



The Home Department

Conducted by
Helen Watts McKee

"At Christmastime"

At Christmastime we deck the hall
With holly branches brave and tall;
With sturdy pine and hemlock bright,
And in the yule-log's dancing light
We tell old tales of field and fight,
At Christmastime.

At Christmastime we pile the board
With flesh and fruit and vintage
stored;

And 'mid the laughter and the glow,
We tread a measure soft and slow,
And tarry 'neath the mistletoe
At Christmastime.

O' Kindly Father of us all,
List to Thy lowliest creature's call—
Give of Thy love to high and low;
Comfort the sorrowing in their woe;
Make wars to cease and love to grow
At Christmastime.

Let every heart be warm today,
May every child be glad and gay,
Bless Thou Thy children, great and
small

In lowly hut or lordly hall—
O, may each heart keep festival
At Christmastime.

—E. V.

"A Merry Christmas"

The pen trails slowly over the words, for we ask, how can we hope that our souls shall be merry when the song of the Christmas angels is drowned in the cries of the murdered and massacred hundreds of thousands of human beings that ring in our ears from the awful carnage across the waters? The season that should be full of "Peace on earth—good will toward men" is full of tears, heartache and distracting sympathy for the agonies of our brothers and sisters who are being butchered wholesale in other lands. So much has been said, and better said than my words can say, that I feel that nothing can be added here. One has but to read the daily news of the events transpiring in the war zone to feel the deepest sorrow that such things should be. All over the world, outside the leaders in the awful war, men and women and children are reaching out sympathetic hands and offering the little they can give to undo the dreadful effects of the worse than brutal savagery that has made the fighting nations drunk with the blood of their kin. So we turn half-heartedly to our own homes, trying to kindle in the loving hearts about us the glow of grateful thanks that we have been spared the horrors about us. And we can but hope that the time will be shortened, and that soon again all the world shall be at peace, one with another. All over our own land, grand-hearted men and women are working toward that end, and while we remember the song of the angels on the birth of the Christ Child, let us pray for the "peace and good will" that alone can scatter the awful clouds and leave the sun again shining over our world. If we can not hush the terrible sounds ringing in our own ears, let us at least make the day bright for the young and hopeful, the little children that are safe in our own homes. A comfortable Christmas, and a prosperous New Year to our readers.

Wintering Palms

The palm is a tropical plant, and will not do well if wintered in a cellar or cool, dark, damp place; they must be kept in a warm temperature.

Phosphate or bone dust should not be used as fertilizers for the palm, as they are sometimes injurious; pulverized cow-chips or sheep manure can be used to advantage, if not used too liberally; the plant does not require heavy fertilizing. The soil should be kept evenly moist, and to do this, set the pot inside a larger pot with sphagnum moss between, and also over the surface. If fertilizer is used, apply it to the soil under the moss. Leaves of palms often turn brown at the tips when kept indoors in the living room, as the atmosphere of the room is too dry. When spring comes, set the palm in a shaded, sheltered situation, where heavy winds will not strike it, plunging the pot in the soil, keeping the soil in the pot moist, but not dried. The old leaves will not brown any more, and the new leaves will be perfect. The old, disfigured leaves can then be cut away. Among the best palms for house culture is ranked the Kentias; Kentia Balmoreana is the tall grower, slender and upright; the Kentia Forsteriana has broad leaves and a sturdy stem. Either will be an excellent house plant, and will become "one of the family" in a short time. They are not hard to grow, if given intelligent care.

Protecting the Tender Shrubbery

In many localities, the tender roses are able to get through the winter with a little protection, while in other localities they must have more covering. But remember that many things are killed by kindness—smothered by too much and too compact covering. Fresh stable manure is as good as anything to pile on the surface of the soil, and may be put on several inches deep as soon as freezing weather settles down. It is advised to further cover with evergreen boughs, or like materials that will admit the air while it covers the plant. If evergreen boughs can not be had, cornstalks, or branches of small trees that still hold the leaves, will do as well. Small boxes, with the ends partly removed, or even old, bottomless pails, may serve if set over the plant, filling around the plant inside with dead leaves, or old hay, or even chaff. It is recommended also to cover the whole plant with coal ashes (if the plant is small), or to wrap old sacking, or straw about the larger bushes. Sometimes one can lay down the tops and cover with suitable protection. The coarse straw stable manure is an excellent covering heaped on the soil, as it can be forked in in the spring and will feed the plants next year. Florists recommend moulding the earth about each plant, then fill in between the mounds with straw stable manure, the coarser the better. For protecting the tall tops, wrapping in straw or burlap is a good plan. Leaves are not advised, as they flat down too much, and mice sometimes nest in them and destroy the plant. The covering should not be added until the hard freezes come, but as soon after that as possible, they may be protected. For climbing roses, try laying down the long stalks on the ground and covering as above. Climbing roses bloom generally on the last season's wood, and this should be preserved.

Basting for the Turkey

After dressing the turkey as usual, stuffing with any desired mixture, put it into the baking pan, and instead of

water, add a pint of hot milk; with this milk baste the turkey as it cooks, every fifteen minutes; as the milk is used up, supply the deficiency with more hot milk, using altogether about two quarts of milk. When the fowl is done, take it from the pan, and set the pan on top of the range to boil for a minute. Do not add anything, unless the milk seems to be a little thin, in which case, thicken with a very little cornstarch wet in milk, and let boil a few minutes as other gravy. The baked milk mixed with the juices from the cooking fowl will make a delicious gravy.

Cooking Rabbits

Try to have young rabbits, as they are more tender and delicately flavored than old ones. Disjoint them after dressing, and put the pieces into a stew pan; season them with a dash of cayenne pepper, salt and a little chopped parsley. Pour over them a pint of warm water (or veal broth, if you have it), and stew over a slow fire until the flesh is quite tender, adding, when they are about half done, some bits of butter rolled in flour. Just before taking the pan from the fire enrich the gravy with a gill or more of thick cream with a little nutmeg grated into it; stir the gravy well, but do not let it boil after adding the cream, as boiling will curdle it. Lay the pieces of rabbit in a hot dish and pour the hot gravy over them.

"Mother's Mince Pies"

Chop fine two pounds of cold boiled lean beef, and mince to a powder a pound of beef kidney suet, sprinkling it with flour if it is inclined to stick; seed and cut in half two pounds of raisins, and wash and pick over carefully a pound of sulfana raisins and two pounds of cleansed currants; be sure they are free from grit and dirt before you let them out of your hands. Peel and chop five pounds of apples and shred three quarters of a pound of citron; mix these all together, with two tablespoonfuls each of mace and cinnamon, a tablespoonful each of allspice and cloves, a teaspoonful of grated nutmeg, two and one-half pounds of brown sugar and a tablespoonful of salt. Put with them a quart of sherry and a pint of brandy, if you use such things, and pack in a jar. If you do not use the liquors, put cider and grape juice in their place. The old time cooks always used brandy to give the mince a flavor and to keep it from fermenting.

The mince should mellow at least a week, or better, two weeks, before using. If you do not prefer a top crust, try the open crust of strips of paste latted over the mince meat. The top crust may be all right, but in the olden days the latted top was the favorite.

The Christmas Goose

The goose should be young; to determine this, the feet should be yellow; the red foot is a sign of at least middle age, and the red-footed goose is usually a tough goose; the feet should be pliable, and the breast bone should bend easily, though hard and firm. After killing and stripping off the feathers, singe off the down, or scald the goose and wrap in a thick towel for a little while, when the down should rub off easily. Then, scrub the body with warm water containing a good pinch of baking soda; apply plenty of water, but don't

bruise the skin; this is to remove the dust and dirt that sticks to the oily skin. The hot water will draw out the strong oil from the skin, and this should all be removed to prevent the strong flavor the carelessly dressed goose has. Wash both inside and out in clear, warm water, then place in a large boiler on a rack, and give it a good steaming; or put pieces of fat salt pork on it and set it in the oven for an hour; this will melt the goose fat, and the oil will run down into the pan; remove from the oven and pour off the fat, dredge with flour, add a little warm water and return to the oven to bake, allowing twenty minutes to the pound, including the time the bird has been in the oven first and last. Baste it frequently, and dredge with flour after each basting, to give it the proper appearance when done.

A walnut stuffing is liked with the goose, made by mixing two cupfuls of warm mashed potatoes with half a cupful of onion juice, half a cupful of chopped walnut meats, a little thick cream, a tablespoonful of butter, the yolk of two eggs and seasoning to taste. Apple sauce or currant jelly are usually served with the goose.

How to Pick Ducks

Put an inch of water in the wash boiler, and lay just above the water a little wooden frame, which may be supported on bricks; or sticks of wood can be used. Let the water begin to boil, then lay on the frame the duck, or ducks, and cover the boiler closely. Let steam five minutes—some cooks say two minutes. Then take the birds out and strip the feathers from each immediately; they will pick as easy as a chicken, and the feathers will not

HARD TO DROP

But Many Do It

A young Calif. wife talks about coffee:

"It was hard to drop Mocha and Java and give Postum a trial, but my nerves were so shattered that I was a nervous wreck and of course that means all kinds of ails.

"I did not want to acknowledge coffee caused the trouble for I was very fond of it. At that time a friend came to live with us, and I noticed that after he had been with us a week he would not drink his coffee any more. I asked him the reason. He replied: 'I have not had a headache since I left off drinking coffee, some months ago, till last week, when I began again here at your table. I don't see how anyone can like coffee, anyway, after drinking Postum!'

"I said nothing, but at once ordered a package of Postum. That was five months ago, and we have drank no coffee since, except on two occasions when we had company, and the result each time was that my husband could not sleep, but lay awake and tossed and talked half the night. We were convinced that coffee caused his suffering, so he returned to Postum, convinced that coffee was an enemy, instead of a friend, and he is troubled no more by insomnia.

"I have gained 8 pounds in weight, and my nerves have ceased to quiver. It seems so easy now to quit coffee that caused our aches and ails and take up Postum." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Postum comes in two forms: Postum Cereal—the original form—must be well boiled. 15c and 25c packages.

Instant Postum—a soluble powder—dissolves quickly in a cup of hot water, and, with cream and sugar, makes a delicious beverage instantly. 30c and 50c tins.

Both kinds are equally delicious and cost about the same per cup.

"There's a Reason" for Postum.
—sold by Grocers.