

The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts McKee

The Boat Adrift

It had floated away from the beach
and buoy,

Out of sight of the tower and town,
Though a battered, useless and empty
wreck,

The boat would not go down,
The morning rose on the waters
wide,

And the night fell, cold and dark,
Yet, ever on, with the wind and
tide,

Drifted the useless bark.

The sail had passed from its broken
mast,

And its painted pride was dim;
The soft sea weeds hung round its
bows,

Which had been so sharp and trim,
Where were the merry mates and
crew

Who had gone with it afloat?
There were none to tell; but the
world's wide sea

Hath many a drifted boat.

Lives that in early storm hath lost
Anchor and sail and oar;

Ah, never again can the drifting boats
Come into the moorings more.

Out of their loveless, trustless days
The hope and heart have gone;

Good boats go down in stormy seas,
But these boats drifted on.

They had hearts to sail in the wind's
eye once;

They had hands to reef and steer;
With a stretch that would not yield
to chance,

And a faith that knew no fear.
But the years were long, and the
storms were strong,

So the rainbow flag was furled;
And they that launched for sunny
skies,
Float, driftwood on the world.

—Anon.

Our Social Chat

In the columns of the scores of papers and periodicals that come to my homely little den, I find so many good things that I wish I might use the scissors, rather than the pencil. Among them all, I like best those which deal with the every-day world, giving us ideas for the betterment of the race, and for the building up of the home into the heaven (not haven) which it should be. Many of the finest, most practiced thoughts, come through the agricultural papers, from the pens of men and women who have lived, and have learned the lessons of life through living.

I am glad to see that these writers, instead of wrangling over "race suicide," and scolding women for wanting to share in the education of the day, or for trying to support themselves by honorable industry, are urging upon us the question of how to better the children we have; how to build them up to a healthy, mental and moral, as well as physical condition, and how to guard them from the vices and weaknesses common to every neighborhood. In short, how to develop the human animal into the "image of God," rather than to encourage and demand the bringing into the world of more weaklings who must suffer for the sins of the fathers and the weaknesses of the mothers. Most of these writers demand, first, better care of the fathers and mothers

in order that they may be able to transmit to their offsprings the qualities that make for strength and health—mental, moral and physical. They insist that the would-be parents should give to themselves and to each other the care and consideration which is freely dealt out to their brood animals from which superior offspring is expected. Much depends on proper food, cleanliness, fresh air, exercise in the right directions of all the higher functions of brain, mind and body, and the proper environment. It is nonsense to ask that these things be taught in schools; the adult man or woman should teach each other, and these lessons should constitute a post-graduate course—a never-ending study of the laws of life, for what will serve for today may in no wise suit the conditions of tomorrow.

While studying these problems, consideration should be given to the new being which they hope will be given them, and preparations, not wholly physical, should be made for the "better borning" of the little child—the strange, sweet being they would call from the depths of the infinite. What does either the boy-father, or the girl-mother know of its needs? Perhaps neither of them ever saw a new-born infant! Should they not give to the thought of its coming and preparation for its care the same anxious consideration they give to clothing its little velvet body? Should they not study closely the best literature to be had, take into their confidence some dear, experienced friend, and invite the counsel of their family physician, thus learning all their inexperienced minds could grasp and understand? There would still be "worlds" of knowledge to be conquered before they could say, "I know."

Friends, it is of far greater importance that your little child should be born with a "clean bill of health," mentally, morally and physically, conditioned by hereditary to grow up to a clean, happy, sensible adult age, than that we fill our homes with weaklings whose tendencies and shortcomings of body, mind and soul are but the outcome of an ignorant, selfish, unclean ancestry, who have given little or no thought to the sacredness of responsibility which every parentage entails upon its progeny.

School Influences

Parents should not forget that they owe a duty to their children in the matter of looking after the influences thrown about them in the schools and on the play grounds. Many deep thinkers have strong suspicions that much of the vice and crime of the day is due to the lax morals and loose methods which form a strong undercurrent at many of the public schools. Look well to the associations your children form. The purest minded children are no more found among the so-called higher class than the foulest-minded among the poor and unrefined.

A Plea for the Garden

A correspondent writes me: "I did not know that the Home Department did the gardening. I thought you had enough to do to keep the housework and the children straight." I am afraid if the Home Department did not do the gardening in addition to taking care of the house and the children, more families would go hungry for vegetables than do. It seems to be one of the rights uncomplainingly

conceded to the women of the household to do the digging and planting for the vegetables, and to cultivate and care for them until they reach the table in eatable form. But this should not be. "A little garden truck" seems a small thing in the eyes of most farmers, and the work to raise amounts to less; but there is all the difference in the world between having a plenty of "green things" for the kitchen, and not having them. The garden should be longer than it is wide, and so situated as to allow the plow, harrow and roller to be freely used in it, and that is just what should be done. The use of these implements in the garden is better than the medicine bottle and the druggist's bill in the home, and does more to keep the wrinkles out of the gude wife's face than any preparation known to the beauty specialist. Don't be afraid the wife will have too much leisure, or will lose interest in her vegetables because of the horse and plow. You'll see her, as often as is good for her, out there, hoeing away for dear life, or pulling up weeds, transplanting plants, or running the light wheel-hoe as though she enjoyed it.

Put plenty of manure on the ground before you break it up—plenty of it, and let it be as well-rotted as possible for immediate results; then plow it under, going over it in different directions, several times; then use the harrow to break up the clods, and the roller to pulverize them. Open the rows for the early potatoes, peas, and other things that must be in the ground early, and when the seeds are planted, cover the rows with the plow, and don't be afraid to go over the rest of the ground for the late plantings, keeping it loose and open. If possible, invest in one or more of those handy little implements which can be turned to so many accounts, for both her sake and your own, and do keep the hoe sharp! Remember, that whatever benefits this "willing worker," benefits you, and such investments pay a higher dividend than you can well calculate.

If you haven't got your seeds yet, order them as soon as possible, and from a reliable seedsman. Many of our best seedsmen offer collections for a small sum as a matter of advertisement and to secure future custom, and the seeds and plants they send out are of good quality. There are, of course, "Cheap John" concerns who offer old, worthless seeds, but you should patronize the best; a few good seeds are better than a lot that will not grow. Get good seeds and plant them in good ground, give them good cultivation, and you won't regret it. But let the horse and plow do the heavy part, and keep the spading fork in your own, or other hands equally as strong, to do what the plow can not reach. Do not forget the garden.

The Fruit Garden

Of equal importance with the vegetable garden is the supply of fruits, and there should be a plot of land in which are grown all kinds of small fruits—bush, vine, shrub and dwarf trees. It all "pays," if properly attended to, but the care of it should not be left to the wife. Let her gather the fruits and prepare them for the table, fresh, and "put up" for winter, but the work of raising it is no more hers than is the work of raising the corn. It was Adam who was commanded to "dress and keep" the garden, and the command was given him in order to keep him out of mischief

and that he might not have any time to visit the corner grocery, thus leaving Eve subject to the wiles of the old serpent. An abundance of fruit and vegetables to be "put up" keeps a woman busier than the ordinary club work, and with fully as good results, so far as the health of her family is concerned. Let the fruit garden, like its vegetable sister, be planted in rows for the plow cultivation, so long as cultivation may be necessary, and remember, there is health, happiness and big profit in the gardens, even if you never sell a dollar's worth of their produce.

Brain-workers

The changes of tissue in the brain that takes place during study and thought are very important and very rapid; it has been estimated that three hours of brain-work causes as great an exhaustion of the forces of the body as an entire day of manual labor. This waste must be replaced by abundant food, but its selection requires careful consideration and often self-denial, for many things which the physical worker can eat with impunity are slow poison to the brain-worker, who exercises the brain at the expense of the body, and rarely gives the latter sufficient exercise to counteract the mental strain and keep it in condition to resist disease. While the waste of the body is much more rapid, the deprivation of physical exercise encourages torpidity of the involuntary functions and renders them sluggish in eliminating these wastes; therefore, it is important that the tasks imposed upon them should be light. Brain-workers require the most concentrated foods; they should eat fresh beef, and mutton, fish, eggs cooked in many forms, but never hard-boiled nor fried; oysters, crisp salads, lettuce, chicory, tomatoes, watercress, spinach, and the like, with dressing. They should begin the day with fruits, and make that a part of the luncheon; be very sparing in their use of cereals, eschewing entirely white breads and oatmeals. The ideal lunch is a glass of milk, or a hot cup of chocolate, or a glass of fresh buttermilk, with two or three graham crackers, some fruit, an apple, a fig or an orange.

Robert Louis Stevenson advised girls not to marry a literary man. He said: "Shakespeare himself was not a satisfactory life's partner, and authorship is a sedentary, brain-working, dyspeptic profession. He who bends over a desk coming fine sentences will likely scowl when the baby wails, quarrel with his food, want silence when the children romp, suffer from insomnia and live chiefly on his nerves." He commends "a good, capable journalist, as an eminently good-natured fellow, cheerful, energetic, with a keen understanding of human nature, leads a busy life, and comprehends the philosophy of making the best of everything."

Lent and Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday is a movable festival, and cannot happen earlier than March 22, or later than April 25, but between these dates it has a range of thirty-five days. At the time of the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, it was agreed by the representatives present that from that time forward Easter should fall on the first Sunday after the full moon occurring on or next after March 21, or, in other words, "on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the sun crosses the

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