



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"I HAVE decided," says Jennie, "after giving the matter most anxious and profound thought, that the most important room in the house is, or ought to be, the one we eat in."

"Really," I say, rather amused that the thoughtless girl should have given profound thought to any subject, "what has brought you to such a conclusion?"

"I don't know exactly—why, don't you all agree with me?" says Jennie, looking around as if there could hardly be a doubt upon the subject.

"No," says Sophie Mapes, "I don't think the dining-room is of as much consequence as some of the others, for one spends such a small portion of the time in it, and even that time is spent in rather an absorbing pursuit."

"But I think you can notice things about you even if you are busy eating," says Jennie.

"Undoubtedly, and I enjoy pretty surroundings as much as any one, but if I could not make a whole house beautiful I would slight the dining-room in preference to some other parts. Clean and in good order I should want it of course, but ornament could be dispensed with without depressing the spirits, as a barren sitting-room would."

"A dining-room should always be warm and comfortable," says practical Lucy Little, rather sententiously.

"None of us will differ from you there, my dear," I say approvingly. "I should not blame any one for grumbling at a housekeeper who condemned people to eat in the misery of a shivering hurry, for a hurry every one must be in to get to pleasant quarters."

"But really don't you think the room a family eats in ought to be the prettiest in the house?" says Jennie again, appealing directly to me.

"I can hardly say that I do," I answer meditatively. "If I were furnishing a house I would try to have the dining-room suitably and handsomely furnished, but I should not want to do it at the expense of other apartments."

"What would you call a suitable style?" asks one of the class.

"That would partly depend upon the style adopted for the rest of the rooms. There should be a certain uniformity all through a house. If I were buying new furniture I should get that for the dining-room of a rather severely simple style. The chairs should be large and straight-backed, not uncomfortable of course, but not luxurious, the day for lounging at table having happily gone by. The dining-table, if I could have my choice, would be richly finished and elegant enough to allow the removal of the cloth at dessert."

"Would you have no other furniture in the room?" asks some one.

"Oh, yes," I reply, "I would have other furniture if I could afford any, but it should all be technical, if I may use the word in this connection. No book-cases or work-boxes or such things to suggest the possibility of sitting in the room at other than meal times; but side-board, glass stand, and things which are of use in holding table articles, corner shelves or cupboards, for instance, which could be made available as resting places for ice pitcher, pickle stands, or similar things."

"But wouldn't you have anything pretty in the room?" asks Jennie plaintively.

"The things I have mentioned can be made as handsome as you please," I answer, "and the glass, plate and odd articles of fancy china that they would support would be very ornamental. Then in addition I would hang appropriate pictures upon the walls, which to please me would have to be covered with rich paper, quiet, but not too dark, nor of a color that would absorb the light."

"What would you have for a carpet?"

"I should like best an inlaid floor of black walnut, boxwood and yellow pine, with a dark center rug, and a brighter small one at the end of the room, or in the bay window if there was one."

"Would you have mirrors?" asks Miss Kitty.

"I would have one over the mantel between two sections of narrow shelves, to hold choice bits of faience, and if the spaces in the room allowed, I would have an oval glass hung lengthwise at an angle that would give a full reflection of the table to those sitting opposite. A long upright glass seems to me eminently suited to a room where people sit at ease, or are moving about often, but a dining-room looks better with nothing to apparently extend its length, as full-length mirrors do; so instead of having one at the end of the room, I should have the curtain draperies of the windows reach across, and fill the space between them to help to give a cosy, shut-in look to the place."

"I think yours is quite the ideal dining-room," says Sophie Mapes.

"Not at all," says I. "It is, on the contrary, the idea of a very real and practical sort of place."

"Well," remarks Sophie Mapes, "I like nice furniture as well as anybody, but as ours is very far from being handsome, and that in the dining-room the worst of all, I should like to know how I am to make the best of what we have and have the place look as well as possible."

"Keep it in immaculate order."

"That is easy enough," says Sophie, with a sort of desperate cheerfulness, "for there's so little of it; a table and six chairs, that's our stock in trade."

"I really think I would attempt a little home-made furniture," says I. "Have at least a broad shelf, to partly take the place of a sideboard."

"But it would have to be fancy, wouldn't it?"

"No, not fancy at all. Make it of pine, and hide the brackets that support it by hanging on a lambrequin, which you might make by cutting squares or leaves out of east-off dresses. I have seen one made from two old camel's-hair dresses that belonged to a child. One square or oblong piece was of gray, the next of striped crimson, and the same alternation repeated all the length of the shelf. The squares were eight inches long by five wide, and were lined with thick brown wrapping paper, and edged with cord made by twisting gray and crimson worsted together."

"I like the idea," says Sophie, "I think I'll make one. I have enough dark green flannel that was once a broad kilt-plaited flounce to cover it with if it will do."

"Of course it will," I assent, "a solid color will look better than two shades, and if you have plenty of the goods you might cover some corner shelves with it; make them out of barrel heads if you have nothing better. You will find them convenient for holding water pitcher and plates for the dessert, and many other things. Put them quite low down as they will generally be seen by people who are seated, and will thus attract less attention than if above them. I should have two, one at each corner, on the side of the room opposite the windows."

"I should think you would have to get them made and put up by a carpenter," says Jennie.

"No, I can make them myself, and put them up too," says Sophie. "I use the tools in my brother's

tool-chest as often as he does, and I flatter myself as scientifically."

"I couldn't even drive a nail," says Miss Kitty.

"I devoutly hope that stern necessity will never drive you to try to drive one," says Jennie solemnly.

"But I should not boast of being unable to do that or any other useful thing," I say, thinking it a favorable time to point a moral.

"I don't consider such things as carpenter work as belonging to a woman's sphere, and I think she unsexes herself when she employs herself in such a manner," says Miss Kitty.

"Necessity knows no law," says Sophie, "and if I am not rich enough to employ one of the superior sex to put up my shelves, I am glad to be able to do it myself."

"A very good sentiment," I say approvingly.

"I don't want to be severe upon any one present, but I have noticed that those women who are so ready to condemn the practice of many things as being not within their sphere, are often noticeably neglectful of the duties which lie indisputably within their province. So one wonders whether it is conviction or indolence that makes them anxious to limit their work."

"I have been wanting to ask," says Miss Nellie Green, "whether it is wise or otherwise to wash up the breakfast dishes in the dining-room?"

"Decidedly unwise," I say, "unless you first spread an oil-cloth on the table and a drugget over the carpet."

"But it is the custom in many houses."

"True enough," I reply, "and it is done to avoid the breakage of delicate cups and saucers that is a frequent result of sending them into the kitchen. The best plan is for the waiter or one of the ladies of the family, if no waiter is kept, to wash all the glass and the fine china dishes that are not greasy in a pantry near the dining-room. If the house is not provided with a butler's pantry with basin and other conveniences, a closet may be transformed into a very tolerable imitation of one. A small pine table can be put in it or a shelf with hinges will be better, for it can be let down out of the way when not in use. Upon this a small wooden tub or tin dishpan filled with hot water can be placed after each meal, and the cups, saucers, and tumblers, after they are wiped, put away in their places all ready for the next time."

"What becomes of all the rinsing with hot water that we had a lesson on up the Hudson?" asks Jennie. "A body couldn't flourish much with just one pan of water."

"I was not providing for plates and dishes, but only for such things as hardly require more than a single supply of water. Have the slop-bowl that you used upon the table standing by your dishpan and into it pour every drop of tea and coffee left in the cups; in that way you will keep your dish-water clean to the last and not be troubled with changing it. Beside the table or shelf," I continue, "you will need some pegs on which to hang your dish-cloth and towels, and a little corner shelf for the soap-dish to rest upon permanently. If possible, there should be a sort of dresser in one side of the pantry, a very simple kind will answer; just a few shelves above for the china and glass, and a cupboard below for the table linen to be deposited in when not upon the table. The principal supply, you will remember, is to be kept in the linen closet that is to be the object of so much care."

"There were several questions I wanted to ask about the care of the dining-room," says Lucy Little.

"Then," I say, looking at my watch, "I am afraid we shall have to ask you to postpone them until the next time we meet, as it is much later now than I suspected."

"That you do not care for Derriman, and mean to encourage John Loveday. What's all the world so long as folks are happy! Child, don't take any notice of what I have said about Festus, and don't meet him any more."

"Well, what a weathercock you are, mother! Why should you say that just now?"

"It is easy to call me a weathercock," said the matron, putting on her face the look of a good woman; "but I have reasoned it out, and at last, thank God, I have got over my ambition. The Lovedays are our true and only friends, and Mr. Festus Derriman, with all his money is nothing to us at all."

"But," said Anne, "what has made you change all of a sudden from what you have said before?"

"My feelings and my reason, which I am thankful for."

Anne knew that her mother's sentiments were naturally so versatile that they could not be depended on for two days together; but it did not occur to her for the moment that a change had been helped on in the present case by a romantic talk between Mrs. Garland and the miller. But Mrs. Garland could not keep the secret long. She chatted gayly as she walked, and before they had entered the house she said, "What do you think Mr. Loveday has been saying to me, dear Anne?"

Anne did not know at all.

"Why, he has asked me to marry him."

(To be continued.)

A Little Dreamer.

BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

YES, Aunt, I'm a girl with queer fancies,
And wishes peculiar—oh, quite!
What was it you called me? Romantic?
No doubt you are right.

DON'T at all like our plain houses,
With stoops, and a bell that one rings;
I ever so much prefer castles,
With towers and things!

I'D like to see knights clad in armor;
Then, too, I should certainly say
'Twas a terrible shame that the fairies
Have all flown away.

AND then, you know, just for excitement,
Far off, in the heart of some wood,
I'd like an occasional dragon;
Yes, truly, I should!

SOME perfectly dreadful green monster
That acted outrageously wrong,
Till one day a splendid young horseman
Came riding along.

OF course he would slay the old nuisance,
And afterward prove that his name
Was something of royal importance
And wonderful fame!

AND then he would wed the king's daughter,
Precisely as one might expect....
'Would I like to be that young lady?'
I shouldn't object!



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"WHEN we were talking about the dining-room the other day," observes Miss Lucy Little, "I wanted an opportunity to ask you what you thought of the custom of sticking up plates and other pieces of china to show off?"

"Do you mean hanging them on the wall, and standing them upon brackets?" I ask.

"Yes," says Lucy, "or bringing them to the front in any way."

"Do you object to the fashion yourself?" I inquire.

"Yes, I do," answers Lucy with decision. "I think it indicates a great want of taste to make such things prominent. I expect before long to see coal-scuttles for mantel ornaments, and watering-pots, if they happen to be ancient ones, set upon brackets; there's no knowing where the thing is going to stop."

"I think you are rather severe," I say, "and I don't quite agree with you. If you had, like a friend of mine, a Sicilian dish over three hundred years old, wouldn't you think it too valuable and rare a curio to be hidden away in a china closet? I think you would be inclined to do as my friend has done, and have a velvet recessed frame made for it, and hang it over a low case of book-shelves. In general I am not fond, however, of seeing china, even of the rarest, exhibited in drawing or sitting-room, but I do enjoy seeing fine specimens conspicuous in a dining-room, and I cannot see why their presence there should offend the most fastidious taste."

"I think it's a splendid fashion," adds Jennie; "for if conversation languishes you can look at the faience and fall into ecstasies."

"That is a fine and original motive for decorating a dining-room," is my laughing reply; "but it is not altogether a bad one. A hostess cannot afford to overlook anything that may promote conversation, and with the general knowledge nearly every one has now of pottery, china-painting, etc., the topic is apt to be acceptable."

"Is it considered desirable to have conversation at the dinner-table?" inquires Miss Kittie.

"A silent dinner is a dreary ceremony," I answer; "too much talk might be odious too, as interfering with the business on hand. An English paper on dinner-giving as an art, says upon that subject: 'One must observe a happy medium between dullness and brilliancy, remembering that a dinner is not a conversation.' To secure this happy medium, the writer recommends great tact in arranging the position of the guests at table, to avoid such social quicksands as might be caused by placing together people who would be liable to fall into unpleasantly warm discussions, or those whose similar pursuits might lead them into conversation that would exclude the rest of the party. If among the guests at a regular company dinner there is one of notable conversational ability, the hostess would be wise in placing him near the center of the table, where all can hear him or talk with him."

"Mamma has had a new dining-table imported for us," says Miss Kittie, following out probably some thought in her own mind.

"Couldn't she find a good enough one on

this side of the water?" asks Jennie, a little pertly.

"English furniture is handsomer than American, and far more expensive," says Kittie, loftily.

"Oh, of course, if it's more expensive it's much handsomer," says mischievous Jennie, with great gravity; "but how does your table differ from other tables? Tell us about it, please."

"It is made of solid mahogany, very highly polished, and the carving is superb," says Miss Kittie, not unwilling to describe the really very elegant piece of new furniture.

"What is the shape?" asks Miss Lucy Little.

"Circular," responds Miss Kittie, "with a very solid support in the center, formed by four rampant griffins. It is an extension-table, but does not extend in the ordinary way; the leaves are wedge-shaped and radiate from the center, enlarging the table without distorting the circle."

"It must be the perfection of a table," say I, "and I half envy you for possessing such a one. I have always preferred round tables to any others, and have deplored the change in their appearance, the usual plan of extension causes, although where the addition of a single leaf makes them large enough, the elongated circle or oval form they take is very good."

"How many people could sit at your new table when the leaves are in?" asks Jennie of Miss Kittie. "I should not think there would be room for a dinner party."

"It would accommodate a dozen, I should say," is the answer. "But you know, mamma never gives large dinners; she says eight at the table is as many as she ever wants to see. She would rather have frequent little dinners than stiff occasional ones."

"No more than the muses nor less than the graces," quotes Sophie Mapes.

"Yes," I assent, "that was Brillat Savarin's rule, and he gave some other good rules for dinner-giving, one of which was, 'Let the business of eating be very slow, the dinner being the last act of the day's drama, and let the host and his guests consider themselves as so many travelers journeying leisurely toward the same destination.' I think there is a great deal too much hurry about eating in this country."

"Doesn't Brillat Savarin say that a dining-room ought to be very light?" asks Miss Kittie.

"Yes," I answer, "he says it should be 'superbly lighted, and the temperature 60° to 68° Fahrenheit.'"

"That seems rather cold," says Lucy Little. "We keep all our rooms five or ten degrees above that."

"But the act of eating warms one," says Sophie Mapes, "so I dare say that would be as warm as it ought to be."

"As to the room being so very light," say I, returning to that idea, "there is a difference of opinion; some noted diners of very Sybaritic taste have insisted that a subdued light is the only proper one to insure perfect comfort at the table. Sir Walter Scott, however, was one of those who believed in brilliant illumination. He had gas at Abbotsford, at a period when it was little used in private houses, and Lockhart, in describing the daily life there, says, 'In sitting down to table in autumn, no one observed that in each of the three chandeliers there lurked a tiny bead of red light. Dinner passed off, and the sun went down, and suddenly, at the turning of a screw, the room was filled with a gush of splendor worthy of the palace of Aladdin.'"

"What do you think yourself," says Jennie, appealing to me, "about such a light room to eat in?"

"I do not consider myself authority about a matter that has been discussed by such distinguished people, but my own inclination would lead me to prefer the happy medium in this as in so many other things. Too little light is gloomy and apt to make people indisposed for conversation, and too much glare and glitter wearies the eyes, and even produces headache with some delicate persons, when the meal is a protracted one."

"I wish I knew how to set a dinner-table just as it should be done," says Miss Wiltshire. "We have been boarding so many years that I feel entirely ignorant."

"Different families have different ways of doing it," I say; "but there might be a few general directions given that would help you. In the first place, it is proper to have everything clean and in good order before you begin, for you never can tell how much time to allow yourself if you are liable to have to stop to wash a dish, clean a cruet, or anything of the sort. Have everything as far as possible arranged, so that the waiter will not have to leave the room during the meal. If you do not keep a waiter, then be all the more particular to have everything at hand, so that constant jumping up to supply wants may be avoided. If your dining-room is carpeted, first spread down the druggot or crumb-cloth, unless it is your practice to keep it down permanently. Then put on the table-cloth with geometrical nicety; set for each person a knife, fork, and soup-spoon. Lay a napkin by the knife, and upon the former an oblong block of bread. Have a tray of similarly cut bread upon a side-table to replenish the supply if required."

"Why cut the bread in that form?" interposes Lucy Little.

"I cannot give any reason, except that sliced bread is not generally used at dinner-time among people of the slightest pretension to elegance. Rolls of any kind are appropriate, particularly for company dinners; but I do not advise any one to martyr themselves by using either thick bread or rolls, if they prefer their bread sliced, as it is served at other meals. Now, to go on with our table," I continue; "put opposite each person's place a butter-plate and salt-cellar, and if you please an individual pepper-cruet. At each corner of the table place two or three table-spoons. If you use a large caster, put it directly in the middle of the table, but small corner casters are prettier, and should be placed on diagonally opposite corners of the table, leaving the center for a vase of flowers or a dish of fruit, or failing either of these ornamental pieces, a substitute may be found in a glass of celery or bowl of salad.

"At one end of the table, whichever is the carver's seat, put the carving knife and fork and the gravy spoon. If soup is to be used, put the ladle and a pile of soup-plates opposite the person who is to serve it. Have the water-pitcher filled, and the ice put in it some time before it is to be used, and at the right of each place put a tumbler. English books on dining say, 'and one or more wine-glasses, according to the variety of wines to be taken,' but as I am in hopes that none of you habitually dine with wine, I will not include them in my brief directions. Table mats are used in most families, and should be put in such places as the hot dishes are expected to occupy, one at each end of the table and others at the sides. All this is only a hint of the usual way of setting the table for a family dinner, and does not even touch upon the little additions that may be made by ornamental china and glass or silver dishes for various purposes, or upon the tasteful arrangement of little appetizing adjuncts to a dinner that are described in cookery books like Jennie June's and Mrs. Henderson's, that teach elegance as well as excellence."

Flowers, and how to Grow Them.

BY ADELAIDE HOYT.

THE fuchsia, one of the most beautiful flowers, is also one of the very best, and merits a place in every collection. It not only grows rapidly, but blooms profusely at any required time, if given proper treatment.

Fuchsia cuttings strike as readily as those from geraniums. It is necessary, however, to take with the slip a little of the hard wood from the stem, or main branches. The shorter the cuttings, that is, with not more than three leaves, the sooner they root, especially if the callous end touches the side of the propagating pot or saucer.

Many wonder why this instruction is generally given, when the prolific subject of taking cuttings is introduced. For the benefit of those we will say, that the inference is this: the side of the pot is very porous and admits the air more freely than the soil, and if the cutting is placed so that it is in direct contact with the fresh atmospheric air that constantly enters through the pores of the pot, it is stimulated to root rapidly.

When well rooted transfer the cutting to a small pot filled with leaf mold and sand, and just as soon as the little plant begins to grow give liquid manure every week until the roots show through the pot. If very vigorous-looking transfer to a pot two or more sizes larger, filled with equal parts of loam, sand, leaf mold, and well-decomposed manure. Then give considerable water and a shaded situation, for the fuchsia will not thrive in the hot sun, the warm rays of which cause the leaves to curl and drop. We have found it free from insects except the little red spider; but if taken in time—their presence is detected by the leaves turning yellow and falling—they may be put to flight by the free use of the sprinkling-pot, for they cannot stand shower-baths and remain healthy and active.

Cuttings taken from the *Speciosa*, Carl Halt, and *Brilliant*, early in the spring, and treated as above described, will bloom profusely during winter. Other varieties can be made to bloom at stated times by simply pinching off the buds and withholding all fertilizers until a few weeks before wanted to blossom.

Some varieties of flowers that have adorned our garden through the summer make desirable house-plants for winter. Pre-eminently among these is the *petunia*, formerly considered a common flower; it has of recent years been so much improved, that it now has great popularity and is grown extensively. The *Grandiflora* varieties are strong growers and bear beautiful striped and blotched flowers, three and four inches in diameter, while the small-flowered kinds are of delicate appearance, but free growth, and closely covered with brilliant flowers, the loveliest among them being the *Countess of Ellesmere*, a pretty pink with white throat, while the double *petunia* is as large and will in some respects bear comparison with the queenly rose. Take any of these from the border in the latter part of September, and cut them back almost to the root, and transplant into good-sized pots and boxes of rich soil. New shoots will immediately start forth, and as the *petunia* is susceptible to training, you may grow them over a trellis for a small screen; stake them and pinch the branches until they assume a stalky growth, or else let them trail and hang their wealth of flowers over the sides, concealing the receptacle wherein they grow.

Mignonette should be universally grown for its delightful fragrance. We have found Miles' Hybrid Spiral superior to all other varieties. It is dwarf and branching in habit, the flower spikes

grow from six to ten inches long, and if the side shoots are kept off the main stem will be one compact mass of sweet though unassuming flowers more than twelve inches in length.

Young plants of the *Dianthus Chinensis* *Hedenigii* pinks, if taken from the border and potted in the latter part of August, and given plenty of water and some liquid manure in October, will bloom in December, the flowers being fully as large and handsome as its beautiful and favorite sister the carnation, without its fragrance, however; it is, of course, not so highly esteemed.

The beautiful Scotch pink, with its sweet spicy odor, should be treated similarly to the foregoing if desired for in-door culture.

How many have grown the *Senecio Macroglossis*, a species of the old and general favorite the *Senecio Scandens*, or German ivy. The former is an excellent climber, fast grower, and vies with the latter for in-door screens and pillars. The leaves are very peculiar, no two being exactly alike, while the flowers are a delicate straw color. It grows best in rich soil, and should be given plenty of water and kept from the direct sunlight; a shady corner, one to be scarcely utilized is the very place for *S. Macroglossis*.

Chimney Fittings in "Recess."

THE vogue of mantel-shelves is causing chimney fittings "in recess" to be looked upon with favor, although so great a change in in-door architecture must necessarily take place in order to admit of their adoption. These fittings are, as will easily be understood, never so handsome when added to an apartment into the original plan of which their construction did not enter. Still, they may be advantageously added where the room is elegant in form, and especially where florid wood carvings have found a place.

In an apartment built with a view to display chimney fittings "in recess," they are, in point of fact, its main beauty. The fire-place is low. A brass-barred inclosure holds the logs of wood, two upright andirons, of a long faper-like form, hold "heat-plates" of brass with Roman eagles upon them. Resting their tops upon these are the brass shovel and tongs. Forward of the "log-rest" is a wide band of brass, and the entire fire-place is raised above the carpet on a marble step a foot in depth. At the sides of this broad step are pillars of carved wood, which sustain the arch of the fire-place, above which, again, is a wide wood carving resembling the antique balconies of feudal castles. Above this are the deep recesses in which are placed, first, either a portrait of the oldest ancestor or of some great celebrity—the painting must be in oil, and should be dark in tone to correspond with the wood carvings—or, in some cases, a mirror; secondly, two large brass shields, or specimens of fine ware of some sort, and, forward of these, large and long vases of glass, or jars of *faience*. The picture or mirrors must have no frame, excepting the wood carving in frame shape which surrounds this portion of the central recess. Two smaller recesses flank the upper portions of the frame-shaped section, and these also should contain antique jars or magnificent shells of a rare kind. Then, again, the wings of the central arch extend on the sides of the right and left walls of the room, and form small galleries, in which must also be placed shields, jars, helmets, and trophies, forming *suite* with those above the fire-place. In the hollows of the arch are windows, which require jars containing growing plants. Forward of these are set sofas, and between these an immense Persian rug is laid. Polished wood floors without other carpet should accompany this style of fire-place and chimney-fittings.



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BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"I OBSERVE," say I, after wishing the girls good morning, "an inquiring expression upon Miss Little's face, and I wonder if there is any question she would like to ask?"

"Yes," replies the young lady, "I do want to ask if the same rules that apply to setting a dinner-table are to be regarded in arranging a table for tea?"

"There is a difference, of course," I say, "for tea is comparatively a simple meal, and requires less preparation. It is so customary to dine at night in cities, that one is apt to forget that there is such a meal as tea."

"But you know I live in the country," says Lucy Little, "and there we dine in the middle of the day and take our tea at six o'clock. I should be glad of a few hints about the tea-table, unless the other girls would be bored by listening to what will not interest them."

Miss Kitty assures us politely that she shall not consider it a hardship to hear the subject discussed, and Jennie declares that she is thirsting for information upon the matter herself. So being set at ease upon that point, Lucy asks first if the table need be as large for tea as for dinner.

"Plenty of elbow room is desirable at any meal," I say; "but as the viands that compose a dinner necessarily take up more room than the simple dishes people generally have for tea, it is common to expand the table then and contract it for the later meal."

"People can't be crowded when the modern dining-room chairs are used," says Miss Kitty.

"True enough," I say. "People who sit in large arm-chairs are sure to have plenty of elbow room, but not every family is supplied with such."

"And straight high-backed chairs are far more elegant and stylish now than arm-chairs," remarks Jennie, glad to be able to post Miss Kitty upon a matter of fashion.

"In my own home in the country," says Lucy Little, "we have only the ordinary cane-seated reception chairs in our dining-room, and after spending this year in town with Aunt Maria, in her handsome house, I suppose I shall grumble at the chairs and everything else when I go home."

"You will have too much good sense for that," I say.

"I shouldn't blame you for growling at the chairs," says Sophie Mapes, "if the cane seats get punched out as quickly as ours do. I declare it is quite an expense to keep the shabby things in order. We had four re-seated the other day by an old man who came around with a pitiful tale of a sick wife, blind daughter, lame son, and no work. The afflicted old party took five times as long to do them as anybody else would have done, and now we find that either accidentally, or with malice aforethought, he has hacked some of the strips of cane so nearly through at the back that they give way at the least strain."

"That is aggravating," say I sympathizingly, "and if I were you I should cover the chairs and have no more cane seats."

"Could we do it ourselves?" asks Miss Little dubiously.

"Certainly you can," I answer, "and very cheaply, too. You do not need to take the canes out, for that is a very tedious process; but if they are very much broken, lace them together with

cord and patch them up as well as you can. Then with carpet-thread and a big needle tack on a piece of coarse muslin or sacking, the same shape but a trifle smaller than the original seat. Cut another piece the same shape but something larger. Put in a stuffing of hair, moss, or even the shavings furniture dealers use for packing, and fasten the cloth down with small nails at long intervals. For the outside cover use the coarse gray linen, such as is sold for crumb-cloths. Get as small a check or figure as you can, and as dark a gray as possible. I forgot to say that you should keep a paper pattern of the sacking top, as it is hard to get one after the stuffing is in. Cut the linen by this pattern and nail it on neatly with short tacks, burying their heads in the wood to prevent them wearing holes in the gimp, with which you must border the cushioned seat, as much for ornament as to conceal the edge of the linen cover, which cannot be neatly finished otherwise. The gimp should be of a bright color to contrast well with the gray, and light it up prettily, and should be studded with gilt nail heads. Don't attempt to cover the seat over the edge of the chair, like those in the stores, or you will find yourself in difficulty, as the frame of such a chair is not adapted for that; but let the cloth cover come only just beyond the cane."

"I shall immediately proceed to upholster the sole cane-seated chair we own, and then heave an Alexander-like sigh, that there are no more worlds for me to conquer," said Jennie energetically.

"I think you will find yourself satisfied with one," I say; "I did not recommend chair covering as an amusement, for it is quite laborious; but only as one of the devices by which young housekeepers, who do not have such pretty surroundings as yours, Miss Jennie, can beautify ugly things and save some outlay besides."

"I am delighted to hear of all such devices," says Sophie, "and I shall try this one at once, without waiting for the canes to ravel out and have to be tied together."

"Yes, that is the best way, for it insures a good firm foundation for the stuffing."

"Wouldn't it be an improvement," asks Nellie Greene, "to embroider the figures with red or blue worsted like the bureau covers and sofa cushions people make of linen?"

"I should think it would be a great addition," I say. "How very pretty the seat and back of a little cane sewing chair would be, decorated in that way. I remember seeing one pattern of gray linen that had butterflies in the squares; those would be very pretty worked in appropriate colors."

"Oh, I want to tell you something about embroidered things," exclaims Jennie, with great vivacity. "Mamma and I went to the dearest little lunch party last week at young Mrs. Barker's, and the lunch cloth and napkins were all embroidered by her own hands. The tablecloth was made of thick, fine linen like a sheet, and checked off into squares by threads drawn out and sewed with a *revers* stitch like hemstitched handkerchiefs, you know. In every square there was a lovely figure, in what I call outline stitch; no shading, filling in, or anything."

"Were the figures in colors?" I ask interrupting her.

"Yes, they were in silk, mostly red, black and brown, those being the surest washing colors."

"I shouldn't feel sure that any would be unfading."

"Oh, you may be," answers Jennie, "I enquired all about it; you buy the indelible silk, you are all right. The figures that were worked in black looked like pen and ink sketches. They were butterflies, storks, flat round fans and Japanese fans in every stage of unfoldedness, griffins,

dragons, lions of St. Mark, and lots more things than I can remember."

"Was the tablecloth hemstitched all round?" asks one of the girls.

"No, it had a beautiful fringe made of the coarsest linen, raveled and tied in some peculiar manner, and sewed on to the cloth with a double row of herringbone stitch, which made the heading. But let me tell you about the napkins. They were hemstitched with an inch-wide hem all around."

"And divided into squares like the tablecloth?" says Sophie.

"No, left plain, and each one had a perfect peacock feather just thrown upon it. It was so natural that you felt just as if you could pick it up. I never should have patience to embroider a dozen napkins that way, but I am going to attempt the pattern upon a tidy."

"Such a set of table linen must have taken a great deal of time and patience," I observe.

"Oh, immense, but Mrs. Barker hadn't a thing besides to do. You know brides always have clothes enough provided to last them all their natural lives, if the things wouldn't go out of date, and friends make them bridal presents of every imaginable kind of fancy work, so they have time enough to embroider carpets if they choose."

"If I ever get married," says Sophie Mapes, "I mean to leave a few stitches to be taken after the ceremony, for I shouldn't know what to do with so much idle time."

"A very wise idea," I assent. "I never quite endorsed the fashion of laying in such vast supplies of clothes either. It seems like a poor compliment to a man to provide as if you thought he was never going to be able to replenish your stock."

"How funny it would be," says Jennie, "if every man when he was going to be married bought seventy-five shirts, and a hundred and fifty collars. Poor thing, he couldn't have a variety of articles like his bride, but he might have a gross or two of pocket-handkerchiefs to wipe his little nose, and a crate of bran-new stockings to warm his little toes."

"It strikes me," I say apologetically when we have done laughing at Jennie's absurd words and still more comical manner, "it strikes me that we have let the time slip by without setting the tea-table for Miss Lucy Little, and now it is too late."

"Never mind that," says Lucy very good naturedly, "I have been much interested, and another time will do as well."

So, thanking her for her patience, we separate with a promise on my part that she shall not be neglected when the class meets again.

Swiss Pottery.

THE handsome, but by no means high-priced Swiss pottery, is becoming more and more fashionable. The new designs are very beautiful, especially the flower stand, imitating a cleft bud, of which the inner leaves are slightly discovered by the opening of the outer leaves, and the place for the inserted flowers found in the cleft itself. Curious vases of a complex design, half Grecian, half Egyptian, and heavily banded with black, are enriched with colors of delicate contrasting hues. This attractive ware is in point of fact more delicate than the Limoges, except the finer kind of that ware, and there is a vast range of choice in design and color. It is very durable, and has a good glaze. Tapers of new design represent dolphins, in the jaws of which the candle is set, while the triple folds of the twisted tail form the pedestal. Four fish upright on their tails, and back to back for supports for cards and letters, form a design much liked.

on the plate, and afterward go over the outlines with crimson-lake, which will render them less trying to the eyes, for with all proper precautions painting on porcelain is very hard on the eyes. Select a room uncarpeted to paint in, and provide yourself with a covered box in which to place your work until it is dry, and when dry until you send it away to be burned. Dust is dreaded by the housekeeper, as it makes work, but to the painter on porcelain dust is the ruin of days' work. It is well to wipe off your plate with a cloth moistened with turpentine, before you place your tracing paper over it or draw the ornament in crimson-lake at once. Provide yourself with a bottle of alcohol in which to wash your brushes, a horn palette—for one of metal would injure your colors—a rest for your hand, a piece of wood, six inches wide and eighteen inches long, fixed to the table by a screw passing through both rest and table and kept in place by a nut. [A movable rest may be made by fastening supports to both ends of a piece of wood, which shall stand over the china you are painting and allow your hand to rest thereon.] You may manage with a wooden block or small piece of board. If you buy more than one color, your first step is to fill a plate or tile very full of your different colors and send it to be burned, having first marked each tint carefully. This is a guide for future use. The value of La Croix tube colors is this: they are vitrifiable colors ground in fat oil of turpentine, ready to use as you would oil or water-color tubes, only you thin the paint with turpentine instead of water or oil. Lists of La Croix colors may be had at any art-material shop.

As the proper mixture of the colors is necessary in order that the plate shall come out of the firing with the colors fixed and not blistered in spots, and as this grinding is careful work, you may perceive why La Croix colors are more expensive and convenient than the powder colors. Vitrifiable colors cannot be mixed as easily as water or oil colors, therefore do not squeeze out of the tube more than you shall need for a day's work. Prop the tubes up, as by letting them lie flat too much of the oil of turpentine comes to the top of the tube and impairs the ease and success of your painting. When it is necessary to dry your painting, place the painted plate or saucer in the oven, or, if you paint in a room in which there is no stove, a small kerosene stove will answer. Place a tin lid or stove-cover on the top of the stove over the flame before placing your painted plate there.

As you may with bands and dots and combinations of color produce decorative effects, even if you cannot draw well, add to the *sepia* and *eiel bleu* you already have the following La Croix tubes: *Bleu outre mer* (ultramarine blue), price, 45 cents; *Janne à meler* (yellow for mixing); *carmin foucé*, No. 3 (dark carmine), 45 cents; *brun janne* (yellow chrome), 30 cents; *ocre* (ocher), 30 cents; *vert pomme* (apple green), 30 cents; *émeraude* (emerald green), 30 cents; *noir d'ivoire* (ivory black), 30 cents; and *blanc Chinois* (Chinese white). These will mix with any other color, and give opacity and body. This is analogous in many respects to the use of white in illumination, the study of which will help you greatly in decorating porcelain, as many of the ornaments seen in illumination can be applied with little transformation.

Gilding is always done the last thing—always over glaze, never under glaze.* A bottle of gilding preparation costs one dollar. Gilt bands or decorations are put on at a reasonable rate where the porcelain is burned. The cost of burning a piece in New York is ten cents. Mr. Bennett charges twenty-five cents, as he does it only to accommo-

* Mr. Bennett has a vase with gilt painted under the glaze.

date students, and not as a business. It is needless to say the colors come out exquisitely.

A medium in painting is any liquid or material which will mix with powder colors, and then enable you to place the color on any desired surface. It is the means with which powder colors are made to gain your end, *i.e.*, painting on any special surface. The medium therefore varies with the surface. Volatile oils and liquids which evaporate rapidly like turpentine are valuable mediums. The oil of sassafras is the most volatile. The oil of lavender or, as the cheaper variety is called, the oil of spike, is the favorite medium or vehicle used by enamel painters. Decorators on china often simply dip their brush in turpentine to lay on the colors, as it is cheaper than the perfumed oils. If you wish to remove a color, your brush wet with alcohol will do it at once. The oil of tar is useful in painting fine lines, as it does not run. The odor of oil of cloves is, as you know, more pleasant than the oil of turpentine. The West India natural balsam called *copaiba* is colorless, and useful to keep the color on your palette, whether of china or glass, while you are painting. All these oils may be bought at a reliable druggist's, as well as an art-material store. English and German colors may be bought in powder at the art-material stores. Professional decorators sometimes mix French and English colors, the French having more brilliancy, the English more delicate shades, and both firing at about the same temperature; but the amateur must be careful not to mix the colors of different manufacturers together, or use different kinds in the same dish. Flux, which is bought separately, must be mixed with each color when ground.

Powder colors are mixed by grinding them with a glass muller very finely, after pouring about as much oil of turpentine as powder on a ground glass slab; turpentine is added, as this sticky mass would soon become unmanageable without.

Tinting a cup all over is done with powder colors. The colors are blended with a dabber made by putting cotton in a tiny ball tied up in muslin, held by the muslin ends in the hand. After being thoroughly ground and allowed to dry the colors are put in small homeopathic medicine bottles. A china palette, with many little wells to hold the colors and a cover to keep it from the dust, will cost \$1.25. Colors may thus be kept for many days. No dust must be allowed in the color mixture. Strain through a coarse cloth after mixing as a precaution.

To take off an accidental speck of dust, use a needle fastened in a wooden handle. This cheap tool may be used to get the effect of a white design on a dark ground by using the needle as you would a pencil, on the colored ground; it scratches out the color. You may also use this needle in painting leaves. After the color of the leaf has been put on with one painting, scratch out the veins, thus leaving lines on the porcelain to paint darker or lighter veins with another color.

Where the painting on porcelain has made a village famous, the colors are burned after each painting; but those general facts in coloring found by experience in water colors, in staining woods or painting on paper, are analogous: for instance, if you wish to deepen carmine in illumination, add a touch of brown madder (maroon) or blue; in porcelain painting this produces brilliant results. Lines are painted on china at a trifling cost at the china burner's.

If you cannot easily procure oil of turpentine, make it by putting a few drops in a saucer for a few days, adding a little each day until the evaporation has left a thick oily substance on the saucer. It is always better to buy the oil, for as no dust must be mixed with it the above method is very difficult to insure perfect success.

The advantage of taking a lesson after experimenting yourself is very great, as the teacher then can advise so as to bridge over your *individual difficulties*. Mr. John Bennett, of New York (formerly superintendent of the Doulton School at Lambeth, England), charges \$5 for an hour's lesson, but in order to get the full value of his valuable advice it is necessary to have drawn a sketch-book full of flowers from nature, paying strict attention to the chief characteristics, *i.e.*, how the plant grows, the type of the leaf, and whether climbing or trailing, etc. If you write to the Ladies' Art Association, New York, you will also be told that this is the best preparation, but they, knowing the difficulties women have to contend with, knowing the deficiencies of art instruction all over the country, are well fitted to counsel you in your special difficulties, owing to the fact that they were the first in the United States to provide instruction in painting on porcelain. Letters from Maine to California are constantly received by them; for that reason, when writing for advice it is but just to inclose a money order for three dollars, for it cannot be expected that these artists will spend their time writing you the information they have paid for with money, brains, and labor of years to gain, for nothing. Brain furnishing ought to be paid for as well as house furnishing.

A vase ornamented with flowers painted by John Bennett, of New York, or a plaque with a face or animal by Matt. Morgan, of Philadelphia, would be of vast use to the beginner, and could be bought for from ten to fifty dollars. Both artists paint rapidly, both experiment all the time, and a decoration by one of them would be a constant lesson in the value of broad effects.



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"WHAT little I can tell about setting a tea-table," I say to Miss Lucy Little, "you shall certainly hear this time. The other day our meeting was like Artemus Ward's lecture upon the 'Babes in the Wood'; he said all he had to say, and omitted to mention them at all."

"We have tea once a week," says Jennie, "because we dine in the middle of the day on Sunday. Mamma does not like it much; neither do I. But papa says it carries him back to his early days, and he always insists on having shaved smoked beef and great big doughnuts, because he used to have them at grandma's when he was a boy. He doesn't mind how much flummery the rest of us have, but he always eats his old-fashioned things, and has a good time. We used to have an awful time getting the doughnuts for him, for he could tell in a moment if they were bought at a baker's. Aunt Eliza used to send us baskets full down from the country as long as she lived."

"Why don't your cook make them," asks Miss Kitty, "if you must have such things?"

"She does when she knows how, but that doesn't often happen. No, we have given up trying the greasy abominations that professed cooks treat us to, and where do you suppose we get our doughnuts now? You need not try to guess. I make them myself every Saturday, and they are just as light as feathers. The first I made

were a surprise to papa, and he surprised me by giving me a ten dollar gold piece. I never saw him so delighted. I didn't promise to keep him supplied, but I have done so ever since."

"It must be awfully hard work," says Miss Kitty.

"No, it isn't; it's great fun to do anything that pleases papa so thoroughly."

"The labor we delight in physics pain," quotes Nellie Greene rather shyly.

"That's so," assents Jennie with an approving nod of her pretty little head, and then they all stop talking at my request, while I read them an extract from a very practical work on housekeeping, written many years ago.

"Having removed the colored cloth (if there is one) and wiped the table with a duster, spread on the white cloth as evenly as possible, observing that the center crease of the folds is exactly in the center of the table. Then place the large japanned waiter at the head of the table, and put on it a cup, saucer, and teaspoon for each person, and a small pile of three or four extra ones, in case they should chance to be wanted. Put the teaspoon in the saucer at the right hand of the cup. Back of the cups and saucers set the sugar bowl on the right hand, and the cream pitcher on the left, with the slop bowl in the center, leaving a place behind for the coffee or teapot. If there is an urn, its place is beyond the waiter, and there should be a stand for it either of worsted work or of oilcloth. If the spout is inconveniently low (as is sometimes the case) the urn may be elevated by a stand made of a thick block of wood nicely finished and stained in imitation of black walnut. The cups, of course, are filled directly from the urn.

"Apropos to the use of urns, I should like to say that it is very important to have them hot before the tea or coffee is poured into them, and it is absolutely necessary that they should be thoroughly washed and dried, and, if kept for only occasional use, filled between times with shavings or brown paper to absorb the dampness of the air.

"It is fashionable now," I go on to say, "among the people who are going back to old styles, to have a small brass teakettle which swings upon a standard over a chafing dish placed upon the waiter, and tea is made at the table, but I confess it is not a fashion I heartily indorse myself."

"Oh! I admire it excessively," exclaims Miss Kitty, with unusual animation; "the Loftyways in Philadelphia always have tea made on the table, and it seems so deliciously English."

"Well," I say, "I am too thoroughly American to like any custom better for being English, French, or German, but I do like the plan of making the tea at the table, because it seems cosy and home-like, and the beverage is likely to make a nearer approach to perfection than the kitchen decoction is apt to. It is the old-fashioned, clumsy brass kettle that I object to, for modern skill has introduced prettier inventions for table tea-drawing. But while we are on the subject of cooking at the table, let me say that if a tin or silver egg boiler is used to poach or boil the eggs at breakfast time, it should be filled with boiling water before it is brought in, so that the process may be short, and also to economize in the alcohol which feeds the lamp beneath the boiler. However, as we are trying to set a tea-table, we will not dwell upon the belongings of any other meal, but go on with our business. Having set the cups, saucers, etc., conveniently near the seat of the person who presides, place the necessary number of plates, knives, and forks, laying at each place a napkin in a ring or squarely folded, according to your family custom. Give also a tumbler, butter plate, and salt cellar to each person, unless your tea is to be entirely without solids or relishes, in which case

salt will be needless, and it will not be appropriate either to put on any condiments from the castor.

"The table will be more pleasing to the eye if a pretty harmony is observed in arranging the dishes placed upon it. The butter and cheese, for instance, may be placed diagonally opposite each other. Marmalade and jelly may occupy the other corners. A mat for a solid dish, if one is provided, may be situated at the opposite end of the table from the tea service. Flowers, if any are used, may be put in a low vase in the center, with cake and preserves upon each side, while biscuits and bread, or two plates of bread, are placed on the opposite sides. If oysters, salad, or other dish of the kind is present, the person helping it should be supplied with a pile of plates."

"Is it usual to have a change of plates at tea?" asks Lucy Little.

"It is quite common," I answer, "although there is no clearing off of the table at a family tea or any regular courses. If fried oysters, for instance are served, the plates they are put on may be put upon the clean plates at each person's place, and after they are eaten the plates may be removed, leaving those beneath for use during the remainder of the meal. If more changes are likely to be necessary, a fresh supply should be at hand. Preserves and berries should be helped upon glass plates similar to those used for ice cream. A bowl of pulverized sugar, a little pitcher of cream, and a spoonholder filled with teaspoons can be passed around upon a waiter to each person after berries have been served.

"I have known," I continue, "of families of wealth where it was the custom for one of the ladies of the house to superintend the setting of the tea-table, and it is, I think, a very excellent idea, for from the absence of heavy dishes and substantial it is easy to give it an air of elegance and almost poetry that the table prepared for other meals cannot have."

"I know a number of families," says Sophia Mapes, rather ruefully, "where not only the superintendence but the actual preparation is done by members of the family."

"All the better in the general result then," I say. "If you do the work yourself you have no stupid mistakes of others to correct, and a lady is more likely to do a thing pleasingly than a servant."

"Provided she knows how," remarks Jennie.

"You have shown that it is an easy matter for a lady to learn to do whatever she pleases," say I with an approving look, which appears to give Jennie pleasure; and indeed my young friend deserves commendation, for ever since she began to direct her thoughts to the subject, at her father's request, she has shown a steadiness of purpose hardly to be looked for in one so volatile as we have always considered her. She has displayed not a little energy and perseverance, and is becoming, as her mother tells me over and over again, a charming little housekeeper."

"Now do you think of any question you would like to ask before we retire from our tea-table?" I say to Miss Lucy.

"No, I thank you," she says, "unless it is whether it is polite to put a pitcher of water on the table or not."

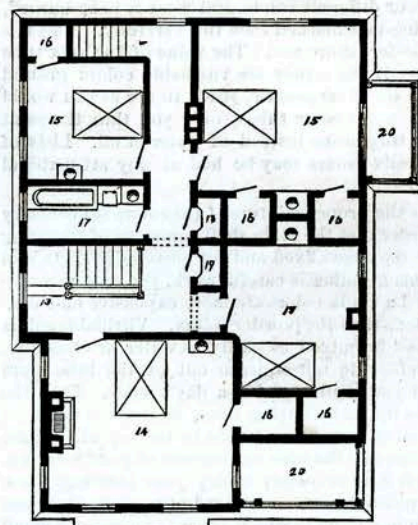
"That is a matter of convenience," I answer. "If there is a regular waiter, it is best to have the pitcher on the sideboard, and have it brought to replenish the glasses when they need it. I don't know whether I have said it or not, but, if I have, repetition will help to emphasize it, that no matter how simple or how elegant the table appointments may be, they must all be kept exquisitely clean, and glass, silver, and china be spotless and shining."

Architecture.

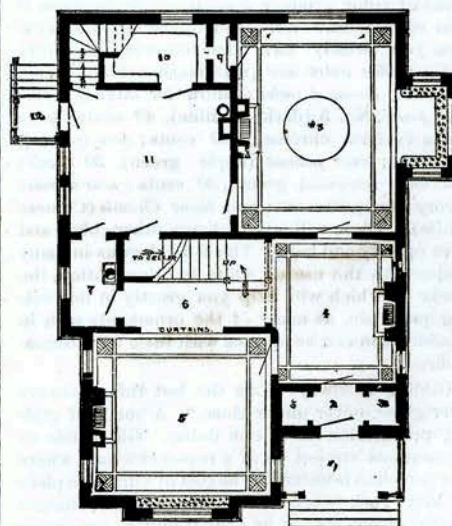
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FOR A DWELLING-HOUSE TO COST \$2,800.—The first story is to be built of brick, with facing of Ohio stone (rubble work) laid in red mortar. The quoins, window, and door jambs are to be of pressed brick, laid in white mortar. The second story to be built of wood as indicated:

FIRST STORY.	SECOND STORY.
1 Entrance Porch.	13 Stair Landing.
2 Vestibule.	14 Family Chamber, 15'-4" x 14'-4".
3 Closets.	15 Chambers.
4 Reception Hall, 11'x12'.	16 Closets.
5 Library, 15'x14'.	17 Bath Room, 10'x5'.
6 Staircase Hall, 12'x7'-6".	18 Hall Closet.
7 Toilet Room, 4'x7'-6".	19 Linen "
8 Dining " 13'-6" x 18'.	20 Balcony.
9 China Closet, 1'-6" x 5'.	
10 Pantry, 8'x5'.	
11 Kitchen, 13'-6" x 12'.	
12 Rear Porch.	

For further particulars address the architect, Mr. Geo. H. Blanden, Springfield, Mass.



= SECOND FLOOR =



= FIRST FLOOR =

It is well to shade distant mountains *very light* at first, and be sure to have the edges soft and faint. For water, scrape some black crayon into a powder and lay it on your board with the kid, working it horizontally, and making the lights and shades stronger as it comes nearer. Your sponge may do good in rendering the water transparent. Make sharp lights with the penknife. Ruins overgrown with moss, and dilapidated buildings, make pretty pictures. Moonlight views in this style of painting are more beautiful than anything else. Care must be taken to do the foliage *well*. By a delicate use of the round point of a penknife, beautiful effects can be produced in the crayon shading. Figures and animals are put in last.

A valued correspondent sends the following to inquiries of D. G. :

For Vitremanic you require some printed designs, two camel's-hair brushes, one of hog's hair, one bottle of glucine, one of enamel varnish, a roller, sponge, blotting-paper, and scissors. With a camel's-hair brush pass a coating of glucine over the colored face of the design, taking care not to touch the plain side with glucine. Lay flat to dry for two or three days or longer. Then wet both sides with water, and the glass also. Place the design on the glass and roll it well down. Keep the plain side wet for several minutes, then carefully raise a corner of the paper with the point of a knife, and pull it gently off. The work must now be washed with camel's-hair brush and water, and afterwards dried by putting blotting-paper over it and rolling it. Leave it for a few hours, then coat it with enamel varnish and the work is finished. Sometimes it is easier to scratch a hole in the center of the picture and tear away.

How to KEEP FLOWERS.—Let any one who wishes to preserve flowers to look like new, take paraffin of the best quality and melt it in a tin cup set in hot water, which may be kept boiling around it so as to keep the paraffin in a liquid state. Into this thin and transparent mass dip the blossoms; or, if more convenient, brush them quickly with a small brush so as to give them a very thin coat that will cover every part of each petal. This forms a casing about them that entirely excludes the air and prevents their withering. The transparency of the material renders this coating almost if not quite invisible, so that the flowers present a perfectly natural appearance. Green leaves, if preserved in this way, must be coated with paraffin prepared with the addition of green powder paint. Chrome-green is best, lightened to any tint required by adding chrome-yellow.

L. P. L.

"COR. CLASS.—1. Can you give me some hints for backgrounds in painting photographs in water-colors? 2. How to mix the colors?"

"AMATEUR."

"COR. CLASS.—How are glass positives tinted? I should like directions for the work."

"MARY M."

"COR. CLASS.—Will you please tell me the principal stitches used in embroidery? How tent-stitch and satin-stitch are made? Why called tent-stitch? Can ferns be bleached in their *natural state*: that is, after pressing them? What is the best method for bleaching them?"

"REBA RAYMOND."

"HANOVER."

"COR. CLASS.—Can you inform me how to stretch and varnish chromos and engravings?"

"NEW SUBSCRIBER."

"COR. CLASS.—Tell me, also, how to make water-colors *effective* on black paper panels? I have tried, but the color sinks as fast as put on."

"A. M."

"COR. CLASS.—Will some member of the Class give me the method of gilding horse-shoes?"

"Mrs. J. E. N."



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"PLEASE," says Jennie, running in some minutes after the class had assembled and exchanged greetings. "Please postpone graver matters and let me tell all I know about housekeeping. It will only take a few moments."

"I question that," I reply, smiling at her eagerness; "you have developed such a talent for the art and have had so much experience lately, that I think it would take hours instead of minutes to tell all you know about it. However, we shall be glad to hear what you have to say, no matter how long it takes."

"Oh, I don't really mean to tell you all I know, or all I have learned, I ought to say since I have been in the class, for in the first place you would all be bored to death, and in the second place any of the other girls could tell the same thing far better than I could. But I have been off in the country spending a fortnight with grandma, and I'm just boiling over with items. They are all good but they won't keep, that's why I'm in such a hurry to inflict them upon you."

"How queer you are, Jennie," says Miss Kitty, with a very languid and elegant appearance of surprise, "who ever heard of items getting spoiled, and how in the world can you get up so much enthusiasm about such a stupid subject as housekeeping?"

"I suppose I am enthusiastic, if you call it so, because I am stupid enough to like it, now that I have had a little practice," says Jennie. "But of course I don't mean that my items would turn sour, or curdle, or get mouldy, I only mean I can't keep them long because I have such a splendid forgettery and such a poor memory."

"Do as I do," advises Miss Lucy Little, holding up her note-book, "and write everything down."

"That's a good idea," assents Jennie, "I only wish I had one to write it down in before I forget it."

"Well, before you *do* forget what you were going to tell us, won't you please to give us the benefit of your new experience," say I, feeling sure that in spite of her nonsense she could tell us something worth hearing.

"Thank you for being so willing to listen," Jennie answers, spreading out her hands. "Now there's an item I learned from grandma on each of those finger-tips, and I will see if I can make them drip off in regular order."

"I don't see them," says Sophie Mapes, laughing.

"Neither do I," continues Jennie; "I wish I did, but I counted the things I wanted to remember on the ends of my fingers every night. There's no danger of my forgetting how many items there were, because I used up all my fingers and both my thumbs, but I am not so sure of remembering what they were."

"Suppose you had had over ten items," says Sophie, "how would your system of digital mnemotechny answer then?"

"Whew," utters Jennie, fanning herself violently, "what a stupendous word, and there's no use looking in the dictionary for it either, for I know you made it up yourself just as you used to do at school. You don't forget your old tricks if you are a grown-up young lady."

"Never mind the big word," says Miss Little,

holding her pencil expectantly over her open note-book, "but give us the item at the end of your forefinger."

"Very well," pursues Jennie, striving to look business-like, "that is grandma's way of cleaning marble-topped furniture. She had some tops that were rather badly stained, but after she had cleaned them they looked very nice again. It isn't a thing to be done in a minute for you have to mix up a paste of lime that has not been slaked, and lye. Then you put it on the marble instanter with a whitewash brush, and let it stay two or three days. I think you might whiten marble busts or statuettes that way, but grandma doesn't indulge very largely in works of art, so she couldn't say whether it would answer or not."

"A very acceptable item," I say approvingly. "What next?"

"The next is a way to get the rust off of steel knife blades. Put sweet oil on the rusty places, and leave it on for two days, then take a lump of lime and rub the rust till it vanishes."

"Our knives are all silver," says Miss Kitty.

"Our carving knives are steel, I am happy to state, as I sometimes have to carve," says Jennie with an innocent little glance at Miss Kitty which makes the latter wish she had said nothing. Now my ring finger reminds me of grandma's good luck in taking tea stains out of her table-cloths. She puts the cloth over the fire in a kettle of cold water, first rubbing the spots with good Castile soap every few minutes till the water is too hot, she rubs more soap on the spots. After the water boils up once she has the cloth taken out and washed and rinsed after the usual method. For these stains she uses Javelle water, for you can buy it at the druggists all prepared, and I think they give you directions how to use it."

"We make our own," remarks Miss Nellie Greene.

"Do you, indeed?" say I. "I should like very much to know how it is made."

"I will bring the recipe with pleasure the next time I come," replies Nellie.

"My little finger," continues Jennie, "recalls, as befits its insignificant relative proportions, a very tiny item, *i. e.*, my grandmother's perpetual spring practice of sticking sprigs of green peppermint into her pantry shelves every day or two, not at all for purposes of garniture, but to warn off ants who do not enjoy its odors so much as Sam Stick did when he perfumed his hair oil with it."

"That is a new idea to me," I say, "and a very easy remedy for an ant-infested closet."

"Now I'll tell you," resumes Jennie what to do if you get kerosene oil on your carpets. So many people use student lamps now even in town that it is quite a common accident. Cover the oil spot with meal, Indian meal I suppose, and change it, the meal I mean, as often as it grows oily; after a while it will take up all the oil, and the carpet will be clean again. Another item that I dare say no one here will care for is about taking spots from hair cloth furniture."

"Let us have it by all means," I say. "There are a good many time-honored hair-cloth sofas and rocking-chairs in upper rooms even yet, and if there is a way to keep them unspotted their owners ought to know it."

"It is simple enough," replies Jennie; "just anoint the spots freely with benzine, and they'll take themselves off. It was my lot to be at grandma's in house-cleaning time, so I have a point on polishing up black walnut furniture which may be worth more than the other item, as that kind of furniture is not obsolete yet, notwithstanding the revival of mahogany. The polish is made of a gill of raw oil, linseed I think, a tablespoonful of vinegar, and one of muriatic acid. When it is all mixed and bottled it may be rubbed on the wood with much groaning and a shoving

noise made by drawing the air through the teeth."

"What on earth," interrupts Miss Little, can a shoving noise have to do with polishing furniture?"

"I'm sure I don't know," says Jennie soberly; "but grandma's stableman did it faithfully through two afternoons' steady attention to her chairs and sofas on the lawn. My next item was one I put my finger on expressly for mamma, because I have heard her protest that everything that was kept all night in a refrigerator had an unpleasant taste. To prevent this, keep a large piece of charcoal on each shelf, and renew it occasionally. Another thing that mamma was pleased to learn was grandma's plan for removing claret stains, for we have had some nice tablecloths disfigured in that way. After the stain has been washed I believe there is no way of doing much with it, but if the spots are wet with lemon juice before going into the wash they will come out readily."

"Now then," continues Jennie meditatively, "I have given you nine items such as they are, but I know that isn't all because I have eight fingers and two thumbs like everybody else but Anne Boleyn, and there ought to be ten things to report. One of my thumbs has certainly played me false, and failed to remind me of what I was to say."

"An argument in favor of a note book," I say. "Perhaps you will remember later what your tenth item was, and give it to us when we meet again. We owe you a vote of thanks for our entertainment, and shall not be willing to entirely lose the missing item."

Chromos and Hand-Organs.

BY MARGARET B. HARVEY.

No, I don't like them. Nothing can ever make me love a travesty of anything noble. A cheap copy of Raphael's Madonna del Sedia, or tin-pan version of Der Wachtel Rhine are utterly powerless to excite within me a particle of enthusiasm or elevate me in the least.

So say I in the pride of intellect and culture forthwith. But would I have said it ten years ago, before I had studied art, before I had frequented picture-galleries and pored over collections of engravings, before I began to dabble in oils and water-colors? Or before I had sought to unravel the mysteries of operas and oratorios; before I had listened to ravishing sounds evoked by masters; before I had found the ivory keys answer, in thrilling voices, to my touch. True, ten years ago I was a child, but many, very many, never grow beyond the mental development of a child.

So, I have come to the conclusion that because you, my brother and sister, and I, who have had opportunities and made the best of them, know a little more of art and music than some of our fellow-creatures, that is no reason why we should despise altogether what they can love and appreciate. The mass of mankind, let us try and remember, are still children in intellect and taste. The college dare not sneer at the primary school, for the reason that, though the great majority never get beyond the latter, the former could not exist without it.

These thoughts were especially impressed upon my mind one day last week while out walking with a younger sister. Suddenly upon our ears fell the wondrous strains of the Miserere from Il Trovatore, almost unearthly in its passionate intensity. Heads bobbed at the windows, children, until quite a number of auditors were visible—when,

what a shock I experienced to discover whence these enchanting measures came.

"Oh!" I gasped, "Il Trovatore on a hand-organ!"

"Ah!" answered my sister, wiser than I, "Look at those women and children! Plenty of people would never hear any music at all were it not for hand-organs."

"You're right," I said, and listened. Every note in the sublime wail was familiar to me, and I was forced to confess that, even though on a machine moved by a crank, it was exquisitely rendered. Tears came to my eyes, just as they had done often times before at the bidding of the piano, the orchestra, and the voice. Ah, even those dirty little ragamuffins must have been made better for hearing this agonized prayer, even though they understood it not.

Would they not be better, too, I mused, for seeing Murillo's Madonna, even through the medium of a fifty-cent chromo? Yes, for otherwise, perhaps, not one of them all would ever know that such a celestial face has beamed upon our dark world and dispelled some of its gloom.

Yes, there is a true place for these humble accessories—no longer will I dare call them parodies—of art divine. Blocks and primers possess no attractions for the matured scholar; but for the eager little one—ah! So do not despair because you are poor. Brighten the walls of your nursery, then, with dashes of color. Tell your boy that the sweet lady and the dear little baby represent Mary and the infant Jesus, whom we all love; and that they were painted many years ago by a great man named Raphael. What a flood of fresh, new ideas come pouring into his tender mind! Do you suppose he will not pause in front of the picture-store to see if the familiar forms adorn the window? Will he not eagerly scan all the prints and engravings that come in his way? And will he not long to know who Raphael was, and when he lived, and what else he painted, and whether there were any other artists like him?

Or call him to the window when a dark Italian and his usual crowd of followers appear in the street. Don't call his attention especially to the antics of the monkey, but urge him to listen, and tell him that the man is grinding out Mendelssohn's Spring Song. Perhaps before evening you will hear him whistling it along the entry. A week later he goes home with one of his school friends, whose mama kindly offers to play for him. How earnestly, how intelligently he asks for the Spring Song. As he listens, he cannot help noticing how much sweeter it sounds on the piano than on the street-organ. The lady smiles at his ardor, and asks him what he knows of Mendelssohn. Nothing but the Spring Song. Well, here is his tender confidence—his grand consolation—his triumphant wedding march. Mendelssohn himself was one of the most cultured of gentlemen, the truest of friends, and the sweetest of Christians of whom we have any record.

Ah, what treasures of heart and mind may not be your boy's, in future years, from such simple beginnings? His intelligent culture may act as a mighty barrier against vice, may supply a strong incentive toward his getting on in the world, and may be a potent cause for his dispensing substantial good to those less fortunate than himself, as well as adding materially to his personal happiness.

He won't care then for chromos and hand-organs any more than the young mother, rejoicing over her developing angels, cares for the rag doll of her departed childhood. But she knows that, had it not been for that same now-despised dolly, she very probably would not have learned the dainty stitching so needful to her now. Similarly does the refined gentleman of artistic tastes know what he owes to chromos and hand-organs.

Women of Yesterday and To-day.

MADAME DE REMUSAT.

BY M. E. SANGSTER.

THE portrait of Madame de Rémusat, as sketched by herself, in her inimitable memoirs, is scarcely a flattering one. Saint Beuve declares her to have been singularly charming, possessing much beauty of face and form, and retaining, amid the glare and glitter of court, the dignified simplicity of a lady who belonged by birth and breeding to the old nobility. Her countenance was mobile, and the expressions of her mood chased each other over it as she talked. She possessed the talent of conversation to a degree rare even among French women, who are the natural queens of the salon. In all the brilliant array, who composed the gay and splendid throng which Bonaparte gathered around him, she was conspicuous for this, that she was the woman with whom both Talleyrand and Napoleon liked best to talk. The farthest possible removed from coquetry, her mind, grave and acute, and trained by a wise and thoughtful education, could not occupy itself alone with trifles. She had her own opinions and convictions, and although she could impose on herself the seal of a discreet silence, she refused assent to those measures and actions which outraged her judgment, and shocked her conscience. Her revelation of the inside life of the emperor and his family has a certain quality of minute and severe fidelity which is terrible. They pass before us in review, these mean, spiteful, scuffling Bonapartes, all their petty malice, their insane strife for vulgar honors, and their mean and hateful jealousies thrown upon the camera in strong relief. Each appears worse than the other, and the conqueror of Italy, magnificent as was his genius, seems oddly composed of the mingled ingredients of Lucifer, Belial, and Mammon. Surely never husband so systematically and cruelly trampled on the most sacred rights of his wife, adding insult to injury, in requiring her to approve of his evil deeds, as well as to condone them. Surely never man so lightly esteemed woman, or person, in the position of gentleman, so constantly and disdainfully thrust ladies aside in the exercise of their prerogatives, so rudely asserted his right to be a savage, and so transparently paraded his egotism and selfishness in the eyes of his followers. If there were those of us who were dazzled by the grandeur of the man's tremendous success, and his comet-like progress over his enemies, and up to the heights of his ambition, our eyes are opened. Claire de Rémusat, with her bright eyes, her keen insight, and her merciless pen, has told what she saw, and in what she lived, and the fine gold turns out to be tinsel, the beautiful scenery, mere stage property, and the actors, the pitiable puppets of vanity and greed.

Born of a good family, taught by a wise mother, and married early to a man who, though twice her age, satisfied her heart, she enjoyed exceptional advantages from her cradle for becoming, what the most delightful of French critics calls, "an unsuspected author." He says, of this class, that "for her own behoof, solely and at first without definite aim, the lady composes a romance, or arranges her reminiscences, or even merely writes to her absent friends, letters which are a trifle long, and none too formal. But fifty years hence, when the rest of us are all dead, when the professional littérateur, who was the rage in his day, no longer finds readers, and his thirty heavy old-fashioned volumes lie buried in funereal catalogues, the modest, intelligent woman will be studied and enjoyed almost as much as by us, her contemporaries." This has been proved a true prophecy in the case of Madame de Rémusat.



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"WHAT do you think this is?" I say, holding the object in my hand in view of the girls.

"Candor compels me to answer," says Jennie, "that I think it looks like a musty and disreputable old copy-book."

"It is musty and old," I admit, "but a much valued relic, being Mrs. James Madison's manuscript receipt book, a collection of recipes and housekeeping notes in her own handwriting."

"Do you mean Lady Madison, the President's wife?" asks Miss Kitty.

"Yes, so they called her sometimes, just as Martha Washington used to be called Lady Washington, but the title was simply one of courtesy in both instances."

"I have always heard," says Miss Kitty, "that Mrs. Madison was the most elegant hostess who ever presided in the White House; but how did her book come into your hands?"

"I will tell you all about that another time," I answer; "just now I want to impress it upon your minds, that with all her elegance, cultivation and refinement, the writer of this MS. did not think it beneath her dignity to take a deep interest in household matters, and some of the dates show that even while she held the position of the first lady in the land, she was not forgetful of the things that properly come under a good housekeeper's notice. Here, for instance, is a recipe for rout-cakes, and here on the same leaf, a new method for polishing brass handles, both entries being made in the second year of her husband's term of office—I was going to say of his reign, but that is a word this country does not recognize in that connection."

"I should like to read the cooking receipts," says Sophie Mapes, "and see if they ate the same sort of things in old times that we do now."

"I do not see much difference, except in the cakes," I say. "They used apparently twice as many eggs, and much more butter than we do, and the rising element, as represented by baking powder and kindred compounds, is entirely absent from these receipts."

"Do you mean to say they didn't even use soda and cream of tartar?" asks Jennie.

"There is but one receipt in the book, I think, where anything of the kind is used, and that is for a composition with the unattractive name of saleratus cake."

"How did they get their cake light, I wonder?" Jennie asks, turning over the leaves of the old MS. "Oh, I see," she continues, answering her own question, "they used yeast in some of them, and plenty of whites of eggs in others. Just listen to this: 'To make a sponge cake, take eighteen eggs, and separate the whites from the yolks.' Now, was such extravagance ever known of? and yet my father perpetually persists in asserting that the country is coming to ruin, because there is no economy practiced nowadays. Why, eighteen eggs would make four bakings and a half of my cup cake, and I verily believe it is as good as Lady Madison's sponge cake."

"Look at the formula for custard on the next leaf," I say, and Jennie attempts to read it aloud, but stops to comment with great indignation on the recorded fact that eight eggs and a cup of thick cream were considered the proper addition to make to a quart of milk.

"We cook with positive parsimony nowadays,

compared to those times," says Sophie Mapes. "I never put more than four eggs to a quart of milk, when I make a custard, and as for cream, if I had any, I should save it to eat with peaches."

"Or pour it over the custard when it is served," I suggest.

"Is it an improvement?" asks Lucy Little.

"Try it," I answer impressively; "but butter the dish you bake the custard in, and turn it out like blanc mange when it is cold. We always have ours treated in that way, and it makes a much better appearance than served in the dish like a pudding. But it must be thoroughly cooked, and not over-done either, or the whey will form. If you have not cream for a dressing, a little melted jelly or any preserved small fruit will do very well to put around the form of custard."

"There," exclaims Jennie, who still continued to pore over the yellow time-stained leaves of the old book, "I have found the evidence I needed to convince me that the pernicious amount of butter and eggs our forefathers used corrupted the integrity of their digestions, just the same as if they had been frivolous modern people; for here, right in among the buttery dainties, is a recipe for 'Dyspepsy Bread.' The name doesn't make my mouth water, and perhaps it is just as well, for I couldn't make it if I tried."

"Why not?"

"Because the very first direction is to make a hole in your flour, and pour in your barm," now, even if I had intellect enough to make a hole in my flour, I haven't any barm to pour in, neither am I likely to have any, for I haven't the slightest idea what it is."

"I suppose it means some kind of yeast," I say. "Now, look at the last leaves of the book, and you will find some items that will interest us."

"To mend broken china," is that one?" says Jennie, turning the leaves and reading: "If it has not been washed, smear the edges with the skin of white paint, and press them together, leave to dry, and in time they will adhere so that no effort will disconnect them."

"I wonder if that's any good," says Nellie Greene. "I suppose the skin is the stuff that dries on top of the paint-pot. I've often seen it, a sort of scum."

"Here is another good idea," says Jennie. "To join marbles; if a vase or statue be broken, join the parts with a cement made of plaster of Paris, white of egg, and gum melted in alcohol."

"What kind of gum does she mean, do you suppose?" inquires Miss Kitty.

"Gum-arabic, I should say," replies Jennie, promptly. "It is highly improbable that chewing gum was known of in those days of intellect and perfect propriety. But listen, I think I have found the article that will delight your hearts. 'To wash blankets.' I am happy, after the schooling you have given me, madam (addressing herself pointedly to me), and the practice I have had in the summer and winter care of bedclothes, it charms me to know that I had a congenial spirit in the celebrated and dignified writer of this MS. Across the lapse of years I shake hands with my Lady Madison."

With much amusement at her irresistibly absurd manner, I secure the book and read aloud to the girls one of the proofs in her own handwriting of the housewifely character of the justly celebrated wife of our fourth president. There is nothing novel about her method, but it is, perhaps, as good now as then, and although I hope such severely laborious work as washing blankets will not fall to the lot of any of the young people who listen to me, it is well, were it only to be able to direct others, that they should know how it is done, and, as Jennie pertinently observes, "One is never sorry for what one has learned, unless there is some harm in it."

"Fill a water-tight cask or barrel half full of strong suds hotter than the hand can bear. Put in this one blanket and pound it with a heavy beetle, then replace the suds with some still hotter but of less strength, and pound the blanket again for many minutes. Pour away the suds, or save it for the first washing of another blanket, and rinse in two fair waters. Wring the blanket out, stretch it very evenly from the four corners, and hang it upon a line where sun and wind may reach it. Blankets must always be washed singly, and the process being laborious in consequence of their great weight, it is more suitable that men be employed for the beetling and wringing, as their arms have greater strength than women's."

"A long and sunny day should be chosen to wash blankets as their thickness keeps them long in drying. Twice or thrice while they hang over the line the pulling and stretching should be repeated, lest in drying they full in the center and are waved upon the edges. It is the habit with some housewives to attempt to restore the fleeciness by combing the surface when the blanket is dry, but such attempts have not in my observation been successful."

"I especially like the suggestion," I say, laying down the book, "of having a man do the hard work of washing blankets, for either from inability or disinclination, the woman who came to wash mine this summer, failed to take out the dirt, in fact washed it in, as another washwoman expressed it, in such a manner that they looked worse than before they were washed. Possibly the fault was more in the rinsing than in the washing. Another time I shall oversee the work myself, as I have no doubt Mrs. Madison did from her familiarity with the process."

"I wonder if this book was written with a view to publication?" asks Miss Little.

"No, I think not."

"Then I wonder why she wrote out such things as that. I never write down anything but receipts for making things to eat."

"Perhaps she made the collection as a guide for some friend of less experience than herself," I say, "or perhaps she was one of those well regulated and methodical persons who will not subject themselves to the risk of a treacherous memory failing them at the right moment, but commit everything that they wish to remember to the safe guardianship of pen and ink."

A High-Low Dissertation.

BY MARGARET B. HARVEY.

ONCE upon a time there was a man who started out to build a house (perhaps there were a great many men who did the same thing, but I am talking of one in particular, an example of a class.) He was poor, and sensible enough to acknowledge it—still, strange to say, he scarcely contemplated the possibility of his ever being any better off—so he didn't see the propriety of putting himself in readiness for any finer house than the one that he was able for at the present moment.

The plan of his house was somewhat peculiar, though he himself did not think so. Close to his boundary line on every side he built his solid foundation wall, and then laid down his first floor. Having accomplished this, he found, as he intended and expected he should, his means nearly exhausted. With the remainder thereof he purchased a large canvas tent, set it upon his massive groundwork, and then considered his house complete. The superstructure gave him shelter—what more could a palace have done? And so, because he had a substantial floor beneath, a flimsy roof above, he was content, being struck by no sense whatever of incongruity.



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

"I WOULD like to ask a question," announces Miss Annie Wells, in her rather precise manner, "but I hardly expect to receive a satisfactory answer."

"Is that a fair conclusion?" I inquire.

"Oh, I don't mean to imply that your answers are not even more than satisfactory," explains Annie, "but I mean I think I shall ask an impossibility."

"If it is a riddle, ask me," murmurs Jennie, while I beg the young lady to tell us her difficulty.

"It is less than a year," she began, "since we had our sitting-room repapered with a lovely paper in imitation of robin's-egg blue Pompeian tiles. Everybody admired it, and it has been such a comfort to me and me, for all the other rooms have such old-fashioned, dreary papers on the walls that it is a real relief to have one pretty room to go into and forget the rest."

"Surely nothing has happened to your pretty wall-paper?" I say, sympathetically. "I hope not, for I particularly admired it when I called at your house, and almost envied you for having it."

"Yes, indeed, something has happened to it," answers Miss Wells. "We have had a visit from a friend, who brought her two little children, and the good-for-nothing little things have bread-and-buttered our new paper high and low, or, rather, low, for they could not reach very high, but that hasn't made much difference, for their father came and spent Sunday, and he oils his hair, and tips back in his chair, and there are two ugly dark spots to mark the places he selected to rest his head on, and keep us from forgetting him."

"*A la Mr. Jellaby*," suggests Jennie, but Miss Wells doesn't read Dickens, so fails to see the parallel.

"What very annoying visitors," I say. "Deliver me from my friends. But I am not sure that there is no way to restore your paper. I suppose that is the question you were about to ask?"

"Do you really think anything can be done?" says Miss Wells in surprise. "I was going to ask if there could be, but it seemed hopeless."

"I really think the marks of the small, buttery fingers can be taken out," I say, hopefully, "but I am less sanguine about the oily impression of your friend's classic head. Still, you can try; what I have to suggest will at least make the spots no worse."

"I will try anything you say," says the young lady, cheerfully.

"My remedy is simple, but takes a little patience," I continue. "I have seen the plan tried with such success that I asked the friend who tried it to write down the method for me, for one is so apt to forget the details. Take a loaf of bread, forty-eight hours old—get the round baker's loaf that is called pan bread, and has crust all around. Cut it into quarters and halve the quarters, unless the loaf is very small. Take hold of a piece by the crust, and rub the grease spot with the crumb or soft part. Rub lightly and always one way: downward will be the most convenient. Keep cutting away the bread as it gets dirty, and take a fresh piece whenever the crust is reached. You may have to use several pieces on each spot, but if the strokes are light and even, and never taken across, the paper will not be defaced, and I hope you will find that the spots have nearly, if

not quite, disappeared. Undoubtedly you would be more certain of success if the application had been made as soon as the spots were discovered. but I hope it is not yet too late."

"I should like to ask," remarks Miss Lucy Little, "what kind of care is required to keep matting in order. It is a new idea for us to have any, but mother writes me that she has been having it put down in one of the bedrooms."

"It requires very little care," I answer, "except to use a soft rather than a hard broom to sweep it with; and if it gets stained or dirty, clean it with a cloth dipped in salt water, and wipe it dry with a soft towel. The salt preserves the color of the matting."

"Salt and water," I proceed, "is also an excellent thing to clean cane-seated chairs with. Use a great deal so that the cane will be thoroughly saturated, and scrub with a brush if the seat is very dirty. Turn the chair upside down, so you can get at the unvarnished side of the cane, as the varnish will resist water."

"What is the object of soaking it?" asks Miss Little.

"To shrink the cane," I answer; "wipe it and stand the chair in the sun to dry, and the seat will tighten up and be as firm as when it was bought, unless some of the strands are broken."

"That is a good thing to know," says Sophie Mapes, "for really cane seats do sag lamentably."

"Now," says Jennie, "would any one like me to mention a useful fact that is apropos to nothing, but just happened to pop into my head?"

"I dare say we should all like to hear it," I reply, "especially if it is one of your grandmother's items. I regard most of her ideas as eminently valuable, for she is a practical housekeeper of such long experience."

"Yes, this is one of grandma's notions, as she calls them. You must know, the dear old body is awfully afraid of sleeping in damp sheets."

"I agree with her fully there," I assent.

"She says," pursues Jennie, "that she has heard of three people who have come to their deaths, and one who is all curled up with chronic rheumatism, in consequence of sleeping in damp beds, so she is determined not to suffer a similar fate, and whenever she occupies any bed besides her own she tests its dryness herself."

"How does she do it? by putting her hand in between the sheets?"

"No; she says you can't rely on the feeling. She is very fussy when she comes to see us, and has a hot flatiron, as we have no warming-pan, put into the bed before she retires, and as soon as it is taken out she sticks in a goblet, and she says there will be vapor condensed upon the sides of it unless the sheets are quite dry. Often in traveling, she says she has found beds damp enough to form large drops in the glass. She says, too, that beds that have been made up a long time gather dampness, especially if the sheets are linen."

"Yes, I often feel afraid of spare beds," I say, remembering some past experiences.

"Really," remarks Miss Kitty, "your grandmother must be a very original and ingenious old lady."

"Oh! she didn't invent the plan I have just told you of," says Jennie. "I suppose she must have read it in some philosophy; it sounds like one of the 'interesting experiments' in 'Young Student's Recreations,' or some such book."

"But what does she do," asks Miss Kitty, "if her interesting experiment develops the fact of there being a large amount of dampness in the bed?"

"Puts in flatirons, or hot bottles enough to dry it, I suppose," says Jennie. "But I can assure you she is quite capable of sitting up all night, if her bed was not exactly to her satisfac-

tion. She believes in warming-pans, and says she can't see why they ever went out of fashion."

"They belonged to the time of cold bed-rooms and unheated halls," says I. "Modern houses are so equable in temperature and so comfortable in every way that we do not have much need of the old-fashioned appliances, that were necessary to make life tolerable in those days."

Care of the Eyes.

THE following paper read before the Boston Society for Medical Improvement is reproduced from the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*. The subject is of such vital importance, so many parents are indifferent from ignorance of the whole matter, until their attention is suddenly called to it by irremediable injuries inflicted upon their own children, that we offer no apology for presenting it entire:

ON THE PREVENTION OF NEAR-SIGHT IN THE YOUNG.

BY HASKET DERBY, M.D.

A BOY or girl is observed by the teacher, during the early years of school life, to see maps and drawings on the blackboard, across the room, less readily than the other scholars. After a time the parents' notice may be called to the fact, and in a small number of cases the child is brought to the surgeon. Expressions of incredulity are subsequently exchanged for those of astonishment when it is demonstrated to the parents that the child cannot see the largest letter of the test-card across the room, and that his farthest point of accurate vision is perhaps within twelve inches of his eyes. He has, without the knowledge of his family, become near-sighted. A difficulty has been fastened upon him that will act to his serious disadvantage through life, and the tendency to which he may transmit to his children. Though its progress may be modified by following suitable advice, it is now no longer capable of removal. Such cases occur with great frequency.

According to the best attainable statistics, there is found in the United States only about one-third as much near-sight as is met with in Europe. And yet its prevalence in New England may be estimated from the fact that one person in ten who consults the ophthalmic surgeon does so on account of this very difficulty.

That near-sightedness is always a serious disadvantage to its possessor, that such an eye is in fact a diseased eye, that the affection is one that tends between certain ages to increase, and that exceptional increase may with advancing years lead to blindness, are facts so often insisted on as to have become familiar to all who take an interest in this subject. Few states of the eye have been more accurately studied. The statistics collected have reached the limit of usefulness. The age at which myopia is likely to begin, the period of life during which it generally increases, the influence of civilization and education on its development, are all satisfactorily known. The hopelessness of its cure is universally conceded. But in my opinion, far too little study has been bestowed on the possibility of its prevention. It is to this branch of the subject that I briefly invite attention.

The first question that arises, then, is as to whether prevention is possible. In answering this, two facts are to be taken into consideration: *First*, that near-sight is seldom, if ever, congenital, though a tendency to its development may undoubtedly be inherited. *Secondly*, that it is usually a product of civilization. This view receives support from those who have had the opportunity of examining the eyes of savage tribes. Furnari,



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

(Continued from page 501.)

"THERE is one thing that makes me very indignant," says Miss Jennie, with a good deal of spirit, as she throws down the paper she has been looking over, while the rest of the class indulge in a little friendly chatter.

"You are fortunate if there is only one thing," observes Sophie Mapes, "for I can think of several sources of indignation myself."

"Oh, dear, yes!" says Jennie, "there's quantities of things I get excited about, but I am especially enraged when men say such things as this,—now listen, please, while I read a paragraph from an editorial in this paper:—'The time is at hand which the delighted housewife hails with rapture as the season for fall house-cleaning. Marthas of our generation are busy with mop, broom, and scrubbing-brush, renovating and restoring and getting rid of the accumulated dust and dirt of the past half year. Now the chimney-sweep's cry is music to the feminine ear, and the noise of the carpet-beaters lulls her soul to repose.'

"Isn't that a vile slander?" she continues, throwing down the paper. "That is the kind of thing that puts me in a rage. The idea of intimating that women enjoy house-cleaning, and that is just the way they all talk. Instead of sympathizing and being sorry that we have the horrid cleaning to attend to, they pretend to think that we revel in it, and only do it to torment them."

"I really think," I say, laughing at the vigorous gestures with which Jennie emphasized her sentiments, "that most men do take rather an unfair view of the disagreeable necessity for annual and semi-annual house-cleaning. But I think housekeepers make it more of a bugbear than it need to be."

"Well, I hate the whole miserable business," sighs Jennie, "and if you know of a way to lighten it, I wish you'd instruct us in it."

"Hating it will surely not make it easier," say I.

"I suppose," suggested Sophie Mapes, "that a house that is kept clean will not have to be torn to pieces and scoured every six months."

"Quite true," I say; "there is a striking difference in the labor of cleaning a well-kept house and a neglected one. City houses, however, that are wholly or even partially closed during the summer, and perhaps the fall, need a thorough renovation before the usual routine of family life begins again. But the grand upheaval need not take place all at once; indeed there need not be any upheaval at all, but the process can be gradually and quietly carried on without disturbance to any of the home circle except those immediately concerned in the work."

"And this year that means me, at our house," says Jennie ruefully.

"It always means me," says Sophie, "but I am so used to it that I don't mind it now. My mother has been sick so long that I am beginning to feel quite old and experienced in household affairs."

"Well, I should think," says Miss Kitty, "that bringing over the obelisk and setting it up again, was a trifling feat in comparison with cleaning a house from top to bottom."

"Either would be difficult for a person who was

ignorant of the way to go to work to accomplish the object."

"I supposed," says Jennie, "that the proper way to clean house was to pull up all the carpets, open all the windows, so people could catch cold, set pails of soapy water in convenient places to trip folks up, and do everything one possibly could to make everybody generally and particularly miserable."

"If many women share your views," I say, "I am not surprised that men consider it an institution devised for their discomfort. No, if you want to do the thing in the best way, clean one room in a day, beginning in the morning, so the floor will be dry enough to allow of replacing the carpet in the afternoon. If you hire a woman by the day, of course you will want to keep her employed all the time, so the best way in that case will be to let her clean each day, first one of the rooms in constant use, and later in the day one that can be left carpetless over night without particular inconvenience. Or else, let her devote afternoons to cleaning the woodwork of rooms where the carpets are not to be taken up and shaken."

"Don't all carpets have to be taken up once a year?" asks a new member.

"No, heavy brussels, velvet, and similar carpets, in rooms that are not used all day long, can be left on the floor for several years with no other cleaning than conscientious sweeping will afford. I do not like to hear any one boast of great dispatch in cleaning house, for there are so many small details to attend to, that haste implies a lack of thoroughness. Make haste slowly, and see, as you go, that nothing is neglected. Look after the closets most particularly, take note of the contents, and after the shelves are washed and dried, restore each article to its place in perfect order. Take the opportunity to examine the wearing apparel laid away from the previous season, and determine what disposition to make of it. Select such articles as you decide to give away, and put them aside. Do not give a pile of things away indiscriminately, simply to get them out of the way (there is no real charity in such giving), but if you do not know, you ask some friend to tell you where worthy and destitute objects for your benevolence can be found."

"There's nothing worth giving away in our house," says one of the girls, whose mother is of necessity an admirable economist. "By the time the grown-up clothes have been cut down two or three times, to suit various sizes of children, they reach the last gasp and are ready for the ragbag."

"Don't put them there," say I. "I am quite certain that the clothes your little sisters cast off would be very useful to some of the destitute little children the city is full of. Try taking them to some of the juvenile asylums, or even the mission schools, and you will find your donation joyfully welcomed by the ladies in charge."

"We have a garret full of old clothes," says elegant Miss Kitty, "but I shouldn't want to go around like a peddler seeking for some one to take them off my hands."

"You have an aunt in Saint ———'s Church," say I; "just tell her that you are willing to make a benevolent disposition of some clothing, and she will take all trouble off your hands."

"I never thought of that," says Miss Kitty.

I feel like making a few apposite remarks on the evil that is wrought from want of thought, but refrain, and return to the original subject with the statement that the cellar is a much-neglected, but quite important part of the house.

"I never go down cellar," says Jennie. "I'm afraid to."

"Afraid of ghosts, or burglars?" I ask, as we all laugh at her childish confession.

"I don't know what I'm afraid of, but I always have dreaded cellars; they are so dark and poky."

"I think that is an old-fashioned idea you had better get rid of as soon as you can," I say, "for it is very necessary for a housekeeper to go into the cellar often enough to see that it is kept in a proper state."

"What do you call a proper state?" asks Nellie Greene.

"A state of dryness and cleanliness," I promptly answer. "In these malaria-haunted times it is of the highest importance that there is neither dampness nor dirt to pollute the air that naturally rises, as either bad or good air will, and permeates the house. By dirt I do not mean dust, although that is not desirable, but dried, decayed, or forgotten vegetables, or any article of food. Quite often a few potatoes will be left unnoticed in the bottom of a barrel; cabbage leaves, celery tops, and various other things are also too often carelessly allowed to lie in the dark corners, and it is not too much to say that the emanations from a small amount of decaying matter of the kind may cause serious sickness. Too great precautions cannot be taken to make the air we breathe as sweet and wholesome as possible. I remember reading a few years ago of a whole family of children being cured of malaria and general debility by the discovery, and consequent cleaning out, of a mass of dirty dish and floor-cloths that were hidden from sight in a dark sink-closet."

"I am a great believer in the sanitary virtues of whitewash," says Miss Lucy Little. "I don't know much about it myself, but I have heard my mother say that scrubbing brushes and whitewash kept off doctor's bills."

"Your mother's theory is a good one," I assent, "and I strongly advise whitewashing a cellar. It not only sweetens the place, after the rubbish we have been talking of is removed, but it lights up the dark corners so that there is less danger of their affording shelter to obnoxious matter in the future."

"What are you going to do if the cellar is damp?" asks one of the girls.

"Light a fire in the furnace, of course," says Jennie promptly.

"But our cellar has no furnace."

"In that case," I say, "the windows should be opened to let the air in for a short time every pleasant day. They are probably very small, but a good deal of air can enter if the covers are removed from the gratings."

"I wish I was not the slave of duty," says Jennie, with mock solemnity; "for now you have made me see that it is my business to inspect the cellar, I shall feel obliged to take my life in my hand and go snooping down those dreadful dark stairs every few days, smelling about like a cat to detect any vegetable deposits our present rather unreliable cook may have left there; I shall make papa buy me a pistol and a bull-dog, though, if I have to make many subterranean trips."

Western Homes.

CHARLIE'S AND MINE.

I DON'T know anything about Eastern homes. I was born in Iowa, lived two years in Illinois, and the rest of my life in Kansas. My travels have not extended outside those States. My father was rich, until his speculations resulted in respectable poverty, when I was sixteen.

I have taught school in the country and boarded in a log cabin of one room. When it was time to retire the "man of the house" obligingly had occasion to go out to the stable, until I was in bed. Then the light was extinguished, and I knew no more. And I have visited among the wealthiest and most distinguished people of the

Following Out the Text.

(See Oil Picture from a Painting by Mr. T. W. Wood.)



TOUCHINGLY beautiful and pathetically eloquent is the picture we present our readers this month, "Following Out the Text." In whose halls of memory gleams not just such a dear old face, replete with the tranquil beauty of a calm old age? Who can look into that serene face, glorified by age, even as the heavens are glorified by light, and not read the story of her life? Who can see the restful, waiting attitude, and not know that she is expecting, with patient hope and loving faith, the good angel who shall lead her beside the still waters and into the green pastures of immortal life?

Without her window the sun is lighting up the world with beauty, and throwing its gleams within her quiet room. Softly the beams fall upon her silver hair—old age's crown of glory—and glimmer with subdued beauty over her exquisitely neat figure. She sits with the precious Book on her lap—that granite volume which has been to her a tower of strength, and to which she goes in the first fresh hours of morning, to gather strength and comfort for the day. Some sacred text has touched a tender chord in her heart, and awakened the tones of memory. Musingly she lays down her spectacles. She seems to hear the tender voice of the love of her girlhood and the companion of her married life; the merry laugh of children falls upon her ear; the music that once filled her home floats up again from the shores of the happy past.

What if, in sailing down the tempestuous tide of life, she has lost some of her gems; she knows that in the day God makes up his jewels she shall find them again. Did she not instruct her children that the brightest words to inscribe upon the banner of life are God and Duty, that those are the inextinguishable beacons by which their footsteps could best be guided over the dangerous paths of the world? They rose up and called her blessed—not for that richest and purest treasure, that fine gold, a mother's love, but because she led them to the "gates ajar," and showed them the purer life that reigns beyond the stars.

One by one, she saw the dear ones who had gladdened her life pass from her loving sight; her earthly possessions melted away, like mist before the morning's rays. She mourned not as those without hope, for she knew that the gates of light can only be reached through the portals of death, and that there are better things to have and to hold than silver and gold and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

We cannot but feel, in looking at this wonderfully touching picture, that the conception is as exquisite as it is natural, and the execution beyond all praise. That beautiful old face, framed in the glory of its soft silvery hair, awakens memories sacred to the heart of

all humanity, and inspires the wish that our sun may set in just such serene beauty as this.

Most touchingly, most truly, has the artist, Mr. T. W. Wood, conveyed to us this lesson: that the sad minor notes of memory, when joined to the music of a living faith, make a melody that brings rest, and peace, and sweet content to the evening of a well-spent, even though a checkered life.



My Housekeeping Class.

BY MRS. M. C. HUNGERFORD.

So much time is always spent in what one of the class calls "How-de-doing," that it takes us a good while to get to business. To-day there is so much chattering that we quite forget what we have met for till Miss Kitty interrupts herself in a description of "the loveliest bric-a-brac" to exclaim, with quite a departure from her usual languid elegance, "Don't, please, let Jennie say 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' if I tell you that I have some hints on dish-washing to give."

"Oh! but I shall. I can't help it. I am suffering such agonies of astonishment that it will be utterly impossible for me to refrain," says Jennie so expressively that none of us can help laughing. Miss Kitty joins in the laugh, but colors, too, as if she hardly enjoyed the joke.

"We shall be glad of your hints," I hasten to say. "Are they suggested by your own observation?"

"Well, partly."

"Then I congratulate you on an awakened interest in at least one detail of housekeeping," I say. "I have feared that you were a little indifferent to the whole subject."

"Well, I don't consider it very interesting, I will confess," admits Miss Kitty; "but as we talk so much about it here, and Jennie and some of the other girls plunge into the matter so, I do naturally take a little more notice of the way things are done about the house."

"Even that is an improvement," I say, "but I am sorry you consider it necessary to acknowledge it in such an apologetic manner. It would be an odd thing to see a gentleman ashamed to own that he was interested in his own business; or, to make the case more parallel, how very much we should despise a young man who expected to follow his father's profession, yet labored to convince everybody that he was quite ignorant of every detail of the business. How is it that young women in nearly all ranks boast of their incapacity to do or direct the work which will in all probability be their life-long care?"

"Oh! dear, I wish I was a man," sighs Miss Barlow. "There are so many disagreeable things about a woman's life."

"I used to think men had the best time," I remark, "and wished I was one till the war broke out in 1861. Then I found I was cowardly enough to be very thankful that I was not obliged to offer myself for a target, as most of the young men did,

and I decided that man's lot contained some disagreeables as well as woman's."

"Yes," assents Jennie, "and it must be horrid to have to shave. After all, perhaps miseries are about equally divided, and it would be hard to choose, if a body had a chance, which persuasion to adopt."

"And as we cannot choose," I say, "we had better be contented, and play our own part as well as we can. Now, Kitty dear, we will give you the floor."

"Thanks," Miss Kitty says, "but I don't know after all that I have much to say that will interest any one. You know mamma has gone out to Chicago to see sister Bell, and her cousin Jane has come to keep house while she is away."

"Don't think I am meddling," I say, interrupting her, "but really I think you ought to have been able to keep house yourself without a stranger's assistance. But naturally you needed a friend with you for company, I suppose."

"Yes," says the young lady, coloring a little. "I should not like to stay alone with the servants, and cousin Jane likes to come to the city for a while. Last Sunday she let all the girls go out after dinner, thinking we should have only ourselves at tea; but lots of visitors came, and we had to work pretty hard. I wanted to leave the tea dishes for the girls to wash when they came home, but she said that would be mean, for they would have all their best clothes on, and be all tired out besides. She washed the dishes very much like that old lady we saw up the river, and I wanted to wipe them for her, but she wouldn't let me. 'Just watch me,' she said, 'and perhaps you'll learn something.'"

"And did you?" asks Jennie.

"Yes, I did. Cousin Jane found a large splint basket in the pantry, and she emptied the apples out of it, rinsed it out, and piled her dishes in it after she had washed them. The milk-pitcher, deep dishes, and other high things she put in the middle, and arranged the plates, saucers, and such things edgewise along the sides; then she stuck the spoons and forks upright between the dishes, and put the cups on their sides on top of the dishes in the middle. The basket was standing in the sink, and after she had put all the dishes in it she pushed it to the faucets and let the hot water run on the dishes to rinse them. That water didn't seem hot enough to please her, so she took a little there was boiling in the tea-kettle and poured it over the things, letting some go on every dish. Then, after a few minutes, she lifted the basket on to the table and took out the silver first and then the dishes, in nearly the reverse order in which she put them in. Most of them were quite dry, and shiny as they could be; some had just two or three drops of condensed steam that had to be wiped off, but it wasn't a minute's work. The silver looked splendidly—as bright as if it had been rubbed with something. Cousin Jane said it wouldn't have looked bright if it had laid in the dish-water a few minutes. She says at home she never has her silver washed with other dishes, but just plunged into a pan of soapy water and taken right out, and then rinsed in the basket with the other things. It never has to be cleaned with whiting or other stuff, but keeps bright all the time."

"Didn't Miss Polly rinse her dishes some such way?" asked one of the girls.

"I think she did," I answered, "but it is a long time since we saw her, and it is well to refresh our memories on such an important matter."

"I wish I had made the discovery earlier, that dish-wiping might be simplified," says Nellie Greene, "for all my life, till I came down to New York, was passed in wiping dishes. Aunt Ruth

used to wash them, and hand me each article dripping to be rubbed, rubbed, rubbed on a coarse towel till it was dry. In the country, you know, people often do a good deal if not all of their own work, and all the family have to help; so the never-ending, still-beginning business of wiping dishes fell to my share, and I really believe I began to wipe spoons before I could walk."

"Speaking of coarse towels," proceeds Miss Kitty, "puts me in mind of a novelty, as fashion-writers say. The cook told us we were all out of dish-towels, and I proposed to go down town and buy a whole piece, just as mamma always does. But cousin Jane objected. The stuff that comes by the yard don't last at all, she said, so she went to the grocers and bought three large empty salt-bags for twenty-five cents a piece. I was disgusted with the dirty things, all stiffened up with salt; but she ripped them up and had them washed, and then cut each one into three towels. I thought the cook would turn up her nose, but she is delighted with them—says they grow softer and thicker all the time."

"That's an excellent idea," says Miss Lucy Little, making an entry in her little note-book.

"Yes, I think it is economical," says Miss Kitty, "for the towels seem seven times as strong as the ordinary stuff. They are a little harsh at first, but they soon get soft. Cousin Jane says she always buys them before they are needed, and uses them first as kitchen hand-towels, to hang on the roller, and then, when use and washing has made them soft and pliable, she cuts them into dish-towels. It is funny, but there is a tear in every bag; I believe it is where they stick a hook in to lift it up when it is full of salt."

"I suppose the towels can be cut to avoid the holes?"

"I presume so; but Cousin Jane darned them in ours, after the bags were washed, with coarse linen thread. She likes to darn, strange to say, so I believe she enjoyed the opportunity."

"I wish she lived with us," sighed Sophie Mapes; "opportunity should not be wanting."

"Do you have so much of it to do?" asked I sympathetically, for I know it is not a pursuit attractive to young people.

"You ought to see the weekly piles of stockings," replies Sophie feelingly, "and nearly every pair with holes big enough to put your head through."

"To speak within bounds," I add smilingly. "But really I do not think it pays to darn such immense holes."

"Oh! dear, I wish it didn't, but we cannot afford to throw them away."

"Indeed; I didn't mean to intimate that you should," I say. "I was only thinking that it would be better to patch the heels neatly, if they are the impaired portions, or even resole them if necessary. If the stockings are long enough, they can be cut down and be almost as good as new; and even if they are quite short they can be made over for children."

"Isn't it a great deal of trouble?"

"No, very little; you can buy a pattern, or you can cut one from an old stocking, and you will have no difficulty at all. I had much rather do it than darn stockings that are really past darning."

"How did we get around from dish-washing to mending stockings?" asks Nellie Greene, meditatively.

"Upon my word I cannot tell," I answer, "but you know—"

"Our thoughts are linked by many a hidden chain. Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise! Each stamps its image as the other flies."

Fashionable Stationery.

NOTE and letter papers continue to be manufactured with either the linen or the smooth finish, one being thought as stylish as the other, although ladies are apt to prefer the smooth finish. The square envelope, with sheet folded once, seems to be firmly established in popular favor, and retains position as a leading style. Elegant stationery is in pure white, but very pale tints give a change. These, however, are without exception quite faint, and the favorite hues are cream or light gray.

Note cards are as much in favor as ever, and are usually seen plain on the edges, any desire for ornamentation being gratified by the introduction of pretty fancies in the way of colored designs on the left upper corner of the card. The envelope is generally left plain. One of the newest ideas is that of Japanese figures in colored gilt, by which the effect of lacquer work is produced. Birds, reptiles, and flowers are portrayed, but the manner of doing it is in the peculiar Mongolian style that is so much liked at present. Fishes are likewise represented, and sets of note cards present a singular appearance—a lizard on one, a bird on another, a spray of flowers on a third, etc. In each kind of ornamentation, too, there is much variety, so that one continually finds something unexpected. These figures are not transferred to the envelope, which is entirely plain.

Sometimes the envelope used for note or letter paper is embellished in imitation of the large old seals of colored wax that some of us can remember. Bright blue or red is chiefly selected, but any color in sealing-wax can be chosen. A circle of goodly size presents quite a conspicuous appearance, and within the initials or crest is transcribed. Of course the simulation is placed where the seal of genuine wax did duty a generation ago. Occasionally the seal appears on the left upper corner of the sheet within, but this is not appropriate, and is in bad taste. Doubtless these ideas are in accordance with the revival of old things which is a hobby of the day. Monograms are not now usually depicted as they were some time ago, but, instead, are in cipher or Japanese style; those on the seals just described being in the form first mentioned.

Mourning paper is black-edged, and sometimes the initial, monogram, or crest is stamped on the left corner in cameo style; but where the mourning is deep, this is done wholly in black. When the first severity of costume is lightened and white accessories appear, the cameo is white and black. Both in black, and black and white, the cameos are of different shapes—round, oblong, square, etc. The envelope is plain. Sometimes large, black, simulated seals are seen on mourning envelopes, imitating, of course, a former use of black sealing-wax.

Visiting cards show no changes worthy of remark, and here the styles are as unpretentious as possible. Gentlemen's cards are growing smaller, although always considerably less in size than those used by ladies. Both are unglazed and engraved in plain script, without flourishes of any description. Invitations to balls or formal evening entertainments are also in very simple fashion, without any attempts at display or ornamental finish; the engraving is fine but plain script. The most expensive work is, of course, put upon menu cards, which show exceeding taste and infinite variety. The painting is exquisitely fine and full of surprises. Much of it for one of the most fashionable firms is the work of a young lady whose father was formerly a millionaire, who cultivated her talent for her pleasure while she was not obliged to do it for pay, but now

makes it a means of livelihood for herself and others. It is said she is sometimes paid as much as a hundred dollars per week for her work.

The most elegant dinner cards are mounted on thick satin ribbon, the ribbon itself the same on both sides and fringed upon the ends. This is folded lengthwise, the upper side being a little shorter than the under, and the card placed inside, the upper part of the ribbon forming a cover. The design on this front side is often of extreme simplicity and refinement, and the disclosure of a more elaborate design beneath is in the nature of a surprise.

A menu design, prepared for a lady who paid two hundred and fifty dollars for twenty-five of them, was on pale blue satin, very wide, and with a ribbed border. The front showed a pictured mansion, lightly arched with gold and shaded on one side with foliage, upon a banneret outlined with gold and gold cord, twined about with a light wreath of flowers. The card for name was thrown across, and below this was a summer sea upon which a lady was sailing alone in a dainty boat. The interior card contained the menu, and was decorated with stems and branches, upon which a bird was perched. A corner in gold contained the mystical lettering which indicated the occasion of the festivity.

Japanese fans for dinner cards are in two colors, of satin de Lyon, wine-color and blue, maroon and éru, or crimson and gold. Small fruits and their blossoms are painted upon some of them, and insects upon the reverse side. A bright green grasshopper will stand in an attitude of astonishment at the oddity of Chinese lettering, or butterflies will spread their gorgeous wings.

A pretty idea for a child's birthday party is a young etched head upon the center of the card, and a bit of morning sky, with swallows on the wing, in the corner. A few loose spires of grass and clover adorn the points, and the transverse bend for the name is outlined on the satin. Holly looks well upon crimson satin, the stems touched up with gold, and small acorns showing different shades of green. Birds are very often most beautifully made with real feathers, and with such wonderful minutiae that the naked eye cannot follow the details.

A charming menu card is covered with a very pale pink satin, decorated upon the front delicately with a few oats. Upon a reedy marine elevation upon the card, on the outside, stands a tall bird, with a speckled brown coat, and it says, "I will wear my brown gown, and never dress too fine."

There is a small portfolio which is a favorite design for a dinner card, and is made of satin tied around with ribbon. The cards in the interior of these are usually etched, and sometimes very beautifully; and English violets, or some modest field-flower, will form the remainder of the decoration.

A quaint card for an annual birthday dinner exhibited an oriental scene upon which had dropped down a couple of open-mouthed, wild-eyed Japanese, set in relief; and a farewell dinner card had marine views that would have done credit to Moran—very small, however, and the bon-voyage was in illuminated lettering upon gold-satin ribbon, the other colors being crimson and dark blue. Etching is very fashionable now, and this strong and characteristic style of drawing admits of quaint, piquant, original, and even grotesque design, without becoming vulgar. These cards are usually done in sets of a dozen or more, and no two of these will be alike. Sometimes they will illustrate, by desire, quotations from a favorite poet. The four designs for correspondence are bronzed, and are very rich and beautiful; the lettering is in colors.