



# The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watkins Meyer

## Through Death to Life

Have you heard the tale of the aloe plant,  
Away in the sunny clime  
By humble growth of a hundred years  
It reaches its blooming time;  
And then a wondrous bud at its crown  
Breaks into a thousand flowers.  
This floral queen in its beauty seen  
Is the pride of the tropical bowers.  
But the plant to the flower is a sacrifice,  
For it blooms but once, and in blooming dies.

Have you further heard of this aloe plant,  
That grows in the sunny clime,  
How every one of its thousand flowers,  
As they droop in the blooming time,  
Is an infant plant that fastens its roots  
In the place where it falls to the ground,  
And fast as they drop from the dying stem  
Grow lively and lovely around?  
By dying it liveth a thousand fold  
In the young that spring from the death of the old.

Have you heard the tale of the pelican,  
The Arab's Gimel el Bahr,  
That dwells in the African solitudes  
Where the brides that live lonely are?  
Have you heard how it loves its tender young,  
And cares and toils for their good?  
It brings them water from fountains afar,  
And fishes the sea for their food,  
In famine it feeds them—what love can devise!—  
With blood of its bosom, and feeding them dies.

Have you heard the tale they tell of the swan,  
The snow-white bird of the lake?  
It noiselessly floats on the silvery wave,  
It silently sits in the brake,  
For it saves its song till the end of life,  
And then in the soft, still even,  
'Mid the golden light of the setting sun  
It sings as it soars into heaven;  
And the blessed notes fall back from the skies,  
'Tis its only song, for in singing it dies.

Have you heard these tales? Shall I tell you one,  
A greater and better than all?  
Have you heard of Him whom the heavens adore,  
Before whom the hosts of them fall?  
How he left the choirs and anthems above  
For earth in its wallings and woes,  
To suffer the shame and the pain of the cross,  
And die for the life of his foes?  
O, Prince of the noble! O, Sufferer divine!  
What sorrow and sacrifice equal to Thine?

Have you heard this tale, the best of them all,  
The tale of the Holy and True?  
He died, but His life now in untold souls  
Lives on in the world anew.  
His seed prevails, and is filling the earth  
As the stars fill the skies above.

He taught us to yield up the love of life  
For the sake of the life of love.  
His death is our life, His loss is our gain,  
The joy for the tear, the peace for the pain,

Now hear these tales, ye weary and worn,  
Who for others do give up your all;  
Our Saviour hath told you the seed that would grow  
Into earth's dark bosom must fall;  
Must pass from the view and die away,  
And then the fruit will appear;  
The grain that seems lost in the earth below  
Will return many-fold in the ear;  
By death comes life, by loss comes gain.  
The joy for the tear, the peace for the pain.

—Henry Harbough.

(Clipped, probably from the Boston Congregationalist of some years ago. Furnished our readers by Mrs. F. C. Grow, of South Dakota.)

## Loneliness of Farm Life

A news item published in the daily papers says that members of the country life commission recently stated that the great drawback to country life in America is the lack of social intercourse. The commission stated that this complaint was encountered not only among the poorer class of farmers, but among the prosperous class, as well, over a large area of country. By those not personally familiar with privations and isolations of even well-to-do farm families, it is contended that the rural mail delivery, the telephone, trolley and automobile have brought the farming communities into such close touch with each other and with the towns and villages that it is positively absurd to say that farm life is lonely and that its pleasures are only limited by the neglect of the farmer to avail himself of these connections with his neighbors. In view of the much talked of prosperity of the farmer, it is generally supposed that about all farming communities enjoy all, or the most part, of these conveniences and that the horse and mule, as a means of transportation, have about gone out of commission; that about all the farmers have their automobiles, their telephones, and trolley privileges. The truth is, however, that there are thousands of farming vicinities where all these conveniences are absolutely unknown, and probably not one in a thousand of even the prosperous farmers owns an automobile, while even the steam cars are very often many miles distant from the well-to-do farmer. On many farms, the women are not provided with any transportation privileges, even in the way of a saddle horse, or horse and vehicle kept for their especial use, and when any trips are made, either for business or pleasure, the women must go in the farm wagon or "take it a-foot." Under these conditions, social life must necessarily suffer, and besides, no amount of reading, or talking over telephones can ever make up for the isolation that keeps human beings apart. Personal gatherings are the most important.

## Getting the Most for the Money

January and February are the months in which white goods and ready-made garments are selling at

greatly reduced prices, and if one is a judge of quality, much may be saved by watching the special sales. Odd lengths of fine nainsooks, muslins and cottons, together with embroideries, laces and other trimmings, are to be had at a much less cost than when cut from the piece before the holidays. "Bargain" counter goods are not always "bargains" to the buyer, but if one goes early, really good articles may be picked out, as in nearly all lots there are a few really valuable pieces, which may be shop-worn, or slightly soiled by handling, as well as a few odd pieces that are as clean and good as new. If one is forehanded, it is a good time to buy winter goods, for these, too, are cheaper after the holiday trade is over, and our real winter hardly ever begins until January. If goods "in the piece" are bought, they can be made up while the winter leisure is with us, as fashions for underwear, and every-day garments are seldom arbitrary. The remnant counter is a boon to mothers with several school children, and many of the pieces are of lengths suitable for making clothing for the grown-ups. Where the country stores do not keep large supplies, many things may be safely ordered through the mails, or some friend having access to the large department stores might do the shopping for the country housewife.

## Mothers and Children

The objection is often urged that women in the business field have little time to devote to their children; but it is true that the business woman sees quite as much of her children as nine-tenths of the house-mothers do. Where the mother must do with her own hands all the home work and "chores" of housekeeping, she has little time or energy to give to the wants of the children. She waits on them, attending to their wants with her mind divided between the children and the work, and hurries them off to school to get them out of her way, in order that she may devote her mind and strength to the routine of housework; when the lunch hour comes, she is still busy with her work, housekeeping, sewing, patching, cleaning, and can give them but a little hurried attention, getting them off her hands again as soon as possible, and when the afternoon brings them home again, she is probably ironing, mending, sewing, or attending to other demands of the home life, which must be got out of the way to give her free hands for the dinner getting, and when dinner (or supper) is over, the table must be cleared, the dishes washed, the chores for the night and preparations for the morning consume her time, and the balance of the evening she has always some necessary work to occupy her exhausted hands and mind. If she sees anything at all of her husband, or has any social life, she must spend the time away from her children, and if the evenings are spent at home, she is usually so worn out, irritated and irritating through exhausted nerves that the young folks are as glad to get away as she is to have them go. These mothers are not "society" women, or wage-earners, and they think they are devoting themselves to their families, whereas, they are attending to the material wants and

losing sight of the higher work of the real mother, and the molding of the young minds is given over to chance and outside influences. They are simply the over-taxed mothers of the middle-class—the common people, whom circumstances force into being simply keepers of the animal bodies of the household. The majority of mothers know less of their real children than do the neighbors outside the home.

## A Mine of Information

Very many people fail to get the full benefit of their subscription to the various papers and magazines which come to them, because their reading is restricted to the items of news, or politics, articles on various subjects, stories, and the like. They do not realize that they are overlooking a perfect mine of information through their neglect to read the advertising pages. By giving attention to these, one learns many things of which they would otherwise be in ignorance. No one can be regarded as strictly up-to-date in knowledge of the advancement of the industries of the world who is not a close reader of advertisements, and reputable publishers are becoming very careful about the kinds of advertising admitted to their columns, thus protecting their readers, so far as possible against frauds and undesirable appliances. Not long since, one of our own readers asked where she might obtain an article she very much wished to get, saying she could not find where it was manufactured. She had entirely overlooked the fact that The Commoner had been carrying the advertisement of the firm for some time. Many of these advertisers offer to send free booklets, giving information of the devices and their uses, and these booklets are well worth asking for, even though you do not buy the article, as it is hardly possible to read them without getting some good ideas. This is especially true of the inventions, devices and machinery intended for the housewife's uses. The booklets of recipes are well worth preserving, as they are usually compiled by the very best authorities along the lines they represent. Now, when you have a moment's leisure, read the advertisements—every one of them. You will find it pays. When you write to the firms, say you saw the advertisement in our own paper.

## Ways and Means

In these times, when the principal "prosperity" is to be found only in the newspaper columns, the question of "helping out with the family income" is a stirring one, and every item on the subject is eagerly read by the women and girls of the family. In nearly all such advice, there are usually a few "straws" which, properly handled, may help to float the one who grasps them; but the worth of the straw is almost entirely dependent upon the person into whose hands they fall. Too many of these seekers are too impatient for results to give any idea a thorough trial; they are looking for "something easy," that will bring quick returns. But everything that "pays" requires hard work, either brain or muscle, and we should not expect to reap the crop as soon as the seed is sown. We must not get discouraged, and many of us must pocket our pride and let it be known that we are in the market. The question of a market is a vital one, for it is a waste of time to make, if we can not sell. This question can only be settled by the individual.

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.