

The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts McVey

True Martyrdom.

So he died for his faith; that was fine!

More than most of us do;
But, say, can you add to that line
That he lived for it, too?

In his death, he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth;
Did his life do the same in the past,
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die: Men have died
For a wish, or a whim;
From bravado, or passion, or pride:
Was it harder for him?

But to live! Every day to live out
All the truth that he dream't—
While his friends met his conduct with
doubt,
And the world, with contempt—

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then, we'll talk of the life that he
led—
Never mind how he died.

—Ernest Crosby.

Our Girls.

Every day, the question, "What shall we do with our girls," becomes more and more urgent as the avenues opened to them as bread-winners are rapidly filled. The supply seems over-reaching the demand, yet schools and shops are yearly turning out these idle hands, and we find that for them, as for our boys, the urgency of the question demands a solution. Women bread-winners are plentiful, and the demand for them is not small; but there is always an overplus. There are few "agencies" for dressmakers, typewriters, stenographers, office or factory girls; they do their own advertising, and "apply in person," not always securing the coveted position; even when they do, the wage is often distressingly small—scarcely enough to supply them with the bare necessities, and their expenses are greatly increased because of the demands for dress and the inevitable car-fare.

Meanwhile, the question of getting good and efficient help in the home is fully as hard to answer. Reliable, trustworthy house-help is almost impossible to secure, and the demand is never half met, although the wages are good, the work less wearing and the privileges much greater than those that fall to the average "business" girl.

The general idea is that housework is degrading, and the least willingness to "go out to work" is regarded as an evidence of "low tastes." Many women, wives, and mistresses of homes of their own, are ashamed to let it be known that they "do their own work." Yet, in the face of all this, no woman, mistress or maid, likes to have it said of her that she is a "poor housekeeper," and our very brightest women court the reputation of being an "accomplished housewife" as a mark of high honor. The name of being a "first-class cook" is greatly appreciated by women of all grades of society.

You will find no man with even ordinary "business sense," who will jeopardize his interests by placing over his employes as foreman, a person who is ignorant of the details of the business which he or she assumes to control; but a woman, ignorant of the first principles of housekeeping, inexperienced in the simplest details of home-making, is allowed to step

boldly into the place of wife and mistress of the home, and to her is confided the control of affairs of vital importance, and the management of "help" often scarcely less ignorant than herself. Is it to be wondered at that there are so many unhappy homes?

If our girls, whether contemplating matrimony or not, who have homes and mothers, would study this almost "lost art," and seek to render themselves efficient and proficient in matters of housekeeping, they would, in any contingency, be measurably independent, and there would be fewer sorrowful failures and unhappy, broken lives, and less of the mad scramble for "situations" already overcrowded, and, at best, but indifferently remunerative.

Imaginary Invalidism.

We all know her—the woman who is always complaining; perhaps we were, at one time, full sister to her; but let us hope we have grown wiser, with the passing years, and have learned to keep our aches and pains to ourselves. Life, to most of us, is like a cloudy day, and we do so love the sunshine!

But, seriously, did it never occur to you that at least half of our woes are imaginary, and that the other half are greatly exaggerated? Did you ever think of the wonderful influence mind has over matter? It is said that human nature loves to be duped, and it is remarkable to what an extent it takes pains to dupe itself. One would think, from the pains some people take to prove themselves invalids, that it was something to be proud of. But everything demonstrates the fact that sickness is sin, and we are told that the time will come when humanity will be ashamed to confess to the weakness and ignorance which are the conditions of sickness. Ill-health is the result of broken laws. We may not ourselves be the aggressors; the mischief may be due to some one behind us, and the result "handed down" in the form of an inheritance to us; but insofar as we may we should reject any such endowment. We should utterly refuse to acknowledge any heirship to weakness, or to wickedness. Why should you wear the cast-off rags of a generation gone by, when beautiful new garments should be yours for the picking up?

Why will people put on long faces when it is so much easier to indulge in a good hearty laugh? People are always glad to see one of the cheerful countenance, and a person who laughs is a doctor with a diploma from the school of Nature. The Good Book tells us something about the "merry heart that hath a continual feast" and says that it doeth good like a medicine. Yes, I know it says something, too, about "laughter of a fool," but a laughing fool is right good company, sometimes. Anyhow, we often find him preferable to the most scholarly dyspeptic who never speaks but in a groaning key, or who has nothing better to tell us than that we are all frail, dying mortals, the object of God's special displeasure, and that it is a sin to be happy.

Now, sisters, let us try to find the sunshine all through this year. If we do not find it, let us try our skill at do not find it, let us try our skill at do not find it, let us try our skill at do not find it, and if we allow the "blue devils" never so small a chance they will take absolute possession, not only of ourselves, but of our homes.

Laughter is the best medicine in the world, and if you don't feel like laughing, laugh anyway, and you will soon find yourself laughing at yourself. The wisest art in the world is to cultivate smiles; the highest art is to find smiles where others shrink away for fear of thorns.

There is so much happiness in this life, if only we would pick it up!

Rest Cure.

When a woman hurries through the forenoon and feels tired, worried and tremulous-like, she does not feel like eating, and if she does, her food is apt to disagree with her, especially if she has to go on hurrying after eating; and if that sort of thing is kept up long, she gets all run down and, like as not, fretful, peevish and nagging. Then she gets the name of being a "scold," or something as unpleasant and undesired. Nine times out of ten, the husband, not understanding the case, makes it still worse by getting out of temper, and, leaving the house, slams the door behind him, shutting her up with the rack of the domestic tempest, and—well, do you wonder that she breaks down into hysteria?

Now, Mr. Husband, we don't doubt that you love your wife; but, if you were as wise as you should be, you would remember that there is a time when silence is golden, and that right then is the time. Instead of showing temper and "saying things," you should begin casting about, right there, to see how best you can relieve the nerve-strain that is surely breaking down the woman you love. More often than not, when you think she is lacking in amiability, she is in need of sleep; and when you think she is wanting in patience and sweetness, the "shortage" is in needed rest.

What she really does need is relaxation, rest; getting entirely away from sight or sound of anything that smacks in the least of work or worry; an absolute "letting go" of things; a season of rightful and accepted indolence. There is no surer cure for this nervous breaking down of the wife and mother than to go away by herself, and if she can, indulge in a half hour's perfect relaxation; a slipping out of the harness, an occasional selfish caring for self. A day spent quietly in bed, playing invalid, is a wonderful nerve. An hour after dinner, lying down with some trashy novel as a soporific, is a good nerve tonic.

The excursion, either at home or abroad, spent in continual exertion, is not to be recommended; many a sufferer returns home more irritable and jaded than when she left home; so, also, the "brisk, daily walk" or the carriage ride, which holds the idea of going somewhere, or getting something done—in fact, any sense whatever of doing something because it has to be done; there is in all this a sense of forced action, of work, which robs it of its restfulness.

A woman should realize that she owes a duty to herself, as well as to others. Whatever affects her health weakens her usefulness to her family.

The "work habit" can be indulged in until it becomes as pernicious as the "drink habit," and quite as reprehensible, quite as destructive to the comfort of the home. A woman who, from any cause, allows herself to become a mere machine, useful only in the sense of grinding out work, seldom has ambition enough to get out

of her own way, and should be treated as a "case of temporary insanity." It should be the business of the husband to see that such intemperance is at once stopped, even at the risk to himself of having to eat cold victuals and sew on his own shirt fastenings.

Butter and Oranges.

A correspondent says:

"Do tell the sisters that a most delicious fragrance attaches to the butter which is kept in an ice chest in company with one, two or half a dozen oranges. The butter absorbs the "zest" of the orange—the oily moisture that is thrown off in the atmosphere when an orange is squeezed or cut, and which is even more delicious than the taste of the fruit itself." The fact of the butter proving so sensitive is enough to make one heed the warnings against allowing butter to remain shut up with meat, fish, or other foods capable of imparting any disagreeable flavor.

The Autumn Garden.

We should not forget, while planning our garden in the spring, that provisions for late flowers must be made at the same time. The beauty of most gardens is gone long before the first frost. Occasionally, an extra early frost may make our efforts vain, but care in covering the plants on doubtful nights will save the plants. While the choice of reliable autumn blooming shrubs is somewhat limited, what we have are very beautiful. Hardiness, rapid growth, freedom from insect pests and long seasons of bloom are qualities to be considered.

Many herbaceous perennials and biennials and quite a few hardy annuals contribute to make the autumn garden a thing greatly to be desired, and from a well selected assortment one may have abundance of flowers well along toward December. Many of them will be in full flower until hard freezing weather.

Once established, these autumn bloomers will live and thrive with almost no care, and there is little excuse for not having them. The plants are not expensive, even when bought of the florist, and a very great many of them can be raised from seed. Do not forget that the seeds or plants must be included in your order for "garden things" sent for now.

For the Cemetery.

Many times we are asked the question, "What shall we plant in the cemetery?"

When our dead lie in a large, well-kept city cemetery, where a careful sexton watches over the flowers and shrubbery, it is possible to grow plants irrespective of their hardiness. We can indulge our sad fancy in the flowers we love, and that were dear to the sleepers. But, when our "Garden of God" lies on a bleak, country hillside, wind-swept, drouth-parched, and uncared-for save as loving hearts watch over it; or, even in some small town, where "God's Acre" is generally the most barren of ground—all the care it receives is from bereaved women, who grieve and forget not, but whose daily cares, whose treadmill existence absorb their moments and leave them only time for occasional hurried visits; then the keeping in order of the last resting place of our loved and lost is often a failure.

There are plants and shrubs, however, that will grow even in the inhospitable soils of a country cemetery, and chief among them is the Rosa Wichuraiana. It is not a new plant—that is, it has been tested for years outside the florist's garden—and it has never failed to give satisfaction; it has hardiness, adaptability to any kind of soil, is almost evergreen, and, during the hot, dry months, gives us an abundance of white, stary, fragrant flowers. There are other good,