, in the home, without deep thought as to the future time when he shall be thrown on his own resources. He

begins to think the real badge of work is a white shirt, creased trousers, a well-fitting coat and a natty hat. He despises the overalls, the greasy jumper, the marked hands which after all is said, have always been and always will be the genuine badges of creative toil. * * * The world is now making the greatest demands for labor recruits. If the boy has any mechanical ability at all, any desire to use his muscles, give him the overalls and jumper, and let him go into that which pays handsomely—in money, in new strength, in life in the open air, in sharpening of the wits, in constructiveness, in invention.—Jonas Howard, in Mothers' Magazine.

The Uses of the Looking-Glass

Women, as a rule, are careless about the "hang" of their skirts, and if one is ordinarily observant on the streets or in public places, many untidy habits may be revealed by a glance at the skirt draperies or bottoms. A sag here, if of only a few inches, a shortening there, and a pouching out or pulling in at another place, could readily have been remedied could we but "see ourselves as others see us." And this can only be done by the use of a long, or full-length mirror. The uses of the looking glass should not always be accredited to an overweening vanity, for it is but right that women should like to appear neatly and becomingly arrayed, and a mirror is a necessity where there is but one woman, or even where there are more. If a woman looks into the mirror only when going out "to be seen of men," she sees herself only as she would appear when on dress parade; but she seldom knows how she looks about her work, in the home. Women are careless of their looks often because of ignorance, and if there were plenty of "reflectors" hanging about, she would be on exhibition to herself under all guises, and if she has any self-respect at all, there would be a reformation. Many women who work heroically to rub out wrinkles and remedy face blemishes, render all their efforts abortive by going about the house scowling and wrinkling up their faces—not necessarily from ill-temper, but from habits of hard thinking or worrying over the little annoyances always found in housework or home-keeping. The scowling woman is not always a scolding one, or even an ill-tempered one, and one of the best "beauty" doctors to be had is a plenty of looking-glasses hung about in the living rooms and kitchens of the homes, as well as in the dressing rooms. I know a woman who is sixty years old, and she has several mirrors in each room; she uses them, too. A good many men would be profited by looking into mirrors, too. Many of them seem to have no idea how untidy they appear at all times. No woman likes an unkempt, "tacky-looking" escort, even though he is her husband.

Query Box

J. M.—Write to the United States Land Commissioner, Washington, D. C., for information regarding public lands in the northwest.

C. K.—A "Limerick" is a five-line verse, the last word of the first, second and fifth line of which must rhyme, and the third must rhyme with the fourth. Not necessarily



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