



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
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## Dream Ships

Like ships upon a stormless sea,  
High up in noonday sky,  
Great dream ships white from stem  
to stern  
In silence glided by.

And in the hush of twilight calm,  
With crimson sails all furled,  
Bound for the port of dreams they  
sailed  
Above the resting world.

And every ship bore treasure trove,  
Within its mystic hold,  
Of love and hope and kindness  
And wealth of world untold.

But we who owned the magic ships,  
Life's lesson learned in vain,  
Would gladly part with all we have,  
To own them once again.  
—Frank Fair.

## Where the Furs Come From

In the large cities of the world, noticeably Paris and London, millions of rabbit skins are dressed and treated, and bogus furs are sent out from these manufacturing centers to robe men and women all over the world. It detracts from one's feeling of pride in a handsome fur garment to know that after the furrier, chemist and dyer are done with the rabbit skin, it may be a "seal-skin," a "sable," an "otter," a mink, a "Siberian Squirrel," a "marten," a "beaver," or any other fashionable fur, according to the demand. The transformation takes place in the shops which sell felt to hatters, carpet-weavers, and felt manufacturers. The skins are purchased soon after they have been stripped from the rabbit's body, and are stiff and hard when they reach the sorting room. Experts examine each skin, and those which come up to the established standard are sent to the furriers; but the torn, undersized and punctured pelts are turned over to the men and women who strip the hide of its hair for the felt-maker. The finished garment has been so transformed that it may sell under any name, as few people are judges of such things.—Manufacturers' Gazette.

## Food Poisons

The American Medical Magazine tells us that the minute quantities of dyes used in ice cream, or cake, or to color the butter to its required yellowness, are quite harmless. Even sugar was once considered a dangerous preservative and forbidden by law; copper, once thought highly dangerous in small quantities, is now claimed to be quite harmless. It is disquieting to know that creosote, a rank poison, is put into the hams, but the old fashioned smoke house methods of curing the meats by smoking them thoroughly, did the same by the meats our fathers prized so highly. Many vegetable and fruit dyes are perfectly harmless in confectionary and cookery, and many other dyes from various sources are used with no bad results.

## The Home Seamstress

In selecting dress-material, care should always be taken to discover whether there is a nap, as in velvet and broadcloth, and occasionally it will be found that certain wool materials shade differently when the cloth is reversed; more goods is needed where either of these conditions exist. All reliable paper pat-

terns give the number of yards necessary in different widths and in goods with or without a nap. Where there are designs and figures, these also must be taken into consideration, in buying as well as cutting. Economical cutting can not be learned from the ordinary label, and most pattern houses send out a diagram, showing how the patterns should be laid on the cloth for the saving of material. The material should never be economized by turning the pattern off the line indicated on the pattern, for, if the pattern is not followed strictly as to indications, the skirt will not hang well, and other parts will be disarranged. Place every part of the pattern on the material before cutting, cut all the parts, mark all indications for seams, etc., nip the notches and mark all holes before removing the pattern. Notches may be marked with chalk or basting stitches instead of cutting, and this should be done if the cloth frays easily. If the raw edges fray too readily, the goods should be handled as little and as carefully as possible in putting them together.

It should always be remembered that it is not always wise to follow the new fashions too closely; there are many freak fashions that live but a brief while; but there are always some moderately plain styles, and it is much more sensible and economical to follow these; it is also in better taste.

Many stores carry a line of bias muslin or lawn seam-covering, a dozen yards for five cents or more, according to width. This is much less conspicuous than the old-time feather, or other fancy-stitch braids. There are also cards of dainty edgings that sell for about the same price. Button-holes are already ready-made on a tape, and sell by the card or bunch containing a number of yards.

## Easy Washing

Whether one has a washing machine or not, washing is hard work, and any method of making it easier will be welcomed by the housewife. Here is a highly recommended method, but in using gasoline, one must remember that the vapor arising from the fluid is highly inflammable. It has been used by my personal friends, who say the gasoline is not dangerous used with the suds. Here is the method: Fill a tub or washing machine two-thirds full of warm, soapy water. Add two-thirds of a cupful of gasoline to the water, stir well and put in the first batch of white clothes; allow them to remain fifteen minutes; at the end of that time stir them up well, rub lightly and wring them out and put them on to boil; put another lot to soak in the same water. You will be surprised to see how clean they look; the water may get so dirty after two or three batches are washed that you will have to throw it out and get a fresh tubful. Continue soaking and wringing and boiling until all the white clothes are finished; then rinse well out of the boil and dry. For colored clothes, use the same proportions, of course omitting the boiling.

A good washing fluid which will not injure the most delicate fabric is made as follows: One ounce each of ammonia, borax and turpentine, and one box of potash. Have eight quarts of boiling soft water, open the can of potash and empty into the

boiling water, stirring until the potash is dissolved, then add the borax and ammonia. Take from the fire, and when cooled, add the turpentine. Put the white clothes to soak before breakfast; into a boiler half full of water cut up half a bar of soap, and add one cupful of the washing fluid. After breakfast, wring out the soaked clothes and have the water in the boiler boiling; drop the clothes into it and let boil twenty minutes, then rinse through two waters, the second one blued. If any spots need particular care, soap well before putting them in the boil. Soak colored clothes in cold water, rinse out and put into the prepared water, which should not be boiling hot; rub soiled places, and for rinsing use the first water from the white clothes. If too cold, add hot water from the boiler.

## Gleanings

There is nothing more helpful than "experience" meetings, where one may exchange ideas with another. We do not all see or work alike, and the other one's methods may be better than ours. His or her outlook may be broader, as well as different, and where we have failed another may have succeeded by the slightest difference in methods. One can scarcely know too much of the better things of life.

This is the season of the year in which to make grape and other cuttings, by selecting the well-ripened shoots of this year's growth, and putting them in the ground in bundles; or, they may be packed in sand or sawdust and kept in the cellar until spring. Cut them square off just below the bud, so the end when caloused can throw out roots evenly all around. The cutting should be six inches long, with several buds. Many shrubby plants may be increased in this way.

Be sure to protect your tender shrubbery by tying it up with wisps of straw, or turning over it a keg with both ends open, and fill the keg with chaff. As soon as the ground freezes, cover the bulb bed with coarse manure; be sure the water does not stand on the bed.

Cider vinegar, if pure, will not keep its strength if exposed in open vessels to a temperature above 60 degrees. If you find vinegar "eels" in your barrels, you must pour out the vinegar and scald it—do not boil—wash your barrels well, and strain the scalded vinegar back into the barrels through a clean flannel cloth. The vinegar must not be allowed to boil, but simply become boiling-hot, then remove from the fire.

Don't neglect to literally cover garden spot with manure this fall, and if you have time, it would be a good thing to plow it under, leaving the ground rough for the frost to work on. If the soil is thrown up in ridges at the last plowing, it will be in better condition for early working next spring.

## A Small Cellar

Mrs. L. S. asks for a method by which she can keep a small amount of vegetables through the winter season, as she has no cellar, and the house is too warm. Here is a recommended means, which she can try at no great expense, and I see no reason to doubt its value: Sink a thick barrel (a box or cask will do better, as being larger) two-thirds its depth into the ground where there is good drainage; heap the earth around the

part exposed above the surface, packing it down well, with a slope all around to turn off any water. If the bottom is out of the box or barrel, so much the better. Put the vegetables that you wish to keep fresh into the barrel, and have a cover for the barrel that is water-tight. When winter sets in, you can cover the top with old carpet, blanket, quilt, or other thick covering, and if the weather is very cold, throw over it straw, or chaff, and lay branches of trees, or other light weights on to keep the covering from blowing off. Cabbage, potatoes, celery, and many other vegetables will keep perfectly in such a cellar, and in this wise, a few pecks or bushels or a number of bunches or heads can be had for constant use without decay or shriveling. The cellerette should be opened only on pleasant days, or a very few minutes at a time, covering again immediately. Plants may also be kept in such a place.

## For the Garden

You can not put too much manure on the rhubarb and asparagus beds, and just as soon as the ground freezes, there should be a plentiful covering over the beds. If the manure is put on the hills of rhubarb and the stalks let to grow up through it in the spring, their size will astonish you. Carrots must be dug early, but parsnips are all the better for staying in the ground all winter. Salsify (vegetable oysters), horseradish, parsnips, and a few other root plants may be dug as needed during the winter. To have spinach early in the spring, seeds should have been sown in September, and the new growth should now be mulched and protected as soon as the ground freezes. Spinach is a very valuable spring crop, not only for market, but for home consumption.

Don't forget that bird houses are a valuable feature of gardening. The early birds may take a few of our early seedlings, but it is wise to protect these by simple means, and feed the birds in other ways. Birds will eat more insects than you can poison by spraying, and your garden will be all the better for the bird house. One of the very worst pests is the English sparrow, which, as yet, have not proven to have any vocation except destructiveness to fruits, vegetables, plants and other birds.

Gather up all the garden tools, repair them, give them a good coating of paint, and put them away for spring work. A housewife who leaves her machinery out in the weather is at once condemned; but the house-man leaves machinery costing hundreds of dollars out in the open just where he last used it, through shiftlessness. Is it any worse for the wife to leave her little labor-savers, which only cost a few dollars, out in the sun and rain? In either case, it is "plumb" shiftlessness, extravagance and wanton waste. Better one good tool under shelter than a dozen fine ones in the open. Tools cost money, and if taken care of, are worth it. If not, better do without.

## Helps for the Housewife

To test vinegar, the following directions are good: Pure cider vinegar, if evaporated slowly to dryness, will give off an odor like baked apples; if the process is carried further to scorching, it will smell like scorched apples. If the vinegar is distilled vinegar, the residue kept from evaporation will smell like burned sugar; if the vinegar is made of wine, the odor will be that of wine. In America, the standard vinegar is made from cider.

Furniture Polish—Take equal parts of boiled linseed oil, turpentine and vinegar; mix the oil and turpentine well, then add the vinegar, beating