

THE CARE OF LAMPS.

The necessity for the proper care of lamps cannot be too strongly impressed on every one who has charge of a household, for illy trimmed, foul lamps not only cause serious discomfort and annoyance, but more or less aggravated disorder of the health of every one who breathes the air contaminated by them. Some hints as to their management will doubtless be welcome, especially at this time of the year, when so much of comfort depends upon good illumination. The use of kerosene in one form or another is so universal, even in great cities, and its full brilliancy is so rarely attained, that any information leading to that end is of great value. No medium used for household lighting produces, under given conditions, so soft, so brilliant, and so steady a flame as the best qualities of kerosene. The given conditions are absolute cleanliness of the lamp, the wick, and the oil, also the chimney. To attain the first it will be necessary once a week or a fortnight at least to empty the lamp of its contents and wash it inside and out with hot soap and water and a little washing soda. When clean rinse again and again to remove all traces of soap, then invert the lamp and leave it to drain until perfectly dry. The burner, if new, may be kept nice and bright by occasional dipping in kerosene, which might be kept in a bowl for the purpose, after the dipping polish with a bit of fine woollen cloth. If the burner is badly backed up take a little fine ash and an old tooth brush, moisten the ashes with ammonia water and scrub vigorously; then rinse, and polish with flannel. The next step will be to place a new wick in the burner; wicks are not costly; they should therefore, for purposes of proper burning and good illumination, be used only a week, and then removed, as during that time they have absorbed sufficient impurities from the oil to become charged with them to a degree interfering with the best powers of the oil for illumination. Indeed, the weekly renewal of wicks is a saving in the end, because clean wicks burn less oil than impure ones. Lamp wicks should be trimmed every day with great care; this cannot be done without a sharp pair of scissors of suitable size. Many persons merely rub the top of the charred part of the wick to insure evenness of flame, instead of cutting it. This is not a good practice, as it causes the top of the wick to become clogged with impurity. Cut the wick square across the wick tub. If the top of the wick is immovable raise the wick above the cupola and trim it as evenly straight across as possible, and then cut off the extreme points or corners. This can all be easily done if you use good sharp scissors of suitable size, but not otherwise. It is claimed by those who profess to know, that wicks made of felt are greatly superior to the ordinary cotton wicks, and doubtless this is the case, because the felt presents no network for entanglement with the small toothed wheel that elevates and lowers the wick. The lamp and wick having been treated, we must next consider the chimney, that brittle object which causes such annoyance by its tendency to breaking at most unexpected junctures. This brittleness results from insufficient, or rather imperfect annealing of the lamp glass in its manufacture, and may be in great measure remedied by the simple process of putting the chimneys into a kettle of cold water, and gradually heating them till the water boils, after which they must be allowed to cool very gradually. This might be repeated several times with good results, after which they must be polished with a soft clean dry cloth. If soot collects in the chimney from any sudden turning the wick too high, or by exposure of the flame to draught, brush it out with one of the chimney brushes, which should constitute part of the lamp equipment in every well regulated kitchen, and then rub and polish with clean cloths on the end of a small mop of cotton wick. Another annoyance connected with kerosene lamps is their tendency to becoming greasy on the outside from the condensation of the vapor of the oil. This may be greatly obviated if not altogether prevented by taking a piece of felt cloth and cutting a hole in the middle of it so that it may fit closely about the socket into which the burner is screwed. The felt may be trimmed, after you find the right size, to form a ring about half an inch wide, which should be kept on the socket to prevent, as far as possible, the escape of the very volatile vapor of the kerosene.

All the routine connected with the care of lamps should be performed in the early morning hours, and at a regular time. This being observed it will only be necessary to give the lamp a slight dusting or rubbing with a cloth, before lighting it and bringing it to the table or sitting room in the evening. Having observed carefully these directions, the housewife will be rewarded by the brilliant, steady soft glow of the lamps that cheer and light the evening hours. It remains only to advise that the housewife select good lamps when purchasing, and to use them only when the wick is turned up to its best capacity for illumination without smoke; in a word, never allow a lamp to burn with its wick turned

low, as the effects are most injurious to the atmosphere of a room, and consequently to its tenants, beside being most disagreeable.

SUBJECTS FOR THOUGHT.

Man does not live by bread alone. Man does not labor solely for his own, daily sustenance. He labors for others; he lives by the past and for the future. The strongest incentive to industry, economy, and good living is the desire to provide for the future and to hand down to our children some results of our own lives. That desire is one of the chief bonds of the human family and it consecrates the rights of property. The capital so saved must be invested, and being invested, it becomes equally useful to those who own it and to those who employ it, although their positions in life may widely differ. To attack the rights of private property in land, is to attack property in its most concrete form. If landed property is not secure, no property can be protected by law, and the transmission of wealth, be it large or small, is extinguished. With it expires the perpetuity of family life, and that future which cheers and enables the labor of the present by the hopes of the future. These are the doctrines of communism, fatal alike to the welfare of society, and to the moral character of man.

Man's highest virtue always is as much as possible to rule external circumstances, and as little as possible to let himself be ruled by them. Life lies before us, as a huge quarry before the architect; he deserves not the name of architect except, out of this fortuitous mass, he can combine with the greatest economy, suitableness, and durability, some form, the pattern of which originated in his own soul. All things without us—nay, I may add, all things within us—are mere elements; but deep in the inmost shrine of our nature lies the creative force, which out of these can produce what they were meant to be, and which leaves us neither sleep nor rest, till in one way or another, without us or within us, this product has taken shape.

We cannot too soon convince ourselves how very easily we may be dispensed with in the world. What important personages we conceive ourselves to be! We think that it is we alone who animate the circle in which we move; that in our absence life, nourishment and breath will make a general pause; and, alas! the void which occurs is scarce remarked, so quickly is it filled up again; and it is well for even our dearest friends when they soon recover their composure; when they say each to himself, there where thou art, there where thou remainest, accomplish what thou canst; be busy, be courteous, and let the present scene delight thee.

THE HABIT OF COMPLAINING.—The willingness, cheerfulness and determination to do our duty, when we accept all the conditions of life, is the powerful lever with which to lift the weight, no matter how heavy. There is a great deal in habit, and some women are in the habit of constantly complaining, until they really believe their lot in life is harder to bear than anybody else, and they get to look upon things as just their luck. I heard of a conversation once that illustrates this idea. An old lady who was telling her troubles to a friend and saying she was so tired, there was so much to do it seemed to her she would never have any rest, when her friend to comfort her, said; Never mind, my sister, this wearisome life will not last always, there will be rest in the grave, to which the other replied: I don't know, it would not surprise me if the day after I was buried, it would be the resurrection and I would have to get right up; it would just be my luck, and she really believed the resurrection would be called for her annoyance. Don't fret and worry, mothers, over the cares of life, make all the sunshine in your homes you can, take time from your daily labors to give some time each day or evening and gather your children around you and make the hour an enjoyment for them and yourself.

GEMS OF THOUGHT.

The temperance work makes steady progress. It is not a craze, furious today and dumb to-morrow, but as a cause, is a slow but permanent growth. [United Presbyterian.]

The empire of Christ is a moral, not a material empire; it is a realm, not of bodies, but of souls instinct with intelligence and love. Its seat of power is the conscience of mankind. [Canon Liddon.]

I find that, when the saints are under trials and well humbled, little sins raise great cries in the conscience; but in prosperity conscience is a pope, that gives dispensations and great latitude to our hearts. [Samuel Rutherford.]

The cold sunsets and the starry heavens, the beautiful mountains and the shining seas, the fragrant woods and the painted flowers, they are not half so beautiful as a soul that is serving Jesus out of love, in the wear and tear of common unpoetic life. [Faber.]

How TO KEEP APPLES IN WINTER.

—The great secret of keeping apples through the winter is to store them in a well ventilated room or cellar that is kept as near the freezing point as possible without actually freezing the apples. Apples and potatoes should never be kept in the same cellar, or if this is unavoidable, the potatoes should be kept in the warmest part of the cellar, and the barrels of apples, well headed up, near the windows, where, on days when the air outside is only a few degrees above freezing, they can be treated to a cold breeze from the open windows, while, at the same time, the atmosphere in the part of the cellar where the potatoes are kept does not fall below forty degrees. With a thermometer in the cellar it is quiet possible to cool off the apples without injuring the potatoes. Do not unhead the barrels until the apples are wanted. It is rarely a good plan to sort over the apples to pick out the rotten ones. Better let them remain undisturbed. Apples in ripening give off carbonic acid, which cannot be allowed to accumulate in the house cellar, but must be removed by ventilation. This deleterious gas, carbonic acid, aids in preserving the fruit, and it is one of the advantages of an outside cellar that this can be allowed to remain.

WONDERFUL SHOT.

A gentleman residing near the Napa and Sonoma county lines tells this story to the Santa Rosa, Cal., Democrat: He was out in the mountains in quest of the festive buck, Monday, and had experienced poor luck until about noon, when he spied a tall, magnificent deer, the first he had seen, rising his proud head above a rock pile at a distance of about 200 yards from him. The branches of a young madrona tree formed a natural canopy of bronze red and green above the animal's head. He hesitated for some time, in doubt about chancing a shot at that distance, the position of his game being so unfavorable. He decided to risk it, however, and blazed away. When the little wreath of smoke cleared away he found that the proudly crested head had disappeared. He made his way as rapidly as possible to the spot and found his game awaiting him.

After performing the customary surgical operation upon the deer's throat with his hunting knife, he commenced to look for his death wound. What appeared to be a bullet hole was found in the center of the deer's forehead. In passing his hand carelessly over the wound he detected a rough, sharp protuberance. Thinking that it was a piece of the shattered frontal bone he tried to withdraw it. He was unable to move it at first attempt, and commenced tugging in earnest. He finally succeeded, but to his surprise, it was not a piece of skull. It was a splinter of madrona wood, four inches in length by an inch and a half or a quarter of an inch thick, gradually narrowing to a point at one end. Upon a careful examination he found that the bullet had not touched the animal, but had struck one of the limbs of the madrona tree about six inches above his head, chipping out the splinter withdrawn from the animal's skull was fitted to the limb, and the result proved beyond doubt that the deer was killed by a splinter of wood.

When the Roman people had listened to the diffuse and polished discourses of Cicero, they departed, saying one to another:—What a splendid speech our orator has made! But when the Athenians heard Demosthenes, he so filled them with the subject-matter of his oration, that they quite forgot the orator, and left him at the finish of his harangue, breathing revenge, and exclaiming:—Let us go and fight against Philip!

Fancy plays like a squirrel in its circular prison, and is happy; but imagination is a pilgrim on the earth, and her home is in heaven. Shut her from the fields of the celestial mountains, bar her from breathing their lofty sun-warmed air, and we may as well turn upon her the last bolt of the tower of famine, and give the keys to the keeping of the wildest surge that washes Capraja and Gorgona.

A TEST FOR FURS.—In purchasing furs a sure test of what dealers call a prime fur is the length and density of the down next the skin. This can be readily determined by blowing a brisk current of air from the mouth against the set of fur. If the fiber opens readily, exposing the skin to view, reject the article; but if the down is so dense that the breath cannot penetrate it, or, at most, shows but a small portion of the skin, the article may be accepted.

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LAUNCHING A CHINESE WAR JUNK.

—It is very amusing to watch the ceremony of launching a Chinese war vessel. It is always customary before a junk sails on any voyage to sacrifice a cock and sprinkle its blood on the bows of the vessel, amid much beating of gongs. But on this occasion a very especial blessing is invoked on the new undertaking and the court at Peking sends its imperial commissioner to offer sacrifice, as the the representative of the emperor. Two altars are therefore erected on board the new ship, one to the goddess of the river, the other to the goddess of heaven. To the former are sacrificed two goats and two pigs, and to the latter, who has less to do with the shipping, only the heads of one pig and one goat. But quantities of joss paper, inscribed with prayers for good luck, are burned on each altar, and showers of prayers on gilt paper are thrown into the sea to propitiate the sea dragon. Then, amid deafening beating of gongs, firing of guns, shouting and general uproar, the vessel glides into the river.

A Boston philanthropist and student of human nature bought a dozen cheap umbrellas, had a nickel plate inserted in each handle, on which was his address and the request that the umbrella be returned, and on the first rainy day went out on the street and handed one to each umbrellaless woman that he met. All were returned within a week, but one, and in place of that came a note saying that it had been stolen and that the writer would pay for it. The next rainy day he handed the umbrellas to twelve men. He never saw but one of them again, and that was brought in by a friend who said that he had stolen it at a festival.

ONCE WAS ENOUGH.—Magistrate (to complainant)—You say that the prisoner struck you once?

Complainant—Yes, sir.

Magistrate (to prisoner)—Why didn't you strike him the second time?

Prisoner—I didn't have to, yer honor.

1837.

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