



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
Helen Watts McKee

**Unrest.**

Down in the harbor the ships lie  
moored—

Weary sea-birds, with folded wing—  
Anchors dropped and sails secured,  
Yet on the water they rock and  
swing.

Rock and swing,  
As though each keel were a living  
thing.

Silence sleeps on the earth and air,  
Never a breath does the sea-breeze  
blow;

Yet like living pendulums there,  
Down in the harbor, to and fro,  
To and fro,

Backward and forward the vessels  
go.

As a young child on its mother's  
breast,

Cradled in happy slumber lies,  
Yet, half conscious of joy and rest,  
It varies its breathing and moves  
and sighs,

Moves and sighs;  
Yet it neither wakens nor opens its  
eyes.

Or, it may be, the vessels long—  
For almost human they seem to  
me—

For the leaping waves and the storm-  
winds strong,  
And the fetterless freedom out at  
sea,

Out at sea,  
And feel their rest is captivity.

So, as a soul from a higher sphere  
Fettered down to this earthly clay,  
Strains at the chains which bind it  
here,

Tossing and struggling, day by day,  
Day by day,  
Longing to break them and flee  
away—

Strive the ships, in their restlessness,  
Whether the tide be high or low.

Ah, why these tear-drops? I can but  
guess,

As down in the harbor, to and fro,  
To and fro,

Backward and forward, the sea-  
ships go.

—Selected.

**Home Chats.**

As the merry Christmas season draws nearer, unless one has exercised considerable forethought and made ample provision for its demands, the contemplation of its "gift" feature is conducive to anything rather than a "merry" state of mind. There is little merriment in discouragement, worry, anxiety, wrinkled brows and an exhausted condition of body and brain, the inevitable result of trying, at the last moment to match the suitability of our belated choice to the contents of our already hopelessly depleted purse. "Nerve-racking" seems the more appropriate adjective for the occasion.

As a people, we are not considered stingy, or particularly selfish; the poorest of us like to give pleasure to our friends, even at the cost of more or less self-denial on our part; scarcely a man or woman but thinks with delight of some gift-giving that shall mean real joy to some one we love, and most of the people long to make the season a time of real happiness, full of gracious and loving significance. Yet we do often contemplate the approach of Christmas time with a sinking of the heart and an involuntary clutching of the pocket-book; we feel that we cannot afford

to give as we should like, or, in all probability, be expected to do. The tendency of the times seems to be growing more and more towards making the old-time festival of good will to men" but a time of annual barter and exchange, and the receiving, in many cases, gives as little pleasure as the bestowing, because of the "duty" character unmistakably borne by many of the presents.

As a rule, such presents are neither artistic nor of practical value, and are usually of such a misfit order that one hardly knows what to do with them, and many of them really are laid away to await the coming of another gift-giving season when they may again serve as duty presents with which to ease the consciences of their present recipients. Such gifts are very ungracious affairs, at best, and one instinctively feels that it would be a comfort to return them to the donor. In anything so sacred as the Christmas custom, the sordid spirit should have no part, and nothing should be regarded on an exchange basis; the idea of a return being expected or obligatory should not enter into either its bestowal or acceptance. And right here we need a thorough reformation, if we might only find a Moses with sufficient courage to lead us out of our humiliating bondage. Let us make our gifts expressive of ourselves, of our good will, friendship and respect. No money value should be considered in the kindly exchange of mutual expressions of good wishes.

**The First Woman Graduate.**

On July 18, 1840, the first diploma ever issued by a chartered woman's college was handed to Miss Catherine E. Brewer, now Mrs. Catherine E. Brewer Benson, of Macon, Ga. As Miss Brewer took the document from the hands of Bishop Pierce, president of the Georgia Female College, she little realized, at that moment, that she was the first woman in all the world to be graduated from the first chartered college for women, and to receive its first diploma. In the long years which have passed since that day so many changes have been wrought in educational advantages for women, and in every sphere in which she moves, that it hardly seems possible that the first woman graduate is still living. Mrs. Benson recently celebrated her eighty-first birthday. The college from which she graduated, then known as the Georgia Female College, is now the Wesleyan Female College.

**Meats.**

Salt and season boiling meats when cooking.

Never put meat directly on the ice; put it on a vessel on the ice.

In boiling, put fresh meats in hot water, and salt meats in cold water. Boil both slowly.

If you baste roast meats, do not use salt in the basting. Salt the meat when partly cooked.

Never salt and pepper broiling meats while cooking. Season with salt, pepper and butter after removing from the gridiron.

Never wash fresh meats before roasting; scrape it if necessary to clean it. If it has been wet or moist, wipe it thoroughly dry before putting to cook.

An ordinary pan will do for broiling; heat very hot; use no fat of any kind; put the meat flat on the pan, turn rapidly and often, and you will

find a "pan broil" very good. Season when done.

**Poultry and Game.**

To broil, split the body down the back and lay it open.

To cut up a fowl for fricassee do not break the bones; cut the joints.

Fowls with white meats should be well cooked; fowls with dark meats may be underdone.

Flesh of game is apt to be tough when first killed; it is more tender if kept some time, or if frozen.

Clean giblets thoroughly; cook and chop them fine; use them in the gravy or in the filling of roast fowl, or mixed with bread crumbs, well seasoned and moistened, they may be browned in butter and served with meat.

In roasting or boiling whole any fowl, truss it—which means to draw the thighs close to the body and cross the legs at the tail, tying firmly to the body with twine, which is removed before serving; or pass the legs through a slit in the skin near the tail and skewer the wings close to the body.

**For Nimble Fingers.**

It is not yet too late to make many little articles with which to help solve the problem of what to give to our friends for Christmas remembrances. As a help to the puzzled ones, I append descriptions of a few easily-made articles.

A doily for comb, brush and hair-pins, to protect the bureau scarf when making one's toilet, may be made of any suitable material—linen is pretty. Take a piece twelve inches long and nine wide; hemstitch a hem one inch wide; embroider on it any pretty flower design in either white or colored wash-silks of the shades of the flowers. A finish of some narrow lace would be pretty.

A pretty shaving pad is made by cutting two pieces of green felt into the form of a leaf, somewhat larger than the natural size, and place between them leaves of tissue paper cut the same shape of the felt. Hold them in place by a piece of narrow ribbon passed through the base of the leaves, and tie with a bow.

Little mats or doileys made of common shaded crochet cotton will brighten up a dressing case and help give a color effect to a room. Directions for these are so numerous in all fancy-work papers that it is scarcely worth while to give them here. A wheel pattern is very nice, and four of these may be made from a five-cent ball of the cotton.

A very effective center-piece or platter mat may be crocheted of knitting cotton by following directions for a thread doily. The difference in the coarseness of the material will make quite a large mat. Sets of doileys for the table, crocheted or knitted of common ball cotton No. 10 or 12, are useful, inexpensive and easily made. These mats may be edged with worsted of pretty colors, and are useful for wash-stands.

A gay school bag can be made of ticking, if it is stiff and new. Cut a piece large enough when folded to hold your largest book and slate, the stripes running whichever way you prefer. Work all the white stripes with cat-stitch, or feather-stitch, with red marking cotton. Make little pockets, up and down, by setting pieces on the inside of the desired width and length, for pencils, etc. Across the bottom, where the piece is folded to

make the bag, put rows of stitching about an inch apart, and into this run a narrow piece of wood—curtain stick is good—to prevent the bag from sagging. Sew up the sides firmly, and put rows of stitching around the top into which a large cord may be run, closing with a draw string; or a flap may be sewed on to button over.

A useful gift for a young mother is an apron made of a square of heavy twilled flannel, which may be made plain or ornamented with feather-stitching of some contrasting color, with a broad hem at both ends. Through one end run a ribbon for a belt to tie around the waist. Baby may be lifted from his bath tub to this apron, thus obviating the use of a blanket, and also protecting mamma's dress.

Buy some soft rose-colored cheese-cloth and cut two pieces to fit the bureau drawers; between them lay a piece of cotton batting sprinkled heavily with sachet powder, and tuft all together with a pretty shade of rose-silk; next make a pocket on each end. Before sewing the pockets on the sachet, embroidery in fancy letters on the narrow pocket, the word "Gloves;" on the other, "Handkerchiefs." Use pink silk of a deeper shade for the lettering and tufting. Baste the pockets in place, then turn in and baste down the four edges of the sachet, including the pockets; feather-stitch the edges with the embroidery silk, remove the basting threads, and your present will please you, as well as someone to whom you give it.

**Query Box.**

If Mrs. C., of New York city, will send stamped, self-addressed envelope, I will try to assist her with the kitchen and laundry question.

If A. M., of Sutton, will send self-addressed stamped envelope, I will refer him to those who are authorities on the question he wishes to understand. His perplexities could not be solved in the brief space allowed for answers in this department.

Comfort.—Tack dark-colored oil-cloth over your screen doors, and they will answer the purpose of storm-doors.

Big Brother.—Your suggestions are good, and I will try to carry them out later. Simple home-made toys are greatly appreciated by the little folks, and if you use your wits and your fingers, you can make them very happy at little cost.

Fanny.—The carcass of your turkey, if used with a knuckle of veal or bits of beef bones, will give you a nice pot of soup, and the scraps may be made into a variety of dishes, any of them appetizing.

Bertha.—A bottle of good perfume should make an acceptable present. A good article can be obtained of any first-class druggist. Cheap perfume does not pay for the purchase.

Seamstress.—Tucked chiffon can be renovated when crumpled, and mussily-looking, by passing a hot iron over the wrong side of the material. This will make the tucks have the raised appearance of new goods.

Aunt Hattie.—Fowls of all kinds should be put into a very hot oven at first, to sear the outside, and carefully tended until commencing to brown, when they should be cooked more slowly and basted frequently. The flesh of a properly done fowl should be as juicy as a nicely roasted piece of beef.

Housekeeper.—To clean and re-color bronze, free it from every particle of grease and dust, and with a cloth apply a mixture of one part muriatic acid to two parts of water. When dry, polish with a dry cloth.

School Boy.—To mend your rain-coat, or mackintosh, get some rubber tissue—or mending tissue, it is sometimes called—and lay a strip between the parts you wish to join and press with a warm (not hot) iron.

Mrs. R.—It is claimed that unironed