



The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Waris Harty

What Really Matters

It matters little where I was born,
Or if my parents were rich or poor,
Whether they shrank from the cold
world's scorn,
Or walked in the pride of wealth
secure;
But whether I live an honest life,
And hold my integrity firm in my
clutch,
I tell you, my brother, as plain as I
can,
It matters much!

It matters little how long I stay
In a world of sorrow, sin and care;
Whether in youth I am called away,
Or live till my bones and pate are
bare!
But whether I do the best I can
To soften the weight of adversity's
touch
On the faded cheek of my fellow man,
It matters much!

It matters little where be my grave,
Or on the land or on the sea,
By pouring brook, 'neath stormy
wave,
It matters little or naught to me;
But whether the Angel of Death
comes down
And marks my brow with His lov-
ing touch,
As one that shall wear the victor's
crown,
It matters much!

The Autumn's Bounty

September brings us so bountiful a harvest that we scarcely know how to care for it all. While the city and village woman is starving for the fruits and vegetables which her limited income will not allow her to reach, the country sister has but to put forth her hand and gather of the best. The canning, preserving, pickling, jellifying and jamming are all fascinating works for the thrifty housewife, but in many families, there are more fruits than jars or cans, or, the gude wife longs for variety, after she has filled her shelves with more than enough for her family needs. There are still wagon loads of fruits that must be sold, fed to the stock, or left rotting on the ground. What may she do? In olden times, before canning was so much a thing of course, our mothers used the best of such fruits and vegetables for drying, using the beautiful autumn sunshine instead of the cooking range for the purpose. If you have eaten only the dirty, fly-specked juiceless "dried fruits" of the "corner groceries," you will turn aside with a shudder at the thought. But fruits, properly dried, are delicious. A home-made evaporator will answer, but a small one for family use will not cost so very much. If the house-man is skilled in the use of ordinary tools, he can make a better one for less money, and if care is taken of the screens, or shelves, it should last for years. I think I have given you directions for making two different evaporators, but our friends are kind enough to send us another, and I hope you will try some one of them, and report. Remember, you can not get something for nothing. The fruit you put on the tray is the fruit you must take off; it, of itself, may be fine; but if it is neglected, allowed to scorch, or to dry too long, or to be polluted by the feet of insects, it will always show your neglect, no

matter how carefully you cook it. Try drying a portion, and report your success—or failure. Will you?

Making Money at Home

The girls who live on a fruit farm can make quite a bit of pin money, and, in time, work up a good trade, with dried fruits. Remember, there is no excellence without labor, and in these days of fierce competition, there is no longer to be had something for nothing. The world demands the best, and it is only the best that pays. The dried fruits one finds at the grocery stores are either tasteless and clean, or rank in taste and dirty, and thus the very name of dried fruits is enough to disgust the average buyer. Factory-dried fruits are made from "any old thing," usually, without any question as to its cooking qualities, and they are too often a disappointment in more ways than one. But if a careful selection be made, using only well-flavored cooking apples, peeling with as little handling as possible, drying carefully in halves or quarters, and exercising care and judgment from start to finish, the product will grow in demand as its merits are recognized. While ordinary dried fruits sell for three or four cents a pound (less, to the producer), fruits put up with care will readily sell for twelve to fifteen cents per pound, and the demand for it will soon outstrip the supply. Peaches, peeled and dried carefully, will also find a large sale at good prices. But insects must not be allowed to crawl over the fruit in drying, as the filth once dried on can not be removed. Begin with a few trays over the cooking range, learn how to handle them, and each year do a little more, being always careful in every particular. Of one thing be assured, you must work for success, and you may have to wait a little for it, but if you are "faithful in little things," as time passes, you will "get your name in the papers." The one greatest trouble with women and girls is that they allow a little failure to discourage them, and they do not stick to their work. It is but for the moment, with most of them. They lack patience and dogged perseverance. Few of them look forward to another year—they want it now.

The Yeast Plant

One of the bacteria best known to the housewife is the plant used as a leavener of our bread. The yeast plant acts on the sugar in the flour to form alcohol and carbon dioxide; the gassy bubbles of the carbon dioxide try to break through the tough gluten of the dough, but can not, and so raise the whole mass, and this makes the dough light and porous. The yeast plant works best in a temperature of seventy-five to ninety degrees Fahrenheit. The housewife soon learns that too high or too low a temperature will kill it. The beginner often scalds her yeast and then wonders why her bread is so solid. Baking kills the ferment, and the gas is dissipated, the alcohol driven out, and the gluten stiffened. The caramelizing of the surface by heat gives the nutty flavor to good bread. The reason for much of the sour bread is that the heat of the inside of the loaf is not high enough during baking to kill the bacteria, which go on working, and the result is sour bread. The oven

should be hot enough to raise the temperature of the inside of the loaf to 212 degrees. There is much more to the making of good bread than unadulterated flour or lively yeasts, and only experience can get the best results, even where one has the best of materials. Everything can not be learned from the printed page—one has to be "shown" many things and happy is the woman who has had good home training before she takes upon herself the duties of a home of her own, whether she must be simply the mistress, or must herself perform the work of the cook.

The point at which water boils depends upon where the water is. At sea-level, it is 212 degrees Fahrenheit; at the City of Mexico, 200; at Quito, 194; on some of the high mountains, it is 180 degrees. The higher the altitude, the lower the boiling point.

Table Talk

The spoon should be held underhand, that is, the hand under the spoon; you will get at your mouth better and your elbows will be held more gracefully.

The fork should be held in the same position as the spoon if it is to be used in the same way—that is for carrying food to the mouth. For carving the meat, the fork must be held in the left hand, and both knife and fork should be held "overhand," the back of the hand up, and the fore finger on the back of the fork, the prongs turned down.

Knife and fork and spoon are all held by the end of the handle, and not half way up. The teaspoon, when not in use, should lie on the saucer, not standing up in the cup.

When the knife is not in use, it may lie across the edge of the plate on the right; or, if little round butter-plates are used, it is permissible to rest the tip of the knife on the butter-plate, the handle on the cloth. The knife and fork should not rest on the table at angles to the dinner plate, with their tips on its rim, either during or after meals are finished. If butter-knives are furnished, when not in use they rest on the bread and butter plates at the left, which hold also the individual piece of bread and any little relish, like olives and celery.

The fork is used instead of the spoon for all vegetables, including peas, for berries, for frozen desserts, and is used instead of the knife for cutting croquettes, soft crusts—anything that does not actually need carving. The knife must be used for cutting meats, fowl, fish. The fork is so important for lifting foods that its shape is something of a cross between a fork and a spoon.

Tea and coffee should be taken only from the cup, not from the spoon at all. Many of us very sensibly taste from the spoon first, to gauge the temperature, but it is not quite correct. The beverage (tea or coffee) should never be poured out into the saucer to cool. Now-a-days, such an action is classed with the sin of eating with the knife.

Drying Fruits

Select large, nice, juicy peaches, apples or pears, if you wish nice cooking fruit by this method. Plums, cherries, grapes, and nearly all other fruits may be dried in the same way, but just now we are "doing up" the

peaches and apples. For your own use, or for extra priced fruits for the market, take of the best. If you have the old Maiden's Blush apple, you will find that is one of the most delicious of dried fruits. Halve the apple before peeling, and with a sharp pointed knife, take out the core from each half, then peel, handling as little as possible. You will soon find it can be done dextrously and skillfully. Prepare only enough at one time to fill the evaporator, as you do not want the apples discolored. Place the halves core-side up, on the tray, which should be a light wooden frame covered with suitable wire, as this lets the air get to the whole surface of the fruit at once, drying uniformly. Fill all the trays in the evaporator, and set over the fire, or even on the back of the range. The heat should be only like good, hot sunshine. Under the frame of trays drop a pinch of flour of sulphur, which will bleach the fruit and keep it from turning brown. Every half hour, change the trays, putting the top tray on the bottom cleats, each time lifting the tray one step higher, thus giving all an equal chance, stirring occasionally or turning each piece separately; as the fruit shrinks in drying, fill each tray with pieces from another tray, thus saving room, but do not crowd. Peaches, halved, pitted and then peeled, dried this way are delicious; but you must have good fruit to begin with. If the trays are used out of doors, in the sunshine, cover them with mosquito netting to protect from insect filth, and take inside before the dew begins to fall, and do not put out until the morning is well aired. On damp or rainy days, the indoor drying can go on uninterruptedly. It pays to dry fruit thus for the family, and is little trouble.

A Valuable Recipe

From the Scientific American: To render wall paper adaptable for washing with soap and water without destroying the colors, make a solution of two parts of borax and two parts of stick lac, shellac, or other lac, in twenty-four parts of hot water. Strain the solution through a fine cloth filter and coat the paper with it several times, rubbing the latter with a soft brush after every application till a brilliant polish is obtained. It is immaterial whether the paper is already pasted on the walls, or still in rolls.

Apple Jelly

Sour fruit not quite ripe is best for jelly. Remove the stems, wash, wipe, cut out blemishes, then without peeling or coring, cut the apples in suitable pieces for cooking, and cover with water, and set on the fire. Simmer until quite soft, then drain through a jelly bag, leaving to drip over night. To each quart of the juice thus obtained, add the juice of one lemon, and cook down, skimming well before adding the sugar, which must be heated before adding to the juice, allowing a pint of juice to a pound of sugar. Let simmer until the sugar is dissolved, stirring, then bring to a brisk boil; after twenty minutes of boiling, the jelly should be ready to form, when it should be put into glasses, or receptacles, and when it gets cold, pour paraffin wax over the top to seal.

Some Pickle Recipes

Mixed Pickles—First, having decided on what you wish to use, lay the vegetables in brine; the gherkins or small cucumbers must be packed in a crock, alternating layers of cucumbers and salt, and left in this, covered with water, for a full week, stirring them up from the bottom, every day or two. A weighted plate should be kept on top. When ready