



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
Helen Watts McKee

## A Paring-Bee Romance

Fiddle-de-dee for your modern kinks—

Your jimcrack balls and your little pink teas;

Gimme them times that was full of go,

When we'd pike through seas of whirlin' snow

To shuckin' parties and parin' bees.

Talking of parin', I recollect

The jolliest one I ever seen,

And quick as a lightnin' flash can crack,

The smell of apples 'll jog me back

To a big, wide kitchen, spandy clean.

A roarin' fire of hickory logs

A-makin' the room as light as day,

And pans a shinin', all piled up high

With apples as red as the sunset sky,

And pretty gals a-peelin' away.

The winter dusk was a-comin' fast,

But somehow, the candles wasn't lit;

The fire-blaze looked so meller and red,

A-dancin' about, that some one said

'Twould be a pity to light 'em yet.

And I says low to Clarybelle West:

"I tell ye what, that's a slick idee—

Gives me a chance I wouldn't let slide

To git my chair up closter beside

The sweetest gal at the parin'-bee."

Clarybelle giggled and tossed her head,

And cut an apple, and then says,

"Joe, I'm jest a-going to count the seed

Of this here apple." "There ain't no seed,"

Says I, "fer it's 'six-he-loves,' I know."

Hey? Grandma's name is Clarybelle too?

Well, honey, I spects it ought to be;

For though it's many a year ago,

And Grandma's hair is dusted with snow,

She was the gal at the parin'-bee!"

—Harriet Whitney-Durbin in People's Home Journal.

## Nineteen Hundred and Ten

As we take the old calendar and hang up the new, we realize with a little sigh that there is something gone; yet we realize far more that there is a New Year, with its duties and responsibilities, standing at the threshold. We turn our eyes from the promise of the future to the fulfillment of the past, and to some of us, the glance is not satisfactory; scattered all along the trail of the dead year we see mistakes and blunders and failures, and we wish we had done better. But we can not undo what is done; we must try to atone by our best in the days to come. The home department wishes for its readers every good and blessed thing the dear Lord can send them. We want to try to do better, the coming year, and we want you to help us. We think we have the dearest readers in the world, but we want you to write to us oftener, telling us how we can serve you more ac-

ceptably. With you, we want to set our ideals high, for if we aim at nothing, we shall achieve nothing. If we aim high, we shall at least lift our eyes. We want to see the bright side, to put the shadows behind us, and look upward and outward with optimistic hearts. Let us cultivate the virtue of courage, and learn to face responsibilities with a cheerful face. The cup of bitterness may come to us; but if it is necessary for our spiritual welfare that we drink it, let us not "make faces," but drink of it so bravely that no one shall suspect that it is aught but the life-giving water of our every day. Let us achieve, and refuse to recognize defeat. Let the year be indeed a happy and prosperous one.

## The Beauty of Winter

We hear a great deal about the beauty of the summer woods, and every one can see that the autumn foliage is glorious in coloring; but one seldom hears of the beauty to be seen everywhere after the leaves fall away, leaving the trees bare and skeletonized. Did you ever take notice of the effect of leafless trees against a background of clear blue sky, or a clump of dark green cedars or pines? When going through the woods, the ground covered with snow, do you ever notice the wonderful coloring of the tree-trunks and branches? In every curve and angle of the stripped branches there is a miracle of beauty and grace, and a marked coloring in great variety. There are so many bright-twigged trees and berry-bearing shrubs that a judicious planting of these about the home grounds will give an effect as beautiful as, though far more delicate than, the richest coloring of the summer season. The golden willow, the red-twigged dogwood, the white-barked weeping birch, and the spotted sycamore are but a few. The grays and softened greens of the boles of many trees contrast delightfully with the black trunks of their neighbors, while the low drooping growths, the shrubbery and vines laden with strings of white, scarlet, yellow or purple berries, give a beauty to the winter landscape that can not be over-estimated. If we would only look for the beautiful, pushing aside the ugly and unpleasant, how surpassingly fair would we find even the darkest days in the gray old winter weather. And then, could there be anything more beautiful than the long mystery-filled vistas that stretch away into the blue distance, making you somehow think of the end of the rainbow, and the pot of gold that is sure to be there—if only one could reach it. Is there anything half so full of wonder as the winter woodlands?

## Misleading Items

A very irritating thing about many magazines is that of giving out unseasonable instructions. Especially does this work harm in a floral magazine. For the veteran in the business, this does not work especial harm, except in loss of confidence in the reliability of the magazine; but for the beginner, it is sometimes a positive damage. For instance: In the December number of a popular floral magazine, the advice is given to "keep the tea-roses well watered and mulched, as the hot weather this month is very disastrous to the plants if the soil is allowed to dry out." When looking for treatment for a

plant at a particular season, it is aggravating and confusing to find such out-of-season advice, and it should be the business of the editor in charge to see that every month should come in for its own. Then, too, many publications are not in the mails until the month with which they are indexed is nearly ended, and thus, work that should be done during that month, in many cases, will be entirely out of season by the time it reaches the reader's hands. Here is an article in a December number, strongly insisting that "all tender plants should be well protected by the last of November. If the magazine had reached the reader's hands the last days of November, or during the early days of December, the instructions would have been barely in time, and, in some years, the matter could still have been attended to the latter part of December; but for this year, with its early blizzards, sleet, ice and frozen ground, it comes entirely too late. Even in the far southland, there have been destructive frosts and freezes and almost zero weather, and all these possibilities should be taken into account. Better get out last year's volume, and read up on instructions.

## About Breads

The so-called wheaten bread diet has received considerable attention from scientists lately, and they find that the excessive use of whole wheat bread is not without its drawbacks. According to recent investigations, the whole wheat contains along with its highly nutritious matter, a large quantity of earthy matter which acts unfavorably upon persons of advanced years. An excessive use of such bread is said to induce rheumatism, paralysis, asthma, locomotor ataxia, and even diseases of the brain. Thus the average person finds himself between two evils; his only escape seems to be to go back to the good old way of eating a mixed diet, avoiding extremes in everything, and in the majority of cases, this will produce better results than where an exclusive diet of some one thing is used. It is claimed that white flour, instead of being deficient in nitrogen, is one of the best foods man can eat; its very richness in digestible and soluble gluten has given it first rank among bread stuffs, and it has been demonstrated that wheat bread is the best vegetable food yet discovered.

## For the Home Seamstress

In selecting paper patterns, this scale of relative measures should be kept in mind: For a 30-inch bust measure, the waist should be 20-inches around, and the hip measure, 37; a 32-inch bust supposes a 22-inch waist and a 37-inch hip measure; 34-inch bust, 24-inch waist and 41-inch hip measure; 36-inch (medium) bust, 26-inch waist and 43-inch hip; 38-inch bust, a 28-inch waist and 46-inch hip; 40-inch bust, a 30-inch waist and 49-inch hip measure; 42-inch bust, a 32-inch waist 52-inch hip measure. With proper measurements, the correctness of these proportions will be found all right. Bust measure is the fixed measure by which a waist pattern is to be ordered, as the misproportion of the waist-line is easily adjusted; a skirt pattern is to be ordered by the nearest hip measure, as by this, the proportion of the bottom part of

the skirt will be right, and the only fitting necessary will be from the hip to the waist.

All patterns or plaids of the goods must be matched, and this necessitates careful cutting. The ends of the breadths must be straight, the grain or thread of the goods must be exactly even in all breadths. To be sure this is so, tear the goods straight across, or draw a thread and pin the selvedge perfectly even, to keep the goods from drawing or pulling in opposite directions, else it will never hang straight. The exact center of the front breadth must be marked, and must hang straight—as it will not do, if one hip is higher than the other (which is nearly always the case), unless carefully adjusted.

The width of the materials to be used must always be considered in choosing a pattern, and a skirt cut in wide gores will call for wide breadth material. In some patterns, especially the plaited one, the seams can be hidden. A plaid material is best made by a plaited, straight skirt pattern, as gores are difficult to match.

## For the Toilet

These are the days that try one's patience to the limit, if nice, smooth hands are the delight of the soul. In spite of everything, where soft coal is used, the hands will get "grimy," and no soap will clear out the lines and creases. Before attempting to wash the hands take a little lard and rub over the hands, just as you would use soap; rub it well in, and let stay a few minutes—long enough to thoroughly soften the dirt, then, with quite warm water and a vegetable oil soap—castile is good, if it agrees with the skin—wash the hands thoroughly, using corn meal with the soap; when clean, rinse well in clear water and then in cider vinegar, let dry before going out. Every night, do this, and when quite dry, fill the palm with a little warm cocoa-butter, and rub well into the skin; or plain mutton tallow is just as good. When the hands feel soft, wipe all the grease off carefully, and in the morning, your hands will be much better. For the face and neck, a plain cold cream is better than water. Rub it well into the skin, then, after a few minutes, rub off with a clean cloth, or bits of cotton, and you will be astonished at the amount of dirt removed. If a pair of gloves—home-made is "just as good," are kept near the stove, and put on every time one has to handle fuel or ashes, it will save lots of trouble; but the gloves must be washed frequently and kept clean.

A writer in a popular magazine says the advice to women to eat less should come only from her physician, as more women are sick from starvation than anything else. Find what agrees with you, and then eat plenty of it. But be sure it is what you need. Be good to yourselves, dear women, and remember that good health is the best beautifier in the world. Remember, too, that you can not have good health if you do not feed your nerves. Be cheerful, and look for the funny side of things. There always is one, you know.

## Query Box

Several readers have kindly sent in the words of the poem, "The Old Man's Dream," requested by Mrs. Warner, and the copies have been forwarded to her; but as several others wish the words, they will be given in our department in a short time. Many thanks to our friends.

Anita—To find out how to secure the free traveling library, or to learn if there is such a thing in your state, write to the state superintendent of public instruction, at the capital of