



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
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## The Sheaf of Days

From a full sheaf in youth we  
bravely draw  
Each morning one light arrow,  
which is sent  
By strength of arm, impelled by  
hidden law,  
Until its force is spent.

Some shafts go well and true, and  
some go ill;  
Beyond our vision, others droop  
and fall;  
Fair shots are others, sped by  
strength of will,  
While some fly not at all.

As the days wane, the sheaf is not  
so full;  
Our arms are weak; the darts but  
feebly go  
From lifeless cords our stiffening  
fingers pull  
To bend the sullen bow.

And some have straighter shafts and  
better bows;  
And keener vision others; but no  
hand  
The journey of a single arrow  
knows,  
Or how its flight is planned!

—Meredith Nicholson.

## Mothers' Pensions

So much is being said and done about the enactment of laws giving to mothers a certain amount each month for each dependent child, by the state in which she lives, that every one is or should be interested in the subject. In many states, a man could desert his family without danger of any penalty; he was not considered as being guilty of any crime, or liable to arrest, and could not always, or often be made to provide for the support of even the infant children. In some states now, desertion of one's family has been made a felony, punishable with imprisonment at hard labor in the penitentiary. The abandonment of their families by men who forget honor and obligation has become an abuse so wide-spread as to awaken the state to its duty to the helpless children who are its coming citizens. Men marry young women and, after the first intimacy is over, desert them, leaving them often among strangers with one or more young children to provide for, and nothing, seemingly, could be done; but things are being changed. The arm of the law may not be able to restore the husband or revive the lost love, but it can at least punish them severely for so doing. Meantime, the helpless mother can keep her children with her, and the pension, added to what she can save by careful attention, or earn at some work which will not interfere with the care of the babies, will enable her to make useful citizens of them. The world is getting better every day, and awakening to its duties to its citizens, young or old.

## Flies and Other Pests

The very first step toward ridding the house of these worse than nuisances, is to remove all kinds of attractions which may bring them about. See that the back yard is kept clean, and do not throw any kind of eatables, vegetable trimmings or decaying matter, about the kitchen premises. If even a small amount of such things is exposed in such places, the flies will find it out and it is but a step from the garbage

to the back door. Screens are a necessity, but cleanliness is more so. You can not control the output from your neighbor's kitchen, but you can see that your own premises are not attractive to the flies. The flies will somehow get into the house, even with the best of screens; but do not let them get out; kill every invader, and thus settle the question of its progeny. Where there are children, one must be doubly vigilant, for the little toddlers are prone to hold the door open, or manage to get breaks in the wire, if not taught to care for such things. Then you must resort to traps and poisons, and you must see that, in case the poison is harmful, the little ones can not reach them, and the older ones should be early taught to let them alone. One of the "swatters," ready-made at the stores, or home-made from a bit of wire screen attached to a handle, should be furnished the children, and they should be taught to use it wherever a fly is seen to alight. It is claimed that oil of sassafras scattered about will prevent flies coming in. It is cheap, and will do no harm to try it; but cleanliness through soap and water and scrubbing brush, supplemented by carefully putting everything eatable and drinkable out of the reach of insects, will do more than anything else to discourage the flies who are seeking a nesting place. Roaches like dirt, too; especially eatable dirt, and there are few things more nauseating than to find the shell of a cockroach in the food. In fighting the pests, "If at once you don't succeed, try, try again."

## Ham Bones

If you live near a meatshop where ham bones can be had, you have, with a few dried beans, material for a good meal. After all the meat that can be sliced in salable shape has been taken from the bone it can usually be had for a few cents. A pint of white beans, soaked over night and boiled slowly with the bone until done, makes a very tasty soup, or pot of boiled beans.

## Poison Ivy

When you go for a stroll through the woods, or when the children are running through the lanes and woods pathways, there is always danger of getting poisoned with the poison ivy, or oak vine which are all too plentiful along the walls and highways, growing in brush patches and on the trunks of trees. Every one should be taught the difference between the poison ivy and the harmless kind. Poison ivy has three leaflets to each leaf stem, while the harmless kind has five leaflets. The berries of the poison ivy are a grayish white, about as large as a pea, while the harmless ivy has fruit of a deep black, and larger. Some varieties of the poison oak, or poison ivy, are climbers, clinging by stem rootlets to the bark of trees, or to other supports; another, is a ground trailer with upright branches. Wherever found, the plant should be destroyed, and a good way to do this is to go out after a rain, when the ground is soft and loose, having gloves on the hands, and pull them up by the roots, burning them. Many persons are extremely susceptible to the poison, and the suffering from the effects of it is very severe, while with many persons it is very hard to cure. The effect is well

known, as an erysipelatous inflammation, particularly affecting the face and hands. It is not necessary with some people to come in contact with the vine or leaves. The symptoms are itching, redness, swelling, watery blisters, and later a peeling of the skin. To relieve, bathe the parts freely with spirits of nitre; if the blisters are broken so as to allow the nitre to penetrate the cuticle, a single application is generally all that is necessary. Another remedy, take a handful of quicklime, dissolve it in water, let stand for half an hour, then paint the poisoned parts with it. Three or four applications may be needed. Another: Bathe the parts well with olive oil, taking internally two tablespoonfuls of the oil three times a day. Anointing the hands and face with the sweet oil will prevent poisoning by the ivy.

Poison dogwood, a small but beautiful shrub ten to fifteen feet high, having a dark gray bark with the smaller branches of light color and the ends of the twigs red, affects in similar manner, but is more powerful. Treatment the same as for ivy poisoning.

## The National Cemeteries

Answering one of our readers: The nation's dead soldiers are buried in seventy-three cemeteries, as well as in local cemeteries with their kindred. Only twelve of the national cemeteries are in the northern states, the principal of which are Cypress Hill, Finn's Point, N. J., Gettysburg, Pa., Mound City, Ill., Woodlawn, Elmira, N. Y., which contain the larger numbers. It is impossible to give the number in each cemetery, as the old soldiers are and have been falling away rapidly, and a very great many of them are being added to the graves of their comrades.

The largest resting places of the known and unknown dead soldiers are Arlington, Va., Chalmette, La., Chattanooga, Tenn., Fredricksburg, Va., Jefferson Barracks, Mo., Little Rock, Ark., City Point, Va., Marietta, Ga., Memphis, Tenn., Nashville, Tenn., Poplar Grave and Richmond, Va., Salisbury, N. C., Stone River Tenn., Vicksburg, Miss., Antietam, Md., Winchester, Va. Two cemeteries are devoted to the thousands of bodies of the heroes who passed away in the prison pens of Andersonville, Ga., and Salisbury, N. C. A great many bodies buried in the various national cemeteries are those of the unknown dead. Scattered about the country are cemeteries largely filled by soldiers who passed away after years of citizenship; but nearly every local cemetery contains the body of some one or more of the men who took part in the civil war, and who preferred to lie among their kindred in local cemeteries.

## Dandelions

The large market gardens of the east are cultivating the dandelion plants for commercial purposes, and the sale of the "greens" is very profitable. The seeds should be sown this spring, as early as possible, and given the same cultivation accorded to carrots except they require thinning to ten inches apart. Next spring the leaves will be ready to use, and should be blanched by placing a covering of boards, or other materials over the rows. The cultivated kinds are much more tender

and less bitter than the wild ones. In forcing beds, the seeds may be started and when large enough transplanted to the garden rows. Forcing plants is not recommended, as the plant should have one year's growth before being used. The field dandelions are much liked, and are valuable as table supplies in the spring. The cultivated plant should have a rich, sandy loam, but will grow well in good garden soil. Like the radish, it must grow rapidly to be good and tender.

## Taking Thought for Tomorrow

When making your garden, do not forget the lavender plant. If you can not get the seeds, get plants from the florist or nurserymen, and grow a few hills at least, in order to have the dried herbs in your linen closet. Another lovely plant is the rose geranium, and it is not at all hard to grow. Before the leaves get coarse and hard, gather and dry them, and they will give a delightful fragrance to the closets and drawers.

One of the dear old plants our mothers used to cherish is the lemon verbena, which is not a verbena at all, but a green house shrub, and any one can grow it in the window, or planted out in the garden in the summer and kept in the cellar in winter, when the leaves fall. The leaves give a delightful fragrance, but you must gather them while still growing.

## Propagating Plants by Cuttings

A shallow dish of any kind which will hold several inches of sand will answer; cover the sand entirely with water, renewing as it evaporates. Cut the slips and set in this sand-bath, and place in a warm, sunny place. The slips do not wilt, as they are entirely surrounded with water, and the moisture keeps the sand from burning them. Root geraniums, verbenas, and fuschias first, then, later in the season, the soft wooded plants can be rooted. This is the process the housewife follows when she has but a few cuttings. Tea roses and many hardwood slips can be rooted in the same manner, and the plants should be lifted with care when well rooted, and soil sifted among the tiny rootlets when they are set in the pots.

## For the Seamstress

In hemming napkins, put the hemmer attachment on the machine, do not thread; run the goods through the hemmer, turning an even hem, then hem afterwards by hand, following the line of accurate perforations. In hemstitching, draw the threads and baste the hem neatly; with the sewing machine, regulated to the stitch desired, without thread, stitch close to the edge as in ordinary hemmings. For hand-run tucks use a coarse needle, mark with the machine in the manner described above, and run the thread in the holes thus made.

Before cutting button-holes, if the material is inclined to fray mark the position and length of each, then stitch with the machine close around this mark. When the button-holes are cut between the stitching, there is a firm edge to work on.

To be sure a sleeve will set well when there are no notches as guides on the pattern, measure an inch back from the shoulder seam, fold the armhole together and place the inner seam of sleeve at front fold of armhole. For a very stout person, measure two inches.

## The Kitchen and Pantry

These rooms should be kept clean, and one of the best ways to keep them clean is to have all the walls and shelves and the cupboards well painted and varnished. The work of