



# The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Wat is Mather

## The Old Armchair

Perhaps no poem has been more widely quoted than the following, written by Eliza Cook. She was born in London, England, in the year 1817, and died at Wimbledon, England, September 23, 1889. Her father was a storekeeper, but the daughter early manifested literary tastes. She wrote for many periodicals, and published "Eliza Cook's Journal."

I love it, I love it! and who shall dare  
To chide me for loving that old arm-chair?  
I've treasured it long as a sainted prize.  
I've bedewed it with tears and embalmed it with sighs,  
'Twas bound by a thousand bands to my heart;  
Not a tie will break, not a link will start;  
Would you learn the spell?—a mother sat there!  
And a sacred thing is that old arm-chair.

In childhood's hour I lingered near  
The hallowed seat with listening ear;  
And the gentle words that mother would give  
To fit me to die and teach me to live.  
She told me that shame would never betide  
With Truth for my creed and God for my guide;  
She taught me to hush my earliest prayer,  
As I knelt beside that old arm-chair.

I sat and watched her many a day,  
When her eye grew dim and her locks were gray;  
And I almost worshiped her when she smiled,  
And turned from her Bible to bless her child.  
Years rolled on, but the last one sped—  
My idol was shattered, my earth-star fled!  
I learnt how much the heart can bear,  
When I saw her die in that old arm-chair.

'Tis past, 'tis past! but I gaze on it now  
With quivering breath and throbbing brow.  
'Twas there she nursed me, 'twas there she died,  
And memory flows with lava-tide.  
Say it is folly, and deem me weak,  
While the scalding drops start down my cheek;  
But I love it, I love it, and can not tear  
My soul from a mother's old arm-chair.

## The Selfishness of Sacrifice

Do not neglect the outings, even though they may be of but a few hours' or a day's duration. The house-mother particularly needs these temporary releases from the nerve-racking tensions that come of the daily routine. A journey, or a visit is not always restful, or satisfying, and from either of these one sometimes returns more worn than when the trip was undertaken. House-mothers, who are proverbially good to others, should learn to be good to themselves. Often the sacrifices upon which we pride ourselves are but forms of selfishness, for in making them we are but consulting our own inclinations and pleasures, rather than the pleasures

of others. It is our delight to deny ourselves that others may have the good times; but very often the family would have twice the pleasure, if we would allow them to enjoy a little of the doing without, and thus have the pleasure of feeling that they have added to our pleasure. Many a son and daughter would gladly share their good times with mother, relieving her of the drudgery of serving, and would thereby increase the happiness of every member of the company. Children are not selfish by nature, but are readily taught selfishness through the unwise example of the parents. Boys and girls are not to blame, if they accept the services that are forced upon them from their babyhood, and many a girl gets an erroneous idea of mother's tastes through never having her attention called to their existence. "Mother does not care for nice clothes," or "Mother never cares to go any where," are expressions often heard from young lips; and mothers are themselves to blame for these ideas. Instead of the mother being the servant, she should be the ruling spirit, to which all her family, as willing servitors, are ready to bend the knee. Now, girls and boys, see to it that mother gets out into the sunshine, and see that she shares in your good times. All she needs is to be made to see that her happiness is your happiness. In your outings, make a comrade of mother. And get the idea that "mother does not like nice things," out of your heads. See that she has them.

## Keeping Cool

One of the surest ways to keep cool during the hot days is to remove all useless draperies, take up the carpets, and give the floors a going over with a cloth and cool, clear water whenever the dust shows. Cleanliness and comfort go together, and it is no harder to wipe up a stained and varnished, or painted floor, once a day than it is to stir up the dust with a broom, only to go over everything with a cloth and remove the dust after it has settled. Such floors do not need scrubbing, as the dust and dirt do not enter into the wood. Children can do this, if a little pains are taken to teach them; if no children, the gude mon can try his hand at it, when seeking ways in which to help the tired wife. When one gets used to bare floors, stained, painted, oiled, or waxed, they are generally liked, and if rugs, or strips of carpet are scattered about over the most used parts, the big, back-breaking, dust collecting carpets will never be replaced. These strips or rugs are easily taken out and the dust shaken or beaten out of them, whenever necessary. And a freshly wiped-up bare floor is delightfully clean looking and cool.

Every room should be flushed with fresh air and sunshine for a few hours every day. If the sun is hidden, the fresh air will do good work. Try keeping the doors and windows open as much as possible, night or day. In all weathers, the windows may be down an inch or two from the top, or the lower sash raised as much. Where drafts are disliked, or not to be endured, the sash may be raised, or removed, and cheese-cloth tacked over the opening. This will keep out rain, or dampness while letting in the fresh air. Above all things, as you value good health, do not sleep in tightly-closed rooms. When one is used to clean air, it is

next to an impossibility to use that which is foul. A bed room that is kept closed always has the "bed room smell," which is at once detected on entering it from an open room. Plenty of water, internal and external, plenty of fresh air, and plain foods sparingly partaken of, will greatly counteract the debilitating effects of heat.

## The Ice Chest

Where ice is available, a home made ice chest can readily be constructed at a saving of expense. Take a large box, of a convenient size, and put in the bottom a layer of saw dust, chaff, or cut hay or straw, as is most convenient. Set a smaller box inside the large one, and pack the filling tightly all around the sides. A galvanized iron pan, the size to fit in the smaller box, and half its depth, is to hold the ice, and this should have a spout about six inches long for draining the water off as the ice melts. This spout must run through the bottoms of the boxes and the packing. Nail short legs on the bottom of the large box, and under this set a pan to catch the drip. Lay a shelf in the box above the ice, and finish with a padded, tightly-fitted cover, which need not be hinged on, but may be, if preferred. It must fit in tightly.

Where one has a cool cellar, an improvised refrigerator may be had by digging a hole six inches deep, and cementing the sides and bottom, and into this, place a frame, covered with fine-meshed wire gauze, having a close-fitting cover, and no bottom. Set the frame in the hole, and mix plaster of paris to a thin cream and pour into the frame, half an inch thick, for a bottom. The plaster will "set" in a few minutes, and no insect can get into the enclosure. See that the lid is close-fitting, and always fastened down tightly.

If ice is not available, and one has a cool cellar, it is easy to dig a hole several feet long, and wide as wanted, two or three feet deep; brick this up, sides and bottom, and cement over the brick; fit a top to it, close-fitting, with a "ventilator" pipe, the end of which is to be covered with gauze wire, running through it. In this, much food can be kept, with very little cost for materials. If one has a "milk house" in the side of a hill, such a "box" can be made, and butter and cream kept ice cold. These conveniences will cost but little in money, and the labor will not be felt, while their value will be untold.

## Some Refreshing Ices

**Mint Beverage.**—Wash and pick from the stems a handful of fresh mint leaves; bruise and steep in water kept just at the boiling point, a handful of leaves to a tumblerful of water, for a few minutes, strain and bottle the decoction, cork, and set on ice to cool; when cold, set in the refrigerator until wanted, then a little cracked ice and sugar to taste may be added. This is excellent for a disordered stomach, or where clear water can not be taken to quench thirst.

**Lemon Sherbet.**—To one quart of boiling water add the juice of five lemons and one pound of sugar; let stand until cool, then strain. Add one pint of water and commence freezing, when half frozen add two well-beaten whites of eggs and a pint of sweetened whipped cream.

**Strawberry Sherbet.**—One quart of strawberries, one quart of water, sugar to taste; mix, and freeze in molds. Before frozen hard, add the well-beaten white of one egg, mix well with a large spoon and leave in the freezer until ready for use. The sherbet may be molded by freezing in a brick-shaped mold and is sent to the table in that form, with fern leaf placed on the platter, and a smaller one on top of the brick.

**Iced Tea.**—A mixture of one-fourth black and three-fourths green tea is good; for black, English breakfast may be used, and for green, young hyson. Allow a level teaspoon of the mixed teas for each cupful wanted. Early in the morning have the water freshly boiling, scald out the pot and put in the tea; over this pour freshly boiling water, as many cupfuls as one desires. Cover closely; let steep (not boil) for five minutes, then strain into a pitcher, cover and set to cool. Longer steeping will give darker color, but is not so wholesome. Boiled tea is not fit to drink. When the tea is quite cold, put into the refrigerator. If wanted in a hurry, set the pitcher into which it is strained into a bowl of ice-water; but do not add ice to the tea, as that weakens it. In serving, fill tall glasses with cracked ice, add a slice of lemon to each glass, and pour in the tea. Sugar may be added individually to taste. This tea will not disturb the nerves. Remember, tea must not boil.

## A Handy Contrivance

For dropping oil in making mayonnaise dressing, the Delineator tells us to try this plan: Cut one small groove and two smaller ones in a cork that fits the oil bottle. Place the bottle on the top of a pitcher to prevent it rolling off the table; under the mouth of the bottle have a bowl containing the yolk of an egg and a dash of cayenne pepper; as the oil falls, drop by drop from the smallest groove, mix thoroughly with an egg-beater; when about an ounce of oil has been used, turn the bottle so the oil will run in a small stream from one of the larger grooves. Add lemon juice as needed, and a pinch of salt at the last.

## Query Box

H. J. N. and Others.—Thanks for replies to "Baking" query.

L. S.—Melted butter is sometimes substituted for olive oil in salad dressing, if the oil can not be had.

Mrs. S.—The long-shouldered effect may be had for shirt waists by using the epaulet yoke, or by shoulder straps extending well over the tops of the sleeve.

L. M.—The different fruit acids are malic, citric and tartaric. Malic acid is found in peaches, apples, pears, currants, gooseberries; citric, in oranges, lemons and limes; tartaric acids abounds in grapes.

M. B. C.—A complete outfit for bead work consists of a loom, needles, directions, patterns, etc., and usually costs \$2 at art stores. Beads in colors or white, cost ten to fifteen cents a bunch.

S. S.—If you will look over the list of publications offered in combination with The Commoner, you will find all the magazines you mention. To take advantage of the prices quoted, you must send your order to The Commoner office.

Annie M.—A persistent use of the soft complexion brush, scrubbing with warm water and a pure soap, rinsing all soap off with clear water, will rid you of the "black heads," which is only dirt in the pores of the skin. A wetting with good vine-

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY  
MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething should always be used for children while teething. It softens the gums, allays the pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle.