



The Home Department

Conducted by
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One of the Fine Arts.

There's a beautiful art that is sadly neglected,
And daily I wonder to see it rejected
By those who'd be healthy and wealthy and wise
By just condescending to open their eyes
And look at things fairly, with never a pout—
I refer to the fine art of Doing Without.

"Why, that's nothing wonderful," maybe you'll say,
"I do without things that I want, every day."
Quite likely you do. But how do you do it?
With good grace, or a face that's as blue as a bluet?
There's a wonderful difference (just jot that down)
Between giving up things with a smile or a frown;
And that is precisely the difference between
The artist and bungler—you see what I mean?
You can't do as you like? Why, then, do as you can;
I'm sure you will find it an excellent plan.
Can't have what you want? Then take what you can get;
No better device has been patented yet.
'Tis the bravest and blithest and best way, by far,
Not to let little lessons your happiness mar;
'Tis an art that needs practice, of that there's no doubt—
But it's worth it—this fine art of Doing Without.

—New Orleans Picayune.

Home Chats.

These cool, crisp September evenings draw us closely about the lamp-light, and on many a hearth a little blaze is kindled, more for the sake of the cosy air it imparts to the room than for any needed warmth it sends forth. The business of the daylight is ended, the tired hands folded, and the mind, relieved from the strain of the working hours, seeks relaxation. Too often these evening hours are wasted, despite the fact that they are golden. What mines of intellectual riches they should be—not to the young, alone, but to every member of the family.

It is well to plan for these evening hours—to devote at least a part of them to the enriching of our mentalities. Did you ever notice into what miserable channels the evening conversation of the average family drifts? In too many instances, it is the merest tittle-tattle—the entire conversation being given to the doings and sayings of the neighborhood, social gossip, which, though it may not be harmful, certainly is not helpful, and when at length the group is dispersed by the bed time hour, we go to our rest feeling—if we stop to analyze our emotions—that we have lost something. And we have—golden hours, priceless opportunities have slipped from our lax hold never to be ours again. Should we not rather seek to make each moment doubly our own by weighting them with a sense of gain?

A noted lecturer said that our field of diamonds is the little patch of ground on which we stand, and the diamonds are there, if we would but stoop to pick them up. If we would each of us, determine to bring to these evening gatherings—not alone those of the family, but to all others, as

well—our best thoughts, and strive to make them helpful in the true sense of the word, we could accomplish immeasurable good. A helpful paragraph, read by some one, and discussed by all, would be much better than aimless rehashing of the doings that may concern us but for the moment. It is well to have plenty of reading matter, and to have it of the right sort, but reading will not take the place of social converse, and young folks, especially, require the contact of other minds, in order to interest and develop their own. It would be a good plan to appoint one of the family for each evening to find out all within reach on a certain subject, asking each of the other members of the family to give whatever help he or she could, and in this wise many new ideas could be brought out.

Not long ago, a mother placed in the hands of the children a clipping of newspaper containing a poem, telling them there was a hidden picture in a certain line which the author did not intend to place there, and offering a penny to those who found the picture. The first evening, nobody could find the picture, but on the second evening, after a few minutes search, the little girl laughed merrily, and said she had found the picture. The mother told her to wait until the others had either discovered it, or had confessed their inability to do so, which they shortly did, and the little girl read the line, "There's many a bird with foliage fair," pointing out the cause of her laughter in the fact that the author had dressed his bird in leaves and grasses, rather than feathers.

Further along in the same article, the author spoke of God as "noting the raven's fall." The mother asked what was wrong, and the little ones, who study their Sunday school lessons, at once pointed out that it was the sparrow's fall which God took notice of, but that he "provideth food for the young ravens when they cry." They decided that the author of the verse should have said he "noteth the young raven's call." To carefully settle the question there had to be a resort to Concordance. In like manner, many questions might be opened up, to the enrichment of the minds of all. A few days ago, I met an old gray-haired lady who did not know what linen cloth was made of. Do you?

"Sutling" the Children.

The chilly mornings of the early autumn reminds us of the fact that the winter wardrobe will soon be a necessity, and it is well to begin in time, by gathering 'p the fragments of the last year's wearing apparel, and seeing what can be done with them. Many garments will be found still large enough for emergency wear, while others, with but little piecing of sleeves, letting out of tucks and seams, may be made serviceable for at least part of another season. Others, hopelessly outgrown by the original wearers, may be made "good as new" for the next in line with new buttons, a little fresh trimming, or other brightening up. Try to give to the little "passed-down" garment a look of individuality for the new wearer, especially in the matter of taking out all soil spots, smoothing out wrinkles, and taking up any noticeable "slack" in the fit of it.

In making over garments which have been ripped apart and pressed, let the little daughter assist you to decide upon the style and finish; it will teach her many things. Do not

forget that the boys have individual tastes, too, which may be cultivated by deferring to their opinion, and they will thus be taught to observe and choose for themselves, later in life. For the new school dresses, there are many attractive styles and weaves in the mercerized cottons.

Above all things, in fitting out the school child, pay more regard to comfort, and the possibility of keeping their garments fresh and clean, than to the style and fashionableness of the make-up and material used. Wash dresses are better than the unwashable, on hygienic principles.

About the Canary.

A little reader of *The Commoner* asks me to tell her how to care for her canary, as she has just received one as a present. If she has had no experience in caring for birds, there is much to tell her, and she must learn a great deal by watching her bird closely and studying its actions and trying to understand its language—for the little pet will talk to her, and tell her its wants, but in actions and sounds.

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In the first place, Birdie should not be confined in too small a cage, and whatever size the cage is, it should be kept clean, if she wants her bird to do well. A paper laid in the bottom of the cage must be changed every day, and at least once a week, the cage itself must be given a good scalding, in order to keep it fresh and sweet and free from vermin. It will benefit the bird to allow it to fly about the room while the cage is being cleaned or washed, and it can readily be taught to return to its house when wanted. His seed and water cup must be kept clean, and fresh seed and water given him every day. He must also have a little dish of water every day in which to take his bath, and after the bath the dish may be removed.

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Fine gravel must be sprinkled over the bottom of his cage every time it is cleaned. Coarse sand will answer every purpose. This is absolutely necessary to keep the bird healthy. A piece of cuttle-fish must be tied to the bars of the cage, on which he is to sharpen his beak, and occasionally eat a little. Give fresh canary seed, a little millet, and save all the plantain and lettuce seed you can; also, wild peppergrass seed, as he is very fond of this, and occasionally a few grains of hemp—but not much of this, as it is too fattening, and sometimes the birdie dies of too much fat. A bird does best with a regular diet of good canary seed, with a bit of light bread, or cracker, or a leaf of lettuce, or a shred of cabbage. Do not feed him cake, or sugar, but give him a slice of apple, orange or other fruits.

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Do not hang the cage in the sunshine, or in a draught of air, but give plenty of light. Do not hang it too near the ceiling, as the top of the room is always heated. A veranda, where he is safe from possible cats, is a nice place for him. If you have house-plants, turn him among them occasionally. A small bag containing flower of sulphur, hung in his cage where he will hit it as he flies about, will generally be sufficient to keep away red mites, but should they be suspected because of the bird's restlessness at night, a white flannel cloth should be spread over the cage at night, and examined the next morning, when, if there are mites, they may

be seen, with a magnifying glass—little red dots—clinging to the cloth, and the cloth should be wrung out of scalding water before being used again.

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Moulting season—shedding the feathers and growing new ones—begins with most birds about the middle of September, and lasts six weeks; few birds sing much at this season, and require careful, regular attention. A bit of rusty nail may be put in their drinking cup. Feed egg-paste, made by rubbing thoroughly together the yolk of a hard-boiled egg with cracker dust and a little cayenne pepper added as a tonic. This should be made fresh every day, and about a teaspoonful a day will suffice. White of the egg, chopped fine and mixed with cracker dust and a sprinkling of powdered sugar, may be given occasionally. Many bird medicines are advertised, but it is best to let them alone. The red tint which some canaries have may be imparted to their feathers, it is claimed, by feeding the bird during the moulting season on a diet of cracker and egg, highly seasoned with cayenne pepper. It is claimed that this diet does not affect either the health or the song of the bird, but care must be taken to have the pepper perfectly pure, as adulterations might kill it. One can grow their own cayenne pepper, and it makes a very pretty pot plant.

How Did You Die?

Did you tackle that trouble that came your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day.
With a craven soul, and fearful?
O, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an ounce,
Or a trouble is what you make it;
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that counts,
But only, How did you take it?

You're beaten to earth? Well, what of that?
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there—that is disgrace.
The harder you're thrown, the higher you'll bounce;
Be proud of your blackened eye.
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts,
It's How did you fight, and why?

And though you be done to the death—what then?
If you battled the best you could,
If you played your part in the world of men,
Why, the Critic will call it good.
Death comes with a crawl, or comes with a pounce;
And whether he's slow or spry,
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts,
But, only—How did you die?

—Edmund C. Vance.

Requested Recipes.

Cucumber Pickles.—Wash small cucumbers and place in an earthen jar; make a brine, allowing one pint of salt to one gallon of water, boiling and cooling; pour over the cucumbers and let stand twenty-four hours; pour off the brine and take as much vinegar as is necessary to cover them, and to every gallon of vinegar add a piece of alum the size of a small hickory nut; a spoonful of sugar, and mustard, mace or allspice to taste. Let the vinegar come to a boil and pour over the cucumbers. A few pieces of sliced horse radish placed among the cucumbers will add to the flavor. Keep in a cool room, well covered. Will be ready in a couple of weeks.

Tomato Catsup.—For this recipe, the tomatoes should not be over-ripe. Wash and slice the tomatoes and put in a preserving kettle; boil slowly for one hour, then rub through a sieve that will not let the seeds pass