



Conducted by
Helen Watts McKey

AN OLD POEM

The Pebble and the Acorn

"I am a pebble, and yield to none!"
Were the swelling words of a tiny
stone;
"Nor time nor seasons can alter me;
I am abiding while ages flee.
The pelting hail and the drizzling
rain
Have tried to soften me long in vain;
And the tender dew has sought to
melt,
Or touch my heart, but it was not
felt.

"There's none that can tell about my
birth,
For I'm as old as the big, round
earth.
The children of men arise and pass
Out of the world, like blades of grass,
And many a foot on me has trod,
That's gone from sight and under the
sod.
I am a pebble, but who art thou,
Rattling along from the restless
bough?"

The Acorn was shocked at this rude
salute,
And lay for a moment abashed and
mute.
She never before had been so near
This gravelly ball, the mundane
sphere;
And she felt, for a time, at a loss to
know
How to answer a thing so coarse and
low.

But to give reproof of a nobler sort
Than the angry look, or keen retort,
At length she said, in a gentle tone;
"Since it has happened that I am
thrown
From the lighter element where I
grew,
Down to another, so hard and new,
And beside a personage so august,
Abashed, I will cover my head in
dust,
And quickly retire from the sight of
one
Whom time nor season, nor storm
nor sun,
Nor the gentle dew, nor the grinding
heel,
Has ever subdued, or made to feel."
And soon, in the earth she sank
away

From the comfortless spot where the
pebble lay.

But it was not long ere the soil was
broke
By the peering head of an infant oak;
And as it arose and its branches
spread,
The Pebble looked up, and, wonder-
ing, said,
"A modest acorn, never to tell
What was inclosed in its simple shell;
That the pride of the forest was fold-
ed up
In the narrow space of its little cup,
And meekly to sink in the darksome
earth,
Which proves that nothing could hide
its worth.

"And oh, how many will tread on me,
To come and admire the beautiful
tree,
Whose head is towering toward the
sky,
Above such a worthless thing as I.
Useless and vain, a cumberer here,
I have been idling from year to year;
But never from this shall a vaunting
word
From the humble pebble again be
heard,

Till something, without me or within,
Shall show the purpose for which I
have been."

The pebble its vow could not forget,
And it lies there wrapped in silence
yet.

—Anonymous.

"Line Upon Line"

Among the thousands of readers of the Home pages there are many—perhaps the majority—who are well versed in all that pertains to good housekeeping and home-making, ready to handle any emergency, to overcome every obstacle, and to meet all demands with a clear judgment and practical skill born of knowledge and careful training. To these, the constant iteration, the "line upon line," "precept upon precept," may seem a wearisome re-hash. But there are other women—the young, or the inexperienced—to whom the problems of domesticity are as a blank wall through which they can not see their way to successful home-making. Many of these have no one to whom to turn in their discouragements, and the domestic department in their favorite journal is a never-failing fountain of help and hopefulness. Instead of asking for recipes for fancy dishes or elaborate ways of doing things, they are eager to know the simple ways of the everyday doings; how to cook the plain, nourishing dishes, to do the house-keeping with the fewest steps for the best results, and for instruction in the performance of the every-hour tasks that confront the housewife at every turn of the road.

It is a wearisome task for the inexperienced to make the modest income cover the necessary expense, and only too often the "balance" is on the wrong side of the sheet, try as they may. There is a foolish idea in some of the young heads that the new house must be like, and run upon like lines as the old one. They do not know how to manage; they know nothing of economizing, and they have yet to learn the lesson of "doing without" rather than going in debt. How shall we teach them to tread the better paths?

Mental Training

Do not be too eager to "help the children get their lessons." It is just as well to let them solve their own problems, and thereby get the strength the mental exercise will give them. Mere memorizing is by no means learning, and many children go through the school term parrotting their lessons, with no real idea of the meaning of any of them. "Knowledge is power" only insofar as it is backed by an intelligent ability to apply it to the practical, every-day demands of life, and without this mental force back of it, knowledge is but as so much rubbish. Knowledge alone is by no means a power, either for good or for bad, without application.

In the every-day concerns of life, let the little ones learn to think for themselves—to solve their own problems, to get at the "why" and "how" of things. If they come to you with questions, it is well to point out to them directions in which they may find the answer, or one may teach them to look into their own minds by asking "What do you think of it?" But let them think. Teach them from the start to be self-reliant, to strengthen their own mental facul-

ties through exercise, and to develop judgment by their own efforts. It is surprising, if one thinks of it, how little children really know of the subjects discussed from the printed page. It is like trying to cook with only a cookery book, with no knowledge of the cook stove or the materials of which foods are made except the names and direction found on the printed page. Ask them questions about the things about them; teach them to notice, and ask them to explain to you why they think things are so—what their ideas are of the matter. Do not rob them of the practical education and strength that comes of mental training rather than memorizing. Let them solve their own problems.

"The Coffee Habit"

We are told so many contradictory things about the effects of coffee drinking that it is almost impossible to decide whether or no it is best "to drink, or not to drink." An exchange tells us that the yellowness of the complexion of which so many women complain is caused by the drinking of coffee, which, as it goes through the system, gets into the pores of the skin, and the result is a muddy discoloration which is hard to remove. As it is very hard to get people to abstain from the use of the beverage, it is recommended that plenty of water drinking through the day be indulged in, thus flushing the system and washing out the objectionable matter. A half hour before breakfast is the time for the first glassful of water, which may be of the temperature best liked; but ice-water should be avoided at all times. An hour after breakfast the glassful may be repeated, and as many drinks may be taken during the forenoon as one wishes, but not later than half an hour before the next meal. After dinner, the drinking may be resumed, and not less than three quarts should be consumed during the twenty-four hours. Plenty of water drinking is one of the greatest beautifiers known, as it washes out the "sewers" of the system as nothing else can.

Celery

According to analysis, celery contains but little nutritive value, for over ninety-three per cent of the vegetable is water with a little oil, and the balance is made up of about 3.5 per cent of starchy substances, 1.5 per cent of cellular fibre, and one per cent of mineral salts. Celery would, therefore, seem to play almost exclusively the role of a seasoning rather than a food; it being the flavor which makes it so popular. Celery contains sodium and potassium salts, and also a well-defined amount of iron. In spite of the presence of the substances mentioned, there can be little doubt that many persons find celery—especially if eaten raw—rather indigestible, which may be accounted for by the fact that it is largely made up of stringy, cellular fibers. Even when cooked, the fiber can not be taken up by the human organs.

Handling the Baby

"Medical Talks" insists that mothers handle the baby too much, and says that the nervous mother makes a nervous baby, and deprives the baby of the pleasure and education to be gained only through entertain-

ing its own self. A healthful baby will lie for hours, "learning things" by studying its own wonderful activities, and any one who has ever noticed the baby's absorption in the study of its own feet and hands will readily understand this. If the baby is comfortably dressed, and in a comfortable condition, it will go through more exercises and motions than anything that could be arranged for it, and will enjoy every one of them. If the baby gets to expecting some one to amuse it, it will be hard to break the habit, and the mother or some one of the family must always be ready to serve. Even a sick child is better off, generally, out of any one's arms, and many mothers are as ignorant of the kind of handling a baby requires as it is possible to be. Teach the baby from the first to depend upon itself for all amusement, even while giving it every necessary care.

Query Box

Mrs. J. F. B.—Many thanks for kind words. The suggestion will be acted upon soon.

"Bebe."—For making the eyebrows grow, use five grains of quinine in one ounce of almond oil; apply twice a day with a fine sable brush.

L. S.—For clammy feet, bathe them every night in warm water, using salicylic acid soap; change the stockings daily, and the shoes as often as practicable, airing the shoes well before wearing again. There may be some constitutional trouble.

E. D. N.—For practical information on floriculture and improving home-grounds, subscribe for a good floral magazine, write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and also to the manager of the agricultural experiment station of your state. You should get reliable printed matter from all these sources.

Allie M.—The best medicine for you is nourishing food, plenty of fresh air, comfortable garments, exercise of all parts of the body, no sweets or rich pastries, a cheerful spirit and a determination to keep well. No drugs!

H. H.—A salt rub is an excellent tonic for the nerves, and is recommended by nurses and physicians. You can take it yourself, but it is better to have an assistant. It consists in rubbing the body all over with handfuls of coarse, wet salt, while in the bath, then rinsing off, and rubbing the body into a glow with coarse, soft towels. Any coarse salt will do.

I. H.—The pop corn stitch in crocheting is made by making four or more trebles in the same stitch, keeping the last loop of each stitch on the needle until all are made, then working them all off at once, bindfast with a single crochet, and making one chain close to the group. The size of the corn depends on the number of trebles worked in the foundation stitch.

Homemade Laundry Soap

Mrs. H. M. sends in the following directions for making "the best soap I ever used."

Measure twelve quarts of rainwater; put six quarts of this into a large iron or copper kettle and put over the fire. When it comes to a good boil, add five pounds of any kind of grease, from clean tallow to cracklings from which the lard has been fried, and let this boil a few minutes until it gets well warmed, stirring; then add gradually

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 the pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle.