



The Home Department

Conducted by
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The Last Expense

We talk of the high cost of living,
But the high cost of dying is
worse;

You can ride to the coast in a Pull-
man,

For what a mile costs in the
hearse.

"They had a whole hack-full of
flowers!"

Then the friends and the mourn-
ers disperse.

You always die ere you expect it,
And the insurance money must go

To pay the "mortician" his charges,
When it ought to clothe Bobby,
you know.

And Susie quits school for the fac-
tory,

For the doctor is waiting, also.

Object to the mortician's charges?
Unheard of! The height of poor
taste!

"Last meed of respect and affec-
tion;"

Who'd count such an outlay as
waste?

You may have the luck of a Jonah,
And fall in whatever you try;

You may have a struggle terrific
To live with the prices so high;

But for goodness sake, put off your
dying

Until you have something laid by!
—Walter G. Doty, in Farm Journal.

"Restless Women"

"The cause of the modern woman's restlessness is that she is awakening," says a writer in the Nautilus. "She is stretching her arms and trying to rise and take up her work. Changing ideals and ideas have brought about entirely new conditions; men have stepped into her home and taken most of her tasks away from her; her garments are factory-made; her spinning and weaving and knitting are done by machinery; the tailor and dressmaker and milliner and baker supply her needs and those of her family. Electricity and gas illumine her dwelling and cook her meals; vacuum cleaners spirit away the dust, and elevators toss her back and forth to her aerial dwelling place. Agriculture and primitive industries were first taken from her, then, most of the work of the household and the household drudgery; and the home life has become so simplified because of these changes that she does not know what to do with her idle hands. She shops aimlessly, joins clubs, goes into the gainful occupations, and in every way tries to fill up her idle hours. The cure for the restlessness for the majority is to select some suitable labor to keep her interest in the world's affairs alive, and develop her hitherto neglected powers."

Another author says, "Women are just as willing now for some one to take care of them as they ever were; this willingness is not essentially feminine; it is human nature; and while it is necessity that drives her into the new fields, the necessity may be veiled, for it is not always poverty that is to blame. The hardest and most bitter necessity frequently has no poverty and never starvation; the real origin of this so-called invasion of women into non-domestic work is the undeniable fact that there are not men enough capable, or at least willing, to offer a proper sort of existence to the women. To marry merely for the sake of marrying would frequently entail a mental,

moral, and too often a physical, sacrifice which women are rightly unwilling to make."

Who Pays the Cost?

Mothers have written to me that they are glad the papers and magazines are beginning to make warfare on the excuse for dress worn by women and girls, and are demanding a reform. They ask sincerely, "Who is to pay the cost of the undress condition in which girls and women go about in all weathers, at all hours," and they are not thinking of their pocket-books when they ask the question. The hundreds of new diseases, increase of the old ones, and aggravation of those which a few years ago were deemed hardly worth noticing, and the increasing ill-health of our girls, is making this a serious problem, for the "cost" of the ruined health, physical and moral, will reach beyond this generation, "even unto the third and fourth." Some one must pay heavily. Meantime, many blame the mothers for "allowing" their daughters to dress so; but the girls will not heed admonition, and if they would, it is almost impossible to get any other than the present style of clothing, or an aggravation of it, among the ready-mades; unfortunately, home dress-making is nearly one of the lost arts, and if one attempts to hire the work done, it is almost impossible to get a dressmaker to do it. Many women of modest tastes refuse to buy the ready-made clothing, and are turning their attention to their sewing machines; but the "paper pattern" companies are supplying very few patterns except those of the "latest style," and even if the patterns could be had, very few, comparatively, would know how to put them together—so little is known of dressmaking by the present day seamstress. A revival of the lost art of dressmaking may help out matters; but it seems to me that, if the fathers and brothers would refuse to let their "women-folks" wear such scant attire, it could be stopped. What do you think of it?

"The Home Dressmaker"

Cutting, fitting and sewing seems to be among the lost arts, but among a sensible average of women, it is being revived, as the present styles are anything but satisfactory. Not long ago, a young woman attended a "special sale" of silk dresses. They were advertised as "marked down" to \$8.98, "the latest models," etc. Having time on her hands, she went to several stores and priced not only the ready-made dresses, but the various qualities of goods. The garments were miserably scant, and the best of them not of the desired quality of material; so the woman went to the pattern counter, selected what she wanted, bought the called-for materials necessary, and, after adjusting the fullness to suit herself, made a much handsomer and better dress than she could buy, at a greatly reduced cost.

Health Notes

A writer in Farm Journal gives the following method for treating eczema. There are many kinds of eczema, or rather, eczema from so many causes, and what will help one case will not help another. As hot fomentations are good in nearly all cases of itching of the cuticle, it is at least harmless. Here is the method:

"Get a teakettleful of boiling water; pour part of it into a wash basin; have a sponge and wrap a cord around one end to make a handle. Dip the loose end of the sponge in the hot water after it has become cool enough so it will not scald, and bathe the affected patches with the water as hot as it can be borne; keep on bathing one place until it is hot to a considerable depth; rub on a little good vegetable oil soap, and bathe the other patches the same way, keeping up the heat of the water by pouring from the kettle. When all the patches have been gone over thus, go over them again with the hot water and rinse off the soap." It is claimed this will stop the itching for a time, if not finally. In applying the sponge, there should be no rubbing, and to rinse off the soap, the water should be squeezed over the affected parts. For some cases of eczema, water should not be used.

Gleanings

A great deal is said against the family cat because of its propensity for killing young birds. Many families will refuse to have a cat on the place, yet will encourage the squirrel in every possible way. The Farm Journal tells us that, with the possible exception of the timid little flying squirrel, there is not a variety of squirrel in America today which does not make a business of bird-killing and nest-robbing. Even the tiny chipmunk, or ground squirrel, stalks birds consistently and not unsuccessfully.

In many localities, the country people have decided that school houses are public property, and belong to the people, and they are expecting to use them for the public good, by inaugurating social meetings at the buildings, and arranging so as to accommodate all who wish to meet together. In many localities, the school buildings are vacant and unused for months at a time. Much good would come of opening them for church and social gatherings. From certain districts complaints come of rowdyisms enacted by the young men; but the elders should band together and force these wild boys to behave themselves. They are not really desperadoes, but they are full of animal spirits, and seem to have no other idea than to bring themselves into notice.

An excellent use to make of old wire that was cut from the baled hay, or barbed wire that is no longer useful on the fence, is said to be found by mixing it with the concrete for floors, walks and walls, as it helps to hold the concrete together while drying, and prevents cracking. If no objection to its use is found, it will be a good method of getting rid of a very troublesome accumulation. Another good use to make of it is to throw it into the gullies, or washes, and let it become buried. The wire rots underground.

"In the Air"

The sensible portion of both men and women are beginning to protest strongly against the freak fashions which are filling the streets with samples of "indecent exposure of person," and are advocating a return to the ample skirts of ankle lengths worn a few years ago. Several women whose position in society will carry weight with the revival have promised to return to the more modest styles, and it is predicted that a

revival will thus be brought about in a short while. Many young girls and women realize the freakishness of the "latest styles," but in many cases, it is impossible to make their own clothes, and there seems nothing else to be had in the ready-made lines. So they are forced to "do as other people do." Many others still cling to the wardrobes on hand, and possess their souls in patience, hoping for the return of sane methods of dressing.

Another hint of returning sanity is in the gaining of favor of the low shoe-heels. There is plenty of room for other reforms, and we hope our women and girls will hasten the day of their coming.

"Summer Boarders"

Many worn out mothers, fathers, sons and daughters would be glad to avail themselves of a few weeks in the country, but complain that the price of board and rooms are beyond their means. Country people should charge a fair profit for their entertainment, but should not expect to make a fortune from a few guests. The story magazines are full of stories telling how the farm wives clear so much money from their summer boarders, and the most extravagant tales are told; but when one reads these stories, they should realize that they are bits of fiction, and a great many of the writers never saw a farm, or visited in the country. Every one should get a summer rest, if possible, and there are many charming homes where the vacation can be spent cheaply and happily.

Taking Care of the Bedding

During the hot months, bedding should be sunned as often as possible—every day is none too often. The covering should be light in weight, and washable, and the mattress should not be so heavy as to make carrying it out of the house too great a burden. A cheap mattress—one made of excelsior with a cotton top—is an extravagance, for it soon gets lumpy and is exceedingly uncomfortable. It is better to pay a little more and get a felt mattress, and this should not be too heavy. There are mattresses made in two sections, and these can be handled with less labor. If the felt mattress is too hard (and some of them do get very hard after a few years' use) it is well to have a cotton mattress, made like a heavy bed comfort, to lay on top of it. During hot weather the perspiration of the body is apt to make the bedding smell badly unless it is often aired and sunned. For children, nothing is more comfortable and economical than the old-time "tick" filled with oat straw, which can be kept well stirred, and aired, and when it gets ground up, the filling can be renewed at small expense. But this can not always be had by the city woman. The wheat straw can be bought at the feed stores, and will answer very well, with a cotton padding made separate, to lay on top. Everything that is slept in, or under, should be aired as often as possible, and the windows should be left open as much as possible.

"And the Boys, Too."

Just now we are hearing a great deal about the girls; but it is suggested by a handful of letters from mothers, that we call attention to the fact that the boys, too, are reaping the harvest of "conditions" and should be looked after a little closer. So long as boys are allowed to school themselves in vice to such a degree as is now the case, it will be difficult to keep the girls from sometimes going wrong. The curse of city life for the children is that they have nothing to do, and we know who trad-