



The Home Department

Conducted by
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Then and Now

'Tis Christmas night; the streets are bright,
And many windows stream with light,
While Mirth seems monarch everywhere,
For sounds of laughter fill the air.
But in a little room which knows
No gleam save where the firelight shows,
Sit, gazing at the glowing coals,
Two lonely souls.

Round them no happy children press
With words and smiles of happiness;
To them no friends bring greetings gay—

Their friends are dead, or far away,
Or else forgetful. At their gate,
Foot-deep in snow, no singers wait
To cheer with quaint and jolly trolls
These poor old souls.

And yet for many years did he
Do much to add to Christmas glee,
With pictures drawn with cunning art
By skillful hand from gentle heart;
And she has told of Christmas time
In tales of prose and songful rhymes.
Now, recompense no creature doles
These lonely souls.

Ah, many a feast, in days gone by,
They've spread, when fortune lingered nigh;
And they knew naught of cark; or care
While bidding comrades come and share;
And there, how joyous was the scene—
The walls were hung with Christmas green—
And healths were drunk in brimming bowls—
These poor old souls!

Alas; they faltered in the race,
And new life sprung to every place,
And seized the wreaths they had entwined,
And thus, discrowned and left behind,
In time too brief they were forgot.
Alas, it is the common lot,
And will be while Earth onward rolls,
For poor old souls.

Left and forgotten 'til once more
Their names are brought the world before,
And then, perchance, some one will tell
How such a picture pleased him well,
Or such a story gladness shed
Upon the children, as they read.
But this will be when Death's bell tolls
For these poor souls.
—Margaret Eyttinge.

The "Old People"

The poem we give you this week was sent in by an old lady, past her eighty-sixth year, who is now at one of the homes in our city because she is alone in the world, disabled, though she has a small income to help her bear her age. The worst of it all is the sense of loneliness, and the feeling that they are in the way—not wanted. With the poem came a note from the matron, saying, "The old people were the most grateful for their gifts, but I think they enjoyed most the fact that they were not forgotten."

I have several correspondents who have anchored in one or more of these homes, and their letters have

such a pathetic, patient tone. They ask so little, and get even less. They want sympathy, and little acts of remembrance. They do not realize that they are practically physical wrecks adrift on the sea of life; they "feel" younger than their years, and they do not like to be treated as derelicts by the younger generation. Many who go to see them, making "duty" calls, leave them far more unhappy than they found them, because they impress upon their minds the fact that they are senile and in their dotage—which many of them doubtless are; but it would be a kindness to keep your recognition of the fact in the background. Many an aged woman resents being called "grandma" by every woman under fifty years of age, and it would be far kinder to call them by their names, and treat them as though they were still human beings. If you take them presents, let it be something more than a package of tea, a bundle of "quilt-pieces," or a book of darning needles. Many of them love laces, a pretty dish, a nice lace-pin, a bright bow for their neckwear; a pretty comb; and none of these need be expensive. These can be given at any time; so can a bright, cheering word. Help them to retain even a slipping hold on their lost youth. Don't din into their ears the fact that they are feebly fighting—that they are old and useless and forsaken.

Women Wage-Earners

Franklin said, "Money makes money, and the money that money makes, makes more money." Many women can save a few dimes or cents if she only tries, and one of the first lessons in saving is that the best way to economize is to get the habit of doing without. It is not always necessary to pinch, or to practice parsimony, but there are many times when money is practically thrown away, because it is spent for useless things, or things that can readily be done without, and the doing without which will occasion us no sense of loss, or lack. If all the pennies that come into one's hands in the way of change are regularly dropped into the home savings bank, and left there until the bank gets full, the amount in dollars will only depend on the size of the bank and the number of pennies dropped into it. If every five cents that would otherwise be spent foolishly in the way of candy or chewing gum, or little, unnecessary trifles, were dropped in the bank, it would soon reach a respectable sum that might be put on interest in a savings bank, and thus, your money would be making money, and every additional dollar of saving would help to swell the earnings. Many women or girls can save more than pennies or nickels, and the amount saved will depend on themselves and their habits of doing without. But whatever you have to invest, invest in your own name, and if you are an unmarried girl or woman, see that you keep it in your own name after marriage. Many thousands of women who turned their savings over to the husband when they married are struggling in poverty because of their husbands having been poor or unfortunate business managers, or who dishonestly used and lost, or otherwise disposed of the sum intrusted to them. A woman who has a bank account, however small, has a sense of independence, and a desire to in-

crease the amount, and if she goes on saving, she will find her bank account comes in handy in more ways than one. The word, thrift, from once being a term of reproach, is now considered the synonym for economy, frugality and conservation.

Cleaning

If the housewife will remember that linoleum, either the inlaid or stamped, contains oil which scrubbing will remove, she will know that soap should not be used when cleaning it. Let the water be warm, but not hot, and to each basinful of water add a tablespoonful of coal oil; stir the mixture well before dipping a woolen cloth in it, and with this cloth scrub the surface; woolens can be wrung very dry, and all moisture can be taken up with the same cloth. Then, go over it with a dry cloth, polishing it. This will save the linoleum, and keep it looking nice.

Here is an erasive fluid which it is said will not leave the slightest trace, although it is more work to remove grease with it than with some other detergents. It can be used on silk or wool garments, furniture, carpets, etc. Place a quart of soft water in a saucepan and add to it half an ounce of powdered borax and two ounces of finely shredded white castile soap of the best quality. Stir until the borax and soap have been dissolved and then pour in a quart of cold water, and set away to cool. When it is cold, add half an ounce each of glycerine and ether and cork tightly in a large bottle. Brush the dust well out of the article to be cleaned, shake the bottle well to thoroughly mix the ingredients, pour a little of the fluid in a saucer, and with a perfectly clean sponge dipped in the fluid, rub the spots until they disappear; wipe thoroughly with a dry cloth, and place the article in the open air to become perfectly dry.

To remove rust from nickel on stoves, cover with sweet oil, well rubbed in, and leave to stand forty-eight hours; smear with the oil, applying freely with a bit of cotton wool after rubbing the steel, then rub with unslaked lime reduced to as fine a powder as possible.

Odds and Ends

Here is a method by which those using the dry batteries that come with the "ear-phones" may extend their life. Whether it is worth any thing, can not be told without experiment: Take off the paper case from the battery, and punch several holes in the sides and bottom, making the holes quite deep. The dry substance inside will be found quite hard, and a very slim nail may be driven gently into the substance, doing as little harm to the zinc as possible. Make a solution of ten cents worth of sal-ammoniac in a quart of water, and put the pierced batteries in this solution for twenty-four hours. At the end of that time, take out the battery, dry carefully and dip in hot paraffine wax to prevent dryout out again. Care must be taken to keep the two zinc tubes together as they were originally, and keep the tops out of the water.

For coloring carpet-rags, these are tried and satisfactory recipes: For coloring black, take five cents worth of logwood extract and the same amount of blue vitriol; dissolve logwood in enough water to cover the goods to be dyed, boil the goods in

the solution (after straining it through a cloth) for half an hour, then lift and throw in the vitriol which has been dissolved in water; then dip the goods again in the logwood, lift, let drain, wash in soap suds, rinse and dry in the shade. For blue, take fifteen cents worth of Prussian blue and five cents worth of alum; dissolve the blue in hot water and strain; dip the goods in it for five minutes, dissolve the alum in one gallon of hot water, pour into the dye, and dip the goods well again, dry before washing. For orange, dip the goods in strong copperas water, then in weak lye alternately, until the desired shade is obtained, then dry before washing. For canary yellow, take the inner bark of hickory or pig-nut tree, and make a strong tea of it. Boil the goods in this for half an hour or more, then take the goods out, dissolve a handful of alum in water enough to dissolve it, and pour in the dye; dip the goods well again, dry and wash in soap suds.

Cookery Kinks

If the steak happens to be tough, pound it thoroughly, and roll in flour; have ready a skillet containing either all sweet lard, or half lard and half suet, piping hot, and deep enough to nearly cover the steak; drop the prepared steak in the hot grease, and let fry until the blood oozes out on top, then season and turn quickly, and cook until done, which should not take a very long time. The grease should be hot enough to sear the surface at once, and the steak should be taken out of the grease as soon as done.

For Cooking Lentils—Very few people, comparatively, know how to cook lentils. A pint will make a very good dishful. Wash and soak them over night, and in the morning, drain and cover with fresh warm water and set to boil slowly for an hour and a half. At the end of that time they should be soft; if not, cook a little longer until quite tender, then pour into a colander and drain. Have the frying pan very hot, with a tablespoonful of butter or sweet drippings, and salt and pepper to taste; turn the lentils in this and stir for a few minutes, then remove to a cooler part of the range and let cook for ten more minutes, until a delicate brown, then turn out and serve.

Dried peas, beans and lentils require soft water, and if this is not at hand, add a quarter teaspoonful, or less, of baking soda to every gallon of water. Do not salt until nearly done. Soft water must be used for onions, and young vegetables. When soaking wilted vegetables in cold water to freshen them, do not use salt in the water.

When cooking, one sometimes has an extra egg-yolk or two, that could be used later. After the yolk is separated from the white, drop it into a bowl of water, and it will remain fresh for days, so that it can be used for any purpose requiring yolks alone, except cakes. It should be kept in a cool, dark place.

To Test Cocoa

When pure, cocoa is one of the healthiest of all hot beverages. When adulterated, it is very trying on both palate and digestion. Makers of cocoa for family consumption know this so well that the purity of the article they place on the market is always asserted to be unquestionable. But cocoa is usually greatly adulterated by the unscrupulous, especially in the powdered form, and can be so abused more readily than any other beverage used at the table. Starch is usually the material used as an adulterant, and if one knows the secret it can readily be detected. Dissolve a quantity of the pulverized cocoa in enough water to form a paste, then to the mixture add a few