

The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

An Eastern Legend

An aged man came late to Abraham's tent;

The sky was dark, and all the plains were bare;
He asked for bread; his strength was well-nigh spent—

His haggard looks implored the tenderest care.

The food was brought. He sat with thankful eyes,

But spake no grace, nor bowed him toward the East;

Safe sheltered here from dark and angry skies,

The bounteous table seemed a royal feast.

But ere his hand had touched the tempting fare,

The patriarch rose, and, leaning on his rod,

"Stranger," he said, "dost thou not bow in prayer?"

Dost thou not fear—dost thou not worship God?"

He answered "Nay." The patriarch sadly said:

"Thou hast my pity. Go; eat not my bread."

Another came that wild and fearful night,

The fierce winds raged and darker grew the sky;

But all the tent was filled with wondrous light,

And Abraham knew the Lord, his God was nigh.

"Where is the aged man," Presence said,

"That asked for shelter from the driving blast?"

Who made thee master of thy Master's bread?

What right hadst thou the wanderer forth to cast?"

"Forgive me, Lord," the patriarch answer made

With downcast look, with bowed and trembling knee;

"Ah, me, the stranger might with me have stayed,

But, Lord, Dear Lord, he would not worship Thee."

"I've borne him long," God said, "and still I wait;

Couldst thou not lodge him, one night, in thy gate?"

—Wallace Bruce.

The Spring Resurrection

March the first, with snow lying about in patches, and the mercury still hugging the freezing mark, there were hyacinth leaves pushing out of the soil under my window, and almost before we begin to realize that the winter is ended, there will be bud stalks and gay blossoms springing from the hardy bulbs we planted last fall. If you did plant them, you will be reaping the harvest in color and fragrance; but if you did not—you will wish you had, when you look over into the bulb bed in your neighbor's yard.

One snowy morning, when the first bare places began to show up well, a dear girl friend came running in and said: "What do you think! My tuberose is pushing up out of the snow!" "Not really!" I said, for I had never heard of such a thing. So I went with the enthusiastic child to see the tuberose that grew in the snow, only to find hyacinths bulging out of the ground in the bed, and the crocus buds showing in the grass. She assured me she had planted her tuberose bulb right there, and I told her if she did, it would stay right there, but she would see nothing

more of it. When she said she had planted her spotted calla outside, too, I could assure her that she would probably find it coming up some warm day later on, for the spotted calla is almost hardy in the middle states. But I know every one of you will wish you had planted the hardy bulbs last fall.

The latter part of March, plant chrysanthemum seeds in a box for the window. The seeds germinate in about seven days, and as soon as they are large enough each tiny plant should be picked out carefully and transplanted to another box. Early in May they may be set in the open ground. Chrysanthemum seeds do not "come true," and in order to have flowers like the parent plant, you must take root slips from the old plant as soon as the shoots start well, and treat the slips just like plants. Keep the plants growing well until time to take them up in the fall, potting them for bloom in the autumn.

The Date and Citrus Fruits

Very few people know much about the dietary value of the date. The principal use on the table is in the raw, dried state, and it might be used far more frequently, even in this state, to advantage. The date is rich in food value, with its easily digested sugar, and is very energizing. It can be used in many dishes, and is good in all of them. It can be used with cereals, rice, apples, lemon, and in other ways. Puddings, stews, meringues, sauces, cake fillings, and an excellent bread is made by its introduction among the ingredients. A very excellent quality of dried dates can be bought for ten cents a pound. It should be fresh, and not too dry from standing exposed in the store.

The citrus fruits are all valuable as foods. They are sources of energy, rather than as nourishers and muscle producers, as containing mineral salts and acids in a form readily assimilated by the digestive organs. The citrus fruits are oranges, lemons, limes, pomeloes, citrons and kumquats. Pomelos are marketed under the name of grape fruits, and are not very generally used, but are valuable in their place; they make delicious salads, and may be made into various comserves, such as marmalade, jellies, etc.

There are several Farmers' Bulletins sent out by the Department of Agriculture, which give valuable information about these fruits and the methods of preparing them. These bulletins are free for the asking, through the secretary of agriculture, or by application to your senator or congressman.

Cleaning the Clock

For the cheap clocks so necessary in the kitchen and bedroom, the following method of cleaning is given as tried and recommended:

Take the works out of the metal case, which may be done by any one using a little common sense. Usually this is done by taking off the little key handles (or whatever they are called), at the back, the little brass legs and the alarm bell. Pull the back of the case off, and carefully take out the works; fill a quart bowl (or dish or pan large enough and deep enough to contain the works) with gasoline enough to cover the works completely; hold to the upper side and swirl the bunch of wheels briskly back and forth to dislodge

the dirt. If the clock is not too dirty, it will soon start to running in the gasoline, if it has been wound up previous to its submersion, and this will help to work the dirt out, and should be allowed to continue for a short time before taking the works out of the bath. Then set the works in the sun out of doors until the gasoline evaporates, then put into the case again, and fasten the handles, feet, and bells as you found it. The washing should be done out side of the house. Gasoline should never be used for cleaning anything near a particle of fire or flame.

Some Cleaning Suggestions

To clean upholstered furniture, cover the material with a towel and whip with a rattan; then brush the upholstered parts very hard and wipe them quickly with a cloth wrung as dry as possible out of clear hot water, following with a clean white flannel dipped in alcohol, and as soon as the flannel shows dirt wash at once in clean tepid water, otherwise the alcohol will dissolve the dirt and deposit it in streaks on the surface of the fabric. Clean alcohol lightly used with a flannel wrung almost dry will not mark the most delicate fabric; but it must not be further used if the least soil shows on it.

Making Soap

Several requests for soap recipes are at hand, and here are two good recipes just sent in:

To make soap, measure twelve quarts of soft water; take six quarts and put over the fire in a large lard or soap kettle; when it comes to a boil, add five pounds of tallow, or any kind of grease (even cracklings, after frying out the grease); let the grease boil a few minutes and then gradually stir in a one pound box of concentrated lye; while it is boiling, put four ounces each of borax and sal soda into a quart of the water you have already measured; set on the back of the stove until both are dissolved. When the soap begins to get "ropy," which will be in perhaps half an hour, (but give it time, for it must "rope" off the stirring paddle), add the borax and soda; stir well and gradually stir in the remaining five quarts of cold water until thoroughly mixed; then dip out into any vessel or mold, let get cool, cut into bars and dry thoroughly in the air.

Another—Salsoda 6 pounds; lard or tallow, or grease of any kind, six pounds; stone lime three pounds; soft water four gallons. Dissolve the lime and soda by boiling together in the water; stir well, let settle and pour off the clear water; then return the water to the soap kettle and add the lard or grease, and boil until it becomes soap. Pour into a pan, or mold, and let cool, cut into bars and dry.

Saving Fuel

Where a fire of great heat is not needed, during the cool spring days, yet some fire is a necessity, try this: Make a strong fire and get it going well; then cover with ashes, or chips, saw-dust, or even sweepings from the wood yard, thoroughly dampening the saw-dust, chips or sweepings, but not having it wet, before applying. If covered all over, the fire will smoulder, consuming the covering slowly, and can be increased by opening a draft a little, closing again when sufficiently hot. This will work

with either wood or coal fires. When a coal fire is burning briskly, and less heat is wanted, take the ashes from the ash-pan to cover the coals. Nearly all the ashes will burn away. If the covering is put on at night, by morning there will be very little ashes, and the fire will be a bed of live coals. If covered in the morning, the fire will keep until evening, and can be quickly started up with a draft and fresh fuel. Partly decayed logs and stumps make fine fires, and damp, soggy wood will act as a blanket for keeping the coals while sending out a gentle heat.

Seed Cakes "Like Mother Used to Make"

We have had several requests for the old-time seed cakes recipe, but have just succeeded in getting it from a Cornish lady. Here it is:

One quart of flour, four eggs, two cupfuls of sugar, one-half pound of butter, caraway seeds to taste; one cup of sweet milk, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder sifted with the flour. Get the seeds of the grocer or druggist. Five cents worth will make quite a few batches. The seeds may be only scattered over the top before baking, if preferred.

Worth Remembering

Silverware that is in daily use may be kept very bright if allowed to soak in strong borax water for four or five hours occasionally. Pour the water boiling hot over the plate, but let cool as it will. This will save much rubbing and polishing.

It is claimed that filigree work on silverware will be brightened and cleaned by letting lie in sour buttermilk for a day. The acid in the buttermilk clears the silver without damaging it.

Wet umbrellas should not be closed and stacked in the dripper. Stand the umbrella, handle downward, to allow the water to run off quickly, thus preventing the ribs from rusting and the covering from rotting. The umbrella should be opened a couple of inches to allow the water to escape without wetting the handle. When nearly dry open to the full and this will stretch the covering and prevent cracking. Let remain open until dry.

For the kitchen windows, sash curtains are very desirable. Have them just the size of the lower sash, strung on picture wire and fastened to the lower sash at the top; then, when the window is opened for airing or sweeping, or washing the sills or frame work, the curtain is not in the way. Be sure to make the sash curtains of materials that can be washed and boiled.

It will soon be time to put away the stoves for the summer. Before storing them, give the stoves and stove pipe a good coat of stove polish mixed with machine oil, and they will not rust. One of the liquid enamels can be used for the same purpose.

This is strongly recommended as a cleaner of furs: Take a quantity of clean sand—a quart or half gal-

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