



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

The Closed Door

The neighbors, passing by my house,
All say they envy me—
My books, my sunny window seat,
My bird for company;
The pictures on my sunny walls,
The flowers on the sill;
They know not of a darkened room
Where all is hushed and still,

And whether I would choose or no,
I slip along the hall,
And down the empty passage where
I hear my lone footfall.
And pause before a silent door—
Ah, me, so long away!
My heart no heavier could be
Were it but yesterday.

I turn the knob—an empty room,
Except that, playing there,
I see a little busy child
With sunlight on its hair.
A little child that never was,
With eyes I used to know;
I stand and watch it at its play,
And then I turn and go.

I grope along the darkened hall,
For I can only see
A little child that never was,
And never is to be;
A little lord of quietness
That never needs my care—
O, all the years that I must come
And find him playing there!
—Charlotte Wilson.

Guarding Against Moths

Many women do not seem to realize that the work of the moth goes on in winter as well as in the summer, where the house is kept at summer heat, as many homes are, which are heated by furnace. The mother moth we see flying about in April or May and August is not the insect that eats the clothing. The mother moth lays her eggs where she knows there will be a supply of food for the larva when the eggs hatch; then she dies. Her work is done. Some one may ask what becomes of the father moth. I do not know. When the eggs are hatched the larva at once goes to eating and builds itself a kind of coat from the material on which it feeds. A good lookout should be kept for these little white worms, and every one of them killed. The eggs are said to hatch in six days, where conditions are favorable.

Buffalo bugs and beetles destroy not only woollens, but silks and feathers and hair goods. The bug eats the carpet from underneath, and can do much damage before being found out. Silk waists, umbrellas, and like things are quickly ruined. The buffalo bug confines its work to the summer months, but the smooth black beetle works at all seasons, and is very destructive.

One of the destructive insects that destroys cotton goods is the "silver-fish," or fish moth, and shiner. It is a smooth, slender, wingless and worm-like insect, with two long antennae on its head; it is found in old houses, in attics, closets, and trunks, and ruin laces, cottons of various kinds, and books; any starched goods are especially liked. They can be exterminated with strong insect powder plentifully applied and persisted in.

To fumigate clothes for moths, shake out the garments so the fumes can get into the folds. Put a sulphur candle in the closet, and close the room tightly for some hours. The

sulphur candle should be set in a pall of earth before lighting, to prevent fire.

A Scarcity of Hardy Bulbs

One can hardly realize that the terrible war now being carried on in Europe will affect the flower-lover; but our florists are sending out warnings that, owing to the war conditions, they are unable to get all the bulbs needed to supply their trade, and have decided not to offer low rates for quantities in hundreds and thousand lots. They assure us that bulbs imported from European countries will be scarce, and only early orders may be surely filled.

Florists are offering collections of excellent hardy bulbs, as well as bulbs for the house, and nothing is more satisfactory to the woman who has a cold house than the old stand-by, the hyacinth. The collections at low rates are not large bulbs, usually, but they are "sure to bloom," and will give much pleasure to the grower.

Transplanting Herbaceous Perennials

This is the season for dividing and transplanting the peonies. Divide the roots and set so that the crown is just below the soil, letting the root run as deep as its length. The new soil should be sunny as to location and with considerable sand and a little quicklime, stirred thoroughly into the soil. Plants which refuse to bloom where they now are will usually give bloom when transplanted, getting more prolific with age.

Nothing will give more satisfaction or greater variety of color than perennial phlox, which may be set out now, dividing the roots. Seeds sown this fall should make considerable growth before cold weather, and will bloom next year. Hollyhocks will do well if the seeds are put in the ground now. The new varieties are many of them as beautiful as dahlias; they are perfectly hardy, and will "seed themselves" if allowed to do so. If one will look over the catalogues, they will find many things well worth starting this fall; plants that will grow for years and give no trouble to the busy worker.

A Chapter on Rose Culture

The most suitable soil for rose-growing is a strong, rich loam or vegetable mold mixed with one-fourth its bulk of stable manure; well rotted cow manure is always safe, and the rose seems to do well with it. A good vegetable garden soil will grow roses well, but for the best success the soil should be a dry, rich soil with plenty of manure. Liquid manure, such as the drainings from manure piles, poured on the surface in the early winter months, before the ground freezes, a gallon or two to each bush, applied twice during the winter, is recommended. A good way to apply this liquid manure is to make two or three perforations in the bottom of a tin can, set the can near the roots an inch or two deep, and pour the liquid in the can, filling as it seeps away, until the required amount has been applied.

The rose will grow and bloom in any soil; but in poor soil, the shoots will be short and the flowers small and semi-double, instead of large and full-leaved. As it is so easy to feed the plant, there seems to be no excuse for starving it. The sun's rays are absolutely necessary for the best life of the rose plant.

All roses that bloom but once a

year may be transplanted in the autumn after the first hard frost. The ends of the roots broken in lifting the plant will form a callus during cold weather, and very early in the spring will start new rootlets from this. If attended to very early in the spring, before growth starts, they do well; but care should be taken not to mutilate the roots any more than must be. If there is a tendency to tap root, it should be cut off, and only lateral rooting encouraged, as these are the best feeders. Hardy roses seldom need protection, except in very cold climates, where they may have the soil covered with coarse manure several inches deep and the tops tied up with sacking, wisps of hay, or boxes or barrels set over them.

Pruning Roses, and Covering

The hardy varieties of roses should be pruned in autumn or early winter, removing any old wood, or weak shoots, as only the young wood will bear blossoms. If the rose is of the variety that "winter-kill" at the top, the pruning should be deferred until early in the spring, when all dead wood and weak, or old branches should be removed. The knife should be applied directly above a bud, with an upward sloping cut.

For the tea, or everblooming varieties, the pruning should be done at any time, as it is only on the new shoots that the flowers are borne; some advise removing all blossoms as soon as the petals fall. For winter protection where the tender roses are apt to winter-kill, it is recommended to cover the rose bed with several inches of sand, or by carefully lifting the plants, cutting down the tops and putting in boxes of earth, keeping them in the cellar. Many persons lose their plants by this lifting. If the plants are in a bed, a frame should be set about the bed, and branches of pine, or other bushes laid over the rose plants, and on there straw, or leaves can be scattered, or a muslin cover tacked over the frame, to protect them from the cold.

When rose plants are wanted for the house during winter, the preparation must be begun before cold weather, if flowers are wanted. When the plant is to be lifted, select one with a root growth not too large, and with a sharp spade cut around it about four inches from the stem or base; the ball of earth should just about fit in a half gallon pot or pail; then it must be pruned a little and left in this condition for two or three weeks; until the roots have calloused where they were cut; then take up and transfer to the pot, firm the earth down about it. With care the rose will bloom in the latter month of winter; but for a winter bloom it should be prepared a year previous, and kept growing thriftily all the season. Roses kept in the house have many insect enemies, and suffer from the dry heat of the ordinary living room. It is best to get them, ready for blooming, from the florist.

To Increase the Rose Supply

Several readers have asked how to propagate roses, in order to increase their supply inexpensively. From Park's Floral Magazine, we get the following, which is neither expensive nor troublesome: The Killarney and other hybrid tea roses can be propagated from cuttings taken in mid-summer and inserted in sand, which

should be kept moist, covering the pot or box with a glass and keeping in the shade for a while, then setting in a sunny location, keeping the moisture in the sand. Propagation can also be effected after the wood ripens by taking cuttings and burying in bundles in coal ashes where the frost will not reach them. In the spring they will be found calloused and ready to form roots. Insert these calloused cuttings in sand early in the spring, and they will soon develop roots, when they can be potted or transplanted. They should be six inches long.

As many are not careful enough when transplanting, it would be safest to insert the cuttings where they may be allowed to remain the first year, when they will make stocky, well-rooted plants.

As a protection during the winter, every flower-lover knows that more plants are killed by protection than by the cold; they are literally smothered. When covering a bed of roses, it is best to set a board frame about it, then cover the plants with branches from which the leaves have been stripped. Later, some light covering may be added to the branches, which will keep the covering from matting down on the plants and rotting them.

It is not too late in many localities to sow seeds of hardy perennials, as the little plants will have some time to "get on their feet," after which they may have some light covering for the cold.

Show Chrysanthemums

We are often asked how the large flowers are to be grown which we see at the floral exhibitions. It is too late for that now, as to produce these there must be months of preparation, and the buds must nearly all be pinched off, allowing only the few wanted for exhibition to develop.

THINK HARD It Pays to Think About Food

The unthinking life some people lead often causes trouble and sickness, illustrated in the experience of a lady over in Wis.

"About four years ago I suffered dreadfully from indigestion, always having eaten whatever I liked, not thinking of the digestible qualities. This indigestion caused palpitation of the heart so badly I could scarcely walk up a flight of stairs without stopping to regain breath and strength.

"I became alarmed and tried dieting, wore my clothes very loose, and used other remedies, but found no relief.

"Hearing of the virtues of Grape-Nuts and Postum, I commenced using them in place of my usual breakfast of coffee, cakes or hot biscuit, and in one week's time I was relieved of sour stomach and other ills attending indigestion. In a month's time my heart was performing its functions naturally and I could climb stairs and hills and walk long distances.

"I gained ten pounds in this short time, and my skin became clear and I completely regained by health and strength. I continue to use Grape-Nuts and Postum for I feel that I owe my good health entirely to their use.

"I like the delicious flavour of Grape-Nuts and by making Postum according to directions, it tastes similar to mild high grade coffee." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

The most perfect food in the world. Trial of Grape-Nuts and cream 10 days proves. "There's a Reason."

Look in pkgs. for the little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.