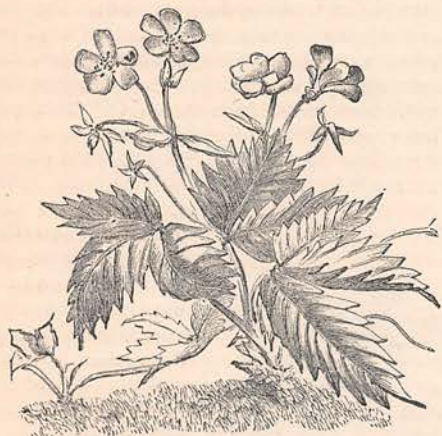


as the fruit, the ovaries (akenes or seeds), being carried to its outer surface, and scattered over it as they are seen in the matured strawberry.

Most of the order are hardy and evergreen, and until within the last fifty years it was considered that they required little care save to scatter the ground with straw to protect the early fruit, and also when ripe to keep it



ALPINE STRAWBERRY.

unsoiled—a custom which gave it its name. But the advance and practical application of science to horticulture has brought in a very different system of culture, and under the best approved methods, strawberry beds are as neatly arranged and thoroughly worked, as any other crop, and the tangled appearance of an old-fashioned strawberry bed would shock all modern ideas. By systematic and intelligent treatment, strawberries may be made to bear during seven months of the year. By pinching off the flowers of the early blooming varieties, the blossoms of the following spring may be induced to appear in autumn, and the naturally early bearer, may be kept back by a shaded northern exposure, while others may be hastened by one sunny and warm, and seeds raised in pots may be forced into fruitage during the months of November and December. Thus, by the judicious use of various methods the table may be supplied with this delicious fruit through nearly all the year. In New York, fresh strawberries may be had, by those who are willing to pay for them, from February to October, but, of course, the market out of the "season," which generally begins in the latter part of May and lasts until the first of July, is very limited.

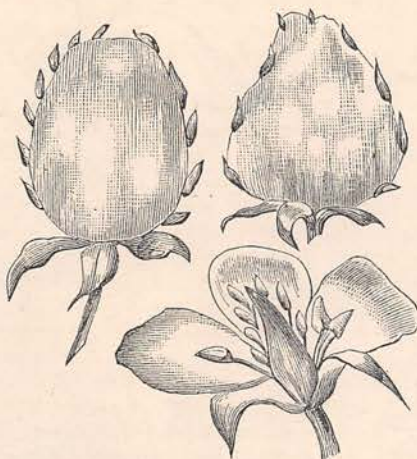
A very remarkable variety is the Chilian berry, found only upon the Pacific coast, with creamy-white flowers and rose-colored fruit, which is said to be sometimes as large as a hen's egg.

The Indian species is the one cultivated in our hot-houses for ornament. It is extremely elegant for hanging baskets, and is covered with a scarlet fruit which has not the least taste, and is dry and shining like wax.

There are only two species of the genus *Fragaria* which have colored flowers, one is red and the other yellow, and there is one which is apetalous, all others have white blossoms.

The "Hautboy," which is well known in this country, grows wild in England, but is not indigenous. All strawberries are propagated by runners, but new varieties are produced by seed from flowers carefully cross fertilized. Some American varieties are pistillate only, and when this is the case it is necessary to plant them near those with perfect flowers.

The strawberry needs a rich and light soil, abundant moisture, and careful cultivation; but it will always amply reward the gardener's toil. Ladies may find a most agreeable occupation, as well as add to the luxury of their tables, by devoting a portion of their time to the study of the best methods of its scientific culture. It is, indeed, surprising to us that so many possessed of means and appliances, do not oftener find pleasure in the lighter labors



FRAGARIA VESCA, ALPINE STRAWBERRY.

of the garden. Hawthorne says that there are no pleasures that so recreate the mind as those of the garden, and, indeed, if fruit raising be pursued scientifically, and regard be had at the same time to the study of beauty, it may give much the same gratification as the pursuit of art. It seems, indeed, a sort of creation in which nature aids the artist with the perfect colors of her palette.

A Wonderful Walking-Stick.

WE have received (says *Nature*) from Messrs. Eberstein of Dresden, a specimen of an interesting "walking-stick for naturalists or tourists." The stick is a perfect *multum in parvo*, and contains quite a museum of scientific instruments. The handle alone contains a compass, a double magnifying glass or pocket microscope, and a whistle. Below it there are a thermometer on one side of the stick and a sandglass on the other. The body of the stick is partly hollow, and its interior holds a small bottle, which is intended to contain chloroform or ether for killing insects. Along the outside of the body there is a half-meter measure, showing decimeters and centimeters. Near the end of the stick a knife-blade may be opened, which serves for cutting off objects which cannot be reached by hand. At the extreme end a screw may hold in turn a spade (for botanists), a hammer (for geologists), a hatchet, or a strong spike, which would be of great use on glaciers. The whole is neatly finished in black polished wood.

Talks with Girls.

BY JENNIE JUNE.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

IN a conversation with a young lady a short time since, who is a vocalist by profession, and earns a moderate livelihood by her profession, I was struck by the cheerful, practical, common-sense view she took of her own affairs, and the honest independence which characterized her methods. If this was the way in which the majority looked at life, and accepted the situation, I thought, we should not have so many helpless women and girls to be taken care of.

There is nothing advantageous in this young woman's individuality, or belongings. She is not handsome, nor very young; her voice is not remarkable, and such cultivation as it has received has been won by herself with great difficulty, and under the most discouraging circumstances. She has no father or mother, and her relatives ignore her existence altogether, or are only an obstacle to her advancement, as her pride makes her avoid them rather than ask for their countenance in any way. She does not know, from week to week, or even day to day, what she can rely upon; for her engagements are brief and spasmodic, and her pupils (for music lessons) few and far between. Yet her body, though not plump, is in fair condition, and always neatly clothed, and her mind apparently serene.

"Do you not feel anxious and worried about the future?" a friend asked of her. "No," she replied, "why should I? I take every chance I can get; such people as I, who are not proud, are always wanted, and if I could not earn a living by singing and teaching, I could by chamber-work and waiting. I love to do chamber-work, and I love to wait on table, and I can do both very nicely." "Would you not feel that you were lowering yourself by doing such work?" was asked. "Well, I don't know," she responded thoughtfully. "I think not. You see, all I care about is to get my living honestly, be free from debt, and able to be among clean people. The one dread I have of poverty is dirt, and I think, vermin, such as mice and roaches. I assure you," she remarked, laughingly, "since my aunt died, and I have been obliged to stay in boarding-houses (not first-class), I have studied up the subject very carefully, and now consider myself an authority on the getting rid of such pests and nuisances." "But do you not long for a home of your own, and freedom from petty wearing anxieties?" was the next question, rather cruelly put; but it was in the interest of hundreds of young

women in the same case, and in order to see what this true, simple girl had thought out for herself as the best thing to do with her own life.

She waited a moment, and then said, "I don't think much about that now; I did once, but *he* died, and there are not many men who would care about marrying a woman nearly thirty, and so uninteresting as I am. Besides, there are not many marrying men now-a-days, and the number who support their wives and families, and maintain decent respectable homes, is still less. I have seen a good deal of a sort of married life, in which the burdens were all on one side, and in which the anxieties of a woman with husband to look after, and children to maintain, far exceeded mine. I do not anticipate, therefore, at my age, anything in my future but what I can carve out for myself; and my one ambition is a room all to myself, in a central position, and in a nice French apartment house, which I can furnish and keep all the time as a store-house for books, and little relics in the way of pictures and keepsakes. If I cannot manage that I shall fall back on my other idea, and get a 'situation' in some nice family, where I shall try to make myself so useful and necessary, that they will accord me some privileges, perhaps a small room to myself, which I can make my 'cosy corner,' my home."

Does this sound rather narrow, and common, and pitiful, to some ambitious young readers? But that is because they do not understand, as well as the listener did, all the possibilities of the life thus sketched out. There are so many resources now for unmarried women, that did not exist a few years ago, that no life enriched by taste and cultivation, or even by honest industry, can be called empty, or need be poor, or to be despised.

The empty life,—the pitiable life is that which hangs its hopes on the doings of others, which has no garnered heritage of its own—which eternally waits to be filled from the harvesting of those who are more courageous, more faithful, more honest, more true than themselves.

The question of work is the most important with which women have got to deal, and it is high time they grappled with it seriously. It is no use to stand still, and cry out for opportunities so long as the chances that exist lie neglected at our feet. The few women lawyers, and women doctors, and women preachers, and women authors, who occupy high and influential positions to-day, have reached them through years of hard work, and obscure, and unrecognized endeavors; perhaps if you are capable of the same exertion, the same self-denial, the same persevering labor, for labor's sake, the same giving up of all other objects for the sake of this one paramount ambition, you will achieve the same results. But the requisite devotion coupled with the requisite power is rarely found, and so the really great in any walk of life are very scarce, in fact may be counted on the fingers anywhere. "Genius," somebody has remarked, "is an infinite capacity for taking trouble."

If this is true, then our prospects for genius in

the future are growing smaller every day, for the incoming generation, even more than that which has preceded it, seems to be decidedly averse to taking any trouble whatever. Life, with a constantly increasing number of people, seems to be made up of attempts to shirk, in some way, their duties, or their obligations. Perhaps the growth of modern machinery, the introduction of so many "modern improvements," the labor-saving contrivances, the numerous appliances for supplementing hand-work, which have the effect of lowering the moral tone of work, and separating it from the humanity and the individuality which formerly characterized and ennobled it, are partly responsible for this state of things. It is a great thing to be conscientious all the way through, and known and recognized for the faithful, honest, and intelligent performance of whatever you have to do, whether it is dusting and sweeping a room, or painting a picture; making a bed, or writing a book.

In these days of display and competition, we are too apt to let pretense stand for truth, forgetful of the relationship between the motive and the act, the deteriorating influence of low aims on the one side, and the elevating tendency of high ideals upon the other. It is our business to guard against this danger—which has not only its inconvenient and troublesome physical, but its moral side as well.

It looks, just now, as if it would be necessary, for some generations to come, that women should work at work that brings money in order to live, and it will save much trouble in the future if each will think the facts out for herself, and make up her mind not only to accept the situation but do her best with it.

Now, what have women worked at? What can they work at? What do they work at that suits them best, and from which a livelihood can be most certainly gained?

The two great necessities of the world are food and raiment, and in this country at least it is women who are mostly concerned in their preparation. How has this work been performed? Is cooking perfected? Has the making of dresses and other garments been reduced to a science? Has the organization of certain departments of food and clothing with great commissariats of supplies been the work (in the majority of cases) of men or women?

To these questions only very unsatisfactory replies can be given. No standard has been created by women in any branch of work of which they have control. No original researches have uprooted old traditions, or organized strength forced upon opinion new and better ways. Generation after generation, they have fed dyspeptics and dyspepsia, and contrive to do so without any strong, united effort to arrest attention and remedy the evil. General Sigel has stated publicly that "Bull Run" was due to "pie and doughnuts." Our men had no strength when they first went to war, they could not fight, they were always pining after the pie and cake which they used to have at home, and which had really formed a much larger part of their living than fresh meat. The "pie" is usually a dreadful compound of greasy crust with very

little fruit, and the cake a mixture of grease with sugar or molasses, white flour, and saleratus. Is it surprising that men grow gaunt and cadaverous, their stomachs weak and their complexions sallow on such food as this?

Soup, the great strengthening and life-giving element in food, has been almost entirely neglected. Is economy an object? There is no way in which so much can be obtained for so little! Is a true physiological order to be observed? The clear, delicate soup, in small quantity, is the best preparation for the meat and vegetables which are to follow! Great cooks have existed, but they have been men, great works have been written which have become text-books for the practice of culinary art, but they also are by men. Enterprise and organization furnish the majority of families now-a-days (in cities) with bread of a uniform quality, canned fruits, preserved meats, "prepared" flour, all sorts of cakes, and crackers, and other articles, better, and as cheap, if not cheaper than they can be made at the average home. It is men who are responsible for these enterprises; where women are employed in them it is in a subordinate capacity. These are not pleasant facts, and to say that women have been "kept down," does not account for them. Now that women can do pretty much anything they please, there is still but little improvement in the direction which they have mainly under their own control. They want new employments with the honors and emoluments attached to them, which are at best fitted for and limited to the few; but our cooking is left to the ignorant, and the making of our clothing to those whose direct interest it is to make it as little useful and little permanent as possible.

It would really be much more to our credit, and furnish the strongest of all arguments for entrance into the field of men's activities, if we had first properly organized, and perfected our own. Of course, there is the fact that capital is required for important undertakings; but women of capital never use it, as men do, in building up a business—they live upon it, or distribute it in doubtful charities. The reason is to be found in their timidity; they are afraid to take risks; but is this timidity constitutional; or the growth of circumstances? At any rate it does not save them from being forced into the position of bread-winners for themselves and others.

Almost any kind of work is worth money that is well and thoroughly done, and its value rises with the estimate put upon its degree of excellence. On the other hand, poor work of any kind either receives nothing at all, or is done at starvation prices. Thus, a poor book or painting, hardly up to the "dead level," will scarcely pay for the salt consumed in the time expended upon it, and will not bring to the author or artist half so much as one elegant costume to the artistic dressmaker, who rides in a carriage, while the merely average lawyer, or doctor, or minister, goes afoot. A cook who is a *chef* gets a salary equal to that of a managing editor of a "great" daily paper. It may be said that there are few *chefs*, but there are also few managing editors. The numbers are always small that are ready and able to take

superior positions, for the reason that they require comprehensive faculty, a wide experience as well as special training. All these are the result of long and thorough work in subordinate places, and this is precisely the kind and degree of labor in a trade, business, or profession which women are not inclined to give, which at least they rarely do give. It is not sufficient to sit down with a comfortable belief in one's own capacity; we must be able to test it by comparing what we can do—what we *are* doing, with what has been done—what *is* being done by others in the same time. Are the results which we obtain the best that, under the circumstances, can be obtained? If they are not, then it is our business to endeavor to improve them. And do not let us make the mistake of attending to the unimportant matters first. There are young ladies who go wild on painting, and decalcomanie, and decorative art, whose hosiery would look better for neat and orderly mending. There are women who spend precious hours dressing a mantel-piece with a fringed cover, who would be saved from future loss and suffering by a knowledge of physiological laws, and observance of them in the family.

Mere babies, before they have learned to read and write, start "children's" papers, and foolish people encourage them. Why, one requires all knowledge and all wisdom to teach a child! Young girls as soon as they have got through with their first love affair (always an unhappy one), want to write an autobiography, quite sure that no one has ever experienced such suffering as theirs. The more ignorant the individuals, the more they want to teach the rest of the world what they appear to think it is waiting to learn from their lips.

The world is cursed to-day with ignorant work that stands in the way of better, and prevents it from receiving the encouragement it deserves. Much of this is due to our system of education, which turns out boys and girls afflicted with a smattering of almost everything, but knowing no one thing thoroughly, and nothing at all of what is to form their chief occupation and means of livelihood.

The way to dignify labor is not to shirk it, and try to get away from it, but to do it in the best manner, make its results more valuable, and develop workers whose character shall ennoble their work. Good work in any direction requires good thinking, and the very power to think out a subject presupposes cultivation of the higher faculties by a certain amount of reading and study of the work of others. If we could only have some of the beneficial effects of even a common-school education put into ordinary occupations—into cooking, sewing, and the like. But the only way this can be effected is by having young, strong, intelligent, well-educated women take hold of such work, and do it with all the enthusiasm that they put into Berlin wool, crochet, and painting on china. Life is so pleasant where its work is well and cheerfully done; where its obligations are fulfilled; where its burdens are divided, its joys shared, and no duty considered too onerous, or neglected because too trivial. It is all that is required to make earth a paradise.

Estrangement.

BY ROSE GERANIUM.

DES, darling, I could yield thee up,
Nor yet be broken-hearted,
Believing in the other land
Our souls should not be parted.
But oh! what balm can soothe the pain
Which rends, yet will not sever?
To gaze into thy living eyes,
And feel thee lost forever!

Something about Gems.



THIRTY years ago, when recovering from a long illness, I remember opening my eyes one evening to see seated in her cosy arm-chair before the glowing fire, my dear old grandmother. Her busy fingers were weaving, row by row, a scarlet stocking, and as her needles flew back and forth in the bright light of the soft-coal fire, a blaze of what might have been starlight flashed and glanced from one of her withered old hands. "Why is it?" I thought, but too weak to make any effort to solve the mystery then, I shut my eyes and went to sleep.

But I did not forget it, and a few days after I asked my old black "Mammy" what made diamonds look so like a drop of light. "I don't know, honey; you had better ask Mars Charles. But 'pears to me I've heard somebody say as how diamonds was the tears God let fall when he found out how naughty our fust parents had been."

I *did* ask "Mars Charles," and his answer was certainly less poetical and not a whit more satisfactory to my childish mind than "Mammy's" had been, when he told me that diamonds were "composed of pure crystallized carbon, a material to be found in its uncrystallized state everywhere, in the bread we eat and the coal and wood we burn."

Since then, I have seen many pure and limpid stones and pondered much over the various gems and minerals which delight our eyes and open before us long vistas of dreamy fancies by their shimmer and glow.

The taste for gems I have found is not confined to us upon whom the ends of the earth have fallen. Penetrate as far as we can into the distant past, we still find evidence of an intense love for gems. Ancient Egypt offers us proof of this from her mummy-pits, and the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum from their ashes and lava. In the songs and ballads of Hindoo mythology precious stones are often mentioned. Pliny tells us that the garments and utensils of the Indians were lavishly adorned with gems, though what stones

they were he does not say. The only one of whose identity we are certain is the sapphire, since its name is the same in almost all languages or with but slight alteration (Hebrew, *sapphir*, Chaldaic *sapirion*, Greek, *sapphros*, Latin, *sapphirus*, etc.), and is described in Scripture as a blue stone, "like unto the vault of heaven."

Although we find that "every man and woman whose heart made them willing," brought offerings towards the building of the Tabernacle, yet only the rulers of the tribes brought the "onyx and stones to be set" for the breast-plate, to be worn by the high priest, a fact which makes us conclude that precious stones were not at that period in the possession of the majority of even the wealthy.

The first stone in the breast-plate, according to our version, was the Sardius (odem, in Hebrew), which may mean any red stone from a cornelian to a ruby. Hebrew legends state that the *blushing* ruby was a symbol of Reuben, who brought shame upon himself by his irreverent conduct toward his father. The finest rubies are brought from Burmah, where the mines, being a royal monopoly, are rigorously guarded, the most valuable stones being always retained for the royal treasury. The color of a ruby may vary from the most delicate rose-tint to the deepest carmine. The most valuable is that shade called "pigeon's blood," which is of a pure, deep, rich red, unalloyed by any admixture of other color.

There are some corundums which have a six-pointed star across the crystal, and when the gem is of fine color this adds greatly to its beauty, though really the effect of an imperfection in the stone.

Brahmin tradition tells us that the abode of the gods was lighted by enormous rubies and emeralds, and the King of Burmah still bears for one of his many titles that of Lord of the Rubies. There can be no doubt that this gem was well known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, for intaglios are still in existence engraved on this stone 500 B. C., which was the highest period of Greek art.

Pildah, translated topaz, derives its name from an island, Tepezion, supposed to be situated in the Red Sea. There are two varieties of the topaz, one gold-colored and the other a greenish-yellow called chrysoprase, from its blending of leek color and gold.

Bareketh, the third stone, literally translated, means flashing stone, though in our version it is given as carbuncle. Orientals assert that Noah's ark was lighted by a carbuncle, and some ancient writers say that these gems drop from the clouds amidst flashes of lightning.

Nophek, the fourth stone, signifies in Hebrew carbuncle (authorized version, emerald). There are various species of this gem, the most valuable of which are the Indian and Garamantine or Chalcedonian. One author says the Garamantine, from which term arises our modern name of garnet, inclines to blackness, but if held against the fire or sunlight it surpasses all other carbuncles in luster and glows like a burning coal.

The Sapphir, or sapphire, the fifth stone in the high-priest's breast-plate, is often men-