



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

"The Hand That Smites"
They say this world is round, and yet
I often think it square;
So many little hurts we get
From corners, here and there.
But one great truth in life I've
found,
While journeying to the
west—
The only folks who really wound
Are those we love the best.

Love does not grow on every tree,
Nor true hearts yearly bloom;
Alas, for those who only see
This truth across the tomb!
But soon or late, the fact grows
plain
To all, through Sorrow's test,
The only folks that give us pain
Are those we love the best!
—Anonymous.

(The above poem was sent us for re-print by one of our readers, and we give it place with pleasure. We are always glad to have our friends send in their favorite poems, or to hunt up poems which are wanted and asked for.)

"Everybody Works but Father"

There are indications, says an exchange, that man—always alive to his opportunities—is essaying a relapse to the primitive conditions in which the woman not only supported herself, but man, too. There is a popular song which tell us that "Mother takes in washing, and so does Sister Ann." It is presumed that the other girls help to swell the family revenue, one as a sales-lady, another as a typist, and a third as an employe in a box factory. The minor sons, while subject to the mother's influence, earn wages, and very soon learn to spend them on their own pleasures. Interpreted as a reversion to conditions of former days, not merely to those of a century ago, but to the days of savagery, this emancipation of man is interesting. The man, it is claimed, sees in his leisure nothing less than a just recompense for his labors and deprivations during the long period in which his family was growing from babyhood to adult age. Man, it would seem, has "come into his own," but as elderly women are losing out at every point, the mothers will soon be asking where she "comes in." Yet there are many fathers willing to work, if allowed. One of our readers gives this bit of experience, in a private letter: "A little over a year ago, I answered an advertisement for help wanted. When I made known my business, the manager said they advertised for girls, as girls could do the work, and would work cheaper than men. I asked what they were paying, and was told, \$1 per day, but was assured that a man could not afford to work for that. I told him I had my own home and a small pension, and if I could get \$1 per day, I was sure I could do satisfactory work, and the wage would help me out. But there was no show for me. I was an old man, and I stood no chance, notwithstanding the fact that I could do better work, was more reliable, and was willing because of necessity to work for the wage offered." This white-haired old gentleman is forced to be dependent on his elderly wife, who finds work in an office, and his young

daughter who has to leave school to earn less than a dollar a day, at work which the father can do far better, if allowed.

Cruelty to House Pests

One of our readers takes exceptions to the treatment of ants suggested in the "Little Helps" gleanings in a recent Home Department. We give her argument as sent in: "I am not much pleased with the following paragraph which appeared in the Home Department of July 8, under 'Little Helps'—'A good way to get rid of ants is to give them something they like to gather on, then burn the whole bunch when they get busy.' Will you kindly excuse me for offering a few words in behalf of the little ants as a protest against the cruelty suggested. It is true that the ant gets into houses and pantries, which is very annoying to many good folks; but it may be gently brushed out, then a little pepper sprinkled on its runway will make it understand that its company is not desired. Then, why should we darken our own souls by the misuse of a power intrusted to us? God, in his infinite wisdom, placed these little insects here alongside of us for some good purpose; why not seek to learn the purpose? Perchance God designed them to try our souls and teach us patience, of which we are often sorely in need.

"But, of course, The Commoner does not endorse this method of getting rid of ants—neither can it deem such teachings as wholesome food for children. Could one imagine any little girl of seven to ten years of age, who could look upon such destruction of life without shrinking from the sight with horror? I venture that there is not one amongst The Commoner's 'enormously' paid staff, as Will Maupin says, who would deliberately set foot on even a single tiny ant. Now, then, would the Home Department editor, with false pretense, call all the little hungry ants to a great banquet, and while they were confidently eating, with thankful hearts full of love for the hand that bestowed on them the good things of life, raise the other hand and with murderous intent, burn them all to death? It is scarcely believable, and yet we shall be glad to hear what plea can be made to the indictment."—M. S., Ohio.

The above writer's argument will apply just as justly to the destruction of any and all household pests. The destruction by fire or scalding water is surely as swift and painless as by poison, and in many households, the little red ant can not be gotten rid of by the delicate methods she offers. Some houses and grounds are so infested by the ant family that self-protection from their depredations is a serious problem, not only to the housewife, but to the gardener and fruit grower. When the little girl shall have grown to the dignity of having a house of her own, I fear she will feel justified in doing many things without a shrinking of horror, which she now can not look upon. Wanton cruelty is one thing; self-protection is another. Many a tender-hearted housewife is forced to steel her heart and rejoice in finding effective means whereby to clear her house of fleas, flies, mosquitoes, roaches, bugs, ants, moths, and the army of destructive insects with which we all have to war, more or less. Every form of life preys

upon some other form, and in many cases, such destruction is justifiable. Without radical measures, the fields, forests, gardens, orchards, as well as the comfort of the family life, would be devastated, and the dear Lord, himself, has often set into motion the machinery for shortening the life of myriads of his creatures, not even excepting the human family, because the necessity for the measure existed. We shall be glad to hear from others.

For the Hot Days

For those who do not have a cooking chest, or who do not use gas, gasoline or oil, it is well to make good use of the breakfast fire, putting on the dinner vegetables while breakfast is cooking. With a very little additional fuel, the meats and vegetables may be cooked while the breakfast is being eaten and cleared away. For any that is not done, cover closely while still hot, and wrap in plenty of newspapers, and they will finish cooking and keep warm. This will not be an added burden for the morning hours, as many things may be prepared over night, and once one gets the habit, it is easy enough to get everything ready in the cool of the morning. An oil stove, or a gasoline, where gas can not be had, or where, as in some places, the cost is too high for gas, may be supplemented by a home-made cooking chest. The hot months should not require so much cooking as is generally done, and with a careful planning of hot weather dishes that are quickly prepared, much of the burden may be done away with.

The housewife can arrange to do most of her work in the cool of the morning, and thus have the heated hours for rest. It is largely a matter of habit; but it is a habit that housekeepers should cultivate in themselves and foster in others. Many women get up an hour earlier than the family, and do much of the work before the breakfast, must be served; but it is just as well for her to press into service other members of the family, and see that they rest an hour longer at noon. Unnecessary furnishings should be removed from the bedrooms, and every one should be required to make as little work as possible, by keeping things in place, emptying their own slops, airing the beds and hanging up their clothing. If the family washing is done on the machine, the clothing can be on the line very early in the morning, and where clothing is soaked with perspiration, several washings a week will not only add to the comfort of the family, but to the life of the clothes. Use the washing machine.

Worth Knowing

For cleaning black silk, as well as many other materials, nothing is better than ox-gall. Break the gall bladder into as much boiling water as you wish to use; spread the material on a perfectly clean table covered tightly with something that will not soil, and with a sponge dipped in the gall go over the material on both sides, then rinse clean by sponging, still on the table, on both sides. Dissolve a little gum arabic or gelatine in the water and sponge lightly on the wrong side of the silk, then pin the silk to a cloth to dry.

Where the sink is used regularly, it must be as regularly disinfected.

Two tablespoonfuls of washing soda to a gallon on boiling water makes an excellent and cheap wash to pour down the drain pipe. Do this after every use of it, or once a day.

Heavy damask linen does not need starch, but the inferior quality should have a little starch. Even the poorer quality of linen may be made to look beautifully stiff and glossy if, when washed and dried and ready for ironing, it is dipped into boiling water, then wrung as dry as possible between cloths before being ironed; then iron at once with an iron as hot as can be used without scorching it.

The broom will last much longer if given a bath in hot soap suds on wash days. Dip the broom in the hot suds and shake backward and forward until quite clean; afterwards rinse in cold water and hang handle end up to dry.

Care of the Nails

It is a common occurrence to see women take up a sharp penknife with which to clean their finger nails, or even other sharp pointed metals. This not only injures the skin under the nail, making it ragged and giving it an inflamed appearance, but leaving it rough and in just the right condition to catch and retain all the dirt or stains with which it comes in contact. An orange stick should always be used for cleaning under the nails; or a brush and warm water is effective.

For the Toilet

There seems nothing whatever that will restore the color to hair become white through age, or from any other cause. Sometimes a tonic will restore the color when the hair is faded from sickness; but for the gray hair, nothing short of a dye or stain will affect its color. Staining, if well and skillfully done, will be satisfactory in many cases, but the one who starts out to "dye," or to do much staining will find herself a slave to the process, for it must be a daily affair, and even then, it will deceive nobody, and the real color (or lack of color) will show more or less perceptibly at the scalp line, with the utmost care. Better nourish and treat kindly the gray hair and make it as beautiful as good care can make it.

For the dry shampoo which is asked for, equal parts of corn starch and powdered orris root is used. This, for oily hair, will absorb the oil, and leave the hair fluffy. But it is not recommended, unless the user is very careful to remove every particle of the powder, as otherwise, dandruff may be the result.

For the "moth patches," sometimes nothing will avail; but the removal must come from within. Generally, they are the result of a lazy liver and bad dieting, and the liver must be kept active, while the diet must be restricted to good, nourishing foods, cutting out anything that will weight the digestive tract. If this is done, the spots will, in time, fade away; but sometimes the "time" seems interminable, stretching over years. For local application, this is recommended: One tablespoonful of sulphur and enough bay rum and red vaseline to make a paste; spread on spots twice daily, until bleached. The red vaseline will have a tendency to make the hair grow, but for those not troubled with a superfluous growth of hair, no harm is apt to result.

Spiced Vinegars

If mint vinegar is made during the time of green herbage, one can serve mint sauce during the winter with little trouble. Gather the perfect leaves as tender as possible, and wash; shake them dry and put into glass fruit jar and have plenty of