



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

Mid-Winter.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosened dirt its breath before;
Low-circling round its southern zone;
The sun through dazzling snow-mist
shone.

No church bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air; no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak;
A solitude made more intense
By dreary voice-ed elements—
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying
blind,

And on the glass th' unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.

We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
Which, in our lonely life had grown
To have almost a human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveler, sank
From sight beneath the smothering
bank,

We piled with care our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney back—
The oaken log, green, huge and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear;
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the
gleam

On whitewashed wall and sagging
beam,

Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom.
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-
tree

Our own warm hearth seemed blazing
free.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney
laughed.

The house-dog, on his paws outspread,
Laid to the fire his drowsy head;
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind
raved?

Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy
glow.

—From Whittier's "Snowbound."

Home Chats.

Some of our sisters ask, "How are we to get the half-hour rest which you so strongly recommend?" There is but one way, dear sister—just take it. If you wait for it to come to you, or if you wait to "find time," you will only find it when you have worn yourself down to a bed of sickness, and when exhaustion compels you to yield to the inevitable. I know all

about it—I have raised several families, and have been an earnest worker all my life, and only after years of ill-health did I realize how very foolish I had been. The mother of very young children thinks she cannot possibly spare the time; something will happen to the babies if she remits for an instant, her vigilance. Well, "something" will be pretty apt to "happen," not only to them, but to herself, if she does not. Not even a machine can work always under high pressure without giving way in some parts. A spell of sickness will surely overtake her, and, it may be, that she may be taken away from them.

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One of the ways by which to get the half hour is to learn to let some things go undone, or let some one else do them. Look over your list of "must be's," and cross out any that may be dispensed with. Begin the morning by getting all the help you can—it may be only a few steps, but get somebody else to take them. Let the men and children do all they will, and then lead them to do a little more. You will be surprised how many steps even a four or five-year-old baby can take "to help mamma," and it will be fun for the little one. Have a chair or stool in the kitchen, and sit down to do everything you can. If possible, have a plain lounge or cot in the kitchen, and don't hesitate to lie down on it every chance you get. Have it understood that it is for your own use, and allow no one—not even the gude mon, to rob you of this right.

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Give your family plain, simple food, dispense with fancy dishes, and try to get the most of your cooking done in the morning. Have your meals strictly on time, whether you get all you wanted cooked or not. We all eat too much, any way; simple food is far the most healthful. Remember, the greatest help in the house is, as everywhere else, simple common sense. It is getting to be quite the fashion to simplify. Let the little ones wear plain dark clothes, and do not be a slave to the ironing board. Think plain, and act for yourself; a provisional program, and practical common sense is far better than "system." Find out just how much you can do without making yourself "a bundle of nerves," and don't try to do anything more. Take all the short-cuts you can, and if you see any possible chance of picking up a paper or a book, even for a minute's reading, just pick it up; if you read but one sentence, it will give you something to think of, and rest your mind.

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And, dear sisters, take this comfort to your hearts—if you keep on working beyond your strength you will be giving your John a chance, bye-and-bye, to hunt up another wife, and a second mother for your children.

Home Treatment For Catarrh.

We get so many requests for cures for catarrhal troubles that it may, perhaps, be well to give several recommended treatments, and I would suggest that they be either copied, or pasted, into your recipe book for future reference. At this time of year, catarrh is very prevalent. It must be remembered, however, that the disease will return and make itself more or less disagreeably manifest every time one takes cold, and the severity of the disease will largely depend upon the condition of the general

health and the state of one's vitality. Here are the recipes, many of them strongly recommended:

With a nasal sprayer, costing perhaps fifty cents, use a treatment made of Siler's solution, which is a standard preparation to be procured at any drug-store, and ten cents worth should last you six months. The druggist will tell you how to prepare the spray. The nasal sprayer may also be had of most druggists.

This treatment is said never to fail of benefit: Boiled linseed oil, one ounce; oil of tar, half ounce; tincture golden seal, forty drops; oil of sassafras, twenty drops; tincture of mullein, one-fourth ounce; tincture of wild cherry, one-fourth ounce. Put altogether in a two-ounce bottle and shake well before using. Take a small wire and bend a short loop on one end, wrap cotton on this, dip it in the mixture and with it swab out the nasal passage night and morning.

Another remedy, which is said to be good for several things, is given: Put a bit of sponge in a wide-mouthed empty bottle, and on it pour five cents' worth each of oil of horse-radish and oil of mustard. Take the cork partly out, when wanted to use, inhale a little at a time as you can stand it; it will sting if the throat or lungs are inflamed, but it will cure; can be used as often as you want to use it. For headache, inhale through the nostrils; it will cure in half a minute; use as often as you please. For weak and granulated eyelids, take the cork out, shut the eye, put the mouth of the bottle over the eye and keep it there as long as it can be borne—of course, bending the head over the bottle, as only the ascending vapor is used. Keep tightly corked when not in use.

If the nasal passage is scabbed and full of painful sores, one of the most effective treatments is to swab the nostrils out as far back as possible with carbolated vaseline—a five-cent bottle will last you a long time. It is not painful, and if a little of it is snuffed back into the throat, it will be all the better. Equally as good is a mixture of fifteen drops of carbolic acid to an ounce of glycerine, well mixed, used in the same manner as the above. The swab may be made of any soft material, but a bit of very fine sponge is best. The carbolic acid is stimulating, antiseptic, and healing, and the soothing qualities of the vaseline or glycerine are well known. The effect is immediate, and very satisfactory, and can be used as often as needed.

Another remedy, which is highly recommended by a well-known physician, is a daily cleansing of the nasal passages by the use of a douche and a solution made of one drop of carbolic acid to one ounce of water; using a pint of water at a time. If this is too strong, use twice as much water. Wash the head out well with this two or three times a day. A lotion composed of five to ten grains of permanganate of potash, dissolved in a pint of water, used with the douche, as above, is also recommended.

Query Box.

Flower Lover.—If you will watch the advertising columns "about these days," you will find the names of reliable seedsmen and florists.

Little Mother.—We all have to learn, and I fully appreciate your trials; but do not give up. See directions for making dried yeast bread and mince meat in another column.

Ask for help whenever you wish it; I am glad to assist you.

Hattie.—The first step away from self-respect, we are told, is personal uncleanness; the first move toward building up a proper pride, in man, woman or child is a visit to the bathtub. You cannot be healthy, pretty, sensible, or even good, unless you are clean, physically, and the dishonor is not in getting dirty, but in remaining so.

Comfort.—Radiators neither take in nor drive out bad air; they have no element of ventilation whatever. An open vessel containing water is therefore not only desirable, but a necessity, and some means of ventilation should be provided in a room heated by a radiator. Living rooms should have a temperature of 62 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. All sleeping rooms should have plenty of sunshine.

Sister.—A good substitute for a lounging pillow, when feathers cannot be obtained, is baked cotton batting. Take a good quality of the batting and pick it thoroughly apart until quite loose; then place it in a large paper, pinning loosely so it cannot fly around and put it in a warm (not hot) oven, leaving the door open, and let remain there until quite heated through.

Querist.—The four dollar stamp of the Columbian series, issued in 1893, bore the portrait of Queen Isabella of Spain, Martha Washington is the only other woman honored by our government; her portrait is on the eight-cent stamp of the present series. It is understood that the postoffice department will issue a set of stamps to commemorate the St. Louis exposition, which opens in May.

S. E. W.—Yes, indeed, ingrowing toe-nail does at times become a serious menace to one's life. As a treatment, several things are recommended; one of the best early treatments is to pack the corners of the ingrowing nail with antiseptic cotton and saturate this with the tincture of chloride of iron. The iron acts as an astringent and hardens the tender granulations, deadens the pain and stimulates the formation of healthy tissue; repeat three times a week for several weeks, until the nail has grown out, then trim straight across. Another remedy is to pack finely pulverized blue-stone under the ingrowing nail. At the first soreness, merely to pack the corner with antiseptic cotton will answer.

Mrs. E. A. C.—For the farm women who have little money and less time, and who are yet anxious to read good literature and keep abreast of the times, I would suggest the high class literary monthlies as furnishing the best all-round means of improvement. Singly, the subscription price is from fifty cents to one dollar per year, but in combinations, where several are offered together, the price is much less. Much excellent reading matter, stories and information on many matters, as well as a great deal of instruction in the various departments of the home, may also be had in the better class of very cheap monthly publications—from fifteen to twenty-five cents per year. A few very desirable publications are sent out for ten cents per year. I cannot give addresses in this department, but if you will send stamped, addressed envelope, I will be glad to help you to some of the best of these. I will not "forget my farm sisters."

For Dried Yeast Bread.

To make good light bread with dried yeast, while getting supper, boil until thoroughly soft, three or four good sized Irish potatoes, and when ready to mash, there should be fully a quart

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.