



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

Come, Play Me That Simple Air.

Come, play me that simple air again
I used so to love in life's young day,
And bring, if thou canst, the dreams
that then

Were wakened by that sweet lay.
The tender gloom its strain
Shed o'er the heart and brow,
Grief's shadow, without its pain—
Say where, where is it now?

Sweet air! how ev'ry note brings back
Some sunny hope, some day dream
bright,

That, shining o'er life's early track,
Filled even its tears with light.

The new found life that came,
With love's first echoed vow,
The fear, the bliss, the shame—
Say where, where are they now?

But sing me the well known air once
more,

For thoughts of youth still haunt
its strain,

Like charms of some far fairy shore
We're never to see again.

Still, those loved notes prolong;
For sweet is that old lay,
In dreams of love and song,
To breathe life's love away.

—Thomas Moore.

Home Hints.

If you could only appreciate the difference between the "market" asparagus and the "garden" asparagus, you would, every one of you, set at once about coaxing John to put out an asparagus bed, this spring. "Better late than never," you know, and it would be a starter, even if the plants had to be reset next spring. The hard, white, stringy things you get from the market or the huckster is nothing like the tender green shoots that grow in the home garden. Once established, an asparagus bed is a "joy forever."

We have calls for safe, reliable recipes for canning asparagus, strawberries, green peas, corn and string beans, and other vegetables and fruits considered "hard to keep." Will not our sisters oblige me by sending in at once some really good, safe, tested recipes for these things? Send only such as you know, from practical experience, to be good. In writing them out, be careful to give all necessary directions very plainly, as many of our young sisters are inexperienced, and we want to be very helpful to them, as well as reliable. We may not be able to use every one that is sent in, at once, but we will be glad to have them on hand.

Do not neglect the preparations for caring for the fruits. To have all things in readiness will save much worry and some loss in all families; see that everything needed is at hand, in order, and in good condition. Do not try to use old, hard rubber rings or bent or dented tops. Do not use rusty or leaky cans. Do not depend upon jars that are "nicked," or have little cracks about the top. Use nothing but perfectly sound jars. A little forethought and judicious planning now, with a liberal sprinkle of doing, will save much work and vexation when the busy season comes.

On the farms, it is sheep-shearing time, and I want to tell the farm sisters to have saved out of the "clip" a few long-wool fleeces for filling the quilts and comforts. There is nothing so nice as wool-batting for the bed-clothing. It is light, warm, and will wash without "lumping," and does not mat down hard with use, as cotton batting does. If one lives near a

woolen mill, or factory, it is an easy matter to get the wool batted; your next best chance is a carding mill, where you may get it carded into bats, but not into sheets, as the factory would do it; if you can avail yourself of none of these, there are several ways of preparing it at home. Real, all-wool blankets when bought of your merchant are costly, and it will pay you to have part of the clip made up into bed-covering. A pair of "home-made" (and by this I do not necessarily mean hand-made) blankets, costing for the necessary work from three to five dollars—perhaps less—will greatly outwear a ten-dollar pair of "store" ones, while a factory-made, store-purchased pair costing five or six dollars is generally only a nap-shedding nuisance, shortening "at both ends" from use as well as from washing. For filling for a comfort, three or four pounds of wool batting is sufficient.

Baby's Short Clothes.

In putting the baby into his first short clothes, it is important to bear in mind that hitherto his skirts have not only served the purpose of protecting his limbs and abdomen from cold, but have prevented free movement of his little limbs. With shorter skirts comes the natural impulse to use his limbs, and baby becomes quite a "kicker." Long woolen stockings now become a necessity, and with them should be worn comfortable little shoes of soft, flexible leather. Do not take the flannels off the baby too soon, and, when put off, replace them on the least sign of chill. Many mothers do not lay aside thin little shirts and petticoats of flannel at all during the summer.

Perennial Poppies.

Nudicaule, or Iceland poppies are desirable perennials, and easily raised from seed. Quite a few of the plants will bloom the first year. They are perfectly hardy, and produce an abundance of fine flowers, useful for cutting. They are of a graceful, neat habit, with bright green, fern-like foliage, formed in tufts, from which slender stems arise, bearing white, yellow or orange flowers. Oriental poppies are very showy, their large bright blossoms borne on long graceful stems show well when planted among shrubbery or near somber plants. The new Oriental hybrids are very beautiful, the blossoms being of several colors. All perennial poppies do best when undisturbed for years. They require little care.

Shaw's Garden.

When you go to the World's fair at St. Louis, next year, do not fail to visit the Botanical Gardens, the gift of Henry Shaw to the city of St. Louis. These gardens are said to be the most complete of any in the new world. In connection there is a most complete botanical library; the gardens and the library are known as the American School of Botany. The botany of Shaw's Gardens is the botany of the whole world; there is no plant of any clime that has not a place in these beautiful grounds and conservatories.

A farm sister writes me: I believe soft soap, for plant insects, of whatever kind, is far ahead of all the patent advertised remedies; it can be used on palms, oleanders, oranges, lemons and other hard-wood plants,

and instead of killing the roots if allowed to soak into the soil when washing them, I find it to greatly benefit everything. I wash nearly all my plants with soft-soap suds, excepting begonias and other soft-leaved kinds.

Spring Vegetables

Green Peas.—Cover the peas with cold water, season with salt and boil until tender; drain off the water, add three or four little pats of butter and let melt through the peas; put them in a vegetable dish and serve very hot, if the peas are not sweet enough, add a very little sugar.

Dutch Lettuce.—Wash two large heads of lettuce, separate the leaves, and tear each leaf into several pieces; cut thin slices of lean ham into squares and fry brown, pour in two tablespoonfuls of vinegar; beat one egg very light, add two tablespoonfuls of sour cream, add this to the ham, stir over until thick, and pour boiling hot over the lettuce, mix with a fork and serve while hot.

Cream of Asparagus.—Put a bunch of asparagus in a sauce-pan with enough cold water to reach to one-half the depth of the bunch placed on its side. Add a teaspoonful of salt and let the asparagus boil gently until tender; then press through a colander with a potato masher, put the pulp to one side and keep the asparagus water hot by itself; next, melt a heaping tablespoonful of butter in a sauce-pan, add two heaping tablespoonfuls of sifted flour, braiding well with the butter; now gradually add the water in which the asparagus was boiled; boil gently, gradually adding the asparagus pulp, and when that is well blended with the other ingredients, add a pint and a half of rich cream; season with white pepper, let the whole boil two minutes, and serve hot in a soup tureen in which a few croutons have been sprinkled.

New Potatoes Creamed.—Scrape a dozen good-sized new potatoes; boil until tender; mix a tablespoonful of flour and butter together; stir in a pint of sweet milk, pour over the potatoes and stir until it boils up again; season with pepper and salt and serve. Or, scrape the potatoes, let lie in cold water twenty minutes, then cook with green peas, seasoning with salt, pepper, butter and cream, with a little flour beat smooth in it.

Query Box.

S. C. B.—For soft-boiled eggs, wash them in cool water and lay them singly with a spoon (to prevent breaking) in water that has been brought to a boil and then set back from the hottest part of the fire, for they must not actually boil; allow them to remain in this water, barely at the boiling point, for ten minutes; they will then be coagulated, tender and easily assimilated.

Katherine.—A luncheon is served after the fashion of a dinner, but is a much lighter repast, and there is less formality. Properly, the meal should begin with bullion, or other light soup, end with an ice course, and include an entree, relishes, a salad, a vegetable and sandwiches. The hour for serving a luncheon may be deferred as late as two o'clock.

Little Lottie.—For chicken jelly, take young chickens, simmer until very tender, then skin, bone and chop the meat very fine; cool the broth, remove any fat, and boil again until reduced to one pint; add one-half box of gelatine, dissolved, season with

salt, white pepper and celery seed, stir in meat and mold in egg shells. When ready to serve, unmold and garnish with cress and sliced lemon.

Young Mother.—An eminent authority says: "One of the worst things for the baby is the romp with the father—the tossing, trotting and dancing up and down—to which most babies are subjected just before going to bed. Papa argues that he has no other time to see the baby, but that does not seem a sufficient reason for injuring the little one. The rough play leaves it restless and excited, and is certain to spoil its sleep."

Mrs. G. W. F.—Doilies are used for nearly all dishes set on the table, from small ones for tumblers to large ones for the platters. Three may be a set, one large and two small, or the number may be limited only by the number of dishes for which they are used. They may be all alike, or only those used for the same set of dishes. You can scarcely have too many of them, if you like to use them. They are made by knitting, crocheting, netting, embroidery, faggoting, Battenburg or other needle work, or may be perfectly plain, as your time, taste, skill and means will allow.

Louise.—The "Bolster Roll," is not used as a substitute for the pillow, but as a convenience for storing the pillows inside and out of sight during the day; it is covered with the same fabric as is used for the drapery of the bed or its hangings. It is a cylinder of tightly-rolled material, with closed ends, and openings in the sides for putting the pillows away; it does not lose its shape, and will stand a good deal of knocking about. It is intended to take the place of the troublesome pillow-sham.

Subscriber, Savannah, Ga.—For blackberry wine, put well-ripened blackberries into a vessel, and for every gallon of berries add one pint of rain-water. Set over a slow fire and let boil a few minutes, until the berries become tender; squeeze out the juice while the berries are warm, which can be done by pouring into any kind of coarse, strong bag and putting it between two pieces of wide plank and pressing with a weighted lever. Strain the juice through a muslin strainer (tie a piece of muslin over an open-mouthed vessel and pour the juice through it, and to every gallon of juice add one and one-half pounds of granulated sugar; put into a vessel with a large mouth; fill, until it runs over, and set in a moderately cool place—preferably the cellar. When it begins to ferment, it will run over, and must be kept full, by pouring in more rain-water every day until fermentation ceases. The success of the recipe depends upon keeping the vessel running over all the time it is fermenting, to enable it to throw off all impurities. When it ceases to work it is wine, and is ready to bottle and put away. Pour off from the top, being careful not to stir up the sediments from the bottom, as in no case must any of this go in with the wine.

Will "Reader," New Market, Ia., please send addressed, stamped envelop for reply to inquiry about June wedding.

Strawberries.

To Can Without Heat.—Take nice, fresh strawberries, put into a pan and mash with a wooden potato masher until thoroughly crushed. Then measure the berries, and to three cups of mashed berries put one and a half cups of granulated sugar, beating until the sugar is dissolved, then put into glass cans and seal; keep in a cool, dark cellar.—Ex.

Sun-Preserved Strawberries.—Select fine large berries, not over-ripe; stem them, weigh, and allow one pound of granulated sugar to one pound of berries. Heat very hot some large stone-