



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

"Let Her Vote"

If she really wants to vote,
Here is hoping she will win it;
Look about you and take note
Who's ag'in' it:
Every low saloon and dive,
All the vicious white-slave dealers,
Firms that on child-labor thrive,
And ward-healers.

"In the home is woman's place,"
And these forces there would keep
her,
While graft's crop grows up apace,
For the reaper.
Should she vote, crime still would
lurk
In the nooks we've left unlighted;
But she might do lots of work
We have slighted.

She might clean the city hall,
And with soap and water might
wash
Spots where our committees all
Have used whitewash.
"But," you cry, in great distress,
"All these tasks from home might
win her!"
She'd be back in time, I guess
To get the baby's dinner.

—Walter G. Doty, in Farm Journal.

For the New Year

I have been wondering what I shall say to you, now, in the dawning of the new year; but there seems so little worth saying, when from every quarter of the globe comes the sound of sobbing, the cry of the hungry and the moan of the desolate. In our own land, comparatively free from the horrors of strife, there are thousands of hearts, aching, anxious, sorely touched by the afflictions across the seas; for thousands of the brave men dead, or dying, wounded or missing are more or less remotely of our own kindred, with far too many members of our own families grown up among us, but who left us for some reason, and can now never return, or, returning, will never be the same—maimed, broken, disabled, or otherwise bearing the terrible scars of the awful battlefields.

It is useless, in many cases, to wish for you a "happy New Year," because of the sorrows of the world which more or less keenly touch so many of you; but we can wish for you, most heartily, the best that can come to you, and may whatever is best for you be yours, in good measure, pressed down and running over. It is seen that the terrible tragedies now being enacted over the seas are opening our hearts to a realization that the whole world is of kin, and that the "brotherhood of man" is universal. So, our sympathies are going out unceasingly, pouring oil on the wounded, comforting the distressed, feeding the hungry, nursing the sick, and in every way, seeking to bring about the reign of peace among the nations.

Many, closer to our own doors, are drinking the bitter cup of loss and sorrow, and there are sick and hungry and desolate, crying for the crumbs of comfort; we may be able to bestow. May the days bring you the joy of giving; of lifting the fallen; of comforting the discouraged. The blessing of service is better than feasting, and the sharing of even a "cup of water" will leave you happier, because of the happiness it has brought you. We wish you a prosperous New Year.

Preventing Dampness of Walls

Mr. Jos. Diehm, of Texas, general contractor, kindly sends us the following in answer to our request for information along this line: "In the first place, will say the mortar used is not to blame for the dampness, as all brick, except vitrified, is very porous; hence, when rain is blown against a brick wall by a strong wind, the moisture will penetrate the wall and spoil the plaster or paper on the inside. This defect is only present during continuous wet weather. Another defect of brick or stone walls is what is known as 'sweating'; this is the tendency of all solid walls to collect moisture by remaining at a lower temperature than the surrounding atmosphere, just as an ice-water pitcher will 'sweat,' or collect moisture from the air; and this moisture is as harmful to the paper and drapery as that which penetrates the wall from the outside. The only way to avoid both sources of moisture and insure dry walls, is to 'furr' (strip) the walls and then lath and plaster, the furring being thick enough (three-fourths inches) to insure an air space between the plastering and the outside wall. In new walls, wooden brick can be laid in, and in old walls, 'plugs' can be driven between the brick, to which the furring can be nailed. It costs more to build a wall as above, but it is worth more."

In olden days, this was the general practice in building; but the majority of contractors in large cities now build as cheaply as possible, and the "monthly payment" people do not know the difference, until too late. We are very grateful to our friends for the responses, and hope they may be of benefit to our "Querists."

For the Damp Walls

One of our kind friends sends us the following for walls that refuse to keep dry, and ruin the papering inside: "This method consists in using two washes or solutions for covering the surface of the walls, one composed of castile soap and one of alum and water. The proportions are three-quarters of a pound of soap to one gallon of water, and the other, half a pound of alum to four gallons of water; both substances to be perfectly dissolved in water before using. The walls should be perfectly clean and dry, and the temperature of the air not above 50 degrees Fahrenheit when the compositions are applied. The first, or soap wash, should be laid on when boiling hot, with a flat brush, taking care to form a froth on the brickwork. This wash should remain twenty-four hours, so as to become dry and hard before the second, or alum wash, is applied, which should be done in the same manner as the first. The temperature of this wash when applied, should be sixty to seventy degrees Fahrenheit, and this wash should also remain twenty-four hours before a second coat of the soap wash is put on. These coats are to be applied alternately in this way, until the walls are made impervious to water. The alum and soap thus combined form an insoluble compound, filling the pores of the masonry and entirely preventing the water from entering the walls. — Architect and Builder."

Another friend writes from California, but as he has the preventive for sale, we can not give it. Any one

wanting it can get the address by sending a stamped, addressed envelope to this department.

We are very grateful to the several friends who have kindly answered our call for such measures, and we hope when our friends try the methods, they will let us hear from them. It is very annoying to go to the trouble of decorating walls, only to have the covering ruined by the dampness from the outside.

Caring for Plants

To free house plants from insects, they should be kept growing vigorously. For scale, which infests palms, ivys, and other woody plants, use a soft tooth brush and warm soapsuds; make the suds of some good soap and warm water, and if the foliage is delicate, the suds should not be overly strong. Brush each leaf separately, both sides, and go over the stems in the same way. When the scale is removed, rinse with tepid clear water. For mealy bug, touch each bug with a drop of alcohol, applying it with a tooth pick, or splinter of broom straw, then, when all are killed, wash off with clear water.

The common aphid, or green fly is a terrible pest, not only in the garden, but on window grown plants; it is especially destructive to greenhouse grown lettuce for the early market. For this, tobacco is a sovereign remedy, if it is applied in time to keep the increase down, either as a tea, or by smoking.

Upon indications of a very cold night, plants should be removed to the middle of the room, or otherwise protected from the cold of the window. If the house is very cold, the pots may be set in a box large enough to hold them, and covered with a quilt, or other thick wrap. Many plants will do well if wrapped in paper, and a thick layer of newspapers put between them and the glass.

For using tobacco on house plants, make the tea by pouring boiling water over cheap tobacco, or stems of tobacco and let steep a short time; then dilute until the color of weak tea; lay the pots on the side, and spray both sides of the leaves and stems. Frequently drenching with clear water will kill off the tiny red spider that ruins so many plants, especially rose plants.

If your plants should freeze, as soon as you discover the damage, put them in a dark room where the temperature is but little above freezing, and shower them with cold water. Keep them in this dark, cool place until you find they do not wilt. If taken in time before they thaw, quite tender plants will usually come through with but little injury. Keep them away from light and heat for several days. Any wilted tops or stems should be removed by cutting below the line affected by the frost.

To Remind You

Don't expect to have clean teeth or a sweet breath while there is a tinge of white or yellow on the tongue. It is an unmistakable evidence of indigestion and a disordered stomach. It is a question for a physician to decide whether you are in need of acids or alkalis to correct the condition. One of the safest and surest remedies for all ordinary stomach troubles is plenty of water internally and externally, and it is always

safe not to drink cold water. Various things are suggested to counteract an unpleasant breath resulting from bad teeth, onion or garlic-scented dishes, or disordered condition of the stomach itself. But the very best thing to do is to remove the cause, if you can know what it is. Ten drops of tincture of myrrh in a glass of water used as a mouth wash, will sweeten and refresh the mouth; a teaspoonful of spirits of camphor or peppermint in the same gargle are among the best antiseptics, and a few drops of myrrh and camphor in the water is recommended in cases of colds, throat troubles, or any slight indisposition that may affect the breath.

Ice cream, ice water, frappe, punches and hot soups, hot teas and coffee, do the teeth no good, while the practice of taking a cold drink immediately after a hot morsel is very apt to crack the enamel of the teeth. Do not allow the children to crack nuts, or crunch hard candies with the teeth; they are almost sure to be injured, if not at once broken off. Teach the children early to care for the teeth, and to use the brush. Let each one have his or her own brush. No two children should use the same brush, or handkerchief. Teach them not to exchange chewing gum, or to accept gum from another child that has been already masticated. Children should be taught cleanly habits, and that using anything that has already been in the mouth of another child is not only a dirty habit, but may cause them pain through disease.

The Ice Chest Problem

In the summer time, under existing modern conditions of life, the ice chest would seem to be a necessary requisite to good housewifery, and the expense of it should be lessened as much as possible by judgment in buying and prevention of

THREE REASONS

Each With Two Legs and Ten Fingers

A Boston woman who is a fond mother writes an amusing article about her experience feeding her boys.

Among other things she says: "Three chubby, rosy-cheeked boys, Bob, Jack, and Dick, respectively, are three of our reasons for using and recommending the food, Grape-Nuts, for these youngsters have been fed on Grape-Nuts since infancy, and often between meals when other children would have been given candy.

"I gave a package of Grape-Nuts to a neighbor whose 3-year-old child was a weazened little thing, ill half the time. The little tot ate the Grape-Nuts and cream greedily and the mother continued the good work, and it was not long before a truly wonderful change manifested itself in the child's face and body. The results were remarkable, even for Grape-Nuts.

"Both husband and I use Grape-Nuts every day and keep strong and well and have three of the finest, healthiest boys you can find in a day's march."

Many mothers instead of destroying the children's stomachs with candy and cake give the youngsters a handful of Grape-Nuts when they are begging for something in the way of sweets. The result is soon shown in greatly increased health, strength and mental activity.

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Look in pkgs. for the famous 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.