



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

The Valiant

Not for the star-crowned heroes, the men that conquer and slay,
But a song for those that bore them, the mothers braver than they!
With never a blare of trumpets, with never a surge of cheers,
They march to the unseen hazard—pale, patient volunteers;
No hate in their hearts to steel them—with love for a circling shield,
To the mercy of merciless nature their fragile selves they yield.
Now God look down in pity, and temper thy sternest law;
From the field of dread and peril bid Pain his troops withdraw!
Then unto her peace triumphant let each spent victor win,
Though life be bruised and trembling—yet lit from a flame within
Is the wan sweet smile of conquest, gained without war's alarms,
The woman's smile of victory for the new life safe in her arms.
So not for the star-crowned heroes, the men that conquer and slay,
But a song for those that bore them, the mothers braver than they!
—M. A. De Wolfe Howe,
in Harmonies.

Spring Work

Our housewives do not need to be told that there is enough to do these days; but one thing must be done, even though some others may be neglected. Get rid of insect pests in the house. Clean up, paint, whitewash, fill all cracks, use plenty of carbolic acid in the drains and in dirty places; use strong Persian insect powder, gasoline, coal oil, strong brine or strong alum water in the haunts of the pests. Clean out all damp places, and burn all old rags. Fight the cockroaches to extermination. Nothing can be accomplished unless you keep up the battle until the last one goes. Fumigate rooms and closets and cellars with sulphur, and the other fumigaters recommended by the Department of Agriculture at Washington, and take counsel with those who have overcome the enemy. Remember, every one is liable to have these insects come or brought to them; but the obligation to keep the intruders is denied. One woman, who was moving out of a house, said to the one moving in: "You'll be sorry you took this house—it is full of bedbugs; I know, for I have lived here two years!" The reply was, "that such a condition of things looked worse for the housekeeping qualities of the woman than for the house. Fancy harboring a houseful of bedbugs for two years! In three to six months' time, the worst infested house should be rid of them, with good housekeeping. Fight them! And begin right now, before the new crop is hatched.

There are several roach poisons on the market that have proven of value, but the best insecticide is a thoroughly determined housewife. Keep all fragments of food off the floor, and out of the reach of the roaches, and dry up all damp places. Use plenty of the powder, and have it fresh and strong.

House Cleaning

When washing or wiping off the furniture, do not forget that the backs of picture frames and tops of tall furniture, tops of doors, are all good dust catchers, and vermin is apt to hide in neglected places.

A good scouring soap is made by

melting a small bar of white soap over a gentle heat, then mix with it equal parts of whiting that has been sifted, and very fine white sand, about one-fourth the quantity of the sand as of powdered borax and soda.

For removing paint from furniture, or wood-work that is to be repainted, use caustic soda, made by dissolving one pound of soda and one-half pound of fresh lime in five quarts of water. Boil a few minutes in a copper or brass kettle, then let settle, pour off the clear liquid, and put in jugs; then, on the sediments in the kettle, pour other five quarts of water, boil a few minutes, and pour this off into jugs. The first liquid is very strong, and will take the paint off readily; it must not touch the hands. The second is excellent for scouring pots, kettles, pans, and unpainted wood work. Must be labelled, and used carefully, as caustic lye is very severe on the hands.

This caustic lye is excellent for pouring in cracks and crevices where vermin are suspected, but will take the paint off of anything.

If the cellar is musty or foul-odored, close all the doors and windows and burn enough sulphur in it to fill the place with the fumes. Leave it closed for an hour or two, then open and air, and later whitewash the walls and ceilings with two coats of good whitewash. Sulphur gas is heavy and settles, and the work should be done on a windy day in order to have the fumes well blown out.

To Remove Wall Paper

To remove old paper effectually, wet the paper all over two or three times a day with a rather damp cloth. When the paper is made quite wet in this way, it is easily peeled off. If the walls are to be repapered, wash them first with soda and water, to which has been added a few drops of carbolic acid, and let the windows and doors be left open for a few days. Then paper or paint as desired. Whitewashed walls which are to be papered should be previously well brushed over with strong vinegar; vinegar should be used instead of water in making the paste, and the paper will adhere to the walls. If the paper persists in cracking and tearing off the walls, it may be made to stick by putting it on again with a smooth, raw paste of flour and thick sour milk. Wall paper that has become bruised or torn off in small patches and can not be matched, may be repaired by the use of ordinary paints used by children. Mix the colors until you get as nearly as possible the desired shade, and lightly touch up the broken places, and the disfigurement will be quite unnoticed.

"Skippers in Meat"

E. E., Texas, writes us that "the skippers found on meat, and in the folds of same, are not the product of the little black bug that infests meat, as some people think. Let all those who have charge of cooking or caring for meat, look for a long-bodied fly seen about meats, cooked or raw. Look patiently for a bunch of eggs, if nothing more. When first hatched it takes the best eyes to see them. I have believed for years that many people die from eating the larvae of this fly. All cooks look after the larger flies, but

few pay any attention to this stupid looking gnat-fly. Just how the little bug comes out, I can not tell, or what becomes of it after the season is over; but it is often found where skippers are not. The bug bores into the dry meat, where the larger fly may deposit its eggs. Never saw any young flies."

For the Home Seamstress

To make machine hemstitching, use a fine thread and very coarse needle. This will show better on fine material, but may be used for pillow cases, sheets and the like.

There is nothing that lengthens the life of a garment like good care and instant reparation of any rent, tear, darn, broken threads, or frayed edges. If care is taken to look after the buttons, button-holes, tapes, and other fastenings before putting a garment away, even for a day, there would be time saved when one has to dress. Nothing gives a more untidy look to a person than neglected wear of the garment.

Sew a couple of strong hooks to the belt of the shirtwaist, and a couple of strong eyes to the back of the skirt, and when the two are put on, be sure you fasten them together with the hooks and eyes. Do not depend on safety pins, for they are not always safe enough to prevent the pulling apart of the two garments.

A layette for the baby that will answer all practical purposes consists of four shirts, four flannel bands, four pinning blankets, four flannel skirts, four cambric slips, four simple plain slips, for night, and four day dresses; there should be four wrappers, four little sacks, four pairs of bootees and a half dozen bibs, as many napkins—dozens of them—as you can get, a cap and a cloak. A shoulder blanket for wear for the first few months is a necessity. All sewing should be done by hand, if possible, as the seams are softer, and those to be worn next the delicate skin of the new baby should all be hand-sewn.

Do not neglect to keep the sewing machine clean and well oiled, have your scissors sharp, and your supply of needles, pins, thread and machine attachments ready at hand. Before beginning to sew, see that everything is in readiness for work.

Getting Ready for Summer

In putting rugs away for the summer, be sure to roll them tightly and stand them on end. Wrap them in tar paper, and paste a close covering of newspapers over them to exclude the moth, and put them away in a dark, dry closet. See that nothing is piled on them.

Before beginning to wash the windows, go over them with a dust brush or cloth, removing as much dust as possible, cleaning the little corners. Then, put a little ammonia into warm water, wash them with a white cloth and wipe with one free from lint, polishing with crumpled newspaper. Dabbing spanish whiting wet with ammonia on the glass, then letting it dry, and dusting off, is a good way to clean the glass.

When fumigating a room, open the bureau drawers so they will get the fumes; open the closet doors, the wardrobe doors, and throw the mattress and bed covering over the chairs. Sulphur candles may be had of the druggist, and are much easier used than the stick sulphur that has to be burnt in a kettle. This should

be done with any room where a contagious disease has been confined, or where vermin is lodged in the walls and wood work. Remember that the fumes of sulphur will corrode all metals in the room, and these should be removed, as well as all house plants. Do not leave the sewing machine in the room that is to be fumigated.

Hot vinegar is said to remove paint from glass without injury to the paint on the frame. Soda solution will remove the paint from both glass and wood work. Whiting mixed to a cream with tepid water is good for cleaning painted wood work, as well as the glass.

To remove marks of match scratches from wood work, rub the scratches with a cut lemon, and then apply a little vaseline, rubbing well in; this will prevent any further scratching of matches on that place, as the match will not ignite from the scratching.

General Household

When the stoves are taken down, before putting away, take equal parts of coal oil and pure linseed oil, mix thoroughly and apply to the pipes and stoves with a soft piece of cloth, rubbing thoroughly over all the surface. For stoves, there is an enamel made purposely for the work, which should be applied to all the iron or steel surface; this will harden, and prevent rust, and when the stove is brought in again in the fall, it will be already blacked. Mark the lengths of pipe, elbows and other things belonging to each stove and store with the stove.

Beeswax, dissolved in benzole should be applied to steel articles to be stored for the summer. The benzole will evaporate rapidly and leave the steel coated with a thin film of wax.

Of course you have a washing machine and wringer. If not, the deficiency should be supplied as soon as possible. Washing machines are a household necessity, and with one, even a delicate woman can do out a large washing. See that the working parts are kept well oiled, kept free from gummy dirt. If the wringer rollers become stained, clean them with a cloth dipped in coal oil, then wash with soap suds. Loose the rollers before putting the wringer away. Keep a little water in the machine to keep from drying out and becoming leaky.

A bread mixer is a kitchen necessity and one of a size suitable to the baking needs should be had. It saves the arms a lot of strain, and makes better bread. There is a cake mixer, too, but get the bread mixer first, and use it. Get everything you can to reduce the work of the kitchen. It will pay.

For cleaning, two ounces of aqua ammonia, one quart of soft water, one teaspoonful of saltpeter, one ounce of good white soap, cut fine; dissolve the soap and other ingredients in the water, and mix well. Apply to any grease or dirt, and it will have to go.

Requested Recipes

For good breakfast biscuits, take one pint of flour, measure after sifting; into this mix a heaping teaspoonful of best baking powder and a scant teaspoonful of salt; add a tablespoonful of lard, mixing it with the fingers until it is thoroughly incorporated with the flour; with a spoon, stir into a soft dough with sweet milk or milk and water. As some flour absorbs more liquid than others, the exact amount will have to be learned by experience; the dough should be barely stiff enough to admit of rolling on a well-floured board, until about half an inch thick, cut into small biscuits and bake about ten minutes, or until done. Anything with baking powder as one