School for Housewives

by Marion Harland

True Outdoor Living Which Will Bring Happiness and Health

ONE of the most sensible of modern fads is what a flippant talker called in my hearing just now, "the fresh-air craze."

I say "fad" with deliberate intention. The King of Lexicons gives as one definition of the fashionable monosyllable, "An important matter imperfectly understood, taken up and urged with more zeal than sense"—an interpretation that covers my subject to a nicety.

People who will tell you complacently that they are "fresh-air fiends," meaning that they take fifty deep breaths daily and an air bath every morning, standing in the middle of a steam-heated bathroom with one window open—sit habitually in hot rooms, stuffy with stale air and French perfumes; receive friends, in broad daylight, in the scented glooms of drawing rooms heated by shaded lamps and, when one window is let down an inch from the top in their bedrooms, at night, draw a screen between it and their beds lest they should feel the draught.

Right comprehension of the "important matter" before us impels yearly hundreds and thousands of family men to buy or rent summer homes, handsome or humble as their means warrant, in locations remote from popular caravansaries and rural "neighborhoods."

ORIGINAL COST IS SMALL

Every season, too, more people take real outdoor life for two months—some until frost dashes the forest with vivid color and crisps livid grasses upon the hillsides. Some are camps in name alone and in rustic architecture more expensive than lowland brick and carved wood. Others, and each year in larger numbers, make a "feast of booths" of the hottest months, dwelling in huts and tents. If there be invalids or growing children in the home of our man of moderate means, he cannot do a wiser thing than to transfer such of his household gods as are represented by plenty of summer reading, a scanty outfit of furniture and plain wardrobes to a family camp.

For less than one hundred dollars A large family tent, sixteen by twenty feet in the clear, with a fly attachment for kitchen and dining room, varies in price according to elegance of finish (and the reputation of makers) from $34 to $80. A substantial affair, water-proof and ten feet high at the peak, may be bought for from $40 to $50. A board floor, raised a few inches from the ground, may be laid at a trifling expense and assures dryness. A coal oil stove for cooking, with a few utensils, will be from $5 to $6 more.

A sleeping tent for boys or girls, ten feet square and eight feet high, costs from $18 to $25. Should the mother prefer a separate tent for cooking so far removed from the sleeping quarters that flies and odors will not trouble the inmates of the latter, the extension of the large tent may be left out of the calculation, and the $7 saved thereby go toward the purchase of a 7 by 9 tent, open in front when desired. Price, from $10 to $12. Upon fine days the cook stove may be taken outside, or cooking may be done after the more primitive style of surveyors and Adirondack guides, over a fire of bark and dry sticks.

This tent, when opened in front, is the general lounging place of the family. At the back, and along one side, are piled hemlock, cedar, pine or balsam twigs, packed regularly and firmly into the form of a divan, broad and low, and covered with sea rugs. Here may be had siestas, sound and delicious, with the tonic smell of resinous boughs; here one may lie, propped by pillows filled with balsam "needles," and read by the hour, conscience lulled to rest by the knowledge that one is fulfilling that for which one came into the wilderness—living in the open air, resting upon the very heart of the Nature who is to give back to her children growth, strength and the pure zest of living.

Here, mother and daughters may have their camp chairs and the rockers without which the American matron is never at her most comfortable estate, and while father or brother read aloud, knitting and crocheting go noiselessly on, and the tapestry pattern grows under deft fingers. Here the whole tribe collects for afternoon tea, the kettle boiling in true gypsy fashion; a little way off, the voices of the children playing in the woods leaving no room for regret at the absence of song-birds or the forests remote from the all-the-year-round haunts of man.

Vegetables and perishable foods are brought from the nearest village; in one corner of the tent is an improvised cupboard stocked with biscuits, sweets and "relishes." Muffins and griddle cakes are baked upon the stove—and outdoor appetites make amends for the lack of course dinners. "Everything tastes good in camp" is the unanimous testimony of young and old.

If it be possible for the thoroughgoing, native-born American to find anything to enjoy in "The Simple Life," he knows it in the family camp.

THE HOUSEMOTHERS' EXCHANGE

To Whiten Piano Keys

AT your convenience, will you kindly insert in the Woman's Column the recipe for whitening ivory piano keys? Mine are very yellow, as the instrument has been closed so long.

WET STRIPS OF CANTON FLANNEL with oxalic acid and lay upon the keys, removing as they dry. Be careful that the acid does not drop upon the wood.

Black Asphalt as Polish

LET "E. F. C. (New Jersey)" go to the drug store and get 10 cents' worth of black asphalt and use as a polish for her steel range. If too thick, use a little turpentine. Of course there will be some odor, but it will quickly disappear. I use this on my steel range and find it all right. Please report success. R. L. D.

Tea as an Eye-Wash

TO THOSE subject to sties or inflamed eyes:

If they will wash the eyes in warm tea several times a day, and at night put the wet grounds in a light bag and put on the eye, they will find relief. If used in time it will cure a sty in a day or two. It is also good to drop the tea into the eye. if sore.

Mrs. S. B.

The Use of Corrosive Sublimate

WILL corrosive sublimate destroy those horrid little creatures, bedbugs, and, if so, what is the quantity of water to put with one tablet? I read of the "sure cure," but cannot easily procure the gasoline. Can I use the corrosive sublimate in the long-nosed oil can with success, or is there a better way?

Mrs. H. P. L.

half gallon, is one of the best liquid bedbug destroyers that I know of. Inject into crevices, and spray the edges of the base board, the joints of the bedsteads and seams of mattresses with it. Shut the room up for a day after doing this. The alcohol and corrosive sublimate are, both of them, deadly poisons. Keep them out of the way of children and careless servants. Use the common oil can with long spout.

My Best Curtsey to You

AT the risk of writing at too great length, let me tell you that "Mrs. L. W. H.'s" expression of surprise that one so old as yourself (being a grandmother) can, with such skill, conduct your department, really made me smile (audibly). I wonder why you should necessarily be old because you are a grandmother? I know a grandmother who was just 35 at the birth of her first grandchild. But admitting that you are old, why shouldn't you have the education, mental force, common sense, experience, progressiveness and sympathy necessary to make your department a success and endear yourself to such a large circle of readers? Happily you have not reached the stage where you ought to be "Oslerized"!

Allow me to suggest to "G. H." the use of newspaper in sweeping carpets. Tear the newspaper into bits, and put them into a bucket of water. Take out by handfuls, squeeze as dry as possible, and scatter over the carpet. Then sweep. I prefer this way to using tea leaves or salt, and I consider it second best to your Italian chambermaid's aesthetic method of sweeping by the aid of rose leaves. I would choose the rose leaves surely were it not that my rose garden still suffers from having felt last spring the clutches of a severe blizzard, with snow three inches deep.

T. B.

WITH MY BEST CURTSEY (LEARN-

esteemed correspondent whom we welcome to our Circle after a protracted absence. Let us hope that her roses have long before this meets her eyes proved their superiority to the snows and frosts which typify old age to the pessimistic imagination.

Directions for Taking Dandelion Wine

I SHOULD like to ask "J. A. D.," of New Salem, Mass., through your Question and Answer Department, for directions for taking the dandelion wine he gives a recipe for making. Please insert the question in your paper for me. Mrs. W. R.

I INSERT THE QUERY WITH pleasure, but suppose that a wineglassful of the dandelion wine is the proper dose.

Send in Your Recipes

HERE is a bit of cheery common sense for the family-at-large:

Friends! I know you are all glad that housecleaning is over, and you are settled once more into regular living. But if I am young in the business, I never let my loved ones come home and find all parts of the house turned upside down, for nothing ruffles the temper more than to have to look around for some place to sit when night comes and the family are together. The curtains may be down and the mattings and rugs may be at the cleaner's, but we can sit over clean floors and the furniture may be in place and you can look neat yourself.

I would like to tell the Circle of some dainty dishes for the sick, if they may like them. Mrs. C. M.

METHOD NEEDED IN PACKING HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Careful Memoranda of the Contents of Boxes and Barrels Will Prevent Much Annoyance When Unpacking Time Comes

By Miss M. E. Carter

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Barrels are excellent for almost all packing purposes, and they are easy to get, safe and excellent for tableware, ornaments and whatever is not too large for them. They hold considerable, are easily handled by porters, cheaper and safer to move than heavy boxes.

Delicate crystal ware carefully packed in a barrel can be sent from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast intact. Nothing will be cracked on the way unless the barrel itself should be broken, which is unlikely without a railroad accident. Of course, there must be no stinting of the excelsior. Safe and orderly packing insures peaceful, orderly unpacking, and tends to promote general good humor. Whoever has seen the faces of people when, upon opening badly packed goods, they found some of their best belongings broken will appreciate skillful packing and realize that any other sort is time and material, as well as transportation, wasted.

The packer should always take a list of all things stowed away. Packages and lists should be numbered alike. This method simplifies unpacking and settling because it prevents anything from being opened by mistake too soon and saves things from lying about in danger of damage before a suitable place can be prepared for them. It also expedites the finding of whatever may be needed at once.

Every memorandum taken should be put into one notebook devoted to that purpose, and so inscribed on the cover that any one wishing information regarding the whereabouts of an article needed can easily recognize the book, which, however, ought to be in safe-keeping, while at the same time easy to get at for reference, by trustworthy persons. It is some trouble to keep these strict memoranda, but it pays,

MISS M. E. CARTER

mediate recourse to the memoranda informs one of the exact package which contains them. No matter how carefully you put things up, if you forget all about where they are, there will be tiresome worry and lengthy searching to find them. Once upon a time a lady had suddenly put into her care a lot of valuable jewelry belonging to a young girl, who had gone to Europe and left it behind in a jewel box on her dressing bureau. The lady was full of crowding cares and had countless things to attend to. Without making any memorandum of it, she put the jewelry very

so happened that the silver was some that was never used, except when a very large evening entertainment was given by the mother of the young girl.

As a matter of course, the box was sent to a closet, where glass and china for extra-large evening entertainments were kept. The little girl, upon her return from abroad, naturally inquired for the jewelry. After searching every box of valuables in vain, the lady, while quite certain that the things were safe and would turn up some time, gave up looking, but did not give up racking her brain for some clue to the mystery. No memorandum had she made of that particular parcel's whereabouts. After several devitalizing days of hunting and puzzling over the matter, all at once flashed into her mind the strong oak box out of sight and, until then, out of mind. Without delay, she sped away upstairs to the closet, and, unlocking the box, there, to her own immense relief, beheld the package; but the point is, if, at the time of taking it in charge, she had promptly made a note of it, she would have spared herself mental wear as well as much loss of time that was spent in searching more than once in places where the missing baubles were not. Therefore, all the way along we chant the praises of a faithfully kept book of remembrance in moving times, and also in the more quiet housekeeping days after the home is in running order. The fact is that no mind should be charged with a lot of things to be remembered that can just as well be recalled, when needed, by reference to memoranda, since there is so much valuable knowledge which can only be acquired by exercise of the memory. The first are only for temporary use, and may then be dismissed from one's thought; but the other is forever increasing and useful all the time. Therefore, the mind and memory should be devoted to storing up what is worth keeping and thinking about, not spent on comparatively trivial matters. It is something of an effort, and worth cultivating.