



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

Disenchanted

In a scene of festal beauty,
Where the crystal globes of light,
Wreathed with tropic buds and blossoms,
Made a noonday of the night,
Where the tinkling, perfumed fountains
Woke the puzzled birds to song—
There I met her—fairest, brightest,
Loveliest of a lovely throng.

Round her, like a veil of glory,
Swept a wealth of golden hair;
On her brow, so broad and sunny,
Burned a star of jewels rare;
Like a vision all ethereal,
Robed in clouds of misty lace,
Through the mazy dance she floated,
Airy, fairy, full of grace.

When she spoke, her tones of sweetness
Trembled through the perfumed air;
'Twas as if some lingering seraph
Faintly touched his harp-string there.
Marie was her name, she told me,
With a soft, enchanting sigh,
And my heart in raptured echoed—
"Marie, I will win, or die."

Only once again I met her—
In a parlor dark and cold,
Where the musty, shrouded splendors
Seemed to gather graveyard mould.

Where the prosy light of morning
Showed the clothes line in the rear,
And the air suggested "laundry,"
Boiling briskly very near.

Through the doorway glanced a vision—
Was it mocking? Was it true?
Faded, slipshod, draggled, dirty!
Temper, dress and hair askew.
With one startled glance it vanished,
With hysteric shriek, below,
And I heard—"Good Lud, Mariar,
How was I to tell your beau!"
—Anonymous.

Vacation Days

Do not rob yourself of a little recreation. No matter what excuse one offers, a day, or a few days of relaxation and rest from the continued grind of whatever occupation one follows, is imperative. No one needs the rest more than the house-mother whose little brood of babies has kept her keyed up to the highest tension of care during the hot, dreaded months of midsummer. One of the most delightful ways to spend a few vacation days is with a tent, and clothes that will stand the rough and tumble of camping out. As to the food—well, there is an appetite lurking in the folds of the tent that only the "out-doors" can give, and the one thing to allow for is a good supply of "eats," and the easiest to find is a good, clear stream where the water habit may supplement the appetite for eats. Do try the vacation, if only a short distance away from the daily grind.

Something About Breads

If one were to believe everything to be read on the printed page, we would be tempted to do without eating at all, for we no sooner get accustomed to eating some recommended dish than some one supposed to know rushes in with objections so serious that we drop not only the dish, but the food, and we don't

know whether it is worth while trying to eat anything. We are but just getting accustomed to the use of whole wheat breads, and have decided to believe the great good we are told is to follow its use, when some recent investigations betray the fact that whole-wheat-meal contains, along with the highly nutritious matter, a large quantity of earthy stuffs which act unfavorably upon persons of advanced years. They tell us that the constant use of such bread induces rheumatism, paralysis, asthma, locomotor ataxia, diseases of the brain, and hardening of the arteries. So, we are placed between two evils, and our only escape from either of them is to choose the other. The very best thing to do, in any case, is to find out what food serves us best, and eat it—eat all we want of it; but avoid extremes. We are told to submit our diet to the views of a physician before adopting it; but the physician, in most cases, knows less about it than we, ourselves, do. The most sensible thing to do, it seems to me, is to make a little study of our own needs and notions, and if, after trying a food, it disagrees with us, try something else; but as the food that disagrees at one time seems to be just what we want and need, the next time, we should try to use a little intelligent judgment about things.

Egg-Plant

We call these vegetables "egg-plants," but I do not know why, as it is the fruit, and not the plant, that is used. The fruit is not so well-known as it should be, and many people do not know what to do with it. Those on the market are six or seven inches long, with a diameter of five or less inches, and are of a rich purple color. They may be cooked in various ways, and find favor after one gets used to their flavor; if well cooked, they are excellent. We have given many recipes for cooking them, from time to time. Try them.

Crocheted and Knitted Articles

There is nothing prettier or more convenient than the soft, fluffy articles that can be made with the knitting needles or crochet hook, and among the most useful are the shoulder capes, scarfs and head-wraps. White articles are most in favor, but for the fact that the usual manner of washing them is ruination. Here is a method of washing them that will leave them "like new," if properly done: Make a suds of warm, soft water and a good soap (white); put in the article to be washed and squeeze (don't rub) with both hands, sousing it up and down in the water, until it looks perfectly clean; rinse it through clean, warm water until all the soapy water and discoloration is out of it, and to do this may require two or three rinse waters. While transferring from one water to the next squeeze, but do not wring, pressing all the water possible out of it with the hands; then shake well, but gently, and have a clean white cloth pinned on a board or table; lay the article on this, not stretching, and by no means let it pull into strings with its own weight, but fluff it up in piles, or loosely on the cloth and leave to dry, tossing about occasionally as it dries. Another way that is recommended is to put the article in a cheese cloth bag and hang it in a

draft, shaking and tossing the bag about while it is drying. A way of "dry-cleaning" is to put the article in a bag with quite hot flour or corn meal, and knead or rub as you would a dough keeping the bag closed and working the flour. When clean, repeat, using clean, warm flour for "rinsing." There is a naphtha soap on the market that many housewives use for such things, and the work is easily done. Gasoline may be used in careful hands, but it is dangerous. No crocheted article should be hung up wet, as its weight draws it into stringiness.

Drying Fruit and Vegetables

The prices of canned and dried fruits and vegetables have begun to climb, and one should take advantage of any rains that are to come or have come, and plant vegetables for late gathering. Many things may be planted for a late crop of green things, and everything that can be grown will "come in handy." Late peas, beans, corn, and other vegetables can be dried and are quite as good as the canned things, if care is taken of them during the process. Not only the housewife who finds herself short of jars and cans, but also the woman who likes variety should have a supply. No matter what you think of the "store" things which are sold in bulk, if you dry good fruit or vegetables, taking care of them, you will find them fully equal to the canned goods—some say better. To have good dried apples or peaches, one must see that the fruit is at least "good," if not choice, and ripe enough to can. Free-stone peaches and the early ripening melon apples are best for drying. Sweet apples will not cook up smooth, whether fresh, canned or dried. Tart apples should be used. To peel peaches which are to be dried, scald for a minute in boiling water, as you do tomatoes, then drop immediately in very cold water. The skin will slip off without trouble. To keep the halves without discoloring while preparing the desired quantity, drop the peach in cold water enough to cover until you are ready to use, then drain. Apples are kept from discoloring in the same way. One should have a little family dryer, to set over the kitchen range, and dry the fruits as they are on hand, if intended only for a family supply. If for marketing, a larger dryer will be more profitable. But often one has a few pecks or bushels of choice apples or peaches, and the small dryer will be just the thing. If you have never tried one, it is time you did. The order of the day is to make the most of what one has, and this work can be done, rain or shine, and so much gained.

The Family Fruit Dryer

One of our readers asks what a "family fruit dryer" is like. In years ago, when I was a hard-working farm wife, I had one of these handy little affairs, and it cost me something like four dollars, but they may not cost so much now. The dryer was about two feet high, the sides made of sheet iron, with slides on the inner side, into which wire-bottomed trays were slipped a few inches apart. There were seven of these trays an inch and a half deep; the prepared fruit was arranged over the bottom of the tray and the dryer was set over the cook stove-top, which should not be too hot. When

the stack or filled trays was set in position, we threw under it a small pinch of sulphur, and this kept the fruit from turning brown. As fast as the trays showed that the fruit was drying, we changed their place, putting the lower tray on top, and continuing until all the trays were dried alike. With an ordinary fire—not hot enough to scorch the fruit, a dryer-full of fruit could be thoroughly dried in ten to twelve hours, making two dryerfuls a day. If the fruit is sliced thinly instead of being halved or quartered only, it will dry much faster. Fruit for the family should not be dried in the sun, open to the dust or dirty insects; such fruit may possibly be washed clean; but—I dunno! It don't look as good as that dried over the range, and is apt to have a touch of sourness about it.

Little Helps

To patch umbrella covers, get a supply of black court plaster from the druggist (which is silk covered with an adherent), moisten the adhesive with a little water and place over the hole on the outside of the umbrella cover, pressing it firmly down; this makes a very neat patch.

Fancy Japan tea trays, and also lacquered wooden ones, may be cleaned by this method: Rub the surface with a flannel dipped in milk until all marks are removed; dry with a clean cloth, sprinkle a little flour over, and polish with a soft piece of old silk.

For bottling catsups, pickles, and sauces, have the corks full large, soak them in boiling water for a few minutes, then force them into the neck of the bottle. They should be put far enough into the neck of the bottle so a little sunken space is left to be filled with a sealing wax.

For removing stoppers from glass bottles, such as decanters, vinalgrettes, etc., run a little sweet oil round the crevice, warm at the fire, then wrap a rag round the stopper, grip the stopper in a jamb of a door, grasp the body of the article and twist gently round to right and left, being careful not to spill any contents, while doing so. The most obstinate and tightly fixed stoppers yield to this method.

The easiest way to clean and sweeten the old glass jars is to wash them carefully, then put them in the wash boiler with enough cold water to cover them, and add enough good soap powder to make a strong suds. Allow them to come to a boil and keep covered; take from the stove and leave to steam until cold, keeping covered. If the jars are to be used at once, rinse them with hot water, and fill rapidly. When buying new jars, see that there are no flaws and blisters in the glass, and test thoroughly for leaks.

For the Cook

This season, when all vegetables and fruits are at a premium, and most of either offered of an inferior quality, it is well to study the bean, rice, macaroni, and kindred foods. The bean is especially worth looking after, being very nutritious and furnishing much muscle-making material, taking the place of lean meat, and can be cooked in various appetizing ways. Another recommendation for it is that it is usually one of the cheapest foods, always on the market, will keep indefinitely and can be bought in quantities and stored, if desired. There are many ways in which dried beans may be prepared for the table, and nearly everybody likes it in some form.

Here is another version of an old story. If any one tries it, please report, as the turpentine string has so often failed. Soak a piece of string in turpentine and tie it around the