

The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts M.A.

Gone

At thought of her, the tender tears
Are troubled at their springs,
Yet stir as stirs the April rain
That bud and blossom brings.
Tears that have healing in their
wells—
Not bitter, brackish things.

Only, it is the "getting used"
The hush, the vacant chair;
To wander o'er familiar paths,
Yet never meet her there;
This yearning love, that wants her
back—
The loss so hard to bear.

How memory lights the picture up—
Like embers fanned aglow;
This quaintness, or that archness
shown—
A gesture that we know;
A smile, a look, a gem worn thus—
A ribbon, knotted so.

The winsome air, the merry tone,
A kindness she did;
All fragrant with that sense of her
That could no more be hid
Than subtle lavender or rose,
Laid common things amid.

Can we, who loved her lavishly,
Now she is out of sight,
Be colder, more forgetful grown
Than in her presence bright?
Ah, no. We must not count her out,
Telling the rest good night.
—Selected.

"Fireless Cooking"

A writer in the Woman's Home Companion tells of what a boon the fireless stove, or "hay box," was to some of the women of San Francisco during the dreadful time of the earthquake and consequent conflagration, when they were not allowed to have any fires or lights in their shattered homes, and whose "cooking on campfires improvised from the bricks of the fallen chimneys" was found to be weary work for those living on the upper floors of their houses. She tells of "beef pot-roasts," received the day before, which, after being boiled for half an hour in the morning on the camp-fire in the street, were taken into the house, packed in the box for four hours, and taken out, done to a turn, at dinner time.

There is a great deal of interest manifested in regard to this newly exploited method of relieving the cook during the heated term, and which may relieve the housewife from much care at all times; but its use has not become so general yet as to be very well understood.

The home-made "hay box," or even the devices on the market for the same purpose, will in no sense take the place of the kitchen range or other heat generator. There must be a preliminary cooking over the fire for a more or less length of time, and the food article must be packed, boiling hot, into the receptacle, which must be packed tightly for the retention of every possible particle of the heat. One careless in this matter will be disappointed in the outcome. There may be much experimenting required before one becomes an expert in the matter; and many never

AN OLD AND WELL-TRIED REMEDY
Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children's 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 bottle.

will succeed, because they have not the patience and persistence necessary to success. But it is worth the trial. In The Commoner Home Department of April 13, the description of the hay box is given fully. The "box" is inexpensive, and you will be out little except the time you experiment with, in case you fail the first few times. The value of the process is becoming so well recognized that devices are being put upon the market at a good price, claiming to do the work much better than the "home-made," but it is just as well to try the inexpensive plan first.

As to the steam cooker, one can either pay a good price for one of these, or contrive a "home-made" one, which, according to my own experience, will answer just as well, for an average sized family. It is on the plan of the old "steamer" of our mothers' days—a tin box or pall, with a tightly closing cover and perforated bottom, made to fit closely into the top of an iron, or other kettle, from the boiling water in which the steam rises up into the "steamer" and cooks the foods placed there, thus making the under vessel serve two purposes—that of cooking some one thing in its own depths, and of furnishing the steam for cooking other dishes placed in the steamer. Of course, the water in the under kettle must not be allowed to boil out. The steam cooker is contrived very much on this plan, only, in some respects, it is superior, as it has its own water receptacle, with a whistle arranged so as to give notice when the water gets low. But if care is taken, and an iron under vessel, with a flat bottom, is used, quite a meal may be well cooked over one burner on the gas, gasoline or oil stove in the kettle and its "steamer" attachment.

Growing Freesias

The florist to the contrary notwithstanding, the growing of freesias by the amateur is not always attended with success. But if partially successful with them, it will pay, as even a few flowers scent up a room delightfully. Some claim they do best in tin, wood or porcelain receptacles, as, if the atmosphere is hot and dry, the soil is apt to dry out too quickly where porous pots are used. In any case, there must be drainage; a layer of charcoal or fine gravel, half to one inch deep, is sufficient.

Fill the receptacle to within two inches of the top with a soil composed of equal parts of rotted sod, wood dirt and sand (or the same proportions of chip dirt, well-rotted manure and good garden soil—no clay—with a little sand to lighten it). On top of this lay, for a five or six inch pot, four to six bulbs, and cover with the same soil to a depth of one inch or more. If the bulbs are expected to bloom in early January, they must be planted in August, but may be planted any time within the months of September or October—the earlier the better.

As soon as potted, water them well and place outdoors in shade, and when the green blades push through gradually expose them to the sun. The pots may be kept cool by imbedding them in a box of sand or saw dust, or even leaves, which should be kept moist all the time. By protecting them on cold nights, they may be kept out doors until long past light frosts, and the out-door growth in

the fall is a strong factor in one's success. Five months are required for the growth of this plant, and sometimes longer, according to the care given them. If the fall is unusually cold and treacherous, they should not be left out longer than November 1. The factors necessary to success indoors are plenty of water and sunshine, with a showering of the foliage three times a week with lukewarm water, enough of it to well bathe the roots as it falls from above. Good drainage must be assured to avoid excess of moisture in the soil.

Freesias will not bloom well in a hot, dry atmosphere. The buds require moisture to develop them. The freesias are not particularly tender, and a room ranging in temperature from forty-five to sixty degrees Fahrenheit is best till the buds form. The temperature of the average living room in winter is too high for them, and a cool window should be selected. If aphids and red spider trouble them, spray with an infusion of weak tobacco tea, using an atomizer.

After blooming, cut off the old flower stems and give less water, letting the bulbs ripen, and when the tops have died down, set the pots in a dry, cool place in the cellar and leave until the following August, to be re-potted for another season.—The Mayflower.

Floral Talks

A box of clean sand sunk on the north side of the house, where it can get the morning sunshine, is a fine place to start slips and root cuttings during the summer. When the vigor of the plant is all going to leaf is not a good time to make slips; but if the ripened branch is partly broken in two and left hanging for a week until it begins to heal, then detached and bedded in the sand, it will strike root more readily.

Hanging baskets are so lovely, and so easily grown if well cared for, that every one should have them. Weeping lantana, emerald feather, tradescantia, moneywort, and many other trailing plants may be used, with some moisture-loving plant placed in the center. Some kinds of begonias are good for this. These baskets must not be allowed to dry out. Start one now, and have it in good shape for the winter cheer.

Cut off some young shoots of the low-growing kinds of cannas (the Madame Crozy strain is best), being careful to get some roots with each; plant these in heavy soil in large pots or boxes, three or four to a box; water well and set in a shady place until you see they have recovered from the shock of removal, then put them right in the sunshine, keeping the soil moist; this can be done by bedding the pot in the border, in sand or in saw dust, and keeping the surrounding soil wet. They should make fine winter bloomers if only the dwarf kinds are chosen.

Sow pansy seeds now where they can be sheltered from the hot afternoon sunshine, keep plants growing thriftily all fall, and you will have fine blooming plants early next spring.

Remember, if you wish flowers that "grow like a weed"—that is, without care or attention, the plant will in time become a weed, in looks and habit, and will be worthless in the border. Everything requires some care, and the herbaceous perennials

and shrubbery will be all the better for mulching and caring for during the hot, dry spell. Many things make their best, most thrifty growth during the fall months. If you begin watering them now, you must keep it up, keeping the roots well wet down, or the light surface moisture will induce surface roots, and the plant will do worse than if not watered at all.

Hardy perennials which have bloomed early and apparently finished their growth may be transplanted now. Many herbaceous perennials must be transplanted or root-divided during the fall months, or they will either refuse to bloom next season, or make a very poor growth, if left until spring time.

The Letter "R" and Oysters

Oysters are to be had all the year, but they are at their best and "in season" from September to May. During the summer months they are poor and flabby and lacking in flavor. When taken fresh from the water during the summer months, they are wholesome, but can not be kept long after being taken from the water. There seems to be a variation of opinion on the subject of the "greening" of oysters, and this has resulted in investigations by scientists, who tell us there are several kinds of "greening," some of which are due to an excess of copper; others again, and some of our American varieties re-embedded on our coasts, show a pale green leucocytosis, and are not considered in a healthy condition. One authority regards "greening" as the result of the consumption by the oyster of certain forms of sea-weed, the coloring matter of which is soluble in the tissues and juices of the oyster, and is apparently harmless. Where the former condition exists, and the oysters are flabby and soft, and where much coloring is present, it is better to avoid such than to take chances of gastric disturbance. September is the beginning of the oyster season.—Ex.

When lamps, not frequently in use, are left with the wicks turned up, a thick, sticky, gummy coating forms on the burner from the oil seeping out and gathering dust as it evaporates. The burner should be boiled in water in which washing soda—a teaspoonful to a quart of water—has been dissolved, then cleaned and polished. The wick should always be turned down below the top of the burner so the oil can not ooze out over the top.

Yellow Tomato Preserves

Take in proportions, two pounds of yellow pear tomatoes (after removing peel), two pounds granulated sugar, four ounces canton ginger, four lemons and two oranges. The oranges may be omitted.

Peel tomatoes and cover with sugar, letting stand twenty-four hours. Care must be taken to keep the tomatoes whole. Drain off the syrup and cook it until like thick honey, skimming carefully. Then add tomatoes, sliced ginger, and lemons and oranges sliced and seeds removed. Cook all together gently until tomatoes have a clear look. The syrup should be like honey. Put away in small jars and seal.

Jelly can not be made of yellow tomatoes without addition of a more acid juice of some other fruit. Gelatin could be added to the strained juice of the tomato, but the product would be very insipid unless highly

BETTER THAN SPANKING

Spanking does not cure children of bed wetting. If it did there would be few children that would do it. There is a constitutional cause for this. Mrs. M. Summers, Box 118, Notre Dame, Ind., will send her home treatment to any mother. She asks no money. Write her today if your children trouble you in this way. Don't blame the child. The chances are it can't help it.