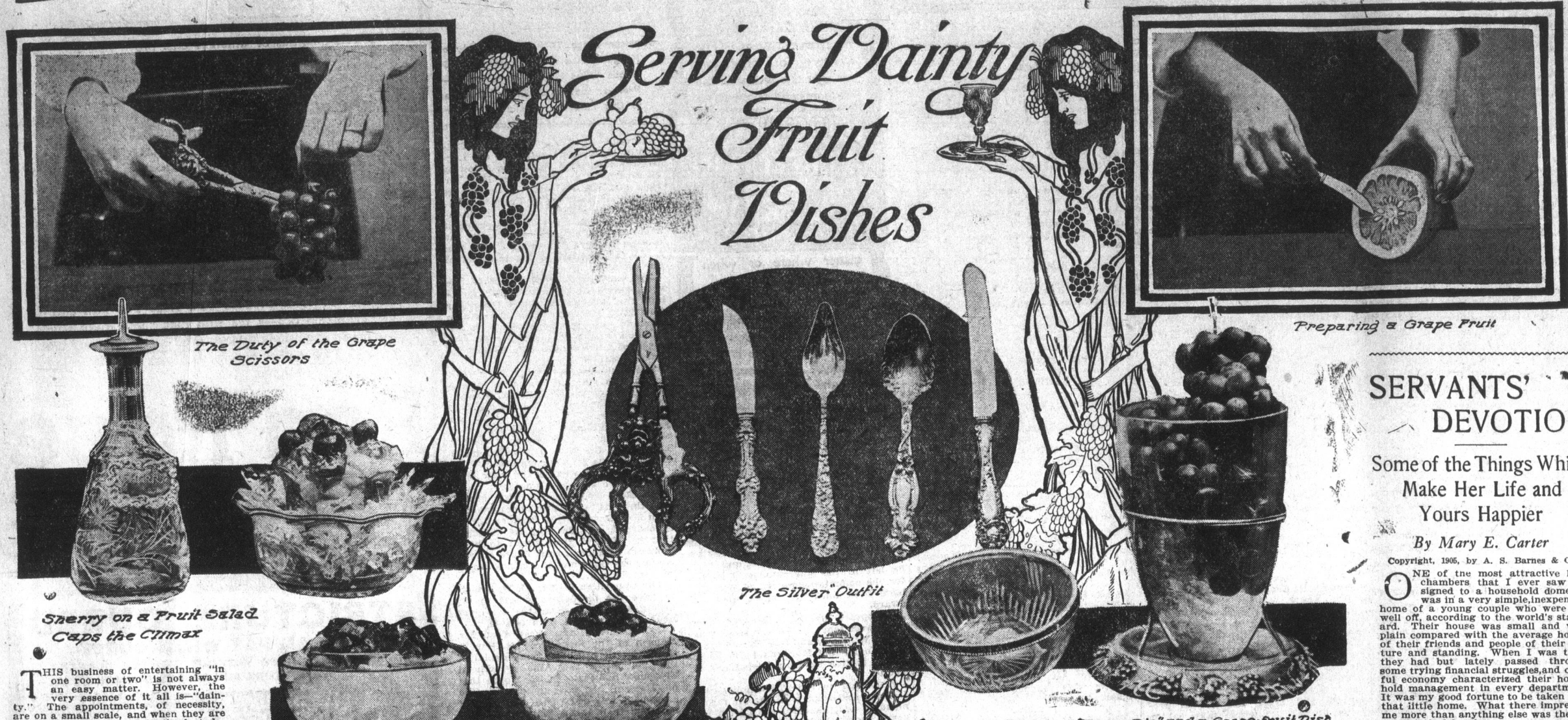


Handbook for Housewives

by Marion Harland



Serving Dainty Fruit Wishes

The Duty of the Grape Scissors

Sherry on a Fruit Salad Caps the Climax

The Silver 'Outfit'

An Individual Grape Dip, and a Grape-Fruit Dish

A Defectable Pair

The Grape-Fruit Service Complete

Marion Harland

SERVANTS' DEVOTION

Some of the Things Which Make Her Life and Yours Happier

By Mary E. Carter

Copyright, 1905, by A. S. Barnes & Co.

ONE of the most attractive bed-chambers that I ever saw as signed to a household domestic was in a very simple, inexpensive home of a young couple who were not well off, according to the world's standard. Their house was small and very plain compared with the average homes of their friends and people of their culture and standing. When I was there they had but lately passed through some trying financial struggles and careful economy characterized their household management in every department. It was my good fortune to be taken over that little home. What there impressed me more than anything else was the domestic bedchamber.

I have seen a great many rooms of servants, many very nice ones, too; but I was struck with that one as never before in all my experience in mansions, palatial, handsome or ordinary. It was as completely furnished as any one could desire for making the toilet. The floor was carpeted, there was a rocking chair, undoubted evidence that the maid had time to sit at and enjoy it. The window gave upon broad daylight, with nothing to intercept the air or the light. The shades and sash curtains were fresh and dainty, and the entire room, with all its appointments, inviting enough to tempt the most fastidious person.

A MODEL ROOM

It was not under a hot room in summer, neither was it cold in winter—the season that I was there. It was quite as warm then as the room of the mistress of that dear little home. In fact, that servant's bedchamber was more comfortable and far more attractive looking than many rooms where devoted domestics and women are obliged to dwell when hard luck compels them to take up their abode in lodgings in great cities. And that unpretentious home was in one of the largest cities of these United States, but, of course, not in the city's eye. I had never before met the mistress. I have never seen her since, but I am sure that her own room was a model of her own care and devotion to her service and ready to do anything for her. The mistress had a sweet, generous nature not hypnotized by what "other people" were willing or not to do. She followed the trend of her own kindly disposition, and did her best for her servant, and the result was that, when I made my call there, the maid was taking all of her mistress' meals up to her own accord, because she thought that she was not strong enough to go up and down stairs.

In remarking upon her servant's devotion, the mistress did seem to realize, also, she herself had evoked the best from her, by her own consideration for her comfort and happiness while under her roof. One who had gone to her service a total stranger, soon became a loving, devoted handmaid, and the watchful guardian of her health.

INFLUENCES ALL GOOD

There is scarcely any one so hopelessly slack and degenerate as not to be influenced by improved environment, and there are few, however distinctly in nice and orderly ways, who are not apt to fall off or go steadily downward until they finally are hardly recognizable by their old friends—if they are thrust away from all of life's refinements. Most improving influences reach us through what the eye rests upon; frequently they are more potent than what comes to the ear. I know full well, that there are some young people who have been reared in luxury and who have been surrounded by beautiful things, who are yet almost uneducated, even worse than untidy, in their own apartments, notwithstanding they appear in public remarkably well groomed. But this is no reason why others and have never known any but rough, uncouth surroundings, should be forever declared the sort of places too often found in the homes of the poor. It ought to be enough for them.

Finally, they ought to have some closet room and good locks and keys to their bedrooms, their bedchambers and their rooms. "The castle" is the only place that she may call her own. What ever privacy she has must be secured to her there. The fact that she is a stranger and a sojourner in the house, by courtesy, entitles her to these things.

A COMFORTABLE BED

It seems strange that one must even speak of the servant's bed, but that it should be good, in every respect a restful spot for a tired body, pleasant to look upon and decent in all its appointments at work, is a thing that is not an unquestionable fact. People who are constantly changing their servants are those who show the least attention to the matter. It is about as it is in the character of the rooms given to the workmen. The room kept room will be of little avail to one so steadily at work, unless it is kept bedtime, that she will feel too tired to wash and dress herself. It is better to have a room that is kept in order, or who is too much hurried from one duty to another, to find time to sit down in her room and think her own thoughts, unalloyed with a sense of haste.

The Housemothers in Weekly Conference

KEEPING OPEN HOUSE

THE suggestion of the very familiar talk I purpose to hold to-day with our flat dweller and cottager is found in a letter from a newly made matron and housewife. She "sets the case," to use a favorite phrase of Andrew Jackson's, so aptly as to spare me the trouble of preliminary explanations.

Ours is the stereotyped six-room-and-a-half apartment, a drawing room of fair dimensions (for a city flat) and a tiny ante-room, dignified by the name of "library," three bedchambers and a dining-room, with a love of a bath room, lined with tiles, compose the shell of what we would glorify into a home. Both of us are hospitable and we are rich in congenial acquaintances. We would like to "keep open house" personally. I should like to have a master's salon, and do my infinitesimal best toward hastening the day of which you and Professor Somebody spoke in an article you wrote last summer upon lawn parties. But—and the word is a terrible but—toss our income and our lodgings are too small to warrant such luxuries as dinner parties, luncheons and evening receptions. "Entertaining" as the word is generally applied—to the rich, not for the almost-poor. John and I are happily content in one another's society, and we agree (again) in thinking that happiness should not make us selfish and that the influence of every real home should be felt beyond the walls that bound it.

John and you are so essentially right that I could devote the whole of this paper to showing the reason and beauty of your conclusion. "Real homes" linked together by common needs, common sympathies and harmonious tastes, make up the highest order of society.

You honor me by asking my advice in your perplexity. As a starting point, strike "entertaining" from your catalogue of available words. It meant well enough in the beginning, but, like many another respectable thing, it has been misused until it has lost character. Leave "entertaining" to the newly rich clan with whom dollars are the only test of "real good society."

Next secure for your home and for yourselves that degree of seclusion without which what should be a garden of delights is trampled into a common. Keep open house upon one day of the week. Let your friends comprehend that you are joyfully at home to them upon one afternoon and evening out of the seven which make up the weekly round. The announcement is a flattering assurance that you wish to be sure of seeing them when they call. When a woman says: "I have no day at home; I" (bearing hard upon the pronoun) "see my friends whenever they can make it convenient to call." I settle within myself that she is willing to take the risks of being out when they chance to come; also, that her time is of little value to herself.

Unless your dining room opens directly out of the drawing room, serve the modest refreshments prepared for your "at-home" day in the larger of the two parlors. Set a table in a convenient corner, and make it an attractive part of your furniture. Cover it with your prettiest tablecloth, arrange upon this your daintiest tea equipage, and always brighten the array with flowers or ferns. A basket of light cakes, two or three plates of sandwiches and thin bread and butter, a fancy dish of bon-bons flanked by one of salted nuts, and in the afternoon tea and in the evening chocolate, make up an all-sufficient menu, were your income trebly as large as it now is.

I hope you have a standing tea-kettle and spirit lamp for making tea in the drawing room. In no other way are you certain of having it hot and fresh. If made in the kitchen and brought to you in the teapot, there are eight chances against two that the water has stood upon the tea leaves until the tannic acid extracted from them has embittered a beverage that should never have that peculiar "tang." If poured into cups and brought into the drawing room by the maid, it cools in the passage. Have the boiling water heated in the kitchen and kept on the bubble over the spirit lamp.

Even better than the alcohol burner is a neat apparatus to be bought at any shop where gas fixtures are sold—a set of gas tips set in a circular frame, and attached by a flexible tube to chandelier or bracket burner. I have made use of this for several seasons to my entire satisfaction, setting it upon a marble-topped stand near the tea table; or, if upon the latter, in a large stone-china plate, lest the heat should injure the cloth or the surface of the table.

Prepare sandwiches and cakes early in the afternoon, wrap them upon the table and cover with dampened napkins to keep them fresh. Do not make tea until visitors arrive, and never before 4 o'clock. Chat cheerily while you are preparing the cover and washing it separately.

Rust Stains

I have a white wash and dress, and in some unaccountable way I got the skirt full of stains, which I think are rust. I am sure that I have never used any preparation that will take them out.

Javelle water and sunshine will extract rust if the process be tried faithfully and patiently. Rinse with pure water after every application, waiting ten minutes to let the detergent "set in its fine work."

How to Clean Pet Hats

A black felt hat may be cleaned with ammonia and warm water, but light hats must be cleaned with castile, heated and applied with a brush. A white felt hat is cleaned with a brush of powdered fine clay and flour. Rub the powder over 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 cornmeal rubbed on with a piece of clean flannel.

Little German Cakes

We are indebted to one of our notable company of German housewives for the following:

I will tell you how to make delicious cakes for luncheon. When too much sugar is used they do not get nice and pimply. In Germany, we say "puckie."

One egg; one-half egg shell of water; a dash of salt. Mix in your until the dough is like that for noodles; roll out, cut in strips about four inches long and two inches wide and cook in boiling water. Then sprinkle with sugar. Will not somebody try them and let me know how they like them?

Now for the cake frosting, or icing:

One-half pound of powdered sugar, or confectioner's sugar, size of a walnut; three tablespoons of warm water; two tablespoons of chocolate.

Now for the cake frosting, or icing: One-half pound of powdered sugar, or confectioner's sugar, size of a walnut; three tablespoons of warm water; two tablespoons of chocolate.

Hard Soap

(By request.)

THE ingredients are three parts of cold water, one part of potash, one large tablespoonful of borax, one small cupful of ammonia.

Save every little piece of grease or dripping fat that you have a use for, and if it is not too much, melt it in a tin can, or if it is too much, melt it in a tin can, or if it is too much, melt it in a tin can.

Pop-Overs

Three cups of flour, three cups of milk, three eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately; then, when the milk is as thick as paper, then, when the milk is as thick as paper, then, when the milk is as thick as paper.

Baltimore Fried Chicken

Joint a tender chicken as for rice; roll in salted cracker dust until thoroughly coated; set aside for an hour before frying in fat to