



The Home Department

Conducted by
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Passing By

You who rest so safely in your beds tonight,
You who 'midst your downy comfort softly lie,
Ere the pleasant slumber steal your senses quite,
Do you hear a footstep slowly dragging by?
All your windows curtained, all your doors shut fast
(Rows of silent houses, homes that fear not foe!)—
Do ye sigh for pity, as those feet trudge past?
Musing, "Thro' the darkness have they far to go?"
You who rest so calmly in your graves tonight,
You who in the churchyard very safely lie—
Do ye, as in dreaming, 'neath your crosses white,
Hear the restless footsteps ever passing by?
Steps that flag and falter, battling with the blast—
Steps that halt and tremble, pressing on so slow;
Do ye sigh for pity, as those feet trudge past?
Musing, "Thro' the darkness have they far to go?"

Wages Can Not Buy Living

The Federal Bureau of Labor's report of its investigation of prices the last 10 years shows that the cost of living has been steadily rising. Investigations were made in important industrial centers of 32 states.

On June 15, 1912, the report shows 14 of the 15 articles of food investigated were higher than a year before and 10 had advanced in the last 10 years more than 50 per cent over the average retail price for the 10-year period, 1890-99.

The advance during the decade, comparing the price June 15 last with the average for the 10 years, was as follows:

Granulated sugar, 8.5 per cent; strictly fresh eggs, 26.1; fresh milk, 32.9; creamery butter, 33.3; wheat flour, 29.3; pure lard, 55.3; hens, 51.1; sirloin steak, 59.5; smoked hams, 61.3; corn meal, 63.7; rib roast, 63.8; round steak, 84; pork chops, 86; smoked bacon, 96.7; Irish potatoes, 111.9.

One article, bacon, in the last year, decreased one-tenth of 1 per cent.—Associated Press.

Wages paid in Kansas City factories and shops will not buy a living, according to the annual report of the factory inspector of the board of welfare, made public recently. Six hundred and twenty factories, employing 20,922 persons in busiest seasons and 13,511 in dull times, were visited. Of this number forty-seven men and twenty-five women receive a wage of less than \$3 a week each. Of the total of women employees, 69 per cent are paid less than \$9 a week, which is considered "a living wage" in this city. One-fifth of the men employes receive less than \$10 a week and most of them have families of five or more.

According to a scale drawn by the factory inspector, on the basis of a man and his wife, and three children in a family, such a wage would not care for their barest needs, even if the man were able to earn his salary every week of the year, which is impossible for many of them, because of "dull times" when working forces are reduced.

According to Commissioner A. W.

Biggs of the state bureau of labor statistics, during the year 1910, there were employed in the 11,511 factories and workshops of the state of Missouri, 169,578 men, 40,322 women and 3,492 children, along with 10,169 working owners who took the places of salaried employes, making a total for the state of 223,641. These employes received in salaries and wages an average annual salary for each of \$562. Deducting the cost of production, including raw material, rent, taxes, insurance, interest on capital invested and general deterioration, from the worth of the output of goods, there shows a profit of something over a million and a half dollars (\$157,000,000) which these wage workers were earning for their employers. In twelve cities it is shown there were 11,366 men, women and children who received less than \$5 per week; there were 9,456 men and 165 women who received from \$20 to \$25 per week, and 3,946 men with a salary exceeding \$25 per week. In smaller towns and rural communities, the prevailing wages were somewhat less than in the cities.

"Advice to Mothers"

There is so much of it given! And a very large portion of this advice is written up by the "maiden pens" of the inexperienced youths of either sex, with quite a sprinkle sent out by bachelors and maiden ladies. The average editor wants "fillin'" for his "Home Interests" column without paying for it, and as he is usually about as ignorant of such matters as the ones who send in the "advices," he indiscriminately accepts and publishes whatever "looks good" to him. Unhappily, too, there are childless mothers and grandmothers that have forgotten, and between them all, the poor, overworked, distracted mother has a hard time. Being myself a grandmother in active commission, I find a great deal of amusement in reading up these "advices." That's why I am not giving them myself.

Some Experiences

In my last Home talk I told you of one of my hostesses; in this one I shall tell you of another. This lady, the wife of a professional man—no children; they had a very large house, and the wife, a delicate woman, tried to do all the work herself, letting a room or two to choice boarders. The man drew large fees, and put on considerable style; but they were always short of money—distressingly so, at times. They lived plainly—even poorly, and the bare cost of housing, feeding, warming and dressing these two should not have been enormous; but they were always owing bills, and the mail box was generally stuffed with "bills." They were always burdened with debts they could not pay. Why?

Another experience was with a very bright, intelligent woman, whose large family kept her pretty busy, but several of the older ones were working, and earning their way. She, too, did her own work, and kept her house ordinarily clean and comfortable. There were several girls, from the oldest, a young lady of twenty, to the youngest, a tot of three. The older girls dressed as expensively as their wages would allow, and tried to "keep within sight of the styles," as they said; they had much cast-off clothing that could

have been made over very nicely, clothing the younger ones, while the boys' clothes could have been cut down for the little fellows. What do you suppose the mother did? Either passed the garments—good garments, and not much worn, to the second-hand man, or the rag man, or gave them away to the various societies, and bought ready-mades for the younger ones. The family saved nothing, and was always pressed for necessary "change." Yet their weekly wages were variously from five to \$25 a week; it all "went," with nothing to show for it. Why?

Next week I will tell you of some others, but meanwhile, I wish you would think of these, and see how their manner of living conduced to "the cost of living."

Odds and Ends

Gum water is used to add a glossy finish to collars, cuffs and shirt-fronts. Take two ounces of fine gum arabic, powdered, pour on it a pint or more of tepid water and leave stand over night; in the morning pour it carefully from the sediments into a clean bottle, cork, and set away for use. When starching the articles, add a teaspoonful of the gum water to a pint of the usual laundry starch.

For children's school wear, nothing is more useful than the apron; many an unsightly, or worn dress can be worn for a long time, if several pretty aprons are made to wear with it. There are so many designs for the common, every-day garment, and materials are so cheap, that every child should have plenty of them. They save washing as well as wear of heavier garments.

It is said that, when cooking "smelly things," a bowl of vinegar and water placed beside the stove, or close to the cooking vessel will prevent the smell of cooking from spreading through the house.

Coal should be kept in a dry, airy place, and it will burn much better than if in a close, badly ventilated cellar. Coal that is excluded from the air soon gets rid of its gas, and the absence of this renders it more wasteful when burned.

Gleanings

There is still, as Sidney Smith wrote, nearly one hundred years ago, "a very general feeling that if you once suffer women to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will very soon be reduced to the same kind of aerial and unsatisfactory diet.

Ruskin says, "The path of a good woman is indeed strewn with flowers, but they rise behind her steps." When a woman looks particularly kind, patient and forbearing, you will generally find a troublesome husband, selfish sons or headstrong daughters in the background.

As Kipling says, you sometimes see a woman who would have made a Jeanne d'Arc in another century, threshing herself to pieces over the mean worries of housekeeping. Many a poor housekeeper could do brilliant work along some other line, could she have the necessary time and quiet for concentrated attention which men are able to secure.

For centuries, abject submission has been the role assigned us. If we objected, we were divorced or beheaded. We read in history, "In 1379, Sir John Arundel's squadron being overtaken by a storm, sixty

women were thrown overboard and drowned to lighten the ships."

Too often it is only a man's evil deeds that calls forth a reminder that his mother was a woman—"always the female." If women do not sign many masterpieces, they prepare many by inspiring their sons, and in praising a man's great deeds, the mother-influence should not be forgotten. From Adam's time down, women have been made the scapegoat, her whole life is a compromise between antiquated laws and modern feeling.

Man wants us to be a near approach to his ideal, but he doesn't want us to be perfect. Every woman, therefore, knows that since it is our failings that appeal most to a man, and which he most delights to hear about, she should cultivate and keep enough of them just to console him.

"Dressing on Dimes"

A great deal is said about the woman who always has plenty of nice clothes, even on a small salary, and many times she is unjustly accused of wasting the family income on her stylish apparel. But in many cases, the clothing costs but little, because of the fact that the woman or girl makes her own clothes. There are more women in the United States who do their own dress-making and sewing than in any three other countries of the globe; there are tens of thousands of girls between the age of fifteen and twenty who are making their own garments by the aid of paper patterns. Women who have acquired skill with needle and scissors manage to keep themselves and their families well and fashionably dressed all the time by studying the fashion magazines and using the paper patterns, and only the cost of the material is drawn from their purse. A great many garments are renovated or made over, and the dyepot is a close second to the paper pattern. Women have learned that it pays to make their own and their children's clothes, and more girls that one has any idea of are learning to "dress becomingly on dimes."

Good Things to Know

Here is a method for waterproofing boots and shoes that is recommended: Heat in an iron vessel either fish oil or castor oil, or tallow, to about two hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit, then add, cut into small pieces, vulcanized or raw India rubber about one-fifth the weight of the oil, gradually stirring the same with a wooden spatula until the rubber is completely dissolved in the oil; lastly, to give color, add a small amount of printer's ink. Pour into a suitable vessel and let cool. One or two applications of this is sufficient to thoroughly waterproof a pair of boots or shoes for the season. Leather thus dressed will take common shoe blacking with the greatest facility.—Scientific American.

To dye raffia successfully is a very difficult matter; to obtain the best results, boil the raffia for a few hours in a strong solution of soap to which has been added one teaspoonful of borax or washing soda to one gallon of water. Dip straw flowers, or the strands, into a warm solution of dye until the desired shade is reached, then rinse and dry. To give a luster, dip the articles in a solution composed of three parts of alcohol to one part of shellac.

When the mackintosh coats have become hard and rigid, they may be cleaned with lime water to look like new." A handful of the best gray lime should be dissolved in half a bucketful of water, and the mixture applied to the stiffened part by means of a small sponge. Repeat at the end of three or four hours.

Tussah and other wash silks are so easy to wash and iron, requiring no starch, that they are very prac-