



The Home Department

Conducted by
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The Near

O, near ones, dear ones, you in whose hands

Our own rests calm; whose faithful hearts all day

Wide-open wait 'til back from distant lands

Thought, the tired traveler, wends his homeward way!

Helpmeets and heartmates, gladdeners of gone years,

Tender companions of our serious days,

Who color with your kisses, smiles and tears,

Life's warm web woven over wanted ways.

Young children, and old neighbors and old friends;

Old servants—you, whose smiling circle small

Grows slowly smaller until at last it ends

Where in one grave is room enough for all—

Or shut the world out from the heart you cheer!

Though small the circle of your smiles may be,

The world is distant, and your smiles are near;

This makes you more than all the world to me!

—Owen Meredith.

"Stoking the Furnace"

These be the days when the furnace becomes "one of the family," and the comfort of the household is largely dependent upon its proper feeding and care. Indeed, so dependent upon outside heat do we become that we blame much of our ill-feelings, and especially our "colds" and cold shivers upon the furnace. But comfort is not a matter of outside temperature so much as the internal bodily condition. Nearly all our ailments depend upon how we "stoke" the inside furnace, the amount of fresh air, the kind, quality and quantity of fuel, and how well we look to keeping the drafts open and the ashes removed. The people who go shivering along the street in cold weather ought not to feel chilly unless the system is weakened by disease. Piling on furs and woolens will not help matters if we neglect the "fires inside"—the furnace we all carry with us. A famous physician once said: "A chilly man is a sick man," meaning that if ordinary exposure to outside weather can make one uncomfortably cold, there must be something wrong with the physical condition or with his clothing. The ordinary sensation of cold seldom has an external cause. People who go along the street shivering in winter weather must have some diseased bodily condition which accounts for it, and piling on furs and flannels will not remedy matters. Warm clothing should be worn, but the heavy, close-fitting garments keep the skin from breathing, and as soon as the skin is smothered, the body gets cold. The blood must have fuel, and the fuel is air, just as much and as fresh as can be absorbed. The first dash into the cold air sends the blood from the surface, but if the circulation is good, the reaction will follow, and the re-heated blood will flow back to the surface, producing a delightful tingle of life. It lies with us, then, to "stoke" the internal furnace with the fuel of pure air, wholesome food, plenty of breathing through the nose, bathing and ventilating the body, avoiding too heavy,

tight-fitting clothing, keeping the drafts open, the ashes removed, and the piping in order. Looking after the fires within is cheaper and more satisfactory than attending the furnace in the house-basement.

Aid for the Deaf

I have several letters from those afflicted with more or less deafness, asking for advice and information. There are several electric apparatuses for the partially deaf, from the "slightly hard of hearing" to the "shut outs" in the world of sound; but while to some they are certainly of value, others get no satisfaction out of them, and at best they are but a "crutch" to the disabled ear. The application of electricity to this class of afflictions is still in its beginning, and the best of the instruments are cumbersome, and are so much in evidence when in service as to attract a great deal of attention from the tactlessly curious. They are of much greater value to some than to others, owing more to peculiarities of the individual than to the apparatus itself. Many of the afflicted say they would not like to do without them after having become used to them, while others declare them of no good whatever. The prices are high for all grades, varying from ten to twenty-five dollars for the cheapest, made for the "only slightly hard of hearing," to the apparatuses made for the "very hard of hearing," or generally called "deaf" class, who are so hard of hearing as to be practically shut out from all social pleasures. Instruments for these range in price from \$65 to \$100. The more expensive can not be carried about, but must be used as stationary. The batteries are called "dry," and they exhaust themselves, whether used or not, in from two to four weeks, and can not be re-charged. They cost from 25c to 35c each for the smaller instruments, making the use of the instrument somewhat of an expense, after it is purchased. Deafness is such an intolerable affliction, and so terribly ruins one's life and usefulness, that one so afflicted will do almost anything for relief. As these instruments are improved upon, they will doubtless be a wonderful blessing to the afflicted; but as yet they have not reached perfection. It is claimed that some makes are better than others; but I can not say.

Filing Receipts

It is a common occurrence that people are made to pay again a bill that is already once paid, simply because the payee either did not take a receipt for the amount, or did not keep it when given. Once upon a time, there was little danger of a second "dun," but it is not so now. Every bill settled should be receipted, either on the bill, or by separate receipt, and should then be filed away in a safe place and kept. How long these receipts should be kept is dependent upon the statute of limitations of the state in which they are given. In some states, the time is shorter than in others, but the time can be learned from the statute books of the state, and should be. Many families are dunned for groceries, or gas, or other bills, several years after the debt was incurred, and, having nothing to show that the amount has been paid, are forced to pay a second time, or to at least suffer great annoyance, and some-

times a lawsuit. Your tradesmen are not always honest, and they also know that few women keep a receipt after it is given, and the more unscrupulous of them will put you to much trouble if they think they can make a little out of your carelessness. In this respect, men are careless, too, and have to repay; but they can fight their way through such things better than a woman can. If you have been in the habit of destroying your receipts, begin now to save them. Either paste them in a regular letter file, or scrapbook, or have some large, heavy envelopes, those opening at the end preferred, and mark on the outside of each the nature of the bills to be filed—groceries, gas, etc., and as soon as a bill is receipted, or marked paid, slip it at once in its envelope. Do not lay it down, or hang it on a nail in the kitchen; remember, it is just so much money to you, in case of a dispute about its payment. Keep these receipts for several years—as long as the law will recognize the debt, at least. It is a good thing to pay by bank check, so far as possible, and keep both the returned check and the stub of the check book on which it is written. This should not be regarded as "too much trouble," but as a part of the business of conducting household expenses, and as the envelope fills, it should be put away in a tin box bought for that purpose, where it can be found at a moment's notice.

House Dust

"Where does all the dirt come from?" wails the discouraged housewife, as she struggles with broom and dust pan. During the summer, with doors and windows wide open, the house is comparatively easy to keep clean; but no sooner does the closing up season arrive than the housewife has to begin and wage constantly a battle with house dirt. House dirt comes from many quarters. Part of it is the "fluff" from the clothing we wear, and other sources are particles worn from the carpets, rugs, curtains, ceilings, walls, furniture, ashes from the registers, radiators, stoves and heaters, stray hairs from the family and from pet animals, particles of feathers, crumbs, the sheddings from insects, particles from our own bodies, and the nap or fleece from a hundred sources. This dirt or dust settles, some of it on the floor, some on walls and ceilings, and some falls on the furniture, or clings to our clothes. If allowed to accumulate in rooms, it gives the atmosphere a bad, unpleasant odor, and invites fungi, bacteria, and other poisons. If left long, the inorganic part of this dirt undergoes a species of decomposition, giving off effects similar to that of sewer gas. Added to this is the dirt brought in from the outside on shoes and clothes, no matter how neat one may be. There seems to be only one thing to do—just keep on fighting. The vacuum cleaner promises us relief, but as yet even the cheapest of the really reliable ones seems to be beyond the purse of the average woman. Plenty of fresh air and all the sunshine one can get, together with hot water; soap and the scrub cloth, seem to be our best disinfectants, and these should be used in abundance. Every year there are new inventions brought out toward better sanitation, and the woman of today

is excusable for a feeling of envy that possesses her at thought of the woman of the future. Meantime, keep the home as clean as possible, and use freely the means we have at hand.

For the Toilet

A good soap cream which dries on the skin and leaves it soft and smooth is made as follows: Take a small cake of good toilet soap, grind or pound it fine, and melt in a double boiler with a teaspoonful of powdered borax and one of oatmeal, a tablespoonful each of witch hazel and glycerine and two ounces of rosewater. Melt and stir well together, then pour into a small jar. Use for cleansing with soft water.

Here is one of the best known tissue builders, and easy to prepare: Four ounces of elder water, one ounce each of spermaceti and white wax and four ounces of sweet almond oil; melt the wax and the oil and the spermaceti in a water bath (a double boiler, or set the cup containing the ingredients in another cup of boiling water); add a teaspoonful of tincture of benzoin to the elderflower water, warm it and pour into the melted oils; beat as it cools. Use as other tissue builders, first washing the face with quite warm water and a mild soap cream, rinsing and drying on a soft towel, and rubbing in the cream.

For those who are often out in the air, and consequently suffer from chapped lips or face, the following is a good salve: Mutton tallow (melted and strained), one-fourth pound; raisins, one-fourth pound; yellow beeswax, one tablespoonful. Simmer these ingredients slowly together until the raisins float on top, then strain and pour into small jars to cool. This will never get rancid, and is good for chaps on lips, face, hands, and also for healing cuts or sores; it has a pleasant odor, but may be perfumed if wanted.

For the man of the family, whose skin is exceedingly sensitive after shaving, try this: One ounce of pure glycerine, three ounces of rosewater and half an ounce of best grain alcohol. Use the palms of the hands to apply the lotion, and let it dry on. A little rice powder dusted over the face is good after the lotion.

Good Salves

A reader asks for the recipe for a good salve, containing Burgundy pitch, which was given several years ago in our department. It is difficult to hunt up the article wanted unless more ingredients are specified, as there are so many such plasters, or salves for plasters. I give several, and hope one of them may be the one wanted. If amount given is larger than wanted, reduce the quantity but keep proportions of ingredients.

Green Mountain Salve—Resin, five pounds, burgundy pitch, beeswax and strained mutton tallow, each one-fourth of a pound; oil of hemlock, balsam of fir, oil of origanum, oil of red cedar and Venice turpentine each, one ounce; oil of wormwood, half an ounce, verdigris very finely pulverized, one ounce; melt the resin, pitch, beeswax and mutton tallow together, then add the oils, having rubbed the verdigris up with a little of the oils, and put it in with the other articles, stirring well. Then pour into cold water and work as wax until cool enough to roll.

Green Mountain Salve No. 2.—Two pounds of resin, one-fourth pound of Burgundy pitch, one-fourth pound each of beeswax and clear mutton tallow, and melt together slowly, stirring; when a little cool, add one ounce each of oil of hemlock, balsam of fir, oil of origanum, oil of red cedar, Venice turpentine,