



The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts May

The Gospel of Labor

But I think the king of that country comes out from his tireless host, And walks in this world of the weary, as if he loved it the most; For here in the dusty confusion, with eyes that are heavy and dim, He meets again the laboring men who are looking and longing for him. He cancels the curse of Eden, and brings them a blessing instead; Blessed are they that labor, for Jesus partakes of their bread. He puts his hand to their burdens; he enters their homes at night; Who does his best shall have as a guest the Master of life and light. And courage will come with his presence, and patience returns at his touch. And manifold sins be forgiven to those who love him much; And the cries of envy and anger will change to the songs of cheer For the toiling age will forget its rage when the Prince of Peace draws near. This is the gospel of labor—ring it; ye bells of the kirk— The Lord of Love came down from above to live with the men who work. This is the rose that he planted here in the thorn-cursed soil— Heaven is blest with perfect rest, but the blessing of earth is toil. —Henry Van Dyke, in National Monthly.

"The Perennial Fourth"

Every year, the feeling is growing stronger against the dangerous pastime of celebrating with fireworks the anniversary of the birthday of the nation. The aftermath of such celebrations every year is appalling, and thousands are yearly crippled or killed because of the practice. There should be many more "safe and sane" ways of showing our joy as a nation than in cultivating the warlike spirit of our youth, and ending the day with suffering and death, besides confagurations and the "going up in smoke" of many thousands of dollars of wealth caused by the destructive fireworks falling in the wrong places. Manufacturers have devised and put upon the market so many most beautiful, and comparatively harmless displays, that there seems no call for the "roar and fire" of battle, as well as the smoke and danger hanging about its field.

The New Era

One of the blessings of the age is that the housewife need no longer immolate herself upon the domestic altar by grilling over the red-hot stove in the furnace heat of the old time kitchen. In very many neighborhoods, gas is used for fuel; where this can not be had, gasoline, coal oil, and, in a smaller measure, denatured alcohol is the fuel used, and these are all perfectly safe, if properly handled, and used in good stoves. But we are further blessed with the steam cooker and the cooking chest. Especially should we be thankful for the cooking chest—the fireless cooker, and as one is so easily constructed by the home mechanic, if the commercial article can not be reached, every housewife should insist on having one of home manufacture, and then use it, despite of a few failures, until she gains a thorough control of it and learns by practical experience its great worth.

In many cases, women have only themselves to blame for hard, drudging toil.

For the Outing

Study rather what not to take than what to carry with you to the picnic grounds. Do not take china plates, cups or dishes. Have a supply of the cheap little wooden or paper plates to be had at the grocers or the bakers, and keep a supply of bright, clean tin cans—those evaporated milk comes in, if the perforated ends is melted off make good coffee and tea cups, and larger cans will do for making the tea and coffee, while tin platters, the small tin baking pans to be had for five cents, will answer for dishes; these, and many like conveniences can be thrown away when the meal is done.

Leave the layer cake, soft pies, custards, and other messy things at home. Have plenty of sandwiches, plain bread and butter, or with cheese and dressing, or chopped meats, fish, or fruits between the slices. Have small biscuits, broken and buttered while hot; have cookies, cold sliced fowl and meats wrapped in paraffine paper; have the juice of lemons, sweetened and put into bottles and well corked; take ice, well wrapped in newspapers and blanket, if you care to carry it; have cans of evaporated milk for the tea and coffee. Take the tin salt and pepper shakers, paper napkins (to be had for five cents a dozen), two or three towels, and a few cheap knives and forks and spoons. A covered tin pail to carry water in, and something for the children to drink from, are also necessary. Be sure to take food that will not create undue thirst, and which will satisfy the healthy appetites which picnicking always gives. Then, just make up your mind to enjoy every moment of your time, and "take no thought of tomorrow," if the thought is going to detract from the joy of today.

Take the outing. The one important thing is to take yourself. Mother should go, but not to be the burden-bearer. Take her as the guest of the family.

General Helps

If lemons are inclined to spoil in hot weather, make a syrup of them, which is always ready for use in various dishes. For one dozen lemons, carefully grate the rinds, taking off only the yellow; squeeze out the juice and add to the grated rind, letting stand for several hours. Then take four pounds of sugar and make a thick syrup with just enough water to boil it smooth; stir in the lemon juice and bottle, dipping the corks in paraffine wax. The wax may be used over and over again, if saved when opening the bottles. Put the syrup up in small bottles, and if not wanting to use so many lemons, keep the proportions as above.

Be sure to keep a bottle of peroxide of hydrogen in the house, as its uses are manifold. Diluted with water—one part water to two parts peroxide, it cleanses the mouth, sweetens the breath, and keeps the teeth clean. For a sore mouth or gargle for sore throat it is used the same strength. Applied to open sores it cleanses, disinfects and helps the healing process, removing all festering matter. There is always a call for it, and it does not cost much.

In some of the city drug stores it costs about twenty-five cents per pound bottle; others, as much as fifty cents a pound (or pint).

Put in a few "rest" hours in picking up things around the barn and fastening on loose pickets or rattling boards. With the heavy rains of summer roofs sometimes show a leak, and these should be attended to at once, or the plastering and paper will be spoiled, making a demand for greater expense and more labor.

Keep the weeds cut out of the corners, and especially about the house, and the lawn can be kept smooth with the lawn mower, hook, or scythe. Keep things looking neat, and make home attractive to the young boys and girls. Do not let the vines straggle, but keep them tacked up to the sides of things. Have plenty of them.

Culinary Ways

It is not easy to learn to make flaky pie-crust from printed recipes; so much depends upon the handling of the dough, even with the ingredients rightly proportioned. Some flours are lighter or dryer than others, while butter, sugar, and flour measured by "spoon" or cup may not be accurately proportioned owing to the difference in cups, or their being heaped up or leveled off. Just a little too much water will make a dust more flour necessary, and the materials may be kept too warm and blend too much.

Ice water should be used, just enough to make the dough soft enough; the paste must be mixed with only the tips of the fingers, the lighter the touch the better; heavy kneading and working spoils the flakiness. The paste must be rolled on a board floured enough to prevent sticking, and the butter laid over it, then the dough folded, rolled again, more butter laid on it, folded again and rolled until all the butter is used. Lay the dough on a plate and set on ice until wanted.

A delicious dessert for a luncheon is made thus: Get a set of the pretty little irons called rosettes, which cost but little. Make a pancake batter by beating light two eggs and adding a pint of milk, two teaspoonfuls of sugar and a pinch of salt, with flour enough to thicken. Have the little irons hot and fill with the batter. The irons are so shaped that there are thin partitions, and the batter bakes almost immediately. Fill while warm with any fruit preserves or creams, or let get cold and fill with ice cream.

For pies, roll paste about a quarter of an inch thick, adding an extra thickness for the edge. The regular puff paste requires a very hot oven, but rot allowed to scorch. After baking, the pie should not be reheated, but may be kept on ice for twenty-four hours.

Whipping Cream

Many housewives complain that, in whipping cream, they fail to get it firm, and it goes back to thin cream. To "whip" successfully, the cream used must be very thick and rich—what is called "double cream," and the cream should be set for more than twenty-four hours. It should be on ice for several hours before using, and the bowl containing it must be set in another vessel filled with cracked ice; sweeten and flavor

the cream to taste; have ready a second bowl, very cold, at hand, and use an egg-beater to whip the ice; as the froth rises transfer it to the other bowl, and if wished particularly thick a sieve should be used to allow any unbeaten to drop through. When there is doubt about the richness of the cream, dissolve a teaspoonful of gelatine in a little cold milk for each quart of cream. Put the cup containing the gelatine over boiling water and stir until the gelatine is entirely dissolved; when cool, but not set, whip it into the cream, and set on ice a couple of hours before serving, and this will firm it.

Green Apple Pie

Do not stew the apples before making the pie, and this presupposes good apples. Cover the bottom crust to the edge with apples, peeled, cored and quartered, and each quarter cut into three pieces lengthwise. Lay them evenly and sprinkle a very little salt over them, not quite enough sugar to sweeten, a thread of good molasses over every part of the apple to enrich and brown it, a dust of cinnamon and the same of grated nutmeg, distributing it evenly so all will cook well into the fruit. If the fruit lacks juice, add a spoonful of water; if liked, a few drops of lemon juice, dropped here and there, adds to its flavor. Secure the upper crust firmly to the under and bake in a moderate oven. In making apple pies, green or ripe, remember there are apples and apples, and be sure you get the right sort.

Sponge Cake

We are frequently asked for directions for making sponge cake that will not be dry and crumbly. Good quality of cake does not depend entirely on the proportions of ingredients, but very largely on the way in which those ingredients are put together. Much of this can only be learned by observation, and practical experience. Not every housewife, even though she may be an excellent cook otherwise, can successfully make cake. Here are some directions which will aid the beginner, and they are but a small part of what one should know in regard to cake making and baking: "Sponge cakes depend for lightness upon the amount of air which is beaten into the mixture before baking. The following, though often varied with good results provided a larger amount of air is entangled in the batter, is a safe rule: Never stir a sponge batter, as the air already entangled is thus allowed to escape; beating, cutting and folding are the correct strokes. Separate the eggs, and beat the yolks until very thick and lemon-colored, and beat the whites until they are stiff and dry. Add the sugar to the yolks and beat again, then add the flavoring. Beat in the whites of the eggs, flour sifted with the salt, and finally cut and fold. For this stroke, use a case knife, adding the flour gradually and cutting it in. Never stir it. Three eggs, one-half cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of flour, a pinch of salt, one teaspoonful of lemon juice and grated yellow rind from one-half a lemon are the correct proportions for a small loaf. * * * But after all, it depends on the baking. Many a promising cake has been ruined in the oven because there must be too much left to the individual judgment. There can be no hard and fast rules laid down, but the stereotyped cooking school rule is helpful—it divides the time into quarters: first quarter the batter rises; second quarter it continues to rise and begins to brown; third quarter it continues to brown; fourth quarter finish baking and shrink from the pan.