

# MICHIGAN FARMER

AND STATE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.

DETROIT, SEPT. 15, 1888.

## THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

### HER DOLE.

She had many tasks to do that day,  
And brief were the hours from sun to sun;  
But she met them all in a cheery way,  
And while she finished them one by one,  
Hope touched her heart and whispered light,  
"Perhaps he will praise you to-night, to-night."

But as they sat through the evening long,  
Both were tired, and dull, and sad;  
And she felt that Hope had told her wrong,  
No word or caress made her poor heart glad;  
But he spoke instead (though his love was true),  
Of some slight thing she had failed to do.

By and bye, to the tune of the husband's snore,  
That woman wept—as women will;  
While out of the silence, o'er and o'er,  
Despair kept wailing and wailing still:  
"It will be the same when life is past,  
"They will blame, not praise you at last, at last."  
THOMAS. A. H. J.

### THE TALKATIVE WOMAN.

It seems to me that talk should be,  
Like water, sprinkled sparingly.  
Then ground that late lay dull and dried  
Smiles up at you revived,  
And flowers—of speech—touched by the dew  
Put forth fresh root, and bud anew.  
But I'm not sure that any flower  
Would thrive beneath Niagara's shower!  
So when a friend turns full on me  
His verbal hose, may I not flee?  
I know that I am arid ground,  
But I'm not watered—Gad! I'm drowned!"

There is one type of femininity I am always willing to avoid. It is the woman who talks. I mean that frequently encountered individual who resembles a watch, in that once wound up she will go till she "runs down," in spite of any effort to stop her. It is said Providence had a beneficent purpose in view in the creation of flies and mosquitoes; undoubtedly He did; but His object in creating the talkative woman—and making so many of her—is far more recondite and obscure, and really, in my desperate moments, I have fancied that she ought to be ranked with them as one of the pests and annoyances of the race.

I meet her in many forms. Sometimes she occupies a chair at the dinner table and monopolizes the conversation by drowning out all others with her strident treble. A chance phrase "starts her off," and one learns to be as guarded as travelers on Alpine heights, who speak in whispers lest the vibrations of their voices may precipitate the awful avalanche. To flee is to sacrifice a dinner; the only resource is to become spiritually deaf and let the constant dropping of words fall upon the auditory nerves without being received into the consciousness.

Then there is the woman whose theme is "our family." Whatever subject is broached, "my brother," "my sister," "our family" are quoted; their preferences

given, their opinions cited, till you long to quote the Irishman's answer to the aristocratic of an ancient house who was bragging about his ancestors: "Sure, yer fam'ly's like a hill of potatoes; the best part of 'em's underground." Is politics the topic, "my brother's" opinions are quoted as final; in religion, "my brother's" doxy is orthodox, all dissenting opinions are heterodox.

There is the woman whose theme is herself. As "all roads lead to Rome" so whatever is said reminds her of something that has happened to her; and her likes and dislikes are all important. You are expected to take an interest in her hay fever, and to wear black when she has neuralgia, but how dreadfully tiresome she becomes, in her selfish absorption in her immediate personal concerns. And there is, unhappily, also the woman whose conversation, no matter from what point you start it, always lands you on a neighbor's territory. From the safe vantage ground of some magazine article, some topic of public interest, you are led to somebody's stinginess, his wife's extravagance, or that dullest of all narratives which gives in detail all the trivial incidents of an uninteresting career; and there are no switches on the talkative track she has chosen, you cannot divert her attention nor stem the current of her words. Heaven defend us from the well meaning individual who in her painful accuracy wearies us unto death with her minute descriptions, leaving nothing for our imagination or perception.

The woman who hails you on the street and holds you a reluctant auditor while she tries to carry on a confidential conversation from her station on her doorstep, her prattle running "on and on forever" like Lord Tennyson's famous brook, can be more easily disposed of, since under cover of the rattle of a coal cart or a passing truck one can smile feebly, gasp "Yes, yes, just so," and unite her parting bow with the first steps of her retreat. A merciful providence has ordained that no human tongue can out-rattle a coal wagon.

Worst of all is the woman who "runs in to sit a minute" and stays half a day. She finds you with the last new magazine, or a book you have been trying to find time to read, in your hand, and says: "Oh, you're not busy; I'm so glad; now we'll have a nice talk," and you sit with what grace you may while she prattles on about her personal concerns, tells you long stories of past conversations in which she bore a heroine's part, with that awful, awful iteration which comes to be perfectly maddening at last,

"I sez, sez I." You do not wish to offend her by intimating a distaste for her conversation, having no desire to be impaled upon her merciless tongue and dissected for the benefit of her next audience. And so you strive to guard your lips from giving assent to that treacherous "Don't you think so?" which commits you to her opinion of a neighbor's conduct, and long for meal-time as Napoleon prayed for "night or Blucher." The hour you meant to have spent so pleasantly, that you earned perhaps by rising early and working hard, is gone, you have been neither amused or instructed, and you shut the door upon your caller when at last your martyrdom is accomplished, with a mute gesture of exasperated impatience, and set about the tasks now to be resumed. You can only hope her parting words, "I've had a jovely visit!" (words so characteristic of a woman who has had the felicity of a monologue of an hour's duration) are sufficiently sincere that what proved severe discipline to you may have been a pleasure to her.

The longer I live the more respect I have for the individual, man or woman, who, having nothing to say can say just that and nothing more. "Things said for conversation are chalk eggs," says Emerson. Much of our talk is as valueless as "chalk eggs" and far more harmful. The idle tattle that ripples from us as a centre spreads its widening circle through society, lowering its tone, causing hearts to ache through its unkindness or injustice, perhaps breaking down some good resolve, some nobler impulse toward better things, putting us all on a dead level of gossiping familiarity we misname friendship.

When will we learn that talk is not conversation! Talk is like the arms of a windmill, always in motion whether the mill is grinding or not, veering this way and that by accidental currents; purposeless. But conversation doubles our mental power; the act of expressing a thought, clothing it in language for a friend's acceptance, makes it clearer and more worthy to us. The activity is contagious, it is developed by sympathy and appreciation; it is exhilarating; it piques one to emulation; it is a delight to catch the purport of the half-uttered thought—may we have the good manners not to interrupt and catch it, half chiseled into shape, from our friend's lips!—and find it suggestive and helpful.

But the talkative individual, alas, never thinks, and hence offers us only "chalk eggs," nay, insists on our accepting them, forces them upon us at the point of our

politeness; and how time is wasted and our mental tone degraded by that never-ceasing flow of "I sez," "he sez," "they sez!"

BEATRIX.

#### WHY GIRLS DISLIKE HOUSEWORK.

Without doubt one reason why girls dislike to go into a stranger's kitchen is because of the unreasonableness and petty, annoying exactions of the mistress. Some women seem to think if they hire a girl she belongs to them, body and soul almost. The girl's work is never done. Her task-mistress exercises her ingenuity to find something more for her to do, no matter how faithfully she may have labored and how tired she is. And a great many more, who allow a girl a little leisure, will not permit her to plan her work and carry it on in her own way, though it may be as good as their own. They break up her routine—for every girl worth hiring does systematize her duties and mentally schedule them—and then complain she "never gets round." Still more expect the girl to do their work exactly as they themselves have been accustomed to perform it; and exercise an espionage to see that their instructions are obeyed to the letter that raises the temper of any girl, no matter how naturally patient and amiable, and which they themselves would not submit to for one moment. A capable girl resents being instructed as if she were a novice, and it is in the endeavor to follow out the varying methods of so many different "missuses" that so many good girls are spoiled—they get so accustomed to dictation that they can do nothing independently. What does it matter, if the bread is light and white and sweet, whether the girl's process is the duplicate of madam's or not?

I like the method of a friend of mine here in town, who pays her cook good wages, installs her in the kitchen, and expects her to prepare good meals without instructions or comment. The marketing is sent in, but no orders are given relative to how anything shall be cooked, unless some special dish is included. The cook attends to her business, and the mistress to hers; there is a family of eleven persons and the cook is the only help kept. But this lady does not give over the kitchen to the domination of the help without knowing what goes on in it. Cupboards, refrigerator, storeroom, pass in review every day, and she is not afraid to speak of whatever is amiss. She knows to a cent what the week's expenses amount to, and can tell you whether her present kitchen auxiliary is as economical and relatively as excellent in getting up meals as her predecessor. And the help question does not bother her.

Now, if other women would turn over to their help certain specified duties which they are expected to perform promptly and faithfully, hold them responsible for such performance, criticise results rather than methods, and not expect in a young girl of seventeen or eighteen the steadiness, strength, and knowledge of a woman twice her age, the domestic problem might be somewhat simplified. The woman who is always nagging, fretting, and making the waste and breakage of her girl topics of conversation with her visitors, don't deserve

to have help, and generally gets her reward in reluctant service, perhaps desertion in the hour of her greatest need.

I've known some funny things, illustrative of this tyranny of one woman over another, as exemplified in small matters. I was once ushered into the dining-room of a farm home where a new assistant had just been engaged. The table was very neatly set, and looked very orderly and attractive, more so than I had ever seen it under my hostess' management. I was just ready to congratulate her upon an auspicious beginning, when "My goodness!" and she began re-arranging the dishes, changing the food about, till in two minutes the table had quite resumed its wonted higgledy-piggledy appearance. I pitied the poor girl when she came in with a plate of steaming, snow-white biscuits, and saw her handiwork so upset. Her face turned scarlet and her eyes sparkled when her mistress exclaimed sharply: "Mary, you didn't have a single thing on this table in the right place." How was the stranger to know the peculiar style in which madam set her table, a mode entirely her own? And I knew once of a lady who discharged her girl because her son took from the girl's hand a pail of milk she had started to carry down cellar and, later, rose and gave her his chair in a crowded room. "She was getting quite too attentive to the boys," was the cause assigned. Not a word of praise for the gentlemanly instinct which pitied and relieved the embarrassed girl, or the manly courtesy which eased a woman's burden because of her womanhood, only a jealous fear the servant might find favor in her son's eyes.

There are a great many sides to this hired help question, which one must consider. We are accustomed to exclaim at the incompetence and inefficiency of the girls, but in a great many instances they are made so by the incompetence and inefficiency of their mistresses, and the petty tyranny and nagging which some of them become so accustomed to that they really cannot appreciate its absence, and think their mistresses must be weak and easily bullied because they are considerate and amiable.

BRUNEFILLE.

#### WAYSIDE JOTTINGS.

It was one of the unexpected events that come about sometimes that I should find myself, after a warm, rainy day's travel, at this "Point," though why it is called Salt Point nobody knows. There is no salt here, neither is it near the sea; but this is a pleasant country, with its hills and valleys, and rocks out of which flow such fine springs of pure water. The fair, silver Hudson rolls along its deep bed about eight miles to the northwest, and beyond, the Catskill mountains stretch their serrated outline against the distant sky. As we rode along the Hudson, we could see the low-lying clouds glide along the mountain sides, and when they dipped down into the valleys, they seemed to me like nothing but a great calm sea resting there.

The small towns through this part of Dutchess county lie along a one-horse kind of a railway, where the trains wait for the passengers instead of the passengers for the

trains. The stations are so small that were it not for their projecting roofs, I think one might venture to carry them away without being detected. But the country roads are very fine, the friends have good horses, and together with the prospect from the hills, I have seen the country to my heart's content. Looking off from some of these hills one can see, not quite "all the kingdoms of the earth," but the blue mountains with the lights and shadows playing along their rough sides, and the White Mountain houses sitting among the rounded tops are plainly visible; while mile after mile of fair, summer country lies all around, beautiful in deed to the eye; but in taking a practical and near view of it, I imagine our Michigan farmers would say something about its being a "God-forsaken country." It is a fine country for the imagination to work upon, but it must be hard for the horses and men. I saw them plowing a side hill so steep that a horse falling down could not get up, but rolled over till he reached the bottom. That is a steep story, but quite in harmony with the character of the country. There are such "heaps of land" here, it is said the county can be bought at four dollars an acre, not including buildings. Yet notwithstanding this, the farmers are attached to the land with all its "idiotsyncrasies," and toiling over its stony heights, call it "Home, sweet Home." And there are homes here in which a guest fails to find any hint of a "skeleton," homes almost ideal in the beauty and tenderness of life within them, the love grown full of grace and strength as the years glide by and leave the hair silvered, but hearts as pure as the grandchildren who cling about their knees. It seems there are so few in the world of humanity who touch us more than on the surface. We meet a thousand faces, we clasp as many hands, yet only here and there find one who stirs the deep within us; only here and there one whose influence makes the heart glow, and at parting there is felt the mutual heart declaration, "Then you'll remember me."

Last Sunday I attended a Quaker meeting at an ancient stone church, with its little yard adjoining where the low modest stones mark the burial place of the gentle "Friends." The meeting was for the most part a silent one. The members came in quietly and sat with peaceful, meditative faces. Silence reigned supreme; one could hear his own breath come and go, yet no one dozed. Only one old gentleman sat with his hat on. It seemed very pleasant to me, as I saw those calm kind faces, the soft blended colors of their garments, and felt the peace that seemed to rest over all, while the sunlight crept through the open door and the sweet summer air filled the quiet room.

"The spirit moved" one member to read an article written by some "Friend," and when we had sat about an hour there seemed to be a general movement, each Friend turning to some one near and shaking hands with a morning greeting. One came to me and held my hand in such a sincere grasp while she asked, "Thee is a stranger, where is thee from?" Friend is a fine word, full of expression and nobility, and it seems well thus to term the gentle Quakers.

S. M. G.

SALT POINT, N. Y.



## REFORMING THE BABY.

In the portrait Beatrix drew of a spoiled baby I instantly recognized the very child who sat for the picture, or at least every one would say it was the same, so perfect was the picture.

Now what can be done with such a child toward reducing him to subjection? Nothing whatever so long as he remains under the control and authority of his present guardians; but if he could be placed in proper hands there will be great hope of reform. Reformation and warfare might be called synonymous words. There is always a hard struggle before there is any permanent reform. This is particularly true of a spoiled child; it is one long sharp battle, the outcome of which no one can be certain of. But I started, not to give my opinion or my theory, but an instance that came under my observation. The boy was about a year older than Master Claude, and as much worse as an additional year of indulgence would make him, when his weak and indulgent nurse was dismissed and he was placed under the care of a wise and quiet, but not harshly firm person, one who resolutely and steadily set about the task. The very first and perhaps most important change made was in his (the child's) diet. Instead of sweets continually he was required to eat wholesome food; this was the beginning of a struggle that was anything but pleasant to the entire neighborhood, who would have been glad had they been deaf for the time being. Not a blow was struck the child, but he was given to understand that he must eat such food as was given him or, if he chose, do without it, thus making fasting his own act, and a healthy child can stand quite a fast without injury. One of the methods employed was to pay no attention by word or look to any outburst of anger; if it became too unpleasant for others the child was removed if possible beyond hearing; it soon became monotonous, too much like beating the air with a feather, and the child becoming exhausted by his own exertions, was conquered, and at last learned to obey all in authority over him; and furthermore discovered that others, even children, had rights that he must respect.

JANNETTE.

## BED CLOTHING.

A correspondent of the *American Cultivator* says: "In good bed making, one of the first requisites is a perfect adaptation of mattress and springs to the bedstead. Next, a well-made mattress, whether it be hair, wool, moss or excelsior, and over this a 'puff' or mattress cover made of thin unbleached cotton cloth that can be bought for five cents a yard, containing three bats of cotton, tied with tidy cotton. Have the 'puff' large enough to tuck under the sides of the mattress, to avoid curling up under the sheet.

"To young housekeepers I should like to make some suggestions regarding bed clothing. Buy good heavy double sheeting, bleached or unbleached as preferred, and if for an ordinary sized bed, nine-quarters wide. Cut your sheets two and a half yards long and this will allow for a hem three inches at the top and an inch and a

half at the bottom. If you can afford it, buy a pair of California blankets, for when soiled they can be washed and be made to look nearly as well as new, but if they are too expensive a luxury, cheese cloth comforts will answer nicely, as they are warm, soft and light, and these qualities are by no means to be despised in bed clothing. It pays to buy the best quality of cheese cloth either in white or colored, which can be bought for eight cents a yard. Twelve yards and a quarter is the right quantity to get for a large comfort, or ten yards for an ordinary sized one. I think, however, the large ones are much more desirable for a double bed.

"For a real winter comfort, large size, use four or five bats of good cotton, which costs fifteen to eighteen cents a pound. Cut a pasteboard four inches square, for a marker, and at each point of the square dot with a lead pencil indicating where to tie. This will insure exactness. Tie at these places with tidy cotton and tuft with Germantown yarn or zephyr. For a large comfort four ounces of zephyr will be the amount required. A pretty finish is a crocheted edge or a large scallop drawn off with a small teacup and buttonholed with the same with which it has been tufted. Pink and blue make up prettily, but scarlet is more durable than any other. Before making up your red goods, dip it in hot salt water, dry and iron, and it will look as new as before the wetting. Unless this precaution is taken it rubs off, making no end of trouble, for it is like unto 'Aunt Jemima's Plaster,' 'the more you try to rub it off, the more it sticks the faster.'"

"White comforts are apt to soil at the top where they come in contact with the face, particularly if the spread is taken off at night, and this should always be done. To remedy this, take a width of cheese cloth, making it as long as the comfort is wide, sew up the ends, and slip over your comfort or blanket, making it secure by basting it on, or by means of a little shield pin, which will come so far from the face as not to inconvenience the sleeper. Have two for each bed, so that they may be washed as often as desired."

## A PROBLEM IN LIFE.

I suppose we must all answer to roll call; in our literary society we answer "Present," or by quotations; mostly the latter; so I will follow the habit formed. H. C. Farrar says: "For one to sense his own deficiencies is great gain, and to address one's self resolutely to supply them is a greater gain." "It is not creditable to go through life ignorant of everything. There are many things we should know and may know, because we have the ability and time and means."

Ruskin said: "We cannot always know whom we would; the friends we love we may not at all times have beside us; but how different it is in the realm of books. Here we may choose what friend we like; their sweet companionship we may enjoy whenever we will."

Sir John Herschel called books the best society in every period of history.

Our pastor said to me one day last week while visiting here: "It seems to me that

farmers' wives and daughters have much more time for reading and improving themselves than town women, on account of the many interruptions of the latter," and I am inclined to think this is true of the average. There are some in all stations and circumstances who can never find time for books or writing, because they are not over anxious to; how many spend their whole life cooking, eating, and battling with dirt!

Sisters, do not be too hard on dirt; we shall lie down at last and be covered with dirt; we may first be wrapped in fine linen, with a sheet of zinc and polished wood between, but these will become as offensive as clean dirt; so why starve the mind and heart in such a useless warfare! I do not mean to sit down and cultivate the mind at the expense of the body, for a healthy mind depends on a healthy body, and too much dirt isn't conducive to a healthy body; but there is a happy medium. Let us strive to find that place where we are neat enough and not too neat; then we will be able in a greater or less degree to begin the supply of the deficiencies which we feel; and at the same time enjoy the most cultivated society, and the friends Ruskin tells of. We cannot at all times find as much leisure as we could wish for literary pursuits, but we can find a little time each week, and a large part of the year more than a little. As the mind is the soul which will never die, which will leave this "house of clay," this "body of the earth earthy," to be no more troubled with dirt, isn't it quite as necessary to give this part which is to live eternally a share of our time and culture? We cannot ignore the body or the needs of the body, we must care for the physical; and how to do it properly with the least drain upon the strength and time, that we may have some time to give to the culture of the spiritual and intellectual, is the problem to be solved. I suppose this is why Beatrix is so often asking the readers of the *HOUSEHOLD* to tell their methods of doing any of the many things which women are constantly doing.

ALBION.

M. E. H.

## A HOMEMADE PORTFOLIO.

The illustrations in our magazines and best illustrated papers are so beautiful and artistic that the desire to preserve them follows as a natural consequence. We of course prefer to keep the volumes of *Harper* or *The Century*, or whatever magazine we subscribe for, unmutated; but there are always odd numbers of other periodicals, pictorial papers, and the like, coming in our way, which perhaps contain portraits of famous men, charming bits of landscape, quaint initial letters or tailpieces, specimens of art we would like to keep if we only knew how to manage them so as to make them ornamental, or at least, not a litter-ary nuisance.

Many ladies have made very attractive scrap-books, by the exercise of considerable thought and care, and a good deal of time. The portrait of an author, an engraving of his home, or scenes concerning which he wrote, reproductions in black-and-white of his pictures, if an artist, are grouped with paragraphs relative to his history, and (x-

tracts from his writings, making a valuable work of that usual *melange* of miscellany—the scrap-book.

But this fails to provide for the flotsam and jetsam which drifts to us, and for stray pictures there is nothing better than a portfolio. To prepare this, in the first place order at a job printing office a number of pieces of heavy cardboard cut in various sizes. Select the pictures you wish to preserve, choosing the best work, and those having enough artistic merit to do credit to your taste and knowledge of art, cut off the margins and paste them on suitable-sized pieces of pasteboard. The name of the artist, title of work, or any other apposite matter, may be written on the reverse. Do not use too much paste; the work should be done with the greatest care and daintiness; edges trimmed evenly, and pasted in place without smearing.

The portfolio to hold these sketches is prepared as follows: Cover a large piece of pasteboard with silk or plush, preferably the latter. Cover two pieces of cardboard pointed at one end, widening to two inches at the other, and on either side sew pieces of silk elastic at the pointed end, and have a fold for a running string at the other. Join one side of the silk to the large covered cardboard, and the other to a full piece of silk to be gathered in at the top with a silk running string, forming a bag portfolio which can be hung to the wall with ribbons or cord and tassel.

If you find a picture you wish to frame, cut it out and mount it upon a suitable-sized piece of cardboard, then frame with a narrow moulding of oak or cherry. It is quite an art to suit the frame to the picture; a worthless chromo in a handsome frame, a simple sketch in an elaborate setting, lose their effect by the sense of incongruity awakened. Do not hang cheap pictures near fine ones, for the same reason, nor mingle engravings and etchings with oil or water color paintings. A cluster of grasses, a bit of bitter sweet, a little sheaf of oats and barley, are effective among black-and-white work, but detract from the effect of paintings.

#### WINTER MORNING GLORIES.

I hope our readers who are preparing other winter plants will not forget the morningglories. Plant them late in October and they will begin to bloom about New Year's and last a couple of months. They only run a little more than a yard, but bear lots of bright flowers and are a great delight.

I also learned from a hired girl to loosen the top of a fruit can by running a knife around it, but have learned from experience (that solitary school for a certain class) that doing so turns up the edge of the top and renders a great deal of tapping necessary when they are used again. A better way is to plunge the top of the can into warm water for a few moments, when it will open easily.

THOMAS.

A. H. J.

#### A NEW TOPIC.

I for one come in answer to Beatrix's call for more letters, although for my part I highly appreciate hers. As the ladies have

carried the political question about as far as they can, I will bring up a new subject. Is it wrong to have socials for the benefit of the church; church socials I mean, not kissing parties, but a place where every age can go and have a good social time, a dish of ice cream, or something of that sort, and give their money? There are some in our neighborhood who think it a terrible thing. Now I think if they never do any thing worse than that they will not have many very bad sins to confess. I would like to hear the opinions of others.

Can any one give a good recipe for "stick tight" fly paper? NAOMI.  
OXFORD.

#### SCRAPS.

MISS MARY BOOTH, in the *Bazar*, takes a very sensible stand on the propriety and expediency of following the fashions, however silly they may be. She says: "To defy the fashion is to declare dress of even more importance than obedience to fashion declares it, it is to maintain, moreover, a personality that is unlovely as arrayed in opposition to the rest of the world; and is to betray a vanity that is really quite as bad as that contrary kind of vanity which gratifies itself with the wildest profusion of gauds and gewgaws. The first constituent of good dressing is the element of inconspicuousness; a lady when faultlessly dressed is so clothed as not to attract attention, but should she chance to attract it, then to be found with her toilette exactly right and all as it should be. The person who dresses out of the fashion, because not liking it or not approving of this or that feature of it, makes herself prominent by her dissimilarity to others, wears a quality of notoriety, and is, so far, in worse taste than the worst fashion could make her."

I CAN recommend the Rochester burner as giving excellent satisfaction. It is better than any other lamp-burner I know of. There is nothing that goes to make a home cheerful and attractive in the evening so much as plenty of light, and kerosene is cheap enough so one need not be economical in its consumption. Keep the wicks well trimmed, and the chimneys clean, and don't think you are going to the poorhouse if you have two or even three lamps burning in a room at the same time. A bracket lamp is good to light the room all over, and a couple of lamps on tables, with shades, give light enough for those who wish to read or sew. You can buy lamps provided with the Rochester burner at prices ranging from \$3.50 to \$15. Very handsome nickel or brass ones, with pretty decorated shades, cost \$5, nice enough for any one. And a nice lamp is a suitable present for any housekeeper, for one can hardly have too many. Many city people who have gas in their houses buy lamps because of the softer illumination they give, and also because by night or day they are ornamental, with their pretty, delicately painted or tinted globes, over which are thrown semi-transparent shades of china silk or silk muslin. In caring for the lamps, it is better to pinch off the charred part of the wick with the fingers than to cut it with the scissors, and if the lamp has a glass reservoir for oil, it should

be occasionally washed out with soda dissolved in water, being careful not to let the solution touch any bronze or gilt on the lamp. A large teaspoonful of soda to a quart of water is about the right proportion. The oil for such a lamp ought to be strained.

I WONDER how many HOUSEHOLD readers know how appetizing an ice-cooled canteloupe or nutmeg melon is as a breakfast dish "about these days?" They are almost as requisite to a well-ordered breakfast table at this season of the year as is the matutinal cup of coffee. Do not send one to the table till you have tried its quality. Sometimes a very good-looking one will be as flavorless as a green pumpkin. A well flavored melon just from the ice-box, its green crescent shading almost imperceptibly into a golden orange on the inner edge, is a delicious introduction to the oatmeal and cream, the crisp toast, poached egg and baked potato to follow it. And by the way, the Colonel said the other morning as he gingerly broke open a steaming, mealy Early Rose: "The true way to eat a baked potato is to have it steaming hot—like this, drop a lump of butter into one-half of it (suited the action to the word), sprinkle with salt and eat it right from the skin, as you do a boiled egg from the shell, without putting it upon the plate at all." Try the Colonel's method.

B.

#### Useful Recipes.

CRABAPPLE CATSUP.—Three pounds of crab apples boiled until soft enough to rub through a colander, then add one and three-quarters pounds of sugar, one quart of vinegar, one tablespoonful each of cloves, pepper and cinnamon and one teaspoonful of salt. Boil until thick.

SPICED PEACHES.—Pare the peaches, but do not remove the pits. To five pounds of fruit allow three pounds of granulated sugar, three-fourths quart good vinegar, one-half ounce stick cinnamon and one-fourth ounce cloves. Tie the spices in muslin bags. Cook the fruit until done, which will be in from half to three-quarters of an hour.

APPLE BUTTER.—Take cider as it runs from the press, before fermentation has commenced in the least, and boil it down one-half. While it is boiling keep it well skimmed. Pare and core sweet apples and put them into the reduced cider until the boiler is nearly full; keep a steady fire and stir the mass often enough to keep it from burning at the sides. When it has settled down fill in more apples and cook all until of the right consistency. When done put in stone jars or a sweet oaken tub. It can be seasoned with spices if liked. This is the old-time sauce without molasses and has that peculiar and appetizing "twang" that makes it so suitable for eating with meat.

MUSTARD PICKLES.—Take equal quantities of very small cucumbers or larger ones sliced, green tomatoes sliced, cauliflower broken up and small button onions. Cover with strong salt water for twenty-four hours, then scald the brine, skim and dissolve in it a bit of alum the size of a nutmeg. Pour it over the pickles, let them stand until cold and drain. Then prepare vinegar to cover them by adding to each quart, one cup of brown sugar, one-half cup of flour, and one-fourth pound of ground mustard. Boil the sugar and vinegar; mix the flour and mustard; stir the boiling vinegar into it and pour over the pickles.