

# The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

## Gas Man and a Goose

The subject of gas has been most ably handled by our esteemed contemporary, but perhaps we may be pardoned for adding a humble plea beside. The gas man and a goose are two widely differing subjects, but one is moved to express opinions of them both under the head of nuisances. The former is a very astute and knowing person, and the other can only remember the "Michalmas" before last and the "Michalmas" before that, and all the rest is "ga-ga."

Nearly everybody that you meet on the street casts imploring eyes to heaven and makes sympathetic inquiries as to the size of your gas bill. "Mine," says a woman I met the other day, "is once and a half as big as my neighbors," and they cook with their eyes and keep the house brightly lighted all the time."

And that is just the whole thing in a nutshell. You call up the main office and the man will sympathize with you and tell you how sorry he is that he can't change it, but that is the end of it. A man with his eyes readily crossed from years of looking around rubber shoes and such accumulations in the little closets under the stairs where your meter lives, arrives at your front door. He strikes a match and writes in a book and he might as well have inserted the Greek alphabet for all you know what he is about. You say, "I am sure that our bill will be much less this month. We have scarcely burned any gas at all." He gazes back at you with surprise all over his face that you should even dare to wonder if a gas bill might not be less, and grows out that it is an amount by two dollars larger than the last.

You tear your hair and your family's hair and throw all the false hair at hand in the fire with the rage that consumes your soul. The cross-eyed man will tell you with tears on his cheeks that he is sorry. Perhaps your meter leaks. That is the end of it. A patient friend comes and tries to teach you to read the meter so that you will keep an account of the gas yourself, but the patient friend is worn to a frazzle, and you have not yet grasped the fearful intricacies of the system by which our city is lighted and for which we lay down our pretentious pennies. Your head aches from trying to stand on it and what seems purposely written in the language of Demogogus II, and you begin to think if you had that to go through with at every door that you would make the bill too big too.

There seems to be nothing in the world to do about it but burn candles, and then when you don't burn one it is still there on the shelf and you don't have the soul agony of having said that you cut in twilight, dress in the dark and entertain your friends in the shadows. Yes, I believe that to burn candles is the only way out of the wretched old lighting problem, a gas plant does not seem to recognize economics.

Now about the goose. He lives somewhere in town here, and whether he is chained by one leg or beest by dogs, I know not, but he ga-gas all through the watches of the night, and the cackles away at such a rate that you are sure he had an answer that saved Rome. Certainly in the recesses of that wily brain inside his tiny head must be an impression that he is now sacred and that the city approaches are depending upon his speech, else why should he rend the night?

The good people that lived about this nice old Ga-Ga said to themselves that he would adorn the board on Thanksgiving, that soon his cacklings would have ceased, and they endured, but he wasn't eaten. Thanksgiving, and a great fear has come to live in the hearts of those who listen nightly to his song; maybe he isn't intended for Christmas either.

A gasman and a goose, rather dissimilar animals, are they not? The good Ga-Ga must save Rome, and hence his song "oft through the still night," and the gasman, like the poor, is always with us, and his bill pinned to our pincushion. Do you believe that the day is ever coming when neighborhood nuisances are a thing of the past, and the gas bill—well, when you buy a yard of blue ribbon, you generally like to have a yard of blue ribbon, don't you?

BRENT WITT.

## Thinly Veiled

The season's costume conceals of the season are to be noted the accented negligees, which are made of chiffon net, both plain and embroidered, and liberty silk and satin. These becoming garments are designed in a great variety of styles, but there is none more fetching for the woman of slender figure and some height than the empire gown of pleated chiffon, and to go over it the coat for a pale pink gown of this sort is more than half of yellow lace. It is a very much outworn garment, with a front of lace cascades in front and a long tailed back that is all lace and shirring, and frills also. The sleeves are draped flat florences, and there is a wide stridle of pink satin ribbon, which has a huge satin buckle in the back.

## The Fashion for Platinum

Platinum holds undisputed sway in the world of jewelry. Gold and silver make but little appeal to the ultra-fashionable woman. There are many reasons for this passion for platinum, its lightness, its adaptability to designs of exquisite delicacy, its wonderful effects like silvered frost on a window pane, and the fact that it is a better background for precious stones than either gold or silver, have all contributed to its extraordinary popularity. Jewels nowadays do not weigh a quarter of what they used to do, but they cost a great deal more.

There is no doubt that the average fashionable woman spends much more in jewelry than she used to do, and they are always having their jewelry reset in newer designs. There is a great demand for old jewelry up to 1820. After that period jewelry became heavy, inartistic and ugly, very different from the styles in fashion just now. Pearls, emeralds and sapphires are the most popular at present. There is a craze for pendents—ballon and basket shapes, in the most fairy-like designs in diamond and pearl, set in platinum, are exceedingly popular. Button earrings are not much worn, but pearl-drop earrings are continually asked for. Rings with single stones are fashionable, and simple diamonds with colored stones around them. There is rather a craze at present for watch necklaces in enamel, in palest blue, pink, green or other delicate colors. The rare very effective. Some women even have watches fitted into the handles of their walking sticks. The newest wristlet watches are oblong in shape, thus fitting more comfortably to the wrist. Most of them are made in platinum.



CHARMING DRESSES OF SATIN AND CLOTH.

L'Art de la Mode.

## Living Room Furniture

A living room that gives a caller the feeling that he has strayed into a museum by mistake or reminds him of that vainglorious belle of the ball who wore jewels of seventeen different descriptions, including every last gem in her possession, ought to have a general overhauling.

At least good taste would urge it, the maid would approve of it, and your own little duties might be reduced by one-half.

The living room should be as free of bric-a-brac and superfluousities of furniture as possible. When the furniture is chosen with a view to ease, comfort, and coziness rather than chilling splendor and exhibitions of art, some of the brittle and fragile stuff will have to be eliminated, for one doesn't care to move about in constant fear of brushing against something that will crash.

The more simply and sensibly the living room is furnished the more time you can save in keeping it in order. As a rule it needs more brushing and dusting than any other in the house, and the patience and energy required to keep bright and shining every little vase and gewgaw and every bit of furniture that might be dispensed with are often considerable.

## The Christmas Turkey

Young hen turkeys not more than a year old are best for roasting, yet a young male turkey is preferable to an old hen. The legs of a young hen are black, the skin white, the breast broad and fat and the shorter the neck the better. The bird is fresh as long as the legs are not stiff. An old hen has reddish, rough legs. A gobbler, if young, should have black legs and small spurs, and is always much larger than the hen of the same age. The flesh of an old gobbler is strong and tough, and it can be told by its reddish legs and long spurs.

When buying also note well that the head and legs have not been removed, if the eyes are blanched you may be sure the turkey has been in cold storage too long. The presence of pin feathers indicates that the turkey is young, but the most important indication is the breastbone. If the thin end near the stomach feels soft and griety then it is young. Have your turkey thoroughly cleaned and trussed.

For the stuffing use broken bread two days old and moisten it with heated milk in which butter, salt, pepper, sage and thyme are used as seasoning. Do not mash the bread into a pulp, but work it lightly, and do not fill with butter and dredge with salt, pepper and flour. Cover the breast with buttered paper to keep from scorching. Place, breast downward, on a rack in the roasting pan and put in a very hot oven. Use a smaller rack than the pan to admit the free use of the spoon in basting.

When the turkey is basted with a light brown sauce, the breast is a light brown and sides brown in a similar manner. Reduce the heat, baste once in a while, and each time sprinkle with flour.

About thirty minutes before taking it up rub over it a tablespoon packed solid with butter. When the joints separate easily the cooking is completed. A double pan is preferable, but when a regular baking pan is not obtainable cover the one used with a large bread pan. By creating steam the turkey is cooked more quickly. Keep at least a cup of water in the pan all the time, also a little butter or bacon to help prevent scorching. Do not prod the fowl with a fork, and cook slowly. That is the entire secret.

If the mat of the oven is as great as the turkey, and is kept steady and firm, a seven-pound turkey will cook just right in two hours.

If you like more stuffing than the fowl will hold, you will appreciate the plan of one housekeeper. When making the turkey dressing she scraped out the inside of the fowl in an area of loaf of bread and cut off the crusts at each end so thin that the ends of the loaf were still closed. She then rinsed the inside of the halves with cold water, turned it out and filled the loaf with the extra dressing. After placing the crusts on the open ends of the two half loaves she inverted them on a pie tin and placed in the oven to bake half as long as necessary. Before serving time she browns the loaf receptacles lightly and serves the dressing in them. It is delicious.

To garnish a turkey, place a bunch of parsley over the neck and arrange around the remainder small croquettes and pickled onions. Egg balls may also be used. Have the Christmas turkey carved at the dinner table in view of the guests, as half of the charm is lost if it comes to the table already sliced. Beside the usual carving knife, provide one with a long, rough handle and a short blade. Both must be very sharp, or the meat will break into chunks. The carver should thrust his thumb into the upper end of the breastbone in such a manner to give him a secure hold upon the carcass on the platter where it should remain until the process of carving is over.

Remove the legs and wings first, disjoint them, then carve the meat from the breast in thin slanting slices cut from the breast toward the back. There is really no difficulty whatever in carving any fowl, provided the meat is thoroughly done and the knife is very sharp. Turkey looks most attractive when daintily sliced. Do not serve on a platter a size too small. If you cannot procure one large enough for slices of meat as they are cut from the bird, it is well to provide a second small platter for that purpose. The one who carves the turkey may serve each dish, or have it passed to the guests to make their own selection. When serving the meat on individual dishes the dressing should be served at the same time.

Roast turkey is good stuffed with chestnuts and sausage meat. Roast two pounds of chestnuts for twenty minutes. Shell and blanch by removing the brown skin, put half of them into a saucepan, with two cups of milk and a tablespoonful of butter. Cook until soft, wash smooth, season with salt and pepper, add half a pound of sausage meat and the whole amount of chestnuts. Mix well and fill the turkey.

A good way to utilize the left-over pieces of turkey is to combine with an equal quantity of rice. Remove the meat from the turkey bones and run it through the chopping machine, then add sufficient butter, milk, salt and pepper to season. Form the mixture into small balls, roll in beaten egg and cracker crumbs and fry. Garnish with parsley.

## Gifts of All Sorts and Descriptions

You have some pieces of ribbon left from hat trimming, wash making or other work. Why not use them to make dainty little gifts for friends who are remembered in thought mainly?

The combination of the practical with the beautiful is possible with a piece of ribbon six inches long and four inches wide. Fold it in half, making a book three by four. Fold in a hem one-fourth inch wide all around and cut-stitch it down with colored silk thread or buttonhole twist. In the cover sew four fannel leaves, with the edges pinked or cut in regular points. Place on them a row of needles, each one threaded with the colors of a woman would be most likely to use on a short trip. Pin in a row of small safety pins and add ordinary pins, black and white headed ones in neat rows across the leaves.

Attach the binding string or ribbon on the outside and tie around the little emergency book. This is a flat case that a woman can tuck in her handbag or slip into her coat pocket. It is a gift in need, and will be used many times.

The tiny flat sachets that are placed in the folds of a blouse or underwear in a suitcase must be of necessity small. Here, then, comes a small piece of ribbon to the rescue. A pad of cotton batting should be cut and sprinkled with sachet. There should be a corner of muslin or batiste covering made for it. Over this sew the ribbon case, first basting the raw edges together on the right side. A dainty binding of narrow ribbon can be added to give a neat finish. Outline the four edges with this and finish the joined ribbon with a necktie bow or a full rosette of ribbon.

Work in an initial or the monogram of the owner. Present with a little sprig of holly or mistletoe, or a very clever way is to attach an express tag, intimating that the gift is for short trips. From a piece of ribbon one-half yard long can be made a little shirred bag to hold circular bolts of lingerie ribbon. Gather each edge and then sew the gathered part around a crocheted ring about one inch in diameter. Do the same with the other edge, leaving the short ends of the ribbon open. They, of course, must be hemmed for the sake of neatness. Place two or three bolts of ribbon with the ends coming out through each ring and the opening between the hemmed ends. This little case is always appreciated

## Jewelry Gifts

Now that women and girls are wearing jeweled ornaments on their heads, about their throats and upon their slipper-toes, it is a simple matter to find something suitable for a Christmas gift. For the hair there are bandeaux of exquisite beauty and design, developed in aluminum set with rhinestones, or platinum aglitter with amethysts, or silver encrusted with seed pearls and of amber chased with gold. Of similar metals and gems are braided-pins and barrettes. The latter type of hair ornament in oval or square shape. One novelty in "beaded" lock fasteners is known-shaped and equipped with a clipping which may be inserted underneath the coil, fast and easily adapted to its outline.

Backcombs come in all of the popular metals and jewels, but the smart thing in this ornament is made of tortoise shell decorated with pearls set on tiny pedestals of gold between which are set emeralds. This combination of yellow, white and green contrasting with the tortoise shell is wondrously effective. Jet-on, or plain—be a favorite and fashionable material for backcombs and is exceptionally small when used in connection with gold, silver, pearls or rhinestones. The brilliant black composition is again being extensively made up into ornaments of various kinds, of which the modern woman cannot have too many. And the shapes are alluring. The most interesting are the hollow spheres, circles and diamonds and the very long oblongs. It is the smart thing to use two hapsins of decidedly different shape and size at the one time, but they must be of matching material—plain or cut jet, Roman gold, real silver, amber or gun metal.

Among the Christmas novelties in the short bars which come in sets of three and are known as "dressing pins" is a breakless affair of silver set with colored gems and of platinum encrusted with rhinestones or amethysts. By these fasteners there are also bars of carved white ivory or coral, and these are much in demand, since white jewelry of all sorts has attained pronounced vogue.

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## Christmas Entertaining

When old Father Time turns his hour glass and brings the Christmas season, with its attendant festivities and memories, do not linger long in retrospection, but bear in mind that while there are little children blessing our homes Christmas will always be a merry day, and not a stone must be left unturned to make it as joyous as possible.

A child remembers no past and disregards the future; but the grand, glorious present is lived to its fullest extent. Even if your heart is weighted down with the world's sorrows, endeavor to make the children happy during the holiday season.

Vacation will be incomplete without a party, for nothing appeals more to children than this form of amusement. Send invitations written on white cards decorated with a small Christmas tree, Santa Claus or a "kidd" stocking or a chimney studded with water-color. If the design is drawn on a thin piece of paper it can easily be transferred to the cards by using waxed paper. If the invitations are written in rhyme they usually please the children.

I want you to come to my Christmas party. And promise to give you a welcome hearty. Wear your best frock and do not be late.

I will expect you from four to eight. Have the house decorated with Christmas greens and a large tree decorated with ornaments, fruit, candy and toys. Purchase several dozens of birds, which may be had at any toy shop, and are balanced so that they can be perched upon the tree-branches, and hide them in the tree. Have the children guess how many birds are in the tree, awarding a prize to the one coming nearest. Have a large flat box filled with bran or sawdust. To a gift intended for each guest attach a pine branch and bury the gift in the box of bran, covering the tops and sides with Christmas greens so that some of the wood is visible. The little host's or hostess's words are in the forest and cut down a Christmas tree. This will be great fun for the kiddies. If preferred, small artificial trees may be used instead of the pine branches. Label each tree with the name of a child so that there will be no confusion of gifts. Small dolls, a box of paper dolls, books and boxes of paints would be appropriate

for the girls, and books, balls, boats and toy watches for the boys. These articles can be purchased for five or ten cents apiece. Wrap them daintily with tissue paper, ribbon and Christmas seals, for children love to untie packages.

Make a "Jack Horner" pie by filling a large tin pudding dish with snapping crackers, to each of which is tied a little describing a tiny guest, with a strand of ribbon two or more yards long. Cover the dish with crepe paper to resemble a pie, and through the top cut the ribbon.

Hold the pie above the children's heads and supply each with a ribbon. Have them repeat the nursery rhyme about "Little Jack Horner," and when he "pulled out a plum" tell them to pull the ribbon. The snapping cracker contains a cap and trinket, while the upper portion is found with the aid of the rhyme.

Have the dining table effectively decorated with holly and flowers, with a small Christmas tree or Santa Claus for a centerpiece. From the chandelier hang red and green Christmas balls, and serve the salted almonds and bonbons in porcelain holders, which can be found in the confectionery department of any shop. At the same time purchase small favors suitable for a Christmas party. These are inexpensive and add much to the decoration of the table.

A suitable menu for a children's party consists of:

- Clear Soup
- Wafers
- Cold Turkey or Chicken
- Bread and Butter Sandwiches
- Fruit Salad Served in Glasses
- Celery Crackers
- Ice Cream
- Holly-Decorated Cakes
- Cocoa

Have the ice cream molded to form a Christmas ball, snowball or Santa Claus, and ornament the plate with sprig of holly or mistletoe.

After supper, if there is time, play games or tell the children an interesting Christmas story. As they leave for home, present each with a flower used in the decoration of the table. Many other ways of entertaining the children will suggest themselves. It all depends upon whether you live in town or country, or whether your climate is temperate or frigid; but some time during the holidays entertain the children.