

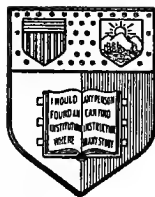
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# **THE HOUSEKEEPER'S WEEK**



MARION HARLAND

# THE Housekeeper's Week

BY

MARION HARLAND

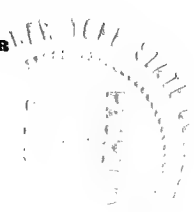
AUTHOR OF

COMPLETE COOK BOOK AND EVERYDAY ETIQUETTE

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY

MARY TAYLOR

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# **THE HOUSEKEEPER'S WEEK**

# THE HOUSEKEEPER'S WEEK

## CHAPTER I

### HER HOUSE IN ORDER

That there is a distinct body of knowledge to be mastered before housekeeping can be understood intelligently is appreciable only by the minority of American housekeepers. Many of us begin housekeeping handicapped by a lack of knowledge and by a lack of experience in the practical side of the business. To most of us the duties involved in the experiment of housekeeping assume at first a chaotic and unsystematized shape. Each day arrives with its tangle of fresh and seemingly unrelated perplexities to be solved from hour to hour. That which might give dignity and interest to the business,—a plan for the day, the week, the year,—is absent. Occasionally one meets a young woman entering upon the task of housekeeping, which is, after all is said and done, a woman's business and profession par excellence, with a mind trained to some conception of the issues involved and with enough practical knowledge to "do" for herself and family if necessary or to train the domestic or domestics who fall to her lot.

In America this is rarer, much rarer, than in France or Germany where the part played by the woman in the marriage partnership and in the making of home is better understood and defined.

It is said that it takes three generations to make a gentleman. Perhaps it takes as many to make the best of housekeepers. The young woman who begins housekeeping with a body of seasoned and systematized knowledge inherited from her mother and grandmother is lucky. Where this should be the rule, it is the exception, and that, not always because the mother and grandmother have not had the knowledge to impart but often in America because such knowledge is not held of sufficient importance to be handed on. A mother hopes that her daughter may be richer than she and may therefore escape household cares; and in consequence the daughter goes untrained to a test which, whether she be rich or poor, demands thoughtful preparation. If this untrained young housekeeper has servants she is at their mercy and must depend upon them for the knowledge which should be her special province; if she has none she must take the long hard road to experience.

The "willing worker," however, always sees light in the end. And there comes a day to every diligent "householdress" when the old saw, "Order is Heaven's first law," becomes luminous with meaning.

The value of planned housekeeping in time becomes apparent to every earnest worker in the field.



Early training, of course, hastens the day, hastens especially the recognition of housekeeping as a business, or even, if one goes deeply into the study and practice of it, a profession containing several important divisions governed by general laws. When one begins to look at housekeeping in this light a new dignity is given to it. Even drudgery when viewed in its relation to the larger purpose of the scheme is lightened, is robbed somewhat of its terrors.

Upon the ability of a woman to administer wisely the affairs of the house depends the health of her family and more often than not the financial prosperity of her husband; and as soon as she recognizes the fact that her end of the business is as important as his and demands as constant and methodical attention, so much the better.

There are three general heads under which the business of housekeeping may be classified and upon which the woman of the house should be informed. The first branch covers the economic field, the expenditure and proper division of income. The second deals with the culinary department and the third concerns the business of keeping the house clean and habitable.

Many books have been written on the subject of household expenditure, and a careful study of the subject is advisable for any woman who expects to master it. It is sufficient to say here that the main object of such study is to arrive at a reasonable division of one's income, at a correct distribution of the

money available among the various home interests. In the care of a moderate income one can not be capricious or fanciful in the matter of expenditure without subsequent regret. Yet capricious, fanciful and uneven one is apt to be if one considers only the outlay of the hour without regard to its relative importance. Each housekeeper should make a list of the objects for which money is to be expended and should come to some conclusion as to the proportionate amount to be spent on each.

Some of these objects, such as food and shelter, bear a rather constant relation to the moderate income. Others vary according to taste. In a late book by Bertha M. Terrill called *Household Management*, the different divisions into which family expenditure may fall are thus denoted: Rent or its equivalent paid for shelter; Operating Expenses, such as fuel, light, wages and repair; Food; Clothes; Higher Life. "The latter includes all that ministers to mental and moral well-being, as education, travel, amusements, charities, savings and insurance."

The thought bestowed at the beginning of each year upon some sensible plan for the division of one's money will repay a thousand times the labor necessary in formulating it and can not fail to bring a certain amount of symmetry into the home life.

The keeping of accounts is a logical sequence of a proper division of income. There is no teacher in the matter of expenditure like the figures in the case. The unsupported feminine memory is very untrust-

worthy when it comes to computing how the money goes or has gone; and only an itemized list with expenditure noted at the time of purchase is likely to convince a woman of the channels into which her money has dripped away. An account-book kept faithfully for one year will serve excellently well as a guide and sometimes as a warning for the next year. Keeping accounts is an integral part of planned housekeeping.

If the financial welfare of the family depends largely upon skilful management of this first branch of domestic science, it is equally true that the physical welfare of the family depends upon the wise ordering of the second or culinary department. Without good food, a wise selection and combination of foods, health is impossible. One must not only know how different sorts of foods should be cooked, one must know what foods combine happily for palate and health in a single meal. If one knew the definition of all the words in the dictionary and did not know how to combine the words into sentences, said knowledge would be of little use. And likewise if one could repeat all Mrs. Rorer's good recipes backward and make good every recipe on the stove or in the oven, this would not be enough. One must know something about the chemistry of cooking, about the effect of foods upon the human system before one is in a position to keep John and the children clear of dyspepsia.

Perhaps the study of cooking is the most interest-

ing of the three branches of study necessary to a comprehension of the housekeeper's task. After one gets over the first bumps in the road, the acquisition of knowledge, both practical and theoretical, is rapid and one advances into a more and more fascinating country. Any one who thinks the study of cooking dull has gone but a little way along the path of that particular kind of learning. There is variety in it. There is room for the assertion of personal preference and all within the bounds of orderly management. The literature on the subject both as regards the chemical value of food and the art of cooking is immense. No woman who "sets up to be a real, for-sure-enough housekeeper" should be without a shelf full of good authorities on the subject. It is a proof of the limited and slighting way in which we look upon this branch of learning that we always say "the cook-book" as if there were only one and that enough. We do not say "the novel book." We mention politely the name and the author in connection. We should do as well by the culinary art as by the art of fiction. And when it comes to the matter merely of reading for pleasure, there are times when the interested housekeeper will choose a cook-book for her diversion rather than the most exciting novel. A cook-book can create romantic and delightful pictures for its readers as well as the novel and these pictures are always susceptible of proof while those of the novel are not.

The third class of duties about which it behooves

the housekeeper to be informed concerns the keeping of one's house, its furnishings and the clothes one wears, clean, in order and in repair. This branch of housekeeping carries with it a great deal of drudgery which must be constantly renewed. Yet this drudgery can be lightened by knowledge of the best methods of doing the work and by an orderly and methodical arrangement of tasks. The effect upon family life of proper management in this department is as marked as the effect of the proper apportionment of money or of skilled direction in the culinary department. If the first two make for financial prosperity and physical well-being, the last, if not undertaken with too great fussiness and an unwholesome attention to detail, makes for a state of mind enabling one both to work and to play with vigor and success. There is nothing like a well-ordered house to put one in tune with the world. The aspect of such a place where day by day thoughtful care adds to its attraction, its comfort and individuality, becomes to the lover of home as dear as a loved familiar face and imparts much the same sense of rest and peace.

It is with the routine necessary to bring about this happy relation between people and the house they live in that this book has to do. The details are homely enough. To classify these, to organize the knowledge necessary for the proper keeping of a house, to put it in its most available form has been the aim of the author. Following this idea the week

has been taken as typifying the unit of work in its relation to the house. Nearly all the tasks necessary for the ordering of the home may be comprised in the weekly routine. If the housekeeper is a very modern one indeed and does her housekeeping with such nicety and method that the old-fashioned housecleaning is never necessary, then all the duties of keeping the house in order may be comprised within the bounds of a week.

The kind of matter contained in this book is often pushed off into a corner at the end of a cook-book or distributed through a volume devoted to the general topic of housekeeping. It has long been the author's belief that the directions for keeping a house clean and habitable and the recipes for preparations to be used in that effort are as deserving of a separate volume as the recipes and directions for cooking; and that classification and organization of this kind of knowledge should be made for the benefit of the housekeeper. The material used in this volume is the result of a lifetime of observation and of practical effort in the matter of housekeeping. The division of the tasks, according to the day of the week, is perhaps somewhat arbitrary. There is room for discussion as to whether it is the best order. The author can say only that it is the order which best recommends itself to her.

When to the housekeeper the duties of each day assume a distinct identity, the battle of managing the work is pretty well fought out. When Monday



no longer looks like Tuesday and Friday has a face and ways of her own, it means that logic of a kind is making its way in the housekeeper's brain. If the author succeeds in her aim of clearing up to some extent the subject in hand, and of lightening the labor involved in the important branch of domestic science under discussion, she will feel well repaid.



## CHAPTER II

MONDAY

WASH-DAY

When I was thirty years younger than I am now, yet believed that I knew thirty times more than I shall ever learn, I had the hardihood to write and to print a rodomontade I shall copy here in part.

The copying and the reading are a part of the wholesome penance maturity pays for even partial possession of the sins of presumptuous youth:—

“By what human ordinance or Divine intimation it was first appointed unto womankind to lay hold of the log of the week by the heaviest and most knobby end, I never expect to know.

“It is—and it has been from time immemorial, and it will be until the end of this rolling old globe of ours—the law of thrifty housewives that eyes, anointed by the blessed sleep of Sunday night, shall be unsealed by cock-crow to smart and water in the smoke of boiling suds; that hands, lately folded in prayer and crossed in sacred decency through the hallowed hours, shall rub and redden and roughen over the bleached ridges of wooden wash-boards, or the luckless laborer lose temper and cuticle against the treacherous grooves of metal ‘patents;’ that,

what with lifting boilers and tubs, and wringing and starching and hanging out and folding down, the priestess of that unblessed day in the calendar shall be, by Monday night, separated from Sunday quiet and Sunday thoughts by an abyss of unsavory odors and sweltering heats; by such backaches, and headaches, and armaches, and legaches, that the recollection of the holy season is a dream of doubtful distinctness, and the hope of a return is frightfully counterbalanced by the reflection that—as Tommy Snooks sighed to Betsey Brooks—

“ ‘To-morrow will be Monday!’ ”

There was a good deal of this jeremiad, and at the time the picture was not overdrawn. We had not learned to prattle of Realism thirty years ago, yet the word has sober meaning when applied to a sketch from the laundry-life of that generation. It is the fault of the housemother of the twentieth century if she knows, by personal experience, hardships such as are depicted here.

To begin with her “stage setting”—she is poor indeed if she have not a laundry separate from her nominal kitchen. It may be a mere closet in size, perhaps nothing better than a shed in a lean-to. If she be a flat-dweller, one corner of her pocket-edition of a kitchen is fitted up with set-tubs, each with faucet and waste-pipe. The toil of pouring in water heated by the kettleful over the fire; the lifting of clumsy tubs of dirty suds; the carrying of these

across the room to the sink; sometimes to throw the fouled water into an outdoor drain,—all that her grandmother and her “hired help” designated aptly as the “heft” of wash-day work—are obsolete impositions upon the women of the family. Our granddames accepted them with the pious resignation that stood with them for philosophy. Silent endurance of the inevitable was part of their religion and the daily practice of the same.

There was, then, deep spiritual significance in the unwritten, but none the less arbitrary law which set Monday's toil so close to Sabbatical rest. Our woman who lent a hand with the weekly wash—often doing it all, unassisted—needed a sojourn in the Land of Beulah before she waded through the soapy surges that must be passed on the morrow.

The modern housewife of moderate means may not have a washing-machine. To tell the truth, she is a trifle wary of this labor-saver. She has heard of patents that are said to be not unwieldy, or liable to get out of order, but she knows of more which have been an expensive delusion and a snare. A wringer is a necessity of life. No self-respecting maid of any known nationality or creed, would stay in a house where a wringer is not kept. It saves the muscles of arms and half the burden of the crucial day. As we shall see, by-and-by, ingenious women and compassionate men have invented compounds that reduce to a merciful minimum the rubbing and scrubbing necessary to dislodge dirt and eradicate

grease and stains from household linens and "body-clothing." Deteratives, warranted not to rot the threads, or stir colors, are advertised hourly. A fair percentage of them are safe and worthy of the laundress' grateful confidence. She is a canny house-keeper who makes a practical study of domestic chemistry, and having proved what home-made deteratives are trustworthy and safe, turns a deaf ear to the patent agent, charm he never so wisely.

Granting all we have said of modern mitigations of the white woman's burden, *par eminence*, the truth stands, and can not be softened out of sight, that the bane of the American housemother's professional life is washing and ironing. She names it first among household duties; it is a bugbear in engaging a new servant; her ideal of a peaceful, care-free existence is to be able, conscientiously, to "put out the family wash." When she must put her own hand (literally) to the work, the duty is nothing less than an affliction.

Many weary women, in surveying the ruin wrought by a single meal upon snowy napery, and the dire results of one afternoon's outing upon the dainty summer frocks of their girls, the shirts and trousers of their boys, are ready, in bitterness of spirit, to take up, in behalf of the recently laundered garments and fine linen, the doleful plaint of the hour-old baby's epitaph—

"Since I am so soon done for,  
I wonder what I was begun for!"

A wit (and presumably a householder) of the eighteenth century declared that wash-day was instituted in commemoration of the day on which Job first saw the light, of which the sorely afflicted man of Uz said, "Let it perish! let darkness and the shadow of death stain it! let it not be joined unto the days of the year!" A latter-day writer has indulged in gloomy statistics as to the proportion of human life spent in cleansing the house, clothing and person, in fouling which the remaining time has been employed—or wasted?

Our more optimistic, because more sensible housewife does not squander time and lower her spirit-level in bemoaning the inexorable fact that clothes will get dirty, and, when dirty, must be cleansed. She brings to the tasks that fall to the accursed day cheerful philosophy and such knowledge of the best methods of doing the work as will achieve satisfactory results with the least expenditure of time and nervous forces.

Let us come now to practical talk concerning some of these ways and means.

If our laundress be far-sighted, she will forecast the morrow's duties so far as to put the "clothes" (all-embracing term) in soak overnight. In one household I wot of, where all needless work is avoided on the day of rest, the bulk of this preparatory task is done on Saturday night, leaving the body-linen, exchanged for clean on Sunday morn-

ing, to be added to the soaking clothes on the evening of that day.

The tubs should be perfectly clean. Even stationary tubs, with closely fitting lids, will gather dust and need to be wiped with a wet, then with a clean cloth, before they are half-filled with soft tepid water, and made ready for the soiled articles. Sort these, in preparing for the soaking. Put table- and bed-linen in separate tubs; keep soiled undergarments apart from both.

You will save yourself much subsequent worry if you "treat" stains before washing. A chapter—perhaps more than one—will deal, at length and in detail, with various stains and the best ways of disposing of them. I offer here a few general rules:

Fruit, ink, coffee, chocolate, and tea stains may be wet with Javelle water, or with a weak infusion of chloride of lime. Leave the soiled places in this for five minutes, then rinse in pure, tepid water. Never omit the rinsing. Neglect of this precaution is almost sure to weaken the threads of the fabric by the continued action of the acid.

Rub chalk upon grease spots, and butter upon stains made by machine oil, or axle-grease, washing out the butter a half-hour later with warm suds.

When all are ready, put into the tubs and see that they are well covered, as I have directed, with tepid—never hot—water. If the water be hard, stir a handful of pure borax into each large tub.

On the morrow, draw off the soaking water; wring each piece hard; return each kind to its respective and emptied tub, and wash in warm suds, made with plenty of really good, ripe soap. "Green" soap—that is, newly made—is injurious to clothing and to hands. It eats into both with the virulence of a corrosive acid. Unless the water be soft, add borax again. It is harmless, mellows the water, and tends to whiten the clothes.

Abjure washing soda and all its works in the laundry. The ordinary garden variety of laundress is so addicted to it that, if it be denied by her employers, she will smuggle surreptitious parcels of the drastic stuff into the laundry, and add it secretly, at her own expense, and at the sorer expense of the mistress' property. The owner of the maltreated fabric seldom suspects the crime until she finds it eaten into tiny holes, as if peppered with bird-shot.

There are other laundresses' allies and householders' foes which have a like effect. Some are patented and widely advertised. They save the washerwoman's muscles, rasp the sensibilities and deplete the purse of her employer. Borax is safe and efficient. One pound (powdered) will soften forty gallons of water.

When the clothes are clean at last—the soiled places rubbed out, and all of uniform whiteness—rinse in clean hot water, and put into a boiler half-filled with tepid water, to which you have added shredded soap and a tablespoonful of kerosene, stir-

red in well before the clothes go in. Never forget that boiling water "sets" dirt, and that dirt will make the contents of your boiler hopelessly dingy. Do not crowd so many clothes into the boiler that the water will not cover them well, and that in heating it can not bubble freely between the several articles. Boil gently for an hour; lift out the wet linen with a wooden clothes-stick on to a wooden tray, or into a clean tub; again half-fill the boiler, and put in a second supply of clothes.

Wash your table-linen first, and, as in soaking, do not mix it with bed- or body-linen. Be scrupulously particular in this separation, even after both kinds seem to be clean.

Now comes the final rinsing. Have ready an abundance of clean, warm water, souse each article several times, shake hard, twist with a pair of strong hands, and put through the wringer. If there are buttons upon any garment turn them inside, with a fold or two over them, that they may not be broken or torn off in the wringer.

Much of the "good color" of a washing depends upon the wringing. Clothes should never drip when hung on the line. They dry more evenly and quickly, and are much whiter if every drop of water that can come away be wrung out before they are pronounced ready for the lines, than if hung up, streaming with water.

A few leading points as to the management of flannels and colored fabrics belong to this chapter.



“Many women of many minds” would be an appropriate motto with which to introduce the question of the temperature of the water in which flannels are to be washed. Says one prime authority upon Household Economics:

“Flannels and hosiery should be washed in tepid, soft water—never in hot, and never in cold.”

Yet veteran housewives persist in extolling the merits of cold water as a means of cleansing woollens, and of keeping them soft. “When you have tried this method of washing woolen goods you will never be satisfied with any other,” writes a grandmother, who prides herself upon “not being too old to learn anything that is worth knowing.”

In my own laundry flannels have, usually, been washed in lukewarm water, squeezed, and not wrung out, shaken free of water, dried quickly and ironed on the wrong side while damp. To be frank, I have not been invariably satisfied with this method. The phrase “lukewarm water” leaves too much to the discretion of the individual. What would be several degrees above tepid to the delicate cuticle of the mistress, is cold to the toil-hardened hands of her maid. “Why not test the temperature with the thermometer?” cries our college-bred girl.

I reply—and my sister housekeeper will sustain me in the assertion—that there are many things which look well in housewifely manuals, and which are the soul of reason and common sense, that lapse

into a dead letter in the rush and routine of workaday life. Were there a thermometer to every square inch of laundry wall, our average hireling, whose own the woolens are not, would not take the pains to consult one.

Return we to our flannels. Not long ago, I put a particularly pretty dressing-sack into the family wash. The material is soft flannel, the design lilac flowers and leaves upon a white ground. A scalloped edge of lilac silk finishes sleeves and cuffs. Having just had a talk with one of the aforesaid honorables, I was moved to an experiment. The favorite garment was laid in cold salt-and-water for an hour to set the color, dried in the shade, and ironed through a thin damp cloth. The laundress, obedient to orders, albeit she "had never heard of the like before," was loud in praise of the result. The color held fast, the white ground remains clean and clear. The flannel is as soft as when new. I am not prepared to claim that this plan would be successful with flannels that have been already washed in the old way.

Certain I am that hot water shrinks flannels. Hot irons carry on the evil work. To prevent shrinkage, stretch each garment often while it is drying. Not once or twice, but one dozen times, pulling out sleeves and body and skirt to their full width, and letting the length take care of itself. Here, again, what may be called "the laundress of commerce"

fails in her duty, and her employer pays the penalty of her shortcomings.

In winter, it may be necessary, on three Mondays out of four, to dry flannels indoors. Freezing shrinks woolen stuffs almost as badly as do overheated water and hissing hot irons.

Colored cottons and linens should be laid in cold salt-and-water, mixed with a little pulverized alum, and left there for an hour, at least, before they are washed. Then, wring out the brine, and rinse in clear cold water. Next, wash, at once, in tepid suds, unless you prefer to use soap-bark or bran-water. This last is excellent for colored gingham, lawns, and linens which require starch.

Boil two quarts of wheat bran in six quarts of water for half an hour; let it cool, and strain through cheese-cloth, pressing hard to get all the mucilaginous matter. Add cold water if it should seem too thick. After rinsing the brine out of your gingham, calicoes, etc., wash them in this, using neither soap nor starch.

Each of the topics touched upon in this—the opening chapter of our week—will be treated more at length as our subject opens and develops into more importance.

## CHAPTER III

MONDAY (*Continued*).

### STARCHING AND BLUING

A thousand and one times have I been tempted to wish that the bluing bag or ball or bottle had never made its way into the laundry.

“Bluing,” whatever may be the medium that puts it into the hands of the slovenly, unskilful or lazy laundress, is to her what the feather duster is to the happy-go-lucky chambermaid. In the deft fingers of the conscientious washerwoman, bag, or ball, or bottle has its important uses. Like the ticklish ingredient in Sydney Smith’s celebrated recipe for salad-dressing, of which he enjoins—

“Let garlie’s atoms lurk within the bowl,  
And, unsuspected, animate the whole;”

like the teaspoonful of sugar in tomato soup, or the faintest conceivable suspicion of asafetida in catsup,—the influence of bluing should be subtle, yet potent. We should miss it, at a glance, if it were absent. It should never be seen.

An over-blued article betrays gross ignorance, or more culpable carelessness, always and everywhere. The shiftless creature who uses bluing to hide dirt,

is short-sighted as well as indolent. The spots she failed to rub out darken with the dye, and are also "set" by it into indelibility. When blue streaks appear in linen which has been well washed, they are due to improper mixing, or the things thus mottled were hung upon the line while dripping wet. The trickling streams dry into stripes.

Another precaution should not be omitted: if you will shake the clothes as they come out of the wringer, and pull each piece as straight as if you were getting it ready for the ironing-board, you will effect a great saving of time and strength upon ironing-day, and lessen the chances of the aforesaid streaks.

In the use of bluing, in mixing soda in the dough you mean to form into biscuits, or blend with cake-batter, muffins, soufflés, and cream soups, in adding the prescribed "dash" of cayenne to sauce, or mayonnaise,—the housemother and her helpers should have "a light hand." Beat the coloring matter into the starch as you would fold the stiffened white-of-egg into a soufflé, and then strain it through clean cheese-cloth to get rid of possible lumps and specks.

To make your starch, wet two tablespoonfuls of crushed starch to a thin paste with two cupfuls of cold water, and when it is thoroughly dissolved, pour upon the paste a pint and a cupful of boiling water to which has been added a generous pinch of salt. The salt will prevent the clothes from getting sour and musty in hot weather. We do not need to be re-

mind how often we have been sickened by the peculiar acid odor arising from garments brought in from the laundry in "muggy" summer days, and which no amount of airing and fumigation will dispel. Set the starch, when mixed, over the fire in a double boiler, and cook for one minute after the water in the outer vessel boils, stirring all the time. Should it be too stiff, beat in boiling water gradually until you have the proper consistency.

Another good recipe for making starch differs in a few respects from the foregoing, and may be even better in the opinion of some of our housewives:

Dissolve as much starch as you think you will need in cold water until it is of the consistency of rich cream. Pour slowly upon this water from a boiling kettle, stirring fast and steadily, until it is smooth throughout. Now, add more boiling water, and stir until it is of the right consistency. Give it a minute's final boil, remove from the fire, and whip in a bit of paraffin the size of a walnut. Bluing should also be added while the mixture is hot.

Dip the pieces to be starched into the warm compound, shake off superfluous paste, and clap each part of the article under treatment smartly between the hands, to insure even distribution of the stiffening matter throughout the fabric.

Our granddames made much of this clapping process in the clear-starching for which they were famous. They "did up" their own laces with their high-bred fingers, by some magic of manipulation,

lost to their descendants, leaving each thread clear and consistent, and the whole a miracle of sheer snowiness. A venerable gentlewoman once told me with justifiable pride, that in her day "ladies clapped muslins as they pulled candy—with the tips of their fingers." Also, that "much practice was required to bring the art to perfection." I should think so, indeed!

See to it that the clothes-lines are taut and clean.

Discouraging manuals of housewifery,—written, for the most part, by women who have never set foot in a laundry, unless it were to tiptoe through it on a wash-day, skirts and noses uplifted,—lay down, as an imperative rule, that lines shall be taken down every week, as soon as the wash is drawn from them, and put aside in a clean, dry closet until they are needed for the next week's work. It is well, as a matter of neatness and economy, that this should be done. It is also possible—barely—that some of the practical housewives into whose hands this book may fall, have been so blessèd among women as to have hired laundresses who would obey the rule. A vast majority of us have, long ago, made up sorrowful minds to the truth—one among many of the same brand—that in domestic life, "must" and "can" are not interchangeable terms. In other words, that, if one would remain alive and sane, one must not confound what one thinks one would do were one in one's employee's place, and what the latter functionary may be induced to consider as her own duty. To take

down the clothes-lines every week is, in her sight, an uncovenanted mercy, and as such, not to be counted upon, except by the most exacting of nominal mistresses. She is a wise woman who does not make a point of a non-essential; who, since she can not get her clothes-lines taken down and in every Monday afternoon, winks at the omission, and contents herself with the knowledge that they are kept clean where they are. Upon this she may insist with a fair degree of confidence in the fulfilment of her hope that it will be done. Even a haphazard laundress weighs the trouble of wiping the lines before putting out the week's wash against the chance that she may have to give the things a second scrub, and decides in favor of what will cause her less work.

In her disinclination to follow the counsel of manual and mistress, she has more excuse than one supposes at first survey of the case. To stretch and fasten ropes and rustless wires properly requires a man's height and a man's strength, and these are not always available at the right season in the best-regulated families. The next best thing is to make the stationary lines scrupulously clean. Before putting out the washing, go over the line with a soft white cloth, wiping it hard and all along the length, especially near the posts and poles. Should the cloth show much soil from soot and dust, get a fresh piece, and repeat the operation.

Do not be niggardly with clothes-pins. They are cheap. You may reasonably insist that they shall be



collected at the close of the day, and put into a bag or basket, to be kept clean and dry when not in use. I have seen white linen spotted at regular intervals where the pins had clamped it, making a second soaking and a bleaching necessary.

Happy the woman who has an open, sunny space in which to stretch her clothes-line! Thrice blessed is she who has in addition to this, a bit of clean turf whereupon stained, or "dingied" articles may be spread for bleaching!

Always dry colored clothes in the shade, and with the wrong side outward. Disregard of this simple precaution brings many a dainty fabric to grief. When one reflects that to expose dampened cotton or woolen, silk or linen garments to the sun and air is a common bleaching process, one wonders at seeing delicate shades one would retain uninjured, if possible, subjected deliberately to these influences, for the lack of a little common sense and ordinary prudence. Freezing fades no less than heat. Avoid both.

Do not leave the clothes upon the lines longer than you can help after they are dried. They collect dust, and get stiff and harsh, and, if the day be windy, are strained in seam and thread, and often whipped into ribbons. A high wind is particularly to be feared when linen sheets and table-cloths are on the line. Serious damage is imminent when one sees these valuables flapping in the gale, like the sails of a storm-tossed vessel. Manage to hang sheets and the larger

pieces of napery in a sheltered corner, and bring them in as soon as they are dry. Follow the same rule with all starched articles. They become limp if the air is damp, and crack and split in a high wind. Freezing takes out the starch, or, if sudden and severe, makes shirt-bosoms and skirts as brittle as paper, so that they tear at a touch, and stick to the frozen lines.

Says a shrewd housekeeper, whose advice I have found to be uniformly sound in other matters: "If you must hang your wash out-of-doors in freezing weather, stir a handful of salt into the last rinsing water. The clothes may then be got upon the lines before they stiffen with frost and there is less danger of their sticking to the line. This applies to laundry work done on bitter winter days."

When you can do it without over-fatigue or interference with other duties, dampen down the clean and dried clothes overnight, and fold ready for ironing next day. They are far more easily handled if this be done soon after they are brought into the house than if they are left, rough-dry and in a disorderly heap, for eight or ten hours. In taking them from the line, lay them, one by one, within a clothes-basket lined with a clean cloth, folding each piece loosely as you lay it in place. Don't heap them pell-mell, upon one another, as the manner of some is, without regard to quality, kind, or economy of space. A just sense of order should prevail throughout each stage of the work.

Having ready in the laundry a large table spread with a clean cover, lift one piece at a time from the basket, spread out to its full size, and sprinkle with a clean whisk-broom—never, by any chance, used for anything else—dipped in warm water. Some notable housewives affirm that the sprinkling should be done with really hot water,—that the clothes are more pliable, and the dampness more equally diffused if this be done than when merely warm water is used. As you sprinkle, press out folds and wrinkles with the open palm of a firm hand, and pull hems, sleeves and seams straight. These details, that seem of minor consequence to the inconsiderate and inexperienced, lighten the work of the morrow more than the novice is willing to believe.

It is one of the time-worn and stock criticisms launched by men against women that they “make work so hard as to wear themselves out before it is half done.” Dispassionate survey of laundry processes, as usually conducted, gives point and color to the slur. Do you recollect the charming picture given in Mrs. Whitney’s delightful story—*We Girls*—of Barbara Holabird, as she dampened the clean household wash in the basement laundry, rolling each piece up hard, and thumping the rolls with her doubled fist, while she chanted her improvised rhymes to a tune of her own making, serenely unconscious that her boy-lover was looking at and listening to her, from the yard above, and falling more and more deeply in love each moment?

Read the book—the very prettiest story of co-operative housekeeping which even that beloved and lamented priestess of our domestic life ever wrote—and learn that there is poetry as well as hardship in the three hundred common days of our American housemother's year, and that Job's birthday comes in for a fair share.

## CHAPTER IV

### MONDAY (*Continued*)

#### DEVICES FOR MAKING WASHING EASY

This is what they all claim to do! Without affecting to deny that laundry duties are the heaviest that fall to the lot of the woman who does her own house-work, her sister-woman and, occasionally, a man and a brother, set clever wits to work to lessen the weight of the burden at some point of pressure. It is worth the philanthropist's while to slip a pad under a galling band here, or to let a buckle out there.

If he be accounted worthy of the disciple's name and reward who

“Lessens, by a feather's weight,  
The mass of human woe—”

he, or she should have abundant honor who comes to the rescue of the sorely beset toiler in the reek and steam of tub and boiler.

The formulas given in this chapter as illustrations of the practical operation of this helpful spirit, are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, trustworthy. They are vouched for by responsible persons—intelligent, honest, and solicitous to share with others what

has been of service to themselves—workers along the same lines with laundress and housewife.

I lead off with a recipe which commends itself with especial force to me, believing as I do that borax and kerosene deserve to be called “the housemother’s twin blessings.” I have instinctive confidence in an emulsion combining these in judicious proportions.

At least one dozen housewives have justified this trust by earnest praise of the preparation, after trial of it in their own homes. One writes: “I would not try to do my washing without it. It does away with two-thirds of the rubbing.”

#### KEROSENE EMULSION (1)

Shave half of a cake of Ivory soap fine with a sharp knife. Add to it a quart of warm water and two tablespoonfuls of powdered borax. Set over the fire, and simmer until the soap is dissolved. Lift from the range and stir into the mixture a coffee-cupful of kerosene. Bottle, cork closely and set away for use. It requires no further preparation.

Put the clothes in soak overnight in hot water, adding the emulsion,—all of it. Do not put your hands into the hot water, but stir the clothes into the mixture with the clothes-stick, until all are thoroughly saturated. Cover the tubs in which they are soaked and leave until you are ready to begin washing next day. You will find that the dirt is loosened, the materials made pliable, and partially bleached, where bleaching is desirable.

## KEROSENE EMULSION (2)

Shave a bar of old white soap quite fine, and dissolve it in two quarts of hot water, stirring until it is a thick suds. Beat smooth, and add a large tablespoonful of borax wet up with cold water. Next, put in two great spoonfuls of kerosene, and, after stirring for a minute to make the "emulsion," pour in quickly two tablespoonfuls of household ammonia. Bottle and cork, while you turn the clothes soaked overnight into your washboiler half full of hot water. Churn them up well with the clothes-stick, add the emulsion, and boil for half an hour. Take out, then rinse twice, first in hot water, then in lukewarm, and wring.

One box of concentrated lye  
Two ounces of best borax, powdered  
One ounce of salts of tartar  
Two ounces of lump ammonia  
Two gallons of boiling water

Put the mixture into a stone jug; shake violently for a whole minute, keeping a tight cork in all the while, and set away for use. Half a cupful of this fluid will suffice for a large boiler of clothes. Keep the jug closely corked, and it will be good as long as it lasts.

No housekeeper can afford to be without Javelle water, if she makes a business of taking out fruit, and ink, and divers other stains that white goods are heir to—no matter how vigilant the mother may be,

and although children may be preternaturally careful of frocks and pinafores. It is a ready reckoner of the damage done by such mishaps, and if properly applied, will not injure delicate materials.

This useful compound is sold by druggists, but it is not difficult to make it at home, and the domestic product is much less expensive than the manufactured article.

A small teacupful of Javelle water, added to a boiler of water, will assist materially in keeping the clothes white, and will not act disastrously upon fine threads.

#### HOME-MADE JAVELLE WATER

Into a large stone or porcelain-lined pot put two pounds of baking-soda, and pour over it two quarts of hot water—not boiling. Stir with a wooden spoon until the soda has dissolved, and add half a pound of chloride of lime. Set the pot in a wide pan of warm water, and let it stand, covered, on the range until the mixture is quite hot. Take it off then, and let it cool, keeping it covered all the while. When cold, draw off the clear liquid carefully, strain through cheese-cloth and bottle. Cork closely, never leaving the stopper out for a moment longer than necessary.

The cloudy residuum left in the pot may be bottled for clearing kitchen sinks of grease, as it is a powerful alkali.

For a good soap-powder we are indebted to an emi-



ment chemist who has generously supplied me with other much-needed information in the preparation of this work. I give the formula in his own words:

#### SOAP-POWDER

The finely powdered commercial article is usually a pulverized soap, containing about forty per cent. sal-soda. It may be made as follows: Dissolve five pounds of sal-soda in about half a gallon of boiling water, and put into this ten pounds of finely shaved laundry soap—ripe and good. Melt slowly on the back of the range. Don't boil it!

When nearly melted stir until it is a homogeneous, thick mass. Ladle this into a clean tin or enameled pot, wider at top than bottom. Then let it cool. When chilled and solid, cut around the edges with a thin, sharp knife, and dump the cake on a clean piece of cloth. Divide the cake into thin strips; spread on paper, and let them dry naturally, without artificial heat. When air-dry, the strips are brittle and may be rubbed between the hands into a coarse powder.

However, the soap may also be cut into larger pieces, and used like any soap in laundry when it has been well dried. It contains more alkali (sal-soda) than ordinary soap, hence cleanses more quickly.

Smaller quantities may be made, and, to the ingredients given herewith, there may be added, before cooling, a cupful of benzine, skimming it for laundry purposes. Keep covered, and in a dark place.

## A HOME-MADE BLUING

“Warranted,” says the lively donor, “sound and kind.” We take it, trustfully, upon her word.

To one ounce of Chinese, or of Prussian blue (either will do), add a quart of soft water. Put it into a bottle and shake well and often for three days after mixing it. After this, do not shake it at all. If any of it is precipitated because not dissolved, you may refill the bottle after using all that is clear.

If you can not get the pulverized blue, ask the druggist to crush it for you. Unless the Chinese or Prussian blue be pure, your compound will be a failure. It will precipitate, and spot the clothes. If it is all right and not adulterated, it is a matter of great economy to use this preparation. It will not hurt the finest fabric. The quantity here given has been known to last a family of six people a year, and the cost is trifling when compared with that of any patent bluing.

But—ask your druggist to warrant the blue! He will, probably—and then you will be grateful for the recipe.

## STARCH THAT WILL NOT STICK TO THE IRONS

Two ounces of best spermaceti  
Two ounces of gum arabic  
Two ounces of powdered borax  
One ounce of glycerine  
One quart of water

Make the starch in the usual way; stir in one tablespoonful of the mixture, and thin with hot water, until fit for use.

This is as good an opportunity as I shall have to say to my fellow-housewife that scraps of soap should never be thrown away, no matter how small, —either in laundry, or bath-room. Least of all should they be allowed to soak their shortened lives away in the bottom of a wash-tub. When they are too small to be handled with ease, they should be collected carefully and put aside in a covered box until there are enough to warrant the busy house-mother in making them into a jelly. This is done by leaving them in warm water for a couple of hours to soften. Then, put them into a saucepan with the water in which they were soaked. There should be just enough to cover them. Boil gently until you have a clear jelly. Dissolve for each cupful of this, a teaspoonful of refined borax, in a little warm water, and whip into the soap jelly. Bring again to the boil, and pour into a jar to cool.

This, diluted with warm water—rainwater, filtered, when you can get it—makes a lovely lather for washing such woollen goods as would thicken and “full up,” if soap were applied directly upon them.

Toilet soaps should be kept by themselves, and made, by the addition of boric talcum, into a scented jelly for the bath-room.

## PARAFFIN AS A CLEANSING AGENT

Housewives who profess to have given paraffin a fair trial in the laundry, are so loud in praise of it that to pass it over lightly would be to fly in the face of the evidence of many witnesses. I offer a recipe the excellence of which is vouched for by several who have used it for years.

The clothes must be soaked overnight in the usual way. In the morning wring them out, and shake free of superfluous water.

Into a boiler half full of hot soft water, cut a half-bar of white soap and a bit of paraffin a little less than two inches square. Fill the boiler three-quarters full with pieces of fine clothing—those about which you are most particular—and boil for thirty minutes. Remove the clothes, lay them in hot rinsing water and fill the boiler with the second-best things, having thrown out the soiled water and put in a fresh supply of water, soap and paraffin. This done, boil half an hour, and take the clothes out. The contents of the boiler are not to be thrown away this time. There will be enough soap and paraffin for the third boiling of towels and coarse pieces.

Rub all soiled spots lightly on the wash-board, using no more soap. The dirt will have been loosened by the process, and be ready to fall out of itself. After passing through two rinsing waters and bluing, hang out to dry.

In winter, if the flannels are washed in the water left from the first washing of fine white clothes, then rinsed in warm water, softened with a little borax, they will be nice and soft.

The soapy water from the boiler is good for cleaning floors, sinks, etc., if used while warm. The boiler should be emptied before it cools, or the paraffin will form a rim as a high-water mark, which nothing but kerosene will remove.

The next washing-compound upon our list is enthusiastically commended by good judges of laundry work. It has, evidently, the elements of success, so far as ingredients go. I precede it by a serious warning to those who are not familiar with the character of gasoline. This valuable agent in many varieties of domestic arts is perfectly safe in careful hands. Nobody can take liberties with it. Keep it away from artificial light of every kind, and it is absolutely manageable. It resents the approach of fire in any form. Yet I am assured by authentic attestants that the mixture of which I am about to speak may be boiled after it has been cooled, and, as it were, seasoned by the air, without the least risk of explosion.

#### A GASOLINE EMULSION FOR WASHING

Shave a bar of old white soap fine into a pot holding about two gallons. Stir into it two quarts of boiling water; set over the fire and bring to a boil, stirring often to facilitate dissolution. When you

have a sort of jellied cream, remove from the fire to a fireless room, or, better still, to the outer air. The back porch is a safe place. While the soap jelly is still hot pour into it, gradually, a half-pint of gasoline. It will effervesce furiously, filling the kettle. Cover with a tight lid and let it alone for fifteen minutes.

Have at hand the weekly wash that has been soaked overnight, then wrung nearly dry and sorted into tubs, ready for the laundress and the rubbing. Make a suds with plenty of hot water and a pint of the emulsion; rub in the usual way, or put into the washing-machine if you have one; rinse in warm water, and the articles are ready for the line. As I have said, it may even be boiled without danger of explosion, but this is seldom necessary, so well does the cleanser do its part.

It softens hard water and dislodges dirt and whitens linen. Colored clothes may be washed with this emulsion without fading them.

#### A GOOD WASHING FLUID

Dissolve in two gallons of boiling water one can of potash, or of a patent lye you have tried and proved to be good. Add to the mixture a half-cup of household ammonia, and as much powdered borax. Take from the fire, cover closely, and when it is blood-warm, put it into bottles with tight rubber corks.

On wash-day, have ready a boiler of scalding water into which you have stirred a half-bar of ripe

soap. (A half-bar here means a piece two inches square.) Add a small teacupful of the fluid to this boilerful, and set on the stove. Your clothes should have been soaked overnight, and the soiled places rubbed with soap. Put them into the boiler, and keep up a hard boil for twenty minutes. The clothes should then be turned into the tubs. They will need very little rubbing, but must be put through two rinsing waters.

## CHAPTER V

MONDAY (*Continued*)

### WOOLENS, COLORED COTTONS AND LINENS

Reference was made in our first chapter to the "cold-water process" for woolen materials, including that bugbear of the thrifty manager—blankets. An earnest advocate of the somewhat startling innovation upon grandmotherly customs, writes:

"It is the only way for washing woolens if you would have them beautifully soft and clean—soft as when new, although nearly worn out. My experience dates back some nine years, when a neighbor and myself washed blankets on the same day, the blankets being exactly alike, bought at the same place and at the same time. Hers were soft and pliable, while mine had that harsh feeling every one knows for herself, and shudders to think of.

"I asked my friend the reason of the difference and she said—'Having had experience in my girlhood in the woolen factories of Scotland, I simply soaked my blankets in cold water.'

"Of course I had used warm—and behold the result. Since that day even our woolen stockings are treated in this way.



“One need not always use the cold water. Tepid may do as well for old woollens. I am told that it does. But when they are new, before washing them at all, I soak them in pure cold water for at least half-an-hour, or until the flannel will make a fine lather when soap is rubbed on. Afterward, I wash them just as I would wash any other garment. My baby's nightgowns—made of white gauze flannel—when treated in this manner, are a joy to behold and to handle.

“It is useless to try the ‘cold water process’ after the article has been once put into warm water, for then the grease is ‘set’ and your woolen has a harsh texture. The children's fine white flannels, having been invariably treated to the ‘cold water cure,’ when new, are afterward washed in the same way as their muslins—but not boiled, of course. Then they are thrown into the cold bluing water, hung out in freezing weather, or in sunshine, and never disappoint me.

“There is a lot of virtue in cold water!”

From this pleasant letter we gather that cold water is but an initiatory stage, designed to take the wool-oil out of the fabric. This done, the rest of the operation does not differ materially from the methods practised in other laundries.

I have taken great pains to get a consensus of opinion from divers trustworthy sources upon this important branch of household labor, and culled from a mass of correspondence what seems to me helpful and practical information for the willing learner.

In response to my inquiry, a wide-awake Western woman says:

“Will I tell you how I manage to have my blankets look well as long as one thread holds to another? With a ‘heart-and-a-half!’ as we say out here.

“If the blankets are very much soiled, shave two bars of wool soap into a granite saucepan; cover with soft warm water and set on the range to melt. Have in a great pot plenty of warm (not hot) water. Air, beat and brush the blankets well to get rid of all the fluff and dust. Put into a large tub three big pailfuls of warm water. There should be ten or twelve gallons of it. Add a cupful of household ammonia, before stirring in the melted soap. Mix all well together with the clothes-stick, and put in the blankets. Do not rub them on the wash-board, but souse them under, and shake them about vigorously, then squeeze them between your hands until you see that the dirt is out. If, when you lift them to the light, they look grimy, make a second suds like the first, and repeat the sousing, shaking and turning until you are satisfied. Put through the wringer, if your hands are not strong enough to press all the wet out of them. They should not drip when hung on the line. It is well to add a little ammonia to the clear water in which they are rinsed before they are wrung out.

“Hang them lengthwise on the lines, using plenty of clothes-pins. Make sure that a blanket is taut on the line, but do not strain the edges. Dry in the shade. While they are still damp go all over each

with a clean, new wire brush. An 'electric' hair brush is good for this purpose. Brush with the nap; never against it.

“This process may seem tedious, but experience has proved to me that there is no short cut to excellence in the washing of blankets.”

A serious trouble with housewives and laundresses who have the management of flannels is the tendency of woolen fabrics to shrink in the wash. All-wool garments are so liable to this infirmity that many a clever economist insists on buying flannel that has a liberal admixture of cotton in it. It will not “full up” in the water and in the wearing. She, who is able to indulge herself and her family in the use of “patent” underwear at a cost of fifteen and twenty dollars a garment, is wise if she adds to the expense of the luxury by sending them every week to a professional cleaner, unless her home laundress be unusually skilful, and amenable to reason. It is a common complaint with our housemother that servants, competent and docile in other respects, can not, or will not wash flannels in such a way as not to make them smaller and tighter each week, until they are, perforce, thrown aside when but half-worn.

In an earlier chapter, I have expressed my individual opinion to the effect that hot water shrinks woolen goods of every kind. Yet I am constrained by a sense of justice, and by respect for an esteemed correspondent, to give for what it may be worth, a brief note on this head, that tells another story.

“My husband is a bit ‘pernicketty,’ as our old-fashioned people say, in the matter of flannels. He will have none but the best all-wool underwear and negligée shirts. His summer suits are of the same, and it goes without saying that they are an apple of discord in the laundry. To keep the peace below stairs—and, I might add, to keep my poor John out of the poor house—I wash the aforementioned garments with my own hands, and he never suspects it! Every Monday morning, as soon as he is safely off to his office, I shut myself up in the bath-room with his outer and inner flannels, and then and there address myself seriously to the self-imposed task. I run the water in the tub until it is as hot as I can bear my hand in; plunge the precious articles into the steaming flood, soap them well all over—using none but old, white soap, kept in the store-room for this sacred purpose alone—and rub them on the wash-board, until every part has been rubbed and soaped. I have my own clandestine wringer, and I put them through it, then rush them through two clean, hot, rinsing waters, wring out the wet with my hands, and hang the cleansed valuables in the back yard. This last part of the process is all that I intrust to any hands save my very own, and I superintend this, to make sure they have the right exposure. When the flannels are half dry, they are hung in the sunny sitting-room, near an open window, and I stretch them faithfully every ten minutes.

“The success of the process depends largely upon

the rapidity with which each stage is conducted. It is a 'rush order' throughout.

" 'Lots of trouble?' I don't deny it, but my good-man wears his all-wools in gladness and singleness of heart, and there are no failures in the laundry because nobody there would think the garments (or the wearer thereof) 'worth all that fuss.' I differ from the powers-that-would-be-if-they-could in this, as in other views. And I really take deep if secret satisfaction in the fact that each of these garments is worn with perfect comfort as long as the threads hold together. Furthermore, they outlast by months flannels washed in the ordinary way, and look well to the end.

"As for the waste of time at which my fashionable acquaintances would cavil if they suspected the 'degrading' truth—I don't play 'Bridge' and can, therefore, afford an hour a week spent thus. May I add a line of caution to other flannel-washers? Never put them (the flannels, not the washerwomen) into water in which cottons or linens have been washed, no matter how clean it may seem. There is always fine lint afloat in it that will be taken up by the flannels, making them hard and inclined to shrink."

#### HOW TO KEEP WOOLEN STOCKINGS FROM SHRINKING IN THE WASH

Wash in the usual way, and while still damp, stretch upon wooden frames, cut to exactly the size

of each stocking or sock—or, to speak with absolute correctness—a trifle larger. These may be bought at some shops, but a better plan for the mother of moderate means, is to get a thin smooth board—such as cotton fabrics are rolled on when put up for sale—and have her forms made at home. Lay one of each pair of hose smoothly on the board, attach it to the soft wood with pins, and pencil the outline on it very carefully, making it, as I have said, a very little larger than the stocking. Next, bore six holes in each to hasten the drying. The pattern may be cut through the board by any one who has a jack-knife and a steady hand. The boards may be had for the asking at any village store. It is, therefore, not a serious undertaking to provide a form for each member of the family who wears woolen hose. Boys' winter stockings, worn with knickerbockers, being stout and often coarse, thicken—as dismayed mothers complain—until they are stiff as boards, while the baby's knitted socks become all too small for him long before he has outgrown them. One pair of wooden forms for each will prolong the usefulness of the foot-gear and save the mother much annoyance.

Woolens that have been badly shrunken in the wash may be improved, if not entirely restored to their former size, by the following process:

If you have not soap jelly on hand, dissolve shavings of white soap in enough boiling water to melt them, and when the "jelly" is cold and firm, stir into

a tubful of cold water. The size of the tub depends upon the number of clothes to be washed. If the flannels are soiled, add a little household ammonia just before they go into the water. Wash them as quickly as possible, using no more soap, pass them through the wringer, rinse in two cold waters, and wring dry with a few dexterous twists of a pair of strong hands. Dry in the shade, and quickly, stretching them every ten minutes.

If these directions be obeyed to the letter, the ill-used garments will be soft and flexible when dry.

#### TO CLEAN A CHAMOIS VEST

Make a good warm suds of well-ripened white soap—add a tablespoonful of olive oil to a gallon of the suds, and wash as you would fine, all-wool flannel. Rinse in warm water and stretch on a form—a firm pillow, if you have no other. If, when you have dried it in the shade, there remain harsh places in the vest, rub them soft between the hands. If there be a lining take it out before washing.

#### COLORED COTTONS

If you have colored muslins, calicoes or gingham to wash, mix a tablespoonful of ox-gall in each gallon of cold water, and leave the articles in this for two hours.

*Or*—make a strong brine of fine salt and cold water, and soak the colored cotton in it before washing quickly and drying it—always with the wrong

side out—in the shade. Colored things fade more in the drying than in the tub.

If, by inexcusable carelessness, the garment should get into the boiler and go through the boiling process with the white clothes, there are five-hundred chances against one that it will be irretrievably faded when it comes out. If the colors are not perfectly fast there are, likewise, as many chances in favor of injury to the rest of the contents of the caldron. A second boil in water liberally dashed with lemon-juice, or chloride of lime, may bleach the unwelcome tinge out of the white things. If anything will restore lost color, it is a dip in household ammonia, slightly diluted. The odds are against you, still you may make the attempt.

*Moral:* Set your colors before they go into the water, and keep colored and white things as far separate as the limits of your laundry will allow. Let them typify the Jews and the Samaritans on one day of the week.

A tablespoonful of powdered alum dissolved in boiling water is a potent addition to the briny bath in which the gingham, etc., should lie for two hours, or more, as a preparation for the tub. Repeat the "setting" every time the colored article is washed. A common blunder is to imagine that, once set, it needs no further treatment. A mistake, equally common and as disastrous, is to take for granted the paid washerwoman's obedience to the injunction never to omit the preliminary stage. Should her em-



ployer think it too much trouble to give personal attention to a matter that will consume, perhaps ten minutes, all told, of her morning, the hireling will reckon the salt-and-alum soaking as "notional," and give it the go-by.

I seek to impress these homely items in the toil and moil of Monday upon the mind and the housewifely conscience of my reader, because I know that colored cottons and linens may be kept bright and comely as long as they retain integrity of texture, if any one will but observe these simple and absurdly easy precautions. Also, that there is nothing in the salt and alum which can rot the finest threads.

The colors set, you may, if you wish to starch the cottons or linens, make a gallon of boiled starch in the usual way, and strain half of it into a tubful of soft warm—not hot—water. It must be more than lukewarm, yet not too hot for you to bear your hand in it with comfort. Rub lightly and rapidly. Never let colored goods lie for one minute in the washing, or rinsing water, after they are once clean. Dilute the reserved half of the starch with warm water and use it in rinsing. Hang in the shade and dry.

*Or*—and this is perhaps a better method to pursue with delicate tints and sheer, fine fabrics:

Boil two quarts of clean wheat-bran in eight quarts of water for an hour, never fast, but steadily all the time. Turn out, and as soon as it is moderately cool, before it stiffens, strain through double cheese-cloth, pressing hard to get all the starch. If it is too thick,

add cold water until it is of the consistency of thin starch. Wash your lawn, dimity, or gingham in this, using neither soap nor starch. The bran-water is both cleansing and stiffening. A variation of this mode of doing up thin stuffs when black or dark blue, gray, or green—indeed when the color is so dark that the ordinary starch will impart a whitish look, is this:

Put into a clean white muslin or cheese-cloth bag, a pint of wheat-bran; and lay it in as much boiling water as will suffice for each skirt or waist. Cover the vessel in which the bag lies, and set at the side of the range where it will keep hot, but not simmer, for one hour. Then squeeze and knead the bag hard in the water, and above it, until no more liquid will exude from it. Stir a tablespoonful of borax into the water. Wash the article you wish to clean in this preparation while it is quite warm, having, first, reserved a cupful for the rinsing water. This must be thinner than that in which the main washing was done. Shake, and clap several times between the hands. When nearly dry, iron on the wrong side over a double thickness of flannel.

## CHAPTER VI

MONDAY (*Concluded*).

### SILKS, BLACK, COLORED AND WHITE

A black silk gown which has long seen service and is hopelessly shiny on the right side and defaced by smears and stains and yet retains its integrity of warp and woof, is too good to throw away. No dressmaker would deign to renovate the old soldier, yet you feel that there is work in it for months to come. None of us women require to be told that the wardrobe which does not include a seasoned veteran in the shape of a three-quarters-worn black silk, lacks that which no new gown can supply.

If you, the veteran's fond proprietor, will reduce it to something like a decent show of capabilities, there are still abroad in the land seamstresses who have, they tell you proudly, "worked with a dressmaker" and are not above making over what the profession would condemn as a derelict. Provided, always, they are not expected to rip and clean. That depth of ignominy you must avoid by doing the work with your own hands.

Ripping is an art. Unless you have, by rare good

luck, some humble-minded pensioner, too old-fashioned to resent the task proposed, and conscientious enough to bring to it the deftness learned in an earlier day—trust nobody but yourself to dissect the veteran. May I suggest as an alleviation of the hardship of the undertaking, that you set about it on some stormy evening when John has the time and the will to beguile the work of weariness by reading aloud while the keen scissors are plied?

In such circumstances, you will have patience to rip seams carefully, clipping each stitch, and resisting the disposition to tear down a whole breadth at one pull.

When the breadths and sections of waist and sleeves are separated, brush out the dust, and wipe both sides of the silk with a bit of soft flannel. Spread, breadth by breadth, upon a sheet doubled upon a large table, and sponge what is hereafter to be the wrong side, with warm (not scalding) water in which peeled potatoes have been boiled into mealiness. Strain the water through a cotton bag before using it. While the silk is yet damp fold it smoothly and lay between folds of an old linen sheet until you are ready to iron it. It should be damp still when ironed on what was the right, and is to be the wrong side, leaving the other free from the gloss of the iron. Hang by the edges to dry, using plenty of clothes-pins. If there are grease spots on the silk, sponge freely with household ammonia before ironing.

## TO WASH FAST-COLORED SILKS

Having ripped the garment apart, make sure that the color will hold by washing a small sample of the goods in cold water with borax soap. If the original color does not stand the test, it is quite possible that it may fade agreeably, as it were, into a shade that is not displeasing to your eye, thus promising you a new gown.

Wipe the silk on both sides with soft flannel. Have ready in a tub three gallons of warm suds made with old white Castile soap. Stir into this rapidly a quart of household ammonia, put in the silk and wash it as you would a pocket-handkerchief, breadth by breadth; rinse all in clear, tepid water, shaking and squeezing, but not putting through the wringer. Roll four or five thicknesses of soft linen or cotton about a round stick—an old broom-handle will do. It should be perfectly smooth. Wind the breadths of damp silk on this, keeping each straight and taut. The silk should be about half-dry. When all are on, wrap the roll in dry linen and leave it alone for at least an hour. Finally, iron on the wrong side with an iron that is not hot enough to fade it.

Silks that are badly soiled may be made to look fresh and crisp by following these directions. They must not lie in the water one minute longer than suffices for a rapid souse and rub, or the color will not be clear.

## WASH-SILK WAISTS AND CHILDREN'S FROCKS

The pretty wash-silks affected by young girls for shirt-waists and by mothers for children's party frocks, must be carefully handled in the laundry, or they are not worth making up. They may be washed without ripping if the right means are used.

If the garment be greasy from perspiration, or other causes, soak it for an hour in tepid water in which a little borax has been dissolved. See that the pail or tub in which you are to wash it is perfectly free from soil and grease. Delicate fabrics are sometimes ruined by carelessness in this respect. It is not enough that the tub was washed when set away after the last using. Scald and wipe it out now, with a clean, dry cloth. Make a lather of soft water and "ripe" Ivory soap. Wash the waist quickly and faithfully in this. Do not use any soap in the process. If the suds are properly made you will need none. Pass from the suds into a rinsing-water, just lukewarm, and from this into a second. If the material be white or pale-blue, add a very little liquid bluing to the second rinsing-bath. The rinse must be thorough, as if any soap is left in the silk, it will yellow it. It may be advisable to have three waters to make all sure. In which case the dash of bluing should go into the last.

The rinsing done, shake, and press out the wet by hand, wrapping the garment in a soft towel, and squeezing it through this to absorb the moisture.

Iron while still so wet that the steam rises freely.

Lay a piece of fine, thin muslin, or linen, between the silk and the iron. The latter must not be so hot as to risk streaking the moist silk by uneven drying. Press hard and steadily as you iron. When the silk is smoothed to your liking, take a fresh iron, rub it with especial pains and press the now perfectly dried garment on the wrong side, running the iron over it lightly and swiftly, without the muslin covering.

One mother who does up her girls' waists and gowns herself, gets a firm, but slight gloss by the addition of a teaspoonful of dissolved glue to the third rinsing water.

She lays stress upon the necessity of ironing before the silk is nearly dry, maintaining that the silk will never look well if suffered to dry before the heavy, hot iron presses it.

#### TO WASH WHITE AND COLORED RIBBONS

Pin the ribbon upon a board about which you have tacked a clean white cloth. Scrub the ribbon from end to end with a bit of white flannel wet with cold water to which you have added a little household ammonia. Having treated one side faithfully, draw out the pins, turn the ribbon and scrub the other side as thoroughly with a fresh piece of flannel. If the ribbon be very dirty, change the water three or four times. Dry upon the board in the sun, having wiped the ribbon repeatedly with a dry cloth until you can get no more moisture out of it.

White ribbons may be bleached, in drying, by sponging them with peroxide of hydrogen. Leave in the sun on the board until dry. Take from the board, cover with two thicknesses of an old cambric handkerchief, and press hard with a moderately hot iron through the cambric.

A variation of the foregoing method is especially recommended for white ribbons and the faintly tinted taffeta and lutestring ribbons used for lingerie and which, being worn constantly, and coming into contact with the skin, must be washed often.

Keep on hand a jar of soap-jelly made by boiling down scraps of fine toilet soap, saved for this purpose as they become too small to be used in the bath. Never throw away a bit, no matter how minute. The riper, the better.

Wet your ribbons in cold water and lay them on a flat surface. The marble slab of an old-fashioned table, or bureau, made perfectly clean and free from dust, is an excellent place for the operation. Dip a clean, rather firm, but not harsh tooth-brush into the jelly, then into cold water, and scrub the ribbons lengthwise until they are clean. Keep them smooth by holding one end down hard, while you work toward the other. Rinse three times in cold water, changing the water each time. The last water should be perfectly clear. Dip the ribbons up and down, in rinsing, holding one end, and handling as little as possible. While they are yet dripping wet, wind upon a smooth, clean bottle, taking care not to wrin-



kle the ribbon, and set in an airy window, out of the sun, to dry. Always dry silken stuffs in the shade. The sun draws them into wrinkles.

Trim the frayed ends diagonally to prevent raveling.

In ironing lay a very fine piece of muslin or linen between the ribbon and the iron which should be but moderately warm, as I have directed in the preceding recipe.

#### TO CLEAN A BLACK, OR DARK-COLORED WOOLEN SKIRT

Other gowns may be more costly, and most of them are handsomer. None fulfils the end of its creation more faithfully than the "rainy-day skirt." It was never smart, perhaps, but it is all wool, holds its color and abides in strength when fancy fabrics go to the wall—*i.e.* the rag-bag, or rag-picker.

If the man who saves his fellow (and sometimes his inferior) from ruin, be a benefactor, the sturdy garment whose mission it is to stand between better, because richer, raiment and needless wear and tear, should be accounted respectable, and renovated dutifully when shabby in the service.

If it be mud-stained at the bottom—and it is invariably, albeit of walking length—falsely so-called—brush out all the loose dirt. May I remind you to do this in the open air? Our sidewalks are the chosen breeding-grounds of bacteria of the most malevolent type, and you have never considered it worth while to hold up the old short skirt. Beat and brush

it out-of-doors, shaking steadily against the wind as long as the dust flies.

Lay it, then, upon a table, and scrub the mud stains left above the hem with a freshly cut raw potato. This, by the way, will remove such spots and streaks from black silk when nothing else will. Next, spread and straighten each breadth, and sponge faithfully with stale beer. If you can get what is listed as "malt vinegar," it is even better. Use it lavishly, and when one side has had full justice done to it, be as faithful with the other. Lastly, go all over the right side with a sponge dripping with alcohol. Hang in the air, but not in the sun, until almost dry, supporting by the belt and not sparing clothes-pins. Take it down, and iron on the wrong side through a damp cloth.

#### SOAP-BARK AS A CLEANSER

The best way of using it is to enclose it in small bags, or pads, each containing a couple of handfuls of the bark. Make several of these, keeping one for white flannels, cloths, etc., one for colored, one for black. The pads should be made of cheese-cloth.

Spread the article to be cleaned upon a table covered with a clean white cloth. Have under your hand a bowl of tepid water in which you have stirred a tablespoonful of household ammonia. Dip your pad in this and hold there until soaked through. Wash the soiled gown or coat or trousers, with the wet pad, rubbing gently upon the spots. Then, with

a piece of dry flannel, or other woolen stuff, rub the whole surface dry, changing the cloth as it gets wet.

If the washing and wiping be done well, you will be amazed at the dirt that comes away, and the renewed look of the thing treated. Boys' cloth trousers, men's every-day coats, girls' school frocks of serge, "mother's" working-day gown of black delaine, or merino, may be cleaned at home, with wonderfully little labor, and no expense beyond the purchase of ten cents' worth of soap-bark.

I lay much stress upon the department of domestic cleaning of materials not classed as washable, because the prices charged by professional cleaners are cruelly heavy to people of moderate means. It is a time-worn adage that the best thing is the cheapest in the long run. In subscribing to the truth of the platitude, I add a proviso:—The best thing must be cared for as befits its value, or it is not cheap. Dirt is a costly condition in any circumstances. The lack of personal cleanliness invites disease and doctor's bills. The soaping, rubbing, boiling, rinsing and wringing needed to bring a badly soiled garment back to decency, tell upon its integrity more than a year of careful wear. It *does* pay to buy a good thing to begin with. It pays far better to use it without abusing it, when once bought. It pays well, and always, to get the good thing clean when legitimate wear has soiled it. For really excellent fabrics—like the best quality of human virtue—do not go to pieces in the wash.

Lay it down as an axiom that nearly every all-wool, pure silk, real linen and round-threaded stuffs of whatever kind—will wash if they are handled judiciously. I had my lesson in the direction of this home truth, over forty years ago. I had worn a fine white, all-wool grenadine for several months. It was as good as it was pretty, and I grieved when it finally became so begrimed with town smoke and country dust as to be no longer presentable, even for rainy-day-at-home wear. I handed it over, with a lot of other past worthies, to my gardener's wife who had a genius for making over castaways in the clothing line for her little brood. In a few days she came to me with a matter that weighed upon her tender conscience. Upon her arm she bore the discarded gown—so spick-and-span that I could not believe the evidence of my eyes. I had apologized for offering it to her, saying that nothing could be done with it, but she might dye and utilize it for carpet-rags.

“Seeing it was such nice material and knowing that real good stuff always washes well, I just put it into the tub, washed it careful, and ironed it while it was damp—and will you look at it? And so, feeling sure you would not have thrown it away if you had guessed what could be made of it, I didn't think it was right for me to keep it,”—was the conclusion of the honest soul.

Of course I would not revoke the gift, and the lesson was rubbed into my memory by the sight of the renovated grenadine made up for the present owner's

eldest girl's best gown, worn to church, Sunday after Sunday, all that summer.

Moral: When a garment is too dirty for your use, try to get it clean before deciding that its period of usefulness in your service is at an end.

## CHAPTER VII

TUESDAY,

IRONING-DAY

If ever the crisp order of the officer-in-command, "Clear decks for action!" should be issued and obeyed on the domestic frigate, it is on ironing-day. If your kitchen be, also, the laundry, the injunction, "Stow close!" is added.

Arrange culinary operations so as to have as little cooking done as is consistent with family comfort while ironing-table and clothes-horse occupy the center of the stage. A fretful hiss of fat in the direction of a flat-iron, or a drip of gravy athwart a freshly laundered garment, is a disaster. Pots and saucepans crowd the top of the range when you require all the available space for the irons. Meat and bread are likely to burn in the overheated ovens unless they are watched closely, and nobody has time to watch the baking on ironing-day. These solicitudes are not fussiness. It is true economy of time and nervous forces to devote the greater part of one day to the serious task of getting what Yankee housewives used to call, "the brunt of the ironing" out of the way of other and lighter duties. And, since this branch of domestic service, when begun, must pro-

ceed "without haste, without rest" toward completion, it behooves all who are to lend a hand in the task to plan cannily for each step in a way where not one may be skipped.

An oblong table on which sheets and table-cloths may be spread at half-length, is a "must have" to the trained laundress. The regulation ironing-board, supported at each end by stout legs attached to the board, and folding under it when not in use—or by the more primitive method of resting the board on the backs of two chairs—is all-sufficient for smaller articles, but as a foundation upon which heavy bed- and table-linen are to be manipulated it is a clumsy contrivance. Even when a clean sheet, kept for the purpose, is spread on the floor to keep the trailing folds from the dust, the necessity of frequent shiftings of counterpane or table-cloth to bring every part of it under the iron in its turn, adds sensibly to the labor of her who wields it.

Table, and ironing- and bosom-boards must be covered with folds of flannel, or with an old blanket, in order to secure the degree of elastic firmness requisite to produce the soft glossiness pleasant to the housewifely eye. The jar upon the worker's joints and muscles is much less for the slight yielding of the woolly substratum. Over this tack smoothly a stout cotton sheet made fast to the underside of the board. This covering must be invariably clean. Damp cloths and hot iron will betray any stain or dust by transferring it to the article under

treatment. A scorch is a stain—a fact lost sight of by many a laundress who does not renew the “ironing-sheet” until it is dropping to pieces under the vigor of her polishing strokes, and as sere as a November oak-leaf. Then she wonders that her clothes are “dingied” in spite of her painstaking.

Have at the laundress’ right hand a trivet, or ring, on which to set the iron in the intervals between active operations, and beneath it a square of asbestos.

If you can not get asbestos, use a flat stone. A homely but efficient appliance for setting the iron on, and likewise for cleaning it is a piece of unpainted wire netting, such as is sold for window-screens, folded into a square of five or six thicknesses. It keeps irons free from rust if they be rubbed briskly on it now and then, and holds the heat for them.

Within easy reach of the worker lay a block of folded wrapping paper on which to wipe the iron and to test its heat, and with the paper a cloth for removing dust and chance flakes of soot from the handle and top. A bit of beeswax or spermaceti, or, best of all, paraffin, should lie in a saucer near by. It imparts gloss to the iron but it should be used sparingly. An asbestos holder is an excellent thing, but any thick square, made of folds of flannel, Canton flannel, bed-ticking, calico—anything which will play the part of a non-conductor of the heat of the iron to the hand—will answer the purpose of the average laundress. The chief advantage of asbestos over the substances named is that a single fold laid



between two pieces of woolen or cotton stuff, will protect the hand, and be less clumsy than a multiplicity of thicknesses.

Should the irons be rough from disuse or dampness, rub them on a smooth board, on which has been strewed table salt. If they are in regular use and kept in a dry place when not employed, they will need no more friction than will be given by the wire netting spoken of just now.

In preparing the clothes—dried and dampened and folded—for the ironing table, sort them intelligently, laying each kind in the order in which it is to be ironed. There is no surer token of inexperience or slovenliness than when a laundress pulls out the contents of her clothes-basket, helter-skelter, to get at some articles left in the bottom which she would like to “do” first, or drags out whatever comes to hand and by whatever corner, tumbling all the rest into a damp, disorderly pile. In folding down yesterday’s wash, she should have laid it in the order in which she is to attack it to-day.

Begin with a couple of pillow-cases or towels—plain ironing—to make sure that your apparatus is in good running order; then take the fine, starched clothes, while day and energies are at their freshest. If there are embroideries, pull every scallop and point into shape. If they are too dry to be pliable, dampen with a sponge dipped into a bowl of warm water. This is another reachable accessory essential to the ironing-day outfit. When the embroidery is

quite ready for the iron, press steadily and hard on the wrong side, bearing your weight full upon the implement. Iron steadily and not fast. It is not imperatively necessary that you should thump! The rhythmic bump! bump! bump! rising from the scene of operations from morn to dewy eve of ironing-day reminds the well-read mistress of muffled drums

“Beating funeral marches to the grave.”

I can answer for one who has harkened to the lugubrious boom until nerves and patience gave way. I have in mind one strenuous and well-meaning laundress, who, in six months, battered the mortar and lath wall against which she chose to set her table, until it looked like the track left by a cannon-ball upon the outer fortifications of a besieged town.

As you iron (without thumping!) table- and bed-linen, handkerchiefs and towels, fold, and press the folds into sharp, clean, straight creases. They will look neater and keep fresh longer for this final touch. When they have received it and are satisfactory in your sight, lay the smaller articles aside in neat piles. Hang the larger upon the clothes-horse to dry perfectly and to get the full benefit of the air. Do this, with care not to wrinkle them, and handle as gingerly when the hour comes for taking down the sweet, thoroughly dried clothes, and ranging them in orderly array in the hampers or trays in which the harvest of your two days' toil is to be carried to the garner of linen-press and bureau-drawers.

I have known of households in the South where it was the pretty custom to drop a bit of orris-root tied in a cloth, into the boiler with the handkerchiefs, body-clothes and pillow-cases. It imparted what the French call a "soupon," and we try to express by our translation of the word into a "suspicion," of violet breath, faint, yet unmistakable and exquisite. It is so subtly suggestive as to make the lavender-scented sheets of our foremothers almost vulgar by comparison. A dainty conceit, as I have said, and stories of the elder days, when people took time to be "esthetic," as we phrase it now—make loving mention of lavender and dried rose-leaves lurking among the folds of linen sheets, fine as cobwebs. The big chests in which the flaxen treasures were hoarded from one generation to another, were redolent of these and of Spanish cedar linings. In our prosaic age we hold that clean linen should have no scent but that of its own ineffable purity. We contend, too, that it should be kept well-aired. There are iconoclasts who hint that the nameless odor, reminiscent of East Indian spices, and native rose-petals and gray lavender-blooms, and auld lang syne generally, that brought a lump to the returned wanderer's throat, and poetry to his tongue—was largely compounded of must and dead air. So we make a point, and a sharp one, of admitting the winds of heaven freely to our linen-closets, and when we can afford the space, make the closet a windowed room. In the interests of modern sanitation, we write it down as a

rule without exception that linen (I use the word in the generic sense) that has a smell when it is put away as clean, is unwholesome. It was washed improperly, or the taint of cold cookery clings to it, or it was imperfectly ventilated before it was consigned to the clothes-basket as a graduate from the laundry.

Returning to our ironing-table, let me say a word of my own judgment as to sheets, linen and cotton. Certain latter-day writers on physiology, hygiene and cognate themes, deprecate ironing them except at the hems. One authority, too eminent to be lightly questioned, asks boldly and baldly:

“Why iron them at all? Fold them in the middle, then across again; lay on the table and smooth with your hand as you fold. Finally, press the hems with a hot iron and hang the sheets up to air. Can't you see the sanitary wisdom of all this? The air circulates freely between the meshes that are not crushed flat. You will sleep more healthfully between unironed bed-clothes.”

Our Eminent Authority may be in the right, and I may be an unsanitary, unprogressive Sybarite, wedded to ideals which advanced thinkers and doers have long ago cast to the moles and bats. For, I will have my sheets ironed all over and faithfully. “Same as a pocket-handkercher!” as I overheard a char-woman say who was hired to assist the laundress.

Consulting Mrs. Parsons McPherson's capital little manual, *Ethics of Household Economy* (which should have a place in every housemother's library),

I note that even she discourages the "waste of time, strength and fuel" involved in the ironing of sheets. Yet she adds: "If they are for your spare bed, then iron the whole surface."

Catching at this goodly straw, I elect to regard my especial and well-beloved couch—my friend and comforter—as a spare bed. In my stubborn old-fashionedness, I rest better and maintain my self-respect more surely despite "crushed meshes," when I "lay me down to sleep" between sheets that have been thoroughly aired and retain the smoothness and crisp creases made by the swift passage of a hot iron throughout their length and breadth.

"If I were Queen of France,  
Or, what's better, Pope of Rome,—"

I should have my sheets renewed daily, always sleeping within fair, fresh linen in summer, cambric in winter, ironed all over, and on both sides. The crushed meshes may be non-sanitary. Hence, they may be naughty. They are nice!

If you would keep the irons in perfect order, wash them when the last bit of work is disposed of for the day, wiping them dry, and set them away in a dry closet where they will gather neither dampness nor grime during their rest time. If any moisture clings to them from the washing, it will tell the tale of neglect the first time they are used. It is prudent to leave them on the range for a few minutes after wiping them, to make assurance sure.

Wind an old sheet around the ironing boards and put aside where you will not stumble over them and where they will not get dirty for the rest of the week. The precaution will save annoying delay and extra work the following Tuesday.

If the weather has been clear and fine, and the laundry is airy, the clothes may be taken up-stairs on the evening of the day in which they were ironed. If you have no room except the kitchen to do your laundry work in, and there is no hall or disused room in some other part of the house where the things may be aired overnight, do not leave them down-stairs to absorb the smells of cooking and greasy dish-water. We are all of us unpleasantly familiar with what we have never found a better name for than "the kitchen smell." It means cold fried grease, the reek of hot suds in which soiled pots and pans have been cleansed, and a "blend" of cooked vegetables, tea, coffee, hot sweets, and in summer fruit parings and cores. No need to proceed with the loathsome analysis! Clothes, washed to the last degree of purity, and sterilized from all possible bacterial influences by hot irons, if allowed to hang in the "blend" for five, eight, or ten hours, during which time windows and doors are closed for the night,—become hopelessly interpenetrated with the abomination, and retain it.

I have been sickened by it in church, my chance neighbor in the next pew exhaling it in whiffs, the French scent (at two dollars a bottle) with which

she drenched her handkerchief that morning, could not "down." I have been put to sleep in sheets, beautifully ironed (on both sides!) which gave out the vile reek, as they were warmed by the heat of my body. I have, times without number, recognized the indescribable and as unmistakable effluvia in glossy napkins unfolded at private, and at hotel tables.

No matter how strait your cottage or apartment, don't, if you can help it, leave your newly-ironed clothes, bed-linen and napery to air overnight in a close kitchen. The finer the material the more susceptible is it to the deadly taint. Even "crushed meshes" are not immune.

Keep a large square of mosquito-netting to throw over the laden clothes-horse, draping it so loosely as to permit a free passage of air, while it protects the articles under it from flies and dust.

In transferring the clothes to the basket that is to take them to their several destinations, consider the convenience of her who is to unpack and put them away. In common with hundreds of other house-mothers, I have, throughout my domestic life, kept up the habit of doing this with my own hands, sorting and inspecting with critical eyes, assigning to each room and shelf and closet and drawer its rightful supply of clean "things." I speak from experience, therefore, in touching upon the need that each article of a kind shall be laid with others of the like class. A jumble of handkerchiefs, stockings, skirts,





towels and bureau-scarfs is a grievance to the methodical sorter. When table-linen is added to the "mix," it approximates indecency.

In folding sheets, contrive, whether they are for double or single beds, to have them, when put up, of uniform shape and apparent size. They fit more evenly upon the shelves where they should be laid with the closed folds outward, the open edges toward the wall. The difference in the general appearance of a linen-closet where this rule is observed and one in which towels and sheets are piled on the shelves, without regard to it, is so marked as to call for no special comment.

## CHAPTER VIII

WEDNESDAY

BAKING-DAY

“The Home-made Loaf” stands with so many of us as a symbol of the wholesome good cheer beloved in our childhood’s days that we are disposed to class the phrase with traditional open fireplaces, dough-nuts, “such as mother used to make,” and other reminiscences of “the days that are no more.” In fact, it is a family stand-by that should never go out of fashion in town and in country.

One feature of our pressing, headlong, breathless, national life is that fewer households depend upon home-cookery with every year that rushes by. The rage for contract work and specialties has crept, like blood-poison, into every department of domestic service. What Douglas Jerrold stigmatized as “the Greatest Plague of Life,” in driving thousands of families into hotels and boarding-houses, has perverted their taste for home-made bread, cakes and puddings. Vienna rolls and long sticks of crusty French bread represent the staff of life upon which our ancestors leaned much of their weight. Confectioners’ pastry, flaky and translucent with lard and (alleged) butter has superseded the puff-paste our

mothers compounded with their own dainty hands, never intrusting the delicate art to hirelings, no matter how capable. Real pound cake is now almost an article of virtue, and sponge cake no longer melts in the mouth of the enchanted eater.

In saying that our domestics—of whom a witty woman says that they and their employers' evil case were foretold two thousand years ago, inasmuch as they grow poorer every year and we have them always with us—are responsible for the decline and fall of home-bakery, I speak by the card. Forty years ago, the first question put by the prospective mistress to the candidate for the place of cook in her kitchen was, "Are you a good baker?"

The term covered all manner of breads, biscuits, muffins and griddle-cakes, family pie-crust (the mistress, as I have observed, making the finer pastries herself), plain cakes, custards and puddings. No bread was bought unless the cupboard were emptied by sudden calamity. Baker's bread was sawdust and starch to the palate accustomed to honest loaf and biscuit. Baker's cake was voted by old and young "tolerable, and not to be endured." Baker's pies were inadmissible to any well-ordered table.

While it is true that bakeries have kept pace with the growing demands for their products, and that these last have improved in quality no less than in quantity, the advance does not justify the scorn with which the cook-lady of the twentieth century repels the modest suggestion slid by the candidate for the

honor of the cook-lady's residence under her roof, between the queries with which the candidate is plied,—“Can you make bread?”

To one such meek suggestion an especially lofty personage retorted:

“An' I take lave to say as yez is the only leddy as has iver asked me to do it? The quality all takes their bread from the Frinch partisserers.” (Presumably patisseries.)

This is an extreme case, perhaps, but housewives will support my assertion that the percentage of “competent cooks” who can make sweet, wholesome bread is so small, and the unwillingness to do home baking so general among our servants as to forecast the probability that in another decade no self-respecting cook-lady will condescend to practise the obsolete art.

Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney (Heaven rest her sweet and noble soul!) predicted, a quarter-century ago, that the time is near when wives and daughters who persist in living in homes and not in hostelries, must do their own housework.

I have daily evidence that there are still in these United States at least seventy times seven thousand women who have not bowed the knee to the Baal of folly and fashion, nor kissed him with their lips. When home and home-comfort become idle words in our country, they will have left the world.

The inference of all this is plain. If we and our Johns abhor the shortened sawdust and sweetened

starches of the "partisserers," and are determined to feed our households with food convenient for growing children and hard-working adults, and our imported cook-lady will not demean herself to the extent of making bread, we must do it ourselves.

In the pages that are to follow this disquisition, I shall try to show that baking is not menial labor, when rightly performed. We have illustrious precedent for ranking it among the more dignified branches of housewifery. Jane Carlyle was born a gentlewoman. She may have been a bit of a shrew after years of invalidism and Carlyleism had worn her nerves to tatters. But she had good blood in her veins, and common sense in her pretty head, and she was a worthy companion in intellect for the most distinguished author of his day. He would live in a farm-house, secluded from town and society, because the sight of visitors and the noise of the streets distracted his thoughts from his writing. His wife—well-born and delicately reared—had to do the cooking for a dyspeptic husband, including what she, at first, railed at as a degradation—the mixing, raising and baking of the loaves, brown and white, that made up, with oatmeal porridge, the staple of her lord's diet.

When, on winter nights, the dough rose slowly, she sat up with it, as she would with a sick child. In one of these dreary vigils, she had a revelation. She was as well-read in certain lines as the great scholar to whom she was bound, and she had not to explain her

meaning when she wrote to him of her revelation, the next morning.

“After all, in the sight of the higher Powers, what is the mighty difference between a statue of Perseus and a loaf of bread, so that each be the thing that one’s hand has found to do? The man’s determined will, his patience, his energy, his resource, were the really admirable things of which his statue of Perseus were the mere chance expression. If he had been a woman living at Craigenputtock, with a dyspeptic husband, sixteen miles from a baker, all these same qualities would have come out more fully in a good loaf of bread.”

It would seem to be a far cry from the Italian sculptor, sleepless and wan with anxiety, awaiting the action of the furnace fire upon the bronze that was to win for him immortal renown, and the tired cook in the Scottish kitchen, who could not go to bed until the dough in the kneading-trough had doubled the original bulk. But the sharp-witted reader of the classic anecdote took the flight in fancy, and drew comfort from the inspiration.

Of Emily Brontë’s soul Swinburne says,—

“It knew no fellow for might,  
Passion, vehemence, grief,  
Daring,—since Byron died.”

Not the least interesting spot in the old Yorkshire Parsonage where the wonderful sisters wrought and suffered and died, is the corner of the quaint kitchen

where Emily was wont to stand on baking-day, kneading the dough with strong deft hands, her shapely arms bared to the elbow, her eyes fixed, in the intervals of the task, upon the German book propped against the wall "out of reach of flour-dust or spatter of yeast." She did all the baking of the family that had a dyspeptic father as its head.

Her learned preceptor in the Continental school in which she studied music and foreign languages, becoming proficient in everything to which she bent her mind, said: "She is too great for a woman. She should have been a man—a great navigator." One biographer writes: "Her reason was powerful, and in grasp sublime; her turn for logical demonstration was phenomenal."

Her humble neighbors in that hamlet on the Yorkshire moors knew her but as the "Parson's daughter who made the best bread in Haworth." I have talked with them and heard their commendation of her housewifery, particularly of her beautiful darning and her "main good luck in baking."

I recalled it all when a woman sneered, the other day, at my talk of bringing housework up to our level, instead of letting it pull us down to a lower plane.

Now for the details of one of the most important branches of our housemother's profession:

The fundamental principle of every species of the genus *bread*—the informing and vivifying life of loaf, biscuit or muffin—is that which makes it *rise!*

Dear old stories of the Scottish peasantry make frequent mention of "barm." Our American foremothers held yeast-making to be an essential branch of housewifely art. It was a domestic calamity when the weekly brew failed, and not an uncommon occurrence for a messenger to be sent to a neighbor a mile away, for a cupful of lively yeast as a "starter" of the new supply for the luckless cook.

Compressed yeast, patented by a wealthy corporate body and sold in every township, has changed all that. Sometimes the yeast-cake is fresh. Sometimes it is stale. In the latter case the cook has no redress. In the depths of my housewifely conscience I have grave doubts as to the quality of the patented yeast-cake when compared with the creamy spume that rushed into sight when "mother's" yeast jug was uncorked. I have misgivings that the bread is not so sweet and tender as in the day that antedated telephone, trolleys and baking-powders.

Right sure I am that if I lived in the country the year round, and did my own baking, I should not sink into dependence upon the green dog-cart that drops the yeast-cake at the kitchen door twice a week. I should make my own yeast, as I did thirty years ago. I thought it no hardship then. You, my very much younger pupil, whose righteous soul is sore vexed by the shortcomings of patent "raisers," will win peace of mind and certainty of right results which will more than compensate for the labor, if you will make your own yeast. In the fond hope of



persuading you into this step, I append to this familiar talk, directions for preparing old-fashioned, honest home-made "barm," *Anglicé—yeast.*

#### HOP YEAST

Peel six potatoes of fair size, taking care to have the skins as thin as possible, as much of the starch of the potato lies nearest the outside covering. Tie a large cupful of good fresh hops in a bit of cheesecloth, and put with the potatoes into a pot containing two quarts of cold water. Cover, and boil until the potatoes break to the heart. Lift them with a skimmer, leaving the hop-bag in the water, and the water on the fire. Mash the hot potatoes in a bowl, and work into them four tablespoonfuls of flour and two of granulated sugar. Moisten this paste with the boiling hot tea, from the pot, stirring to a smooth batter. When you have used up the tea, squeeze the bag hard into the batter to get out all the strength of the hops. Let the mixture get lukewarm, add four tablespoonfuls of lively yeast, or if this be your first barm-making, a yeast-cake, dissolved in warm water. Strain the batter through a colander to free it from possible lumps, and turn into an open bowl to "work." Throw a piece of mosquito netting over it to exclude the dust, and set in a moderately warm place until next day. In warm weather six hours will be sufficient for fermentation and quiescence. When it no longer casts up bubbles to the surface, put into glass jars, fit on the tops and store in the refriger-

ator, the cellar, or the ice-house. It is well to use pint jars, as they should be opened as seldom as is practicable. When you are ready to mix bread, take out the quantity you need, close the jar and return immediately to the ice or the cellar. Never bring the jar into the warm kitchen. This yeast will keep good for a fortnight in summer, for a month in winter, if kept closely corked, or covered with air-tight tops.

#### POTATO YEAST

The taste and odor of hops are so disagreeable to some persons that they can detect—or imagine that they can—the flavor in bread raised with hop, otherwise called “brewer’s yeast.” For the benefit of such, and because the substitute is like rich cream in appearance, pleasing to the eye and making beautifully white bread—also for the use of housewives who can not get hops at call—I offer this variation upon the original “barm.”

Pare six fine mealy potatoes. (Old and waxy potatoes do not make good yeast.) Put over the fire in two quarts of cold water and boil to breaking. Strain them out without stirring, and return the water to the fire. Mash the potatoes fine, with four tablespoonfuls of flour and two of sugar. In doing this, add the boiling water from the pot, gradually until all is used. When the batter is lukewarm, stir in a cupful of lively yeast, set aside in an open vessel to work, and throw a square of netting over it to keep out dust and insects. When it ceases to bubble, put

the yeast into small jars, cover and keep in a cool place.

#### HOME-MADE YEAST CAKES

Pare and slice eight fine mealy potatoes, and put into two quarts of cold water with a cupful of fresh hops tied in a cheese-cloth bag. Boil forty-five minutes after the bubble begins. Take out the hop bag, straining and squeezing it hard to get out all the strength. Pour the hop-tea and the potatoes into a bowl through a colander, rubbing the potatoes well until all have passed the holes. Set back on the fire and stir into the mixture two cups of flour wet up with cold water. Take from the fire, and cool to blood warmth, after beating smooth. Add two great spoonfuls of lively yeast, throw a bit of netting over the open bowl and let it rise. It should quadruple the original bulk. Now, knead into the paste a cupful of white Indian meal; roll out into a sheet a quarter-inch thick, and cut into round cakes. Dry in the hot sun in summer, in an open oven in winter. They must be dried—not baked. To cook them would vitiate their vitality. It is a good plan to put them into a cooling oven at bedtime, and leave them there until morning. When quite dry, put into a muslin bag and hang them in a cool, dry place.

If properly made and thoroughly dried, they keep for a month without losing strength.

Use as you would patent yeast cakes. A cake the size of an ordinary tumbler will make two loaves. Soak soft in lukewarm water, stir in a mere pinch of soda, and work into the dough.

## CHAPTER IX

WEDNESDAY (*Concluded*)

### BREAD-MAKING

Before entering upon the actual process of making the loaf, have all materials in readiness. The work should proceed by regular stages, with no needless delays.

In no way does the unmethodical housewife advertise indifferent "management" more plainly than by neglect of the simple rule: Have your tools and stuff laid to your hand before you begin the work laid out for you. The woman who has to make a separate journey to cupboard, pantry, refrigerator or cellar for each ingredient, wonders why she finds cookery so much more exhausting than her neighbors do. Such an one complained to me that she had to wash her hands four times while she was making one cake:

"You know you just can't bear to take hold of a door-knob, or turn a key with sticky, floury hands."

If I bethought myself that she would not have been obliged to touch knob or key, had sugar, eggs,

flour, milk and spices been collected and "in beautiful order ranged" on the table beside her, flanked by egg-beater, bowls and spoon—I kept my counsel to myself. Nobody thanks her friendliest friend for gratuitous advice. It was none of my business if she washed her hands forty-four times in an hour, and was so tired by the time the cake was in the oven that she had to lie down for the rest of the forenoon.

Next in importance to yeast among the tools and stuffs for bread-making is flour. Of course, none but the best quality should be used for the loaf. Experienced bakers will assure you that, while it is possible to make fairly good biscuits and very good griddle-cakes of the second best brand, the attempt to manufacture risen bread of it would be time, labor and materials thrown away. The general principle is sound. When you can procure the best family flour, and afford to pay the market price for it, get it, by all means. Now and then this is not feasible. Or, as sometimes happens, the "best" belies the name.

Test it by taking up a handful and squeezing it hard. If it retains the impress of palm and fingers, and has, moreover, the feeling of powdered chalk, or lime, when rubbed between thumb and finger, or if it has any odor whatever—it is not fine "family flour." If you can not exchange it, you may improve it to a degree that will make it tolerable.

One of the faults of flour which should have been excellent, having been ground from ripe, sound, well-

dried wheat, is that it was not thoroughly seasoned when it was packed in the barrel. It was barreled in damp weather, or so soon after grinding that what some call "the mineral heat," was not quite out of it.

To overcome this disadvantage, transfer from bag or barrel, to another receptacle. Take out several quarts at a time, sift it and pour into a box or into two barrels, letting it lie lightly, to correct the effect of tight packing while it was damp. If you have but a small quantity on hand, sift it twice and set it in the open oven for twenty minutes, or thereabouts, stirring and tossing it frequently while the drying is going on. Some good cooks give every baking the benefit of this process, insisting that it makes good flour better, and corrects indifferent. The flour should be cooled before it is mixed into dough.

#### POTATO SPONGE BREAD

Allow four potatoes of fair size to a baking which will require three quarts of flour. Boil and mash them while hot, working into the pasty mass a table-spoonful of butter and as much white sugar. Thin with three cupfuls of warm (not hot) water; strain through a fine colander to get out the lumps, and add, a handful at a time, a pint of dry, sifted flour. Now, put in the yeast—half a cupful if it be liquid, or half a cake of compressed yeast. The cake should have been dissolved in a little lukewarm water. Beat the mixture for three or four minutes—hard! I hope you have a bread pan or bowl with a perfor-

ated top. If not, throw a clean, light towel over the sponge bowl, and set in a rather warm place, where there will be no violent change of temperature during the eight hours in winter, the six hours in summer needed to raise it.

If all be well with the sponge, you will see, when the cover is lifted, a rough, porous mass which justifies its name. It should have trebled, perhaps quadrupled the original bulk, and, when handled, should break into tender ropes. Should the gas escaping from the crevices made by the hand, have an acrid or sour odor, dissolve half a teaspoonful of soda in warm water, and beat it thoroughly into the sponge. If the beating be superficial, you will have streaked bread—a sure sign of slovenly baking.

Sift two quarts and a pint of dry flour into a bread-tray or a big bowl. It must be clean and dry. If you use a wooden tray, scald and sun after each using. If a metal bowl, do the same. Hollow out the center, leaving a deep pit. Pour the sponge into this, and work the flour down into it with a wooden spoon. When the spoon can no longer manage it, wash your hands in cold water, wipe them dry and begin kneading. See to it, at this juncture, that the dough is soft and pliable. It should fall from the fingers when lifted, in graceful streamers, instead of in clumsy gouts. In a word, mix the dough as soft as it can be handled. To get the full benefit of the sponge which is the life of the bread, rinse out the bowl in which it was raised, with warm

water, and add to the dough. If the dough be of the proper consistency, you will find it leaving the sides of the tray of itself as the kneading goes on. Work it into a ball, and thump it with the double fists, lustily, aiming every blow at the heart of the lump, and turning as you strike it. It is fine exercise, and more graceful than swinging dumb-bells. Don't be afraid of dealing too vigorously with your subject. It likes it! and grows in comeliness under it. In fifteen minutes, if you have dealt justly with it, you will have an elastic ball that springs back gaily from each attack. If you thrust a finger into it, the hole closes instantly.

Make the dough into a round mass; sprinkle flour in the bottom of the bowl, or tray, and over the dough; put on the perforated cover, or throw the cloth over the bowl, and set by for a first rising. In warm weather the time required for this varies from three to four hours. In cold weather it may not be accomplished under six. You must have a kneading-board for the next stage of the fine art. The board must be absolutely clean, free from signs of former usage, and guiltless of the rancid smell which in households I have known seems to be accepted as a necessity. Bread, at any period of development, is intensely sensitive to uncleanness of any kind. It absorbs tastes, odors, dampness and must, with incredible rapidity. The kneading-board should be used for nothing outside of its legitimate purpose. As soon as the dough is off, it should be scraped



clean, scalded, then wiped dry, lastly set in the sun. If the day be cloudy, leave it upright on a chair near the fire until it is dried to the heart.

A slab of marble is better for kneading bread than wood. Nor is the substitute as costly as one might suppose. In many an attic, or among the rubbish in the builder's back-shop, may be found the top of a table, or washstand, or part of a discarded mantel, that may be utilized by our housewife. Marble tops have "gone out," and such remnants of what our grandmothers considered elegant plenishing, may be had for the asking, or the finding. Or, squares of refuse marble may be bought for a trifle at marble yards.

The advantage of marble over hard woods is the superior cleanliness, first, and mainly. It does not absorb dirt and odors, and is easily cleansed. A secondary recommendation is the coldness of the stone. This will be appreciated most highly by the pastry-maker, but it is a good thing in bread-making also.

The kneading-table, board or slab is sprinkled with flour, and the ball of dough is transferred to it. If the first kneading were a pretty task, the present business is prettier. Working always from your body, punch and toss and roll the yielding mass, now so elastic that it is a joy to handle it. It does not adhere to well-floured hands, and it grows lighter and more buoyant with every stroke.

Fifteen minutes of the play suffices, all else being

propitious. Break off bits of the dough, form into rolls or into loaves, and arrange in the baking-pans for the final raising. Grease the pans well before the loaves go in. Cover with light cloths, and let the bread rise until it is at least twice as high and plump as when it went into the pans.

While this is going on, see that your ovens are getting ready to do their part in the worthy work. Heat them thoroughly, and so manage the stored heat that it shall not fail you while the baking is in progress. There must be coal or wood enough in the range to last until the bread is ready to be withdrawn from the oven. To lower the temperature by putting in fresh fuel, would be disastrous. Test the heat by holding your bare arm in the open oven while you count twenty-five deliberately, or, by setting a tin plate containing a little flour at the back of the oven, and shutting the door. Look at it in five minutes. If it has begun to brown delicately, it is safe to risk your bread to the steady oven's care.

In ten or twelve minutes more, open the door an inch or two, and glance at the bread. When it has filled the pans, cover with clean white or brown paper (never with printed or written sheets) of light weight. Heavy paper would hinder the rising, and adhere to the crust. The philosophy of the paper covering is that the crust, if formed before the bread has gained its full height, would make the center of the loaf heavy. Neglect of the simple precaution accounts for many a streaked and soggy loaf.



Ten or twelve minutes before the bread is taken from the oven remove the paper to let the crust brown. A quart loaf will bake in an hour. You may test it by running a fine clean knitting-needle into the heart of the loaf.

A little practice will make you familiar with the humors, the tricks and the manners of your particular oven. It is not practicable to lay down cast-iron rules as to the time required to bring bread, biscuits and cake to the precise point beyond which scorching and hardening begin, and short of which lie sogginess, viscosity and general uneatableness.

In drawing the plump, browned loaves from the oven, turn the pan gently upside down upon a clean cloth, shaking very slightly, should they adhere at any point. Prop each on the edge, leaning against a box or wall at an angle that will allow the air to pass around them. This will prevent "sweating." Wait until they are quite cold before you put them into a bread-box lined with clean cloth. Cover them with another clean linen towel. Keep these linen towels for this purpose, and this alone, and wash them frequently.

Bread is hardly second to milk and cream as an absorbent. One sour slice will impart acidity to the rest of the contents of the box. Therefore keep a second box for the "heels" of loaves, and scraps that may be utilized in puddings, in breading chops and croquettes, and thickening bisques. Both tins should be scalded and sunned twice a week.

## MILK BREAD

Directions for making milk bread are given for the benefit of the many who persist in the belief engendered by country-bred mothers, that it is sweeter, moister and more wholesome than bread mixed with water. That it sours more quickly weighs nothing against the superior quality of the toothsome loaf. The novice will do well to try her prentice hand upon the following formula, as simpler, and, mayhap, surer in results than the Potato bread.

Scald—without actually boiling—two cups of milk and stir into it a tablespoonful of butter. While it is cooling to blood-warmth, sift two quarts of flour into a mixing bowl, adding, prior to sifting, a teaspoonful of white sugar and half as much salt. When the milk is lukewarm, add a pint of water of the same temperature, and half a cake of compressed yeast dissolved in half a cupful of warm water. If you use liquid yeast, put in four tablespoonfuls. Pour the mixture into a hollow made in the middle of the flour, and with a wooden spoon work all into a smooth dough. This done, turn the mass upon a kneading-board or marble slab, and knead patiently and faithfully for ten minutes. It should be light and elastic, leaving board and hands without sticking. Set to rise in a bread-bowl, with a perforated top. See that it is left in a corner where no drafts can reach it—and keep the temperature even. If too warm, the dough will sour. If too cold, it

will refuse to rise. Cooks say that bread-dough "takes cold as easily as babies." In six hours your dough should be ready for the second rising. Make into three or four loaves, knead each portion for five minutes and put into a greased pan. Cover with a light cloth, and let all stand for an hour longer. Bake in a steady oven.

#### QUICK BREADS

Under this head come biscuits of all denominations, muffins, griddle-cakes, scones, waffles, buns, gems, shortcake—the which, if recipes were written out for all of them, would consume the entire space allotted for this book and overflow into another volume. And—be it borne in mind (I, for one, am tempted to forget it) this is *not* a book of recipes.

The same general rules are to be observed in the manufacture of all quick breads.

If baking-powder be used, it should be sifted twice with the flour before the flour is wet. The salt should be sifted at the same time. This precaution insures thorough incorporation of the ingredients.

Baking-soda must not be used in such breads (or in cake) unless there appear also in the list of materials, some corresponding acid to act, with the alkali, in producing effervescence. Neglect of this chemical rule is responsible for biscuits mottled with greenish streaks, familiar to commercial travelers whose territories include back-country districts, and for the bitterish taste of a certain type of baker's

cake. Sour milk, molasses, lemon, and other fruit-juices, cream of tartar, and raw and cooked fruits are some of the agents in common use for the accomplishment of that which makes quick breads light. If in reckoning up your ingredients, you note soda among them, look for the complemental acid. If it be wanting from the list, let the recipe alone. The conditions of lightness are absent, and unmitigated soda is caustic, unwholesome and unpalatable.

*Quick mixing* is another essential in making the class of breads and cakes we are considering. Have all your materials and tools at hand when you begin operations. Sift the flour, cream the butter and sugar, and measure spices; if lemons or oranges, or dried fruits are to have a part in the composition, they should be ready to go in before you crack an egg. After the business is begun it should be carried forward, without a break, to completion.

Steady baking is a *sine qua non* to success. The oven should be heated to the right temperature, and held at it from the moment biscuits, muffins or cakes go in until they are taken out. To add coal while baking is in actual process, is to invite disaster.

The provident and experienced housemother keeps on hand a supply of coarse brown or white paper of suitable size for covering bread and cakes while they are in baking. By the time batter or dough is fairly "set" so that the paper will not stick to it, cover, and do not remove until you are sure the cake, biscuit or muffin is cooked to the core. If obedient to this

rule, you will have neither streaked cake nor burnt biscuits.

Do not open the oven every few minutes "to see how the breads are getting on." When you must look in to lay the paper over the pans, open the door just far enough to admit the hand, slip in the covering and shut up the oven as quickly as possible. Do this as quietly as you would close the nursery-door where a nervous baby is sleeping. Some of the more delicate order of breads and cakes are startled out of propriety by a heavy tramp upon the kitchen-floor, or the bang of an outer door. The violent jar of the oven-door will cause the fall of a soufflé, a meringue, a batch of "gems," or the hopeless flattening into sullenness of sponge cake.

After the bread or cake goes into the oven, do not transfer it to another unless it has stiffened into consistency so pronounced that the change can not make it sink in the center or droop at the sides. If it be virtually "done" and needs to be browned in a brisker oven, you may risk the change of climate. An immature production is almost sure to come to grief in the transition.



## CHAPTER X

THURSDAY

DETERSIVES

In this chapter little attention will be paid to what one correspondent classifies as "honest, every-day dirt." While we live and move and have our daily being in a world the very air of which is dust-laden, our clothing, our draperies, our napery and our persons must gather soil and grime. If this were evitable, laundries would go out of business. Accidental stains and discoloration are another branch of an important, if disagreeable subject; a branch that borders upon the tragic.

One lively woman writes:

"So numerous have been the spillings, the sloppings, the leakages, and the scorchings in my household of late that I am more accustomed to the rôle of Lady Macbeth than to any other. I go about, with dreary eyes and distraught mien, rubbing at real not (alas!) imaginary spots—muttering insane ejaculations. My husband threatens to have me thus photographed."

To save other women from the like distraction, I offer, herewith, certain deterrents that have been tried and found faithful, when properly applied.

## INK SPOTS

*On the skin:* Authors, editors, bookkeepers—all classes and conditions of men and women who write much, should have ever within easy reach, a bottle of real spirits of hartshorn. Household ammonia is excellent in its way for cleansing clothing, etc. If used instantly, it will remove superficial ink stains. The pure spirits of ammonia acts quickly and effectively.

Keep upon wash-stand or desk a small bottle, with a glass or rubber stopper, full of spirits of ammonia. If, in filling a fountain-pen, the fingers are blackened, or if the pen leaks, or an ink-stand overflows, wet a sponge with hartshorn and wash the spot vigorously. Rinse at once in clear water. Soap sets ink and other acid stains. If all traces of the accident have not disappeared, repeat the ammonia and the rinsing.

For minor mishaps of this kind, such as an ink-smear upon the finger, wet the tip of a sulphur match and rub the smirch until it vanishes. The work is slower than when ammonia is used, but it is a convenient device when the liquid is not at hand.

Hand Sapolio will remove ink from the skin. I do not recommend the habitual use of this or of other gritty soaps for the purpose. They abrade and roughen the cuticle.

*For white goods:* If your handkerchief be soaked with ink, throw while it is still damp, into a strong

solution of spirits of ammonia. Leave it for fifteen minutes, rinse in clear, cold water and treat it to another bath in a fresh supply of the solution. Wash well in this, rinse and lay in the sun to dry.

*Lemon-juice for ink spots:* Not many weeks ago the babyest member of our household—perhaps moved by a hereditary tendency toward ink-slinging—divided the contents of an ink bottle impartially between the tiles of the bath-room floor and her white frock. I was out of the house at the time and knew nothing of the accident until the ink stain was twenty-four hours old. Turning a deaf ear to lamentations over the absolute hopelessness of the disaster, I saturated the ink spots with lemon-juice, rubbed into them all the salt the juice would hold, and spread the frock in the hot sun. It lay there all day, kept moist by hourly applications of lemon-juice. At night it was put to soak in a tub of soft, clean water. In the morning it was turned over to the laundress with directions to wash it in the usual way. When this was done not a trace of the inky flood was left upon the muslin. This is but one of many instances which have proved to me the efficacy of a simple, harmless detergent.

In that last adjective lies one prominent advantage of this and other vegetable acids for extracting stains of any kind. Javelle water, chlorinated soda, and indeed, chloride in any form, are unsafe in careless, because inexperienced hands. Unless the fabric under treatment be rinsed thoroughly in clear water

within a few minutes after it is submitted to the chemical, the latter acts disastrously upon the threads. In extracting the color, it weakens the stuff. Oxalic acid—although a vegetable product—will eat holes in stout linen, cotton or woollen in an incredibly brief time unless instantly rinsed out. A bath of an hour in lemon-juice would not weaken the finest cambric lawn.

Another household detergent which gains in favor with each trial is *Cream of tartar*. Dampen the stains with hot water and rub into them all the cream of tartar they will hold. Leave this on for ten minutes and hold the injured parts taut under a stream of boiling water, repeating the process twice. Now, lay the wet spots in the hottest sunshine five or six hours, keeping them wet. If the stains remain after the sunning, soak overnight in pure water and repeat the cream of tartar treatment next day. I have never known the process to fail, and I have tried it upon old and upon fresh ink spots.

*Sour milk:* Or buttermilk is a harmless, and often effective agent in the work of removing ink-stains.

Soak the spotted article overnight in lopper milk, or, if you can get it, very sour buttermilk. Next day, rinse it twice in clear, soft water, and lay it in the sun, wetting it hourly with lemon-juice. If the ink be not entirely gone repeat the process of soaking, rinsing and sunning.

*Chlorinated soda:* Acts quickly upon ink. A few drops, poured upon the stain, will make it vanish al-

most entirely in a few minutes. In five minutes, rinse well in lukewarm water—using no soap—and then twice in cold, clear water. Dry in the sun. Where expeditious measures are imperatively demanded it is most valuable.

*Salts of lemon:* Also acts quickly. The precautionary measure of the double rinsing must not be neglected for reasons already given.

*Oxalic acid:* One of the most potent of deterrents, is responsible for more bitter disappointments on the part of would-be cleaners than any other known to the average operator. It will take out ink spots, new and old. There is no doubt on that point. It may, likewise, be warranted to take out the injured part as certainly, if not as rapidly, as the scissors could cut it. Yet careful housemothers assure me that they have used it for years, without damaging linen, or cotton white stuffs. The secret of safety lies, I may be allowed to reiterate, in not leaving the acid in the material wrought upon long enough to convert a blessing into a bane.

The crystals may be rubbed into the stain with the tip of a finger, and boiling water be poured through the stain and stuff, slowly, for a minute. Rinse, then, in cold water; rub in more crystals, and repeat the scalding and the rinsing until the marks have disappeared, or grown so faint that a few hours of sunning will efface them entirely. The last rinsing before exposing the wet surface to the sun should be repeated four times, each time in fresh water.

If the solution of oxalic acid be used, wet the stuff with it and hold the spot taut in the steam of a hard-boiling kettle. If the stain be small, stretch the fabric tightly over the mouth of the spout and let the steam pour through it for three minutes. Rinse twice; wet again, and hold over the spout. Finally, rinse four times and commit to the sun—the surest, and the safest of bleachers.

*Chloride of lime:* While better known as a whitener than as an expunger, will extract ink and other stains successfully, if properly applied. The following mixture is judicious:

One pound of chloride of lime to four quarts of water. Shake well together and let it stand twenty-four hours; then strain through a clean cotton cloth. Add one teaspoonful of acetic acid to one ounce of the lime-water and apply to the blot. Absorb the moisture with blotting-paper.

*Kerosene and soap:* Is a useful combination in washing, as we have learned through our laundry talks. A friend, in whose housewifely wisdom I have implicit faith, contributes a story which I indulge myself by repeating in her own words:

“I want to tell you how my laundress removes ink stains, even when the article spotted has been afterward boiled and ironed. A dresser scarf having been vainly treated to a milk bath and everything else I could hear of as remedial, was thrown away. The laundress begged to be allowed to try her way with the stains. The scarf was well soaped, rubbing the soap on the spots as quickly as possible, then put into a clean pan and about

a half-cupful of kerosene poured on it. Enough cold water to cover the cloth was added and the pan put at the back of the kitchen range to heat slowly.”

It may be necessary to repeat this process, but eventually the stain is removed.

*Sweet milk:* Produces desirable results when applied to wet ink spots. I have removed a big splash of ink from a velvet carpet by washing it instantly with skim milk. A cupful at a time was applied with a sponge saturated to dripping with the milk. As fast as the cupful was darkened by the squeezings of the sponge, it was thrown away and a fresh supply substituted. When no more ink could be sopped up, the milk remaining white after each immersion of the sponge, the wet place on the carpet was washed over and over with clear water, and coated with a paste of corn-starch. Three days later, the starch was brushed out, and not a trace of the flood of ink appeared.

Some weeks afterward, a similar accident befell a handsome embroidered table-cover. The milk was brought in within two minutes, and the sponge plied vigorously upon the apparent ruin. Then the cloth was lifted, the stained part held taut over a bowl of clear, lukewarm water and dipped repeatedly in this. Next, the cover was laid upon a folded sheet, and wiped of superfluous moisture with a soft towel. The corn-starch used in the former experiment was superseded now by boracic talcum. The cover was laid away out of the dust for two days. When

the powder was brushed out, keen scrutiny was needed to discover any sign of the catastrophe which had filled the owner's soul with dismay. And this, although the ground color of the cloth was *écru*, and the heavy embroidery of vari-colored silks.

I dwell longer and more emphatically upon this gentle detersive for the reason that it may be applied to colored fabrics without injury to the most delicate tints. Whereas, the majority of the extractors I have enumerated can be used upon "white goods" alone. They draw out the body color with the ink.

Just one word more in regard to taking out rust stains. If the garment or article having the rust on is put into water in which a few teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar have been stirred, and boiled in it for a few minutes, the rust will disappear and the goods be as clear as before it was damaged. Of course, I suppose the goods to be white. I will not answer for any color. It matters not whether the sun shines or not. Your garment is cleaned and no harm done, as the cream of tartar does not injure the daintiest fabric.

Rub with tartaric acid while wet to remove spots from linen, or dip in boiling water, rub with salts of sorrel and rinse well. To remove ink from cotton, silk or woollen goods, saturate the spot with spirits of turpentine and let it remain several hours; then rub between the hands. It will crumble away without injuring the color or texture of the article.

A housewife of sense and experience, supplies, at



my request, a corroborative bit of domestic history:

“The following was used on a pink chambray with excellent results: Take a glass or cup and hold the goods firmly over it; wet the spot well with fresh milk, permitting the fluid to pass through the cloth into the cup; then rub the juice of a lemon into the cloth, working it well in with the end of the finger; alternate milk and lemon-juice, and I think the spot will come out, the color remain and the goods be perfectly whole. As I say, I used this to take out an ink spot, fully the size of a dollar, from the sleeves of a pink chambray waist, and the pink of the goods did not fade in the least. The ink had not been washed into the cloth, however, but was several days old when I attempted to take it out. My sister tried it on a blue lawn, and it was completely successful. The ink came out and the blue stayed in.”

*Grain alcohol:* Will remove ink, also liquid shoe-polish, if applied promptly. The goods must be literally “soused” in the fluid, and the latter be poured through it again and again, then rubbed with a clean linen cloth.

*Butter:* If ink spots be rubbed on both sides of the material with butter, left untouched overnight, and then washed in the usual way, no trace of them will remain when the article is dry.

#### COFFEE, TEA AND FRUIT STAINS

Coffee and fruit stains are easily managed if, as soon as they are made, the soiled article be held tightly over a basin of hot water and wet thoroughly, and boiling water at the same time be poured through

the stain, once and again. The blemish will be washed away in less time than it takes to tell you how to do it.

Neither coffee, nor tea stains need be the bugbear housewives make of them. Both disappear in the family wash if this be tolerably well conducted.

*Glycerin:* Coffee stains even where there is cream in the coffee, may be removed from delicate silk and woolen fabrics by the aid of pure glycerin. Brush the glycerin on the spots, then wash them with lukewarm water and press on the wrong side with a warm iron. The glycerin absorbs both the coloring matter and the grease.

*Chloroform, alcohol and ammonia:* Black coffee stains and those made by clear strong tea, will yield to what I rank as the best "cleanser" I have ever tried. I mean a wash made of equal parts of alcohol, chloroform (or ether) and the admixture of a tablespoonful of household ammonia to a quart of the compound. It should leave no mark on the stuff, and the ammonia has a tendency to restore the color if it has been changed by the hot liquid.

Fruit stains may be removed by any of the means suggested for eradicating ink. The ugliest and most obstinate of fruit spots are amenable to the somewhat heroic treatments here indicated:

Lay them in hot water, in which a generous handful of borax has been dissolved. Leave them thus for ten minutes, then rub and wring, and lay them damp upon the grass in the hot sun for the rest of

the day, wetting them every hour with the borax water. Rinse them in pure water and hang up for the night. Next day, cover with lemon-juice and salt made into a paste, and leave them again in the sun, wetting every hour with lemon-juice. At night throw them into a tub of pure water, and leave them there all night. Do them up with borax soap in the usual way.

The following process has, once and again, removed ink and peach stains, mildew and iron mold from my clothing and household linen. It will not rot the dainty lingerie.

Cover with a paste of salt and lemon-juice and lay in the sun all day, wetting every hour with the lemon-juice. At night wash with clean water and hang up. Next day renew the application. The process is slow, but sure and safe.

A weak solution of chloride of lime will remove stain of peaches or any other fruit stain. Lay the stained articles in the solution for about three minutes, then take out and rinse in cold water. Send to the wash and the stains will be removed.

Chloride of lime is so caustic in its action upon delicate fabrics that great caution must be observed in the use of what is an excellent deterrent. In preparing the weak solution here prescribed it is well to be on the safe side; better that it should be too weak than so strong as to eat into the threads of the linen. Prepare the solution, bottle it, test the strength upon a bit of linen stained for the purpose,

and keep the mixture closely corked for summer use.

*Javelle water:* Is really but a modification of the foregoing, and is to be managed in the same way. It is singularly effective in removing the unsightly yellowish-brown splotches made by peaches and pears. These are so treacherous and unexpected that we hold them in especial dislike. Invisible, when unwary fingers are touched to apron, napkin or table-cloth, they start into hideousness under the hands of the horrified laundress, and defy mild measures that are efficacious in the warfare against ink, rust, and even mildew.

#### RUST AND MILDEW

Javelle water will dispose speedily of rust and mildew. Yet I prefer to subject my fine linen and muslins, disfigured by iron rust, or the unmistakable tokens of the laundress' carelessness, to the gradual influence of lemon and salt and buttermilk, joined to the operation of bright sunshine and brisk airs upon hurt and marred things. It takes more time, but my linens are sounder and whiter when my favorite agencies have had their way.

#### AXLE GREASE

Axle grease is another peculiarly obnoxious blemish to garments. Next to the trousers of boys who haunt the carriage-house and "steal rides" upon all manner of vehicles that have wheels, the silken gowns

of Mrs. Lofty, who "never walks, or takes street-cars," are most liable to this disfigurement.

As with most fabrics brought to be "treated," the initial measure is to get rid of the dirt. Sponge the spots with a mixture of equal parts of alcohol and ether, confining your operations closely to the injured portion. Wipe dry with old linen. Now, attack the grease—for that is what is left. Scrape French chalk to a powder and rub it well into the grease spots on the wrong side of the silk. Hang up the gown and leave it for two days before brushing off the powder.

#### PAINT, TAR, PITCH, STICKY FLY-PAPER, ETC.

*Benzine* will remove paint from delicate fabrics, even when the spots have dried into the stuff. Apply freely, leave on for an hour, and renew. Sponge the blur, left after the paint has peeled off, with pure alcohol.

For tar and pitch rub the stuff with butter or lard. Work it well with the tip of the finger, spreading as little as may be. Leave a thick coating of the grease over the spot all night. Next day, scrape it off and the tar or pitch will come with it. Now, sponge with alcohol and ammonia; rub dry, and should any blemish remain, rub powdered French chalk on the wrong side.

Soak paint until soft by pressing on the spots a sponge wet with alcohol. When soft it may be scraped off. Sponge the blur that remains with the

invaluable mixture of equal parts of ether and alcohol.

Equal parts of ammonia and spirits of turpentine will take paint out of clothing. Saturate the spots two or three times, and then wash out in soap-suds.

If the article injured be of linen, the butter, lard or cottolene will suffice to remove the tar or other resinous substance. Rub into the spots thoroughly, let it alone for three hours, and wash in the usual way.

A generous supply of butter should be rubbed thoroughly on gingham or calicoes or other cotton goods that have made too close an acquaintance with fresh paint. If thrown aside till washing or put on even a week or two after being daubed with paint, and then washed out just as usual, all traces of paint will vanish.

Sticky fly-paper—John's especial abhorrence and the trap of unwary children—may be washed out of the father's summer trousers when he has sat him down confidently, evening paper in hand, upon the broad, cool window-bench where the careful spouse has hidden a sheet of the "Tanglefoot," he hates—secure in the persuasion that he will never happen upon it there—he may be appeased, I say, and the pearl-colored integuments be purged of the detestable compound by sponging with pure alcohol, dashed liberally with household ammonia. If the mixture be heated by setting the vessel containing it in boiling water (keeping the inner jar or bottle corked) it

will act more quickly and be more certain to expunge the marks.

Alcohol will remove fly-paper stickiness from any substance. Sponge well with this, then with household ammonia. We have had the like mishap in our home, once and again, and rectified it by this treatment. Once the least of the flock appeared, beamingly, before the horrified mother with a sheet of fly-paper fast to a mop of sunny curls. Every hair was caught. To disentangle the hank of gold thread was a work of time and patience, but alcohol and ammonia did the work.

I have removed slighter visitations of the ubiquitous "Tanglefoot" from hands and pinafores with ammonia, alone. After getting it off the skin wash with bland soap and anoint with frostilla, or cold cream to prevent chapping. Or should the sticky surface come in contact with table-linen, woodwork, clothing, fingers, or in fact anything not intended, even the family pussy-cat—use simply kerosene! That will cut it instantly. In the case of clothing, remove the kerosene with any means known to the housekeeper.

#### IODINE

Soak the stain in cold water for half an hour, and while it is still wet, cover thickly—rubbing in well—with baking soda, and lay in the sun.

*Or:* If the stain be old and obstinate, wet the spot with water, rub in crystals of oxalic acid and hold over the spout of a boiling kettle, letting the steam

rush through it for five minutes. Rinse and repeat process. Ammonia, also, will remove iodine stains.

#### MUD AND GRASS STAINS

*The inside of a cut raw potato* will remove mud stains from black silk. Try it upon a small piece of colored silk. Should it prove ineffectual, use a mixture in equal parts of alcohol and ether, rubbing down toward the bottom of the skirt—not up.

I have cleaned the bottom of black silk and woolen skirts thoroughly by rubbing the grayish blurs left after the mud was beaten out, with a succession of pieces of raw Irish potatoes. Use the freshly cut inside, changing for another piece as one becomes soiled, and, should marks of the rubbing be left when the stuff is dry, sponge with alcohol.

In dealing with grass stains, which are a serious problem in summer with mothers of small children, and laundresses, competent or otherwise, use the ordinary black cooking molasses, which is found in every pantry, rubbing well into the fabric, whether cotton, linen or woolen, letting it remain a few minutes and then washing by the usual process. It will not injure the most delicate material or color, and the most obstinate case will yield to the treatment.

If the garment be not washable, cover with thick black molasses, and leave this on for three days. Wash off with clear water. Should a spot remain when dry, sponge with ether and alcohol in equal parts.



**SCORCH**

Scorch from ironing or fire may be taken from goods by first washing and boiling; then wring from suds, hang in the sun to dry, or wet in suds (hot or cold) and dry. Repeat this process until all spots have been removed.

**PERSPIRATION STAINS**

I have said times without number, and expect to repeat the saying innumerable times more, that perspiration stains are the most intractable of blemishes. Combining, as they do, acid and alkali, they resist treatment which might remove one or the other. Ammonia would act effectually upon the acid, and is an exasperation to the salts in the stain. Lemon-juice, invaluable in mildew and rust spots, adds acid to acid. The one forlorn hope is that a mixture of alcohol and ether in equal parts, with a dash of household ammonia, may do away with the worst features of the stain. In applying this or any other deterrent, never forget to lay several thicknesses of blotting-paper (white) under the soiled place to prevent the formation of the obnoxious ring that is likely to remain on the stuff after it is dry.

**VASELINE AND OTHER OILS**

A veteran housekeeper tells this story of experience with a stubborn grease spot.

“Some years ago my nurse spilled a quantity of hot vaseline on a brand-new and rather expensive white bedspread. The

spots soon took on a dark, greasy, unsightly appearance and, while they did not show immediately after washing, they soon returned and I thought my spread ruined. She took it to the laundry, spread it on the floor, poured kerosene oil liberally on the spots and left it in that condition over night. The following day it went through the regular wash, was thoroughly rinsed and dried in the sun, and not a spot has returned in all these ten years. I have had numerous occasions to use it since."

If the oil is kerosene, cover with oatmeal or with cornmeal, and leave it alone for two days. Then brush and beat well. If any other oil be spilled, cover with a stiff paste of fuller's earth and water. Leave thus for three days. Repeat if necessary.

The first step in removing fat of any kind from cloth is to coat the spot with a bland alkali, such as French chalk. Get at the wrong side of the stuff if you have to rip a seam in order to do it. Rub the finely pulverized chalk into the grease and lay the garment by for four hours. Then cover the chalk with thick blotting-paper and set a moderately warm iron upon it. A hot iron will fasten the oil in the stuff. Slip the paper along as the grease begins to show through.

Should any trace of the damage be left on the right side, sponge with pure alcohol. Lay clean blotting-paper under the cloth as you sponge it to prevent the formation of a ring when it is dry.

## CHAPTER XI

### THURSDAY (*Continued*)

#### ON CLEANING NON-WASHABLE ARTICLES OF DRESS

*Gasoline: its excellence and its peril:* Beyond question, gasoline is the most efficient cleanser we have in general use, and the least harmful in its effects upon the substance under treatment. Yet, of all that I shall recommend to my readers, it is the very last I should put into careless hands. A collector of curious statistics estimates that on an average, one woman or child per day, is killed or seriously injured by gasoline every year, in the United States. This may, or may not be true. Data of the sensational type are not minimized by the professional statistician. Certain it is that casualties arising from the misuse of this cleansing agent are frequent enough to discount the intelligence of housewives as a class.

I dropped a caution on this subject in a former chapter. I reiterate it with force at the outset of our consideration of the merits and the uses of gasoline in renovating articles which can not be safely consigned to the wash-tub.

For example—worsted stuffs of all grades may be

washed in gasoline without fear of fading or shrinking.

If you can do this out of doors, it is best to take all your apparatus into the open air, with no fire or artificial light near. If, as is more probable, you must work in the house, shut yourself into the bath-room and set the window open wide. Lay the breadths—several at a time—in a basin or bowl or boiler, cover with gasoline, put a close lid upon the vessel and leave for half an hour. Lift then, wetting your hands as little as may be, and shake and souse alternately for two or three minutes. Do not rub. Hang in the air to drip and dry, and the work is done. In the bottom of the bowl a heavy deposit of sooty matter shows how soiled the cloth was and how thorough is the purification. When all the dirt has settled, pour off the clear gasoline cautiously and use for the next supply of clothes. If the cloth be sadly soiled, throw away the first lot of gasoline and rinse the articles to be cleansed in a fresh supply. Gasoline will not remove grease. Therefore, before using the bath I have described, cover grease spots with a paste of fuller's earth or of French chalk, and leave on all night. Next day cover with blotting paper and "draw" out the oil with a hot iron.

I wish it were possible for me to instil into readers' minds the simple fact that gasoline will not extract stains or grease spots. There is no chemical reason why it should do either of these things. It does take out "plain dirt" of any description.

*Benzine* is subject to the same objection as gasoline in the minds of timid housewives. We are horrified daily by newspaper stories of accidents to life and limb, caused by the explosion, or ignition of benzine and naphtha. Unless one has the common sense to conduct one's renovations in a room remote from artificial light of every kind, one should never meddle with any of the three cleansers, but confine one's operations in the cleansing line to soap and water.

As we shall see by and by, benzine cleans gloves perfectly. It also takes off paint from flexible materials.

#### DRY CLEANING

*Dry cleaning* is an invention of our latter day for which we can hardly be too grateful. It is neat, it is safe, and it is harmless to the texture of the articles treated. The rules for the treatment of woolen stuffs, light silks and embroidered wash materials one does not like to wet are substantially the same.

A white Bedford cord gown—partly wool, partly cotton—was successfully cleansed by following this formula:

Put into a tub, cover with corn-meal slightly salted and scrub with this as you would use suds, rubbing between your hands, and hardest upon soiled spots. Cover it up in clean meal and leave it there for two days, throwing a cloth over the tub to keep out dust. Shake then, and brush with a perfectly clean whisk.

Buckwheat flour may be used instead of the meal. Indeed, it is preferred by some experienced amateur

scourers. They say that the finer grain of the buck-wheat flour is more easily and thoroughly worked between the threads of fine stuffs, and does not fray them as the coarse meal does, sometimes.

Small rugs of lamb's wool or white fur, such as are used for baby-carriages, may be cleansed, again and again at home.

Half fill a clean tub with dry corn-meal, and dry-wash the robe in it as in suds. Rub clear down to the hide, treating each hair impartially. When this has been done, throw out the soiled meal; line the tub with the robe, fur side up, and sift clean meal all over it, rubbing it well in, until you have buried it out of sight. Throw a cloth over all, to exclude dust, and leave thus for two days. Beat and shake out the meal at the end of that time.

Larger floor rugs, even costly oriental fabrics, are rid of dust and grime, and the colors are brightened by a similar process.

Heat coarse Indian meal in the oven in large pans, when you have mixed with it one-fourth the quantity of fine salt. When the mixture is quite hot (it must not scorch) have your rugs close at hand. They should have been shaken and whipped on the wrong side, out-of-doors. There will be dirt enough in them after the beating to warrant more thorough measures. Scatter the salted meal thickly over the rugs, rub in well, using a clean broom or a brush; cover to keep out the dust and leave thus for twenty-four hours. Sweep, then, with a clean, stiff broom twice—

once against the nap, and the second time with it: finally, shake and beat to dislodge any lingering remnants of the meal and salt. You will be amazed at the complexion of the aforesaid "remnants." The meal and salt may be used without heating, but you are more certain to have them perfectly dry, if they have been in the oven, and the heat helps on the cleansing process, besides killing any larvae that may have skulked out of reach of the broom.

*Flour and borax* are used with good effect upon finer materials. The waist of a cream-white cashmere gown, adjudged to be hopelessly soiled, was made entirely presentable by obedience to a formula given to the incredulous owner by one who had tried it. I transcribe it from her letter:

Rub into it with a clean complexion brush a mixture of flour, four parts; borax, one part. Do not miss one thread in the rubbing. Shake lightly to dislodge the loose powder and rub in a fresh supply. Leave this on for three days, covering to exclude the dust. Then shake and beat.

*Boracic talcum* is a refined variation of the same cleanser. It is so much more expensive than the flour and borax that few would care to use it upon articles calling for basinfuls, much less tubfuls. It is worth while to resort to it when small and valuable pieces of lace or linen need attention. To clean a lace collar—Battenberg, point or Cluny—pin it firmly to a cloth-covered bosom-board and go all over it with boracic talcum, or with a mixture of pow-

dered starch and borax, rubbing it well into the lace with a tooth- or nail-brush. When you have treated one side thus, turn the collar and repeat the process with the other. Cover with powder when you have done brushing it in, throw a cloth over it to keep out the dust, and leave it for two days. Then unpin the collar, shake, lay it on the board, right side down, and cover with a very damp cloth. Press with a hot iron through the cloth.

Embroidered handkerchiefs, cravats, scarfs, centerpieces and fine doilies, that inevitably come to grief if sent to a professional cleaner, may be restored to respectability by skilful manipulation with boracic talcum. If you can not get it conveniently, make a substitute that may serve you as well by powdering starch and sifting it four times, with one ounce of borax to a pound of starch.

*Block magnesia:* If of the finest quality, may fitly join the band of household cleansers. Inferior qualities abrade silks and fray linen threads. They also rob lustrous fabrics, like silk and satin, of gloss, making them look dull and "cottony." A white or pale-colored crepon, or point d'esprit gown—waist and skirt—may be cleaned in this way:

Lay the breadths, smooth and straight, upon a table covered with a white cloth, pinning each breadth in place to prevent it from drawing away, while you rub into every thread the best quality of block magnesia. Rub straight, evenly and gently, until you have gone over every bit of the material.



Turn the breadths now and treat the wrong side in the same way. You will find the waist more troublesome, but it can be cleaned without taking apart. Lay the whole gown upon a bed, cover with a thin cloth, and leave it thus for a week before shaking and brushing out the powder.

Fine lawns may be treated with magnesia, also white felt hats. In every instance the magnesia must be left on the article for some days. There are chemical agents in the magnesia that need time for their work.

A silk or pongee parasol, that has not begun to show the light through the creases, yet is soiled by wear or accident, may be cleaned at home, if these directions are regarded throughout: Add a teaspoonful of fine, dry salt to two cupfuls of powdered starch, and with a soft, clean "complexion brush" rub the mixture into the silk on both sides, not missing a thread, and working with the grain of the silk all the time. Blow off the loose powder and rub in a fresh supply. Leave this on for two days before shaking it out and wiping the whole surface with soft flannel. The parasol should be opened wide to keep the silk taut. I have cleaned silk satisfactorily in this manner, and also with boracic talcum.

*To clean velvet:* Corduroy, which is a sort of country cousin of velvet, may be restored without injury to the pile by the dry cleanser last mentioned. Sift boracic talcum thickly over it. Then "massage" the corduroy with the tips of resolute fingers

for at least ten minutes, renewing the powder as it is worked in. Cover with clean powder and put into a box with a close cover. Leave it thus for three days before beating out the powder and brushing well.

Velvets may be cleaned by putting them in gasoline and brushing with a tooth- or complexion-brush. Great care should be taken to guard against an explosion. Gasoline will not take out grease, but velvet coat collars can be cleaned by sponging with turpentine. It will not injure the nap.

I have cleaned badly soiled velvet with a mixture of equal parts of alcohol and ether, one-third as much naphtha, and a teaspoonful of ammonia to a pint of the blended ingredients. Bottle, cork, and shake the preparation well. Sponge the velvet—always with the nap. It will look like a sorry affair when dry, but the next step in the process will bring all right.

Hang the garment in the bath-room and turn on the hot water until the room is full of steam. Shut door and windows and leave the garment in the steam for some hours. When cold and still damp, hang in the outer air.

To renew velvet: Hold a hot iron upside down; wring a cloth out of water, lay over the iron, then put your velvet wrong side next to the wet cloth. While the steam is passing through it brush on the upper side with a soft brush. Move the wet cloth as fast as it dries to continue the rise of steam.

Do not lay finger upon the newly-risen nap until the velvet is entirely dry. Creased and crushed vel-

vet may be freshened and smoothed by steaming, and the method here described is a manifest improvement upon the old way of holding the defaced garment over a steaming kettle. The wrinkles left upon cloths that have been packed away for a long time, or unskilfully, may be removed in like manner. Turn on the hot water, and when the room is clouded by the vapor, turn off the water and shut up the room. The steam will do the rest. Velvet ribbons which have become creased can be freshened by holding them over a pan of boiling water, and brushing up the nap with a stiff brush. This process removes wrinkles and makes the velvet look nearly as well as when new.

*Fuller's earth:* Takes the place of magnesia and talcum in handling neutral-colored articles. A tan or gray coat, or jacket, soiled and darkened by long usage, should, first of all, be brushed free of dust as the initial step to rehabilitation. Then, lay it upon a large table, and go over every inch of it with powdered fuller's earth, working it in with a new clean complexion brush, until not a thread is left unvisited. Turn the garment upside down and repeat the work by rubbing in the powder against the nap or grain. Shake the coat to dislodge the loose earth, rub in a second supply, and leave this on for a week. It will eat up the dirt and form a harmless combination with grease. At the end of the week shake and brush vigorously.

Tan or gray felt hats may be made almost as good

as new by rubbing them with fuller's earth. Proceed as with the colored cloth, even to the week's waiting in a dark box.

*To clean felt hats:* A black felt hat may be cleaned with ammonia and warm water, but light hats must be cleaned with oatmeal, heated and applied with a brush. A white felt hat is cleaned with equal parts of powdered pipe-clay and oatmeal. Rub the powder on every part of the hat and then brush thoroughly. There is nothing better for cleaning light-colored felt hats which are only slightly soiled than dry corn-meal rubbed on with a piece of clean flannel.

#### TO CLEAN FURS AT HOME

##### Sealskin and Other Dark Furs

With a clean whisk broom wet in alcohol brush the fur thoroughly until saturated to the hide. Sift thickly into and over it pulverized fuller's earth; cover to keep out dust, and do not touch for two days. Then brush and beat out the powder. Grime and soot will come out with it. I have cleaned white furs in the same way, substituting talcum powder for fuller's earth.

This plan of cleansing furs, I believe to be my own device. I made my first experiment upon a set of white "moufflon" belonging to a small lady who represented the infant element in our household. I carried muff and tippet into the bath-room and shut myself in with them, the alcohol bottle and a box of

talcum (borax). First, I brushed all the dust out of the furs. Then with a new whisk, never used until then, and dripping wet with alcohol, I swabbed them down to the skin. Finally I sifted the boracic talcum under every hair, until the furs could hold no more. I consigned them, with many a misgiving, to a big box lined with tissue paper, and put on the lid, the alcohol being still wet upon the powder. At the end of three days, I took the moufflon out. As I shook it into the fresh air the white powder flew in clouds. Gentle practice with a brush brought out the rest and revealed white fluffiness beyond my fondest expectations. The experiment has been repeated many times, since then, and always to my satisfaction.

Ermine, the prettiest and the most expensive of our white furs, has the disadvantage of yellowing if laid away. To avoid this mishap, line the box in which it is to be secluded during summer with blue tissue paper, or wrap the ermine in clean muslin made very blue with laundry bluing (but not starched). Put a cake of white wax in the box as well.

If the ermine has already yellowed, you may possibly whiten it by this method:

Beat out the dust and sponge the collar with peroxide of hydrogen; lay it in the sun for some hours, sponging every hour with the peroxide. Then fill the fur with boracic talcum and shut it up in a box for a week. If anything will bleach the ermine, this will.

By the end of the winter the collar and the silk binding of fur and cloth garments have become so soiled as to mark the neck or the neck-band of the wearer's gown, or the man's collar. The mark is a blending of coal dust and perspiration, which repeats itself each time the outer garment is worn.

To abate the nuisance, try the deterrent mixture of ether, alcohol and household ammonia. With a bit of perfectly clean sponge scrub the soiled portions of the silk, cleansing the sponge after each application. This will remove grease and grime. Wipe dry with old soft linen.

#### TO CLEAN GLOVES

*Benzine:* Put on both gloves, pour enough benzine in a bowl to cover the hands and hold them under the fluid a moment or two, then wash thoroughly as if using soap and water, rubbing all soiled spots well. Rub dry with a soft old linen towel, leaving on the hands until they are perfectly dry. They will look like new after several cleansings, if the gloves are of good quality.

Benzine is highly volatile, evaporating quickly. So, the injunction to keep the gloves upon the hands until they are dry is not so unreasonable as one might suppose. Have a book or paper at hand, and read, using the hands as little as possible, to beguile the tedium of waiting. When you draw off the gloves, wrap a clean handkerchief about the fingers that do the pulling, as a newly cleaned glove is very sensitive

to soil or dust. Hang the gloves up in an open window to let the odor escape, before laying them away.

The invaluable gasoline cleans gloves as well, to my way of thinking, as benzine, although the odor clings to them more persistently, perhaps.

If you do not like to risk this, or naphtha, lay the gloves at full length on a folded towel and scrub with a bit of old flannel dipped in skim milk, then rubbed on the best quality of toilet soap. Wash in this way every part of the glove. Lay between two clean towels and put into a drawer for two days. They will be discolored and stiff, but when drawn on the hand and arm will recover color and softness at once.

In the cleaning change the flannel as soon as it is soiled, and wipe the gloves dry before laying them away between the towels.

We, who are teachers of the rising generation of housemothers, rejuvenated our light and white gloves after this fashion in the years when gasoline was not a domestic commodity, except as a distant relative of the giddy gas known as camphine and was burned in the place of whale oil in our lamps. We had a regular day for washing our gloves with skim milk and sweet soap, and another for stretching them back to their normal form and complexion. That day was usually Thursday. The six, eight or ten pairs of discolored gloves lay in their cerements until Saturday. We took pride in the skill gained by our many washings, and had a trick of displaying our encased hands to one another in church on Sunday,

without attracting the notice of grave mammas and uninitiated beaux.

We, likewise, cleaned light gloves with white india rubber, and with stale bread-crumbs, fancying that they kept clean longer when thus treated than after they were washed in any other way.

White kid gloves may be cleaned on the hands with oatmeal and benzine, mixed to a paste. Continue rubbing until the paste drops off in dry flakes.

Slippers and gloves of white or light kid may be cleaned by rubbing them with a piece of clean flannel dipped in a mixture of equal parts of powdered alum and fuller's earth. A rub afterwards with fine oatmeal sometimes improves the looks of the kid.

When black gloves become white at the finger tips, rub these with a few drops of good black ink mixed with the same quantity of sweet oil. Light suedes may be cleansed with white castile soap boiled in milk to make suds, rubbing them with flannel, then with warm water, finally with dry flannel.



## CHAPTER XII

### THURSDAY (*Concluded*)

#### ODDS AND ENDS OF RENOVATING

##### TO CLEAN LEATHER

*Tan leather shoes:* Wash a raw potato, cut into two or three pieces; rub the potato well into the shoes; be sure not to miss any part or the tan will show where the potato has missed. Let it dry, then apply polish twice with a light quick motion, which will give a finely polished boot or shoe.

If the shoes be hopelessly defaced, yet strong as to material and seams, they are worth recoloring. This may be done at home, and satisfactorily if the following directions be obeyed. Provide yourself with a bottle of gasoline; brush the mud and dust from the shoes and sponge them with gasoline, rubbing it in well. It takes the oil out of the surface of the leather.

To dye, purchase a package of patent dyes—slate. Make up as per black ink recipe, using half the quantity of water. When made, add one tablespoonful of alcohol and one teaspoonful of spirits of camphor. Apply to the shoe after cleaning. Let the first coat dry. Put on the second and let it dry. Rub off with a dry cloth; touch up spots not well covered.

When dry, polish with a good black paste, and russet leather will not show through in a week, as the shoemaker's always does.

A few drops of turpentine on a woolen cloth will clean tan shoes very well, and a drop or two of orange or lemon juice will give a brilliant polish to any leather.

Sweet oil forms a good dressing for patent leather. Apply it with a small piece of flannel and then polish the leather with a soft cloth.

If the russet shoes be but slightly soiled, they may be treated with cut banana. In every case see that no dirt that can be brushed off is left on the leather to interfere with the polish. If this precaution be neglected, dust becomes mire, and clouds whatever preparation may be used in cleaning.

*White and light-colored leather* of any kind—may be renovated, so as to serve another term of usefulness, by mixing a good patent dye to the exact shade you wish to get in a glass or earthenware bowl. Metal might change the tint, if there be acid in the dye, as is probable. Apply the dye, as dry as it may be used to advantage, to the leather, then leave it until it is perfectly dry and well soaked into the leather, when the surface may be polished in the usual way. American leather may be first well washed with a soaped flannel, rinsed with a soft cloth dipped in clean water, dried and finished off as above. Bags, portmanteaux, etc., according to their leather, may be cleaned in these ways.

*White dancing slippers* are easily cleaned with gasoline.

Wet a piece of perfectly clean flannel with gasoline and scour the slippers with it. When dry, wash with peroxide of hydrogen and dry in the sunshine.

*Other shoes:* White satin shoes may be easily cleaned at home. Stuff out the shoe in shape and rub it gently with a soft cloth dipped in methylated spirit, repeating until clean. Dry with a clean soft cloth.

Low shoes when new often blister the heels by slipping just a little as the wearer walks. To prevent this it is well to rub the inside of the shoe at the heels with soap before putting them on.

A *leather valise*, battered by many assaults from baggage-smashers, and disfigured by traces of hotel and railway cards, may be rendered presentable and serviceable, so long as hinges and lock are sound. Go all over it with a damp cloth to get rid of paste-marks and portable soil. Next, rub with a cloth wet with kerosene. Leave the valise or suit-case to dry in the air, but avoid the sun. The third stage is to wring out a flannel cloth in neat's-foot oil. You can buy it from any harness-maker. Rub the leather well with this; throw a sheet over it to exclude dust and leave it thus for several hours to let the oil sink into the leather. Wipe, and polish with chamois skin.

*To remove an ink spot from leather:* Moisten the spot slightly with water, rub into it powdered crys-

tals of oxalic acid; wash off in fifteen minutes and repeat washing after each application. Lastly, work in a few drops of neat's-foot oil.

*A chamois-leather vest* may be dry-cleaned if not stained badly with perspiration. Chamois shrinks so woefully in the hands of the laundress of commerce, that the day of consignment to the wash-tub should be delayed as long as decency will permit. Pending the evil hour, take it to the bath-room, spread it upon a table and rub both sides and every part of the vest with powdered fuller's earth. Work in well with a clean complexion brush. Cover with powder and lay in a closed drawer for a week before beating and brushing out the "earth."

#### HATS

*A white duck hat:* Clean it with a good quality of magnesia—fine in grain and pure white. Rub it well into the hat, shut it up in a box and leave it for a week. Remove the powder with a bit of soft flannel, smoothing it round and round, always in the same direction and evenly.

If not perfectly clean, the hat must be put through the process a second time.

*Straw:* To clean gentlemen's white straw hats, use one teaspoonful of oxalic acid to a cup of water; scour with an old toothbrush until all soil has disappeared. If you should discolor the black band with the mixture, dampen it with diluted ammonia water to restore the color.

*Leghorn:* Brush out the dust with a stiff whisk-broom, running it around the inside as faithfully as you brush the outside, having, first, taken out the lining and removed the band. Clip each stitch, instead of pulling the thread, and leave no bits sticking to the straw. These are minor steps in the operation, but they tell visibly in the result. When the hat is "broom clean," rub it all over and thoroughly with damp cornmeal. Let this stand for ten minutes; then apply dry meal. Rub into every thread, and leave it on for six hours before brushing out the meal. If you wish to bleach it, sponge freely with peroxide of hydrogen and expose to the hot sun.

*Panama:* Wash the hat all over with lemon juice, leave it in the sun for six hours; then sponge carefully, leaving no part untouched, with peroxide of hydrogen. Sun again for several hours.

*Or:* A cup of white cornmeal, soaked in benzine or gasoline, well rubbed on with a clean, soft cloth, will clean and leave no stains.

Both Leghorns and Panamas have an ugly fashion of yellowing before they have lived out half their days. And, while the peroxide of hydrogen bleaches quickly, and what may be called plausibly—other housewives who have tried the two ways of whitening straw, agree with me in thinking the old method practised by our granddames—whose Leghorns and Naverinos served for their grandchildren—the surer and more enduring. Some used this formula:

Pulverize stick sulphur and mix it to a paste with

water. Plaster this thickly on the straw and place in the sun to dry. When dry, brush the sulphur off, and the hat will look like new.

Others employed the same agent in a different way. A tin or iron plate of sulphur was set on the ground and lighted to a slow flame. When it was fairly kindled, a barrel open at both ends was carefully placed over the smoking sulphur. Across the top of the barrel was laid a stick from which the discolored hat was suspended by a short cord. A board was fitted to the head of the barrel so closely that the fumes of the burning sulphur could not escape. At the end of half an hour the hat was shifted to a different position that the hot gases might reach every part of it. More sulphur was lighted if the first supply was exhausted. The hat was not taken out until it was cold. A couple of hours in the open air sufficed to dispel the sulphurous odor.

If the hat be but slightly soiled, go over it with a paste of lemon-juice and table salt, spreading it thickly and evenly and leave the hat in the sun for the rest of the day. Next morning brush off the salt, and wash with strained lemon-juice. Another day's sunning should make it as white as ever.

#### SOOT MARKS

Even in our age of closed chimneys, and steam heat, there are households sufficiently luxurious and affluent to indulge in the renaissance of open fireplaces. Now and then, when fires are kept up regu-

larly in the baronial chimneys, a gust of wind or a fierce dash of ill-directed rain brings down the accumulations of a winter's smoke.

When soot falls upon the carpet or rug, never attempt to sweep it up at once, for the result is sure to be a disfiguring mark. Cover it thickly with dried salt, which will enable you to sweep it up clean, so that not the slightest stain will be left.

#### EGG STAINS

They should not excite disgust, but they do! The yellow drip from the breakfast egg, eaten *en règle*, from the shell of the "strictly fresh," a-down John's blameless shirt-front, or Mary's embroidered muslin; the smear left by Jenny's spoon on the cloth where she dropped it—full, of course—"on an accident,"—are alike odious in the housemother's eyes. She can not explain why they should convey an impression of coarse negligence verging upon vulgarity. Yet she is distressfully aware of the fact, and so are we. Moreover, they are not easily sponged out. The hateful, vulgar yellow clings like the smirch of scandal to reputation.

Egg stains on linen or on any other cloth should be soaked in cold water, for hot water sets the stains and makes them most difficult to remove. The same rule applies to egg stains on dishes, etc. If the dishes are placed at once in hot water the egg stains will harden, but they readily come off in cold water.

The albumen in eggs is made into paste by boiling

water. It dissolves readily in cold. Therefore, if you try to sponge away the ochreous streak from non-washable stuff, do it with cold water.

#### FEATHERS

*To clean a feather boa:* Shake gently in a draft for a minute or two, pulling it open through the length to clear out the dust. Blow hard into it—upward—to dislodge lurking particles. Then wash it in clear gasoline. Do it out of doors and in the daytime. Souse it up and down a dozen times; shake and hang in the air to dry, shaking several times while it is airing.

*Or:* Sift finely pulverized fuller's earth into the feathers, filling them full with it. Shut up in a box for two days, shake gently and hang in the wind to get rid of the powder. Or, you may dip it repeatedly in gasoline.

*Ostrich plumes:* May be cleaned in the same way. To restore them after being exposed to dampness: hold the plumes or feather boa over a register, or much better, over the kitchen range. Hold there and shake as near the heat as possible without scorching. In a few moments they will fluff up and be as lively as a ball of down.

After the washing in gasoline and the drying in the open air, the plume or boa will have a dissipated, blasé look unbecoming the crisp jauntiness of its former estate. Hold it at the steaming spout of a boiling tea-kettle, then over the red-hot plate of the



range or hang it from the upper grating of a hot oven until it curls, watching lest it burn. I know a woman who *bakes* her plumes periodically.

There are other, and it may be, better ways. One authority upon the subject sets down positively that "the whole secret of success in renovating feathers is starch—raw, not boiled—as the cooked starch would act like glue. Take three tablespoonfuls of raw starch to one pint of cold water, into which put the feathers, after they have been washed and rinsed. Press in a dry cloth with the hands, squeezing as dry as possible; then hang in the wind to dry—in a strong draft, if convenient. When quite dry, shake well, but not hard. As the starch flies off in a cloud, every filament will rise, and the plume be as fluffy as at first. Hang in the steam of a boiling kettle until the plume is saturated. Do not curl near the stem, as the feather will, then, be too close and thick. When curling, keep the forefinger of the left hand parallel with the stem."

*Or:* Make a suds of good white soap; put your plume in and soak until the dirt is loosened. Repeat until the last suds are clean. If the plume is white, rinse in water with a little bluing in it. In washing begin at the stem and squeeze down to the tip. Dry as you would anything else—preferably in the sun. Then lay your feather on a large sheet of paper and sprinkle thickly with prepared chalk and flour. Put your hand on the side of the feather and rub down to the tip, keeping it up until the fibers are loosened.

Shake out well in the air to get rid of the powder, and curl on a blunt knife. Handle carefully, so as not to break the plume.

## WHITE STUFFS

*White all-wool waists:* A cream-colored waist may be cleaned according to rules for which I have to thank a friend. She says:

“I have cleaned three this winter. Two were wool waistings of different kinds, the other a cream wool challé. The latter was trimmed with white silk appliqué, which I did not rip off. My method is simply to soak the waist to be cleaned in cold water for a couple of hours, then wash in cold water with any good white soap, rubbing the soap freely on the waist. Rinse also in cold water, several times if necessary. All the waists iron to look exactly like new, and without shrinking.”

A second contributor volunteers a dry bleach for which she vouches, as I guarantee her skill and truthfulness:

“Wash the waist in warm suds, rinse in hot water and keep it hot while drying, stretching all the time into shape, and when dry, bleach with sulphur. Get a large barrel; put a brick in the center of the bottom; then a red-hot stove lid upside down on the brick. Put sulphur on that. Put a large wire sieve on top of barrel and put goods or waist, flannel or white silk, on it. Cover tightly. Leave the garment loose so the sulphur will reach every part of

the goods. When the sulphur is cold, the goods will be as white as when new."

I have to thank a third benefactor for her method of cleaning chiffon.

*To clean white chiffon:* "Chiffon should be washed in soap lather by carefully rolling and pressing between the hands, then rinsed in clean water and stiffened in gum water, the same proportion as for lace—namely, one tablespoonful to a quarter of a pint of water.

"Roll in a cloth to absorb some of the moisture, but proceed quickly since it must not be too dry when it is ironed.

"To iron chiffon, it must be placed on the table wrong side up and ironed along the selvedge, as ironing across would displace the fibers and destroy the appearance of the delicate fabric.

"Chiffon ties with a natural crêpon crinkle should not be ironed, but, instead, the ends should be carefully pinned out on a table, the tie just stretched enough to permit of the crinkles falling into their natural shape.

"When dry fold it without pressing the folds in; air and put away carefully."

A delicate and not easy process. Had I less confidence in the woman who assures me she "has tried it, and found it true," I should not dare to quote it. For chiffon has kinks—in more than one sense of the word—and I have never essayed to cleanse it.

## TO TAKE THE OIL OUT OF WOOLEN STUFFS

A lively housemother thus relates, at my request, the history of a calamity changed by presence of mind into a pleasing reminiscence:

“Many years ago I had read that rye flour will absorb any oil on a carpet. An accident spread a pint of castor-oil on the parlor carpet. This made a large spot, and I ran to the flour bin only to find rye flour out. In desperation I took white flour instead. Then I covered the flour with newspaper, and both with a rug. I changed the flour as often as the oil penetrated it and formed cakes, as long as there was any oil left—rapidly and hard at first, slowly and light at last. Not a vestige of oil remained, and I have had several experiences since in removing oil from carpets and wool clothing—putting flour above and below the spot in cloth and placing a slightly warmed iron over the spot. This is a simple remedy and one always at hand in the home.”

## TO REMOVE THE “SHINE” FROM CLOTH AND SILK

(1) The shine that shows a serge skirt or jacket to be no longer new, may easily be removed by sponging the garment with bluing water, such as is used to launder clothes. While still damp press the goods under a thin cloth.

(2) To take the “shine” off of clothing: Wring a woollen cloth out of water; lay over the goods and

press with a hot iron. Do not press dry. Take cloth up while steaming.

(3) "Damprag" it by rolling it upon a wet cloth, the gloss next to the cloth. Leave thus for an hour or more. Then open upon a table, and hold a very hot iron just near enough to the moistened "shine" to bring up the steam, which should do the work unless the garment be positively threadbare.

(4) To remove the "shine" from John's coat and trousers, sponge with hot vinegar. This will cleanse and freshen them at the same time. Sponge afterward with ammonia.

(5) Whatever you use, the removal of the "shine" will be temporary. One of the best things I know of is a bit of very fine emery cloth—you may buy it in small squares at a druggist's—rubbed upon the shiny parts of the cloth. Rub gently. The friction will remove the gloss for a time. When it reappears, rub again.

(6) Soap-bark is one of the best mediums for the removal of "shine" from cloth. Many a suit that has not begun to be threadbare, is thrown aside as too shabby for even every-day wear because it has grown glossy upon the shoulders and the underpart of the arms. Make a flannel bag, put a handful of soap-bark into it, and dip into hot water. Use it as a sponge. Do not wipe the cloth dry.

A black silk that has worn so "shiny," that it looks greasy may be cleaned to a "dull finish" by sponging with a mixture of equal parts of alcohol

and ether. Add a generous tablespoonful of household ammonia to the mixture before using. It is yet more effective if set in boiling water half an hour before it is used. Change the water for more, boiling hot, at the end of fifteen minutes, and do not take the bottle containing the wash near the fire. The contents are highly volatile, but should the cork blow out, there is no danger unless the alcohol is ignited by artificial light.

#### TO CLEAN A TISSUE OR CRÊPON VEIL

*To clean a tissue, or crêpon veil:* Souse in gasoline (out of doors), shake gently and attach with many pins to the line in the sun, but not where the wind will stretch it out of shape. Or, after shaking out the gasoline, spread smoothly upon a cloth, pinning down at the edges, and leave in the air and shade to dry.

#### ÉCRU LACES

Ecrû laces can be kept to their original color by using yellow ochre, obtainable at any paint store. It is perfectly harmless to lace or muslin. Mix a small quantity of this powder with boiling water, and add to the starch or last-rinsing water; test the color with a corner of the curtains where the pattern is heaviest; put all curtains, intended for one room or window, in at one time, so the color will not vary. Souse and wring out in the ordinary way. If not satisfactory the first time put through again.

*Or:* Put a little saffron in the rinsing water, making sure to wring and shake out the water before hanging the curtains up to dry. If hung up dripping wet, they will be streaky.

Our grandmothers gave the sallowness of age to their thread laces by dipping them into weak, clear, black coffee—strained through a flannel bag. You can try the same process, if you prefer it to the saffron. In either case test the color first upon a bit of lace or muslin.

### SILK

*To clean a muddy black underskirt:* Take a brush and use it vigorously over bad mud spots. Then scrub over with a piece of old velvet. You will be surprised at the result. The velvet, without the brush, is fine to remove the dust that collects on the silk.

*The "ring" left by sponging silk:* If the cleaner has observed the precaution already insisted upon of laying a folded piece of blotting-paper under the silk before touching it with the sponge, the chances are that there will not be left the round spot which is as hard to get rid of as the original stain. Alcohol is of all liquid deteratives the least likely to leave the obnoxious "ring." If you have used some other fluid, and the unsightly mark offends your eyes when the stain has vanished, and the silk is dry, try what I have found successful in more than one case.

Stretch the silk taut and scratch very gently with

your finger nail around the edges of the ring, always from it and evenly until you have blended the darkened portions of the silk with the rest. If done carefully this will make the blur nearly, if not quite imperceptible. Next time sponge with alcohol and ether,—in equal parts. If, in cleaning with any liquid, you will put a thick, dry pad of cotton under the stained part of the stuff, there will be little danger of the “ring.”

#### TO SET COLORS

To set colors in new cotton fabrics dissolve one ounce of sugar of lead in eight quarts of water, and soak the articles in it over night.

*Or:* Lay them in salt water enough to cover them several inches deep, and leave them there for five hours. The color will be set, and the dirt will not be permanent.

*Or:* Soak for the same time in a strong infusion of alum. Dissolve the alum in hot water, but let it get cold before putting in the cotton or linen goods.

#### STRAYS

*To prevent white silk from turning yellow when not in use:* Wrap it in pale blue tissue paper, or in soft muslin that has been dipped in deep bluing water, then wrung out, dried and ironed. No starch! You may also put a cake of pure white wax in the box.

*To take the odor out of stockings that smell of the*



dye, and the armpits of underwear and wash waists: When they are washed let the last rinsing be in alum water—about a teaspoonful of powdered alum to one quart of warm water.

*Jet passementerie* may be cleaned by rubbing it with a cloth dipped in equal parts of alcohol and water. Dry afterward with a clean cloth.

*To clean jewelry with stones in it*, wash it in warm suds made with yellow soap and a few drops of sal volatile. You will find that this makes the ornament brilliantly clean.

*Stains on flannel blankets and light-colored woollens* may be removed by an application of glycerin and raw yolk of egg—equal parts of each well mixed together. Let this soak in thoroughly, and, when it has done its work, remove it by washing with soapy water.

*To take chewing-gum from clothing*, turn to our old friend gasoline. The gum will evaporate with the gasoline if rubbed a little with a cloth wet with gasoline. Not a trace of the gum will remain. This is better than scraping.

*To take varnish out of cloth*: Soak the spots with a sponge dipped in alcohol, wetting the sponge as it dries, and covering with a thick cloth to prevent too rapid evaporation. When the varnish has softened, scrape off all that will come away, and scrub off the rest with household ammonia.

*Alcohol will remove glue*: Wet a sponge in this, lay upon a spot, covered with newspaper, to prevent

evaporation, and leave for half an hour. Then sponge the softened glue with more alcohol.

*Clean leather-bound books* with powdered pumice stone applied with a piece of soft cotton or wool. Rub until clean.

#### ORNAMENTS

*Cut steel* may be polished with powdered pumice stone, slightly moistened and applied with a soft brush or cloth.

*To clean a steel chain:* Put it into a box three-quarters full of fine emery dust. Close the box and shake violently up and down and to and fro for several minutes. Now and then turn the box upside down and shake again, to leave no part of the chain untouched.

## CHAPTER XIII

FRIDAY

### HOUSEHOLD PESTS, VERMIN

“There is no house howe’er so well defended,” that is proof against the incursions of insect invaders of domestic comfort and housemotherly pride. Each woman who reads these lines can recall without an effort some humiliating experience that burned the axiom into her astonished soul.

To this hour, I find it hard to think with Christian charity of the relative-in-law, who, after spending a night in the pretty guest-chamber of the first house we ever owned, asked me placidly, at breakfast, if I knew that the moths had their *habitat* in the fretted cornice bordering the frieze I had thought handsome. We made much of cornices, and knew little of friezes then, and I was proud of the elaborate decoration of my newly-furnished chamber.

“I saw them plainly as I lay in bed,” continued the candid speaker, accepting a second cup of coffee, and asking incidentally, that it might be “hotter and sweeter than the first.” “I am blessed with keen eyes, and I espied a colony of the little rascals hanging, heads downward, in the crannies of the pattern.”

Inwardly I chafed hotly, and said ugly things to

myself as to the chronic propensity of In-laws to say disagreeable things one's blood-kindred would keep to themselves. Outwardly, I smiled slightly and commented upon the ubiquitousness of moths who, like Solomon's representative spider, "take hold with their hands, and are in king's palaces."

The In-law smiled superior to my feint at careless ease: "I thanked my stars my wife was not with me! The sight of a moth throws her into a panic. She would be sure that we would carry off eggs or larvæ in our clothes."

I scorned to inform him that I had personally conducted the spring campaign against creeping things of all species, and put down woollens for the summer with my own hands. How was I to think of hunting for wool-eating moths in the convolutions of a plaster cornice? As soon as he and his valise were out of the house, I led a raid upon crannies and convolutions. The ceiling of that room had been swept with a hair broom at least twice a month during the half-year of our occupancy of the house we joyed in calling ours. Mounted now upon a step-ladder and armed with a pointed paint-brush, and woman's inalienable weapon—a hairpin—I hunted and slew until I could find not one more to add to the host of wriggling larvæ, and the eggs that promised increase of family within a week. If I could not at once—or ever—forgive the officious In-law for discovering and proclaiming what I should have prevented, I laid the lesson to heart. To this hour I

do not comprehend what took the wool-eaters into recesses where there was nothing to feed upon. The lesson set for me was that they seek out all manner of unlikely lairs in which to increase and multiply for the housewife's confusion and shame of face and heart.

The same may be said of other and even more objectionable "creatures" who molest and make afraid the careful housekeeper and are the slattern's disgrace. There may be reason in the country home for the popular belief that the presence of nocturnal prowlers in the bedroom, moths in carpets and curtains, roaches in the kitchen, and red ants in the pantry—not to mention silver-buffalo- and carpet-bugs—reflects irretrievable ignominy upon the mistress of the infested premises. A fair degree of care should suffice to keep her domain free from the few who are imported by traveling visitors, or from town in the trunks of "hired help." Her urban sister—unless she lives in a detached house (and not one family in ten thousand does this)—is subject to the inroads of predatory bands from neighboring houses or flats. To the dweller in cities the warfare is practically ceaseless. It is not enough to drive them away from her premises. They must be exterminated, root and branch, or the routed forces, banished, for a time, to territories to the right or left of the victor, or maybe to the upper or lower floor—return with whetted appetites as soon as the fumigation is fairly over.

Merciless dealing is the true wisdom here. I take this occasion to enter my personal protest against the weak sentimentality that entrenches itself behind such puerilities as the assertion that everything alive has an equal right to live. I take issue with Uncle Toby who, in releasing the fly that had tickled his nose pertinaciously, declared that "there is room in the world for thee and for me." Leigh Hunt calls Uncle Toby "the pitier of the devil himself." From my standpoint, the man who could capture the devil and then let him free to do his will upon other men, is as cruel as he is weak. Uncle Toby's liberated fly flew off to torment somebody else,—perchance to goad a saint to profanity. It is not true—if Shakespeare did say it—that

"The poor beetle that we tread upon,  
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great  
As when a giant dies."

A fly that has just been bereft of both wings, will fall to work greedily upon a drop of honey set close to him, his enjoyment of the sweet evidently as lively as if he had not been maimed. If the beetle were a cockroach, common humanity demands that he should be trodden under the housewifely slipper.

If I speak warmly on this subject, it is because I have witnessed so many exhibitions of misdirected sympathy and inconsistent compassion. It is not ten years since I was condemned openly and held up to public reprobation for advising a woman whose

premises were overrun by a breed of mice too knowing to enter the traps set in their sight, "to catch one, smear him with tar, and let him go."

"Mice are cleanly little beasties," I added, "and as he runs, he will besmear the sides of his hole and the walls with tar. His comrades can not abide the stickiness upon their fur, and will flee as for their lives." This statement of a fact was branded in the condemnatory resolutions of the body that arraigned me, as "flippantly trifling with the sufferings of harmless creatures that had as much right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as their tormentor." The paper then went on to say that, if the murder of the "beastie" were a domestic and neighborhood necessity, he should be drowned in warm water. "Not hot, but with the chill taken off, that the shock of immersion may be lessened."

Since vermin—including "rats and mice and such small deer," are a direct menace to human health and happiness, they must go! To inflict needless pain upon anything that God has made, is a sin. Therefore, let justice upon the evil doer be done as swiftly and as effectually as possible. To mutilate a beetle is wanton cruelty, even though the victim be cold-blooded and incapable of feeling such suffering in dying as would attend a cut of a giant's finger.

Now for the application of our sermon:—

Begin we with moths, classed in Holy Writ with the corruptions of rust upon human riches. They are dear lovers of warmth and of darkness, when

joined to warmth. Dusty corners are a delight, and fleecy folds the acme of luxury. Therefore keep your rooms well-aired and admit the sunshine lavishly. Sweep the corners and the walls—and explore the cornices!

#### IN PUTTING AWAY WOOLENS AND FURS

Beat and brush out all the dust, as the first and most important step. Where eggs are not, the live moths can not come. Even with the lowest orders of creation, there is no such thing as spontaneous generation. See to it that every thread and hair of the stuff is visited by the brush. Then, hang it in the hottest sunshine you can find. Leave it thus for a day, and when the articles are brought in at evening, put them into a clean trunk or box—or barrels that have been wiped clean and then swabbed with camphor. Of all known drugs this is most abhorrent to moths and other creeping things.

Next day, take the woolens and furs into the porch, if you have one. A bright, airy room with a hardwood floor, is the next best place. You should have abundance of newspapers saved for the occasion. Printer's ink is as unwelcome to moths as to bigger sinners. Lay in between the folds of each article plenty of camphor balls, or gum camphor. Envelop it, next, in newspaper, pinned carefully at the open ends. Finally, sew or pin up the parcel in unbleached muslin, or in cheese-cloth, and lay away in a perfectly dustless chest, box or cask. Never lose



sight of the cardinal—and the comforting—truth that, if the air be excluded and there are no unguarded cracklets through which the dust may penetrate to the contents of the parcel, it is a physical impossibility for moths to get at them, were the box not opened in ten months, or ten years.

A notable housewife, who dislikes the smell of camphor, claims that the use of it is a needless precaution, if the woolens and furs be entirely free from dust—therefore of eggs and larvæ—when they are put away. I have, myself, dispensed with camphor or any other preservative, and sustained no damage from the omission.

When you are ready to put away furs and woolens and want to guard against the depredations of moths, pack them securely in paper flour sacks, and tie them up well. Before putting away your muff or furs for the winter, twirl them by the cords at the ends so that every hair will straighten itself. Put them in their boxes, and paste a strip of paper where the lid fits on tightly.

*Turpentine* is a valuable ally in the righteous war. The odor is clean and wholesome. Sprinkle a little of the turpentine in the bottom of trunks and drawers, and cover with a fresh newspaper. Also, saturate pieces of soft cloth, and place in the corners, away from the clothes. In midsummer often open them up, and tuck in a fresh supply without removing the articles. Keep a bottle of turpentine in the wardrobe or closet, and occasionally sprinkle a few

drops around. It is good for furs or feathers or anything in which these pests live.

Endorsement of the excellence of this means of defense comes from a veteran:

“Two years ago, when house-cleaning, I found many moths in parlor chairs, closets, boxes—almost everywhere. After thorough dusting and cleaning, turpentine was applied freely to edges of upholstering, all seams in boxes, bureau drawers and closets, and no moth has ever been seen here since. Bugs will not, for years after, go where turpentine has been applied. Mosquitoes will not trouble you if you paint the headboard of the bed with it.”

To keep moths out of upholstered furniture, carpets and clothing, heat a flat-iron very hot, place on a brick or stone in the room, put as much gum camphor as will lie on under the handle of the iron and close up the room for a few hours.

#### SILVER-MOTHS AND BUFFALO-BEETLES

A most pestilent crew! Their field of action is generally the carpet, the rug (the more costly the better) and upholstered furniture.

So far as I can judge, they attract one another. Like Longfellow's vultures and human woes—

“They gather, gather, descending flockwise—”

until the poor housemother is distraught beyond expression. Try this plan of warfare: Stir red pepper into wood alcohol in the proportion of a table-

spoonful to a pint. With a syringe inject the liquid into every crevice and corner. Turn up the edges of the carpets and wet them with the mixture. Shut the rooms up closely for a few hours to allow the alcohol to evaporate slowly. It is not likely that a single treatment will abolish the evil. Persevere, adding, now and then, a lump of camphor, crushed, to the pepper.

When you leave home for the summer, drench carpets, etc., with gasoline, in which gum camphor has been dissolved, and close the room thus visited. No vermin can live under this heroic treatment.

*Or:* Drench the edges of the carpets and all along the bottom of the baseboard with gasoline. Shut the room up tightly for twenty-four hours. Open and air. Let no artificial light be taken into the room meanwhile. This will kill any sort of vermin.

*For a moth-infested rug:* First, take the rug and have it beaten well from the wrong side. When no dust remains, spread it to full size in a disused room, and drench it with gasoline. Roll it up, wrong side out, to retain the strength of the gasoline, and close the room for two days. Open in broad daylight, unroll and air your rug, and return it to its usual place. There will be no moths left alive in it.

The gasoline is more effective still if mixed with camphor or cedar oil. Allow a tablespoonful of cedar oil to a quart of gasoline, shaking the bottle hard to mix the ingredients thoroughly. Keep the bottle closely corked.

## FOR FURNITURE

(1) If furniture is infested with moths, remove the lining beneath the seat and interline with tar paper.

(2) If the moths have got into the carpet it must be taken up, thoroughly shaken and pressed with a flat-iron as hot as it will bear without scorching. Then liberally sprinkle the floor where it is to lie with spirits of turpentine, pouring it into any cracks there may be between the boards.

## FLEAS

Pennyroyal, properly used, is sure death to fleas. If the green herb is in full season, order a bushel or more of it through a market man, and strew it thickly in every flea-infested room. Take one room at a time: cover the floor with pennyroyal, and shut door and windows, not opening them again for two days. Then gather up the withered herbs, and burn them at once. Repeat the process if it is necessary, which is not likely. If you can not get the green herb, put oil of pennyroyal into boiling water, and scrub floors and woodwork with it.

*Or:* Since the fresh pennyroyal is very hard to obtain in a large city, for a six-room flat take three pounds of sulphur, wet with alcohol, or three sulphur candles. After removing silver and gilt articles and dainty colors, put the sulphur into an old pan and set inside of another pan of water. Unlock

the windows, so that they may be opened from outside, and ignite. Be careful not to inhale the fumes.

From a tropical city where the nimble pests gain foothold in the beds, eluding the daily quest, and bobbing up serenely as soon as the weary foreigner lays him down to sleep, we have a message:

“Saturate one corner of a handkerchief with coal oil, just the least you can, so as not to drip, squeeze it tightly with the hand; pass it between the sheets so as to scatter the odor around where the fleas are; then pin the kerchief on the back part of the night-robe just below the shoulder. This I do to keep from smelling the odor of the oil myself.

“The fleas will soon leave the bed and house. I keep a little cloth saturated and place it so it can not be smelled by myself. The fleas soon desert the room.”

To whatever means you may resort, add this to it. Lay sheets of “sticky fly-paper” under the bed and other large articles of furniture, also along the bottom of the baseboard in secluded corners. Do this at night, since the papers will be unsightly in the day, and veritable snares for unwary feet. Next morning, look at them, and if they are not dotted with black specks, that will never be nimble again, do not repeat the experiment. Burn paper and fleas together.

*Fleas upon cats and dogs:* Upon four ounces of foxglove leaves, pour two quarts of boiling water,

and with this wash the animal. Repeat the operation three or four times a year.

*Or:* Wash him well in two gallons of water to which you have added a cupful of kerosene. Some hours later wash with strong suds made of tar soap. Swab him with pure water and comb his hair.

#### ANTS RED AND BLACK

The words recall another instance of ill-directed sentimentality. A boy-visitor in a house where I was also a guest, pursued a big black ant that was running across the drawing-room floor with a grain of sugar in his mouth, and was about to set his foot upon it when his mother arrested him: "My son! Let the poor innocent thing go! How often have I told you never to kill an insect?"

Was it mean and spiteful in me when I smiled to myself to see her shudder at sight of a black ant—I hoped it was the escaped thief—swimming in the glass of iced tea passed to her an hour later? The hostess apologized distressfully, as she exchanged the glass for another, by saying that "the wretches are everywhere, this summer! We are tormented out of our wits by them in the kitchen and pantries."

Even tender-hearted Cowper, in excluding from his list of friends the man who "needlessly sets foot upon a worm," admits that the intruder upon the alcove's beauty and the household's neatness must die.

"A place for everything, and everything in its place," is the surest route to fulfilment of Heaven's first law, Order, and the place for red and black ants is not upon my table, in my sugar-bowl, or upon veranda and parlor floor.

*Some ways* of getting rid of the smaller varieties. Procure a large sponge, wash it well and press dry, which will leave the cells quite open; then sprinkle over it powdered sugar, and place where the ants are most troublesome. They will soon take up their abode in the cells. Dip the sponge in hot water, which will wash them out. Put more sugar on the trap for a new haul.

(2) Mix five cents' worth of tartar emetic in an equal amount of sugar. Make it quite moist with water, put into small dishes and set on shelves where ants are troublesome. The ants disappear as mysteriously as they came. Keep it out of the reach of children, as it is poisonous.

(3) Take one-half cake of yeast and dissolve it in a little water, then add a half-cup of syrup. Set the mixture around their haunts in the saucers of flower-pots.

(4) Scatter a few whole cloves on the shelves where they congregate. They appear not to like strong spices.

(5) Use borax and red pepper freely. Lay rags dipped in kerosene in their way and tack sticky fly-paper to the underside of your shelves.

(6) Wash the inner walls with strong red pepper

tea and rub the outer with turpentine soap, repeating weekly.

(7) Borax and red pepper; soap, mixed with cayenne smeared on the edges and at the back of the shelves.

Let me commend, in particular, the expedient of smearing the underside of pantry shelves with soap into which cayenne pepper has been worked. Next to this I place the sticky fly-paper recommended in premises infested by fleas. Ants seem to have a special antipathy for the odor of the composition coating the paper. They are often found lying dead in heaps under the paper, without having attempted to cross it.

*Ants infesting lawns:* May be disposed of more easily. Fill a machine oil-can having a long spout, with kerosene, into which you have stirred a teaspoonful of red pepper. Thrust the tip of the nozzle as far into each ant-hill as it will go easily and inject the peppered oil into the hole. It is sure death to the depredators. If poured upon the grass it will blight it. Hence the need of a can and nozzle.

A grateful correspondent will not object to the insertion here of an extract from her letter:

“I have rid the house of ants by following your directions. I put carbolic soap into all cracks and crevices, rubbed it upon door- and window-sills, and scalded the ant-hills in the garden with boiling water. The ants dislike the odor of carbolic acid in this special soap.”



Since the odor of carbolic soap is unpleasantly suggestive to some of us, connected, as it is, with hospitals and infectious diseases, I return to the soap and cayenne. Common laundry soap may be used. If hard, it may be moistened with pepper tea, until soft enough to be wrought into a paste with the powdered cayenne.

#### BOOK-WORMS

Not the human variety, but a tiny insect that burrows into the bindings of our choicest volumes—leather, morocco or vellum. Happily for our peace of mind, they are less numerous by far than ants, fleas or moths, but when they do get in their fine work, they show no respect for author or decoration. The stoutest bindings crumble before their undermining.

Clean the bindings thoroughly with a dry cloth, and dislodge the insects by the librarian's trick of striking two volumes together gently and repeatedly. This shakes out eggs and larvæ. Had this simple precaution been practised every fortnight, the mites would not have been bred in your bindings. When all the books have been taken from the shelves and treated in the way I have indicated, dust the shelves well and go over every part of them with a brush dipped in olive oil, to which has been added one-third part of oil of cedar. Wash the underpart of each shelf, as well as the upper, also the backs, with this preparation, working it well into the wood.

When it is quite dry, put the books back into their places and shut up the library for a few hours, that the odor of the cedar may impregnate the bindings. Repeat the process at the end of two weeks. The cedar oil will prevent mold, and effectually arrest the operations of the marauders.

## CHAPTER XIV

FRIDAY (*Concluded*)

### OTHER HOUSEHOLD PESTS

#### ROACHES AND WATER-BUGS

We abbreviate proper and common names in this hurrying country of ours, and the housewife, curious to classify the insect Arab who roams kitchen and bath-rooms of mansion and flat, defiant of rank and rules—must not consult dictionary and cyclopaedia in the lead of the alphabet. “Roach” is there set down as a fish, and divers other things, including a style of dressing one’s forelock—never as a beetle. We are in too great a hurry to get rid of him to make a scientific study of the nuisance. Pause we a moment to acquaint ourselves—not with him—we know too much of his methods and personality to spend time in rehearsing them. It is interesting, nevertheless, to note the faithful description of this pervasive tormentor of the domestic circle, given by our naturalists.

“They are nocturnal in their habits and very troublesome in houses, where they often multiply with great rapidity, infesting kitchens and pantries and attacking provisions of all kinds. They have a very offensive smell.” Could the most sorely harassed housemother, with a fine command of her ver-

naacular at the service of her temper, sketch our Pest's portrait more accurately? To cap the climax of odiousness, he inflicts upon the memory a sesquipedalian title. The common kitchen species is the *Blatta* (or *Periplaneta*) *Orientalis*. His near relative, the water-bug, or croton-bug, is known in scientific circles as *Blatta Germanica*. He was brought to our inhospitable shores in the hold of German vessels. Ever since then, he has been a stowaway of the vilest type.

*Borax* comes into deserved prominence in the list of our helpers in the business of freeing our premises of native and imported varieties. It is war to the death with us. There are no reservations for aborigines; no naturalization laws for the alien. I have found borax—cheap, clean, and harmless to Christian creatures—more efficacious than anything else tried in my kitchen. My German cook pronounced it “no good” after three nights' experiment. At the end of that week she informed me exultantly that the “big fellows were all gone, and none but foolish babies came out.” In ten days these had also disappeared. We strew borax thickly over shelves and blow it into cracks. You may try mixing corn-meal with molasses and red lead into a paste and setting saucers of this in the roaches' path. Or, substitute tartar emetic for the red lead. Both are highly recommended.

One co-worker, to whom I imparted the history of my success, offers a substitute in part:

“Mix equal parts of sugar, borax, Paris green and sulphur. I get fifteen cents' worth and put it in an atomizer, such as is used for insect powder, and sprinkle wherever they may be. I take everything out of my pantry and put the powder around back of the shelves. Then I put clean paper back on and replace things. It has been there now for about six months. I sprinkle mine at night, and next morning I clean up the floor and wipe off the walls. It must stay in the cracks. You won't miss any roaches for two or three weeks, but after two or three months there will be no more, if the powder be properly used.”

It is plain that there is no royal road to extermination. A touch of genius—defined by the great Italian poet-painter as Eternal Patience—is indispensable to success.

It has been shown in other cases, that they will leave if pennyroyal is used in their haunts. A good way to use it is to wet a cloth in water; then let fall a few drops of the oil of pennyroyal upon it, and go over the shelves or other places where they are troublesome.

A peculiarly tough tribe was blotted from the face of sink and refrigerator, store-room and meal barrel by borax mixed with cayenne pepper. It is maintained by Southern housekeepers that a strong decoction of common poke root, mixed with an equal quantity of black molasses, boiled to a syrup and

spread upon bread is sure and present death to cockroaches. They eat it greedily and die.

A "Shut-in" who has leisure for experiments in domestic and scientific lines, writes eagerly to me:

"Did you know that putting plaster of Paris and sugar together would kill all bugs in the pantry? They get dry and must drink, which kills them after eating."

From the Pacific coast we have the authoritative order: "Five cents' worth of Paris green, one-half pound of powdered sugar and insect powder puff. In filling puff use one-third of poison to two-thirds of sugar, and place it wherever necessary. In a very short time the roaches will be no more."

A merry young wife wrote joyously to me:

"You told me in answer to my jeremiad over household pests, to try borax, and encouraged me to think that if the plain borax, used with a free and flowing hand, did not accomplish the object, one pound of corn-starch and one-fourth pound of borax carefully mixed together and laid thickly around their 'happy hunting grounds' would clear out water-bugs. I tried it. I couldn't open a door in the flat but they were dropping down on my head. I tried it—and, presto, change! In two months not one could be seen. That was over a year ago, and none has shown up since. If any more move in I know just what to do."

The conclusion of the whole matter would seem

to be that (parodying Beau Brummell's farewell to English imitators)—Borax is the Man!

Combined with cloves, with salt, with sugar, with Paris green, or, best of all, with cayenne pepper, it is the chosen instrument of destruction in the conflict with the *Blatta*—domestic and foreign.

#### MOSQUITOES

If there are no nets in your windows and no screens in outer doors, and you can not rig up a mosquito-net over your bed, bathe faces and hands in spirits of camphor, or rub them with oil of pennyroyal or citronella before you go to bed. You may not like the odor, but the trifling annoyance is more easily borne than the irritation of the poison substituted by the mosquito for the drop of blood drawn from your body. Scientific men have established beyond dispute the fact that malaria is conveyed into the human body by the bite of the noisy little insect. He has two characteristics which should be cited in his favor. He gives warning of his attack, and he is not a creeping skulker. When he moves, it is on wings. There is no need to turn over the mattresses, or probe cracks in the search for him. Apart from these trifling offsets to total depravity, Uncle Toby himself, "the pitier of the devil," would have nothing to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon the female mosquito. For, although from the force of habit petrified by the usage of thousands upon thousands of years, we speak of the malaria-carrier as

“he,” it is his spouse who does all the work of their world. Like the hive-drone, he is a cipher at home and abroad.

The most effectual guard against the bite of the now-dreaded insect that I have ever known of, is a cone-shaped tablet manufactured in Venice and in general use in Italy. If my memory serves me aright, it was called *Sonni tranquilli* (Sleep quietly), and each box bore the stamp of the maker—Zamproni. Our sleeping-rooms were large and lofty, during three winters passed in Italy—winters that ran far into the spring—and mosquitoes had both seasons for their own. Every night, fifteen minutes before bedtime, we placed a couple of the small pyramids upon a shovel, set fire to them and amused ourselves by watching the miniature volcanoes as they ignited, puffed, fizzed, flamed, and threw out volumes of aromatic smoke oddly disproportioned to the size of the peak that emitted them. The shovel was waved gently over the beds, and into the far corners of the vast chamber, until the eruption ceased. Then we went to bed, and didn't so much as dream of stinging singers. The man who imports the marvelous cones into America should fill his pockets, and would deserve a monument at the hands of grateful countrymen.

Until then, camphor is our surest refuge.

Yet—this hint from a New Jersey woman (who should be an authority upon mosquitoes) is a move in the right direction:



“Take a piece of paper rolled around a lead pencil to form a case, and fill this with very dry Pyrethrum powder, putting in a little at a time and pressing it down with a pencil. This cartridge may be set in a cup of sand. An hour before going to bed the room is to be closed and one of these cartridges burned. Two are required for a large room.”

Coal oil poured on pools or any concavity containing stagnant water will effectually stop all mosquito breeding.

#### FLIES

Three rules stand out, unchallenged, in the directions for keeping a house free from this one of Pharaoh's Plagues: Cleanliness, Darkness, and Coolness. Open the windows wide early in the morning, before sunrise,—as soon after dawn as you can prevail upon yourself to forgo the last delicious doze for the sake of a greater and more general good. Open outer doors, also, and encourage the blessed breeze, as yet untainted by dust and smoke, to blow freely through halls and rooms. By eight o'clock at the latest, the shutters should be closed and the Venetian doors bowed, or fast shut. Within the shaded interior all should be spick-and-span as to dirt, cool in temperature—and silent as far as concerns the teasing buzzing of the “plagues,” as hateful as the hiss of a serpent to the neat housewife.

I read once in a “Woman's Corner” that the odor of lavender is so obnoxious to the *musca domestica* that a few drops upon a sponge will warn off the

winged trespassers from the table on which it is laid. In generous faith in the "Corner," I bought the lavender, soaked a sponge in it, and set the saucer containing it on the desk at which I must do a day's work with the mercury soaring into the nineties, and the flies finding their way into the room by secret paths the human eye could not discover. Looking up from my paper at the end of ten minutes, to repel their attentions, I saw two seated luxuriously upon the sponge, and others crawling over the saucer!

If you do not mind the sight of sick, staggering and dying flies dropping about table and floor, you may get rid of hundreds a day by making a syrup of brown sugar, adding tartar emetic, and setting saucers filled with it about the room. A syrup of sugar and water mixed with black pepper, is also fatal to them. Old-time housekeepers put this preparation in soup-plates and laid brown paper, such as sugar loaves were put up in for sale, on the surface of the trap. They also set snares for flies in tumblers three-quarter full of strong suds, on the tops of which were fitted paper covers—smeared on the underside with molasses. A hole was cut in the middle of the cover through which the foolish creatures crawled to destruction in the hot, soapy water. They were caught by the tumblerful, for window and door-screens had not as yet been heard of by the thrifty women.

Cold green tea, made very strong, left to get cold

on the leaves, strained off, and sweetened inordinately, is as poisonous to flies as to human gossips (who, by the way, always remind me of the most objectionable of the *Musca* tribe—the bluebottle). Set the syrupy mixture around the room in small saucers. It acts in a few minutes upon the winged pests. Human “tabbies” withstand the poison for years.

Try a tea made of quassia, one pint; brown sugar, four ounces; ground pepper, two ounces. Mix together well and put in small shallow dishes. Set these about your living-rooms.

*To keep flies away from horses and other dumb animals:* Pick green walnut leaves (the black walnut) and pour boiling water upon them in quantity sufficient to make a strong decoction. When cold, strain, and sponge the horse or dog with it, letting it dry upon him. Flies will not touch anything thus treated.

Tea, made in the same way of the green leaves of the watermelon, will have the effect of preventing flies from touching whatever is washed with it.

Wild peppermint, and the commoner “smartweed” that disfigures our roadsides, when bruised and rubbed upon the horse’s hide, and in the ears where insects are most troublesome to the worried beast, will secure him from their attack.

When washing windows and floors put a few drops of paraffin in the water, for this will keep away flies, moths, and all insects. Flies will not settle on win-

dows that have been washed in water mixed with a little kerosene.

#### RATS AND MICE

I recommend, first, a first-class mouser, a cat that understands her business and has a double eye to it night and day.

Second—Find the haunts of the “beasties” and with a bellows blow a pungent mixture of unslaked lime and red pepper as far into their runways as it will go.

Third—Catch a rat in a trap, besmear him with liquid tar and let him go. He will make for his home and leave tarry tracks wherever he touches the wall or floor. His brethren will be tarred with the same fur, and tracks, and flee for their lives.

To prevent mice from coming out of the hole they have made nail a little piece of board over the hole, but before doing so put as many tacks in the board as you can, and have the points on the inside next the mouse’s nose. As he tries to find his way through, it hurts him and he keeps away from it.

Sprinkle “tar camphor” about their haunts. They can not abide the smell of camphor and they detest tar. This precaution is especially useful in drawers and boxes that are seldom opened. The busy little beasts will gnaw through the sides of wooden cases of books to get at the leather bindings, of which they are particularly fond. If the tar camphor be sprinkled freely among the books, they will not touch the cases.

## CATERPILLARS, APHIDAE, ROSE BEETLES, ETC.

From a Southern correspondent who is a successful horticulturist, I have what he attests is an effectual safeguard against the inroads of the foe that lays so many of our pleasant places waste in hot, dry seasons.

“Twelve years ago I read of the sulphur cure for the worm pest in an agricultural paper. I had two cherry trees of the Glass cherry variety, that could never be used because of the worms. I followed directions minutely; namely, ‘to bore a hole with a half-inch bit into the tree, slanting downward to the heart, at the second run of sap, which is in August, and fill the hole with powdered sulphur, then plug up tight.’

“In two weeks from the time I did it the small caterpillars dropped from the tree in great numbers and the fruit has been most excellent ever since. The simple remedies are often the most valuable. I may add, for those who do not know, that the second run of sap goes up through the wood, and not as in the spring, between bark and wood.”

In my own orchard I have found much relief from the following application. It should be tried while the fruit buds are forming, and again before the fruit is more than half-grown. It may, also, be used upon ornamental shrubbery, berry vines and climbing plants.

Make a strong decoction of Paris green in hot

water; let it get cold, stir up well and spray leaves, branches and trunks with it—abundantly. Repeat weekly until the worms are destroyed.

For the small green destroyers of rose-trees and blossoms—known to botanist and entomologist as “aphidæ,” to the average gardener as plant-lice, and sometimes as “ant-cows”—I can recommend treatment that has abated the infliction to a satisfactory degree in my own garden.

First—Water the earth about the roots of the afflicted plants with lime solution. Stir into hot water as much slaked lime as will dissolve in the liquid, and cool.

Use this early in the morning before the sun hatches the eggs, secreted in the ground, into larvæ. A semi-weekly soak should, in time, make an end of the evil broods.

Second—Beat into this same lime-water a pint of kerosene for each gallon of the lime-water, and continue to beat until you have an “emulsion.” Apply to the bushes early in the morning, or late in the evening, using a garden syringe.

Third—Water, while the dew is on the roses, with tobacco tea, made over night and left to cool and strengthen until morning.

Fourth—Sift powdered white hellebore over the bushes while the dew lies thick upon them; Scotch snuff, applied in like manner, is spoken highly of by some florists. The plague is sometimes so severe and pertinacious that all of the methods I have in-

licated are needed. Leaves are eaten into lace-work, and the tender buds of the flowers are riddled to the heart by the voracious wretches.

A gardener is responsible for this piece of advice: "If plants are infested with insects, cut a potato in half, scoop out the inside, and place it on the soil under the plants. The insects will gradually assemble in it."

Preventive measures are worth far more than experiments upon the full-grown insect. The lime-water destroys the coming aphid.

#### VERMIN IN THE HAIR

With the multiplication of public schools and our admirable system of compulsory education, bringing into daily association all classes of society—comes an attendant evil to which too little care is given by mothers who have never known of it in their well-ordered households. In the conduct of a domestic Syndicate, extending over a term of a dozen years or so, my thoughts have been directed to the revolting subject by hundreds of letters from distracted mothers, brought face-to-face, and for the first time in their decent lives, with the problem of rooting out vermin from their children's hair. I use the word "rooting" advisedly. The child of ten or twelve years of age, who has been allowed to brush and comb her own hair for a year or more, under the supervision of mother or nurse, having never so much as heard the name of a parasite always mentioned in

whispers by lips polite (when alluded to at all), is ignorant of the danger of sitting in classes with mates whose mothers neglect the simplest details of personal cleanliness. Before warning of the mischief is given by irritation of the tortured scalp, the loathsome squatters are in full possession, and prepared to defend their rights. The horror of the discovery of the occupation is absolute misery to the parent. In her eyes, it is disgrace. Shampooing does not clear out the eggs that stick, like limpets to a rock, upon the pretty hair, and so close to the scalp that the comb does not drag them off. Extermination is a work of time and infinite patience, for the tiny fiends breed fast and live long.

I see, in imagination, the fastidious reader shut down the page upon the loathsome topic. I could tell tales of discoveries made by the parents of children who attend select private schools, and are never suffered to ride in street-cars, that might mitigate the shuddering critic's judgment as to the propriety of putting this part of my chapter into print.

Imprimis, wash the hair and the scalp thoroughly with strong suds made of warm water and tar soap. Add a little ammonia to the suds. Yes! I know it will take the oil and, consequently, the luster out of the luxuriant locks of which you are so innocently proud. The luster may be coaxed back when more harmful things are disposed of. Wash, comb and brush the hair well. Then obey this simple prescription.

Tincture of larkspur will *certainly* destroy vermin



in the hair, and make an end of the "nits" or eggs, that cling to the hair and promise other broods. Be careful to keep the tincture out of the reach of children, as it is a deadly poison, taken internally. Wet the hair and scalp well at bedtime for a week.

Old countrywomen have been aware of the virtues of larkspur as a specific for this affliction for many years. But they made a strong decoction of the blossoms and used it as a wash for the hair. The more potent tincture is a veritable specific, if the use of it be intelligently and faithfully continued.

#### BEDBUGS

They may have a dozen aliases, being even more repulsive to the housemotherly mind (if possible) than the "creepers" just dismissed with a mighty sigh of relief. The murderer of sleep and the thrifty housewife's chiefest dread—is a "red rover," a "nocturnal creeper," a "household pirate," a "B.B." a "double B," and so on and so on, until we strike, with a shock that is a surprise at connecting anything so dignified with the noxious—*Thing!* upon the dictionary name. It is a *Cimex lectularius!* Henceforward, in dealing with this objectionable creature as briefly as is compatible with the part he plays in cottage, villa, city flat, hotel, sleeping-car and steamer—let us for the sake of euphony and peace of imagination, speak of him as the "C.L."

(1) The cheapest, deadliest preparation to every kind of insect life, and the one to be found in every

house at any time, is ordinary kerosene, or coal oil. Get at the C.L. with an atomizer or a feather. Repeat the dose every week for three or four weeks, and the cure will be radical.

(2) Take a cake of white soap or a piece of tallow, and with a knife scrape as much as is needed; then add an ounce of powdered corrosive sublimate, making a smooth paste. After washing the bedstead with cold salt water, wipe dry and apply the paste to every crevice. This will not evaporate or soak into the wood as liquids do, but will prove a ready and deadly feast for all partakers.

(3) There is nothing else on earth that will kill them or destroy their eggs so quickly as gasoline. It cleans everything it touches, and does not harm the finest finish of anything. Apply it with a five-cent brush or a stiff feather. It will run into the smallest cracks and crevices, and one can easily brush the dead eggs, dust, etc., from the same.

(4) Spirits of turpentine applied very freely with a five-cent paint brush to all crevices, edges of baseboards, window and door casings—anywhere that a wise C.L. would seek a hiding-place—will call each and all “to fold their tents like the Arabs and as silently steal away.” If they have already taken lodgings with expectation of board, in furniture, or if you are moving into a building where they may possibly have an earlier claim, just paint every bit of your bedsteads and other furniture without missing any spot, with brush and turpentine, also upholster-

ing and mattresses around edges and tufting. This, after freeing from all dust and dirt.

(5) An ounce, more or less, of formaldehyde, according to the size of the room—may be vaporized in a room. In this case close the doors and windows and pad them tightly. Do not open the room for twenty-four hours, when every living thing in it will have been killed. Formaldehyde will not injure the most delicate fabric. It comes also in candles—so called—but the liquid is the cheaper form.

(6) Fifty cents' worth of quicksilver from the druggist, beaten together with the whites of four eggs. It takes about an hour, and it will form a kind of paste. Buy a small flat brush, such as artists use (you can buy it at a painter's for ten cents) and paint the corners of mattress and springs and all crevices in the bed and room with the paste.

(7) A good mixture is one ounce of corrosive sublimate dissolved in a gallon of gasoline. With a plant-syringe inject the mixture into every crack of walls and floors, beds and other furniture. It will discolor nothing, so you may use it freely upon mattresses, etc. Take one room at a time, and then shut it up for twenty-four hours. Open in broad daylight, admitting the air freely and keeping artificial lights out of the room. Sweep thoroughly and burn the sweepings at once.

These "infallible" preventives and extirpators set down here were made over to me by seven of the best housekeepers of my acquaintance. The moral

of the collection is: If the particular breed of C.L. that makes your life a burden does not yield to one of the "sure-and-certains," try another.

Now, may I offer a bit of my personal experience? The C.L. was imported into my new and dear country cottage within two months after we took proud possession of it, by a new cook who had come direct from one of the maids' boarding-houses that are favorite breeding-grounds of the abhorrent creeper. As I learned later, the woman took advantage of our week's absence on a visit that summer, to remove her pillows and herself to our bedchamber during our sojourn with our friends. A fortnight later, the horrible truth of the C.L.'s occupancy of my bed and the baseboard of our chamber was revealed. I spare the reader details touching the condition of Bridget's own room on the next floor. We ripped up her matting and tumbled it out of the window, sending bed-clothes to keep it company. All were beaten at a safe distance from the house, then left in the blaze of the August sunshine for three days. They were turned every hour and taken in at night. Mattress, bedstead and walls were soaked with a mixture of gasoline and camphor. Half a pound of gum camphor was broken into bits and put into a demijohn. The next morning the demijohn was shaken hard and long. Then, with a syringe, the liquid was injected into every crack of the flooring and above the baseboard. A strip of molding running along the junction of the walls with the ceiling, required and had

earnest attention. The creatures were ambushed there in squads. After saturating the mattress and spraying the bedstead, as I have said, we closed and locked the door. Nobody entered the room for two days. It was opened and aired at the end of the time and a new tenant was installed.

For twenty years not a C.L. was seen there. Then a drunken cook arrived from the city, went to bed within an hour after she alighted from the train, and arose at my stern insistence at ten o'clock the following day, that she might be sent back to town. She had slept in her day clothing, and when the chambermaid stripped off the sheets to air the bed, she found thirteen lively specimens of the C. L. clan between them! The room was treated to another course of gasoline and camphor, with the same result that attended the former experiment.

Yet housewives wonder "how upon earth a C.L. ever finds its way into a decent house!"

Gloss over his name and nature as we may, he is a filthy thing! In our day of much travel and indiscriminate mingling of passengers of all nationalities and habits of life, the price of exemption from the crafty and incredibly prolific C.L. is perpetual vigilance. The canny chambermaid pries warily into the corners and tufts of mattress and pillows daily; pokes an inquisitive hat-pin into the crannies of the iron or brass bedstead tri-weekly, and suns blankets duly in "the good old summer time." It is so much easier to keep "them" out than to *get* them out that she does not grudge the trouble.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SATURDAY

#### FLOORS, WALLS AND THEIR COVERINGS

“When the sun is in the West  
Lazy people work the best.”

Many a housekeeper who has striven conscientiously to keep up with the demands of five working days, is morbidly inclined to apply this morsel of proverbial philosophy to her hard-driven self with a difference as to the time of extra labor. It can not be right—so she reasons—that every Saturday should be so full of “must-be-dones” from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, that she can hardly catch her breath between them.

“If I were a really good manager and wisely systematic,” runs on the self-accusation, “this would not happen every week. Things”—convenient and all-embracing word!—“would be kept in such order that Saturday need not be general cleaning-day.”

For her comfort be it said that this has been the experience of every other housewife since the beginning of Time. I dare say that Eve bestowed unusual

care upon the "happy walks and shades"—the bowers, that

"Touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew,"—

on the day preceding the Sabbath. Throughout all Christendom, the wish prevails that the "day of rest and gladness" shall not be marred for us by the ghost of duty unfulfilled. With some of the workers there is a subconscious desire to sweep and garnish as for the reception of the Lord of the Sabbath.

The ordinary houseworker has a rooted aversion to carrying the labors of this week into the next. One of the ear-marks of the slattern in the eyes of her fellows is the trick of putting off a little ironing, a little scrubbing and half the silver-cleaning until the more convenient season which, like to-morrow, never comes. Duties thus postponed, gather weight like snow-balls. They are as hard to pick up as dropped stitches and have the same effect in the finished whole.

"A time for everything and everything in its time," trots smoothly in harness with the age-worn maxim quoted at the beginning of a former chapter.

In obedience to this, much of the work set down under the head of Saturday, should be done in the "betweenities" of the preceding days. At least two-thirds of it belongs to the house-cleaning period. The grouping of the multifarious ways and means of banishing dirt, and keeping it at bay, is contrived for the sake of convenience in reference.

Have all your implements handy before you begin

your cleaning—brooms and brushes, plenty of scrubbing- and dust-cloths, broom-bags, soap, turpentine and chlorides, or caustic soda, for pipes.

In this important task—one that is surpassed in gravity and in detail by none with which we have heretofore grappled—begin we with

#### CARPETS—THE CARE AND THE CLEANSING THEREOF

*Carpets—the care and the cleansing thereof:* Let me drop a word of motherly counsel to the young housekeeper, who recoils in dismay at the prices asked for velvet, Axminster, and body Brussels, and who faces the inexorable necessity of covering the floors of house, or apartment with “something.”

Do not have oriental rugs or velvet carpets in your parlor and cheap, thin ingrains up-stairs. Better matting for all the rooms—if the floors are of plain deal—and lay down rugs of serviceable filling in solid colors, that harmonize with furniture and wall papers. Buy the filling by the yard; cut it into desired lengths and fringe out the ends. An excellent quality may be bought at one dollar a yard, and, being alike on both sides, it will last twice as long as if it were not reversible.

One of the thousand-and-one minor annoyances for which the housemother—no matter how experienced—is never prepared, is that rugs of single-ply material *will* curl at the corners. She may reverse them daily as punctiliously as she winds her watch, and by night they snarl as viciously as a cross dog raises his



lip at a stranger's approach. Voluminous essays have been printed upon the "total depravity of inanimate things." Our veteran housewife can give points on the subject to the ingenious authors.

To curb the disposition of your "filling" rugs, tack a triangular bit of corrugated rubber, about six inches long, on the sides that make the right angle, under each corner of the rug. Bore several small holes in each corner of the rubber and sew through the holes and carpet. The stitches will be hidden by the pile of the rug, the short stitches being on that side. When the rug becomes faded, rip off the rubber, tack it on the other side and reverse the rug.

#### TO DRY-CLEAN RUGS

Be they cheap or expensive, there is no better way of dry-cleaning rugs at home than this:

First, beat the rugs until no more dust flies from them. Then lay them flat and cover them thickly with powdered fuller's earth. Rub it in with a brush as if you were scouring. Roll up the rugs upon the powder and leave thus for a week before brushing and beating.

After doing the weekly sweeping of carpets, take a dish-pan half full of water, with a cupful of ammonia in it and sweep the wrong way of the nap with it. One can not realize the amount of dirt taken up which otherwise would be ground in. It leaves it fresh-looking and likewise preserves it.

## TO WASH ORIENTAL RUGS

One woman who rejoices in the possession of one dozen "real" oriental and antique rugs, testifies, upon the word of an occidental Christian, that she never sends her treasures to a professional cleaner.

"I clean them at home and fearlessly," she asserts. "Fearlessly, because I have done it every year for ten years. I trust nobody else to handle them, the operation being delicate in certain stages.

"First, beat them thoroughly on both sides; then lay them on a flat surface and go over them with pure soap, warm water and a new scrubbing-brush, scrubbing well but not too roughly if they are old. Sponge off well with several waters, then take a board with a perfectly smooth, rather fine edge (a piece of picture molding is good) and scrape them—drawing it across them until all the water you can squeeze out is gone. Hang them in the air and dry thoroughly. If they have fringe put it into the suds, and squeeze out and it will be of beautiful creamy white."

I have made experiments almost as daring with my own oriental rugs, seven of which have been in active use in my house for a quarter-century, and which promise to wear twice as long. I have sopped up ink with skim milk, and scoured the milk out with ammonia; I have taken out grease with a paste of fuller's earth, and washed out the tracks of muddy boots with warm suds, and the colors are as firm as when I

bought the rugs. So I can believe my friend's account of her heroic practice with hers.

TO SWEEP BRUSSELS, THREE-PLY AND INGRAIN CARPETS

If you use a broom—and this may be necessary about once a week, even when the floor is treated to the sweeper daily—you may scatter tea-leaves, well squeezed, over the floor before beginning the work. Or—wet newspapers, tear them into bits, squeeze out all the water that will come away, and use instead of the leaves.

*Or:* if the carpet be very dirty:—Mix in a big pan coarse cornmeal, three parts—dry salt, one part. Sift several times to incorporate them thoroughly, and strew thickly all over the carpet. Rub it in with a blunt broom, then sweep faithfully, once against the nap, once with it. You will be horrified—yet delighted—at the quantity of dirt that will be rolled up under the vigorous strokes of the broom. If two sweepings do not get all the meal out, try a third.

If you will substitute dry salt alone, for the meal and salt, it will freshen the colors, take out the dirt and kill moths, larvæ and eggs, should any be in the wool.

When sweeping a dusty carpet or rug, you may moisten bran such as you get in the feed-store, with clear, cold water; work with the hands until all is moist, and sprinkle over the carpet. Rub it in with the broom or brush; then sweep it all off. It will bring out the colors finely without raising any dust.

The broom does its work well, if adroitly plied. The woman who understands how to work it to advantage, stands straight, holds the handle firmly, yet not with a fierce grip that tires her and stiffens the broom. She sweeps away from her, and if the whole room is to be swept, works from the corners toward the center of the floor. In so doing, she does not lodge dust in spaces the broom has already visited, but in a compact heap where all of it may be seen and taken up with the dust-pan and brush. The carpet-sweeper is a saving of spine, muscles, strength and time. A good one costs but a couple of dollars or so, and it will last for years.

Sweep out the corners as usual first; then run the sweeper all over the carpet. The labor is much lessened, the carpet is cleaner than if swept with a broom, and very little dust is raised, so there is a saving all around. If rugs are used, a hair broom or old broom, covered with a cloth, is necessary to remove the dust from the floor about them.

Carpets can be cleaned and the color restored by going over occasionally with a broom dipped into warm water to which has been added a little turpentine.

Once in ten days wash the carpet broom in hot soap-suds, shake it well and hang it up where it will dry quickly. A broom thus treated will last very much longer than one which is not washed, and it will clean the carpets much better.

None of the methods in which broom or sweeper is

used will clean the carpet, unless the implement be itself clean. Every time the sweeper is used it should be opened, the fluff, hairs and dust removed and the box brushed on the inside. The two minutes spent in the business will be repaid with interest by the increased efficiency of the sweeper. About once a month, moisten the brushes of the sweeper with gasoline in summer, and in winter with household ammonia. This disinfects the implement, and keeps it free from parasites that might, else, be scattered over the carpet.

Brushes of all sorts last longer and do much better service if they are cared for and kept clean. Household brushes should be washed frequently. A good solution for this purpose is made by dissolving a pound of washing soda in a quart of hot water. This may be bottled and used at any time. When you are ready to use the solution put a tablespoonful into a quart of water and wash your brushes in that. A little soap in addition for the soft brush is a good thing. Rinse in cold water and dry in the open air.

#### TO SCRUB A VERY DIRTY CARPET

It was reserved for the brave housemother of to-day to demonstrate that no carpet—not even nursery ingrain, or a kitchen rag-carpet—need be thrown away because it is, apparently, hopelessly soiled. To leave it as it is would be dangerously unsanitary. It is whole in woof and stanch in warp. Stiff with adhesive dirt, including grease and stickiness, the sight

of it is an offense to the neat-handed mistress and a disgrace to the household. If the colors be tolerably fast the apparently hapless article may be scrubbed into comely usefulness.

Have it taken up and beaten on both sides with stout whips that will get out the loose soil, yet not break the threads. This done, tack it again to the floor. Have ready two pails of clear hot water. In one dissolve one bar of good laundry soap, one that makes a fine lather. If your carpets have many light shades, use one cup of gasoline to a gallon of suds. If the carpet be all wool, use a few spoonfuls of ammonia. With a good stiff scrub-brush scrub the carpet as you would the floor, but do not soak it. Wring your cloth in clean warm water and rinse off the suds; then wipe as dry as possible with a clean cloth. If your carpet is not too wet when you get through the work, it will soon dry if the windows are left open.

The repeated caution against soaking the carpet means much. Wipe as fast as you wash, doing a small space at a time, and changing the cloth with which the wiping is done before it gets wringing wet. The oftener you substitute a dry for a damp cloth, and the more effectually you get the wet out of the carpet, the sooner and the better the job will be done. Let no one tread on the carpet until it is perfectly dry. Do the washing on a hot day when the sun shines brightly and the wind brings no dust into the room.

A second formula for scrubbing carpets comes from a practical and a capable housekeeper.

Two bars of white soap, shaved fine; one gallon of water; four ounces of borax; sixteen ounces of sal-soda; four ounces of puverized fuller's earth. Boil until well mixed; remove from the fire. Add three gallons of water and a half-pint of alcohol.

Apply the solution to the carpet as directed in the foregoing recipe.

This formula is especially useful when the carpet has lain on the floor of dining-room or kitchen, and is badly spotted with grease. The borax, sal-soda and fuller's earth have direct reference to the preponderance of oily matter in the dirt.

#### MATTINGS

*Mattings* are less expensive than carpeting and cooler—perhaps more healthful—for summer wear. When buying matting get three or four yards extra for summer rugs. Cut this into the desired lengths and finish at the edges by pulling out the straws to the depth of about four inches and tying the threads. These rugs protect the matting as well as heavier ones, and are easily cleaned and, best of all, there is no fuzz and nap to wear off and make frequent sweeping a necessity.

If you put matting down, be sure the floors are thoroughly dry before it is laid. Year old matting gains new life by being wiped up with salt and water. Do this not oftener than twice in a season, as the

brine has a tendency to rot the straw, if applied frequently. For other cleaning, when it gathers grime, sprinkle the matting with Indian meal and sweep it thoroughly, sweeping out the meal and the dirt with it.

Widths of matting sewed together with a loose stitch, using carpet thread, make the floor covering look neater and wear better than when staples are used to fasten it down. Even tin tacks, double headed, which are generally preferred to staples, rust in time, especially after the matting has had several washings, leaving ugly marks on the straw. Another advantage in sewing the breadths together is that dust and refuse do not settle as in the cracks left between widths of matting put down in the usual way.

Mattings, as well as carpets, should be lifted yearly in a house which is constantly occupied. The best mattings are the cheapest, since they are reversible, as a rule, thus yielding twice as much service as the poorer and loosely-woven varieties that break into fuzzy splinters after one summer's usage.

#### LINOLEUM AND OIL-CLOTH

Here, again, an article that costs somewhat heavily at first, looks better and lasts so much longer than the next best of its kind that it is wise economy to buy it when one can afford the original outlay. Inlaid linoleum will show no sign of wear for years, if properly cared for, the blocks or lozenges being made separately and set into the fabric like a mosaic. The



treatment of it is the same as that bestowed upon the cheaper oil-cloth when laid upon the floor. Neither of them should be scrubbed. If this course be followed the gloss will quickly be worn off. It should first be carefully washed with a soft brush, to remove all the dust and fluff, and then wiped with a large soft cloth wrung out in tepid (not hot) water. If it is very dirty it may be necessary to use a little soft soap, but this should be done rarely, and on no account must soda be used. When it is dry, wipe over with a cloth or sponge dipped in skim milk. This in winter will brighten and preserve the colors and give it a polish. After sponging with the milk dry with a cloth.

The milk should not be used in warm weather. It attracts flies, no matter how carefully it is dried. In winter, the drying must be thorough, as the dust, in settling upon the dampened oil-cloth, will form a viscid film with the milk. On this account, we never have our kitchen linoleum sponged with milk while we are in city quarters. The direful and unescapable "blacks" that sift between window-sashes and keyholes give a dingy complexion to curtains and floor-coverings, be the housewifely watch never so vigilant.

Use a soft, fine cloth in wiping oil-cloth and linoleum. A coarse, rough piece of osnaburg, or bur-lap, will, in time, scratch the polished surface and injure it. Save old crash towels and other linens for the purpose.

## PAINTED FLOORS

Housewives are not agreed as to the use of cold or of lukewarm water in cleaning paint. There is but one opinion among experienced cleaners as to the effect of hot water upon floors and walls coated with paint, with varnish, or with oil. It softens and dims paint; takes off varnish, leaving a sticky residuum, and transforms an oiled floor into a dirty surface that calls dismally for deteratives.

Says one housewife: "When cleaning paint, use simple cold water with a sponge or woolen cloth, wiping off with a dry cloth, and you will be surprised to see how quickly you will have to change the water. I have used this method for three years and could not be induced to go back to warm water."

On the other hand a woman who has kept house as long, and as successfully, maintains that warm water does the work better and in less time. I let her speak for herself and for her theory:

"We have just cleaned our kitchen walls, which are painted, and are so well pleased with the result that I would like others to know how we did it. To the one ordinary scrubbing-pail about two-thirds full of warm water we added a heaping teaspoonful of baking soda (saleratus) and washed the walls with a sponge, rinsed with clear warm water and wiped dry with a cotton cloth.

"The walls look as fresh and clear as though freshly painted. The soda does not injure the paint

in the least and this way is much easier than any I ever tried before. It is also good for painted wood-work. I used about a pound of saleratus for our kitchen walls and woodwork, for I changed the water quite often—it was so soiled.”

Number three puts in her oar with a short, strong stroke:

“Paint should be cleaned with a sponge and lukewarm water to which a little ammonia is added. Wipe dry with a clean cloth.”

Number four is as laconic:

“Scrub with washing soda and cold water, taking a small area at a time, and wiping dry before going on to the next.”

After reading these and dozens of other opinions based upon experience, I am not inclined to alter my own belief and practice. We wipe up our painted area and veranda floors with lukewarm water to which has been added a little kerosene. The warmth of the water keeps the oil thin, and the kerosene takes up the dirt after a manner peculiar to itself, while it brightens rather than dulls the polish.

#### PAINTED WALLS

Painted walls may be treated in the same way, changing the contents of the pail often. You can not have clean paint if it be washed with muddy water. Sweep the floor for the like reason before wetting it. Apropos of sweeping—the integrity of the paint would be maintained much longer if a hair-broom

were used instead of the common straw besom. The latter scratches if plied diligently. For many years I have had hardwood and painted floors swept with brooms done up in red or gray flannel petticoats. A bag of the size required to envelop the broom is sewed up on three sides and hemmed at the top. Into this hem a stout tape is run and when the broom is in the bag, the string is drawn, and tied about the handle to hold the bag in place. The flannel wears out in time, but the paint and varnish hold their own, and coarse red flannel is cheap. Sometimes I have substituted lead-colored Canton flannel for the flannel, with the fuzzy side out. It sweeps clean, but when the fluff wears off the bag is threadbare and comparatively useless. Don't make the mistake of cleaning paint with sand soap. It scratches the paint; the other soap will do the work.

#### OILED AND HARD-WOOD FLOORS

A notable New England housewife (and there are no more intelligent homemakers the world over than our New England dames) has generously written down for our use the story of her experience with a hard-wood floor of domestic manufacture.

“In most households the easiest way to care for the floors is a problem. For the benefit of any one who will try my way I gladly give my recipe. While the expense is something at the start, it is a joy undescribed. Any man handy with nails can lay a floor over an old one.

“My husband purchased hard pine tongued and grooved boards, laying them the long way of the room. Jam the boards together as you nail, to close the cracks. Be sure to use perfectly dry stock. Use slim wire nails and ‘blind nail’ securely down. When all is done, sweep two or three times, and if there are any spots do not attempt to do any washing, as water spoils the whole effect of the finish.

“Now, make a swab of old cloth and go all over the surface, wetting every part with linseed oil (raw). Let this stand all night. Repeat the second night. In a few days go over the whole with common lamp oil, wiping it off very much as you would with water if washing. Wipe with a soft cloth.

“Do this work on a sunny morning, leaving doors and windows open for several hours. The floor, without the lamp-oil finish, will show spots, but when finished in this way no spot can be found, except, of course, molasses or some sugary mixture which seldom finds its way to the floor. Spots of this kind can be removed with warm suds.

“My husband laid my kitchen floor two years ago, and it looks as good as the day it was done, and no hard work either. When we take into consideration that we have no back hall, and there is a perpetual grind of sand and dirt, it is wonderful how well our floor always looks with so little care.”

It is not every John who can handle a carpenter's tools so deftly as our New Englander's obliging husband. But in every neighborhood there are carpen-

ters who can work by the directions here laid down. We are under obligations to the housewife for telling us how to care for the oiled floor after it is laid.

I think she would do well to avail herself of the inestimable kerosene in cleaning the oiled boards. This is the most approved method of treating a floor that has been oiled, not varnished. Water that is just blood-warm is mixed with a little kerosene—say a cupful to a gallon of water. A cloth is wrung out in this and the floor is wiped with it—neither scrubbed nor swabbed. Change the water frequently.

When oiling floors, use a woolen cloth rather than a brush. If the oil is thoroughly rubbed in with the cloth the result will be much more satisfactory than when put on with a brush. The same is true in staining floors, and in this case the stain should be rubbed into the wood with one cloth and then rubbed off with another.

Grained and varnished imitations of hard wood are best cleaned by rubbing well with cloths wrung out in borax soap-suds. Afterward, they should be rubbed with a flannel barely moistened with kerosene. If there is too much kerosene it will dissolve and blur the colors.

If you would prefer a stained to a painted floor, try the recipe which follows:

If there be traces of the old paint or varnish on the boards, scrub thoroughly with warm water and soda to get every bit of it out of the grain of the wood.

Then go over the floor with borax water. Finally, wash with clear cold water and let it dry perfectly. When completely dry, take one gallon of boiled linseed oil, best quality, and two heaping tablespoonfuls of burnt umber. Heat the oil hot in an iron kettle. Then stir in the finely powdered umber, and with a paint-brush apply it as hot as you can. When dry, the floor does not need scrubbing. A mop wrung out of warm water will clean it nicely.

The amount of oil and umber given will supply two coats for a floor fourteen to sixteen feet square. For one coat take about half the amount. Total cost of the two coats, about ninety cents.

In my country house I have had the use of hard-wood floors for thirty-odd years. They are handsomer now than when they were laid. Once a year they are put in perfect order by a painter who understands what we want and how to do it. For the next six months they have constant and severe wear, with no protection except the rugs that lie in the most exposed sections of the rooms. They are never washed, nor is a drop of kerosene allowed to touch them. The one idea of the housemaid of commerce, when set to clean a finely polished hard-wood floor, is to fetch the oil-can. If forbidden to do this violence to the shining surface, she resorts to the practice I have indicated in the care of oiled floors. Only, she souses the cloth in the pail and dashes the oily liquid over the boards with a free and flowing hand.

Curb her zeal—so far short of being according to





knowledge—and your own temper (if possible). A polished hard-wood floor should be dusted and never scoured. Do not so much as wipe it with a dampened cloth. The dust is removed with a petticoated broom, and the corners of the room are investigated with a soft dry cloth. If there are foot marks which will not yield to the dry cloth, dampen it very slightly with cold water, and erase that one spot. Once a fortnight, have everything taken out of the room and wipe the floor with dusters made of old silk, or fine muslin—or best of all—with chamois skins.

If you can not have the services of a competent painter, try one of these formulas for the requisite “polish.”

Melt together in a bowl set in hot water half a pint of turpentine, two and one-half ounces of powdered resin, three-quarters of a pound of beeswax. Do not let these ingredients come in contact with fire while melting, as they are all inflammable. When melted apply to the floors with a soft cloth and polish with a brush.

The second recipe was given to me by the aforesaid painter who knows his trade and my wants:

A good furniture and floor polish is made by mixing well together two parts of crude linseed oil and one of turpentine, adding a tablespoonful of salt to the gallon. Apply with soft flannel; rub in faithfully; throw a cloth over it so as to exclude dust, and three hours later polish with clean chamois skin.

A housewife, who has made trial of the latter for-

mula and expresses herself as well pleased therewith—contributes this note to her testimonial:

“Once a week, after all the dusting is finished, I wipe my polished stairs and floors with an old cotton cloth, on which has been poured a very small quantity of floor oil—just enough to moisten the cloth and take up the dust. It also helps to restore the gloss, which kerosene and some other oils remove or deaden. Remember to use as small a quantity as possible, or the floor will be oily and sticky; and do the dusting first, or it will look just as bad as ever when it is finished. One quart of the oil has lasted me nearly two years.”

#### VARNISHED AND WAXED FLOORS

Good floor varnish, like outside varnish, never washes off. Give the floor a couple of coats of good varnish, and then wax it and keep it rubbed up with an oily rag. A good oil for rubbing it with may be made from linseed oil, one pint; turps, and about one and one-half gill of Japan. Mix them all together, rub on the floor with a woolen rag and wipe them off dry. This makes a fine floor and furniture polish, if you don't let the the floor go too far before you use it.

In a good many places where there are varnished floors the owners keep them waxed when they begin to look shabby.

Varnished floors are not made to be washed with soap and water.

Polish, where a bright surface is desired: Half a pint of alcohol, half an ounce, each, of resin and shellac powdered. Mix these with the alcohol, then add half a pint of linseed oil. Shake thoroughly before using.

*A good floor wax:* Melt a scant half-pound of beeswax; set in a pan of hot water; add, gradually, stirring well, a quart of turpentine, and when mixed, a half-cupful of ammonia. Cover the saucepan containing it closely, and set the outer vessel of hot water at the back of the stove to heat for ten minutes. Apply warm with a piece of flannel, and polish with a rough cloth.

Paint stains on a floor may be scoured off by soaking them for a short time in benzine or turpentine, and then rubbing them with emery paper or a little pulverized pumice stone applied with a damp cloth.

Clean flannel dipped in paraffin oil will satisfactorily remove marks on polished or painted wood if rubbed on for a few minutes. Wipe with a clean cloth wrung from hot water to remove the odor.

From the care of floors we rise by a natural transition—to

#### WALLS

Clean spots on kalsomine with white chalk, blending the edges with the surrounding surface by rubbing gently with a clean, dry sponge. Painted walls may be washed with lukewarm suds, or cleaned with a cloth wrung out in kerosene. For hard-finished walls use dry bread as you would upon a papered sur-

face, rubbing always in one direction and changing the bread frequently.

#### TO CLEAN WALL-PAPER

Papered walls should be freely rubbed with pieces of stale bread, dirty marks receiving special attention, and afterward rubbed with a soft cotton duster.

If an entire room is to be cleaned, or if a whole breadth of paper is badly grimed, and you have not been far-sighted enough to have laid aside in trunk or closet an extra roll to match each room, you may clean the room after this fashion:

Buy five cents' worth of oil of sassafras, five cents' worth of glycerin, five cents' worth of blue-stone; pour on this two quarts of boiling water; stir in flour, then knead like bread. Take a piece the size of a coffee-cup, rub the paper by down strokes only; after each stroke mix or lap the dough before making the next. Go on in this way until the piece of dough is soiled all through. Then take another piece and proceed as before. This is a very valuable recipe.

But a simpler, and often as efficient cleanser is made of buckwheat dough, mixed stiff with hot water, without shortening or salt. Knead it until it is lukewarm, break into handfuls, and use as in the more elaborate recipe. Do the work with patience and care, and the result will reward you. If carelessly performed, you will have a streaked surface.

*To remove grease from wall-paper:* Rub with

chalk, and leave it on for a day. Then lay blotting paper upon the chalk, and press a warm iron upon it. Or, use fuller's earth in the same way.

*Or:* Rub the spot over once or twice with a piece of flannel dampened with alcohol. Do not have the flannel too wet, or it will blister the paper.

*To remove paper from a wall:* Since the paperer will charge you for the time it takes him to strip the walls and make ready for the new covering, it is an economical measure to have the surface prepared for direct operations before he comes. Have at hand plenty of warm, soft water, and several large sponges. Sponge a yard or two of the paper until it is soaked and blistered. Then strip it from its weakened hold. Proceed thus until the wall is bare. Wash faithfully with suds of warm water and borax soap; lastly, rinse and wipe dry. Do this a day or two before the arrival of the workman who is primed with charges at the rate of four dollars per day "for time."

*Another way:* With a paste brush go over all the paper to be removed, with paste, missing not one inch, and the paper will come off in one-tenth of the time it will with water. The secret lies in the fact that the paste keeps the paper damp and loosens it completely.

Holes in walls can be stopped with plaster of Paris, but mix this with vinegar instead of water, or it will harden so quickly that it will be difficult to manipulate.

## WHITEWASH

Whitewash, while out of vogue in the living-rooms, is always in requisition in cellars and outhouses. It plays an honorable part in the work of sanitation everywhere. I offer a recipe which is in high repute under the title of:

*Government whitewash:* Slake half a bushel of lime with boiling water; cover the process to keep in steam; strain the liquid through a fine sieve or strainer, and add to it one peck of salt, previously dissolved in warm water; three pounds of ground rice, boiled to a thin paste and stirred in while hot; half a pound of Spanish whiting, and one of glue, previously dissolved by soaking in cold water, and then hanging over a slow fire in a small pot hung in a larger one, filled with water. Add five gallons of hot water to the mixture, stir well, and let it stand a few days covered from the dirt. It should be applied hot, for which purpose it can be kept in a kettle or portable furnace.

A pint of this wash mixture, if properly applied, will cover one square yard. Coloring matter may be added as desired. For cream color add yellow ochre; for fawn, add, proportionately, four pounds of umber to one pound of Indian red and one pound of common lampblack; for common stone color, add, proportionately, four pounds of raw umber to two pounds of lampblack.

The name is not an empty boast. The whitewash,

thus compounded, is in general use upon Government buildings.

The painted walls of a bath-room should be washed with a sponge dipped in common baking soda—then sponged again in clear warm water. The painted walls of a kitchen are harder to wash satisfactorily, but first use the baking or bicarbonate of soda, afterward sponging with soap and water. Soda cleanses white paint or enamel most satisfactorily.

#### BURLAPS

As a wall-covering burlap is growing into favor, particularly for hall and the walls of staircases. It is objected to by many people on account of the expense. They do not, however, take this advantage into consideration: it may be tinted or re-colored without removing from the walls, either a dull or a glazed finish being easily put on, making it quite as good as new. The first cost of burlap exceeds that of paper of the same general effect, but its wearing qualities make it less expensive in the end.

All the care it requires is brushing every few days to rid the threads of dust and "blacks." If of good quality it holds the color a long time and may be renewed indefinitely as I have remarked.

#### TILES

In bath-room and hall tiles have superseded linoleum in a majority of modern houses of the better class, and in many apartments suitable for tenants

of moderate means. They are pretty, easily kept clean and durable.

If they become spotted wash them over with lemon-juice and leave for fifteen minutes, then rub them up with a soft cloth. It is much better never to wash tiles, but simply rub them over with a damp cloth and then with skim milk or milk and water. If, however, they are unglazed and very dirty, dip a damp flannel in very fine clean sand and clean them with this, using as little water as possible and then polish with milk as before.

Tiles in which real fireplaces are set, are liable to suffer from smoke and soot. Clean them with flannel wrung out in kerosene, taking the time for the task when the hearth and chimney are cold. Wash, then, with milk and wipe with a soft linen.

#### GILDING

Gilding on chandeliers and curtain-rods will show the effect of dust, dampness and the presence of flies, after a few months. Do not make the mistake of treating them as you would brass or ornaments or utensils.

Fly marks and general griminess may be removed from gilding by dipping a small piece of cotton wool in gin, and with it rubbing the soiled parts gently. The cotton wool should be squeezed before it is applied to the gilding, for this must not be made really wet, and any damp on it should be dried as soon as the marks have been removed.



Cover grease spots on wood or stone with flour, starch or powdered chalk, which will absorb the grease. Cold water thrown on grease as soon as it is spilled will harden it; the greater part may then be scraped off.

Hot water which has been poured over tea leaves, allowed to stand half an hour and then strained is excellent for use in cleaning varnished paint.

## CHAPTER XVI

SATURDAY (*Continued*)

WINDOWS AND FURNITURE

WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

Choose a cloudy day for washing windows, or if the sun shine, do not wet the windows while the rays fall on them. Some housewives insist that they "want to see the dirt if it is there," and after hours spent in polishing, wonder that the glass is streaked. The reason is plain. The sun dries the moisture unequally before the cloth can take it up.

Add ammonia—a tablespoonful to the gallon—and twice as much kerosene, to lukewarm water. Stir well and dip a soft linen or old cotton cloth, or a soft sponge, into the mixture. With it wash each pane separately, drying with another cloth and paying particular attention to the corners. Before leaving the pane, polish with a wad of newspaper, rubbed between the hands until all stiffness is taken out of it. Proceed in this way until the whole window is cleaned. As will be seen at once, you must clean the upper part of the window first, or the process will be interfered with by drippings from above. As a preliminary

step, in this as in other cleanings, the loose dust must be wiped off before the panes are wet. Go over the glass with a bit of old silk, if you have it, or with a cheese-cloth duster.

*Diamond panes in lattice windows:* The modern villa is almost sure to have a few windows thus filled. Sometimes they are of colored, sometimes of ground glass. They are more troublesome to get clean and to keep clean than plate-glass, because it is a "fincial" job.

Stir a little kerosene into tepid water. Rub pieces of newspaper soft, and soak in this; squeeze each almost dry and clean the "diamonds." Wipe at once with old linen. With other newspaper, rubbed between the hands and not wet, polish the glass.

Professional window washers do not wash them at all. After rubbing off the dust and grime, they cover the glass with a thin paste of whiting and household ammonia, leaving it on for an hour or more, then polishing with old newspapers. Printer's ink has something to do with the cleansing qualities of the paper.

*Another way:* Clean windows with a flannel dipped in paraffin and polish with a clean duster. It imparts a fine polish.

*To remove paint from glass:* A woolen cloth dipped in household ammonia will do it almost instantly with a little brisk rubbing. If the paint be hard and dry—swab with a sponge dipped in alcohol and turpentine until it cracks and scales off.

*To keep windows free from frost:* For this formula I am indebted to a shop-keeper who has made trial of it when the frost would otherwise have dimmed his show windows into the similitude of ground glass.

“Bore a small hole—say one-half inch—in the framework directly below, and another directly above the plate glass; if a large or a wide window, two holes would be expedient both top and bottom. It can be seen that these holes give free circulation, making the temperature of the glass more nearly equal inside and out. At the same time it does not change the temperature of the store or room to any appreciable degree. If this is properly done, the show windows will be perfectly clear.

“Should the above be impracticable for any reason, the following is good: Alcohol rubbed on the glass at frequent intervals serves a double purpose by keeping away frost and keeping windows clean. It may be diluted with water, if the operator so desires.

“For ‘steam’ or windows blurred with dampness, place a cigar box of lime immediately under the glass and it will absorb the dampness.”

If glycerin be diluted with water and rubbed on the glass, the frost will not settle upon it.

*Mirrors:* For taking finger marks from looking-glasses, put a few drops of ammonia on a moist rag and rub the blurs with it. Mirrors which are fly-

specked should be washed with cold water and then polished with a chamois dipped in alcohol.

*To polish a dim mirror:* Mirrors kept in rooms to which light and air are seldom admitted, contract a film which is not easily taken off with soap and water. It is a mistake to suppose that it goes deeper than the surface of the glass, although the usual methods of cleansing do not brighten the latter. Keep for this purpose a piece of sponge, a cloth and a silk handkerchief, all entirely free from dirt, as the least grit will scratch the fine surface of the glass. First, sponge it with a little spirits of wine, or gin and water, to clean off all spots; then dust over it powdered blue tied in muslin, rub it lightly and quickly with the cloth, and finish by rubbing with the silk handkerchief. Be careful not to rub the edges of the frame.

*A home-made re-silver for a mirror:* Dampness, excessive heat, much moving and jostling sometimes injure the amalgam which makes the value of a mirror. If you are within reach of a professional framer, gilder and mirror-renewer (the crafts are frequently combined in one man) and the glass be large, your wisest plan is to send it to him. Small glasses may be re-backed at home by one who is deft of hand, but it is a delicate piece of business.

Pour upon a sheet of tinfoil about three drams of quicksilver to the square foot of foil. Rub smartly with a piece of buckskin until the foil becomes bril-

liant. Lay the glass upon a flat table, face downward; place the foil upon the damaged portion of the glass; lay a sheet of paper over the foil and place upon it a block of wood or a piece of marble with a perfectly flat surface; put upon it sufficient weight to press it down tightly; let it remain in this position a few hours. The foil will adhere to the glass.

#### TO CLEAN POLISHED FURNITURE

An upholsterer, in a moment of confidence, let me into his secret of cleaning a piano which had gathered a purplish mist that obscured the polish in many places and defied the usual methods of dusting and rubbing. It looked slight but it was so obstinate that I called in professional advice. The man was as honest as he was skilful, and I was a good customer. He asked for a bowl of lukewarm water and white soap, a sponge and a chamois skin and a soft linen towel. Then he let me see him work. He mixed a very little soap—a mere dash—with the water, wrung out the sponge in it and washed a space about a foot square on the defaced case. This he wiped quickly with the chamois skin wrung out hard in the same water. Finally, he polished it dry with the soft linen, and went on with the next twelve inches.

“A trick of the trade!” he explained. “Generally, it is done within closed doors. Very simple, you see, but it must be well done—and quickly.”

That was thirty years ago. I have cleaned pianos and other highly polished furniture in that way and

in no other way ever since. The annoying purplish film *will* collect upon the face of new furniture. The absence of this is one of the hall-marks of the genuine antique. No matter how excellent the imitation, the appearance of the faint mauve veil condemns it for the connoisseur.

Smears, spots and superficial scratches may be effectively treated with a piece of old flannel wrung out nearly dry in kerosene.

*White spots on furniture*, left by hot water, or hot dishes, or sharp acids, are one of the common blemishes of polished and oiled woods.

Try, first, wood alcohol, rubbing it in well. Should a whitish mark remain, wet a bit of flannel with a bit of camphorated oil—just such as you would use upon your baby's sore throat—and rub the spot faithfully with it until it is absorbed. Then cover the spots with olive oil, leaving it on all night. In the morning rub the oil well in. This will remove scratches and slight indentations. Use asbestos mats in future under hot dishes and plates. You may buy them with washable covers, more or less ornamental.

An equal mixture of turpentine and linseed oil will remove white marks on furniture caused by water.

*Home-made furniture polish:* (1) Take a tablespoonful of sweet oil, the same of turpentine, a gill of vinegar and the white of one egg. Place in a bottle and shake until thoroughly blended, which will be in about five minutes. Apply in the usual manner.

(2) For shiny "polishing" wood furniture, add a few drops of sweet oil to shellac varnish on ball and rub over a small space at a time till it "knacks" and shines. A little experience will show you.

(3) For "wax finish" dissolve thinly shaved paraffin in rather hot turpentine and polish.

(4) If you want varnish to "stay" smooth, apply it very thin (thin down with wood alcohol or with turpentine). Then put the article in a closet, if possible, or in a warm room without draft, as the more slowly the varnish dries the longer it will stay smooth. Then rub down with fine sand or emery paper until the surface is perfectly smooth. Apply another thin coat. Dry slowly again. Apply a third coat in the same way. This is a little more trouble, but thus you can get almost a piano finish. The best varnish for furniture is thinned "marine" varnish—or use bleached shellac varnish, in wood alcohol or grain alcohol.

The quartette of "helps" just set down may be depended upon as trustworthy, since I have them from an eminent chemist who has been a valiant and true co-worker with me for years in what I have been permitted to do for American households. I can not pass his contributions over to others without a grateful word.

*Waxed tables:* Get a quarter of a pound of beeswax (the unbleached will do) and have ready a piece of carpet a quarter of a yard square, lined with a piece of cloth and padded. Hold the wax before a



fire, and as it melts coat the cloth well with it, and while yet warm begin to rub the table briskly. Rub for a quarter of an hour.

Dining and hall tables were rubbed by the hour with this compound in the very lang syne. One of my earliest recollections is of being lulled into a delicious morning doze, while the sky was still pink with the sunrise, by the steady rub! rub! rub! of the waxed cloth upon oaken floors and mahogany tables downstairs. The wax did much, but in the opinion of the Virginia housemother, "elbow-grease" did more.

Clean hard wood with a flannel wet in turpentine and rub afterward lightly with boiled linseed-oil. Take off spots with fine sand mixed in oil. Apply it with a leather and rub with clean leather afterward to bring back the polish.

So says one who uses solid woods, and no veneer. Instead of sand I should recommend the use of a very fine emery cloth for spots that will not readily yield to the oil.

#### OIL PAINTINGS AND GILT FRAMES

Again I say, that if the article that needs cleaning be very valuable, it is better not to try to renovate it at home. I have seen really handsome oil portraits irretrievably injured by scrubbing at the hands of a dirt-hating housemaid. Never brush the painting with a stiff broom or whisk. Each application leaves a tiny scratch, and habitual use of the brush will

roughen the surface, destroy the varnish, and dull the colors.

Oil paintings may be cleaned by rubbing with a cut raw potato. Rub gently with a circular movement, and sponge off the dirt with tepid water. Dry with a very soft cloth, or better still, a silk handkerchief. This method is good for all oil paintings, but care must be taken not to wet the back of the canvas.

Unless you have had some experience in varnishing do not undertake this part of the restoration yourself. Let each movement be exceedingly gentle. If the painting be unequivocally soiled and blackened superficially with smoke and dust, content yourself with wiping it off with the damp cloth. The cut potato will bring away more dirt, and if used cautiously, can do no harm.

If the canvas be not grievously begrimed, wipe it off with a clean, soft cloth wet with weak suds, drying it at once. Then dampen the cloth in suds to which has been added a little kerosene. This process will get off the dust and grime. If the painting be valuable, do not meddle further with it. Send it to a restorer of paintings and have it put in good order.

Like caution must be exercised in treating gilded frames that have lost luster and are scaling off in spots. There are patent gilding fluids highly praised by the makers and venders. I am assured by domestic furniture-tinkers that battered and rusty gildings may be made to look passable by one or all of the following applications:

(1) To clean or brighten gilt frames boil four or five onions; add sufficient sulphur to give a yellow color. Strain. Wash with the liquid when cold.

(2) A little gold paint to touch up the worn patches, and then a washing with a paste made of the whites of three eggs beaten up with one ounce of baking soda.

(3) Buy from a paint dealer ten cents' worth of dry bronze powder and a like amount of banana oil. Mix, as you need it, to the consistency of cream. Do not mix more than you need, as it dries up when left standing. It is much cheaper and better than the gilt mixed with benzine bought in bottles.

The amateur gilder should try this, and another home-made preparation, upon a bit of wood before applying it to the frame, and learn from experience the right degree of coloring and consistency.

(4) If the frame be soiled, wipe with a soft cloth wet with strong onion tea. Should this fail, try a flannel wrung out in kerosene. If the spot be dark and deep, have a gilder cover it with gold leaf.

Here is a borrowed suggestion as to making the nails from which pictures are suspended "fast in a sure place."

Often in putting up heavy pictures that are hung from a screw in the wall rather than from the picture molding, the greatest difficulty is experienced in getting the screw to fasten securely in the plaster. This is a simple remedy.

The hole made by the screw is enlarged and the

edges of the plaster are thoroughly moistened with water. Then the space is filled with plaster of Paris and the screw pressed into the soft plaster. When the plaster becomes hardened the screw will be found to hold very firmly.

#### LEATHER-COVERED FURNITURE

When but slightly soiled by daily wear, the contact of weary heads upon the backs, and of childish fingers on arms and seats, your library furniture may be cleansed without injury by a simple process, and without calling in professional aid.

Wring out a flannel cloth in neat's-foot oil. You may buy it from any harness-maker. Rub the leather well with this, throw a sheet over it to exclude dust and leave it thus for several hours to let the oil sink into the leather. Wipe and polish with chamois skin.

The formulæ which succeed this are for badly-rubbed and faded leather.

(1) Turpentine and beeswax melted to the consistency of thick cream make a fine polish for leather upholstered furniture.

(2) To restore the leather covers of chairs to their original luster, wet the leather first with a little hot milk. Then, after melting beeswax in hot water, add to it enough turpentine to give it the consistency of a thin cream. Put this mixture on the leather covers and polish them with a soft cloth.

(3) To clean and polish the leather coverings of

chairs, etc., mix together equal parts of vinegar and linseed-oil, apply very sparingly with a piece of flannel and polish with a soft cloth. The same treatment is excellent for French polished furniture, but it must be remembered that the vinegar and oil mixture is to be applied sparingly and that "elbow grease" is to be used generously.

(4) Leather-covered chairs may be cleaned by mixing together half a pound, each, of French chalk and fuller's earth, two ounces of powdered starch and one ounce of yellow ochre. Wet with boiling water until a thin paste is made and add a tablespoonful of sweet oil. When it is cold spread on the leather and let it remain until perfectly dry. Then brush it off, removing every particle of the mixture, and polish the leather with melted wax and turpentine, using four ounces of wax to a gill of turpentine. The leather may be darkened, if so desired, by adding a little oil to the wax.

(5) Carefully dust the leather, then wash with warm water, being particular to remove all soiled spots and dirt.

Wipe dry and then wipe over with a black cloth dipped into beaten white of egg mixed with its bulk of warm water.

(6) Flaxseed water is good for cleaning leather upholstered furniture. Pour half a cupful of boiling water over two tablespoonfuls of flaxseed and bring to the boiling point. Strain, and when cool apply with a cloth to the leather.

## MATTRESSES, DOWN DUVETS, ETC.

Not one housewife in fifty is alive to the necessity of watching over the well-being of the mattresses which have superseded the unsanitary, clumsy, and uncomfortable feather beds of our Dutch and English forebears. Necessity—if one would keep the mattress in good looks and prolong its natural period of usefulness. I take it for granted that your mattress is in two sections. The object of making it in this form is two-fold. The wear is equally distributed, and the mattress is more easily handled by one pair of arms—and that pair a woman's. Turn it over and around daily, and be on the lookout for rips and breaks. Watch for the working loose of tufts;—nothing else so tends to get a mattress out of shape and order as letting this go unheeded. If it is permanently neglected, the mattress must soon be made over.

Beat the mattress lightly with a furniture paddle once a week, and with a pointed brush get the dust and fluff out of the tufts.

A housewife who looks well to the ways of her bedroom and slights no other part of a large house, advises her not very strong sister to sew with a stout thread at regular intervals loops of wide tape, doubled, to the bindings of the seams.

She represents that they help with the daily turning, and add to the lasting qualities as well. Pulling at the sides of a mattress to get a firm hold may re-

sult in strained ticking and in binding dragged away from the seams. It is not a steady pull that hurts, but the false strain caused by taking hold of a surface which doesn't yield a hand-hold.

If the mattress be much soiled and is yet too sound without and within for you to think of going to the expense of having it made over, clean it at home.

On a clear, hot day scrub the soiled parts with a stiff brush and hot soap-suds and borax. Scour fast and hard; then go over it with a dry brush and powdered borax, rubbing it in well. Leave the mattress to dry in the sun. When quite dry, brush off the powder.

If spotted during illness by medicine, food or blood, make a stiff paste of corn-starch and glycerin and cover the stains with it. Apply a paste of fuller's earth to grease spots. Leave both kinds of paste on for twenty-four hours; brush out the powder; wash the soiled places with borax soap and renew the paste.

#### CLEANING FEATHER PILLOWS

A German *Hausfrau* commends this way of handling feather cushions or pillows:

“Sew together two sheets of light material. Put into this bag the contents of one pillow, or enough to be easily handled in a wash-tub or machine. Have good, warm soap-suds; then put in your bagged feathers. Rub and shake as you would any piece of soiled goods. Wring out first in clear hot water, then in cold; lastly, wring out as dry as possible.

Stretch your clothes-line back and forth about eight inches apart, forming a bridge, where the sun and wind strike freely. Lay your feather bag over the line, and during the day keep turning and shaking now and then. If not dry the first day, take into the house over night and repeat next day. When almost dry beat lightly. When dry the feathers will puff up and fill the bag. In the meantime have your pillow cases washed, and the feathers are now ready to go back into them, sweet and clean."

A capable New England woman contributes what appears at the first reading, strenuous treatment:

"Feather pillows may be freshened and the feathers be made light by placing them out of doors in a clean spot during a hard rain. Let them be thoroughly wet and then hang in a warm place to dry. Spots on the pillow cover may be removed with a paste of water and fuller's earth. Another way to clean the feathers is to place them in a cheese-cloth bag and wash them in warm, soapy water, followed by several rinsings in clear water."

The best renovator of feathers of which I have any personal knowledge is the sober, old-fashioned method of sunning them. Turn them out of the tick upon a clean sheet spread on the dry grass. If you have not access to turf, the tin roof of a house is the next best thing. Do this on a still, hot day, so that the feathers will not fly about. Stir them up well, and lay over them a square of light netting. Visit the feathers hourly while the sunshine lasts, and



shake and turn them faithfully. The sun and air will do the rest. Take the feathers in before the dew falls, bringing the edges of sheet and netting together into a bag. If you have a vacant room or attic where they can be spread out at night, the good work will go on all night. A second day's sunning will complete it, if these directions be obeyed. The feathers will be odorless and fluffy.

A musty or rancid odor in a feather pillow is intolerably disagreeable, besides being excessively unwholesome. Before you decide to throw the offending member into the garbage-cart, or upon the manure heap, try laying it upon the damp ground all day long for a week, turning it hourly. The sweet, warm, damp earth is the best of disinfectants.

*To wash down duvets and comfortables:* It is my privilege to lay before my readers several well-authenticated ways of washing the duvets without which no bedroom may be considered well-furnished in our luxurious age.

(1) To clean a comforter that is not badly soiled, select a hot, windy day, put up a strong clothes-line and pin the comforter on single, with clothes-pins about five inches apart. Prop it up well and then, without further ceremony, turn the hose on it. The water, forcing through the cotton, will carry with it every bit of dust and dirt. When the comforter is dry, it will be as fluffy and clean as when first made. Do not wring or squeeze. It is the wringing that mats the cotton and makes it hard. When mine are

soiled around the edges, I take a soft brush, warm water and soap and scrub the edges before giving the shower-bath. Down puffs and pillows may be cleaned in the same way.

(2) Make a suds of any good soap and plunge the down quilt into it fearlessly. It will look wretched and will probably need plenty of rubbing and several waters, after which it must be hung in the air—not in the sun if the colors are delicate—for several days. It should, of course, be brought in at night and it will need much shaking and loosening of the down, which will settle in the corners, but in the end, if carefully done, it will look just like new.

(3) Down quilts and small feather or down pillows which have become soiled can be washed at home with very little trouble or expense. First, choose a good day, for the drying is half the battle, and you need plenty of sunshine and a gentle wind. Use lukewarm water and one of the many pure soaps that are in the market just now and avoid a wash-board. It will not be of any help and it will certainly pull your quilt or pillow out of shape. Rub thoroughly with the soap, squeezing and patting with your hands as you might fine woolen underwear. Rinse in two or three clear waters and hang up to dry in the sunlight. A dash of salt in the water will keep the colors from fading.

#### THE FEATHER DUSTER

This implement is only tolerable when new and downy. After it has been worn down to the stems

and points of the feathers, it does more harm than it ever did good in its plumiest days. It is always superficial and pretentious.

A cloth, with or without a handle, is always preferable to a brush, be the latter ever so soft and fluffy. The feather duster is the darling of the housemaid whose own the furniture is not. It is one of her mistress' pet aversions, offering, as it does, an indefinite series of illustrations of the truth of the old saw, "What goes up must come down." The dust dislodged by a jaunty flick of the gay feathers is as sure to settle again, and more thickly than at first, as sparks to fly upward and snow to fall. The best duster is a soft cloth, which retains what it wipes up, and can be washed again and again.

Since Phyllis, "neat-handed" or foul, is a fixture in the home and is stanch in allegiance to the dust-dispenser, and Abigail is wedded to her ways, and the politic mistress will not make a stand upon non-essentials, no word of mine will do away with the tawdry implement. Then—keep it clean! It takes to its heart the invisible germs of disease and the just-visible eggs of moths and fleas. Then it is hung in a dark closet, and the pests breed abundantly. Wash it semi-occasionally in alcohol and camphor, and hang it up in the sun and wind to recover curl and stiffness.

While in the bedroom, we will bestow a few minutes upon the care of the brass bedstead, which has become so popular.

## THE BRASS BEDSTEAD

So few of us cling to the wooden bedstead that the hints dropped with regard to the proper care of the ancient and ponderous article in our chapters upon *Household Pests* may suffice. The brass, the enameled, or the painted iron bedstead is one of the most judicious of the hundreds of inventions the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have made on the seventeenth and eighteenth.

If it be pure brass, it requires no more care than a fender, candlestick or fire-dog of the same material. Dust daily, rubbing off any blurs with a soft old silk handkerchief, flannel or chamois skin. When it needs a regular burnishing use old flannel cloths wet with kerosene and rubbed upon the pomade sold for this purpose.

Brass beds, chandeliers and lacquered goods may be improved by putting a little sewing-machine oil on a soft rag and going over the bed or fixtures. The oil will remove fly specks and leave a luster. It does not harm the lacquer. Never use such things as onions, lemons, benzine, turpentine, gritty soap, acids or lye, which will remove the lacquer, more or less, producing a coat of verdigris if the articles be not cleaned every day or two after the lacquer is removed.

I add cheerfully to what has gone before, the sane observations of a sister housemother:

“If metal beds are chosen with an eye to keeping

bright, and then given just a little care, there is no necessity for dullness and tarnish. Experts say that brass ought not to tarnish if it is properly treated in the first place, and the brass trimmings to white beds are the first places usually that show wear. Be careful in getting your bed to see if the trimmings (or the bed itself, if it is all brass) are carefully finished. If you do not know the signs yourself, ask some one who does; it may cost a little more than you thought, but it will be less in the long run. Enameling can be done (redone, that is) at home with very little trouble. Enamel paints cost so little that there is no excuse for letting a white iron bed get shabby, even though frequent handlings may have scarred the enamel here and there. Once in every few weeks an enameled bed should be gone over with a soapy rag; it is surprising how much dirt will come off and how fresh the enamel will look after cleaning."

The last injunction for which I can make room before dismissing the brass bedstead may seem over-fastidious to the busy woman who has but one maid, yet who would fain believe that her tasteful furniture is well kept:

"Never touch the brass without having a cloth between your hands and the part of the bed that you have hold of, as the perspiration will tarnish it. Never hang anything in the line of clothing over it, as some people do. By taking these precautions you may keep a brass bed for years, by dusting all parts of the bed once or twice a week."

## CHAPTER XVII

SATURDAY (*Continued*)

### VARIOUS HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS

#### THE BATH-ROOM

A stationary wash-stand in a sleeping apartment is now generally recognized as a menace to health. All manner of ingenious traps, warranted to let everything down and not even the lightest of gases up, were introduced to quiet the qualms of people who were "up" in germ-literature. When scientists and the growing death-rate in luxurious mansions demonstrated the active superiority of deadly sewer-gas to plumbing precautions, standing wash-stands in houses of the rich were ripped out, and each bed-chamber was provided with a private bath-room.

Unfortunately a mighty majority of our readers—respectable, and making up the bone, sinew and brains of our population—can not afford to live in mansions and allot to each member of the family a suite of rooms. To the dwellers in city tents, otherwise "genteel" flats, I sound one sharp, clear note of warning. Dark living rooms are a menace to health, always and everywhere. Bath-rooms which are lighted and ventilated by casements opening into sleeping apartments (and they may be counted by

the hundreds in our large cities) should be condemned and abolished by the Board of Health. No matter how attractive the apartment may be in other respects, decline to take it. Air and fumigate as you will, it becomes a tank of sewer-gas, all the more deadly when nearly, if not quite odorless.

A "bad smell" is comparatively harmless. Like that pink of chivalry, the rattlesnake, it gives fair warning of approach and peril.

I have in sad memory such a mad mistake made by the architect of a handsome house owned by a friend of mine, twenty years ago. The bath-room attached to the nursery had a hinged window in the division wall. The two little daughters of the house slept in the nursery, and on cool nights the nursery was ventilated by means of this casement.

Both children suffered continually from malaria, although the neighborhood was healthful. One never recovered from the "mysterious visitation."

You may well ask where were the doctor's eyes that he did not denounce the nuisance when called in to the hapless innocents. I might answer that they were keeping company with the architect's common sense and common humanity, and the maternal instinct which should have taken the alarm at the first sight of the quarters in which her children were to sleep and play.

Fresh air, hot water, and borax are our best weapons against the insidious foe.

There should be plenty of fresh air in your bath-

room. Unless the weather is so cold that there is danger of freezing the pipes, leave the window open, day and night. Even upon intensely cold days let a sluice of germ-destroying air rush through the room several times a day. Once in twenty-four hours at all seasons, flush the pipes leading from bath-tub and bowls with scalding water, choosing the time when it is at the hottest and letting it run for ten minutes. As soon as it is too warm for you to bear your hand in it without shrinking, put a handful of borax in the tub and in each bowl and turn on a full head of hot water.

Next to kerosene, borax is the housewife's best ally in cleansing. It is also antiseptic and medicinal. I keep three grades of it upon a shelf in my bath-room: a large tin can of pulverized borax for cleaning porcelain linings and nickel fittings, and for the "flushing" I have spoken of; a smaller can of boracic acid (in powder) for sores, fever-blisters and corns; lastly, a dainty can of perfumed boracic talcum for chapped hands, etc.

I could not support housewifely existence without my borax.

Scald the pipes often with a strong solution of chloride of lime, dashed liberally with red pepper. Loathsome things are bred in the pipes from effete matter lodged there. When I say "scald," I mean that you should flush the drains, including the supply and waste pipes, with boiling water for ten minutes at a time, until your end is gained. Then keep the



pipes clean by similar means. Three times a week, when the water is hottest, let it run for ten minutes in all the pipes.

#### TO CLEAN BATH-TUB, BOWL, ETC.

A plumber says that stains on porcelain tubs, wash-stands and sinks are caused by allowing the surface to be injured. When new, porcelain is as smooth as a piece of window glass, but if rubbed with sand soaps, its surface becomes like a piece of ground glass from which no cleansing agent can take the stain. He recommends common household ammonia for cleaning.

In cleaning bath-tubs, wash-bowls and sinks, when the dirt collects around the sides, a little kerosene does the work twice as quickly as any kind of scour-ene.

Pour the oil into an old dish; take a white soft cloth, dip in the oil and smear all over the tub. The stains come off at once. Then wash over thoroughly with warm suds. It works like a miracle. Do the same with the wash-stand and water-closet. If the bath-room has tiled sides the oil takes all stains off.

To clean an enameled bath take a heaped tablespoonful of kitchen salt, moisten it with turpentine and with it scour the bath; then rub with a clean cloth. Before beginning operations take care that the bath is perfectly dry.

*For marks on enameled tub:* Rub with whiting and lemon-juice applied with a stiff brush. Let the

paste dry upon the enamel. After an hour scrub it off with a flannel wet with kerosene.

Five cents' worth of oxalic acid to a pint of water, kept on hand, is very useful to drop on a rag and rub on the dirty marks that the kerosene will not remove. The same applied with a rag and a stick will remove bad stains in closets and the inner edges of the marble wash-stands.

*To clean marble:* Use no soap. A mixture of lemon-juice and whiting, spread upon marble, left to dry for some hours, then washed off with pure water, will whiten it. Vinegar may be used if you can not get the lemon.

Fine table salt rubbed in marble will remove a stain unless the latter be of too long standing.

For iron stains on marble, wet the marks with oil of vitriol, let it remain fifteen or twenty minutes, then wash off and rub dry with a soft cloth.

*To bleach discolored marble:* Make a paste of whiting and lemon-juice, and cover the marble with it, leaving it on all day and night. Wash off with pure water. Never use soap in cleaning marble. Repeat; leave on again for twenty-four hours, wash as before, and when dry sponge with peroxide of hydrogen.

#### TO REMOVE RUST FROM NICKEL-PLATING

Cover the rust spots with mutton tallow. Let this stand for a few days, then rub with finely powdered

rottenstone. Wash off with strong ammonia water and then clear water.

#### TO CLEAN SPONGES

When very foul wash them in diluted tartaric acid, rinsing them afterward in water; it will make them very soft and white.

#### POLISH FOR FAUCETS, BATH-ROOM TRIMMINGS, SILVERWARE, ETC

Take two common candles and grate them fine; add one pound of rottenstone powdered and three pints of benzine. Shake well before using. A few drops of lemon-grass oil will deodorize it. Apply it by rubbing on with a rag and wipe dry with a clean rag.

*To keep faucets bright:* Polish as bright and smooth as possible, then varnish with good spar varnish. You can wipe them off with a moist cloth, which process should leave them bright.

*Iron rust on marble:* Make a paste of wood ashes and kerosene and rub it well into the rust. Leave it on for a few hours before scouring it with dry ashes (sifted fine) and a flannel cloth. This will remove rust from almost any surface. If you can not get wood ashes, use whiting.

*The escape pipe:* A can of lye and the garden hose will cleanse any drain pipe, no matter what the obstructions may be.

## BATH-ROOM SOAPS

Keep soaps meant for cleaning the paint, sink and other appurtenances of the bath-room distinctly apart from toilet soap. For the former have none but that which is of good quality and old.

The older the better. You know that soap was among the preserved domestic commodities found in Pompeii. Hard as stone, but lathering freely when wet! In humble imitation of your notable foremothers, buy soap by the box six months in advance of using it, cut it into squares and spread them upon the attic floor to ripen. It is mellowed by age, losing caustic properties and giving off by evaporation, the volatile and useless elements of turpentine. Moreover, in hardening, it lends itself to economic principles. Bridget-Thekla-Dinah would do violence to tradition and established usage, if she did not let the square of soap lie in the bottom of the dish-pan or wash-tub while she is rubbing the clothes or sousing, swabbing and "dreening" the breakfast, luncheon and dinner "things." When in draining off the dish-water, she finds a dab of saponaceous jelly in the bottom of the vessel, she dumps it in the sink. Green—that is, new—soap is an extravagance the thrifty carefully avoid. If for no other reason, the woman who does her own work should eschew it because it eats into her own hands—making them sore, coarse and red. Old soap is bland.

Save all the scraps of soap from kitchen and bath-

room and wash-basins in bedrooms, in a tin can kept for them. When nearly full, add enough borax to make a jelly-like substance, pouring boiling water over it.

Unless the bits are very minute, shave them fine with a sharp knife. They jell more easily. If they remain hard, set the tin in boiling water for half an hour. Next, strain and squeeze the warm jelly into an earthenware crock through cheese-cloth. Cover it to keep out the dust and set upon the bath-room shelf along with the borax cans.

The shelf in my bath-room is of glass and easily kept clean. The towel roller is of the same material, never rusting or mildewing what is hung upon it.

The saponaceous jelly gives forth a goodly smell, softens and whitens the hands; washes matings and scrubs carpets, and is beyond praise in cleaning bath-room and kitchen utensils, particularly nickel or silver. Now that porcelain is so common in kitchen and bath-room, the housewife should learn the simplest method of keeping it free from discoloration and stains, or for getting rid of these blemishes when they appear. As it is the custom of nearly all of us to take bric-à-brac that needs cleansing into the bath-room for convenience's sake, some directions for the task are submitted under this head.

#### MARBLE STATUETTES

Turn on hot and cold water in tub or basin so as to have a lukewarm bath for the image. Set it in this,

and, with a soft brush wash it carefully, cleaning out carvings and corners. Dash water freely over it when clean, and set in the air, but not where the sun will strike it, to dry. Do not touch it with a cloth. The brush does the heavy work, the shower-bath the rest. No soap!

#### PLASTER FIGURES

Dip in cold starch of moderate consistency; set in the window, but not in the sun, until perfectly dry. If you leave them all day it will not harm them. Brush the powder off with a soft, dry cloth or a complexion brush.

#### MARBLE SLABS

Mix two parts of common soda, one part of pumice stone and one part of finely powdered salt. Sift the mixture through a fine sieve and mix it with water, then rub it well over the marble and the stains will be removed. Rub the marble with salt and water, then wash off and wipe dry.

#### ALABASTER

If alabaster ornaments are merely grimy, washing with soap and water will clean them; if, however, they are stained, wash them first and then spread carefully over them a mixture of whiting and water, made into a stiff paste. Wash this off after a few hours.

**MOTHER-OF-PEARL**

Mother-of-pearl may be cleaned easily by washing it with whiting and cold water. Use neither soap nor soda.

**GLASS GLOBES**

Wash them with soap and water to which a little salts of lemon has been added. The great difficulty of getting the ground portion of the globe to look white is that grease, settling in the roughness, is very hard to remove by soap and water alone, or even by the help of soda. After the globes have been carefully washed in the manner recommended, do not dry them with a cloth, but, after allowing the water to run on them for a while, let them drain dry.

**GLASS BOTTLES**

*Glass bottles:* To render stained bottles beautifully clean and bright, put in salt and pour in vinegar; stand a few hours, then shake.

**CANDLESTICKS**

To clean candlesticks whether tin or enameled, fill them with boiling water to clean them. Do not allow the water to stand any time, but pour it off and then thoroughly dry the candlestick with a cloth. In this manner grease and dirt may be removed without damage to the color or substance of the candlestick.

## TO CLEAN A SEWING-MACHINE

Put the machine close to the register, the radiator, or the stove, and throw a blanket over it to keep in the heat. Do this that the caked oil about it may melt. Then oil it thoroughly with paraffin. Work it quickly for a few minutes, wipe off all the paraffin and dirt, treat it to a little more paraffin, wipe it again and after the application of a very little of the ordinary lubricating oil it will be ready for use.

## THE PIANO

A piano not receiving much usage should be kept open at least an hour each day, excepting on rainy days, when it should be closed when not in use. Do not expose to dampness or intense heat or cold, or to sudden changes of temperature, as all are injurious to a piano, and rusting of the strings and other metal parts, sticking of keys, rattling of the action, becoming out of tune, breaking off of varnish will be the result. Place the instrument against the inner wall, if possible, away from a hot stove, open fire or register. Pianos should be tuned at least three times a year by a competent tuner.

One of the best-known agents for cleaning and restoring the color of the piano keys is alcohol. Dampen a soft cloth with alcohol and wipe off the keys, rubbing with the grain. Dry with a soft linen or flannel cloth. If piano keys are exposed to the sunlight occasionally they will keep their color much better.



If the keys are very yellow, and the alcohol does not whiten them, wet strips of white Canton flannel with oxalic acid and lay upon them. Take care that the flannel is not so wet as to drip upon the wood of the case. It is well to protect it with a piece of oil-cloth adjusted below the keyboard.

#### BOOK-SHELVES

At least twice a year clean your library thoroughly—oftener if you can make time for the task. Take every book from your cases, and dust them first in the librarian's way, which is by striking one with another lightly, so that the dust flies out; then dust them with a cloth.

Scrub the shelves on both sides and in front with turpentine mixed with hot water, and when dry, paint them with cedar oil. It will keep the book-weevil away and impart an agreeable odor to the room.

#### THE KITCHEN SINK

The sink can not be made sightly by any device. It is unmistakably and irretrievably ugly. It is, nevertheless, the criterion of the housewife's or the cook's "management."

"Show me the sink, and I will describe your cook," is a homely old saying.

If it be littered with tea-leaves and coffee-grounds; if it be whisk-clean, save for a greasy gloss on bottom and sides, while in the far corner the blackened whisk conceals a disgusting deposit of refuse and coagu-

lated fats;—you need not inquire verbally as to the manner of that mistress' housewifery, or that cook's fidelity to the duties of her calling.

An excellent deterrent for cleansing and sweetening a kitchen sink is washing soda. Dissolve a couple of handfuls in hot water, and when boiling hot, pour down the drain.

Pour chlorides down pipes, or, perhaps better still, caustic soda, which cuts the accumulated grease.

Scald the sink every other day, flushing the pipe with the hot water for ten minutes at a time. Once a week add to this a strong solution of chloride of lime.

Keep a sieve hanging above the sink and use it when anything that contains sediment is poured out. The grating fixed in the bottom of the sink is too coarse to keep back the substances which clog the pipes. The worst of these is, of course, grease, invisible to the careless eye when hot, but afterwards working out the troublesome fruits of neglect. It coagulates upon the sides of the drain, and if not "cut," becomes as hard and as impervious to water as wax. Nine-tenths of the disastrous stoppages in the pipes that flood the kitchen floor with all manner of uncleanness, and involve the expenses of the plumber and his as costly assistant (why must a plumber invariably bring along a helper when one man could do all the work?), at least nine-tenths, I say, of the mischief wrought by obstruction and flooding are the direct results of a collection of grease

that should never have been thrown into the sink at all, or if there, should not have been suffered to stiffen into a mass.

In consideration of this truth, the reiteration of the injunction to flush the pipes regularly with caustic alkalis is none too strong. My favorite bathroom ally, borax, is a useful thing to have in a kitchen. Add a little to the water when boiling out enameled saucepans, and it will help to clean them. If added to the water in which dish-cloths are washed, it will help to keep them a nice color; and if a handful be thrown into the sink every night, directly over the grating and left there until morning, it will tend to dissuade water-bugs from creeping through the waste-pipe, and sweeten the first dash of water turned out of the faucet next day.

By the can of borax should stand the bottle of household ammonia. Both are cheap. The combined cost of the two would not equal in a year, although used daily, what a plumber and his other man would charge for three days' work—"and time."

Clean grease or rust from plain iron or galvanized iron sinks with kerosene and wash with boiling hot soap-suds.

#### THE RANGE

If the coal or gas range should have rusted during your summering, or you find that the one, in the house or flat you have just taken, is red with oxides, scrub it thoroughly with a strong solution of washing soda, using an old whisk-broom. Then heat and dry

well. While your stove is still warm, take a clean flannel rag, put some olive oil on it (it takes very little) give the range or stove a good rubbing all over; then dissolve two teaspoonfuls of baking soda in half a cup of water, and with a clean, soft rag apply this to the nickelplate, being careful not to get it on the stove itself. Rub dry with another clean, soft cloth.

To the coal range give a good coating of stove blacking moistened with olive oil, then plenty of elbow grease and warm rags. If the nickel parts can be unscrewed, do this before you begin to wash, as they clean more easily when separated from the stove. It is not necessary to repeat very often, if it is done thoroughly once. It keeps your stove from getting rusty.

If, during the incumbency of your predecessor, the range or stove has been so culpably misused that it is incrustated with a hard, black substance, unmistakably oleaginous, try washing it with suds made of soft water and borax soap, scrubbing with a stiff brush and scraping with a flat stick. When the crust has yielded to this treatment, rub sweet-oil into the surface of the stove, leave it on for twenty-four hours, wipe with a soft cloth and polish as you would any dull stove.

#### HOME-MADE STOVE-POLISHES

The number of patented polishes transcends the reckoning of the evicted demon who boasted of his

legion. All are warranted to do their work to perfection, and a few do it fairly well. I append two formulæ for the manufacture of domestic polishes, neither of which can injure the range.

(1) A quart of soot from the chimney or pipe leading from a bituminous coal fire; one teaspoonful of white sugar in a coffee-cup; two tablespoonfuls of boiling water poured on the sugar. Fill the cup with vinegar. Wet the soot gradually with the water, as you would wet flour for drawn butter or other thickening. Mix, first with the sugar, which helps to bind the mixture, and when you have a paste, add the vinegar, also gradually, beating smooth as it goes in.

There is much in knowing how to put ingredients together.

(2) "Mix aluminum powder and banana oil. With a paint-brush paint the whole range excepting the top with this mixture. It wears splendidly, does not peel and beats blacking 'all to pieces.' You must not mix it too thick. Any painter will tell you exactly how. Ten cents' worth of each is sufficient for a range."

Whatever polish you may use, apply it to a cold stove, having previously brushed off the dust, and with a cloth slightly dampened, wiped off the loose dirt. A fine gloss is obtained by adding a teaspoonful of alum to the ordinary black lead.

*To keep stovepipes from rusting when not in use:* Clean out the soot, rub them well with sweet-oil and wrap in newspaper until needed. Then the oil may

be rubbed off and a new coat of blacking may be applied. The papers must be bound in place with stout cotton cords wound around the pipes so closely as to exclude the air.

*To prevent the choking of stovepipes with soot:* Get from a stove-maker a quantity of zinc shavings, or pieces of zinc too small to be useful in his trade. Burn a handful in the range when the fire is hottest. Smoky chimneys are often cured by this simple expedient.

When the chimney takes fire throw on a handful of sulphur, or, lacking that, several handfuls of salt.

#### TO CLEAN ZINC

It is so much the fashion now to cover the tops of kitchen tables with zinc that the owner, or care-taker of them should know how to clean and to polish them.

Scrub the zinc with hot soap-suds until you have a clean, dull surface. Make a paste of sifted coal ashes and kerosene; cover the zinc with it; let it dry, and polish with old flannel.

A neater method is to dip a piece of flannel in paraffin and with it rub the zinc well, which should then be washed with hot water and soap to remove the smell of the oil, and polished with a dry cloth.

#### A KITCHEN ASH-SIFTER

A piece of rather fine wire netting cut to fit the ash tray under a range will save all sifting of cinders, as the fine dust alone will drop through it. The net-

ting should be cut slightly larger than the tray, so that an edge can be turned up all round it to keep it in place.

#### FLAT-IRONS

Irons that have been put away sticky should be well scraped with a thin knife, then rubbed with a rough cloth, moistened in kerosene.

Keep the irons in a dry place when they are in use weekly. If you shut up the house for a month or more, grease them well before putting them away.

#### GREASY PANS AND KETTLES

Pour a few drops of ammonia into every greasy roasting pan or greasy cooking dish after half filling with warm water. A bottle of ammonia should always be kept near the sink for such uses. Never allow the pans to stand and dry, for it doubles the labor of washing, but pour in water and use ammonia, and the work is half done.

#### GRANITE WARE

A correspondent, to whom I am glad to render acknowledgment, thus enlightens us on the subject of stained and blackened granite ware:

“By a happy chance I learned that Javelle water (directions for making on every can of chloride of lime) cleans granite ware perfectly and entirely without effort by simply putting it into the stained dish and letting it stay until the work is done. The Javelle water may be used over and over again, as

long as the strength lasts. It should be kept tightly covered in a glass or earthenware vessel when not in use, and will last longer if kept covered so far as possible when used in cleaning pans, etc. I know whereof I speak, for this cleaned off a sixteenth of an inch solid crust of burnt jam (when all scrapings, scourings, etc., had utterly failed) leaving the dish as clean as when new. The only drawback is that it takes off the gloss; but since the stains go with it, it can be excused.

#### TO CLEAN COPPER UTENSILS

A kettle so badly corroded that it is blackish green within and without, may be redeemed without much trouble by this means:

Heat a pint of vinegar mixed with a large handful of salt to a boil in the kettle. With a flannel rag scour the kettle inside and out with the vinegar while liquor and kettle are hot. It will remove verdigris and burnish the kettle. This done, scald the vessel with soda and water.

To clean one that is not so given over to the deadly verdigris—one of the surest poisons known in housewifery science—rub it with a cut lemon dipped in powdered bath-brick. When all stains are removed wash it in warm, soapy water; then dry and polish it with powdered bath-brick and a soft cloth. Powdered bath-brick, mixed to a paste with oil, may be used instead of the lemon.



## TREATMENT FOR TINS AND IRONWARE

Rub the new iron kettle first with lard, heat it until it smokes, and wash in hot soap-suds. It is sometimes necessary to make a second treatment.

New tinware treated in the same way will last much longer, as it prevents rust. However, tinware should not be heated quite as hot as iron.

An iron kettle that discolors potatoes, etc., which are cooked in it may be set right thus:

Boil potato peelings in the iron kettle, slowly, for a few hours—five or six hours will do—then clean perfectly and grease it thoroughly.

The potato peelings will come out quite black, but they will gather unto themselves and bear away with them the noxious elements that caused the trouble.

*To remove rust from a kettle:* Put into it as much hay as it will hold; fill it with water and boil it many hours; if the kettle is not entirely fit for use repeat the process.

Scale or crust can be prevented in a tea-kettle by keeping an egg shell or an oyster shell in the kettle.

## PEWTER AND BRITANNIA

Some of us have heirlooms of these materials. Unless taken care of regularly they change to a dull lead color with bilious shadings—an unlovely sight. Coat with paste of powdered rottenstone and oil, leaving it on for some hours. Rub it off with soft flannel

and polish with whiting and household ammonia, finally with chamois skin.

#### TINWARE

It will never rust if it be always wiped perfectly dry before it is set away after it is washed. The moisture left in the seams and on the sides causes it to rust. Wash in hot suds, rinse in hot water and wipe well. If you would "shine it up" a bit—common soda applied with a moistened newspaper and rubbed with a dry piece will make it look like new.

*To mend leaky tinware:* Sprinkle a pinch of fine resin around the hole, on which lay a lump of solder the size of a bean; hold it over a lighted lamp for half a minute and the solder will melt and spread. Set near the fire, or in the sun, for a few minutes; then plunge into cold water to insure hardness.

New tins should be filled with cold water, set on the range and boiled there for some hours. Then let the water get cold in the saucepan. This will remove the "tinny" taste for all time.

#### USEFUL ODDS AND ENDS OF KITCHEN LORE

*A cement* which will resist the action of hot or cold water, and which is useful for mending earthenware and stone jars, stopping cracks and holes in iron and tin kettles and pans, is made by mixing litharge and glycerin to the consistency of thick cream or putty. The article mended must not be used until the cement has had time to dry. Leave in the sunny

window of a dry room for at least a week before you put anything into it.

*Never fill a lamp* quite full, or when it is brought into a warm room the expansion of the oil will cause it to overflow.

On the other hand, a kerosene lamp that is burned night after night, and never filled more than half-way to the top, sometimes becomes charged with gas generated by the flame, and explodes.

*Ivory knife-handles* which have become yellow from misuse may be whitened by rubbing them gently with fine sandpaper and then polishing with a clean piece of chamois skin.

Should this fail to restore the color, wash with peroxide of hydrogen and lay in the sun for some hours. Ivory should never be laid or dipped in hot water. Wash ivory-handled knives in a pitcher, immersing the blades and wiping off the handles.

*Wooden bread-boards* should be scrubbed with sand or salt instead of soap, in order to be kept in good condition. Sun, or set them before the fire until they are entirely dry. A musty kneading-board will impart a taste to the dough that is not agreeable to the educated senses.

*Iron saucepans* should be kept clean on the outside as well as inside. To prevent the smoke from sticking, rub the outside of a new saucepan with fat before placing it on the stove. Wash with hot water and soda.

*Tin and granite iron tea-pots* if unused for some

time, will give an odd flavor to the tea when next used. This may be prevented by placing a lump of sugar in the tea-pot before putting it away.

The "odd flavor" generally arises from the slow evaporation of the moisture clinging to the inside of the pot, and which can not escape from the close vessel. Dry it thoroughly and set, open, near the fire before the sugar goes in.

*Never lay meat* directly on the ice. Place it on a dish or wrap it in paper before putting it in the refrigerator. Use for the purpose "butcher's paper." To wrap meat in newspaper is to poison it slightly. Moreover the practise is unclean. The best plan is to lay the raw meat on a clean dish and put a wire cover over it.

*Wash the bread box* out weekly and air it before placing bread in it again. To air it means that it should be really in the outer air, and if possible in the hot sun. Miniature forests of mold flourish apace in staling bread. Do not carry plantations over from one baking to another.

*If your kitchen* has a tiled floor, a little linseed-oil rubbed on the tiles, followed by polishing, brings up the colors wonderfully.

*If the new refrigerator* smell of paint, burn a pan of charcoal in it by day, and at night set pans of cold water on the shelves. The lead and oils will settle in the water. The volatile particles cause the odor. When precipitated into the water, they can not rise again into the air. If your newly painted floor

“smell to heaven” conquer the nuisance by setting large pails of water in the room overnight. In a couple of days the smell will be gone.

*Dry salt applied* with flannel will clean enameled tubs which have been stained. Wash well afterward.

This applies to stationary tubs in the laundry, but the process is as effectual if the porcelain or enamel sink be stained.

*If, in cleaning the range,* some of the polish gets upon the nickel fittings and dries there, flannel wet with ammonia should remove the polish. If not, try vinegar mixed with kerosene.

*A dish of unslaked lime* placed in a damp cupboard will tend to dry it. The lime should be renewed every day or two, as it loses its power.

## CHAPTER XVIII

SATURDAY (*Concluded*)

SILVER, CHINA AND GLASS

### THE CARE OF SILVER

Were I to have the entire charge of my silver, I should have no polishing days and use no plate powder or pomades. As it is, I try to impress upon my servants the truth of the old saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure—a ton, in fact. But when the standpoint of mistress and maid in household economics is the same, the millennium will have begun. As a young housekeeper, with an indifferent waitress, I never allowed her to wash china, glass and silver. I did not have my old fender and andirons then, and if I had owned them, they would have been an empty show, since we had not the luxury of an open wood fire. I did, however, have a pair of old brass—real brass—candlesticks and a generous stock of silver. For this I had, as I have said, no cleaning day. The secret of avoiding this penitential period was simple. Every time it was used I washed it in hot water, to which a little ammonia was added, rinsed it in scalding water, wiped it quickly with a soft linen towel, then rubbed it briskly with a piece of soft flannel. Silver, treated faith-

fully and regularly after this fashion, needs no plate powder, and will hold its own in weight and form ten times as long as if subjected to the weekly attrition of gritty powders and corrosive acids. If our grandmothers had known and practised this plan, they would not have bequeathed to us such paper-thin teaspoons and loving-cups and tankards, from which patterns and inscriptions have been effaced by much rubbing.

The readers of the ever-pleasant "Rollo Books" may recall his recipe for keeping his desk in order "for ever and ever." It was briefly, never to let it get out of order. My plan for keeping silver clean, without the weekly polish, is after the same sort. Never let it get dull. Make a strong suds of very hot water and silicon, or other good polishing powder, adding a tablespoonful of household ammonia. Wash the silver used at each meal in this, rinse in water as hot as you can bear to touch, and wipe, quickly, each piece as you draw it from the hot water. No draining! A rapid rub while the silver is hot, with old flannel, completes the work.

The suds must be strong, the water must be hot—not merely warm—the ammonia must be put in last, and the wiping must be immediate and brisk.

The "drainer" should not be so much as named among those who wash their own china and silver, glass and plated ware.

Our heirlooms were not worn thin by legitimate use. They were outraged weekly by vinegar, whit-

ing and scrubbings. It is not the daily wearing that makes linen, cotton and flannel old and ragged, but the wash-board and wringer. I have called plate powders "gritty." Put a pinch of the finest and most velvety of these under the lens of a microscope and you will see that it looks like sand. No silver is proof against it.

A cheap and simple way of brightening dull silver is to let it lie all night in lopper milk. A brisk wash next day in hot water is all that is needed after the milk bath.

To save labor and at the same time to keep the household silverware bright without constant polishing, camphor is valuable. If a lump of it be placed on each shelf of the closet or cabinet where the silver is kept, a thorough cleansing and polishing is seldom necessary. A lump of camphor the size of an egg should be kept in the drawer or chest with the small silver.

*To prevent tarnish:* When your silver is not in regular and daily use, and when you would lay it by in the plate-chest or safe for weeks or months, there is no reason why you should expect it to tarnish during its seclusion.

Have it perfectly clean when you lay it aside. Do not touch it with the naked hand. Perspiration is an unholy combination of salts and acids, and no matter how dry and clean your fingers may seem to you to be, invisible perspiration is always there—and potent! Take up spoons and forks and larger pieces of silver-



ware with a bit of cotton batting, wrap them carefully in tissue paper and pack in a chest or box. Put a bit of gum camphor in the bottom of the box, close the lid and give yourself no further concern as to tarnish. It will keep bright for six months, or for six years. I know, for I have followed the plan for forty-odd years.

In Virginia, even before the war, gentlewomen always washed up the supper and breakfast things with their own hands. Colored servants could not be trusted to do it.

And very wise housewives they were. In the whole course of my married life I have had but one maid who washed silver and glass in "my way." She came to me as green as her native bogs in June, and was trained by myself into one of the best waitresses I ever had, or ever expect to have. The soil was virgin and good. She lived with me eight years. Then we went abroad for some years and I lost her. When I told her once that she washed my valuables to my liking, she answered naively: "You see, mem, I knew no better to begin with, and just did as I was tached."

#### BRASS

Brasses can not be washed three times a day, nor packed down in tissue paper and camphor to keep away the corruption of rust—alias verdigris—but they may, and they should be, dusted every day with a bit of very soft flannel. When you leave home for

the summer, envelop them in cotton batting, then in tissue paper, tied on tightly to exclude the air.

To clean brass nothing is more effective than the old-fashioned plan of rubbing first with a paste made of powdered bath-brick and paraffin, and then with dry powdered bath-brick. A mixture of lemon-juice and powdered chalk used in the same way is also excellent.

To clean brass ornaments wash them over with strong ammonia. The fancy parts should be well scrubbed with a brush dipped in the ammonia, Rinse in clear water, wipe dry and polish with wash leather.

Any article of brass, with the exception of Benares ware, may be cleaned in the following way: Wash the brass in suds made of equal parts of ammonia and water with soap. This will remove all dirt from the article, leave it free from grease and give it a semi-polish. Then use a good brass polish. If the brass looks hopelessly tarnished any good powder that is used for cleaning silver or brass, if moistened with vinegar and applied vigorously, will remove the tarnish and leave a bright surface.

Black and green brass should be well washed in hot soap-suds containing soda, then scoured with paraffin and whiting before any brass polish is used.

Sweet-oil and powdered rottenstone vigorously applied with a piece of soft flannel will clean brass ornaments.

*To clean a brass bird-cage:* Clean with a bit of

flannel wet with kerosene, then rubbed upon the red pomade used for brasses. Leave it on for half an hour and polish with a dry, clean flannel or with chamois skin.

Whiting and sweet-oil mixed to a paste and rubbed on with a piece of flannel will brighten it. Wipe with a soft cloth and polish with chamois skin.

#### HOW TO WASH CHINA AND GLASS

Step the first: sort the "things!" That is the generic term, borrowed from the vocabulary of the vulgar. Discard it! Be specific! Bring your glass to the front; behind it, arrange the silver, great and small; next, mass the china, each after its kind. The plates should already be scraped clean of fragments; and cups emptied and rinsed. Have ready two dish-pans, towels galore, a soap-shaker and a long-handled mop.

Draw over your hands and fasten at the wrist, a pair of gloves two sizes too large for you, from which you have cut the finger-tips. Pour boiling water into each pan, churn the water in that on your left to a foaming suds with the shaker. In this lay the smaller silver, give it a few sweeps with the mop, fish it up, transfer to the other—the rinsing pan. Again, take out one piece at a time, with the mop, and wipe while still so hot that you could not hold it but for the towel protecting the finger-tips. Do all this rapidly, laying each article hot, clean and shining, upon a tray lined with linen cloth to prevent scratching. The

glass comes next. Although the water is no longer boiling, roll each glass dexterously in it lest it crack, dip and swirl over in the rinsing pan, and wipe quickly. Lastly comes the china in due order—plates and dishes last. Of course, if you have had many at table, the supply of water must be renewed, at least in the first pan. Not a trace of grease must appear upon the surface of the water. If an oily rim be left at high-water mark within the pan, profanation has been done to artistic rules. For thus is dish-washing brought into the realm of the fine arts. It is thorough, and far more expeditious than the usual sousing, swabbing and “dreening”—to say nothing of the polishing which is omitted in eight out of ten kitchens.

A gentlewoman may go through the whole exercise of clearing off the table from which four people have dined; washing and wiping the articles used and putting them away, without spotting her dinner-gown.

Will you be tolerant with yet another scrap of personal experience?

I have lovely associations connected with the earlier years of my housewifely life. My John used to read the paper aloud to me while I washed the dinner china and glass. The children went over their lessons to me while I washed the breakfast equipage. I had a voluminous bib apron which my husband and boys declared to be more becoming than the gown it protected. I pinned up my sleeves, and there were always my gloves to keep my hands white. When



there was something of special interest in the evening paper I prolonged operations. Usually, when there were just ourselves and the one child who was old enough to sit up to dinner, I finished the last dish and put away all in the china press in twenty minutes after I laid hold of the first spoon. This when we had a four-course dinner, exclusive of coffee.

Bridget-Thekla-Dinah would take one hour to do the same and it would not be done one-tenth as well. Yet she may be exceptionally tidy. It used to hurt me—actually hurt me!—to see how my fragile treasures were handled, after we became so well-to-do that I could not afford to take care of them myself.

There is a world of difference between drudgery and the practice of a favorite art. That, I take it, is the interpretation of the saying, “the labor we delight in physics pain.”

Have you, dear yoke-fellow, ever visited your kitchen while your faithful B.-T.-D.—perhaps the most satisfactory in most respects of any who have ever governed the lower story—is “doing up the dishes?” She is one of the neatest of all created cooks, in the main. Her domain is a pleasing study in orderliness and judicious arrangement. You are proud of it and of her, and she knows it.

*But*—she plunges, and souses, and jumbles, and swashes her “things” in water in which she can bear her hand comfortably. Swabs them with a dish-rag! Then she “dreens” them! “Drains” does not express the misdemeanor. She says “dreen”—and she

is right. Cups and saucers, plates and dishes—even glass and silver—are drawn leisurely from the cooling water, which was “comfortable” when the “things” went into it, and set up on end, or turned upside down that the water may stream, and stray—and streak! at its own will across the smooth surfaces. When all are out, she dries them leisurely, and, I will admit, with a clean towel. With two towels! the second, warmed at the range, to polish them.

#### CUT GLASS

Cut glass is sensitive to sudden changes of temperature. Do not hold the cut glass bowl that has had ice-cream in it under the hot water faucet. Do not take a piece of cut glass from a hot room into a cold one suddenly. Pieces of ice touching the sides of a punch-bowl will sometimes cause it to crack. A block or piece of ice should be firmly anchored in the center of the bowl. To temper a cut glass dish before filling it with ice-cream, punch, etc., pour cold water into it, then a piece or two of ice, very small pieces. When the dish has been gradually chilled put the ice-cream into it.

When cut-glass oil and vinegar cruets become so discolored inside that shot or fine sand will not cleanse them, fill the bottle with finely chopped potato skins. Cork tightly and let the bottle stand for three days, when the skins will ferment. Turn out and rinse. The bottles will be as bright and clean as when new.

*To clean water bottles* mix together half a gill of vinegar and a handful of salt. Shake well and let the mixture stand in them for half an hour.

#### TO CLEAN A GREASY JAR OR AN OIL CRUET

Ordinary means do not suffice sometimes to get the oil out of a jar or bottle in which it has been kept a long time. Put a handful of well-sifted wood ashes in the jar, fill it with water and set it in a pot of cold water. Bring the water in the outer vessel to a boil and keep this up for an hour.

Since you may not be able to get wood ashes, substitute a tablespoonful of household ammonia for the ashes, fill up with water, screw on the top loosely and boil in the same way. Wash out with strong suds and rinse before setting to air in the sunshine.

#### LAMP CHIMNEYS

When you buy the chimneys, put them into a tin pail of cold water, set this in a pot of cold water and place this last upon the range where it will heat very slowly to a gentle boil. Keep this up for an hour—never boiling hard—and let it subside and the water cool gradually. This process “tempers” glass.

#### TO LOOSEN A GLASS STOPPER

Let fall a few drops of ammonia into the crack around the stopper. Or tap the stopper sharply, but not too hard with a clothes-pin or piece of wood. Or heat the neck of the bottle slightly with hot water or over the gas.



## CHAPTER XIX

### EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK

Good and comfortable housekeeping is brought about only by daily attention to many of its details. Eternal vigilance is the price of other things than liberty,—surely it is the price that must be paid for an orderly and well-kept house. A certain round of duties must be accomplished every day of the world in order to make the work go smoothly, in order to give that air of well-being to the place in which one abides that means rest for the mind as well as comfort for the body. The giving of this constant, well-modulated, daily attention to the affairs of the house makes heavy demands upon the self-control of the housekeeper. Whether she tends to her own house or directs service, the strain upon the energies is heavy. To get in everything that should be done and yet to retain one's composure and a mind open to interests outside of "business," this is the ideal that should animate a householdress—and it is a high one. For even in a household where the daily tasks are performed as they should be, no comfort abides if there is constant fussing and fuming, if the mind of the housekeeper is submerged by her cares instead of floating on top of them. We all know and tremble

before the over-anxious air of the over-anxious house-keeper. We know afar the vexed and careful look she bends over meat, chickens and vegetables in the market, determined as she is on screwing out the best value for the least money. We shudder as we remember the baleful glance she casts upon the dust in the corner forgotten by the heedless maid. The woman of the sort referred to keeps house at the expense of the happiness of her family. She rates housekeeping higher than she rates herself. From this awful mistake, we say with all piety, "Good Lord deliver us."

The multifarious details of the daily work can be managed with cheerfulness and equanimity. We may not have attained that height ourselves but we know it can be done. We all remember some happy, busy, competent aunt or cousin or friend of the family whose house always shone with the polish of good management and whose family rejoiced no less in the management than in the good temper accompanying it. We all have in our minds the memory of some excellent housekeeper who was or will be sometime deserving of that most delicious epitaph found in an old English churchyard,—“She was so pleasant.”

The list of those duties which should be performed daily comes to about the same thing in the estimation of most writers on the subject. The order of their performance is not always the same and can not be laid down as a law because of varying conditions in

the various households concerned. In some families the breakfast is late and little or no household work can be accomplished before that meal. In others where breakfast is earlier the maid can practically have the lower part of the house in order before the inmates descend to their morning meal. The number of people in a family, sometimes the architecture of the house, make a difference as to which household task may be first disposed of.

It is a good plan for each housekeeper to make out an order of work for every day, also for the special tasks of the week, have it type-written and hung in the maid's room. Though the array of duties may seem to her a little startling at first, she will soon recover from the shock. Such a proceeding saves her confusion and does away with the endless explanations from the mistress which follow usually the first month after the installation of a domestic.

The following program is one that the author has herself found satisfactory for the every-day care of the house:

1. Care of the Front. This includes sweeping the pavements in front of and about the house, and sweeping or scrubbing or mopping the porch if there be one.
2. Make the fires, air the living-room, dining-room and hall, setting them to rights if necessary.
3. Prepare the breakfast and set the table.
4. Clear the table, wash the dishes and kitchen

utensils. Put the kitchen, pantry and ice-box in order.

5. Make the beds, put the sleeping-rooms in order, renovate the bath-room, see to the stairs and balusters.

6. If there are any dishes to be prepared for luncheon and dinner, prepare them now.

7. Attend to the particular tasks of the day, as, for instance, cleaning silver on Wednesday, general down-stairs cleaning on Saturday, etc.

On days when the work is particularly heavy, the mistress of the house should arrange as far as is in her power to lighten the usual labors of the maid.

#### CARE OF THE FRONT

In putting this job first the author has given it a place not usually awarded to it. Most writers on household arrangements put off pavements and porches till the middle of the morning. But the truth is that this is just one of the places, though one should not be weakly yielding, where John and the boys are to be considered. Most of the niceties of housekeeping John doesn't know anything about and, if truth must be told, cares less. But he does notice the porch and the walks; and when he starts out to business in the morning and meets Jones or Smith at the gate, he likes to have the place looking tidy, "ready for inspection" as the military phrase goes. So out of deference to John, it pays first to sweep

the pavements, clean the front steps and the porch if there be one.

One of the readily discernible signs of a good housekeeper is the appearance of the front steps. "By her front steps shall you know her." So said the lady from Philadelphia where surely the front steps are the whitest of any in the world. And it was she who advised me to use powdered pumice stone in cleaning steps of stone or cement.

#### CARE OF THE DINING-ROOM

Whether the floor is carpeted or of polished wood it should be brushed each morning and the room thoroughly dusted. There is no place about the house, except perhaps the kitchen, where absolute cleanliness is so desirable as in the dining-room and no place where such constant and continuous care is demanded. The dining-room table should be daily polished with a soft chamois and if once a week, as the case may be, it is waxed or a drop of oil is rubbed into its bright surface, so much the better, though the oil will do little good if it is not administered with a plentiful supply of "elbow grease." To keep the dining-room table bright and shining is one of the pretty points of housekeeping. With old southern housekeepers it was almost a passion. To some of us, who remember back before the days of the war, the most characteristically recollected attitude of the old family butler is that in which he stands bent over

the mahogany, chamois in hand, bringing out the quality of that lovely wood.

#### DAILY CARE OF THE KITCHEN AND PANTRIES

This requires the orderly disposal of the utensils used in cooking, the keeping of table or tables clean, the sinks scrubbed and free from grease and the kitchen floor in order. A painted or hard-wood floor is harder to keep clean than a tiled floor, which is cold, however, or one covered with linoleum. One must not keep the maid on her knees all the time and it is well to select a floor which keeps free from spots if mopped up once a day and scrubbed on Saturday. A painted floor should never be scrubbed but should be wiped up with a cloth.

Among the minor daily tasks connected with the kitchen is the putting away of supplies from grocery and market. I know of nothing that adds more to the neat appearance of the kitchen than the practise of sorting these out and putting them away immediately on their arrival, throwing superfluous bags and other wrappings into the waste basket which is a necessary part of the furniture of every kitchen. And while we are dealing with the kitchen, it is worth while mentioning a means by which the mistress may help to simplify the daily work of that department, If she will each morning write out the menu for luncheon and dinner and hang it in the kitchen, the business of the kitchen will come up correspondingly.

I have yet to meet a cook who does not recognize the help given by this system.

#### THE DAILY CARE OF BEDROOMS

This should be a small charge upon the maid if members of the family do their part toward making the house machinery run smoothly. Each member of the family should, in the old-fashioned phrase, keep her room "picked up," and the time to perform that office is largely at night. One's clothes should be hung up when taken off and not left lying around till morning, both on account of the clothes and the appearance of the room. There is nothing more discouraging than to start the day by opening one's eyes on a disorderly room. What is really no task at night and takes but a few minutes before going to bed, when added to the duties of the morning, assumes baleful proportions. If the bedroom is in order and the bed-clothing turned back, as it should be when one rises, the work of making up the bed neatly and of dusting the room will take but a few minutes.

#### DUSTING

To keep a house properly and daily dusted requires time and unless there is more than one maid employed in the family the mistress must share the task with the maid. Of course the untrained maid loves the feather duster which is an abomination to

a cleanly housekeeper. She must be taught to wipe softly and fairly with a cloth over the surfaces and in the crevices needing attention. White cheese-cloth cut in squares and hemmed makes the best dust-cloths. The maid should be taught that these as well as the broom cloths must be gathered up and taken care of when dirty, not thrown into corners. And while we are on this subject let it be said that the laundress should be instructed that broom-cloths and dust-cloths are as much a legitimate part of the weekly washing as handkerchiefs and underwear. No house can be kept clean without plenty of these necessary articles in good condition.

#### THE EVERY-DAY CARE OF THE BATH-ROOM

Every morning the dirty towels should be taken off the towel-racks, put to dry if necessary or consigned to the clothes hamper and fresh ones put in their places. The wash-bowls, both tub and fixtures, should be wiped clean and dry and the bowl of the water-closet rubbed with a long brush indispensable for that purpose and to be found at every good department store. Again as with the bedrooms, the special daily care given by maid or mistress to a bath-room is no more important than the care that should be given by each member of the family. No one has a right to leave the bath-room in such a condition that it shall be in any way unpleasant or offensive to his successor.



#### THE DAILY CARE OF THE REFRIGERATOR

This involves its airing, drying and a proper disposition of articles within. It is well to know that the coldest place in an ice chest is the lowest shelf of the provision chamber. Here one should keep meat, bottled milk, drinking water, etc. The only place free from odors in an ice-chest is the top shelf under the opening through which cold air descends from the ice. One can keep butter here or milk in pans. Green vegetables of the lighter kind, such as lettuce, cucumbers, celery may be kept in the ice chamber. Some such system as the one indicated should be used in the disposition of the foods to be chilled. The greatest care should be taken to allow nothing to be overturned in the ice chest, or if such a catastrophe occurs, to wipe out immediately the soil. The pan under the ice chest, if there be one, should be emptied every day. Directions for the weekly or bi-weekly cleaning of the ice-chest are given in another part of the book.

#### THE SINK

Systematic watchfulness is required to keep the sink sweet and clean. The daily care comprises washing with hot soap-suds each time after its use and rinsing with boiling water. Once a day after this process, turn on the faucets and let a good measure of cold water fly over the surface and run through the pipes.

### THE KITCHEN STOVE

The stove should be brushed off thoroughly every day and rubbed with a soft or damp paper. This will insure cleanliness between the times of the weekly polishing. This polishing, it may be said, must be thoroughly done or the pots and pans will come off soiled or unsightly.

### WASHING THE DISHES

It is well to insist with your maid on the right order for washing the table ware. First the silver with plenty of soap and hot water; then the glassware well polished after washing with a clean, soft towel; lastly the dishes which should be first scraped clean then rinsed off with clear water, then washed with soapy water and last of all rinsed and dried. The average maid gets rid of the scrapings and orderly arrangement of dishes previous to washing. It pays to convince her, if that is possible, that the right method saves time and trouble.

### LAYING THE TABLE

One of the tasks which practice should make perfect, but often does not, is laying the table. A thing that is done three times a day, three hundred and sixty-five times in the year should be done skilfully, and yet the awkwardly arranged table is not an infrequent occurrence. The following are the conventionally accepted rules and arrangements. A canton

flannel or asbestos cover should be provided to lay under the table-cloth as a protection to the table when a table-cloth is used. It may be said that the asbestos covers, now much in vogue, are valuable additions to the housekeeper's store, as they absolutely protect the table from burns and can, the best of them, be rolled up like a flannel cloth. They are not, however, to be obtained at every department store but are the property of special dealers.

For breakfast and luncheon the use of table mats of various sizes is, at the present time, more general than the use of a table-cloth. When the cloth is used, as at dinner, it should be laid so that the central crease strikes the exact center of the table. Place knives and spoons at the right of the plate, having the ends of the handles near the edge of the table. The sharp edge of the knives should be turned toward the plate, and the inside of the bowls of the spoons turned up. The forks should be to the left, and inside up. The napkins should be on the plate or at the left hand side with the water glasses a little to the right and top edge of the plate. At the top of the plate in the middle the individual salt-cellar should be placed. If the meal in the case is breakfast, small butter plates and butter knives may be added to the furnishings of the table; and the service for coffee or chocolate or both should be placed before the mistress of the house.

If the meal in question is dinner, the carving-set and knife and fork should be placed before the car-



ver. The amount of silver on the table will depend upon the number of courses served.

In case the duties of the house are performed by one maid, it is well to dispense at breakfast and luncheon with service beyond the proper disposition of dishes on the table. This is indeed the English fashion and gives a pleasant informality to those meals. But service there should be, and of the right kind at dinner.

*Serving the dinner:* The maid should stand quietly behind the carver while the meat is being carved. She should take each plate from him and set it before the person for whom it is intended. She should then pass the vegetables and condiments if any. The plates should be removed after each course, and before the dessert is brought on, everything except the glasses and the flowers should be removed and the cloth should be cleared of crumbs by the use of a crumb knife and tray or by the use of a fresh napkin.

Though there are some differences of opinion on this point, the generally accepted rule is that the maid must go to the left side of the person served when the dish is one from which he helps himself, thus giving him the free use of his right hand,—to the right when it is something that she places on the table. For instance she must go to the right with the plate served by the carver, to the left with the vegetable dish from which the diner helps himself. Some authorities, however, insist that everything shall be

served from the left except water and other liquids that can be poured into a glass.

In removing dishes the waitress should never pile one upon another and should not attempt to take more than two plates at a time. Perhaps it is unnecessary in this day and age to say that the silver should be placed in the center of the plate, the knife, fork and spoon side by side and not at varying and dangerous angles.

The rules given are the elementary ones merely of table serving. It takes but a short time for a maid to make a conquest of them and rigid adherence to them should be insisted upon. There is no one of the daily round of tasks that contributes more perhaps to the esthetic happiness of the family than that of quiet and efficient service at the dinner table.

## CHAPTER XX

### ANY DAY IN THE WEEK

#### MARKETING AND BUYING THE WINTER SUPPLIES

Marketing may be a matter of any day in the week. Certainly it should not be a matter of every day in the week as it often is with those housekeepers who take no thought for the morrow and are content with looking no farther than to-day. For the welfare of the house, marketing should be done for several days ahead so that cook and mistress may scheme and plan for meals without a constant running to the source of supplies. The leisure gained outweighs the labor involved.

“What sort of a housekeeper is she,” asked one friend of another concerning the new neighbor who had just moved into the house across the way. “She is an always-running-to-the-grocery-housekeeper,” was the reply, an answer which carried its meaning without comment.

#### THE VALUE OF A WEEKLY MENU

My own experience has led me to feel that a decided help to the weekly marketing lies in making out a menu a week ahead. One can not always keep

strictly to the scheme laid down because one can not know exactly what may be left over from meal to meal and how this residue may be best employed. But, in a general way, one knows; and the plan is one which results in a nicely varied table and in a simplification of the matter of buying. A friend of mine, an excellent housekeeper and one particularly worthy of that old-fashioned term of approval, "a good provider," lays in stores for her house but once a week and that on Saturday. She has a refrigerator which holds two hundred and fifty pounds of ice and in this she stores her meat and perishable vegetables. "I go through the agony of buying but once a week," she said gaily to me. "I do it up thoroughly then, make out my menu for the week, hang it in the kitchen, and save myself, by so doing, a world of trouble and no end of time." For several reasons my friend's method does not commend itself to me. I give it only as an instance of that time-saving propensity in housekeeping which we of the profession should cultivate.

#### MEAT AS AN ARTICLE OF DIET

With most of us, in spite of the vegetarians, the most important, the most nourishing and strength-giving item on the bill of fare is meat. Meat three times a day is generally prejudicial to the health. Meat twice a day is once too often for many people. Meat once a day is a necessity for most of us. The choice of meat is then an important part of market-



ing and it is the branch of marketing on which most women are least well informed.

Any woman who thinks seriously of her business of housekeeping should make herself acquainted with the anatomy of the animals from which our meat supply comes so that she may realize with some thoroughness the purpose for which the different parts may be used, the kind of nourishment offered by each and the proper culinary treatment to which the different parts should be subjected. Often the housekeeper's knowledge of this branch is so slight that she does not even know how to name or call for the different parts of the animal in question. The subject of meats is so comprehensive that only a few brief notes can be given here for identifying the different cuts, for choice of the most nourishing parts and for distinguishing between meat which is good and that which is not.

*Beef:* Where the body of the animal has had the least exercise will be found the tenderest portions—on top of the back, the seven prime ribs, the loin or porter-house and the thick sirloin. These cuts are best adapted for roasting or broiling. They are the most expensive as well as the most tender. Inexperienced and extravagant housekeepers fancy, very foolishly, that the palatable meat of the beef begins and ends with these. This is not true. Many pieces which will do for neither of the purposes mentioned are excellent when subjected to the slower processes of braizing, stewing and pot-roasting. For people

of small means the habitual use of steak is not a desirable investment. The poorer cuts do not lend themselves to broiling and the more expensive cuts are, except occasionally, an extravagance.

Good beef when first cut will be of a purplish unpleasant color or hue, but should quickly turn on exposure to the air to a bright red. It should be firm and fine grained in texture, and the fat should be of a pale yellow or light straw color.

Some of the parts of the fore quarter of a beef are the neck, good for mince meat and force meat, and sold at an average price of eight cents a pound; the chuck, a piece behind the neck including the first five ribs which may be used for pot-roasts, cheap steak or stewing, selling at about twelve and a half cents a pound; the ribs, used chiefly for roasts. There is a decided preference in the rib roast. The first and second cuts are the best and bring from seventeen to thirty cents a pound, the third from fifteen to eighteen cents. The brisket is used largely for corned meat. The shin is used for soup and sells usually at not more than five cents a pound. The fore quarter is, as a whole, coarser than the hind quarter, and, in consequence, brings a smaller price.

Of the meat in the hind quarter that of the shin is used for soup. As the meat is of better flavor and the bone has in it finer marrow than that of the fore quarter, the soup resulting is of a more excellent character. From the sirloin are cut the choicest

steaks and roasts. First cuts of the sirloin are not so good as those underneath where the tenderloin begins to appear. Slices from this part bring sometimes forty cents a pound. When the tenderloin is sold separately for a roast, this part is known as the fillet. This part is very tender and much in demand. It is also very expensive, bringing from sixty cents to one dollar a pound. The economical housekeeper in buying a fillet will buy the entire loin or section desired to give the right size, at thirty-five cents a pound, have the parts separated and reserve the part other than the fillet for steaks and roasts. Hip sirloin is the most desirable part of the rump and may be used for steaks and roasts. Housekeepers generally should know about the satisfactory cut from the rump called the aitch bone. This weighs about six pounds and is to be bought at from seven cents to twelve cents a pound. There is considerable difference in the quality of meat provided by the round. The top round furnishes a fair quality of steak at from twenty-two to twenty-five cents a pound. The flank is good for corned meat and sells at from seven to ten cents a pound. In connection with the cheaper cuts it may be well to state that many of the cheaper steaks may be made palatable by the process called "marinating." First, pound the steak lightly, then cover it with olive oil and lay it in a cold place for several days. The steak, when broiled, is fine. Liver should be carefully examined before using to

see that it is in a healthy condition. If streaked or spotted, it is diseased.

*Mutton and lamb:* The nutritious qualities of mutton are not so well understood in this country as in England which perhaps accounts for the fact that it is less frequently used here. Generally speaking our cooks know less about preparing it than they know about the preparation of beef. Mutton is in season the year round. The leg makes the best roast. The rib chops are most delicious and are correspondingly expensive. A mutton chop cooked as one can get it in the simplest inn in England, with hashed brown potatoes and a good lettuce, makes a luncheon good enough for any one. Lamb is mutton up to the age of one year. It is an expensive and delicious meat.

*Pork:* Some one has said that it is well to regulate the use of pork as we do the use of oysters by confining it to the months in which the letter "R" occurs. Of course this rule does not apply to the use of ham and bacon. Crisp bacon is one of the most appetizing of breakfast dishes and it is well to have it regularly, say once a week, on the breakfast bill of fare. But pork chops and pork roasts are very heating to the blood and should be used only in autumn and winter. Small sausages of a good brand are an excellent breakfast or luncheon dish. One must secure these from a trustworthy butcher. Pork should always be thoroughly cooked if danger to health be avoided. In fresh pork the fat should be a

pure white and the lean a fresh pink. A yellow color in salted pork is a bad indication.

*Veal:* This meat is best in spring and summer. The meat should be white and should have a tendency to pink. The leg makes the choicest roast and the loin an excellent one. The breast is good for stews and the neck can be used for the same purpose. A cheap roast can be made from the shoulder when boned, rolled and stuffed. The "knuckle" is used for soups. Its highly gelatinous quality is much valued. The combination of the "knuckle" from veal and the shin from beef makes the best "stock" known to the author. And while we are on the subject of soup bones, it is well to say that there is a choice here as in most things. A beef bone should be one-third fat and bone, and two-thirds meat. And its use does not end with the making of soup. The meat may be used for a hash or stew or even for croquettes. From thirty cents' worth of shin a good housekeeper can get a meat course for three meals besides her soup.

*Fish:* Now that the price of beef and mutton has gone up so considerably it is well to treat with care the claims of fish as an element of diet. Fish is not so nutritious as other meats because it has less fat, but it makes a pleasant and healthful change in the bill of fare if the conditions are right. The main condition is, that the fish shall be fresh. Fish deteriorates in quality much faster than other meats. One therefore should be particularly careful in the

selection of fish brought from a distance. Here personal inspection should be the rule and not order by telephone. The meat should be firm, the gills red, the scales bright and shining, and there should be no evidence anywhere of discoloration. In general, white-fleshed fish is apt to be more digestible than dark-fleshed fish.

The market affords such a variety in fish that a more lengthy study than can be given here is necessary to a proper discrimination. Briefly, haddock, cod and bluefish, among the cheaper varieties, may be recommended for baking. Haddock is also good for frying and is the best of the three mentioned. Halibut and salmon, more expensive varieties, are especially good for boiling, as is also the delicious red-snapper.

Each householder must find out for herself concerning the local varieties to be had and the proper ways of cooking these.

*Some indications of good poultry* are a soft pliable breast bone and smooth flesh. The body should be plump and fat but not fatty. Pin feathers indicate a young bird. Chickens are esteemed more of a luxury than a matured fowl but the latter, if properly treated, yields a more satisfactory return to the economical housekeeper.

*Fruits and vegetables:* These healthful articles of diet should be on the table the year round. Happily the best of these things come to those who take them in the order intended by nature and do not at-

tempt to force the season. In our huge city markets, the exchange between different parts of the country is now so perfected that the securing of exotic and hot-house vegetables is easily within the range of possibility at all times of the year if one is willing to pay the price. Such expenditure usually is only for the very rich who do not, in the end, profit as much as those who are content to take these things as they come. If one has tomatoes in February and strawberries in March, one does not give the home-grown product the greeting it deserves. Many an inexperienced housekeeper wastes her money on far and foreign-grown foods when she could furnish her table much more comfortably and economically from those supplied by the home market.

#### ACCORDING TO THE SEASON

To make oneself acquainted with the orderly progression of fruits and vegetables throughout the year, make out from experience and statistics a reference chart designating the season and its length for each article inscribed thereon. Consultation with the chart will often define the best possibilities of your menu—especially of your winter menu. In spring and summer when new potatoes, asparagus, peas, beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, corn, follow each other in quick succession it is easy enough to know what to buy. But the most of us do not think highly enough of the good root vegetables which stay with us through the cold season,—carrots, parsnips, turnips

and beets. In winter we have also cabbage, celery, onions, brussels sprouts, squash and spinach,—a variety great enough surely with the good canned things to be bought so cheaply, and needing only the proper cooking to set forth an acceptable table.

*Green vegetables:* These should be bought only when needed as they are easily spoiled and are difficult to take care of. If it is necessary to keep celery, asparagus and lettuce a day or two, keep the roots in shallow water not more than three-quarters of an inch in depth.

*Winter vegetables:* These should be well dried before storing. Apples need a very cold place in order to keep well. As sweet potatoes spoil easily they should be bought in small quantities.

#### BUYING IN QUANTITY

In the old-fashioned housekeeping of America before flats were invented or apartment houses dreamed of, when everybody had a store-room above ground and a cool roomy cellar below, it was possible to lay in for the winter large stores of things which the average householder of to-day finds it impossible to keep. The barrels of apples and potatoes which used to be the pride of the store-room are now for the most of us, alas, things of the past and even the flour barrel does not always furnish forth that place as it used to do. Indeed, for many of us, the word "store-room" is an idle one and a store-closet is all we may claim, Woe to the house, however, which makes no



provision outside of the usual marketing for the long cold months when fresh vegetables and fruits no longer make plain and easy the path of the marketer.

It is well to have some store of jellies and canned fruit and pickles on the shelves, though there are many reasons why it is no longer advisable to put up the huge quantities of these things that our mothers and grandmothers did. The drudgery of putting them up is great and the much larger variety in nutritious foods now on the market makes dependence upon such supplies less necessary than formerly. It is now possible to buy good canned fruit and jellies from the factories though one must know and be sure of the brand. Perhaps the best of the reasons for not putting up the quantities of fruit that decked our mothers' store-rooms lies in the present price of the fruit itself. This, which used to be a small item of expense, has in the last few years of abnormal growth in food values, swelled to an important figure.

*Filling the store-room for winter:* If we can not expect nowadays to find on the store-room shelves as huge a collection of jams, jellies and pickles as used to deck them, other things there are with which economy and thrift, as well as good living, bids us fill up the extra spaces. In the fall when the first supply of canned vegetables and fruits, of cereals, of olives, of tinned fish and meats comes in, pay a visit to your grocer or to some good department store and buy with liberality. Twenty per cent. or more can be saved by buying your winter stores in quantities.

Most women have a horror of spending any large sum of money at one time on housekeeping. It needs, however, only a little study to figure out the gain in spending a lump sum at the beginning of the winter season instead of dribbling out a larger sum for the same output during an appreciable space of time.

*The department store:* The department store of to-day offers often excellent bargains in groceries. The money at their disposal enables them to buy in large quantities and consequently, at regular intervals, to sell at smaller prices than is possible to the small dealer. It pays to watch for "sales" when the old stock is cleared out, in the interest of the new. If one is familiar with the more excellent brands of food, one runs small risk of a loss in picking up certain standard things in this way. In this branch of marketing as in others, it is only the experienced buyer who profits.

*Store-closet:* The store-closet should be dry, well ventilated and cool. Even when the space in this is small, as in flats and apartment houses generally, it pays to keep on hand a month's supply of certain necessary articles. Flour, tea, coffee, chocolate, vinegar, oil, spice, flavoring extracts, soda, baking-powder, molasses, corn-meal, rice, salt, pepper and gelatin—with these things every store-closet should be supplied in a sufficient quantity to keep things running without frequent replenishing.

In the store-room closet there should be a corner devoted to household necessities of another sort and

these also should be bought in quantities. Let the bottles of ammonia, the packages of washing powder and of matches, the cans of stove-polish, the pounds of candles, the bottles of bluing, the boxes of starch and soap, have the prestige of owning a shelf all to themselves from which they may be summoned when needed.

#### EGGS

During the winter months eggs rise to a price that makes it well worth the housekeeper's while to store them. If coated with some substance that excludes the air they remain in good condition for a long time. One should be careful, however, to cover them with nothing which will communicate a bad flavor, as the porous shells are very sensitive to this. A friend of mine has kept them successfully in small quantities, eight or nine dozen, by putting them in a jar of lime water, covering and leaving in a cool place. The freshness of an egg may be tested by putting it in a mild solution of salt water. If it sinks it is fresh. If it stays on top it is stale.

#### MILK AND BUTTER

One should visit if possible the dairy from which one buys one's milk supply and see with one's own eyes whether a perfect state of cleanliness obtains. Impure milk is a frequent source of disease and too great care can not be taken in choosing the sources of one's milk supply. Good milk is a bit yellow in color. There is much argument as to the relative

value of creamery and country butter. The methods employed in the creameries are usually better than those employed on farms. Perfect cleanliness is demanded in the creamery. But it frequently happens that the material used on a good farm for the making of butter is better than that used in the creameries. If the method of making the butter corresponds, the dairy or farm butter is then better than the creamery butter.

#### CAUTION ABOUT BUYING CHINA FOR EVERY-DAY USE

While on the subject of buying for the house, let a word be said, inconsequent as it may be, on the subject of buying the every-day china. Let the housekeeper indulge her taste as variously as possible in making out the sets for her company china closet. But in that china which is to be exposed to the daily wear and tear, let her choose one pattern and stick to it,—a pattern which her dealer in this kind has always on hand or can replenish on short notice. Such a course is economical and keeps the table harmoniously dressed.

## CHAPTER XXI

### SEWING AND MENDING DAY

A quarter of a century ago sewing occupied a much more conspicuous position in the industry of the household than it does to-day. In this, as in other branches of work, division of labor has done its holy and unholy work. While we may deplore the evils resulting from the handing over of much of our sewing to a class, the abuses consequent upon the sweat-shop system and other horrors incidental to the change noticed, still it is true that the average householdress is much benefited by the leisure gained through the new disposition. Much of the time she used to spend over the sewing-machine, or needle in hand, can now be devoted to solving other problems of the household economy. Even those of us who scorn the ready-made gown,—and wholesale scorn of this is very silly,—yet buy many articles ready-made which we used to toil over in the sewing-room, or what was almost as bad, spend weary hours with the seamstress in contriving.

There has been, however, too great a rebound from what was often feminine slavery to the needle. The average woman of to-day knows less than she should of the gentle art of sewing. Even if she does noth-

ing toward the construction of gowns or undergarments, there are still in every house other uses to which the needle should be put. No house where the income is a moderate one can be properly carried on without some attention to the labors of the needle and it is a strange thing that usually books devoted to household management give little or no space to this subject.

“I loathe the needle and I never touch one,” said a sprightly young housekeeper to an elegant woman of the before-the-war period. “My dear, I pity your house, your husband and your children,” was the reply. “I am no devotee of the needle but a day never passes that I don’t have to put in a stitch somewhere—sew on a button, run up a tear or mend a slit.” The old lady was right. Some sewing is necessary to the proper care of garments and the articles used about a house.

A regular mending and making-over day is as necessary for the smooth and agreeable running of a house as wash-day or ironing-day. Perhaps it does not need to come quite so often as these. Once in every two weeks in a small family may be often enough to go over clothes and household supplies to see where stitches are needed, though a week’s time will in most families develop a surprising number of demands upon the needle. But whether once a week or once in two weeks there should be a fixed time for attention to this important branch of household economy. The laundry every week sends up garments

with buttons missing and rents to be repaired. Dress skirts have a way of needing new braids or velveteens. Towels and table-linen and bed-linen, to say nothing of stockings, need to be darned. Often the bags used for various household purposes must be replaced. Lastly, supplies of bed-linen, table-linen, tea towels, dust-cloths and broom cloths frequently need replenishing. The new material must be cut and hemmed. A regular attention to this department helps much in keeping the house in proper order.

The writer is familiar with one household where the regular mending day is regarded by its members as the most delightful of the family institutions. The day or afternoon rather is kept as sacredly, though not so grimly, as the Calvinists kept Sunday. A large airy room in the top story of the house is used as the sewing-room and is furnished with every appliance necessary for furthering the work. On Wednesday afternoon, the feminine members of the family, five in number, gather there with the personal and household mending and sewing. They are not at home on that afternoon to any but a few intimates who are familiar with the ways of the house; and no one is allowed to be present, under penalty of a heavy fine, unless equipped with needle, thimble, thread and scissors. A small fine is exacted for the borrowing of these implements and the money thus stored goes to the sum used for adding to the attractions of the sewing-room. At five o'clock the maid comes up with sandwiches, steaming tea and a tea

service to put a finish to the gaieties of the afternoon. "I never go to a tea where I have half the fun that I always have on our 'making-over and mending afternoon,' " said one of the daughters in speaking of their Wednesdays "at home."

#### SEWING-ROOM

If possible there should be a sewing-room in each house, where sewing-machine, the implements necessary for sewing, the mending basket and the materials to be made up are kept. On the one hand it is difficult to keep a bedroom or living-room put to such use in perfect order; on the other, the convenience of a room designed particularly for the purpose of sewing is greater than that of one which is a sewing-room only by chance. In a sewing-room by intention there should be as much light as possible; and it should be provided with a locker for materials, a big basket or two for mending, a table for cutting, the sewing-machine and comfortable chairs.

*One to make ready:* Have needles, thread, thimbles, scissors and emery at hand before you begin to sew. It is particularly difficult while sewing to be jumping up and down for implements beside the inconvenience frequently of scattering thread and bits of stuff over the floor. It is a convenience to have scissors of different sizes, a large pair for cutting out, a medium size for ripping and buttonhole scissors for that department. Needles should be of the best-tempered steel. No good work is possible with



a poor needle. The papers marked from five to ten contain enough sizes to meet the usual requirements, five being suitable for darning cotton and ten being fine enough to use for lawn and cambric. The work-basket should always contain basting cotton as well as several spools respectively of fifty and sixty white cotton, the numbers of cotton most used in ordinary sewing.

*How to thread a needle:* It is well to remember as you thread your needle that old story of Hans Christian Andersen about the little tailor who had a beautiful daughter with whom his two apprentices were in love. They both sought her hand in marriage. The tailor's edict was that the one who finished a given amount of work in the shortest time should have her. She sat by while the work was going on and threaded the needles for both. To the one to whom she was indifferent she gave long threads; to her lover she gave short ones and he won the girl. Long threads tangle, break and get thin through use. Only for basting or running a seam are they advisable. The technical direction given by teachers of sewing for the length of the thread is the width of the shoulders, across the body from waist line to shoulder or from the tip of the fingers to the elbow.

When one comes near the end of the thread clip it with the scissors. Do not break it off with your teeth, both for the sake of the enamel and the neatness of your work.

## DARNING

This branch of repairing is the *bête noir* of many an otherwise industrious person. Yet some of the stitches used are found in embroidery and practice in them gives a good foundation for that beautiful art. Many of us can remember some lady of the old school of whom it might be said truly that her darning gave an added beauty to the article repaired. But most of us prefer to admire her rather than to imitate. Darning, properly defined, is the repairing of fabric by the insertion of new threads where the article in question has become thin or worn into a hole. It differs from patching in that the weak or broken part is woven back while in patching a piece of the material is inserted over the fault in the fabric.

There are several varieties of stitch used in darning. Those most in use are the running stitch, weaving and the diagonal stitch.

*For weak, thin and broken places* one should use the running darn, which means the placing close together on the wrong side a number of parallel lines of running stitches. It is well to leave small loops at the end of each row to guard against shrinkage in washing.

*For stockings and woven materials:* The term darning is more often applied to the repair of stockings than to any other of its branches. The method most practised for this purpose and for the repair of woven materials generally is that of plain weaving,



placing first a set of stitches vertically along the hole and then crossing these by others woven in and out. This should be done from the back or wrong side of the material. A quick way of darning is to take the stitches diagonally instead of lengthwise and crosswise. This does not make so finished an appearance, as it is not in harmony with the weave of the material, but it is sometimes more durable than the more usual method.

The hole in a stocking should be made as symmetrical in outline as possible before one begins darning. If it is very large it is well to throw strands of thread across the hole to keep it in shape. A very important rule in darning is that the ends of the darn should not be even because this throws too great a strain on one line of loops. If the darning is to last, let its contour be wavy or diamond-shaped, and let the darn be not heavier than the texture of the stocking.

*Darning woven material:* Where woven material has been torn it may be repaired by weaving back the broken threads. Very industrious people have been known to weave back the entire pattern in fine table damask where a hole has been torn, but the most of us are satisfied with a plain darn. A plain running darn will do for a weak place. The best effect is given to fine darning by the use of the raveled warp threads of the same material. Wool may be threaded by waxing it or twisting a cotton thread with it. Often a few stitches will hold together anything not

destined for the laundry, but where that is in question there should be a close grouping of threads.

*Kid glove darn:* The most satisfying way to mend a kid glove is to buttonhole the tear or slip with loops having a little interval between and then catch these loops together firmly with the thread. Such a darn will last as long as the glove and if neatly done is far from unsightly.

#### PATCHING

This is setting a piece into a garment or other article to take the place of a worn part. When the hole is too large for darning, the provident housekeeper must patch. A good general rule is that it is better to use an old piece of the stuff to be darned than a new one as the new may tear the fabric besides looking out of place. One should find the center of the hole, cut it into proper shape, either square or oblong. A round patch is seldom advisable. Then proceed somewhat according to the nature of the material. If it be coarse and of little value, running or hemming the right side of the garment to the patch, overcasting the raw edge on the wrong side, may do. If the material is fine, more elaborate means must be used and dainty embroidery stitches taken.

*For repairing household linen and underclothes:* Cut out the worn part in oblong or square shape, cut the corners diagonally, turn in small folds on the four sides and hem neatly to the patch inserted from

the back. Turn the raw edges of the repairing piece inward and hem or run on the wrong side. The width of the space between the hole and the outer edge of the patch should be equidistant all around.

*A neat strong patch for heavy material* is inserted from the right side. The edges are not turned in on the wrong side, but they are overcast or have the blanket stitch over them. Naturally, therefore, larger folds than in the hemmed patch must be allowed both on the patch and the garment. Lay the patch on the garment with the folds, the edges of which have been overcast, turned inward. Overhand the patch to the garment. Turn to the wrong side, cut the garment as near the overhand stitches as the depth of the fold on the patch. Now cut diagonally in the corners toward the stitches, turn back the edges beyond the patch, overcast and press with care.

*Patch for fine damask:* Table-cloths and napkins need the most delicate patching in order to look well. A tear or slit in the damask may be remedied by overcasting both sides, opening the place and weaving ravelings of the damask back and forth over the torn place. But more arduous methods are needed for a hole of size. The damask used for mending should be soft, as stiff material can not be worked in. After having cut away the worn material in oblong or square shape, cut a patch exactly the right size and matching the pattern of the damask. Now place

the patch in the hole and draw together with straight horizontal stitches closely massed or with the old herring bone stitch, the stitches a little distance apart and made slantingly.

For children's clothes where they have had hard wear, circular patches are sometimes used. They can be stitched in, stretched into shape without nicking the patch, which last is a consideration.

*As to a flannel patch:* It should be remembered as this material does not fray that it is not necessary to turn the edges under. The edges may be carefully overcast or held down with the herring bone stitch and thus look neater and less clumsy than if turned under.

#### TURNING HEMS FOR TABLE-LINEN

A trick which makes the hemming of table-linen play rather than work is to make an additional crease in the linen after the hem has been turned, a crease turned back exactly at the line where the hem begins. Then the hemming itself becomes merely the work of overcasting and can be done much more rapidly and evenly than by any other method.

#### HOW TO MEND THE FRAYED HEM OF A PETTICOAT

Take a sharp pair of scissors and cut the hem in the fold all the way round. Turn the edges inward from both sides to a depth sufficient to conceal the worn part and then overcast. This makes a durable, though not handsome, repair.

## DUST-CLOTHS

Dust-cloths and other cloths for household use. It goes without saying that a large supply of these articles is necessary. But it is not out of the way to insist that these things should be properly shaped and hemmed. The maid likes better to handle them if they are rightly made and they run less danger of being thrown into the waste box by the laundress. Indeed it has been the experience of the writer that the laundress will employ every subterfuge and evasion known to her kind to get out of washing what she calls "rags." Hem them and at once they assume a dignity not known to her before. Dust-cloths should be squares of white cheese-cloth with very narrow hems.

## RIPPING

Mending, darning, patching—these humbler branches of the art of sewing—are the only ones considered in this chapter as they are the only ones which have to do with the weekly management and care of the house. To them, however, might be added one other industry of the sewing-room which it pays to cultivate with some regularity and assiduity. This is the habit of ripping up old garments or half-worn or unsatisfactory ones, taking apart the trimmings of hats, sorting these and laying them aside for future use. Ripping should be done carefully and in a leisurely manner with the points of



fine small scissors. The person who snips the thread at the top of a seam and then tears it the rest of the way is not apt to find her material when the demand comes for it in so serviceable a condition as the one who takes a little more time and bestows more attention upon the work.

## CHAPTER XXII

### ACCORDING TO THE SEASON

#### HOUSE-CLEANING

The old-fashioned way of cleaning house was, at best, a formidable way, one which struck terror to the hearts especially of the male members of a family. There were of old, as there are now, housekeepers who knew how to manage and those who did not—housekeepers who did things in a flurry and those who did them with composure. But notwithstanding the fact that the natural differences between competent and incompetent women are still what they used to be, a difference exists between the spirit in which people undertake the task now and the spirit of long ago. The general prevalence nowadays of the polished floor instead of the dust-attracting carpet has something to do with this. The general use of lightly constructed metal beds and of light-weight mattresses makes the duties of this trying time less arduous. The manufacture of convenient aids of every sort for the purpose of cleaning adds yet another reason for the change indicated, which perhaps owes most of all to the more general dissemination of knowledge on the subject—to the books on household matters where all the facts in the case are classified

and put into an orderly arrangement. What used to be the special knowledge of the few who gained everything by the hard road of experience has now become the property of the many. It is easier to manage when one has before one instructions how best and most easily to do so.

*The house-cleaning season a necessity for most of us:* There are certain model housekeepers of to-day who manage so cleverly, who follow method so persistently and punctiliously that such a thing as the house-cleaning period, the "week of woe" as a friend of my own dubbed it, is unknown in their households. But the most of us still find it necessary to set apart a time of the year when we go into the business of cleaning and rearranging with a touch more thorough than the one employed from week to week. To this period we leave the buying of the new curtains and tapestries, the refurbishing of our old furniture, the annual change in the position of the furniture, the improvements we feel warranted in making from year to year for the bettering of our houses. And for the additional tax on our energies, we feel repaid by the sense of rest in novelty given us by the completeness and variety of the job.

*Spring or fall cleaning:* Some housekeepers go through this ultra business of cleaning twice a year, in the spring and in the autumn. Others deem once a year sufficient. If it is done but once, the autumn is the better time. The house should of course be clean at all times. But the arrangements for living

in winter are much more complicated than those for summer. As we spend much more time in the house in winter than in summer, the appearance and comfort of the house at that time are matters of greater import to us. Our new papering, our new curtains and tapestries, the new bedroom set or dining-room table,—these are more acceptable in the autumn when we must be stay-at-homes more or less, when our friends drop in informally or respond to set invitations. If the house-cleaning is an annual affair let it be in the autumn with a sub-activity in the spring which shall mean merely the sensible preparation for summer housekeeping.

The special tasks involved in house-cleaning have, the most of them, in some form or other already been treated in this book. They are, however, scattered, inserted without reference to the grand “tearing-up” we call house-cleaning. And the object of this chapter is rather to put these tasks in relation and to give general directions than to offer recipes for the work itself.

*Where to begin:* It may seem rather pedantic to say: Begin with a pencil and book—but even pedantry has its places and this is one of them. Set down everything that must be done both in the regular order of house-cleaning and as regards the special improvements you have in mind. Sort out these duties as far as possible and arrange them so that they dovetail into one another. You will never be able to carry out the program exactly as you have set

it down in black and white. Paper-hangers, cabinet-makers, carpenters and "help by the day" will see that you don't; but you will come out much better with a plan than without one. The amount of work you can do and can have done will be double.

*Practical preparation:* All the articles needed for cleaning should be bought and put in the housekeeper's closet before the cleaning begins. A list of these includes broom cloths, heavy flannel cloths for rubbing, dust-cloths, ordinary brooms, wall brooms, mop brooms, step-ladder, whisk-broom, rug beater, a rattan mattress beater, dust-pans, tacks, nails, tack-hammer, ammonia, kerosene, borax, gasoline, furniture polish, pumice-stone, linseed-oil and a long-handled window brush. To have them all together in some convenient place saves time and running about.

*Closets and drawers:* My actual work always begins with an overhauling of closets, drawers and pantries. This is work which can be done in a leisurely fashion at odd times and little at a time. Well done, it forms an admirable basis for subsequent and more arduous operations.

*The attic:* This is my next point of attack. In the attic, unless great care is taken, is the treasured hiding-place of Mr. Moth. Old furniture and clothing not in use offer special facilities for his devastating progress. The sensible and philanthropic woman does not allow large accumulations of articles not in use. The labor of going over these year after year, sorting and folding and cleaning is heavy.

And to keep things which there is slight possibility of one's ever needing or using is selfish when the world is so full of those in need. Years ago it fell to the lot of the writer to examine a number of trunks stored away in an attic by an ancient relative who had just died. Here were to be found the useless accumulations of years, muslins yellowed with age, old silks creased by time till they dropped apart when lifted out of their resting-places, a vast collection of gowns, hats, laces, odd pieces of stuff, all of which in their natural day might have been of some use to the world, now crumbling to pieces and serving only as a tax upon the energies of an impatient relative. The experience was a lesson to the writer in getting rid of the superfluous. House-cleaning time is the time to make way with stuff not in actual use and to benefit, at the same time, one's poorer friends.

*Rugs:* It is well to have all the rugs in the house cleaned, folded up and laid away early in the game of house-cleaning and so left till the other work is over.

*The up-stairs:* As the dirt, in spite of the greatest care, filters down from one floor to the next, the floors should be cleaned in order, beginning with the top and working on down. On the sleeping floor the bedrooms should be cleaned first, then the bath or baths and hallway.

*Program for cleaning bedrooms:* Take down pictures, curtains and other hangings. Take the bed

apart, brush it and wash the pieces. Clear the room of furniture, take the mattress out of doors, beat and clean this article of furniture. Sweep the carpet or floor clean and clear of all the loose dirt. Clean the walls and ceiling by wiping down with a covered wall-broom or by using one of the preparations now on the market for such purpose. These preparations clean the walls beautifully and may be used as successfully by a well-trained servant as by the man sent from the shops. Wash the woodwork, floors and windows. Clean and polish the furniture. Replace it and other furnishings.

*Cleaning the down-stairs:* Take the rooms in the most convenient order, cleaning from the front to the back, leaving the hall till library, dining-room and living-room are finished. If the cellar or basement was not cleaned after the attic had its turn, now is the time for it. The kitchen comes last on the list.

*Itemized order of cleaning:* The program for cleaning recommended in the preceding paragraphs follows without comment.

1. Make out list of things to be done during the week with a special reference to necessary repair and improvements.
2. Collect articles and implements needed in cleaning.
3. Clean closets, drawers and pantries.
4. Clean the attic and cellar.
5. Have rugs cleaned, rolled up and put away.
6. Bedrooms, bath-rooms and upper hall.

7. Living-room, library, dining-room, lower hall and stairway.

8. Kitchen.

*Housekeeping in summer:* For those who do not indulge in the out-and-out spring cleaning, there is yet a round of tasks peculiar to the season and necessary in order to make the house comfortable and habitable for the spring and summer months. These duties consist largely in putting away the furnishings we do not need and which serve in the warm weather no other purpose than that of dust collectors. The fitness of furnishings has much to do with the appeal made to our sense of beauty by them; and it is perfectly true that a room which may appear beautifully and appropriately furnished in February will, with the same furnishings, strike one as stuffy and oppressive in July. One rule of beauty and comfort obtains in winter, another in summer. In the latter season let us dispense with heavy hangings. Let us do with the fewest pieces of bric-à-brac and the minimum quantity of rugs. By the process of elimination the housekeeper's work is lightened and a sense of coolness and comfort diffused through the house.

Still other methods should be used for making easy the work of the house during the summer season. Cold meats may be used where hot ones have been necessary. The fruit provided by the market may take the place of made desserts. With care even the householder and family who remain within city lim-



its, during the warm season, may slacken their work to something like a vacation pace.

#### CARE OF THE HOUSE IN SUMMER

*How to make the house ready for closing:* The first rule is a comprehensive one. Leave everything as clean as possible. Have your rugs rolled and put in a safe place after cleaning. Fold or put away curtains and tapestries. Don't leave anything eatable where mice can get at it. Wash the kitchen, pantry and laundry floors with water to which a little carbolic acid has been added. The plumbing should be flushed with carbolic acid water and flushed again just before you leave with hot sal-soda water. A gallon of water needs a pound of soda. To protect the house from that deadly danger, sewer gas, pour a few spoonfuls of sweet-oil into each trap before leaving. This will prevent the evaporation of the water in the trap or the breaking of the water-seal supposed to protect the house usually from the danger of sewer gas. Camphor-balls strewn along the edges of the carpet will protect it from moths; so will pieces of cotton dipped in cedar oil. And after all this is done, no matter how speckless and dustless is the condition of the house at the time of your departure, you may rely upon it, by some miraculous means, known only to himself, Mr. Dust will have forced his entrance and made terms with the furniture by the time you return.

*Summer vacation housekeeping:* Many a hus-

band who rents a cottage in the mountain or at the seashore for Mary and the children during the summer months, wonders why Mary comes back looking exactly as tired as when she went away. The reason is very often Mary's own fault and is due to her thick-headed obstinacy in trying to keep up city housekeeping the whole year round. If the summer residence, instead of being a villa, as a summer house should not be, is a clean, comfortable place with, say, one big living-room, a dining-room, kitchen, plenty of porch room and the necessary bedrooms, the following rules may convey some idea of how it should be taken care of without too much labor:

1. Mop porches, living-room and dining-room once a day.

2. Let each person take care of his own bedroom, except for the weekly cleaning by the maid.

3. Let every person lend a hand the last thing at night to clearing up the living-room and leaving it in order for the morning.

4. Let the cooking be simple and wholesome. Cut out pastry altogether and have coffee but once a day.

5. Whenever possible, dine out of doors, making a picnic of the occasion.

6. Let each member of the household, including guests, do his or her part toward making the house-keeping wheels go smoothly. There is no reason why some of the strength gained in rowing, walking and living out-of-doors should not be put at the service of Madam Housekeeper.

## CANNING FRUIT

The special household industry of the summer and autumn months is that of canning fruit, making ready the store-closet for the time when the generous earth no longer yields abundance of fruit and vegetables. A few simple rules follow concerning the purchase of fruit, the treatment of cans and jars and the utensils necessary in cooking.

1. Buy the fruit when finest and juiciest. Do not wait till it declines in price and quality.

2. In putting up berries, separate the large and the small, using the first for canning, the second for making juice.

3. In selecting fruit for jelly, choose that which is underripe rather than that which is overripe.

4. Buy pint jars in which to can or preserve your fruit. The fruit is much less likely to be wasted if put up in pint jars than in larger ones.

5. Before beginning the work of putting up your fruit have on hand the utensils to do it properly. These are a good preserving kettle of enameled iron or still better of aluminum, a wooden spoon to stir with when necessary, a skimmer, a dipper or ladle for putting the fruit in jar or can, a pair of scales, a pair of scissors, a funnel to fit into the mouth of jar or can, a pint cup to measure with.

6. When canning fruit that must be pared always use a silver knife for the purpose. A steel knife gives an ugly acrid flavor to the fruit.

7. Sterilize your fruit cans and lids the night before they are to be used by putting them in a bath of cold water softened by borax and boiling them for twenty minutes.

8. In the morning fill the clean cans with water, put on the rubber and the lid which must be screwed down tight. Then turn upside down when if there is a leak it is bound to show.

9. Never use old rings. They are useless but not too useless to serve you a bad turn.

10. Buy the best granulated sugar for canning and preserving. A clear syrup is proof of its purity. If such a syrup does not result from cooking, return to your grocer.

11. Be careful not to put your hot cans on a cold surface and not to let a draft of cold air strike them.

12. Be sure that your can is hot when you introduce into it the hot fruit. Many people wind a hot damp cloth about the jar. Others put the cans in a vessel filled with hot water while filling them.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE TEMPLE OF THE BODY

Thus it stands in the grand old Catechism from which many of us learn all the theology of which we can boast. If the injunction to devote the First Day of the week to religious exercises except such portions of it as are given to "works of necessity and mercy," smacks, to latter-day saints, of Sabbatarianism, it must be admitted that the qualifying clause does not lack elasticity.

Beyond peradventure it embraces the intelligent care of what we should regard reverently as the "temple of the body." Upon the preservation and upbuilding of this depends the welfare of mind and soul to an extent that may not be safely ignored. Health is a sacred duty.

In the practical talk we shall hold together on this subject, I shall not trench upon the province of the physician. Drugs are dangerous elements in unskilled hands. All the same, Nature, as the laity may know it, is a vast pharmacopœia of assuasives and curatives, and "Nursing makes for more in the sick-room than medicines" is a proverb that holds as fast as "Prevention is better than Cure." Which

last, being interpreted, means that where just precaution is observed, there will, as a rule, be no need of cure.

I purpose, then, to group in the pages that yet remain to us, a few general rules for the preservation of sanity in these bodies of ours, and simple directions for the repair of the same when natural laws have been broken to the detriment of the sadly undervalued "Temple."

Do not smile if we begin with the act of Breathing.

Millions never draw a real, true breath from the first to the last inspiration. "E'en down to old age" they live in half-breaths. When you rise in the morning set the window of your bath-room open, place yourself against the wall, and, closing the mouth, take a deep, slow breath, hold it while you count seven, thus driving fresh air down to the bottom of your poor, starved lungs. Let out the air as slowly as you inhaled it—always with the mouth closed. The mouth was never meant to act as a part of the breathing apparatus. Do this ten times before you take the morning tubbing. Manage to do it eight times during the day, if possible, and again when you are ready for bed—ten times in all. You will thus have had one hundred genuine breaths, such as God intended each one of us to take every time we go through the form of receiving and expelling His glorious life-giving air with the machinery He made for that purpose and for that alone.

Hardly a day passes in which I do not hear some-

body say—carelessly, or regretfully—“I never practise deep breathing. I suppose it is the thing to do, but I have never turned my attention to the matter.” I should be as much ashamed to own that I had never bathed my whole body. It is as unclean to retain effete air—often reeking with malevolent germs—in corners of the lungs, as not to wash out the creases of the joints, or between the toes. When you have refreshed the long-neglected organs with one hundred breaths per diem you will find that you are forming the habit of right breathing. At length nothing else will satisfy you. You will hunger and thirst for pure air, and enough of it. And, up-to-date, there is—thank Heaven!—no fresh air trust!

If breathing at all be a fad, then is deep breathing one. I could write pages in praise of it. Its virtues are not confined to the lungs. It assists digestion; it restores proper circulation to the blood; it clears the brain and tones up the whole system. And to think that not one person in five thousand ever really breathes more than half-way down his lungs! Deep breathing should be made a compulsory exercise in public schools.

After which preamble I give an extract from a writer of note who is thoroughly imbued with a sense of the importance of the duty.

“On arising and the last thing before going to bed, when you have on your night dress, stand with your back against the door and fill your lungs, breathing through the nostrils, with the mouth closed, until the

lungs can hold no more. Retain the breath while you count four. Expel it through the nose, counting seven. Practise this breathing movement ten times.

“Next, stand upright, turn out the toes so that the heels touch. Place your hands on your hips, the fingers on the diaphragm, the thumbs back—in the soft part of the back, either side of the spinal column. Now draw in a deep breath, force the air down, so that you feel the thumbs pressed out, through the expansion of the lower back part of the lungs; hold the breath while counting four, expel counting seven. Practise this movement six times.

“Third movement: Stand straight, head up, shoulders thrown back, arms hanging by the side. Now gradually raise the arms until they are high above the head. While you are performing this movement take in a deep breath through the nostrils until the lungs can hold no more. Retain the breath while counting four. Now gradually lower the arms, at the same time slowly expelling the breath, counting seven. Repeat six times.

“Practise deep breathing constantly. Take deep inspirations with the mouth closed, retain the breath a few seconds and exhale through the nostrils. Lay your hand on the abdomen when you take one of these deep inspirations, and you will see the flattening effect on the stomach. In a little while you will breathe correctly, waking and sleeping.”

From another authority almost as eminent we have



further confirmation of the wisdom of the advice to train the lungs in the exercise of the function that means life and health to the whole system. That the partial fulfilment of the duty leads to disease and decay, is a reasonable conclusion.

“Draw in the air slowly, easily and fully. When you have filled your lungs, without straining, hold your breath in for a few seconds, then slowly and steadily breathe out through the nose and keep your lungs empty for a few seconds before another inspiration. The muscles of the body which the will does not directly control, like the heart and the respiratory organs, work rhythmically. Therefore, in breathing, do not gasp and hurry and change your pace every minute. To practise the right method, hold yourself, sitting or standing, in a natural, erect fashion, with your head raised, throat free and arms hanging loosely. Do not practise within an hour after meals and if you get dizzy it is a sign that you should stop. Mouth-breathing causes the nose to become blocked up through disuse. This has its effect on the voice. Resonance and intensity are lost because the sound which should ordinarily pass through the nose is deadened.”

The last sentence tempts me to call attention to an error of every-day speech so universal that we have ceased to see the absurdity of it. We say this or that person “talks through the nose,” when we would describe the peculiar quality of voice attributed by foreigners to us as a national characteristic. When, in

fact, the man in question speaks as one might who holds the nose between thumb and finger, and forces voice and breath through the throat. As the writer just quoted remarks—"The sound which should pass through the nose is deadened."

How much the failure to breathe properly—that is through the nose and not the mouth—has to do with what our transatlantic critics sneer at as "the national catarrh," is a matter for scientific inquiry. It is probably accountable for the untimely relapse of so many of us into the piping wheeze of old age. So prevalent is this premature decadence that what is commented upon as "a young voice" in man or woman who has passed milestone number fifty, excites general notice and admiration. Old age is inevitable, but why invite it to take early possession of us?

Supplement the breathing exercises by a simple set of gentle gymnastics.

Take these directly after you have had your lesson in breathing, leaving the window open all the time, no matter how cold the weather may be.

Stand perfectly erect, chin level, arms straight at your sides, and shoulders squared for a full minute to let the lungs get quiet. Then, swing the arms back and forth at their full length, bringing them up to the level of the shoulders with each swing. Do this twenty times at the first lesson, increasing the number daily until you swing the arms fifty times every morning and every night.

If you like, you may get a pair of light dumb-bells, by and by. Do not fall into the mistake of swinging them two or three hundred times. That is labor—not healthful exercise. After the swing has suppld the arms, stretch them out straight in front of you and work the wrists up and down, shutting and closing the hand as you bend the wrists. Do this ten times. Next, stretch the arms out widely on a level with the shoulders, and, holding them stiff and straight, and the muscles tense, bring the palms slowly together without relaxing the tension of the muscles—as if you were pushing against an unseen obstacle with all your might. Do this, also, ten times, putting all your strength into it every time. This is the most useful of the brief list of exercises. It strengthens lungs, stomach and the whole muscular system, as you will see if you watch the swelling of cords under the skin and the growing ruddiness of the flesh, showing the answer of the blood to the strain. Now, take three deep, long breaths and stand erect for thirty seconds. Finally, stoop as low as you can, bending knees at right angles and the joints of the thighs in like manner. Rise to an erect posture, without laying hold of anything to assist you in regaining the perpendicular. Do this fifteen times.

You are now ready for the bath. The whole series of preparations for what the day may have for the body to do and to endure has not taken more than twelve minutes at the most. I have gone through the regimen daily for a dozen years, and I bring it

all and the rapid bath within fifteen minutes and account the quarter-hour thus spent as the most valuable investment of the day. It awakens all the organs to what old-fashioned people call "a realizing sense of their duty." It supplees the muscles, and stimulates the brain by encouraging the normal circulation of the blood. One man who adopted the system twenty years ago, and who has kept it up as a religious duty until now, tells me—"If I omit it for a day, I can hear my joints crack the next morning." He is sixty-five, and looks twenty years younger.

A third extract from the printed testimony of thoughtful students of physical culture as to a daily duty, will close a homily upon a theme that can hardly be rated too high in the scale of personal obligation. Our author now is a woman—and to our shame be it said—we are much more backward in recognizing the weight of obligation in this line than our brothers.

"To derive benefit from physical culture is one of the most difficult things to accomplish. Such a statement sounds discouraging, but the fault is really with women themselves, both business women and women of leisure. The former are hard pressed for time—they who most surely need the good of exercise—and the latter are—well, one might unkindly call it lazy! There is not the slightest doubt that untold benefits—in fact, the salvation of a woman's health—lie in physical exercise. But it is a long, tedious undertaking and requires no little strength of will to

carry it out successfully. The woman who persists faithfully is the one who reaps rich rewards. After all, when you think of it seriously, fifteen to thirty minutes in the morning and evening is not a great deal of time taken from one's busy day. If more women would try the exhilarating, strengthening process of exercise in their rooms, with windows wide open, there would be far less evil from confinement of business and home duties."

Do we reflect aright—do an immense percentage of us reflect at all—upon the momentous truth that upon the health of women depends the bodily sanity of the generation following? Healthy branches do not spring from a sickly stock.

#### THE BATH

Why the believers in cold-water bathing as essential to cleanliness, to health—and I had nearly said, to the soul's salvation—should insist upon the universal adoption of their creed, is almost as inexplicable as that the dietetic crank should seek to bind hard-and-fast laws upon the gastronomic consciences of his neighbors, without respect for digestive idiosyncrasies. I do not like to think how many useful lives have been sacrificed to the craze for the ice-cold bath. Here and there, a physician is brave enough to tell the man of full habit who has a tendency to apoplexy, that he takes serious risks whenever he plunges into a bath so cold that it drives the blood in

a mad rush from the extremities to the brain. Or, he has too much common sense not to dissuade the anæmic woman from the use of the icy shower, succeeding the hot bath, without which "she could not live through the day." The only drawback to her appreciation of the beneficial downpour is, as she moans herself—that she "can not get up a reactionary glow for hours thereafter and her hands and feet never get warm."

Cold water does not cleanse so readily or so thoroughly as warm. Florence Nightingale told the nurses in the Crimean hospitals over fifty years ago that more could be done, in the way of cleansing skin and wounds, with a quart of hot water than with ten gallons of cold. (A hard lesson for the British tub-topper to master!) Warm water opens the pores and softens the cuticle, allowing sponge or cloth to get out the clinging dirt, and removing dead skin with accretions of insensible perspiration. Cold water causes the pores to contract upon whatever they may contain. We have in two sentences the root of the whole matter. After clearing away what obstructs skin-action, by the use of warm water and bland old soap, one may *douche* the cleansed surface with cold water, and enjoy even to exhilaration the glow succeeding the shock and may safely indulge in shower and glow. In my opinion—and I do not utter this idly—there are as many bath-loving men, women and children to whom cold bathing is a positive injury as

there are those who may use it habitually without danger to health and life.

Whether the bath be hot, tepid, or cold, follow it up immediately by a brisk rub with a rough towel. Unless you are chilled to the bone, such a process will produce the desired reaction, bringing the blood to the surface, and making toes and fingers tingle with warmth.

Profound meaning underlies the ancient adage we quote often and carelessly—"Cleanliness is next to godliness." It is not easy for the soul and the intellect to live comfortably in bilious and congested bodies. Some saints have achieved this. But we are not—all of us—saints. We need every help we can press into service in the work of living decent, Christianly lives.

#### HOW TO GROW TALLER

Diminutive stature is an inconvenience, sometimes. It is always a mortification, especially when the short person is a boy or man. So well is this understood by physiologists that various devices are recommended by doctors, and sundry systems advertised by quacks, for overcoming the defect. I have the pleasure of writing out here brief rules for stimulating natural growth by simple and harmless means.

If you take simple stretching exercises your height will increase. Rising on toes, stretching the tips of the fingers as far toward the ceiling as they will go, then sweeping the hands over front, touching tips of

fingers or palms of hand to floor, keeping both knees straight, are excellent exercises.

The best time for the "stretching" is just after the bath in the morning and at night. Stand back against the wall, and on tiptoe, stretch both arms straight up to their utmost tension. Stand thus while you can count ten, let yourself down slowly to your heels, wait for twenty seconds, and repeat the stretching process. Do this ten times. Mark each morning the extreme point to which hands and head can attain. In the course of a month you will note slight, but steady growth. Persevere for months, practising faithfully twice or three times a day.

I know of one man who gained two inches in stature in less than a year—and this when he was twenty-two years of age.

#### SLEEP AND INSOMNIA

A prime desideratum for the human creature who would sleep wisely and well, is plenty of fresh air in the bedroom. One of my worthy coadjutors writes pertinently and with feeling on this head:

"Unless a current of fresh air be allowed to circulate in the sleeping apartment the air becomes stale and stagnant, the sleeper breathing his own breath, laden with slow but none the less deadly poisons, over and over again. The atmosphere is often further contaminated by the escape of coal gas, which, even though slight, is none the less injurious when inhaled for eight or nine hours every night. When gas has



been burned in the room several hours before the occupant goes to bed, unless the ventilation has been good, the products of imperfect combustion of coal gas are present in the air and must be inhaled by the sleeper to the great detriment of health. It is still a very common practice to heat rooms and especially bedrooms by turning on all the gas jets to the full and closing every aperture that might admit a little fresh air. An apartment treated in such a manner is no longer fit to be used as a bedroom, but it makes an excellent lethal chamber for those who contemplate a leisurely suicide."

When, in addition to the noxious influences our author enumerates, is added stale tobacco smoke from the pipes or cigars of John senior and junior, who have filled the adjoining rooms with the incense of the burnt-offerings to the genius of Home, during the evening, insanitation grows into abomination. Not infrequently the junior smokes surreptitiously in his bedroom, saturating curtains, rugs and bed-clothing with nicotine perfume. Without a dissentient syllable as to the cigar (if it be a good weed), I do insist that every sleeping apartment should be aired through open windows for at least one hour before bedtime, and that during that hour nobody shall stay in the room to add carbonic acid gas to the pure air from without. For that is what we throw off to mingle with the air with every breath we exhale. "Slow, but deadly poison," as we have just read. If we would sleep well, we must breathe well, *i.e.*, normally.

The young need more sleep than their parents and grandparents require, for they have to collect strength for growth as well as for waste. This is the philosophy of the maternal behest—"Early hours for the nursery." Women need more sleep than men—why, it is not so easy to explain. In reading up on this point a few days ago I happened upon something that pleased me too much to be kept to myself.

"The secret of more than one notable instance of beautiful mothers and grandmothers is acknowledged to be due directly to the ability to take a quiet little nap at any time of the day, when a busy afternoon and a long evening are before them. It really seems, then, one of the cleverest attainments open to the eternal feminine—this capacity of capturing forty winks whenever she pleases."

Until I read that paragraph I had never regarded the ability to "catch a nap" at any convenient place—and in all sorts of inconvenient places—as a feminine prerogative. It is a natural gift with some, perhaps. It might be acquired by any and every woman. Ten minutes' sleep in the dark corner of a "Ladies' Waiting-Room" in station, or hotel; a nap on a sofa or in an easy chair in my own drawing-room between the lights, when I had dressed for a dinner, and had yet fifteen minutes before the arrival of the guests or guest who may be depended upon to be five minutes ahead of the rest; a delicious doze in a swift railway-train—these have made me over as good as new, times without number. I doubt not that they have

added sensibly to my length of vigorous days. Cultivate the accomplishment, if you have never yet learned it.

*Insomnia* is an affliction, let it be the result of diseased nerves or a natural infirmity. I could fill a volume with proposed remedies for it. I must omit all but a chosen few.

The friendly chemist to whom I already owe so many suggestions and helps in the preparation of my book that I despair of repayment, writes apropos of applications for remedies for insomnia:

“As to insomnia, my own remedy is to withdraw the blood from my brain by setting my stomach to work with food to be digested. I simply go to the cupboard and partake of the eatables there. Then I quickly lie down. The same deliberate regulation of the blood-flow I find effective when I awake and start ‘a-thinking’ in the night, which I often do—a bad habit, too!

“In severe cases I advise the purchase of a tiny electric lamp fed from a small storage battery, if the bedroom has no electric fixtures. Paint the bulb with asphaltum or with paste, colored black with ink, except a little spot on it the size of a very small pea. Fix this bulb above the bed so that in lying down you have to look at the spot almost backward while looking upward. This scheme is based on the fact that in sleeping the eyeballs turn naturally upward so that only the white is visible. Try that by gently opening the eyelids of any sleeping person and you

will see only the white of eyes. This "spot looking" produces sleep in a short while, in most cases. Then, again, don't eat much before retiring and drink a glass of hot milk containing a pinch of bicarbonate of soda. If milk disagrees with you, use hot lemonade. Many sleepless ones get up and walk the floor, counting each turn at a certain spot. This tires the overactive mind quickly. Others imagine greensward, ever extending, and repeat: 'A-nice-green-greensward.' This, too, produces sleep. Never use narcotics except when the doctor wills it. When you are once used to them they gradually lose effect and you have to use larger doses all the time, detrimental to the nerves."

A partial repetition of the counsels here offered is found in a late issue of a medical journal:

"The sound of water dropping slowly and steadily into a pan occupies and quiets the brain. This is the principle on which we are told to count sheep going over a fence, and do any sort of automatic thinking. One victim cured himself by keeping the eyeballs looking down. Another kept them rolling in one direction, repeating, meanwhile, a certain number or figure. An intellectual exercise should be stopped a half hour before bedtime. A glass of milk, instead of the usual copious drafts of water, taken during sleeplessness, will often help to overcome it."

The simple expedient of keeping a slice of bread and butter within easy reach to be eaten should sleep prove coy has won for me many hours of refreshing

slumber. The mere fact that you can get it, is a sedative. When eaten it makes the stomach the ally of the tired brain by drawing the blood away to assist in the work of digestion.

#### NIGHTMARE AND SNORING

If you sleep upon your back with your arms above your head you invite the snoring habit, and, almost as surely, a nightmare. The position interferes with the heart action and pumps the blood to the head. Moreover, it impedes digestion. Nothing but will power will break you of the trick. Practise what scientists call "auto suggestion." Resolve nightly on lying down that you will lie on the right side and keep your arms down. If you have a room-mate impress upon that person the friendly duty of awakening you roughly if the obnoxious position be assumed. An elastic band worn under the chin to keep the mouth shut will prevent snoring. No one can snore freely unless the mouth be open.

A common-sensible physician contributes the annexed preventive of nightmare: "Nightmare is generally caused by lying on the back while asleep, and the pressure of the viscera on two large blood-vessels situated near the spine and running parallel therewith. To prevent, tie a large hard knot in a long towel, or piece of muslin, etc., in the middle, then fasten the towel around the waist in such a manner as to have the knot over the spine. When the sleeper happens to turn on her back the hard knot

will feel so uncomfortable that she will be compelled to roll over on either side."

The assertion—"I can not get to sleep in the daytime!" is usually uttered so positively as to put argument—much less denial—out of the question. I meet it, then, with the simple statement as firmly enunciated—"But you can rest, if you do not sleep." Utter relaxation of the nerves and muscles, the determination to accept in passive submission Jenny Wren's wooing invitation piped from the house-top—"Come! and be dead!" are the next best things to sleep for lulling unrest and lengthening human life.

An author better-qualified than I to instruct you in the *modus operandi* of the art, of which she is a past-mistress, goes thus into the details of the several stages of the making-over of the tired woman:

"It is very necessary to learn how to *rest* properly. Do not insist that change of occupation is rest: there is the greater delusion. To acquire perfect rest, settle yourself in a corner, arrange your feet and arms, and, indeed, your whole body, until you feel comfortable from head to foot.

"Sit in this position for five minutes, motionless. Don't move, don't do anything, but take long, chest-developing, easy breaths. Whether you close the eyes or leave them open does not matter. But don't move! At the end of five minutes you will feel very much rested. If it is possible, take these rest treatments two or three times a day. At any rate force yourself to observe the treatment at least once every

day. You will be surprised at the amount of good it will accomplish for you.

“The nervous woman who feels inclined to scream if the door bangs or any one drops a fork, the girl who is ‘not in the least cross’ (though all her family think she is) but who ‘can not help being irritable,’ needs ten minutes of absolute relaxation at least once a day in a quiet, darkened room. She is simply over-worked and run down—a victim of nerves.

“On nervous days when you feel like flying out of the window from sheer irritability, stand erect, hands clasped in front and head bowed, having expelled all the breath from the lungs. Now slowly lift the head and shoulders until the head is very erect and inhale deeply through the nostrils. This exercise will, in a few minutes, cause the nervous feeling to subside, and, incidentally, is an excellent way of reducing a double chin.”

## CHAPTER XXIV

### DOMESTIC MATERIA MEDICA

A domestic medicine chest stocked with drugs is a dangerous thing. I am disposed sometimes to think that familiarity with what is technically known as "Materia Medica" is a snare to the housemother. She would better leave the selection and the handling of drugs, especially those that contain mineral matter, to apothecary and physician. She is passing wise in her generation if she makes a careful study of the properties, values and uses of the contents of larder and store-room.

It is not enough to say that this meat, that vegetable, or the other sweet disagrees with one. She should know why, and what to substitute for the unwholesome article. She should know, furthermore, what course of diet will correct stomachic, nervous and intestinal disorders; what to eat in hot weather, and what will supply fuel to the human system in mid-winter.

The ignorance of nine-tenths of our otherwise intelligent housekeepers upon the points I have indicated is appalling to one who has even a tolerable degree of familiarity with the remedial treasures stored



in nature's pharmacopœia. It is not practicable in the limits of a single chapter to do more than hint sketchily of these treasures. The mother who makes this branch of medicine a study converts her market-basket into a dispensary, and constitutes herself the health officer of the district represented by her household.

Descending—or rising—to particulars, she will then know the curative properties of every-day preparations of vegetables and fruits, handled with habitual thoughtlessness and partaken of recklessly by those for whom she caters. For example, *apple sauce, hominy, indian meal, mush* and *wheaten grits* are excellent correctives of constipation, and should not be eaten by adult or child who has a tendency to laxness of bowels. *Rice*, boiled plain, or with milk, or made into gruel or jelly, heals irritated intestines, and comforts by coating the inflamed lining of the stomach.

*Boiled* milk, when taken hot, is a gentle laxative. When allowed to cool, it binds instead of loosening. These facts should be better known. Even physicians, in prescribing boiled milk for patients suffering from "summer complaint" or similar troubles, sometimes order boiled milk as a dietary without specifying the temperature.

The value of *celery* as a nervine is known to comparatively few. The hankering for it frequently felt by brain workers and "fidgety" women is set down as a whim, when it is, in fact, an eloquent point-

ing of nature to a specific. The same esculent is useful in cases of nervous dyspepsia and rheumatic gout. It should be fresh and crisp and be eaten freely.

*Onions* are also an excellent nervine. They should be boiled in two waters and thoroughly cooked. For bilious disorders, influenza, insomnia and muddy complexions, their value as a steady diet can hardly be overrated. *Lettuce* is highly recommended for insomnia. A light meal of fresh lettuce, not too sharply seasoned, and thin brown bread and butter, eaten just before bedtime, will induce drowsiness when the doctor's soothing drafts have no effect.

I have quoted elsewhere and more than once the title given to *spinach* by a renowned writer upon dietetics—"The Broom of the Human System." Its specific action is upon the blood. It is also a gentle laxative, and a solvent of biliary calculi, or gravel. It brightens the skin, as it contains iron, salts of potassium and other helpful ingredients. I remark regretfully, in passing, that this invaluable green vegetable is more frequently maltreated in the cooking than any other that comes upon our tables.

*Tomatoes* move the liver, cool the blood, are easily digested by dyspeptics—in short, are invaluable in all classes of disorders for which old-fashioned doctors prescribed calomel.

*Asparagus*, properly cooked, is easily digested and a gentle sudorific, acting upon the skin and inducing a flow of healthful perspiration.

*Rhubarb*, or *pieplant*, should be eaten frequently

by rheumatic sufferers, since it works directly upon the blood, cleansing it from the uric acid which provokes rheumatism.

*Lemons* are anti-bilious. A southern planter whose field-laborers and house servants were singularly free, year after year, from malarial fevers which scourged neighboring plantations, told me that he laid in lemons by the dozen boxes, dispensing them every day to his family and employees instead of administering quinine. A roasted or boiled lemon, filled while hot with sugar, and eaten still hot, just before retiring, will induce perspiration, relieve hoarseness, and often break up an incipient cold.

*Cranberries* are almost a specific for erysipelas and for a tendency to scrofula.

*Figs* are a well-known aperient, eaten fresh, dried or stewed. They are also recommended for cancerous diseases.

*Blackberries* are a tonic and an astringent. *Black raspberries* and *strawberries* have a tendency in many cases to induce constipation, an effect caused by the seeds, not by the pulp. Mothers, mindful of this property, should exercise a wise supervision of their children's indulgence in small fruits.

*Peaches* may be called a general regulator of the internal machinery of the human body. When ripe and sound, they may be eaten in incredible quantities by the fruit lover. By a strange and beneficent double action, they correct constipation and as effectually brace and heal the too-lax intestines.

Food chemists rank *currants* among the most healthful of foods. They say that ninety-nine per cent. of the fruit is actual nutriment. It is not only invaluable as a body-builder, but it is highly recommended as a purifier of the blood.

Fruits contain predigested food elements which do not clog the system, and are valuable in sustaining strength. Fruit acids cleanse the stomach and bowels and are at the same time valuable as nutritive elements of diet. They are foods and medicines, or foods which avert the necessity of medicine.

Fruits of loose texture containing an abundance of water are the most digestible, while those varieties which are firm and compact are more difficult of digestion. The nutritive value may be less than that of vegetables, but the large amount of water, sugar, salts and organic acids they contain is useful in purifying the blood and also acts favorably upon the secretions of the body. As appetizers and stimulants they are invaluable and give variety to the diet.

Fruit eaten before breakfast or at the meals helps to reduce the redness of the nose and otherwise improves the complexion. Care should be taken not to eat the skin or seeds or any other indigestible portion of the fruit. It must, of course, be perfectly ripe.

No better name has ever been devised for the fresh vegetables with which summer is prodigal than that honored by Scriptural phrase as "the kindly fruits of the earth." "Kindly," because they satisfy the craving of the system for assuasive, cooling acids;

they are fertile in phosphates, generally easily digested, laxative, and, best of all, are antidotes to bile engendered by summer heats. It will be remembered that the royal author of the most wonderful love-song ever written says—

“As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood” (or orchard) “so is my beloved among the sons. I delighted” (as the marginal reading is) “and sat down under his shadow and his fruit was sweet to my taste.”

The like proud preëminence among fruits has been accorded to the King of Fruits by writers of every age. Chemists and learned dietitians join in the chorus of praise. We are told in so many words that apples are the most valuable article of diet that comes to our tables, containing more phosphates in proportion to their bulk than any other food. A recent treatise upon the Apple by an English physician—a specialist in dietetics—advises us to “eat uncooked apples regularly, in moderation, and years will be added to your life while the evidences of age will be long in coming.”

And again—“Phosphoric acid” (in which apples are rich) “contains the least amount of earth-salts, and for that reason is probably the nearest approach to the Elixir of Life known to the scientific world.”

A brother-scientist “sees no reason why one who eats apples daily, ripe and uncooked, should not live and keep well until one has rounded out a century of human life.”

“An apple a day  
Keeps the doctor away,”

says the old wives' couplet.

A barrel of sound, ripe apples—when they are highest in price, costs less than three visits from the family physician and the bill of three prescriptions at the corner drug-shop, to say nothing of the wear and tear of anxiety and nursing upon the mother's nerves. It is not a week since I heard a grandmother, whose vigor is a marvel to her large circle of friends, aver that she had not had occasion in fifteen years to take an aperient.

“Why should I?” she replied to the exclamation that met the assertion. “I eat an apple every night of my life, and often five or six during the day. They are my nervine, and my solace. They are anti-bilious, anti-scorbutic—in fact anti-all that is evil in the human system.”

Some unfortunates can not digest apples—so I am told. But for a fair percentage of such idiosyncratic victims in every civilized community, the respectable druggist would starve, or go out of business.

#### MEATS

Personally, I am not what is usually known as a vegetarian. I believe that meat was given man for food. When I discourage the use of “heavy roasts” of beef, mutton and pork in summer, I would not shut out from the table the tender, juicy beefsteak (always broiled, and never fried), the toothsome lamb

or mutton chop, and broiled bacon, thin as writing paper, and just crimped by the fire. Partaken of in moderation, they are good for the service of man.

A word as to roasts of beef, mutton and hot pork. Beef is a blood enricher, and with the other meats named is a heat-producer. These meats contain in larger quantity than any other foods carbon, and on this account are valuable for winter use. I need hardly say that the physique most in peril in the heated term is that usually known as the "full-blooded." The tendency of the blood, in plethoric people is to the cerebral vessels, distending them, and thus threatening, in excitement or unwonted exercise, their rupture. Persons with the same physical habit are more liable to fevers.

Moreover, the fibers of these meats, especially of pork, are tough and difficult of digestion. The digestive system is relaxed by heat and less capable of assimilating heavy foods. As housekeepers we readily comprehend this when we recall how difficult it is to mince meat with a dull blade. Digestion is accomplished by the combined action of the gastric juices and the muscles of the stomach.

I wish I could impress upon my readers the absolute necessity of thorough mastication of food, thus simplifying the task submitted to the faithful and too often outraged stomach. In winter the whole system is braced—keyed up, if you have it—to its work. In summer—changing the figure—it is below concert pitch.

In summer also, on account of heat, and of inertia induced thereby, there is a disinclination to the regular and more energetic exercise which one craves in the colder months. The effete matter, which is the residuum of undigested food, remains in the system instead of being thrown off.

What are we to say as to hot breads, boiled puddings, dumplings and pies? Even under the most favorable conditions of temperature and bodily vigor they are slow and difficult of digestion. When the dog-star is raging, and all the active forces of the body are below par, the imposition of unnecessary labor upon the languid digestive organs is downright cruelty.

Fish is known as cold-blooded; that is, deficient in the "red corpuscles," which have earned for flesh the term "hearty foods." Fish also contains wholesome phosphates, which neutralize in some degree the effect of fats.

#### EGGS

A correspondent affirms confidently that "two eggs contain more real nourishment than three pounds of meat. One person would get more nourishment from a piece of meat the size of his hand than he would from three pounds of it. The more meat, the less real good. Of course, one pound of meat does contain more stimulant (temporarily) than two eggs, but the eggs 'build up' and store energy, while the meat in a few hours has done its work of temporary stimulation."



This is an individual opinion. The belief that eggs are wholesome for everybody is a fallacy which dietitians have difficulty in dispelling from the popular mind. At least thirty per cent. of the yolk of an egg is oil, and the quantity of sulphur in the same is variously rated at from fifteen to twenty per cent. The cause of the variation is the difference in the comparative richness of eggs. Duck-eggs and the eggs laid by Guinea fowls are richer in fat and more heavily charged with sulphur than those of the common barn-yard fowl. The eggs of certain breeds of these last also vary in quality.

There is ground for the general idea that a diet of eggs engenders bile in persons who are predisposed to biliousness. It is likewise true, as is usually believed, that soft-boiled eggs are more digestible than hard. The albumen of the white and the fats of the yolk are changed by long cooking into a firm mass, almost as hard for the gastric juices to assimilate as what is known as "white oak cheese," made of compressed and cooked curds. A raw egg is one of the most digestible of foods. It is not pleasant to taste, or to the imagination. Hence, it is usually beaten into an emulsion with milk, and sometimes, when a stimulant is needed, with wine.

Next to the raw egg in wholesomeness, comes the "custard egg." To prepare it, lay it in lukewarm water for a minute to take the chill from the shell. Then put it into boiling water in a saucepan which is actually on the fire. As soon as the egg goes into

the water, lift the saucepan from the range; envelop it in a thick warmed cloth, or slip a tea-cozy over it and let it stand on the table or at the side of the range where it can not possibly boil, for six or seven minutes. The contents of the shell will be like custard in softness—white and yolk having cooked to equal consistency.

This, to my way of thinking, is the most palatable form of the boiled egg, as it is certainly the most digestible.

#### MILK

Here again, comes in the question of digestive idiosyncrasy. Some persons, normally healthy, and not finical in tastes, can not drink what has grown into favor rapidly of late years under the title of the “one perfect food.” Milk is said to combine all the elements of nutrition so harmoniously that non-digestion of it is impossible. Yet it does disagree—and seriously—with the stomachs of some who would fain drink it regularly and in quantities. It may be useful for such to know that people who are made bilious or otherwise uncomfortable by milk may correct the trouble by adding a teaspoonful of lime-water to each tumblerful. It will not affect the taste of the milk.

When milk disagrees with the baby, making him fretful, flatulent and colicky, add the lime-water to his bottle at each feeding. It will also correct the acidity of stomach that tends to produce “stomach rash.”

## DIETARY FOR RHEUMATISM

A whilom sufferer hands in his brief testimony:

“To those who suffer from rheumatism I would say that it is not necessary to take any remedy: that is, I have not found it so. Meat, coffee and sugar have an excessive quantity of uric acid. The remedy consists in taking less of them. Meat—once a day, or three times a week; coffee once a day, etc. One need not suffer for lack of things to eat. Milk, rice, eggs and well-cooked vegetables present opportunities for sustenance and pleasure unhaunted by the fear of pain to follow.

“One may find relief by eliminating from the dietary sugar and milk and cream, together in any form, especially in tea and coffee. Either may be taken alone, but not at the same meal. A glass of pure water an hour before meal time; two meals a day of good cereal and hot milk, fruit, if wanted; a generous dinner of meat, vegetables, etc., will cure an aggravated and painful case of rheumatic trouble, as I can testify.”

Leave red meats, such as beef, and also dark meat of poultry, out of your dietary.

There can be no doubt of the truth that diet in the treatment of rheumatism is three-fourths of the battle. Avoid red meats—beef especially—sweets and starchy foods. Eat acid fruits, spinach, tomatoes and salads freely. Drink a good natural spring sulphur water and do not touch spirituous liquors, ale

or wine. Wear red flannel next to the skin the year round—a lighter weight in summer, of course, but do not lay it off at any season.

Albeit not a physician, I venture to advise in addition to a judicious dietary, electrical massage, and “flushing” the system with some good natural mineral water. Drink at least a quart a day of one prescribed by your doctor. I speak feelingly, having been restored to health and vigor, years ago, by the regimen I now indicate. The less medicine you take the better.

#### DYSPEPSIA

Dyspepsia has a hundred forms. It is the Proteus of mortal maladies. It is not practicable to indicate one-tenth of the phases that make existence a burden to the dyspeptic, or to suggest remedies except in a vague and sketchy style. It is the national disease, and our “strenuous,” breathless life is largely responsible for the plague.

We are dyspeptics because we do not sufficiently masticate hard food; we eat too quickly; we drink too quickly, take too much fluid with our meals; do hard brain work while eating. We take meals in snatches while attending to the shop, the children, etc. We partake largely of hot, greasy foods; drink stewed tea charged with tannin; we injure the stomach by drinking strong spirits.

Tea, which contains much tannin, is peculiarly unwholesome when taken with fresh meat. It is said not to affect the digestion of salted or smoked meats;

but that is merely saying that the two last can not be made worse than they are.

No delicate stomach should be tortured by either. Salt hardens the fibers and dries up the juices of meats, and smoke adds creosote to hardness and desiccation.

Even tender, well-cured hams are rank poison to stomachs from which the coat has been worn by excess of acids or overwork. Were I appealed to by that most wretched of invalids—a confirmed dyspeptic—for counsel, common-sense, and therefore unprofessional, I should say, with the depth of pity that often goes with profound personal ignorance of the pain one is called upon to assuage—Leave off drugs, and study your diet carefully. Avoid fats, fried foods, pastries—hot bread and pies of whatever kind; eat plain puddings, custards, etc., in the way of sweets, and let candies alone. Eat slowly, and not heartily, but take nourishing meals at regular hours. Live as much as possible in the open air. In the summer go into the house only to eat and sleep. Take regular but gentle exercise, like walking, in the open air. Have frequent massage and plenty of sleep. Bathe daily in water to which sea salt has been added, following this with a brisk rubbing down with a crash towel. If apples and oranges agree with you, take them freely and often. Peaches, too, in season, will be excellent for you. Avoid the skins of all fruits.

I have had the unhappiness of knowing many dys-

peptics, some of whom were as savage as wild beasts under the affliction, and some who were thereby chastened into saints. I have yet to see one who was cured, or even temporarily helped by medicines.

If I had subjoined to the above list of recommendations a line from an old hymn—

“And keep a quiet mind,”—

I should have struck a straight blow at what is the root of the evil in scores of cases. Eating fast invites dyspepsia, under any circumstances. When the food is bolted between snatches of excited conversation upon painful or unpleasant subjects, or, worse yet, in gloomy silence, filled with somber thoughts and forebodings that change wholesome victuals to hot ashes in the stomach—diaphragm and gastric juices must suffer, although warranted to wear well and long.

#### SOME SERVICEABLE SIMPLES

The virtues of dried mullein leaves, smoked in a clay pipe, as tobacco is used, have long been known to the gatherers and venders of simples. They soothe an inflamed throat and relieve to some extent asthmatic breathing.

It may be used in similar affections—such as bronchial colds and coughs, steeped strongly, and sweetened with white sugar, and drank freely. Young or old plants are good dried in the shade and kept in clean bags. The medicine must be continued from

three to six months, according to the nature of the disease. It is very good for the blood vessels also. It strengthens and builds up the system, instead of taking strength. It makes good blood, and takes inflammation away from the lungs.

A contributor sends in a simple prescription to the efficacy of which I can bear cheerful testimony :

“One of the most efficient remedies for breaking up a cold during its earliest stage is camphor. When the eyes begin to water and there is the accompanying tingling of the nose and feeling of chilliness, place three drops of camphor on a lump of loaf sugar and place the sugar in the mouth. Repeat this dose every fifteen minutes until four or five doses have been taken. At the same time place the feet where they will become thoroughly warm. This will usually prove effectual in breaking up a cold, if it is taken at its very beginning. For a child but one drop should be placed upon the sugar, and five or six doses administered. Another method of taking the camphor, which is sometimes preferred for grown people, is to put a spoonful of sugar into a cup, add hot water, and from ten to fifteen drops of camphor. This makes what it is called a camphor julep.

Camphor may be inhaled with excellent effect in the incipient stages of a cold in the head. Saturate a handkerchief and hold it to the nose, breathing through it for two minutes at a time. Repeat hourly all day.

Nausea may be lessened and often cured by laying

cloths steeped in spirits of camphor upon the pit of the stomach, renewing as they dry.

*Garden mint* is a well-known remedy for disordered bowels, especially in children. Bruise sprays of mint slightly, put into a cup and pour boiling water over them. Leave until cold; strain without squeezing, and set on ice until needed.

*Virginia snake-root*: The curative properties of the wild shrub have long been acknowledged by physicians and housemotherly nurses. A decoction made by pouring boiling water upon the dried and shredded roots, allowing it to stand for an hour, then straining and sweetening abundantly is an excellent cough medicine. In a late issue of a medical journal we find mention of other and notable values.

“As a nerve stimulant it acts promptly, and is much used in depressed or exhausted conditions of the nervous system, especially in typhoid, typhus, marsh and puerperal fevers. It is applicable in the latter stages of diphtheria, smallpox, scarlet fever and pneumonia. It supports the vital forces and rids the system of offending matter by producing perspiration and a determination of blood to the surface. A cold infusion is often employed with good effect in dyspepsia, croup, throat and kidney complaints. A cold infusion is used for strengthening purposes and it may be drunk freely. Dose of the tincture is from half to a full teaspoonful three times a day.”

*Vegetable tonic and cough medicine*: Wormwood,



licorice, black cherry bark, horehound,—equal parts of each. To these add two quarts of cold water; let it simmer all day; strain well and add a pound of loaf sugar and a pint of best rum. Bottle and take a wineglassful after each meal.

*Dandelion blooms:* Put a handful of the blossoms into a pitcher, pour a pint of boiling water upon them, and steep, covered, for two hours. Strain off the tea, sweeten and drink ice-cold. It is good for disorders of the liver, as betrayed by headache and “spring fever.” It may be taken hot for headache and nausea.

*Olive oil* is highly approved by “the profession” as nourishing, easily digested and assuasive. It is a very gentle aperient, and a flesh-builder, working wonders with anæmic and emaciated children. It is said to be a nerve-food for their elders.

The oil is taken in doses of a teaspoonful at first, three times a day. As the stomach becomes accustomed to it, increase the quantity to one tablespoonful taken three times a day. Disguise the taste with orange juice, or mix it with a few drops of peppermint. Perhaps the oil may not be unpleasant to you taken pure. Some learn to like it. Get the best quality.

*Parsley root:* Scraped, steeped in boiling water, left to cool, strained, and sweetened slightly if desired—is given with signal success to relieve stranguery, partial or total.

*Watermelon and pumpkin seeds* are an approved

remedy for like affections, especially with children. The seeds are steeped in boiling water and drunk as a tea.

*Sage leaves* made into a tea, and sweetened abundantly with honey are a good gargle for a sore throat. If, to the decoction be added a little alum while the mixture is hot enough to dissolve the alum, the efficacy of the gargle is increased.

*Strawberry leaves*: A decoction of strawberry leaves allowed to stand until cold, then strained, is healing to a sore mouth, be the cause a foul stomach, or what in babies is called "thrash."

*Plantain leaves*: A poultice of green plantain leaves, scalded, and macerated into a pulp, is good for a felon or other sores arising from distempers of the blood.

*Flaxseed* ground into meal, or used whole, may be wrought into one of the most useful poultices known to doctors and nurses in cases of inflammation of the throat or lungs. The flaxseed must be mixed with boiling water and renewed as it begins to cool.

*Cold tea* is a cooling and healing eye-wash.

*Black coffee* drunk hot and strong, often relieves nausea. It is an invaluable antidote to opium poison.

*Mustard*: A standard antidote to arsenic, belladonna and opium, indeed, to any poison that is not corrosive, is a mixture of ground mustard and water. It should be drunk freely, and until it acts as an emetic.

*Raw eggs* are likewise convenient and effective antidotes to certain active poisons, notably, corrosive sublimate. The victim should swallow them in rapid succession until vomiting is induced. They coat the inflamed alimentary canal with mucus that checks the action of the corrosive agent.

*Salt and water:* A saturated solution of table salt is a quick emetic. It is well for the housemother to acquaint herself with the resources of her store-room to meet emergencies that befall the best kept homes. She will be amazed at the number of "First Aids" at her command.

*Olive oil*, if swallowed immediately after the mouth, the throat and the stomach have been excoriated by ammonia or cyanide of potassium, taken by mistake, will hold the evil in check until medical aid is procured.

*Sweet milk and lime-water* is soothing to a burned mouth and throat after an incautious drink of a scalding fluid.

*Green figs* are excellent for an obstinate boil. They are cut open and the pulp mixed in a basin. The poultice is warmed and spread upon linen, which is applied to the boil, and left in position for several hours. It "draws" the boil to a head.

*Stale bread and sweet milk:* Moisten the crumbs into a soft paste with the milk, and stir until warm in a cup set in boiling water. A favorite and most useful poultice for boils and other "risings" which must come to a "head" before they can be relieved.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### DOMESTIC SURGERY AND COGNATE MATTERS

Burns and scalds are, perhaps, the most common, as they are the most terrifying, of household casualties. In every kitchen, nursery and bath-room, should be kept labeled remedies for the disaster which always comes suddenly and is never expected, in spite of the frequency of previous mishaps of the same kind.

*Linseed-oil and lime-water* form one of the best applications to a burned or scalded surface that curative science has yet devised. Mix in a bottle two parts of oil with one part of lime-water, and shake well before using. The mixture should be kept in a cool place and corked closely. It will remain sweet for months.

*Castor-oil:* An emulsion of castor-oil and water—three parts of oil and one of water—is also safe and soothing. I have known the oil to be applied to a fresh burn, with no admixture, in the surprise of the alarm, with satisfactory results. This is a mother's story of the experiment:

“My baby had the hives, and obeying your pre-

scription, I was rubbing the eruption with castor-oil when a coal popped out from the wood fire by which we sat, directly upon the naked baby. It fell full into the crease between the abdomen and hips—thus making a double burn. Instinctively I snatched the bottle at my elbow, and poured some on the blister. The little fellow was in agony. So was I! The effect was magical. In the words of the old poem we read together when you and I were young—

“The babe looked up and sweetly smiled.”

Henceforward castor-oil has had an honorable place in our list of ‘Emergency Aids.’ ”

*Baking soda:* From another housemother we have a tale of soda as a ready helper:

“One day after filling a quart jar with grape jelly, the jar broke, spilling the entire contents on my left arm, from wrist to elbow. The jar had been heated thoroughly with hot water first. I at once ran to the pump and let the water wash the jelly off; then I covered the entire burn with baking soda, wetting the bandage after putting it on. The pain was dreadful; the neighbors thought my arm would be ruined. Instead of that it never even blistered, but healed in a short time without the least scar.

“Sometimes for children’s burns I mix the soda with enough lard to form a salve, as it is easier to apply when they can not keep still from pain, but I find just cold water and soda best.”

I have seen my cooks coat scalds with dry baking-

soda, and obtain relief from the smart in an amazingly short time.

*Dry flour:* If the burns be covered thickly and immediately with dry flour, there is a partial and grateful cessation of the pain. The philosophical principle explaining this is, of course, that the air is excluded from the raw cuticle, and that the contact of the air is, in itself, poison.

*Wood soot and lard* is an old-fashioned remedy for a burn, but one that is singularly efficacious. Soot and lard are beaten to a paste and spread on a cloth. Strange to say, they do not leave a black spot as the skin heals.

Before quitting the subject of burns, I will give formulas for rendering clothing and curtains fire-proof, for both of which I am indebted to a friendly and an accomplished chemist.

(1) "The following process has been used by a French chemist: Saturate the textiles in a solution composed of chloride of ammonium, 8 parts; sodium hyposulphate, 2.25 parts; sulphate of ammonium, 10 parts; borax, 4.5 parts; water, 75.25 parts. Hang up to dry without wringing.

(2) "Still another formula for fireproof cloth or any garment or wearing apparel is as follows: Dissolve by gentle heat forty parts of boric acid, thirty parts aluminum sulphate, seventeen parts gum tragacanth, nine parts potassium silicate, in 450 parts of water. Then make another solution of the following constitution: Thirty parts of sodium nitrate,

seven parts of ammonium borate, seventeen parts of ammonium phosphate, 400 parts of water. Mix both solutions and permit the mixture to subside and settle. Decant the clear solution, saturate the textiles with it and hang them up to dry without wringing."

#### FROST BITES

If frost bites are taken in hand as soon as the injury is received, much unnecessary pain will be saved in the future. To a pint of kerosene or coal oil add a pound of gum camphor which has been broken into small bits. Shake this until dissolved and then add half a pint of sweet oil. Saturate a soft rag with the mixture and wrap the injured parts with it. Continue this treatment for three days. Burns also may be treated in this way.

#### SNAKE — AND OTHER POISONOUS BITES

Every mother should know that the first and best thing to be done in the case of a bite from dog or cat or snake is to stop the circulation of the blood backward from the wound by a tight bandage and to plunge the injured part into warm water. Wash the wound out freely under the water faucet in the kitchen sink, or change the water as you cleanse the hurt, to get rid of the virus. If no water is at hand suck out the poison. Unless there be an abrasion on the lips or mouth it will do no harm. Many a life has been saved by this summary and homely means.

Then apply table salt to the bite, rubbing in all it will hold. Should the salt turn green after a few minutes exchange for fresh and continue to do this, washing the wound out with warm water, dashed with carbolic acid, after each application, until the greenish tint passes away.

In the "rattlesnake region" of Virginia and West Virginia, the specific for a snake-bite is whisky. The bitten person is given glass after glass of "mountain dew" until he becomes intoxicated. I suppose the explanation of the almost invariable success of the expedient to be that one poison expels the other. Certain it is that the sufferer awakes from his drunken sleep well, and has no more trouble from the wound. I have known too many cases of this sort which were cured by this homely and heroic treatment to doubt the wisdom of resorting to the whisky bottle if child or adult be bitten by a snake. A bottle of the best whisky I can buy is an invariable feature in our country outfit.

#### A CRUSHED FINGER OR TOE

Should be plunged into water as hot as can possibly be borne. The application of hot water causes the nail to expand and soften and the blood pouring out beneath it has more room to flow; thus the pain is lessened. The finger should then be wrapped in a bread-and-water poultice. A jammed finger should never be neglected, as it may lead to blood-poison.



## A SPRAIN

Get a pound of dried wormwood from the druggist and steep a handful of it in a pint of scalding vinegar, keeping it hot by setting the vessel containing it in boiling water. Dip linen cloths in it and wrap the sprained member in them. Change the bandages for hotter as they cool. When the vinegar runs low make a fresh supply of the wormwood decoction. Keep this up until pain and heat have abated. Then bind the ankle or wrist with strips of adhesive plaster to keep the injured ligaments in place until they knit firmly.

Having had a desperately bad sprain treated as I have directed, and recovered the use of the joint and muscles within a couple of weeks, it is a pleasant duty to "pass on" the good news.

A correspondent vouches for this simpler remedy for a sprain:

"For a sprain beat together the white of one egg and a tablespoonful of table salt until you have a poultice. Apply to the sprained member—right on the bare skin—change three times a day, and it will cure the worst sprained wrist or ankle in ten days, and no doctor's bill to pay. I have done it."

## WHEN A PIN IS SWALLOWED

For the fortieth—I am not sure it is not the fiftieth time—the coadjutor whom I long ago dubbed gratefully, "Our Courteous Consulting Chemist," is ready

with an anecdote that is characteristically humorous and helpful:

“I have a little friend with a fondness for a diet of nails and pins. Six times now the frantic mamma has rushed into my den and six times I have gently advised her to “stuff” the little kid with an exclusive diet of mashed potatoes, and no liquid whatever for about forty-eight hours. Then use plenty of nice castor-oil—no other laxative will do. The idea is to surround the sharp object with a soft, innocuous mass, solidly, until the object has been pushed through the lower intestines. The doctors always approved afterward of this. I mention the matter here for the information of mothers on farms, ranches, etc., not in quick touch with the usual professional wisdom.

“Feed the kid in such a case excessive doses of mashed potato, or sweet potato and nothing else.”

The most ignorant of us who read the daily papers is familiar with the word “encysted” from frequent repetition of it in stories of gunshot wounds. The mother should think of it as the one thing to be desired when a child has swallowed any hard substance beyond the reach of her ready finger. If he can not bring it up, make it comparatively harmless where it is. If mashed potato is not ready to hand, make the child eat all the bread he can be induced to swallow. Corn bread is better for the purpose than wheat, and brown bread better than white, because more viscous,

## FOR A CHOKED CHILD

Slap him smartly between the shoulders, and if the concussion does not bring up the obstruction, pick him up incontinently by the heels, and holding him in the air, head downward, shake him hard. If this does not relieve him, nothing but a surgical operation will.

## SUNBURN

Wring cloths out of water as hot as you can bear your hand in and hold them to your face, keeping up the applications—and keeping the water hot—until the fire seems drawn out of your face. Do the same to your arms and legs if you have exposed them too long to the hot sun while bathing. Sunburn, contracted at the seashore is especially distressing when bathers have yielded to the temptation to frolic in the shallows in bathing costume. The skin is softened by the water, and the burn takes the form of a scald. After applying the hot water, powder the skin thickly with a bland talcum and leave it on for some hours.

## EARACHE

Never be persuaded to put anything, not even warm water, into the ear except by direction of a physician.

(1) The best way to relieve earache is to heat an iron or a brick, wrap it in two or three thicknesses of flannel and pour warm water and laudanum on

the top, when steam will at once rise. If the ear is placed close to the flannel, the steam will permeate every part of it.

Mix a teaspoonful of laudanum in a cupful of water. Be careful not to take cold while the ear is warm from the steam. Bind a strip of warmed flannel over it until the flesh has regained normal temperature.

#### THE EYES

The ancient saw—already and repeatedly quoted—of the ounce of prevention, was never more pat than in this connection. We abuse our eyes in so many ways and with such stupid perversity that it is a miracle of Providence and mercy we are not a purblind nation. Oculists who value human happiness more than the repletion of their own pockets, warn us that electric lights, now illuminating thousands of homes, are pernicious to the eyesight unless steadied by lamplight or by gas burners. The loop of electric light is a series of flashes—electric sparks—as unsteady as brilliant. To study or write habitually by this alone will, in time, injure the strongest eyes ever set in human skull. Tempered and steadied by the more stable flame of a lamp or the even glow of gas, it does comparatively little harm.

The eyes should never be used when they are tired or weak from illness, nor should they be exposed to intense light at any time. The light should always fall on the work or book over the left shoulder.

An ingenious writer upon correlation of forces tells

us that to read, or write, or to employ the eyes in other ways requiring close application, when one is fasting, is a strain upon nervous energy equivalent to lifting a weight of thirty pounds. Whether his computation be correct or erroneous, it is certain that the prudent student will not work fasting. If you read or write before breaking your all-night fast you will, in time, rue it. Eat enough to keep the blood away from the brain, leaving it free to do its proper work.

Whenever the eyes ache from strain of whatever kind, bathe them frequently and freely in water as hot as may be comfortably borne. If they smart and are bloodshot, add a pinch of boric powder to a glass of hot water and bathe them several times daily with the wash, abundantly upon rising in the morning and retiring at night.

If you wear glasses do not let them press upon the eyes. They will, eventually, flatten the cornea, heightening the defect you seek to lessen.

Dotted veils have a bad effect on the strongest eyes. A good wash for eyes when inflamed from cold or loss of sleep is one ounce of distilled witch-hazel and one ounce of pure water.

For inflamed eyelids soak a handful of camomile flowers in one pint of boiling water for five minutes. Strain and use as a wash, when tepid. Dry on a soft towel and touch the lids with an ointment made of one part of oil of birch and nine parts of white vaseline.

Fresh parsley, boiled, will often cure inflammation of the eyes, if they are bathed with it. If the inflammation be very bad, make a poultice of the pulp at night and renew until the eyes are cured.

#### THE FEET

*Cold feet*, as a rule, are due to bad circulation, but very often are caused by the footwear. Socks, if not changed frequently and kept clean, are a cause of coldness. Woolen socks, cork soles inside the boots, and thick, substantial soled boots will do away, in many cases, with the trouble.

*Bunions*: I have known the following simple regimen to relieve cases of long standing: Soak the foot night and morning in warm water. Wipe dry and rub vaseline into the bunion, leaving it to dry on the foot. Then fit a bunion plaster—a thin one—about the inflamed part, binding into place with a strip of adhesive plaster. Adjust the bunion plaster so that the shoe will not press upon the foot. The pressure is the cause of the evil. Persevere in the treatment.

*Corns*: Treat precisely as you would bunions. The same cause produces both. Our superiors in civilization for many centuries—the Japanese—have taught us the use and the safety of the corn file. A corn or a bunion should never be cut with a knife or other sharp instrument. Deaths have been caused by such imprudence.

A good poultice for corns is one teaspoonful of tar, one teaspoonful of coarse brown sugar and one tea-

spoonful of saltpetre. The whole to be warmed together. Spread it on bits of kid the size of the corn.

*Callosities on the feet:* A physician sends me the following:

“Take glacial acetic acid at fifty degrees (not ordinary acetic acid) and dilute in the proportion of three to four parts of acid to one of water. Apply the mixture with a small sponge fastened on the end of a stick, nightly, until the callous peels off. As a skin renovator this mixture is unexcelled. It will remove a calloused area around the finger nails if the sponge be handled with the fingers. The fingers may feel sore for a day or two, but no harm is done and the sense of touch is improved.”

A laywoman offers a simpler regimen:

“If sufferers from callous spots would rub a few drops of castor oil on them twice a day for a few days, I think they would be delighted with the result. Continued use of the oil will in time effect a complete cure. My own feet were extremely painful. The oil was the last remedy I tried, and the only one that did me any good. It is a little slow but sure.”

*Tired, aching and sore feet:* If the feet are tired and painful with long standing they will feel much rested if bathed in salt water, and if after washing salt is rubbed over them it will close the pores and keep the skin soft. The addition of a teaspoonful of alum dissolved in a little hot water to the salt bath will help the cure.

*Or*—better still—mix twenty drops of carbolic acid with four ounces of alcohol; pour a little in the palm of the hand and rub the soles of the feet with it night and morning.

Alcohol alone will often bring surcease of pain.

*An ingrowing nail:* A quartet of grateful women declare that this is a “sure thing.”

For ingrowing nails—remove the shoe and stocking; put a piece of paper under the foot; heat a spoonful of tallow and pour it in and around the nail once or twice a day, until relief comes, which will be in a few days. If you haven't mutton tallow, lard will do, or any kind of fat and just as hot as it can be borne. There are two reasons for trying this cure—first, because it is simple, and second, because it is a sure cure. The paper under the foot is simply to keep the grease from the floor.

One of the four adds—“It seems to kill the pain and tenderness at once, and in a few days the granulations all go, leaving the nail in a position to be easily pared away. One application helped mine to such an extent that I no longer live in dread of having a heel firmly planted upon them in a crowded car.”

Scrape the nail very thin, and make in the center—just over the ball of the toe—a V-shaped incision. The nail, in closing this up, will draw away from the sides of the toe, as it grows, and pull itself into bounds.



## CHILBLAINS

(1) For chilblains use one teaspoonful of alum to a little water and bathe the chilblains in that. It gives instant relief when the terrible itching and inflammation set in.

(2) For unbroken chilblains rubbing with damp salt is one of the best remedies known.

(3) Raw onion rubbed on an annoying chilblain is very soothing.

Of my own self I can say nothing, I never had a chilblain, or saw one to my knowledge. Those who have had, and cured them, lay these remedies to my hand.

## POISONS OF THE SKIN

Of the much-dreaded eczema—otherwise “the itch”—an intelligent woman writes:

(1) “Eczema is so common and so hard to treat that many may be helped by my letter. The remedy is an ointment, the most important ingredient of which is the rankest weed that grows, commonly called ‘jimson,’ a perversion of ‘Jamestown weed,’ and can be found from now until frost comes. This grows in lots where manure has been thrown, is called poisonous, and no animal will ever eat it.

“Formula:—Buy at the drug store one pound of pure beeswax, which costs forty-five cents, and a piece of resin about the size of a hickory-nut. At the market get two pounds of mutton tallow and try it out; then go after the weed. Cut the whole plant

near the ground and get as many as one can carry under an arm, or, say, a dozen stalks. Put the boiler on the range and clip off all the bunches of leaves, discarding only the heavy stalks. Pour over the leaves a quart and a half (no more) of cold water, cover, and let all boil for thirty minutes. Strain through a colander into a large stew-pan. Strain the liquid, of which there should be about a quart, through a cheese-cloth to take out all sand, etc. Put back into the stew-pan with the tallow and beeswax cut into small pieces, and the little piece of resin. Let all boil for twenty minutes, then pour into a small bowl and cool.

“The ointment will be on top and will look like yellow soap. Lift it out of the dish and throw away the liquid remaining. Cut into pieces and put away. The relief will be immediate and a cure in two or three weeks. If the ointment seems too hard it will soften from the warmth of the hand.

“I have made it and it has done more than I hoped it would. I trust others may find the same relief. It is good for cuts, burns, bruises and aching feet, say the good people who told me how to make it.”

“Away Down South in Dixie” the curative properties of “jimson” (Jamestown) ointment have been well known since it was named by the earliest settlers from the marshy peninsula on which it grew in the days of John Smith and Pocahontas. It was a favorite remedy with the Indians.

(2) An unpleasant itching of the ears is usually

caused by eczema. Those who are subject to this ailment should eat quantities of fruit, watercress, dandelion, lettuce, etc. For a local application a weak dilution of carbolic acid is healing and agreeable, or listerine diluted one-half with water will allay the fearful irritation of eczema. It is always best of course, to consult a specialist, since the trouble may be a serious one that in time will affect the hearing.

(3) Bathe the parts well with warm water, in which has been dissolved a little boracic acid: dry thoroughly with a soft towel. Do not irritate the skin by hard rubbing. Then apply listerine. At night use wintergreen oil; if possible bind up the parts with a cloth saturated with the oil.

In the morning this may be washed off, as described above. If soap be necessary use the purest Castile after which powder well with borated talcum powder. If the disease is deep-seated, repeat the process more frequently. Perfect cleanliness is the best remedy for any skin disease. If this does not prove effectual, consult a physician at once, for eczema is a very stubborn disease if not treated in the early stages.

*Poison-ivy:* "The first effect of poison-ivy is to raise watery blisters on that portion of the body which has been poisoned. In the course of a few days these blisters dry up or sink in and the painful, itching eruption commonly dreaded follows. If upon the appearance of the above-mentioned watery blis-

ters the victim will at once apply a strong solution of any alkali, by rubbing vigorously into the affected parts, they will immediately disappear and no further consequences may be dreaded. This remedy is not efficacious if the poison is not arrested while in its first stages of watery blisters.

“The commonest form of alkali that I know of would be ordinary cooking soda dissolved in either cold or warm water. This remedy is well known to most frontiersmen and those whose lives are such as to expose them frequently to poison-oak.”

This is one of a dozen suggested remedies spread out upon my desk. I choose what seems to me the most judicious. Alkalis, notably soda, are specifics in the management of wasp, bee and hornet stings, and the more frequent and less dangerous bite of the mosquito. It is probable that it might heal mild eruptions caused by poison-ivy, alias mercury, alias poison-oak, alias “three finger.” We all know it by sight, by whatsoever name it may go in any particular region.

A serviceable simple overlooked in our enumeration of the items composing the Domestic Materia Medica comes to light in our next prescription:

“The bark of sassafras root steeped in water to a strong tea and used as a wash in case of ivy poisoning is considered in our family as the remedy. It allays the irritation and itching of the skin. It is good to take a swallow of the tea at the same time, as sassafras is a blood renovator.”

As a blood renovator it held high rank in the esteem of our forebears. Sassafras tea was drunk by the quart as a spring medicine, and recommended as a sudorific for breaking up a cold.

Here is a warranted remedy for ivy poisoning:

One-half ounce of pure crude opium. Dissolve this in water until the water looks like strong coffee. Thoroughly wet the poisoned parts with this liquor once an hour for six hours and once in two or three hours for the next eighteen hours. This applies to poison sumac, ivy and oak.

Thirty years ago the "capable" mistress of a New Jersey farmstead told me of a domestic treatment of the distressing eruption which I have tried with complete success in my own family several times. It has the merit of being easy, cheap and harmless.

Bathe the affected parts often during the day and bind up at night with sour buttermilk or lopper milk, into which plenty of salt has been stirred.

A solution of sugar of lead to be obtained from any druggist, is also good for the eruption. Should it be severe and general, apply to a doctor for a cooling medicine for the blood as well.

*Hives:* The worst cases of hives I have ever known—and they were very severe and extensive—were cured by lubrication of the affected parts with pure castor oil. If the cutaneous irritation were accompanied by nausea, showing that the lining of the stomach was likewise affected, calcined magnesia was given internally.

*Prickly heat*: Bathe the eruption freely with skim milk slightly diluted with water. Do this before retiring at night, and hourly during the day if the irritation be intense.

Bruised lettuce leaves are cooling and curative to a fevered or itching skin. Bind upon the affected parts with old linen bandages.

*Warts*: Acetic acid, applied properly and persistently, will remove the most tenacious of warts. This is the proper way: Take the clean end of a dead match or any small piece of wood and dip it in the acid. On removing it there will be found about a drop clinging. Apply, or rather allow this to drop on the wart, which, being porous, will soon absorb it. Do this every day to each wart, being careful to have the hand or any part held perfectly still.

A domestic remedy, to the excellence of which I can bear witness, is a paste of baking soda and water applied to the wart and bound in place. Renew as it dries.

A homely application that is well spoken of is thus described by a grateful convalescent:

“A sure cure for warts is to touch them every morning with fasting saliva. An acid in this remedy kills them without leaving a scar.”

#### TO PREVENT VOMITING AFTER THE USE OF ETHER OR CHLOROFORM

No matter how much or for how long the anesthetic has been given, a cloth or absorbent cotton saturated in vinegar and held tight to the nose—patient inhaling it—will stop this trouble.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE CARE OF THE SICK

“What kind of an education would I give a daughter if I had one?” said a discriminating lawyer of my acquaintance in answer to my query. “I should send her to Packer’s for a year or two to study domestic training so that she might be a good house-keeper. On top of that I would have her two years in a good New York boarding-school that she might gain something of that indefinably charming thing called ‘style’ as well as mental development. And then I believe I’d send her for three or four weeks’ training before her ‘coming-out tea’ to a good trained nurse in order that she might have the rudiments of skilful care of the sick.”

This struck me at the minute as a somewhat miscellaneous hodge-podge of an educational scheme. Later I thought better of it. And particularly the last clause engaged my attention. “Isn’t it decidedly important,” I said to myself, “that the average girl should know something of nursing?” and I could answer the question only in the affirmative.

Particularly is it necessary when the income of a family is small that some one in it should know how

to care skilfully, with the least labor and the greatest return for that labor, for the sick. Trained nurses, except in cases of serious illness, are, for the most of us, a luxury. For minor ills we can not afford them and not all of us, even in times of great distress.

Under the best of circumstances a season of illness is a trying one. It means mental anxiety; it means rearrangement of the domestic economy; it means a thousand unaccustomed steps and unusual activities. If there is some one in the house acquainted with even a few of the fundamental rules for taking care of the sick, for making the routine of the sick-room more bearable for invalid and care-taker, then it goes without saying that not only is the recovery of the loved one exactly that much quicker but the general life of the house is helped.

In no branch of home-keeping is an orderly and systematic arrangement of duties more necessary than in the sick-room both for the sake of the patient and to save the strength of the nurse. Unexpected tasks, of course, will arise but there should be a plan for the every-day care of invalid and room. To supply a few of the simpler rules for such care is the object of this chapter.

#### THE ROOM

The room chosen for the invalid should be, of course, the best in the house, as regards light and ventilation. If it is near a bath-room many steps will be



saved. People who are sick for a long time or those ill with nervous affections, which often means the same thing, are particularly sensitive to any glaring or decided effect in the wall-paper. If possible, choose a room where the coloring is soft or neutral and the pattern of the paper, if pattern there be, is vague and indistinct. It is one of the principles of the Rest Cure system, for which the celebrated Doctor Weir Mitchell is largely responsible, to keep the walls of a room as far as possible a blank,—free from pictures and other ornaments that distract or tease the mind. The character of the illness in question should, however, determine this point, common sense being here as elsewhere a mainstay.

Generally speaking the room should be left free from superfluous furnishings, both on account of the mental and physical health of the patient and because absence of the unnecessary means less of care for the nurse. Dispense with heavy hangings and draperies, the fripperies of the dressing-table, all rugs but those absolutely necessary for comfort and to deaden noise.

*The bed* is the most important item of the necessary furnishings. It should have upon it a firm, smooth hair mattress. The mattress is the foundation of the invalid's comfort. If there is a depression in the one that must be used, fold a blanket smoothly and put it in the hollow. If every person occupying a double bed was taught to occupy alternately the two sides of the bed, we should not meet

so often with what is in two senses *depressing* hollows in our mattresses.

*Position of the bed:* The bed should be placed a little out from the wall so that the air may play all around it. It should not be placed opposite a window where the light will be directly in the patient's eyes. The mattress should be covered with a bed pad, the lower sheet drawn smoothly and firmly over it. The upper sheet should be put on more loosely and easily to give free play to the body of the patient and enough length should be left at the top to fold down over the coverings. These should be blankets as they are much lighter than other coverings and contain more warmth. The spread should be of a light texture, not such as to cause extra weight upon the patient.

*The screen* is part of the necessary furnishing of every sick-room. It is needed to protect the patient when the cleaning of the room is going on and to shield him from draft when the room is being aired. An emergency screen can be made by pinning a sheet over a clothes-horse.

*Medicine table:* A separate table should be used for medicines, dropper, glasses, etc. This should have a marble top if possible so that it may be washed free of stains when necessary. As soon as the medicine bottle is empty or the physician prescribes a new drug, rid the table of the superfluous bottle or box. Too great care can not be taken to keep the drugs necessary in a sick-room properly separated and in order.

*Light:* Among many old-fashioned people there is an idea that a sick-room should be always dark. This is false. Sunlight is one of the most healing, health-giving agents we have and, though care should be taken not to excite a person by too much light, or to injure weakened eyes by the same, sunlight should be administered as the patient can bear it.

#### FRESH AIR

Fresh air is of course even more necessary than sunlight and should be admitted into the room every day. In winter or when the patient is much weakened by long illness or when the disease is one that is particularly sensitive to changes of temperature, such as bronchitis, pneumonia and other diseases of a like character, great care must be taken when a decided change of air is made. In such cases it is well to open a window in an adjoining room, flooding it with fresh air while the connecting door is closed. Then put down the windows, wait until the air is somewhat warm, then open the connecting door for its admission into the invalid's room.

Generally speaking the ventilation may come from the patient's own room. Leave one window or two facing each other, two or three inches down from the top. The cold air descends and forces out the warmer air and yet causes no draft upon the patient. When the room, night and morning, is given a thorough airing, wrap the patient in extra blankets, putting something over the head and place the screen so

as to shield the bed from a direct current of air. Having made these preparations throw the window wide open, your common sense and the weather directing you how long to keep it so.

#### CLEANING OF THE SICK-ROOM

The sick-room should be cleaned without bustle or stir. The screen again comes in good play here. If placed before the patient while the refurbishing of the room is in progress, he need scarcely sense the disturbance. If the room has a carpet—which Heaven forbid!—sweep softly with a dampened broom; if a wooden floor, use a broom cloth that is slightly wet. The dusting also should be done with a slightly dampened cloth.

#### FLOWERS IN THE SICK-ROOM

Sometimes flowers bring cheer and comfort to the patient; sometimes they are an unhealthful influence. When they are, and when they are not for the good of the patient can be settled only by the individual. But in no case should they be left in the sick-room over night.

#### INVALID'S REFRIGERATOR

One of the luxuries of a sick-room is the invalid's refrigerator where milk, water and other necessaries of the sick-room may be kept. In default of this, ice may be wrapped in an old blanket or woolen garment of any kind and placed in a dish-pan with the

articles that need cooling about it. Milk and water, if kept in a sick-room, should be covered, as they are very sensitive to odor and atmosphere.

#### SOILED CLOTHING AND EVACUATIONS

A good nurse will lose no time in getting soiled clothing out of the way and in disposing of evacuations. A satisfactory disinfectant should be always at hand. Chloride of lime can be recommended. The vessels used by the patient should be washed out as soon as possible with soap, hot water and ammonia.

#### KEEP THE PATIENT COMFORTABLE

Two nightgowns should be kept in use, one for the day and one for the night. It is amazing how much more inclined to slumber a sick person feels with a change of gown just before the lights are turned low or out. Plenty of pillows should be on hand and these of various sizes, ready for use when the patient craves a change of position. Pillows should be turned often to keep them from getting hard and lumpy to the touch.

*Extra blankets:* In serious cases always have extra blankets ready for that change of temperature in the weather which is sure to come between three and five o'clock in the morning. Then is the coldest time of the day or night and it is also the time when the patient's vital energies are at their lowest. A professional nurse always has her eyes particularly wide

open for the comfort and safety of her patient at that time.

*The hot-water bag* should always be conveniently at hand. Its uses are too well known to make any mention of them necessary. Suffice it to say that the use of it can never do any harm and often, in the case of emergency and where other remedies are not convenient, does incalculable good.

*Changing the sheets while the patient is in the bed:* To one who sees for the first time the professional nurse's touch in changing sheets while the patient is in bed, the accomplishment seems nothing short of miraculous and, for many succeeding times, it may have that interest for one which arises out of any specially skilful piece of work. The writer herself well remembers in a long spell of typhoid fever the entertainment afforded her by watching the nurse perform this part of her duty. The novelty of observing the performance did not wear off for a long time and the time of its happening was looked forward to as a bright spot in the, for the most part, dreary days.

The amateur home nurse should not undertake this feat without previous practise. She should try it first with a well person as subject or take some practical instruction from a nurse. The following directions for the process are the correct ones, but they should be supplemented by the skill that comes from practise. First change the lower sheet. To do this, roll the patient toward the side of the bed away from

you. Turn the soiled sheet in smooth folds toward the center of the bed and close to the patient. Then spread your clean sheet over the half of the bed thus prepared for, laying the folds of the other half over the folds of the soiled sheet. Turn the sick one carefully back to his first position, pull out the soiled sheet and make smooth and firm the clean sheet over the other half of the bed.

To change the upper sheet, make free the bed-clothes all about, turning them slightly back from the foot of the bed but so as not to expose the patient. Have a blanket and clean sheet ready and place them upon top of the spread. Then, while you hold these firmly up to the neck of the patient with one hand, draw the soiled sheet and other covering out from beneath with the other hand. Replace the necessary covers on top of the fresh blanket. If you are skilful in this performance the patient will not be weary from it.

*No wrinkles and no crumbs:* Three golden rules about the care of the bed are perfect cleanliness, no wrinkles and no crumbs. Invalids, much more than well people, are sensitive to any unevennesses, folds or bumps in the sheet or bed pad. The nurse should make it her business to keep wrinkles smoothed out and crumbs brushed off.

*The invalid's dining table:* One of the luxuries of the sick-room is an invalid's dining table which stands on a support placed at one end of the table while the other draws over the bed at a height ex-

actly convenient to the invalid's hand. Such a table not only renders eating more easy and agreeable for the invalid but it saves the bed from crumbs and the danger of soil.

*Care of hair and teeth:* Every day the invalid's hair should be combed, his teeth washed, his fingernails cleaned. Whether a bath should be given every day will depend upon the nature of the disease. Especial care should be given to the teeth during illness as the medicines used often have a tendency to injure them.

*Visitors in the sick-room:* In rural districts the house which contains a sick person is beset by visitors. The patient is supposed to have nothing to do but to entertain company and the refusal to see a friend is regarded as an insult. This is humorous as an illustration of the quirks in the rustic mind, but it is tragic for the sufferer. Even in towns of some size people will be found who think that they should always be permitted to visit the sick-rooms of their friends. The truth is that, in a case of illness, which is at all serious, visitors should be the exception, and no one should feel offended at being excluded from the sick-room. Such calls as are made should be short ones. If the nurse sees signs of fatigue in her patient she should indicate to visitors that the time for their departure has arrived. They should not sit on the bed; they should sit where the patient may see them without effort. They should not talk of disease and the patient's symptoms during their stay.



## CARE OF THE PATIENT'S MENTAL AND MORAL COMFORT

The person who has an invalid in charge must always remember that the state of the mind has much to do with that of the body and that, as a preliminary to the care of the body and as a stimulant to its speedy recovery, everything possible must be done to keep the temper of the mind calm and equable. Discussions of illness, except in so far as is necessary to the proper treatment of the patient, should be banished from the sick-room. The nurse should sternly repress her own nervousness and anxiety. One reason that a professional nurse, aside from her skill, is often more helpful than a home nurse, is that the feelings of the former, not being engaged to any considerable extent, she bears herself evenly. The first lesson for the home nurse to learn is self-control, the kind of cheerfulness that comes from a conquest of self in the interest of the suffering.

*Natural manner in a sick-room:* Adopt as far as possible an easy, matter-of-course air in the sick-room. Walk lightly but not conspicuously on the tips of your toes. Speak in a low tone but don't whisper. Don't be frivolous in manner but don't look portentous. If possible, let the patient feel that the every-day affairs and work of the house are going on regularly and smoothly. There is nothing more soothing to the mind than the feeling that the established order is maintaining itself.

In short let your manner in the sick-room be as

easy and natural as possible. Physicians know the value of this. An instance of the value in which it is held by them occurs to my mind as I write. The picture rises in my mind of a young girl painfully agitated over the serious illness of her mother and frowning upon the professional nurse and the doctor as they talked cheerfully in a low tone while preparing the medicines for the patient. I see the old physician with his keen eyes penetrating the girl's vexation and the cause of it. "We are not disturbing your mother," he said. "The sound of natural every-day conversation is a helpful influence and will do her good." Whether talk is allowed in the sick-room or no, the rule always holds,—“let your manner there be easy and natural.”

## CHAPTER XXVII

### AFTERMATH

Since the preceding chapters were written such a goodly aftermath of available and useful items has sprung up about me that I am constrained to reap and garner them for the benefit of those I would help.

Were I to call this afterword an "Appendix" nobody would read it. I prefer to bind up the slender bundle with sister sheaves and secure for it housewifely recognition.

If it be made up of divers sorts of grain, my excuse is that some of the seeds have been blown into my meadow by vagrant winds and from unknown quarters. So long as they are sound and nutritious, what matter whence they came?

### HOUSEWIFELY HINTS

Women who have not discarded the serviceable rag carpet in kitchen and laundry, may be glad to know that it may be washed on the floor so long as it is not worn badly in body and surface. And this, although it may be vulgarly and apparently hopelessly dirty.

Choose a fine, windy day, when John and the boys are safely off to work and to school, for the opera-

tion. Shave a bar of old white soap into a pail of hot water, churn it to suds and stir in a cup of gasoline. (Have no fire in the room.)

In another pail, close at hand, have plenty of clean hot water for rinsing. You should be provided with a new, strong scrubbing brush and an abundance of clean, soft cloths. When everything is in order, scrub that carpet as you would a floor, but with less slopping. Wash a space the width of a breadth and a foot wide, rinse quickly and wipe as dry as you can get it before taking the brush in hand for another scrub. Proceed in this way until you have been over the whole carpet. Rub the badly soiled parts hard, applying the suds several times before rinsing.

The floor will be dry in an astonishingly short time, if you have not been too lavish with the water.

Leave windows and doors open, and let the air and sunshine do the rest.

*To remove stains from blankets:* Make a mixture of equal parts of glycerin and yolk of egg. Spread it on the stain, leave it for half an hour, then wash as usual.

*To polish brass:* A capital preparation for polishing brasses is the red pomade sold for cleaning copper and brass, used with a flannel cloth, previously wrung out in kerosene. The effect is magical. The brass rails, rods and other mountings of steamers and ferry boats are polished with this.

For brass beds no polishing powders nor liquids should be employed, the brass requiring nothing more

than a rubbing with a soft rag to keep it looking bright. After the lacquer is scratched by powders it will be a task to keep the brass in anything like good condition. The lacquer is not meant to be scrubbed, but is intended to protect the brass from tarnishing through action of the air.

*Green brooms:* Brooms of green straw do not wear as well as those of the natural color, so do not buy them under the impression that they will outlast others.

*When bureau drawers stick in the grooves:* Rub soap over their edges. If that does not remedy the trouble, use fine sandpaper.

*To wash chamois skins:* Squeeze the leather in warm soap-suds—the addition of a little ammonia is good when the leather is very dirty—repeating the process if necessary. Rinse in a fresh lather of soap and water and then hang out to dry. During the drying process the leather may be rubbed with the hands and pulled into shape a little. When dry it will be as soft and as good for cleaning purposes as ever.

*To take fat from soups quickly:* A greasy soup is a culinary abomination. In fact it does not deserve the name of soup. It is merely badly-made gravy. Every drop of oil should be removed from the surface before the broth or clear soup is served.

If you discover globules of fat upon the gravy soup you are to serve to-day, you need not wait to cool it before removing them. Wring a clean white cloth

out in iced water and strain the soup. The grease will coagulate at once and will not go through the cloth, while the liquid will. Of course, the soup must not be squeezed in the straining.

All stocks, soup and gravy should be boiled up each day or they will turn sour.

*To keep a burning lamp from smelling or smoking:* A tablespoonful of vinegar put into the oil lamp or stove that smells or smokes will cause it to burn with a clear light and prevent it from smoking. If you boil the wicks of lamps in strong hot vinegar, then dry them, it will do away with most of the disagreeable odor.

*A sure destroyer of moths—simple and not poisonous:* Saturate moth-infested stuffed furniture, rugs, etc., with naphtha. Do this in the open air, and after several days have elapsed repeat the operation, as the eggs may not all have been destroyed at the first trial. Lay over moth-eaten spots in the carpet several thicknesses of cloth wrung from hot water, and place hot irons upon the cloths. Allow them to stand ten or twelve minutes at a time that the steam may penetrate every part. After this has been done pour on naphtha.

*To keep mice from closed drawers:* If camphor be kept in drawers and cupboards, their contents will be safe from mice, for they detest the smell.

*To restore curdled mayonnaise:* If your mayonnaise curdles in the beating you may save the day by stirring into it a lump of ice as big as your fist and

whirling it rapidly through the dressing for thirty seconds, then taking it out. Go on with your beating then. Should this not succeed, mix into the mayonnaise the yolk of a chilled fresh egg.

Mayonnaise should not be beaten with a spoon, but with horizontal strokes of a fork, or with a revolving egg-beater.

*To clear and purify muddy water:* Stir into it powdered alum. Leave it to settle and in a few hours it will be fit for use. Drain off the water without disturbing the dregs. The taste of alum will be hardly perceptible.

*To take grease spots out of wall paper:* Pulverize French chalk, damped lightly, just enough to make it adhere to the paper; but do not make it wet enough to run upon the surrounding surface. Leave it on for a couple of days; cover them with blotting-paper and hold a warm—not a hot—iron upon the blotter for two minutes. This should draw out the grease. If it does not, brush off the chalk and repeat the process.

*To clean a shell-backed comb or brush from white marks left by alcohol, or cologne:* Try to efface the white marks with camphorated oil rubbed well in with soft flannel. Then rub the whole comb with neat's foot oil applied in the same way. Leave the oil on for a day, shutting the comb in a box. Finally, polish with chamois skin.

*To renovate black crape:* Remove it from the dress and sponge it with beer or diluted ammonia.

The former leaves an odor which takes rather longer to evaporate, but placing it when damp before a brisk fire facilitates matters.

It may also be renewed by holding it over a pan of boiling water, evenly, but not so tightly as to hinder it from falling naturally into the "crinkles" that give it character. Take it by the edges when the steam has moistened it thoroughly, and hang in the dry air.

*To bleach faded cottons white:* The colored frock or blouse that has been faded in the wash or by the sun, may be bleached white by boiling in cream of tartar water. The quantity to be used to make the garment a pure white is a teaspoonful of the powder to a quart of water.

Materials that have become faded and discolored are often restored by packing them away in a dark closet or chest. Layers of tissue-paper will aid in the process.

*To do away with the dark ring left by cleaning textiles:* When a dark ring is left on the material after using such cleansing agents to remove a stain, make a ring all around the outside of the first ring by dipping the finger in chloroform and applying it to the material; keep rubbing toward the center of the circle with plenty of chloroform, allowing it to evaporate freely, and the ring will disappear when the spot is dry.

*Sweeping and dusting:* If your home is heated by dry air, a damp cloth should be laid over each regis-



ter before you begin to sweep. In summer cover the closed registers with rugs or with wadded squares of matting to keep the must and smells of the basement out of the living-rooms.

Brooms dipped for a few minutes in boiling suds once a week will last much longer than they otherwise would. They should immediately afterward be plunged into cold water to stiffen the straw. If salt be added to the water—a handful to a large pailful—the straw will be stiff and cleaner than if water alone be used, and the salt is fatal to the hardiest of vermin that may lurk in the upper part of the brush.

*Emery-cloth and sandpaper as sharpeners and polishers:* A small board to which sandpaper has been glued flat is good for rubbing flat-irons upon to take off any roughness. Emery-cloth of different grades of fineness may be glued to narrow strips of wood for use in sharpening knives or scissors and putting a point upon a pencil.

*How to clean sponges:* Sponges ought to be washed out first, with household ammonia; then in water in which a little cream of tartar has been dissolved. Finally, rinse in clear cold water.

*To keep salt from hardening:* During damp weather salt cellars are apt to be clogged on the inner side of the holes. By placing a few rice kernels in each cellar and adding the salt last the delivery is better.

A teaspoonful of corn-starch mixed well into each

cupful of salt is a yet surer preventive, the starch absorbing the dampness.

*The care of jelly bags:* Dip jelly bags in boiling water and wring as dry as possible before using, to save the loss of fruit juice from soaking into the cloth.

*How to wash a sieve:* Never wash a sieve with soap. Soda or ammonia will clean it, with the help of a clean whisk broom.

*To clean flat-irons:* Tie a lump of wax in a piece of cloth, and keep it for the purpose. When the iron is hot, rub it with the wax, and then scour with a paper or cloth sprinkled with salt. Wax the iron again before putting it away, to prevent the formation of rust.

*How to pick game:* To remove the feathers from game of any kind dip in boiling water, then wrap in a thick cloth. The feathers are steamed loose in a very few minutes and the "pins" will give very little or no trouble.

*Charcoal in the pantry:* A dish of charcoal placed in the pantry will keep articles of food sweet and wholesome almost as well as ice. Change it once a week when the weather is warm.

*To remove the "shine" from cloth:* For that annoying "shine" that will appear on clothing where the most wear comes, use bluing—common laundry bluing. Use a tablespoonful of bluing to a half-cup of water, apply with a soft cloth, then proceed with

the pressing, and the "shine" has vanished until time to press again.

*To take rust from steel and iron:* Make a paste of wood ashes and kerosene, and rub it well into the rust. Leave it on for a few hours before scouring it with dry ashes (sifted fine) and a flannel cloth. This will remove rust from almost any surface. If you can not get wood ashes, which are often difficult to obtain, use whiting.

To clean rusty steel make a paste of equal quantities of whiting and brick-dust mixed together with kerosene. Apply this to the steel with an old cloth, and afterward polish with soft leather. A piece of old velveteen would answer the purpose as well as leather.

*To keep flies from windows:* It is said that flies will not settle on windows that have been washed with water with which a little kerosene has been mixed.

*To take out fruit stains from linen:* If the fabric be soaked in spirits of camphor before wetting, the stain will be removed unless other deteratives have been used already.

*To clean willow furniture:* Use salt and water. Apply with a brush and then rub dry.

*Milky glasses:* Rinsing them in cold water before washing them in warm will prevent them from looking smeared. Hot water forms a film with milk and clouds the glass. It converts egg-smears into a hard custard that is difficult to wash off. Egg-cups and

spoons should always be laid in cold water to soak before they are plunged into hot.

*How to pour griddle-cake batter:* It is always better in making griddle-cakes to pour the batter from a pitcher, instead of dropping it from a spoon. There is no dropping or streaking of the raw batter over range and griddle.

*To clean a defaced iron bedstead:* It may be improved in appearance, as well as cleaned, by rubbing with a cloth dipped in kerosene. Remove every trace of oil by rubbing again with a clean cloth or leather. Warm the oil slightly.

*How to dry an umbrella:* Leave a wet umbrella open to dry so that the silk will not rot or crease. If it can not be left open, turn it upside down, so that the moisture will not collect at the ferrule end and so rot the silk.

By "upside down" is meant that it must stand with the ferrule uppermost. The moisture then trickles harmlessly from the tips of the ribs.

*Cane-seated chairs:* Scrub with soap and hot water. Turn the chairs upside down, and make the cane thoroughly wet. Then dry in the open air. The effect will not merely be to clean the cane, but to shrink it, and if the cane be not broken, the seat will, when dry, be firm and taut.

Again, as with the broom, add a little salt to the water to prevent the canes from yellowing.

*Dried paint on wood and glass:* Spread over the marks a thick paste made of lime and soda mixed with

water. Leave twenty-four hours, then wash off.

*A hint to amateur gardeners:* If you are about to engage in gardening, rub the finger-tips along a cake of soap, getting it well under each nail. This will prevent unpleasant material from lodging there.

In potting house plants, in weeding and settling the earth about roots that have been disturbed by hoe or rake, this homely precaution is valuable. The soap not merely prevents the accumulation of soil under the nails, but helps to cleanse them when the hands are washed from the grime.

*To make leather waterproof:* Mix half a pound of mutton suet, six ounces of beeswax, a quarter of a pound of resin, and half a pint of boiled linseed-oil. Melt these ingredients together, and apply while hot. Boys' brogans will withstand mud and the rot of snow-water twice as long if treated every fortnight in winter with this preparation.

*How to make a pine-needle pillow:* Clip the pine branches into small twigs with a pair of sharp shears. If they are torn off, the resinous juice, which is the soul of the "cure," escapes. Spread the twigs on paper to dry in the air but not in the sunshine or they will shrivel and the resinous breath be exhaled before its time. At the end of a week clip the needles off close to the stem and fill your pillows. I have cushions that were filled after this manner ten years ago, which are fragrant still.

*To burnish copper:* Mix a handful of common salt with enough vinegar and flour to make a paste.

After using the paste wash thoroughly and polish with chamois skin.

*To remove iron mold from linen or cotton:* Dissolve one heaping teaspoonful of oxalic acid in a pint of boiling water. Then hold the article over a bowl and pour the water slowly through on spots. Pour through several times until there are no rust spots left.

Do not fail to rinse the goods well in clear water after each application of the acid. Neglect of this precaution has brought undeserved reproach upon a potent detergent.

*Grass and coffee stains:* For grass stains on cotton or woolen goods wash in alcohol.

Wet tea and coffee stains with cold water and glycerin and let them stand for two or three hours. Then wash with hard soap and cold water.

*Stains on kitchen tables:* Oxalic acid dissolved in hot water and applied to the stained wood of kitchen tables, or to sinks and boilers, will cleanse the metals and whiten the wood.

*To wash the baby's flannels:* Boil a bar of old white soap—shaved—in a quart of hot water until it is a clear liquid. Use about a fourth of the solution in two or three quarts of water comfortably warm to the hands. The principle is not that the water need be only lukewarm, but that each water be the same temperature. The same suds may be used for all the little garments, beginning with the shirts, then stockings, then skirts. On no account should a woolen

garment be rubbed or wrung, as either motion "piles" the fiber and harshens the wool. All that is necessary is to squeeze gently and souse them in the suds. Two suds and three rinse waters are generally sufficient. Squeeze the garments as dry as may be after each bath and finally shake well and pull gently. Dry in the house. When nearly dry press carefully with a hot iron, which should be tested before putting on the wool to avoid scorching. If any garment is too heavy to be squeezed dry enough to hang the wringer may be used. This treatment is highly successful with "bearskin" coats and bonnets. Brush the fur well instead of ironing.

*To remove a "smell" from clothing:* To take the odor out of stockings that smell of the dye and the armpits of underwear and wash waists: When they are washed let the last rinsing be in alum water—about a teaspoonful of powdered alum to one quart of warm water.

*To take grease out of an embroidered linen center-piece:* So long as the grease is not directly upon the embroidery all is safe. Rub plenty of powdered French chalk on the wrong side of the linen and put it aside in a box for two days. Then lay thick blotting-paper over the chalk and press with a warm iron. This draws out the oil. Should any sign of the spot remain on the right side it is the dust that has settled in the grease. Put a thick pad of blotting-paper under the spot and sponge with pure alcohol.

*To clean amber beads:* If you do not care to take

the beads to a jeweler, rub them with amber oil, leaving it on for some hours. Then polish with a soft flannel, wrung out dry in pure olive oil. Lastly, rub until warm with old silk.

This will excite the latent electricity in the amber—restoring its spirit, as it were.

*Domestic dyeing:* To color brown with gum catechu.

For five pounds of goods take two pounds of gum catechu, one tablespoonful of alum, six ounces of bichromate of potash. Dissolve the gum in water enough to cover the goods. Put the alum in with the gum. Wet the goods, then put them in the dye and let them remain two hours over a slow fire, airing and stirring frequently. Then take them out and dry partly, make a new dye of the bichromate of potash with plenty of water in which to dip the goods. Dip several times; after which rinse well. Iron while damp. It will give a fast color for wool or cotton. It has been thoroughly tried.

For coloring cotton rags canary, dissolve ten cents' worth of sugar of lead in one vessel and ten cents' worth of bichromate of potash in another. Put a gallon of water into each. Don't boil, but use the dye cold. Dip the cotton into each dye alternately. This makes a beautiful canary color. To make a nice green, dip the canary into bluing water.

*Sponge for washing paint:* Washing paint with warm water and a large soft sponge will do the work better and more quickly than a cloth. The sponge



leaves no lint, and it saves the time you spend wringing out a cloth.

*To keep cider sweet:* (1) Use only sound apples; make the cider when the weather is cold enough to freeze the apples. Expose the cider during freezing weather and stir it until the whole of it is reduced to as near the freezing point as possible without freezing. Then barrel it, bung up tightly and place in a cellar kept nearly down to the freezing point. As long as it can be kept cold it will not ferment, and as long as it does not ferment it will remain sweet.

The sweetness of cider may also be preserved by adding to it sulphite of lime and black mustard-seed—the sulphur inherent in the mustard acting jointly with the sulphite as a preservative.

(2) Grind or chop six or eight horseradish roots fine and put in one barrel of cider as soon after making as possible. If kept in a cool place, it will remain sweet until spring. What is left makes fine vinegar. One ounce of wintergreen will also keep it sweet but most people do not like the flavor.

*To transfer a print or photograph:* Take the picture you wish to transfer; dip a cheap brush into turpentine and paint the picture with it. A blotter should be used to avoid streaking the picture. Now lay the picture face down upon the article to which you wish to transfer it. Rub the entire surface carefully with a smooth instrument. This completes the operation.

*Fleas upon dog or cat:* If one whose pet dog or

cat is troubled with fleas will wet the afflicted one with camphor diluted with water, one will find that the fleas have taken leave at once, and no harm is done to the pet.

*Ways of preserving eggs all winter:* (1) Put one-half peck of fresh lime into fifteen gallons of water. Stir well and let it stand over night. On the following day give it another good stirring and, when clear, draw the water off. Mix the water with one-half pound (eight ounces) of common salt and three-quarters of an ounce of pure cream of tartar. Place the eggs in this solution to within two inches of the level of the liquid. Be careful not to crack any. Cover the vessel with a heavy muslin cloth and put one inch of lime sediment over the muslin. Put in a cool, dark place and the eggs will keep for nine months in the same brine.

(2) Allow one pint of lime and one-half pint of salt to three gallons of water. Put into a large stone jar and keep in a cool place. Of course, the eggs have to be perfectly fresh when put into the jar.

(3) Place the casks or buckets in a cool place, where they are to remain. To one gallon of boiling water add one pound of water-glass (a solution of silicate of soda) while hot. The glass dissolves at once in warm water and no one could tell it had been added. Let it cool and then put in the eggs whenever obtainable. Drop them in gently. Mark this: every egg put in the liquid should be fresh. Water-glass is a preservative for eggs and not a restorative,

and no eggs placed in it should be more than a week old. Finally, all the eggs must be under the liquid, but so long as they are not exposed they may be as near the surface as possible.

*To keep ants away from refrigerators:* Pull the refrigerator away from the wall, then paint a circle of kerosene on the floor around each leg of the refrigerator. The ants will not cross the circle.

*To protect walls in moving furniture:* It is difficult to lift heavy bureaus and bedsteads up-stairs without grazing the walls. Hang sheets along the staircase walls so that the paper and paint will not be soiled or scraped.

*To remove lime from the inside of a tea-kettle:* Boil vinegar in your kettle. The acid acting upon the deposit of alkaline matter inside, will cause it to disintegrate and crack off. Scrape it out, and in future keep an oyster shell in the kettle. The lime will collect upon it instead of adhering to the sides of the vessel. Renew the shell weekly.

*To keep cut glass from cracking:* Cut glass bowls are often cracked when hot liquids or custards are poured into them. To prevent such an accident, place the dish on a wet cloth. Of course, the fruit must not be boiling hot.

#### IN THE SICK-ROOM

*Cracked ice:* Fever patients derive more comfort from cracked ice when the mouth is dry and hot than from drafts of water. A bit of ice laid on the ton-

gue and left to dissolve slowly, trickling down the parched throat of itself, without the effort of swallowing, is inexpressibly grateful.

Cracked ice should be the instant resort in cases of hemorrhage from the lungs.

It is especially valuable when one has an inflamed throat. I have known cases of tonsilitis and incipient quinsy to be relieved and, indeed, entirely cured by holding cracked ice in the mouth for hours at a time. The icy trickle over the inflamed parts is soothing and healing. Some throat specialists use no other remedy unless the disease has gained such force that heroic measures must be resorted to in order to save life.

It will often arrest nausea, if administered in minute bits, allowing one to dissolve before the next is taken into the mouth.

*To prevent a mustard-plaster from blistering:* Mix oil or lard with the mustard, working all into a smooth paste, and letting fall a few drops of oil upon the surface of the poultice before applying it.

In cases where mustard would perhaps be too severe, a mixture of white of egg and red pepper may be safely used. It will be found quite as effective as the mustard, but it will not blister nor leave unsightly red blotches even on the tenderest skin. It can safely be applied at the base of the brain for headache.

*More uses for camphor:* A safe and not unpleasant household remedy. If one afflicted with catarrhal

cold will inhale the odor of spirits of camphor for two minutes, every hour, drawing long breaths of the fumes, patiently and perseveringly, keeping the mouth closed meanwhile, the affection will, in most cases, be relieved within twenty-four hours.

Three drops of camphor in a teaspoonful of water, taken every fifteen minutes for an hour, will often relieve distressing nausea. Camphor is one of the safest and most convenient of drugs for domestic use. Flannel, folded and soaked in camphor, then laid on the pit of the stomach, is a sure alleviative of colic and nausea.

*Tincture of myrrh as a mouth wash:* Twenty drops in four tablespoonfuls of water is an excellent mouth wash, both healing and cleansing. It is not to be swallowed.

The duty of washing the mouth after each meal is neglected by thousands of so-called neat people. Particles of food left between the teeth yield to the law of rapid decomposition that goes on with other "left-overs" in the human body, and infect the breath, likewise the gastric juices, as the saliva washes them down the throat.

Baby's mouth should be washed daily with a small square of old linen or piece of handkerchief wrapped around the little finger and dipped into water. Tongue and gums should be thoroughly cleaned. Burn the piece of linen as soon as used. This simple act daily would do much to prevent the "thrash" prevalent with young babies.

*Remedies for croup:* (1) An acute attack of croup may sometimes be relieved if a towel or strip of flannel folded lengthwise and dipped into hot water, then slightly wrung out, be placed around the neck of the sufferer and covered so as to retain the heat.

(2) Apply a poultice made of camphorated oil and nutmeg. Heat the oil, saturate a piece of old muslin with it, then grate nutmeg thickly over it, and apply to the chest while warm. If one poultice does not cure, apply more.

When applying hot "stupes" (cloths or bandages) heat them by putting them into the inner vessel of a double boiler. If no double boiler be at hand, any covered vessel that can be set firmly within another will do. Keep the flannels or other stupes moist by sprinkling a little water on them, as they dry, and have one on the patient and one in the boiler all the time. Do not remove from the patient until the other stupe is ready to go on.

Put a layer of absorbent cotton and a piece of oiled silk or light rubber tissue over the stupe to keep the heat in.

*A cheap disinfectant:* Place a common plate over a kettle in which water is kept boiling, sprinkle a level tablespoonful of sulphur on the plate and replenish it every hour. The heat from the boiling water sets free the sulphur dioxide without the disagreeable fumes of burning sulphur, and is death to all germs. It will prevent the disease from spreading to any

other member of the household. The sulphur is best sprinkled by using a common pepper can. It should be kept going all of the first day. After that a couple of hours twice a day will do.

#### HOMELY REMEDIES

*Do not take cold:* Keep a woolen robe and wool-lined slippers near the bedside to be slipped on when called up suddenly during the night, and never sleep in a draft.

*Sulphur for rheumatism:* Sprinkle powdered sulphur between sheet and wadding, covering with thin cloth, and bind on the affected parts; wear all the time, renewing occasionally. Sulphur is a great blood purifier, and when used in this way works through the pores.

*For excessive perspiration:* An alleviative for excessive perspiration under the arms is made by dissolving half a teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda in a small cupful of water. This lotion mopped on the parts is sometimes very beneficial.

*Sulphur for eczema:* Work flower of sulphur into vaseline. Turn a plate bottom side up and put upon it about half a spoonful of vaseline; add the sulphur, a little at a time, and work it into the vaseline with a broad-bladed knife, until of the right consistency. It will have the appearance of a bright yellow salve. Keep in a glass jar with a tight top.

*Nose-bleed* is often stopped in the old way of applying cold compresses or a bit of ice done up in a cloth

at the back of the neck. At the same time insert a small wad of paper between the upper lip and teeth, and press the lips firmly down over it.

*Prolonged bleeding at the nose:* It may be checked by making the patient lie on his back and extend both arms as far above his head as they will go—flat on the floor—holding them thus until the bleeding slackens. I have seen profuse hemorrhage from the nose stopped in this way.

*Deodorizers:* (1) Put a piece of camphor on a saucer and lay on it a red-hot shovel. The fumes from the camphor quickly go off and cause all closeness to disappear.

(2) Dried orange peel, burned upon a brazier or upon hot coals on a shovel, will dispel an evil odor.

(3) A painter taught me thirty years ago that the danger of “painter’s cholera” may be averted by setting a tub of cold water in a freshly painted room. Next morning the water is covered with oily particles containing lead poison.

(4) A few grains of coffee burned on hot coals will purify the air in a sick-room and drive away any odor.

*An antiseptic:* Peroxide of hydrogen is a valuable antiseptic to have in the house. It makes a pleasant mouth wash and throat gargle when diluted and will remove blood stains if used before the stain is dry.

*Danger of checked secretions of the skin:* Pastes and powders that are put on the complexion at night



constrict the pores and shut in the sebaceous secretions, bringing on the very evils that one is trying to annihilate. The process suffocates the skin, re-encouraging the laziness of the glands and pores that produces blackheads and blotches.

*The eyes:* The eyes are benefited by a bath before retiring. Dust has accumulated along the edges of the lids and should be removed before going to sleep. Eyes that are weary from long use may smart and grow inflamed. A simple method of relief is to lay over them a compress wet with cold water. As it is warmed by contact with the flesh renew it.

*To whiten yellowish gray hair:* The elderly woman (or man) whose hair, in graying, has a yellow tinge, may correct this and obtain a beautifully white head by the use of a new hair-brush dipped in bluing water, dried and dipped again, then laid in the air to get perfectly dry. When one wishes to use it, the brush should be moistened—not soaked—in clear water. If carefully handled, one bluing will last for some weeks without renewal.

#### THE CARE OF THE FEET

*Soft corns:* (1) Use sweet or almond oil on absorbent cotton placed between the toes.

(2) Use camphor on absorbent cotton in the same way.

(3) Use bicarbonate of soda—or saleratus—dry. Put in plentifully between the toes. This alkali

draws out all the soreness caused by moisture and acid.

*Hard corns:* Place over the corn a disk of kid, chamois or thin, soft felt, with a hole in the center. Relieve as much pressure as possible. Salicylic acid and collodion make a good lotion for corns. Another method for removing them—a homely one—is to soak them in hot water for half an hour and remove as much of the corn as possible. Then bind over it a clove of garlic, previously crushed and soaked in vinegar. Do this every night for a week.

#### CARE OF PLANTS

*House hyacinths* should be planted in November. Keep them after planting in a dark cupboard in a moderately warm room. When the sprouts are a few inches high, bring them by degrees into the light. The sickly green of the young shoots will soon darken into a healthy growth. Give them plenty of sunlight, water twice a week abundantly, and shade them at night from gaslight. If transported suddenly from darkness to the full glory of the sunshine, they will wither. Move them a little nearer the window daily for a week.

*Keeping flowers fresh:* Clip the tips of the stalks before putting them in fresh water, which should be just off the chill. Always have clean vases. A pinch of charcoal powder in each vase is a preservative.

*Sulphur for plants:* Stick plenty of unburned

matches head first into the soil of plants that begin to look unhealthy. If there should be anything working at the roots or anything that is alive that should not be there, it will exterminate them without the least injury to the plant.

*Calla lily:* About the last of May lay it to rest under the house, where it will dry off. The last week of August repot it. Put charcoal or bits of broken bone in the pot; plant the bulb in good, rich soil, first shaking off all the dry earth; set in a pail of water and give it a good wetting. Then put it in a dark, damp place for about ten days, when it should have a shoot about six inches long. Now give a teaspoonful of castor-oil, wet again and put the plant in a sunny window, gradually, where there is no gas heat. Give it a deep saucer and every morning fill this with boiling water. Once a week give the plant a good wetting and by the middle of November you will have blooms.

*To destroy cabbage-worms:* One large cup of table salt to one gallon of water will destroy cabbage-worms and not harm the plant. Pour from a sprinkling can.

THE END

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