

apply it unawares to the legs of the visitors who are brought up to see the poor babes.

In "The Recumbent Prince" the performer lies on the ground, and the hair is drawn away from the head so as to give the appearance of a beard. A cap or hat is placed on the chin, and a body formed of shawls, etc., is attached to the chin, the real figure being hidden in the same way, so that the face is shown upside down, and a very curious effect is produced.

"Neighbor, Neighbor, I Come to Torment You," is an amusing game, played as follows: The players sit in a circle, and one begins by saying, "Neighbor, neighbor, I come to torment you." "What with?" is the question of the next player; "To do as I do," whereupon one hand is moved. This is passed round the circle until all the players are moving their one hand. Then the same formula is repeated, save that the answer is "To do with two as I do," when both hands are moved; and the thing continues until both hands, legs, head, and body of each player are in motion, which presents a comical effect.

"Jingles" is also amusing. One of the players leaves the room, and the rest determine on a word. When he re-enters he is told a noun that rhymes with the one chosen, which he must find out by their dumb movements. Say "bat" is the word selected, he is told that it rhymes with "rat," and the players either try to imitate flying or hitting a ball with a bat.

Much fun is caused by keeping four or five children in the room while the others are sent out, and placing them behind the drawn window-curtains; then let one just show the eye through the opening, and when the rest are admitted they have to decide to whom it belongs—by no means as easy a task as it seems.

"Judge and Jury" is played by one, the judge, asking any question he pleases of the others, who are the jury; and they in their replies must not make use of the words "black," "white," "yes," or "no;" whoever does so at once becomes judge.

In "Schoolmaster and Pupil" the former asks the name of a river, or place, or mountain, or whatever he may choose, beginning with any letter he may fix upon, and if the person addressed does not reply correctly before ten is counted they change places.

"Shadows" always please children, and can be easily done with little trouble in any drawing-room. A sheet must be suspended tightly across the room, with a lamp on the floor behind it. The actors then go through whatever pantomimic gestures they please, all of which are projected in shadow on to the sheet. Last year we performed a variety of nursery stories in this way, such as "Cinderella," "Blue Beard," and the like, one of the party announcing the purpose of each scene as we performed it.

Most games without paraphernalia require forfeits, and these are some of the methods we have adopted. We require the gentlemen to make a speech to three of the ladies, one on the fashions, another on politics, and the third on domestic economy; or we make them quote lines from four negro melodies, and sing them; or they may be put up for sale, everybody bidding according to the value which they set on them. Or three of those who have forfeits to pay are compelled to build a card-house each, and are not released until the three are all standing up together.

Sometimes the forfeits are redeemed by

repeating everything that is said during a stated time. Sometimes all the people owing forfeits are required to go through the figure of a quadrille by keeping the feet together and jumping; or sometimes they have to dance a quadrille blindfolded, which leads to the most absurd results, and before the third figure, everybody is to be found anywhere but where he or she ought to be. Sometimes they have to sing a song, substituting the word "quack" throughout for the real words of the ditty. "A Marmoset Quadrille," too, is always good fun. In this the ladies are neither to talk nor laugh, whatever inducements are held out to them to do so by their partners, on whom no restrictions are laid. Whenever the rule is broken, the figure must be recommenced.

THE MISTLETOE.

An English correspondent writes: "The mistletoe blossoms in May, and ripens its berries in December, and it does this every year, if the season be favorable. The fruit bud is always at the very point of the last year's shoot; two leaf buds are also at the same point, immediately under the fruit bud; these latter are on opposite sides, which form a fork, holding the fruit in the angle formed by the two little branches. It is a *dioecious* plant, *i. e.*, bearing its barren and fertile flowers on different plants. They ought to be called what they really are, male and female, and not barren and fertile plants. Almost everybody must have observed that more than half the mistletoe plants never by any chance bear berries; these are the male plants. The female plants, being the only ones adorned with fruit, are the only ones sought after, and it thus happens that in some orchards where mistletoe is much desired there will be nothing but male plants remaining, and I have heard the remark made by those who ought to know better that 'the mistletoe had, from some unaccountable cause, ceased to bear berries,' whereas they had ignorantly destroyed all the female plants, and left the unhappy and less charming bachelors to perish miserably—a sort of 'natural selection' not conducive to the permanence of the species.

"Mistletoe grows in great profusion in Windsor Park, chiefly on whitethorn and maple; there is an avenue of the latter in the Home Park, close to the castle, which is almost converted into evergreen. I could not find it growing on the oak; it must have been always rare on that tree, as those producing it were held taboo, or sacred, by the Druids. I have seen it growing vigorously on the common acacia.

"I think the most beautiful plant you will occasionally meet with in full bloom at Christmas is the common furze (*Ulex Europæus*). Its usual season for flowering is May; but some individuals may be found in blossom in every month in the year. I think it is rather treated with contempt, and yet it is exceedingly beautiful; so much so that it is said Linnaeus on first seeing it in full bloom on an English common, fell on his knees and thanked God he had been allowed to see it. It is not quite hardy, and has but a limited geographical range. It will not thrive in a hot climate, nor in the north, and a severe winter kills it even here.

"In spite of the rarity of the occurrence of mistletoe upon the oak, thirteen well-authenticated instances of its recent growth upon that tree are on record. In the older botanical authors, oak mistletoe is frequently mentioned, though always as an uncommon plant. Possibly the esteem in which the Druids held the mistle-

toe of the oak was in some measure due to the rarity of its occurrence upon that tree. Next to the apple-tree, the mistletoe is most frequently parasitic upon poplars of various species. It is, indeed, by no means particular as to what tree it honors with its presence, having been found on British trees, as well as upon many commonly cultivated ones, and upon certain shrubs, such as the gooseberry, buckthorn, and wild rose, and even upon the azalea. It is by no means uncommon upon the hawthorn, and has been observed upon the yew, cedar, and larch.

"Gloucester and Devon are quoted as mistletoe-producing counties, but it may fairly be doubted whether Herefordshire is not entitled to take precedence of these in this matter. Dr. Bull, speaking of this county, says that there is scarcely a Herefordshire orchard of any standing in which mistletoe does not occur. He adds: 'The proportion of apple-trees which bear mistletoe in the central districts of the county, as obtained by a separate examination of more than 2,000 trees, as they came, in several orchards, is as follows:—In orchards of comparatively new kinds of fruits, principally French and Italian apples, the average number of trees which bore mistletoe ranged from 13 to about 30 per cent.; in old, long-established orchards the proportion varied from 30 to as high as 90 per cent.; whilst the general average from all the trees marked down was 39 per cent. of mistletoe-bearing trees.'

"It would be sufficiently interesting to enter at length upon the folk-lore connected with the mistletoe; but much of it is generally known, and the space which such a notice would occupy may doubtless be better employed. It may be interesting, however, to some of our readers, to know how they may raise mistletoe from seed for themselves, should they be so inclined. The simplest method is to crush a ripe berry between the fingers, and rub it with the seeds into a crack of the bark, on the under-side of a branch, the under-side being chosen because the seeds are not there so liable to be washed away by rain. The glutinous matter of the berry will cause the seed to adhere, and it will commence to grow the following spring. The apple, poplar, lime, and hawthorn are recommended as suitable trees upon which to make the experiment."

NAGGING.

WOMEN have bad characters in some things, not always quite fairly given, if sometimes ill-repute has followed only too closely on the heels of ill-deserving, and blame is apportioned according to demerit. And one of the evil things with which they are credited is that uncomfortable habit known popularly as "nagging." Never to know when to let a subject die out of remembrance, never to allow a sore to heal; to show nothing of the grace of forgiveness, nothing of the sweet forgetfulness of silence; to be forever the dropping water wearing into the patient strength of granite, for ever the rasping file tearing out fibers of the quivering flesh—this is the kind of thing of which women are said to be more capable, as well as more often guilty, than men: though no one has yet been found bold enough to say that men are not guilty of this fault at all, and that nagging is as purely a feminine characteristic as maternity, say, or throwing stones from the shoulder overhanded. And indeed men are to be found who nag as persistently as the weakest-minded and most ill-tempered house-mistress of them—men who prod and provoke and worry about every little thing that comes uppermost, and

make life a burden to all with whom they are connected simply because of that fatal habit of never letting the past lie quiet in its grave, and of never knowing when to drop a disagreeable matter that has already made too deep a mark. And perhaps a nagging man is even a more objectionable person than a nagging woman; partly from the greater force of character which he uses as the catapult for his missiles, partly from the feeling one has of the eminent unfitness of things when a lord of the creation takes it in hand to make himself the bad travesty of the inferior creature. To women this kind of collapse is especially painful; for the truth is, women like to be able to reverence their lords as superior to themselves, and when they find them as weak and small and silly and contemptible, they resent it as an injury done to their ideal, and so much of the gilding taken off their gingerbread.

DEMOREST.

BY I. W. SANBORN.

As the wheat among the grains,
As the oak upon the plains,
So the choicest household guest
Is our queenly "Demorest."

As the diamond is to pearls,
Or as Grace among the girls,
So, by far, the ladies' best
Is our charming "Demorest."

Lyndonville, Vt.



We have often advocated the use of oatmeal in these columns, and we refer to it again because we wish to express our entire concurrence in a statement said to have been made by Gerald Massey, the English poet and lecturer, that oatmeal was a most excellent brain and nerve food, containing a large proportion of phosphorus, which is excluded by the refining process from ordinary wheat flour, and should therefore be obtained in some other way, and that the best and easiest way is through the use of oatmeal porridge with milk, as a breakfast dish.

We have tested this for many years, and know it to be a fact, that boiled oatmeal with milk, is the breakfast, of all others, for brain workers. To produce its perfect action upon the liver, as well as the brain, we should recommend that stewed cranberries (or French prunes, for a change) be added to the bill of fare—a slice of Graham toast, and a cup of well-made Mandarin tea. A person who eats this breakfast for a few months will have no other as long as he lives; the benefit arising from it will be so plain, and so decided.

The following is the formula for OATMEAL PORRIDGE.—Set some water on the fire, and when it boils put in some salt; then with a slice stir in by degrees some oatmeal, which should be sprinkled in very carefully, beating or stirring it all the time. When about the consistence of hasty pudding and sufficiently boiled, pour it on plates. It is generally eaten with cold milk, buttermilk, or treacle, or with cold butter. The above is a very good formula, and porridge worth eating cannot be produced by any serious depart-