



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
Helen Watts McKee

## The Old Fashioned Fire.

To steam heat the cities aspire  
As they shiver and shake in the cold,  
But give me the old-fashioned fire—  
The ruddy old back-log of old.  
The warmth and the light  
Of its flames leaping bright—  
The drowsy heads huddled around it  
at night.

In the darkness the winter wind sighing,  
Made the flame take a ruddier glow;  
The sparks up the wide chimney flying—  
Like witch-eyes that gleamed in the snow.  
O, the warmth and the light  
Of those red flames so bright,  
And the comfort and joy of the wild  
winter night.

Far better that friendly old fire  
Than buildings of simmering steam,  
With never a flame to admire;  
With never a beautiful dream.  
O, the love and the light  
Where the old flames danced  
bright,  
And the old-fashioned joy of the old-  
fashioned night.  
—Frank L. Stanton.

## Home-Made Furniture.

Every once in a while, the mania takes irresistible hold on us, and we imagine that we may do wonderful things, without money and without price, by becoming our own cabinet-makers. Many of us have the inventive genius and mechanical ideas, but are lacking in the practical skill necessary to make our ideas available. To such I would suggest that the calling in of a comfortably teachable carpenter—one who is not above taking his instructions from a woman—is a good thing to do. Fortunately, many of us possess, in our husbands, the needful skill, and we should not hesitate to press the matter upon his notice. A woman generally knows what she wants, though she may not be able to make her ideas as plain as would be desirable to the mechanic, but, with a little questioning and patient trying to understand on the part of the workman, matters will take form.

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Do not start into the home-made furniture business with the "something-for-nothing" idea in your head; it will cost you a little money; much less, however, if you hire a competent mechanic than if you attempt to do it yourself, and with greatly more gratifying results. In these days of often-flittings, it hardly pays to overstock one's self with expensive furniture which must so often be submitted to the tender mercies of the moving wagon and its driver, or even to the careful vans of the cities, and there are many useful articles for kitchen and bedroom which must either be gotten up cheaply, or done without. While I, in no sense, advocate the idea of the wonderful, well-stocked, impossible (to us moderns, at least,) old garret, filled with all sorts of valuable material—which, now-a-days, exists only in the imagination of the writer—I still do think that many useful, time, money and labor-saving articles of home furnishing can, with the help of a "strong right arm," skilled in the use of the necessary tools, paint and varnish brush, be wrought out of the ubiquitous goods boxes, to be had at any store, a pocketful of nails and a paper of screws. Last week I told you of a

table-desk, and this week I want to suggest a kitchen cabinet. But I repeat my warning, that, it will be money in your pocket, as well as a saving of your "nerves," if you let the job out to the aforesaid carpenter; and, as husbands are not always (to their own wives, at least,) the most tractable workers-out of women's ideas, I strongly urge you to give the job into the hands of some other woman's husband.

## Something About Fruit Jars.

Probably the Mason glass jar is most widely used of any; its cheapness recommends it; it is convenient, in a measure. Its disadvantages are, a metal cover in contact with the fruit, and its often imperfect finish at the shoulder or place where the rim of the cover meets the jar. Another disadvantage is the lack of durability of the cover. Glass-topped jars are neater in appearance; no one can accuse the Mason jar of being pretentious in appearance, but its cover is pliable enough to allow gas to escape in case of fermentation, whereas some glass tops are fastened so rigidly that fermentation bursts the jar. Tops of Mason jars are sometimes sharp on the edge and cut the rubber; this edge may be made smooth by use of a flat file drawn across; the file touching opposite sides to insure uniformity. The frequent slight ridge on the shoulder of the jar at opposite sides may be removed by the same file. The rim of old covers that have been forced out of shape can be turned back to place by using a small hammer and the edge filed as before, making the cover much more easily and securely adjusted.—Ex.

## Kitchen Conveniences.

Nothing saves a woman's strength more than a grouping within easy reach of the various utensils and materials necessarily used in the preparation of the meals for the family. Yet, in the ordinary kitchen, the principal purpose of arrangement seems to be to increase, rather than lessen the running about after supplies. A kitchen cabinet, containing drawers, shelves, closets, hooks, flour-chest, molding board, etc., can be bought for from ten dollars upward, according to one's means; but, if a member of the family has skill with tools, a very satisfactory article may often be constructed from bits of lumber, goods boxes, or from a spare table, chest of drawers, or wash stand which can be taken for the purpose. It may be inexpensive as compared to the "store" article, but it will cost something. The dry goods boxes can generally be had for a few cents, and bits of lumber may be had cheaply from a builder; scraps of paint, too, may be bought at little cost from the painter, and while, by this means, you may not get just the colors you would wish, the first two coats will make little difference, and you can finish from a can of the color desired bought for the purpose.

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If you think a chest of drawers is beyond your means, shelves, placed at different distances apart with dividing partitions or without, and doors, will be found very serviceable, and in some respects to be preferred to drawers; in the making of these less skill will be required, and the work will be done cheaper. If you are in doubt as to just how to set about constructing these conveniences, visit the furniture store and look at those for sale. While, if the article is patented, you

may not have one just like it, you will get some good ideas to work into your own. If nothing better can be done, a set of shelves can be placed in a large, shallow goods box, set conveniently to your range, and, in lieu of doors, a curtain of washable material may be hung across the front, with a covering of table oil-cloth.

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A set of upright shelves, put together with pegs and screws, and with or without doors, is a convenience. This can be easily taken apart, for removal, requires very little work or material, and has great possibilities. The outside may be painted or papered, the shelves covered with newspapers or the oil-cloth which comes for the purpose, and a curtain may be hung on rods across the front. Different sized boxes may be had from your merchant, and compartments made of these, or they may be set, on the shelves, to "hold things." Fruit jars, that from slight defect are no longer fit for use in canning fruit, may be used for the spices, starches, flavorings, vinegars, etc., while other shelves may hold the many utensils without which culinary operations cannot be carried on. There should be hooks, too, on which to hang, in easy, unobstructed reach, the various spoons, ladles, forks, skimmers and such things so repeatedly in use.

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This is but one of the many inexpensive ways by which the house-keeper's work may be simplified and made easier. With the aid of skilled hands for some parts of them many articles of serviceable furnishing may be cheaply constructed, and with the tasteful use of a few yards of cretonne, denims, muslin, or other curtain material, very dainty bedroom belongings can also be had at small cost. But, remember, my dear madam, if you wish for satisfactory results, and to save money, do not try to be your own cabinet-maker.

## Autumn.

There is a beautiful spirit breathing now  
Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,  
And, from a beaker full of richest dyes,  
Pouring new glory on the autumn woods,  
And dipping in warm light the pillared clouds;  
Morn on the mountain, like a summer bird,  
Lifts up her purple wing; and in the vales,  
The gentle wind, a sweet and passionate wooer,  
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs up life  
Within the solemn woods of ash deep-crimsoned,  
And silver beech, and maple yellow-leaved,  
Where autumn, like a faint old man,  
Sits down  
By the wayside, aweary.  
Oh, what a glory doth this world put on  
For him who, with a fervent heart,  
Goes forth  
Under the bright and glorious sky,  
and looks  
On duties well performed and days well spent.  
For him, the wind, aye, and the yellow leaves  
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teachings,  
He shall so hear the solemn hymn,  
that Death  
He lifted up for all, that he shall go

To his long resting place without a tear.  
—Longfellow.

"No Time."

How many mothers there are who have no time to read, or take the necessary recreation, yet whose cake box is never empty, nor the cupboard bare of pies. Such a mother can always find time for the boiled pudding, or fancy dessert, and all the accompaniments to a varied and elaborate bill of fare, but she has no time to take her little one on her knee, and smooth out the "crumpled roseleaf" which has made its young life a burden for the last half hour. She has time to ponder over the selection and preparation of a large list of eatables, many of which are simply disease-breeders, but she has no time to get acquainted with the school life of her children, or, by quietly listening to their conversation, discover any dangerous element in the associations to which their daily life is subjected.

Let us stop and ask, is there any use of making a god of our stomach? It is all very well to study the very best methods of preparing the daily meals, and time spent in learning the food values and amount of nutrition contained in the various articles thus consumed, is not wasted, but one should remember that the life is more than meat. While "variety is the spice of life" too much spice is a decided disadvantage, and one or two well cooked vegetables, with meat, good bread, butter and fruit is a sufficient variety for any common meal. Cakes, pies, puddings and fancy desserts are not necessary, or even advisable, for every day consumption, or even very often. Fresh, ripe, or even canned fruit can well take the place of so much indigestible cookery, and thus leave time for the mothers of families to rest their aching muscles and get acquainted with their children.

## Helpful Items

A well known writer on matters pertaining to hygiene says: "One of the worst, most dangerous, and yet most commonly used remedies is paregoric for infants; and it is also used by older people as well. I know a young man of about twenty-seven years of age who has spent the last four years in a private hospital, and has recently been sent to the insane asylum as a result of the excessive use of such remedies, the habit evidently starting in infancy with the use of narcotics for children's colic. There are cases in which the uses of such agents are justifiable, but they should never be used except under the immediate supervision of a skilled physician, and even then the danger of contracting a ruinous drug habit is very great. There are many things eminently fitted to relieve pain, having no harmful after effects, and it is, except in very rare cases, unnecessary to resort to dangerous drugs."

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"According to the germ theory of disease, antiseptics are to be used for the purpose of destroying the microbes. According to my observation and experience, when any wound or sore is kept perfectly clean nature and the life principle will prevent decay, or the accumulation of the microorganisms which are in the habit of gathering, feeding and multiplying so rapidly wherever a suitable soil is presented. In reading the code of laws of ancient Israel one is at once impressed by the frequency of the term 'unclean,' and there is abundant evidence to show that physicians were thought but little of, while prevention of disease by cleanliness, proper dieting, etc., were the means insisted on. Contagion was prevented by isolating

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY  
Mrs. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething should always be used for children while teething. It softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle. It is the best.