



The Home Department

Conducted by
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Shutting Out the Cold

It is to be hoped you have spent some little time and energy, if not money, in fixing up the doors and windows so they will keep out the cold. Fresh air is always wanted in the home; but drafts are not to be encouraged, as coughs and colds and often more serious ailments are brought on by the cold creeping in at the joints and crevices. In one cottage that I know there are innumerable openings, and much drafts, and the house-mother says, "I just don't know where all the cold comes from, no matter how hot a fire one keeps up." A glance at one of the windows might have enlightened her. Around the panes of glass were a number of glazier's tacks, and the panes of glass were whole; but the putty had all fallen off, the sashes were shrunken, and nearly every joining showed a line of "out-doors," either at the top or bottom or one side. A little wind caused the sash to rattle, and the noise alone would make one feel cold. Some of the panes of glass were just ready to drop out. Between the two sash, in the middle of the window there was a space something like the eighth of an inch, and the cold rushed through like a small wind. These spaces and openings seemed small, but the wind that stormed in seemed frightfully large. Putty is cheap, and the art of glazing the window sash is not hard to learn. The work would call for but a moment's time some leisure day, and any one who has a small skill with saw, hammer, and plane can easily fill up the cracks, while the joinings can be patched with a little glue and saw dust. Another source of cold, where fresh air is better shut out, is the open space under the outside door. The door may fit badly at the sides and top, and this could easily be remedied, but the under space is overlooked. The wind comes in at the floor, where the cold is always the heaviest, and the feet feel the effects. One can not keep warm with the feet cold and cold feet bring on many ailments. Attend to these matters now.

The Difference

Two women met in a crowded down-town store; the arms of the one were loaded with the bundles that could not be sent home from the store, and she was still eagerly hunting for something she wished to add to her load. The other woman had a few small parcels, and a short list from which she was reading. After a hearty greeting, the one laden with parcels said, "How happy you must be, in your quiet home, with no one to bother you, or to keep you at home, and no one to find fault with anything you do;" and she thought of the husband, children, mother and the demands of her housekeeping. The other woman was a lonely widow—alone in the world so far as immediate family goes; her two children in homes of their own, far, far away from her quiet cottage. It seems a pitiful speech for the hungry hearted, lonely woman, and she said softly, "Yes, I am free to go and come; but if I have no one to bother or find fault with me, I am equally without any one to love or care for my comings and goings." And she showed by her saddened face that she missed these things, of which the other had so much. "It takes every cent I can

take up," the other continued, "to get the things the children need and a few little surprises besides. I wish Christmas did not come so often!" And while the troubled mother saw only the worry and work of the home festival, the lonely woman saw only the long, long stretch of lonely days, deadly dull in their quietude, and compared them to the riotous times of the long ago, when her home, too, was full of the "joys of the Yuletide." The lonely one brought presents, also; but they were not to cheer any child's heart in her own home. The coming Christmas would fill the home of the one with riotous happiness; while the other home would be full of the silence of echoes.

A Social Problem

The following letter voices the trials of so many housewives that I give it, hoping to get the right answer to "pass on," and at the same time show these selfish seekers after "the loaves and fishes," how very much trouble their ill-advised visits may make for another. The writer says: "Do you think it necessary, when our friends call on us, to always ask them to remove their wraps and stay to dinner or supper, as the case may be? My mother, (God bless her) is the best mother in the world, but she makes it very hard for herself and others. She has lived in one place for many years and has many friends. It makes no difference who calls, father and mother seem to think they must invite them to dine. Many times I think they really come more for a meal than to visit; and while I like to call and see my friends, I did not go expecting to get my stomach filled, and I go away before meal-time. It is nice to occasionally invite our friends to dine with us; but I do think it unnecessary to invite every one who comes in. Another thing: I think one should notify a friend if they expect to visit them for a meal. Where one does her own work it is not always convenient to entertain unexpected company. I think a great deal of The Commoner, and always receive help from the Household page.—Mrs. W."

In the old days, when one did not live so much from "packages and parcels," it was customary to extend hospitality to every guest in the way of refreshments; but it is the exception now, unless the guest lives so far away as to make the visit between meals impracticable. What do you think, sister readers of The Commoner?

Gleanings

A couple of men down in Texas have discovered a way of handling the green corn crop so that those dependent upon the markets for their roasting ears can have them as clean, fresh and juicy as when they were gathered in the fields. The corn ear, after being examined to make sure that it is all right, is wrapped in specially prepared paper and hermetically sealed, and it is claimed that it can be thus kept fresh and sweet two weeks longer than by the old refrigerator process, without wilting or shrinking of the grains. The process has been patented, and the men are preparing to put the new product on the market next corn time.

In our sister state, Kansas, women are forging ahead in remarkable

lines, showing wonderful ability in whatever work they are undertaking. Not content with teaching school, clerking, typewriting, and working in shops, they have discovered that they make good as managers of departments in banks, and stores, several of them being bank presidents, scores of them acting as county officials, and a goodly number actively engaged in the practice of law and medicine. But their most signal success is in the managing of farms; more than a hundred have enrolled to take the regular agricultural course in the Kansas Agricultural College, while not a few are already carrying on farm and stock business most successfully. On some of these farms, the women do the work themselves, employing no man until the threshing season. But as a rule, the women boss the job and hire men to do the work. These women, who are most of them students from the agricultural college, are doing the work scientifically, knowing how to get the best out of the soil, and at the same time keep up the fertility of the fields. A great many farmers owe their success to the work of the women of their household, where they have let them have their way, but they have said little about it, except to give them credit for being good butter-makers and poultry raisers. The money thus made came handy to keep up the small bills and expenses.

For the Home Seamstress

For neckwear, where ruching is liked, get a half yard or more of white Brussels net, and cut into strips about three inches wide; double the strip lengthwise, and plait or gather it into bands to be stitched into the collar of the dress and the cuffs of the sleeve. The netting should cost you about fifty cents a yard, and is quite wide; a half yard cut as above should make ten or more yards of ruching. Pieces of dotted net or fine muslin may be used; or a fine sheer piece of embroidered edging may be pleated into a band, using the pleater of the sewing machine. A lace insertion may be made into a very pretty piece of neckwear by using one of the heavy laces and a rather fine crochet thread; crochet an edge on each side of the insertion, and make it up into ends and loops for a jabot.

An acceptable present for the housewife is one or more aprons to be worn for service, more than for ornament. There are so many patterns for these aprons at this time that one can hardly fail to find a satisfactory one. One which can be made both useful and ornamental is shown in our department for November 24th, and the number of the pattern is 9104. Being in one piece, it can be made in a very short time, and if made of the bordered materials, the border may be used for the cuffs, on the patch pocket, bordering the neck, and around the bottom. Very few housewives will object to receiving such an apron, where one of the flimsy, be-ribboned or be-laced affairs would only be accepted for its beauty.

Every woman should wear bed-slippers when out of the blankets in the night hours in emergencies. They may be made of any thick, soft cloth; any scraps will do, and can be readily shaped from the foot of a stocking, the sewing up on the machine calling for but a few minutes.

Mittens of flannel, cotton or wool, should be made for the laundry, for hanging out clothes, and other services in the work, and should be of white cloth, often washed. For other chores, darker colors should be used.

Good Things to Know

For an antiseptic spray for sore throat, this is recommended. It is to be used with an atomizer. Boracic acid, twenty drams; fluid golden seal, two drams; tincture of myrrh, one dram; glycerine, one-half ounce; distilled water, seven ounces. Thoroughly mix these ingredients. This is a most excellent remedy for throat troubles, and should be used as a spray or gargle. Another antiseptic preparation that has stood the test of time is that known as Compound Tincture of Myrrh. Pulverized myrrh, two ounces; capsicum, half ounce; grain alcohol, one quart. Mix and allow the preparation to stand for one week; the tincture will then be ready after decantation. A few drops of this antiseptic in a glass of water will make a milky looking fluid, which may be used to great advantage as a spray in malignant and putrefactive diseases, especially when mixed with an equal quantity of fluid extract of golden seal. The compound tincture of myrrh is a standard article, and can be had of the druggist, and is often called for as Dr. Thompson's Number 6.

A cure for corns is given as follows: Extract cannabis indica, five parts; salicylic acid, eighty parts; collodion, two hundred and forty parts; mix and dissolve. It is applied with a camel hair pencil so as to form a thick coating over the corn for four consecutive nights and mornings. The collodion at once covers and protects the corn from friction. The Indian hemp acts as an anodyne, and the acid disintegrates the corn, so that after a hot bath on the fifth day it will come out, adhering to the artificial skin of collodion on the toe. This causes no pain, and is an old remedy, said to be effective. A less quantity may be made, and any druggist will put it up for you.

An excellent remedy for sore throat is a solution of borax—one teaspoonful of borax to one pint of water, using it warm with a sprayer. Also, a solution of salt and water in the same proportions, used with a sprayer, or as a gargle.

For the Belated Shopper

Among the most serviceable things to be offered for the Christmas bestowal would be a good book on etiquette, and this should be a family affair, for many of us fail in what is called "good manners" more from ignorance than from any ill-breeding. In many homes, the housemother may know a great deal better than she does, and because of her busy, hurried life, may often neglect to inculcate politeness or good manners on the minds of her growing family. A good book treating of the usages of good society may save your growing girl and boy many a bad half hour induced by some blunder when in company.

Another most excellent gift for the family is a good dictionary. There is great need for an authority on spelling, pronunciation, and the clear meaning of words wherever there are people who read and write, and a good dictionary can be bought for less than a dollar, which will be of great service; but a better one is the unabridged, which gives several definitions to every word, with manner of using in each.

Another book which is now becoming one of the most essential is a copy of the state laws. Every member of the family should be interested in such a book, and a knowl-