



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

From Thackeray.

The play is done; the curtain drops,
Slow-falling to the prompter's bell;
A moment yet the actor stops
And looks around to say farewell.
It is an irksome word and task,
And when he's laughed and said
his say,
He shows, as he removes his mask,
A face that's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends;
Let's close it with a parting rhyme;
Let's pledge a hand to all our friends,
As fits the merry eveningtime.
On life's broad stage you, too, have
parts,
That fate ere long shall bid you
play;
Good night. With honest, gentle
hearts
A kindly greeting goes away.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let young or old accept their part
And bow before the awful will,
And bear it with an honest heart.
Who misses or who wins the prize,
Go, lose or conquer as you can,
But if you fall, or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young,
(Bear kindly with my humble lays)
The sacred chorus first was sung
Upon the first of Christmas days;
The shepherds heard it overhead—
The joyous angels raised it then;
Glory to heaven on high, it said,
And peace on earth to gentle men.

My song, save this, is little worth;
I lay the weary pen aside,
And wish you health and love and
mirth,
As fits the merry Christmastide.
As fits the holy Christmas birth,
Be this, dear friends, our carol
still—
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.

Home Chats.

A Reader asks: "Don't you think a woman, first of all, should be a good housekeeper?"

Well, that depends. There are women and women, you know, and not every woman is born with the mental or physical endowment necessary to make of herself a success in the profession of housekeeping, any more than that every man is fitted by nature to make of himself a shining light in the profession of law or literature. That housekeeping is a profession, calling for a high order of ability, is becoming more and more recognized, and bright women are everywhere urging that it be taken from the category of menial service and given its proper standing among the "learned professions." Schools are being opened, classes formed, and courses of instruction are being added to the curriculum of colleges, all tending toward that point. There has been so much haphazard housekeeping, and the "sphere" so abused by being considered as beneath the notice of a woman with any claim whatever to refinement and social standing, that, until recently it has been considered as a term of reproach, and many otherwise sensible women have been known to apologize for having, through some misfortune (or lack of fortune), to "do their own work." It has been the custom to "look down" upon the girl or woman who chooses, or has thrust upon her, the vocation of housework, until a respectable, high-minded woman had to be very

brave indeed to claim for the work any congeniality whatever.

But the twentieth century woman is wiser. She is beginning to demand recognition for the work which, sooner or later, nearly every woman has to do with, and she is finding, and proving to others, that in the proper discharge of the duties of the housekeeper, there is honor as well as profit. So intimately connected with the best interests of the family life have these homely duties been proven to be that women everywhere are awakening to the importance of knowing "how the wheels go 'round," whether she, or another, is supplying the revolving power.

Not all women are born with the needed faculties by which to become, in the popular sense, a first-class housekeeper, any more than that her brother, man, is in all cases born to be a hewer of wood. In the sense of "looking well to the ways of her household," it is generally conceded by all to be her part of the contract to look after it and see that the intricate machinery runs smoothly and to the best interests of the home over which, whether as wife or employe, she is placed, just as the manager of any other business must "keep an eye" on every detail pertaining thereto, though he may not, and generally does not, do any of the physical work, himself. In order to intelligently do this, there are lessons which every woman must, not only theoretically, but practically, acquaint herself with, and this fact is more and more making itself felt, in all stations of life.

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But a woman may be as entirely lacking in the housekeeping talent as the most stupid man of her acquaintance; or she may be enabled, by doing some other branch of work, or by exercising some talent more fully developed, to add very materially to the comfort and convenience of all by letting the job out to some one whose greater ability in the housekeeping line will greatly conduce to the best interests she is called upon to serve. It is nowhere told us that Mary was a practical housekeeper, but God loveth both Martha and Mary.

"Cramped Lives"

A writer in The Observer has this to say:

"It is unpleasant to see anything, even a vegetable, growing in such cramped quarters that it cannot expand and become symmetrical; when we gather it, we can but think how fine it would have been could it have had room to come to perfection. Yet there are thousands of people growing in just this way, passing their days in such narrow, cramped spheres that they cannot round out into complete lives, and death gathers them in without the possible perfection which, in all justice, should have been theirs. There is much said concerning the dignity of labor, and in labor lies the only true dignity possible for man or woman to retain; but it is a duty we all owe to ourselves and our Creator to choose the path in life where highest usefulness and greatest development are to be found. We should make the most of ourselves, and he or she is a coward who shrinks from doing so for fear of the senseless condemnation of those who know little and care less what our struggles against environment and hereditary may mean. O. the buried millions,

and the grand possibilities buried with them."

True Success.

The man whose life, outwardly all defeat, is steadily expanding in its interest and sympathies, steadily growing in power to bear and suffer and be strong, has the blessed consciousness of coming into his kingdom. No outward disaster, no external obstacle or limitation, can ever defeat a true life; the soul can escape all these things as the bird escapes the perils of the snare and the net by flying above them. This highest success lies within the grasp of every earnest man or woman, and it is rarely without attestation of its presence and value, even in the eyes of those who take small account of spiritual things. There is a force which streams from a noble nature which is irresistible and pervasive as the sunlight. The warmth and vitality of such natures, while they invigorate the strongest men and women about them, penetrate to the heart of clouded and obscure lives and minister to their needs. There is no success so satisfying as that which is embodied in one's character, and being so embodied, cannot be taken from him, and the influence of which, reacting on the character of others, is also indestructible.—Christian Union.

Query Box.

(Quite a few of the Queries now in hand relate to matters pertaining to World's fair visitors, which have been answered in recent issues, and I would call the attention of Querists to that fact. I am very glad to help you in any way I can, and you must not be afraid of "troubling" me. I am always ready to read your letters.)

Mrs. L. C.—You will find requested recipes in this issue. Am glad to assist you.

Flora.—The type made the mistake—not I. My copy said, "Slips of hardy roses should be rooted (not potted) in July." Try again.

"John."—If you will send a copy of the verses, "General Sheridan's Ride," unless too lengthy, I shall be pleased to oblige you. I do not find it in my scrap-book.

S. M.—I cannot cite you to any respectable place where lodgings may be had for 25 cents each per night, unless it may be in some of the camp cities. Write to the Salvation Army, Southeast cor. Eighth and Walnut, St. Louis.

Jennie S.—St. Louis weather in July is generally quite warm, but once on the Fair grounds and inside the buildings, the atmosphere is not unbearable. Thin clothing will be very much in demand.

Mrs. W. E. W.—Thanks for such kind words; your good opinion is appreciated. I do not know that I can give the desired recipe. Chili, or chilli, is Spanish for the pod of cayenne, or guinea pepper. I can give you several recipes for Chili Sauce; is that what you wish?

Mrs. C. H.—Do not apologize for writing to me. I am greatly pleased that you think me wise enough to help you. Do not hesitate to make your wants known, for I will try very hard to give you reliable assistance. Answered your query by mail.

W. R. K.—Is one of our nice bachelors who reads the Home Department. He says if the "boys" were sure the girls knew how to help make the home, by "knowing how to do things well," there would be fewer bachelors.

We have any quantity of nice, well-trained girls on our list, and if they don't quite know it all at first, love is a good teacher. Don't hesitate too long, my son.

Mrs. B. M.—To harden the finger nails, use nine grain of common tar in a half an ounce of lard, wear gloves at night after rubbing it on the nails, and wash the hands with warm water and pure soap in the morning. Brittle nails are often but a symptom of disordered health. For the fallow skin, take a teaspoonful of phosphate of soda in a glass of water three or four times daily. The sallowness is from some stomach or liver trouble, which should be attended to.

"Discouraged."—This recipe was handed me by a physician, though it may not be what you need. I see no reason for its being harmful: Stir a level teaspoonful of sulphur into two teaspoonfuls of alcohol with the forefinger; rub it into the scalp every day, and take internally a ten-grain dose of it. It is claimed that by this treatment gray hairs will resume their original color and become soft and glossy. It is the scalp, not the hair, which should be treated.

Jessie.—If you can secure the sea-salt (any city grocer will have it), it is much better for your bath than the common article, but either is good. Sea salt is quite inexpensive. It is said that rubbing the eyebrows and eyelashes with a solution of salt and water will make them grow. From personal experience, I cannot answer your other question.

Halsey's Mother.—For sandwiches, chop cold boiled ham very fine; for each cupful, take the yolk of two hard-boiled eggs, one tablespoonful of lemon juice, one-fourth teaspoonful of mustard and quarter pound of butter; mix altogether and season to taste. Spread on thin slices of bread and fold or roll together. Do not lay the meat in the sandwich in slices.

Dollie L.—I do not think your canary's claws are too long, if of the length measured on your paper. Perhaps the perch is too large. You write such a nice little letter that I am sure you keep both the perch pole and the cage floor very clean, for if you did not, I am afraid that might be the reason of his inability to hold on to the perch tightly—his feet might be sore.

For The Sewing Room.

For the shirt-waist suit, materials twenty-four inches wide necessitates very extravagant cutting, and it is better to select thirty-inch wide goods; these can be found in cottons, linens, chevots, grass-linens, and pure white linens.

The seven-gore skirt will be found very practical for laundering. One length of material, eighty-seven inches, affords a back, the front gore and one of each of the two side gores; from a similar length of material the other back and two side gores may be cut; the material left on this length, corresponding to the front gore on the other, may be used for cuffs, stock and belt. This allows for a forty-inch skirt and a two-and-one-half inch hem. Start to baste the skirt-widths from the top down, taking care not to stretch the bias side. To make welted, or tailored seams, cut the straight side of the seam quite close and finish like a fell seam, keeping the stitches very level. To measure properly for a walking skirt, the length should be taken at the front and at both sides and the back to the floor; you are sure to have a level length by doing this. The desired length may be obtained by subtracting two or three inches from this measurement, and you are sure the skirt is the same distance from the floor at every point, consequently, your skirt will hang evenly. The walking length is two inches from the floor.

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To finish a skirt properly at the bottom, tailors always advise a fac-