



The Home Department

Conducted by
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In the Springtime

Now, even in dream or story,
Did you picture aught like this?
Come, walk within the glory
And see the young leaves kiss.
The plum trees are in blossom,
The peach trees, bright and fair;
There's pink buds for your bosom,
And white ones for your hair.
Long lanes of rosy sweetness
For us to wander through,
All lined with fresh completeness,
With walls of daintiest blue.
The apple trees are blushing
Their breath is sweet as love;
The pear tree faintly flushing,
Shower petals from above.
The roughish young wind scrambles
Through blooming arches white,
Whose soft snows filter downward,
And strew the ground with light.
The birds are wildly singing,
Winged blossoms fly about,
Through petals white or rosy,
The droning bee creeps out.
Ho, for the spring is calling!
The birds have been sent to say
You cannot count your losses,
If you come not out today!

—Mrs. M. C. Victor.

"Growing Old Gracefully"

It is a help to keep young in spirit, to always look for the funny side of life, and there always is a funny side, if we hunt for it in earnest. One should retain their enthusiasms as long as possible. One cannot help the gray hair and wrinkles—time always brings them; but the spirit need not grow old and morbid and gloomy. A happy, youthful spirit makes even a wrinkled face appear very attractive. Another thing we should do is to keep the love element alive; we must cultivate sympathy and kindness, and "love our neighbor," no matter what faults he or she may have. There is always something lovable about every human being. If we look for the good qualities, we shall find them. We should think health, talk health, and act health, and determine that we will keep well at any cost. Keep spiritually and mentally wholesome, and the body can scarcely be diseased. We must not brood; we must not worry—only the serene soul is strong, and no human being is any stronger than the weakest part; if we are strong mentally, bodily and spiritually, we shall be happy. Worry is a disease, or a symptom of disease, and every moment of worry weakens the soul for its daily battle. A writer has said that "Worry is spiritual near-sightedness—a fumbling way of looking at little things and magnifying their importance." One of the strongest cures for the worry germ is to have faith in the wisdom of our Creator; to trust that the "right side" of the tapestry will show the perfect pattern, no matter what the side we work on—the seamy side—discovers. "Faith, hope and charity"—these are the elements that make for a graceful, attractive old age. We are all here for the purpose of winning the battle; we cannot do it, if we lose faith in our Leader; but if we live right, think right and act right, we have "done what we could."

Early Spring Duties

The spring fever is developing rapidly, and one must keep the eyes open for the little things that spell comfort as well as convenience.

There is nothing better for the out-houses, the cellar, or the ordinary kitchen, than a good, well-made old-fashioned white wash. There are many whiteners on the market, but they do no better than lime, while lime is one of the strongest disinfectants known. It should be used freely in cellars, about drains, in all outhouses and barnyard buildings. For the summer kitchen, or storage shed, there is nothing better, and it is so cheap that it may be renewed several times during the season.

Do not allow any one to throw slops about the back yard. Do not allow the scrapings of the dinner plates, the scraps of bread, or other food refuse to be thrown about in the yards, for this is one of the strongest attractions to mice, ants, roaches and other pests. Such waste also brings stray dogs and cats into the yard, and nothing gives a more untidy appearance to the surroundings of the house.

If you have no animals to feed the garbage to, put it into the firebox, or the garbage hole, another good way is to dig a hole in some corner and dump everything that will rot into it, all kinds of vegetable trimmings, lawn clippings, and scraps of food, covering the hole with a board, and sprinkle a few handfuls of dust on the garbage to keep it from smelling. Pour greasy dishwater in the hole, and dirty soap suds, and by all, you will have the finest compost for your potted plants that can be wanted. Begin now, and by fall the contents of the pit will be a fine lot of the best kind of manure.

Burn every useless thing that litters the yards. Put all the combustible things in the kindling pile, and all kinds of paper and trash may be burned harmlessly by making a "cage" of poultry wire and putting the trash inside for the flames. The wind cannot then blow it about, and there will be no danger of fires.

Baby's Milk

From the first of May on into the fall months, it is better to pasteurize the baby's milk, as bacteria develops rapidly during warm weather. One can get a regular pasteurizer for about three dollars, but the work can be efficiently done with less expense by putting the bottles of milk in a vessel of cold water and then bringing the water rapidly to a boil; then remove the vessel from the stove, cover with a blanket and let remain about half an hour; then take out of the water and cool as quickly as possible, by running water at first warm, but gradually cooler over the bottles until they are quite cold, after which they should be set on ice until the baby's meal-time, then warm to the proper degree for the baby's use. Whatever is done, be sure to keep the milk clean, and in a cold place, putting it away as soon as it is delivered.

The Isle of Patmos

Patmos is a rocky island in the Egean sea, just south of Samos, a few miles from the coast of Asia Minor, and contains about sixteen square miles. It is inhabited almost wholly by Greek sponge fishers, whose huts line the entire coast. On the rocky summit of the island is a Greek monastery, built in 1088, and called "Monastery of St. John, the Divine." Of the stay of St. John

on this island there is no record except that given by himself in the first chapter of Revelations, where he tells us that "I, John, was in the isle of Patmos, for the words of God and the testimony of Jesus." It is supposed that he was sent thither by his persecutors about the date of 68 A. D., when Nero was harassing both Jews and Christians with his cruelties. Some authorities suppose it was long after that date, during the persecution of the emperor Domitian, about 90 to 96, A. D. It is not known how long he remained on the island, but it is shown by the records of the Christian Fathers that he returned to Ephesus, and that the Apocalypse, or Revelations, together with the Gospel and Epistles which bear his name, were written at that place. It is known that he died in Ephesus at an advanced age, but neither date nor manner of his death is known.

Window Hangings

It is said that one's neighbors often make up their minds as to the tastes and character of the household largely from the curtains which are hung at the windows. The curtains should be simple, tasteful, unobtrusive and satisfying to the eye, rather than showy, elaborate and in-harmonious with the surroundings. The washable curtain of simple design and unpretentious fabric is much more suitable in the long run. Lace is very lovely while it lasts, and many cheap ones are very nice while they are new; but unless very excellent care is given them when laundered, even the best of them soon wear out. If inexpensive materials are used, such as sheer muslin, sheer dimity, cross-bar muslin, or even plain lawn, or Swiss muslin, one can make them very lovely with feather-stitching or other fancy stitching, braids, rows of netting hemstitching, sheer embroidery, lace insertion and edging, tucks, ruffles or even plain hems, and the work may be made very effective. All of these materials come in very inexpensive grades, but it is well to get a good quality that will bear repeated laundering.

Sweeping and Dusting

In many articles on domestic economy, we are warned of the danger of dust in the house, and taught how to remove it in the right manner. Not all of us can have the dustless cleaners or the expensive machinery to free our houses from the accumulations of dirt with but little labor; even the carpet sweeper, which is at best but a limited convenience, is beyond the reach of the majority of housewives. So we should learn the best way of using the old-fashioned broom, dust brush and cloths. We are warned of the dangers of dust, and told that we should not sweep with closed doors and windows, as this, with the dusting that follows is but a disturbance and redistribution of the dust particles, only the coarser dirt being taken out. We are told that in dust there lurks the deadly germs of disease, not only the poison fallen from our own bodies, but that brought in from the street on our shoes and skirts and clothing. Where the broom must be relied on, the doors and windows should be opened, if possible, and for the heavy sweeping, the days should be chosen when

the wind is "just right" to carry the dust out of the house. Any rugs small enough to be handled should be carried out on the porch, or grass, and rugs or carpets that must be cleaned indoors should be well sprinkled with wet tea-leaves or shredded paper, wet bran, coarse salt, or anything that will catch the dust instead of stirring it up. Sweeping should be done with short, light strokes, and the dust taken up frequently, rather than, as some housewives do, carrying it from room to room. Where it is possible to have the vacuum cleaner, the problem is solved, as all dust and its denizens are taken up in that way. It is to be hoped that the day will soon come when every housewife can afford an apparatus of this kind, but at present, the cost of the machinery is too great for the very large majority.

Over-Working the Woman

If one has even a small bit of ground, there is a strong inclination to "plant something," and where there is room for a garden, it is time to get it planted. But gardening is hard work—men's work, and women should not be expected to do it. Too many women strive to do everything in the way of "chores" to help the menfolks in the busy times, and this, besides the household duties, such as cooking, washing, ironing, caring for the chickens, milking the cows, feeding the pigs and calves, baking, mending, sewing, often cutting the wood and bringing the water from a distance, in addition to the never-ending little things that crowd her from morning until away into the night, then cradling a sick or ailing baby in her arms until morning. The husbands of these wives supply themselves with labor-saving machinery, but leave the wife to get along the best she can with the old hand-implements. While this will not apply to all husbands, it does to a too large majority of them. Don't you think something should be done.

Bits of Information

Rice should be washed and allowed to remain in water over night, and can thus be cooked in ten minutes when wanted for breakfast. If like dried, it can be drained and set in the oven and dried, ready for the table.

Acid fruits, eaten for breakfast, should be followed by either eggs, a bit of bacon, or minced meats of some kind; if followed by cereals, they are apt to cause discomfort through indigestion.

Instead of meats for breakfast, a broiled tomato, egg-plant, corn muffins, or something of the kind, is much more wholesome, and one should begin to lessen the quantity of meats as the days warm up.

Griddle cakes are cooked so quickly that the center is not well done, which makes them very indigestible. If the batter is put into muffin cups and baked for half an hour, they would be nutritious and wholesome. It is very necessary that starches should be well cooked.

Helps for the Housewife

If a cotton rug is to be washed, it is generally of such proportions and thickness that it cannot be wrung. Lay it on a smooth, inclined floor, or table, and go over it with an ordinary rolling pin, rolling it as you would dough. This will force the water out, without wrinkling the rug, and it will dry much quicker.

Where the walls and ceilings have become streaked and black with smoke, put two-thirds of a cupful of coal oil in a gallon of hot water, and go over the surface with a cloth wet with this mixture. Keep the