



Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

The Home Department

Is it Worth the Price?

More men in search of the icy pole—
The mythic staff around which we roll;
More treasures, ships, and lives, maybe—
All sacrificed to the Polar Sea.
What if they find the Pole and the Sea?
What better, then, shall earth's children be?
Silence and glaciers, snow and fogs,
Death knells and darkness and wolfish dogs;
No ship on the errands of commerce bent
Would cross to the new-found continent;
No church will rival the iceberg's spire,
No chimney shelter a household fire.
"Science?" I know. As the old wife waits;
Going backward down to the Blessed Gates,
Looking earthward still for some token set
Of the lost and fallen she can not forget—
Think you all the charts the explorers gave
Can hide from her dreams the unsodded grave?
Think you the wives of the missing men
Can say God-speed to the search again?
There will be new tales of beleaguered ships
Amid topling bergs and ice-floe nips;
Of dying men homesick for meadow sod;
For the sound of the bells in the house of God.
Snow-blind and faint with the ceaseless stare,
They shall stumble on through the icy glare,
Till worn and weak in the garish light,
They sink to sleep in the arctic night,
For this: To outline a chart anew;
Where the ship had carried her colors through;
To claim fresh fields of the sterile ice
At such fearful cost! Is it worth the price?

—Ethel Lynn.

Our Early Easter

Easter is a movable festival, and always comes on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. The vernal equinox is set for March 21st, and Easter Sunday must fall between March 22d, and April 25th; it can not be earlier, or later than one of those dates. In 1761 the festival came on the first possible date, March 22d, and again in 1818. In 1788, 1845, and 1856, it came on March 23; and not until after the year 2000 will it again come so early. It is safe to say that flowers for Easter will enhance "the cost of living" several degrees, if they are indulged in to any great extent.

A Complete Bible for the Blind

One of the most stupendous undertakings of the world of letters is the getting out, in St. Louis, of a complete Bible in braille (or raised) characters for the use of the blind. This work is to be comprised of nineteen huge volumes, and is the work of four young ladies connected with the Missouri School for the

Blind, three of whom are totally blind. It has been in process of preparation for eight years, and it is hoped it will be finished during 1913. The characters are punched on brass plates one and one-half by twelve inches square, and the raised printing is done on heavy, impressionable paper direct from the stereotyped plates. At first, all the work of punching was done by foot-power, but they now have a power press and dynamo. The proof-reading and correcting the plates must still be hand-work, however. It is one of the most wonderful things in the world—the placing within the reach of the blind the wonderful riches of the Bible and the other best literature. A visit to the Missouri school for the blind would be a revelation to any one.

Seeding for Transplanting

Many things, both flower and vegetable, should be started early in order to do their best. A good way to start the seeds is to make little cups or bands of stiff paper and set them in a box of soil, filling them with soil and planting one or more seeds in each. These should not be closed at the bottom, but just pushed down in the shape of a ring, so they can be lifted out when the seed germinates and the plant is ready for removal. By this means, there is no shock to the plant, or disturbance of the fine rootlets.

Another good plan is to use tin cans—the small evaporated milk cans in which milk is brought to you are good for this purpose. Put them in the fire, or on a bed of coals until the top and bottom are melted off and the sides melted apart. This may be easier done with vegetable cans. Have a box of good soil and sink the cans to the level of the soil, then fill with soil and plant your seeds, one or more in each can. When the seedlings are large enough for transplanting, lift the can carefully from the box of soil, dig the hole deeper, or set in a deeper box of soil, and put the can back in the dirt. Draw the dirt up around the plant, a little at a time, but not deeper than you will set it in the outdoor soil. When transplanting it finally, work the can about so as to loosen the soil about it, and draw it out, leaving the plant, fill the space closely about the roots, and it will hardly know it has been removed. It will receive no shock, or check, and will go right on growing. Try this, using care, and you will find it one of the best means for starting tender plants that bear transplanting poorly. The stiff paper bands can be bought cheaply, but you can make them yourself at literally no cost except time. These will rot as the plant roots grow, and there will be no checking root growth.

If you have a spare corner, just sow petunia seeds there, and you will have plenty of bloom the year through. The improved zinnias, salvias (scarlet sage), delphinium, lychnis, Japanese pinks, gallardia and many others are showy, free blooming hardy annuals.

What to Plant

Many plants which grow and do finely in one region will be but dismal failures in another. You must study the needs of your plants, and if you find a plant refuses to do well in your locality, try some other

kind. There are plants for every region, and you are entitled to your share. Some plants, like the nasturtium, do best on poor soil, while others demand the richest to be had. The majority do well in good garden loam; others want the hottest sunshine, while another kind demands a cool, shaded place; some want moisture, and others must have dry feet, though not too dry. If you want pansies (and few things are better liked), you must sow the seeds this spring for the fall blooming. If properly cared for during the hot summer, given shade and moisture, then sheltered during the winter, they begin to bloom very early and continue all spring. Many growers set them in cold-frames and have them in bloom throughout the winter.

There are many summer blooming bulbs that appeal strongly to every flower lover, as they are so easy to raise and sure to bloom. Get out your catalogue and look over the list, and when doing so, just mark down a goodly lot of tuberose of the double kind, gladiolus, oxalis, Zephyranthus, and—the list is long and the bulbs are not expensive. Get them of a florist, or one who has a reputation to keep up. You can get them very cheap at the department stores and from the ten cent stores, or the street stands; but you will find such purchases anything but satisfactory; they are usually old stock, or damaged, or anything but "true to name." Better a few good bulbs each year, than throw your money away on such disappointing things.

A great deal of the cheap seeds offered at these same places are worthless. They are old stock, or otherwise damaged, and you will find yourself with just so much trash instead of your nickels. Tuberose, especially, should be bought of reliable dealers, for a chill, or frost will blight the flower-stalk, and while it will grow, it will not bloom. Get of reliable parties.

Ailments of Children

It is claimed that, while whooping cough is regarded with little apprehension by most parents, it is nearly, or quite as fatal as scarlet fever, and almost half as many deaths result from it as from diphtheria, because of the complications which are apt to follow the disease; one of the worst complications is pneumonia of a very fatal type; kidney and heart disease are also to be feared. The disease is a truly distressing one, both to the child and the one who nurses it. Children have strangled to death when having taken something in the mouth—even so much as a mouthful of milk when nursing—a paroxysm of coughing sets up, and the food is drawn into the respiratory tubes. Little can be done to prevent an attack, because people do not exercise precautionary measures, and children are allowed to go about in public without restraint, in most places. No child should needlessly be exposed to the disease, and there should always be a good physician in attendance on the little sufferer, as much suffering can be avoided and complications prevented. Especially should very young children be guarded against this disease, as the greatest fatality is among the very young; after the age of five years, there is not so much danger; but the older the

child, the less liable it is to take, or to suffer so severely from whooping cough.

Legumes as Crops

Farmers are admonished to plant plenty of beans, because of their food value to the family, as well as the profit to be gained from the crop. This is a hardy, nourishing vegetable, found now in some form on nearly every table, and will find more consumers as its great value becomes known. There is becoming an increasing demand for it, and navy beans which, a few years ago could be bought for fifty cents a bushel, now sell readily for five times as much, and in small quantities, are retailed for ten cents a pound. It is claimed that old land is better than new for growing beans. Every farmer should plant a few acres, and see that they are harvested properly.

Some Health Notes

If you will think the matter over, you will recall the fact that nearly always, when the child has bowel trouble, the physician recommends you to "give it a dose of castor oil." You will probably not have thought of this, and you wonder why a laxative should be given at such a time. But the reason for this is that some poisonous substance is causing the trouble, and this poison must be purged out of the system. Many things, but most frequently undigested food, may cause this self-poisoning, and castor oil seems to be the best purgative, as it leaves no bad effects behind, such as the usual purgative medicines will do. Constipation is a bad thing for child or adult, and if possible, it should be cured by feeding properly; but sometimes just what to give to the sufferer is not known. Oatmeal gruel is good, with plenty of water to drink. An abundance of water alone will often cure. After giving worm medicine, the dose of castor oil should follow.

Fruit Laxative—Steep two ounces of senna leaves in one quart of water; strain over one pound each of chopped seeded raisins, prunes and figs; add half a cup of white sugar and a tablespoonful of Epsom salts. Let soak over night; add another pint of water and slowly simmer for 20 minutes, stirring often, until a thick, smooth jam is formed. Turn this out into a shallow pan, and when dry cut into squares and pack in paraffine-lined boxes. A small piece of this fruit paste will relax the bowels. Use just enough to keep the bowels regular, and this will vary in different persons. There is nothing harmful in the ingredients.

It is claimed that a tea made of the inner white bark of the apple tree will cure inflammation of the stomach. If you can not get the bark from the tree, any druggist will order it for you. Put a heaping tablespoonful of the powdered bark in a granite saucepan and pour boiling water over it to cover well; let boil five minutes. Strain, and when cold drink this instead of water. It does not taste badly, and in a short time you will like it. For food, use cereals, or light diet for one or two weeks, then gradually get back to regular meals, drinking the apple-bark tea all the time, for a month, at least. Eat any plainly cooked, nourishing food; but don't over-eat.

"Nerve Hunger"

Neurasthenic individuals sometimes experience peculiar attacks resembling fainting spells, with extreme weakness, pallor, vertigo, cold perspiration, weakness and trembling of the knees and a sense of heaviness in the head. One patient under the care of the hospital physician is affected in this way every