



### GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

"I FEEL sorry that a sister of mine, that a St. Adrian, should make use of such very coarse expressions," said Mr. Ralph Adrian St. Adrian, in a tone of considerable asperity, laying down an open letter beside his plate on the breakfast table.

"Well, you know aunt was always fond of calling a spade, a spade; and, after all, you must confess that the substance of her letter is true, daddy dear."

"Whether or not it be true is not the question, my dear Adrienne," replied her father, with his most ceremonious manner.

"I merely observe that it is a pity your Aunt Gwendolyn should clothe her opinions in such—such offensive language. If I mistake not, she actually makes use of the word wages!—positively wages!!—in connection with my daughter. Yes, here is the passage," he went on, taking up the letter again and reading aloud the following extract: "'I have waited till Narcissa's twenty-nrst orrtd-day, as I thought, when she became a woman, she might possibly see the folly and sin of the worse than idle life she is leading, and might strike out some line of usefulness for herself. But this is hardly to be expected of a girl who has been brought up as you, brother Adrian, have brought up yours, teaching them that because they bear an aristocratic name, they must look upon industry as vulgar, and because they come of a good old family, must prefer penury to earning a competency by honest work. So I write to ask Narcissa to come and help me in my school. Her long residence in France and Germany will have given her sufficient fluency in those languages to make her useful, and in

return for her services as general assistant I am willing to give her £30 a year wages at first, till I see what she is good for; and a comfortable home where she can be happy if she chooses, and if she does not bring with her any of the



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"'I HAVE OFTEN READ THAT EVERYONE HAS SOME CROSS TO BEAR,' SAID NARCISSA."

grand notions which I daresay she inherits from her father. Let me hear your decision as soon as possible; I shall not ask her a second time, and if you *refuse*, I must see about finding a young person elsewhere.

Your affectionate sister,  
GWENDOLYN ST. ADRIAN.'

"Oh! it is positively insulting! Give me little more cream, Adrienne. Wages! Young person, indeed!!" continued Mr. St. Adrian, actually trembling with indignation, as he handed up his cup for a second supply of the exceedingly blue milk with which the cream jug was filled.

The appearance of the breakfast table gave a very fair idea of the style which characterised the whole proceedings of the family which now sat round it. There was truly a goodly array of dishes, covers, and plates; but the quantity of actual food they represented was indeed small as compared with the requirements of a hungry man. On the centre of a large dish, plentifully garnished with parsley, reposed one mutton chop, of the smallest possible dimensions. Another dish, befrilled and beflounced with dainty napery, contained two sardines, lying tail to tail, and looking half ashamed of the poor figure they cut amongst such a wealth of fine linen decorations. An egg dish was there too, but he who lifted the comfortable china hen which formed the cover would have found an empty nest. An exceedingly small pat of butter, in a dainty dish, and a single French roll completed the array of viands which were spread at Mr. St. Adrian's end of the table; but at the other side, occupied by the girls, there was a substantial home-made loaf, a dish of stewed fruit, and two good sized plates from which the porridge had already been demolished with a good appetite. Thus it was in all the affairs of the family: the father rigorously keeping up a pretence of the style of living which he thought suited to his aristocratic descent, whilst the daughters, pinching themselves to gratify his fancies, were glad to satisfy their healthy young appetites with the cheapest possible fare, averring that very plain food suited their digestion better than dainties, and that they preferred to go on wearing shabby old dresses because they were so much more easy and comfortable than stiff new ones; transparent excuses which deceived no one, but spared Mr. St. Adrian's sensitive feelings from being wounded by a suspicion of vulgar poverty.

The only luxury the girls allowed themselves at table was a plentiful supply of fruit. They had been so long accustomed to living in countries where fruit is plentiful and cheap, that they had come to look upon it as one of the necessaries of life, and rarely sat down to a meal without it—indeed, they greatly scandalised some of the landladies they sojourned with in England by the habit they had acquired on the Continent of always eating stewed fruit with hot meat, and it amused the girls extremely to notice the look of horror some of them put on when told to serve stewed pears or prunes with roast mutton, or apple sauce, sprinkled with currants and sultana raisins, to beefsteak. They had another fancy about fruit which was sometimes a source of grief to their landladies, namely, that they strongly objected to plums, cherries, and such like fruit with the stones left in, and always insisted upon having them stoned before cooking. A mixture of different kinds of fruits, all cooked together, also rather upset their landladies' ideas of what was correct, though on being invited to taste the dishes they complained of, they were generally compelled to acknowledge that stoned cherries and red currants stewed together made a delicious dish, as did apples and cranberries, and, indeed, apples and anything else, with

the addition of a little lemon-peel; while it was undoubtedly economical, as long as rhubarb was in season, to stew it with whatever other fruit could be obtained, as rhubarb takes the flavour of whatever is cooked with it, without imparting its own, if used sparingly. When the girls were particularly short of money and had to live more economically than usual, they made a more substantial dish by putting a little rice with the fruit into a jar, and stewing them all together in the oven. When they were well off, on the other hand, and could afford a little extravagance, they had a very plain crust made, and the fruit cooked in a dish covered with this paste, like an ordinary fruit tart. This lid was afterwards removed. The reason for cooking it in this way was that they had noticed that fruit out of a pie is so much nicer than that cooked in the ordinary way. But it was not often that they could afford luxuries of this kind—economy was generally their only object, and they breakfasted day after day on oatmeal porridge, followed by the cheapest obtainable stewed fruit, and bread.

Mr. St. Adrian was fond of his children, in his somewhat selfish way, but his affection was not of the sort which could induce him to descend from his own exalted position and work to give his daughters a few luxuries. He would have preferred to see them well dressed, but never thought of denying himself in any way to give them the means of improving their appearance. They, on their side, could not but be aware of the weakness of their father's character; but ever since their mother had died, begging them with her dying breath to try to fill her place to him, they had loved and cared for him in a fond, half-motherly fashion which was very pathetic. They had taken upon themselves the burden of their poverty, and cheerfully ate their porridge and bread that he might enjoy his fine white roll, and laughed cheerily the while as they chatted with him across the table.

The conversation this morning was, of course, about the offer of Miss Gwendolyn St. Adrian to take Narcissa, the elder of the two girls, as assistant in her school. The girls had led a Bohemian sort of existence since their mother's death, five years ago, moving from place to place, chiefly on the Continent, stopping for a few months at a time wherever their father could find amusing company, and they "comfortable apartments"—an elegant expression which, in the St. Adrian family, meant lodgings cheap enough to be within their means. They were never dull, and fell in with plenty of their compatriots, aristocratic people, too, who, like themselves, "disliked ostentation and preferred to live simply."

But in spite of the bright face they put upon it, they had felt the sting of poverty too painfully not to see that this offer of their aunt's must not be lightly refused, much as the parting involved would be felt by all concerned. They set to work, therefore, to coax their father into giving his consent; but the plain speaking in his sister's letter had so ruffled Mr. St. Adrian's temper that to convert him to their view was no easy task. He was, of course, aware of the shifts to which the little household was reduced in order to make both ends meet, and in the rare moments when he permitted serious thoughts of life to enter his mind, he was compelled secretly to acknowledge that a less selfish man would, in his place, have turned his time and talents to account to swell their scanty income. But such reflections were not pleasant company, and a stroll along the favourite promenade speedily banished them from his mind. It pleased him to lead this farce of a life, and nothing so surely ruffled his usually placid temper as to have the real facts put plainly before him. However, at length the

girls gained their end, and coaxed and persuaded their father to give a reluctant consent, but so turning and twisting the facts about that they appeared in a different and, as he thought, a happier light than the true one.

"Of course, if I choose to send my daughter to finish her education later in life than is usual, why—it is my affair entirely; and if my sister chooses to present her eldest niece with a trifling sum, just as pin money, well, that is her affair; and far be it from me to forbid my daughter to gratify her aunt in this matter."

And so the matter was settled, and the sisters fell to discussing ways and means to provide the few new garments which this step rendered necessary.

"There is no occasion for my having anything at all showy or stylish, Adie, dear—in fact, the more plain and dowdy my things are, the more aunt will approve," said Narcissa, turning over an old black cashmere which was to be transformed into a neat morning dress.

"You can never look anything but a lady, whatever you wear, with your figure and good carriage," said Adrienne; but still I agree with you, that the plainer your dresses are the better, which is fortunate, as it happens that our dress purse does not contain a single farthing."

"I feel rather a poor, lorn creature, going out alone into the wide world, Adie, and leaving you and dear daddie," said Narcissa, with a little choking in her voice; "and I am afraid that this school is such an extraordinary place. We have heard such odd reports about aunt's system of instruction, and you know I do so dislike anything *outré* and out of the way—it seems to grate on me, somehow."

"Poor dear! I am afraid you will be grated on considerably then, for I suppose aunt's school does stand quite alone, though we have only heard vague reports of the curious things that go on there. But at any rate, Cissa, I think you are better off than I, for you are going out to be some use in the world, and to earn money, and to expand, as it were, whilst I shall have to toil and moil on alone, trying to make one shilling go as far as ten, and playing Princess in a shabby gown to poor dear father's Grand Seigneur."

"I have often read that everyone, even the most fortunate, has some cross to bear," said Narcissa, meditatively, "and I suppose it is so—: certainly is in *this* corner of the world, Adie, and all we can do is to bear ours as bravely as we can; and, after all, you know, it might be much worse—you might be blind and I might have been born an idiot—we are not as bad as that, anyhow!" at which sage remark both girls began to laugh, and returned to their work on the old black dress with lighter hearts. They were accustomed to look for the brightest side of things, and their occasional fits of low spirits were of very short duration.

The days sped quickly by, and the last had come, and the pain of parting was keenly felt by all the three, who till now had clung together so affectionately through fair weather and foul. Adrienne and her father went with Narcissa to the station, and started her off with a smile and a cheering word, and then turned homewards, feeling very bereft without their gentle Narcissa. As for her, poor girl, she broke down altogether as soon as she was out of sight of the station, and felt that she was indeed going out alone into the world; but she soon recovered herself and forced herself to read the book she had with her, to distract her thoughts. The day was cloudy and dull, and the journey long and tiring, and as she grew nearer her destination her heart sank lower and lower. As the shades of evening drew on, a shrill gusty wind sprang up, and

the rain beginning to fall heavily at the same time, pattered dismally against the carriage windows. But the longest day has an end, and after a journey which seemed interminable, the station was reached at last. Narcissa gave a hasty look round, but not seeing anyone who seemed to be waiting for her, she gave her modest luggage to a porter to carry to a cab.

"Spike House, oh yes, miss! we all knows that, about two mile away," said the man; and Narcissa thought she saw a half smile flickering on his face as he shouldered her box.

The cab soon left the town and went splashing along a muddy country road, on either side of which, through the rain and fog, Narcissa could dimly discern hedges and trees. At length she saw that they were passing a high brick wall, the top of which was plentifully adorned with sharp iron spikes.

"This surely must be it," she murmured, shivering in the cold, draughty cab. "Oh, dear, what a dreadful place: it is just like a barracks!" she went on, as the cab turned in at an iron gateway and stopped almost immediately opposite the door of a large square brick house. The building was quite devoid of architectural ornament, and its row upon row of straight, square windows, seen in the gloomy darkness of a wet evening in autumn, gave it the appearance of a prison rather than a dwelling-house.

In response to the cabman's ring, the door of this dismal abode was opened by a plump, rosy-cheeked maid, and a flood of light poured out into the darkness. Dismissing the cab, Narcissa followed the maid across the hall, hearing with surprise as she went the sound of merry voices, intermingled with unmistakable bursts of laughter, which evidently proceeded from a large room on her left. As she passed, the door of the room was suddenly opened, and she caught a glimpse of a large party of girls engaged in a mad merry game with balls.

"The young ladies have not been able to go out to-day, miss," said the maid, noticing Narcissa's surprised glance, "so they always has a good game of romps before bed-time. This is Miss Gwen's room, miss, where she wished you to be shown when you come."

The room into which Narcissa was shown was a small, cosy-looking apartment, very simply furnished, but with a general air of comfort pervading it. As she entered, a lady rose to meet her, and, taking both her hands in hers, looked kindly but scrutinizingly into her face. "And you are my niece Narcissa," she said, after this momentary examination; "you are welcome, my dear, and I hope we shall be very happy together;" and taking her wet cloak from her she drew her to a comfortable chair by the fire. After a few minutes' chat, Miss St. Adrian rang for the maid and said, "Find out which of the young ladies is housekeeper, and tell her that my niece has arrived, and will be glad of some refreshment in a quarter of an hour."

This order rather puzzled Narcissa, but as her aunt offered at this moment to take her to her bedroom, she had no opportunity to ask any questions. On reaching the landing, Miss St. Adrian struck a match which she took from a bracket, and lighting a wax taper in a brass taper-holder which lay beside the match box, she preceded Narcissa into a bedroom, lit a lamp on the dressing-table, and carefully extinguishing the taper, returned it to its place on the bracket.

"This is to be your room, Narcissa," she said, "and I hope you will be comfortable here." But on glancing round the room she appeared to be dissatisfied with the arrangements for her comfort, and hastily ringing the bell, told the maid to send Miss Selby to her. A minute after there was a knock at the

door, and a merry-looking girl entered, who, from her rough hair and rosy cheeks, had evidently come straight from the game in the play-room.

"Minnie, you have charge of the bedrooms, have you not?"

"Yes, Miss Gwen."

"I am sorry you are not a little more thoughtful for the comfort of our visitors. On a cold, wet night like this you should have provided a fire and hot water; and look at this soap, you should never leave such a small, half-used morsel to greet a new arrival, as though you grudged it. Use this up for one of the servants' rooms, or, if they are well supplied, send it into the laundry; and bring a fresh piece here as quickly as possible. And there is no brush and comb; you must always provide all kinds of toilet necessaries for travellers till they have time to unpack their luggage."

Minnie looked very much abashed, and speedily brought the required articles, receiving one more direction from Miss St. Adrian—to bring a maid as soon as Narcissa had gone down to supper, and to direct her to unstrap the luggage and take the covers off such as had any.

Narcissa's toilet was soon finished, and on returning to the sitting-room they found the table spread, and a tall, graceful girl of about seventeen putting the last touches to the arrangement.

"This is one of our elder girls, Ruth Stanley," said Miss St. Adrian, introducing her to Narcissa, who bowed a little stiffly, not feeling quite sure what was expected of her.

"May I get you a cup of tea, Miss St. Adrian?" asked Ruth. "I should have had it ready, but as it is rather late I thought you might prefer chocolate."

Narcissa looked hesitatingly at her aunt. This conduct was so different from what she had ever expected from schoolgirls that she was too bewildered to reply, but her aunt helped her out of the difficulty by advising chocolate. "Tea is so likely to keep you awake, you know, as it is nearly bed-time," she said. "It was very thoughtful of you to think of that, Ruth," she added, laying her hand for a moment on the girl's shoulder as she left the room.

"I can see you think this a very extraordinary school," she went on to her piece when they were left alone; "but you are much too tired to talk to-night—you must make a good supper now, and in the morning I will explain to you all about it. It is fortunate for you that it was Ruth who had to provide your supper, as there is a chance of your finding something eatable, which is more than I can always promise you."

The table was prettily laid out, with a vase of flowers in the middle, and on one side of it a dish with two veal cutlets, grilled, enclosing a small heap of potatoes cut in slices and fried a light brown, and on the other side a glass mould of potted veal; there was also dry toast, bread-and-butter, and marmalade.

As soon as Narcissa was served, Miss St. Adrian, or Miss Gwen, as she preferred to be called, took a note-book from her pocket and wrote a few words in it.

"You must excuse my making these notes," she said to Narcissa when she had finished; "I, unfortunately, have a very bad memory, and am obliged to write down everything I wish to remember; and I must not forget, when I give Ruth my criticisms on her house-keeping to-morrow, to tell her that when there are only two dishes they should not be of the same kind of meat, especially veal, which many people cannot eat at all; and the table would have looked better if she had provided a little cake, or fruit, or sweets of some kind. She ought to remember, too, that though veal can be had all the year round, it is not in

season now, whereas all kinds of game are very plentiful, and game makes a nice light supper dish, as it is easily digestible. But how do you like your chocolate?"

"It is very nice indeed, aunt, unusually so—very different from what one usually gets in England."

"Most of the elder girls can make it nicely now. I tell them to scrape at least an ounce of chocolate Menier into an earthenware saucepan for a breakfast-cup of chocolate, and to make it with half milk and half water, poured cold on to the powder, and carefully stirred till it has just boiled, and then to serve it immediately. Sometimes I add two or three drops of vanilla, and sometimes I stir a very little finely-grated cinnamon into the milk before heating it. Several of our girls are rather delicate, and are ordered cocoa in preference to tea or coffee. I always have cocoa nibs boiled for them; this thick chocolate is too rich to drink constantly; and the doctor tells me that the pure nibs make the most wholesome and most easily digestible of any kind of cocoa."

(To be continued.)

## ADVICE TO GIRLS.



THINK less of your own souls, more of your Saviour. Let it be your constant aim to realise His greatness, to dwell upon His love, to seek communion with Him. You need care little then that you are unable to describe the outflow of your souls in the language of the Church or the experience meeting. When you rush into the arms of your nearest earthly friend, you do not stop to inquire into the nature of your affection, to investigate the elements of your joy, or to reason out the philosophy of your embrace. Nor do you compose yourselves into an attitude learned from others, before you express your affectionate delight. Somewhat thus let it be with your religion. The looking-glass is very well sometimes, but it is no mark of wisdom or humility to be going thither always. And so, while there is an important meaning in the command, "Examine your own selves," there is another injunction far more appropriate to Christian childhood: "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith."—*Rev. S. G. Green, D.D.* From "Christian Ministry to the Young."



## CHAPTER V.

## THE ROUND UP.



LAS! for Philip's castles in the air. They were quickly dispelled by Gervase Heath, who, although he gave the stranger a

warm welcome, as the son of an old schoolfellow whom he remembered well, soon made Philip understand that he was not in any need of his services, Harold

and Will doing all he needed. He advised Philip strongly to hire himself out to a smart American of capital who had lately bought a large ranche for stock-raising in El Paso county, about fifty miles away.

"It is a far more profitable business than farming," he added, "and more suited to an unmarried man."

"That handsome face might disturb my little Joy's peace of mind, wife," he said, when the family had separated for the night. "I don't know what I should do if he robbed me of my little maid."

Carita lay sleepless on her bed that night for hours. She was uneasy about Tom. Eleanor had grown very tired sitting up for them later than usual, and having felt lonely through the day, was irritable, and blamed her much for allowing the boys to ride out of her sight—most unreasonably, considering the little authority she herself exercised over them. Carita had still the old dread of Jack, although he was three years younger than herself. He was the only one ever likely to bring up against her that sad little episode connected with her childhood. Several times, when she had tried to prevent his doing what was wrong, he had made a sign with his generally dirty fingers round his throat, and a significant grimace; or had asked unfeelingly, "Do you remember the locket, Candy?"—not Carrie, but the old name he would then use, which was associated with so much shame and unhappiness. She was still afraid of the boy, and could not bear to see Tom in his society.

When at last she fell asleep it was to dream a strange jumble of dreams. The father came and asked her why she had let Tom go on the round up. Then she and the new friend of yesterday were talking pleasantly together, and suddenly Jack's evil face was thrust in between them. Again, she thought the stranger was surprised because she had only one name, and that he said he would give her another. And just as he was telling her what it should be, Jack appeared again, and said, "Why, she's Candalaria, a little Greaser from Santa Anna." And then Mr. Emerson left her and went to Joy, and they both turned their backs on her, and left her sitting alone by the creek, and the waters

rose higher and higher as she sat there unable to move. It was a wretched night, and she was glad when day came and Eleanor's voice sounded in her ears, bidding her get up quickly, as it was late.

And how had it fared with Phil Emerson? He slept, as boys say, "like a top," out in the tent under the bearskin, and dreamed of nobody.

Next morning, having gladly accepted Mrs. Heath's invitation to spend a week at Pepper-box Flat, he and Ben went up to the Warners to see if Tom had come home.

Carita received him somewhat shyly. It was quite a new thing for her to feel as she did; but dreams are apt, as we all know, to leave an odd impression on the mind until one has slept them off again. Mrs. Warner had not heard of this new acquaintance. Alick and Ronnie had been too busy with their breakfast to talk much, and the previous night their mother had been too sleepy to do more than ask where Tom was. So she looked very much surprised when this fine-looking stranger greeted Carita as though he had known her some time; and on his being introduced to her as an Englishman who was staying at Mr. Heath's, she was coldly civil. "High-toned, no doubt, like the rest of them," was her inward comment at first, but by degrees his frank, courteous manners and evident desire to please, propitiated her, and she gladly accepted his offer to hunt up Tom.

On the evening of the same day Philip came upon the runaways, many miles away, at Turkey Creek. The sun was setting gloriously, as one sees it only on the wide plains or at sea; the wild chase of the day was over, and Master Tom was eating a capital dinner with "Captain Charlie."

No wonder all the youngsters were wild to go on the "round up." Nothing more exciting can be imagined than the scene which the plains present at sunset when the men are riding in from every direction, all making for one point, driving the cattle before them to the place appointed by their captain. There is always a captain chosen for each "outfit," for "bunching" them—that is, gathering them together, so that each ranchman can select his own according to their brand. They are then given in charge of the respective herders—"cow-punchers" they are called; the horses are hobbled and turned away to feed during the night, and the stockmen, after washing and dining, amuse themselves as they best can: smoking, spinning yarns, playing with cards, chiefly poker, and even dancing with each other.

Jack Wilson was already deep in a game of poker, but Captain Charlie, who knew Mr. Warner, had prevented Tom from joining in, and kept him at his side, not wishing to see the lad corrupted if he could prevent it.

Tom's face fell as he read the note which his mother had sent by Philip.

"What's up, boy?" asked the Captain. Tom hated to tell him that his mother had sent to say that he must come home at once. It made him seem so very small.

Phil's kindly nature divined the lad's sensations; besides, he wanted to make friends with him, associated as he was in his mind with Carita. He used tact, therefore, and earned Tom's lasting goodwill by putting in quickly—

"I am staying near to the Warners' place for a week, and I want Tom to run round with me a little; the men are all busy in the harvest."

"Wal, sir, you can eat a bit of dinner with us, I guess; it's hungry work riding all day, and I reckon you'd best camp with us here to-night; it's a matter of thirty miles or more from this to Elk Ranche."

"I wish I could have seen a bit more of the fun," said Tom, ruefully, as the two rode away next morning, just when the stockmen were starting out for the day.

"Never mind, my boy; I'll ask your mother to let you go on the round up with me next April; there will be a better muster then."

Jack Wilson did not return with them; the fascinations of the round up were too strong for him, and as his parents believed him safe up at Elk Ranche, he felt that he could enjoy forbidden pleasures without fear.

Not long, however, for the same afternoon the mail boy, who passed close to the ranche daily, on his fast little bronco, brought a letter from Mrs. Wilson to Eleanor. She had heard of Mr. Warner's long journey, and wrote urging his wife to come back with Jack on Saturday, to spend a week with her at San Juan.

This was on Thursday. Tom seized on the opportunity to get two more days on the plains, and begged to be allowed to hunt Jack up.

"No, indeed," said his mother; "it is well that his parents should know how little he can be trusted. I shall be surprised if that boy does not die miserably in his boots, some day. I shall go to San Juan on Saturday; you will drive me down in the ambulance. I wanted some flannels and new pants for you boys, and shall be glad to do all I can in the city before winter sets in."

(To be continued.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSE-KEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.



ARCISSA was waked next morning at seven o'clock by the clanging of a bell, which persistently rang on for so long that she thought the whole neighbourhood would be roused. She dressed quickly, and, as she stood

mentally debating whether to venture boldly into the unknown territory downstairs, her difficulty was solved by a knock at the door, followed by the entrance of Ruth Stanley, who had so well provided for Narcissa's wants the night before.

"Miss Gwen wished me to come and see if you were ready," she explained, after the

morning greetings; "and to show you that we are expected to leave our rooms tidy, and our windows open top and bottom, and our bed spread over so as to be airing whilst we are at breakfast. May I do it for you? Now, that is done, and there is the bell for prayers; as it is my turn to read this morning, I must hurry on, if you will excuse me."

"But surely the girls do not conduct family worship themselves?"

"Miss Gwen always reads a prayer herself; but the six eldest girls take it by turns to read the chapter. We go over it with her privately the night before, and she explains anything that is not clear. Miss Gwen says every girl ought to be able to read a chapter so as to make the meaning plain, and she thinks that this plan will cure us of the nervousness most girls have; though why one should be more shy at reading the Bible than any other book is a puzzle to me."

After prayers, a breakfast of rolls and butter, with cocoa and coffee, was served at two long tables decked with flowers, and laid as carefully as though for distinguished guests. The girls took it in turns, a week at a time, to prepare the meal and lay the table—a first-class girl, with one of the younger ones under her; and they were at liberty to gather flowers from the garden, though they received higher marks if they avoided robbing the garden by providing wild flowers during their walk the previous day; and special marks for decorations were given during the winter, when the difficulties were greater.

Miss Gwen objected to watery coffee with a little milk in it; and always had good *café au lait*. The girls who prepared the breakfast measured four small tablespoonfuls of coffee berries for each pint of water. They then put the berries in the oven for a few minutes till quite hot, and ground them in the little coffee mill which was affixed to the kitchen dresser. While one of them did this, the other put the kettle on the fire to boil, and poured the milk (a pint for each pint of coffee) into two large jugs which were placed in saucers of water over the fire to scald. The ground coffee was then put into the large tin coffee pot, the requisite quantity of boiling water poured over it, and just boiled up once on the fire. Then a cupful was poured backwards and forwards two or three times, and the pot left to stand by the side of the fire, where it would not boil, during prayers. In the meantime, two large silver coffee pots had been filled with boiling water to heat them, and directly prayers were over, the servants emptied these coffee pots, and poured the coffee into them through muslin strainers. The milk was put into jugs heated in a similar way; and Miss Gwen rather prided herself on the skill with which she poured the coffee and milk into the cup at the same time, looking gratified when Narcissa told her that it reminded her of continental waiters and the delicious coffee they provide.

The only addition to the breakfast Miss Gwen cared for was dry toast, about which she was very particular, and the girls always made it with the greatest care, knowing that it would be more severely criticised than anything else. The slices of bread were cut very thin, the crust taken off, toasted as quickly as possible before a clear fire, and placed in a toast rack in front of the fire. On this particular morning the toast was not approved of, it was neither hot nor crisp, and after many inquiries, Miss Gwen discovered that the maker had laid the slices on the table as she had finished them, instead of standing them upright in a toast rack—a mistake which inevitably spoils the crispness—and had left them on the table during prayers, so that they were of course quite cold. If the meal was perfectly served, each of the two girls

obtained twelve marks, but lost one for each thing which was not entirely satisfactory. And not only were they responsible for the actual food, but they were expected to look over the silver and china as they laid the table, and lost a mark for every article which was discovered to be not perfectly clean and bright. They did not wash the breakfast things themselves, but had to be observant and see that everything was done as it should be.

During breakfast conversation went on cheerily all round the table, in English, except in immediate proximity to the French and German governesses, who were conversing in their own language with their near neighbours.

"I shall be glad, Narcissa," said Miss Gwen to her, "if you will always speak French or German to the girls, as I understand you are proficient in those languages. I do not encourage them to talk anything but English amongst themselves, as ordinary school-girl French is so much worse than none; but they always speak it with the teachers."

Breakfast over, the girls went to dress for their usual walk, with the exception of three, whose duties took them towards the kitchen, with a governess who combined the functions of lady housekeeper and teacher of cookery and domestic economy. Miss Gwen took Narcissa with her to her private sitting-room, and began to explain to her the working of her school.

"I opened this school," she said, "many years ago, and taught the subjects usually considered necessary for a young lady's education, but half of which are of no use to them in later life. The girls were satisfied, and so were their parents, but the results did not please me. They left school accomplished and well-educated in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but very far from my ideal of women as they ought to be. I like girls as a class, I love them with their kind young hearts and generous impulses; but as a rule they are born without *gumption*, my dear—if you know what that expressive provincialism means. I take it to be the power of adapting oneself to circumstances, and that is what young girls generally lack and what I want to instil into them.

"So I changed my plans and began to try to teach them *common sense* in a practical way. Of course they study the subjects necessary for a well-educated woman to know, such as ancient and modern history, by which I mean really modern, not finishing up with the accession of Queen Victoria, but embracing any events of importance in this morning's newspaper. The newspaper also furnishes geography lessons. I read, for instance, in the foreign telegrams that an ambassador from China has gone to Paris; or in the shipping news that a vessel has been wrecked going from Hamburg to New Zealand; and for the geography lesson that day the girls will write down, as well as they can, the route taken, the chief places passed on the way and probable stopping places, and the elder ones will add a description of the country and some of the chief towns passed, and a general idea of the length of time the journey would occupy. The first class go still farther; they are sometimes given time-tables and told to plan out a journey between two given places, and the highest marks are given to those who plan respectively the quickest, and cheapest, and most interesting routes.

"But, in addition to this ordinary education (my plans for which you will soon see for yourself), all the girls learn how to dust a room and make a bed; to cut out, make, and mend their clothes; and those above fourteen years old learn how to arrange, cook, and serve a dinner; to keep accounts, to black a grate and light a fire. Yes, you may stare; but how can a mistress direct an inefficient

servant if she does not know how to do the work herself?"

"But cannot these things be learnt better at home, aunt?" suggested Narcissa, when Miss Gwen at length paused, breathless.

"Of course, they can," replied her aunt, emphatically; "and of course they ought to be taught at home; but are they? Can you show me one girl in fifty who really understands the management of a house? And when they leave school they enjoy their new liberty for a little time, but get engaged directly, and are married at twenty, and then have to acquire their knowledge of house-keeping by experiments on their unfortunate husbands. Besides," she went on, rather less vehemently, "the majority of my girls are children either of officers in the Indian army, or of parents who are otherwise occupied in the colonies, so that they remain with me all the year round, and have no other opportunity of learning any domestic matters. But now let us go to the kitchen and see what Miss Down and her scholars are doing."

In the large, cool larder, Miss Down and the three girls whose dinner week it was, were found inspecting the remains of yesterday's meals and consulting as to to-day's dinner. One had a pocket-book, in which she was making notes of the articles to be bought.

"What do you suggest doing with the remains of this cold mutton, Lucy?" Miss Down was asking, as Narcissa came up.

"Rissoles, Miss Down," said Lucy promptly.

"That seems to be your only idea, Lucy. You would have us live upon rissoles, I believe. They can be made of such small scraps of meat, and of different kinds together, that it is a pity to make them when there is a considerable quantity of meat, as we have here, especially as this will cut into good sized slices. Alice, have you any other suggestion?"

"I should cut as many slices as possible, and dip them into batter and fry for dinner; and the remainder, which will not cut into slices, I should either mince with a little stock made from the bone, or else put it through the mincing machine with the remains of that cold bacon, and any other scraps there are, and make it into potted meat for supper."

"Very good. Janet, can you think of any other uses for cold mutton?"

"I should make the best part into curry, because I see it is very fat, and so would not be nice in batter; and the scraps, which would most likely be lean, I should mince fine with that cold boiled bacon and an egg and herbs, and make it into meat cakes, fried in dripping; or else I should use beef suet instead of the bacon, about a quarter as much suet as meat, and mince them both very fine with rather less than half their weight of boiled rice, and the usual amount of pepper and salt, and roll them up into sausages, and dip them in egg and breadcrumbs and fry them."

"Oh Janet, what a lot of ideas you always have! You are as good as a cookery book," interrupted Lucy. "But I have an idea now, Miss Down; fry it in dripping with slices of onion and carrot and turnip, till it looks nice, and then stew it in some stock, if there is any, and all sorts of vegetables and potatoes, and that sort of thing, you know."

Miss Down, who had put down marks against each girl's name in her book as they answered, laughed at this lucid description; but as Lucy was only a beginner, and this would make a savoury dish, she praised her suggestion, adding, "I think curry is the best way of using the greater part of the meat, as rather fat meat is the most suitable for this dish, and nothing answers so well as a loin of mutton. Of course, it is best made of fresh meat, but as we have this it will do

very well. Alice, will you tell me exactly how to make the curry?"

"Put a little dripping in the frying-pan, and fry in it two onions and three sour apples cut in small slices, till they are a good brown. Then mix three teaspoonfuls of curry powder with one of flour and a pinch of salt, to a smooth paste in a little stock. Put this into the frying-pan, with the meat cut into small pieces, and when it is well browned turn it all into a stew-pan with a little more stock, just enough to cover the meat, and leave it to simmer for a few hours, as long as possible."

"What else is required for the curry, Lucy?"

"Rice, Carolina rice is the best."

"How do you cook the rice, Janet?"

"Wash it, drain it dry, then throw it into a saucepan of boiling water, with some salt, and keep it boiling fast for about twenty minutes; then drain it and put it in a sieve in front of the fire to dry, and shake it occasionally so as to dry it equally."

"Quite right; but if it is not convenient to put it before the fire it will do just as well on the hob, as the only object is to keep it hot. It should be closely covered, too, till it is wanted, and then served either separately on

a hot dish, or heaped up round the curry. You must always remember, in preparing the rice, that you cannot be sure that it will take exactly twenty minutes to cook, as some kinds take longer than others; so you must watch it carefully, and take it off as soon as it is soft and before it gets sippy. It will be none the worse for drying a little longer in the sieve before the fire. With the small pieces of mutton we will make a potato pie for the servants' supper, as there are sufficient cold potatoes left from yesterday's dinner; but you all know so well how to do it that I need not question you about it, but only remind you that there must be no lumps left in the potatoes—they must be mashed quite smooth, with stock, not water, and do not fall into your usual mistake of putting in too much onion—a little is an improvement, but more than a little spoils the dish. The same remark applies to the salt and pepper. You will find sufficient gravy to pour over the meat at the bottom of the dish under that dripping from yesterday's joint."

The best use of the cold mutton having been arranged, the girls made suggestions for joints of meat, and everything else required for the day's meals, and then started off with Miss Down in a pony carriage which was waiting at the door. They were driven by an

old man who acted as groom, gardener, and general factotum at Spike House. Underneath the seats were stowed away two large baskets, in which to bring home their purchases; and the tradesmen in the little town, two miles away, seemed quite accustomed to seeing the fat pony draw up at their doors, and the occupants of the carriage come in with a long list of their requirements. Whilst one of the party actually transacted the business, choosing and observing the quality and price, the others looked on, and tried to profit by her experience, knowing that their own turn to do the active purchasing would come round in time.

"It is a great point to know a good thing from a bad one by the look of it," said Miss Gwen, as the girls were starting, to Narcissa, who thought this the most extraordinary school she had ever heard of. "And there is nothing like going to the shops and seeing for themselves; it is the only way to teach them how to buy well and economically. But now, as you have to learn all the rest of our school arrangements, we must not linger too long in the kitchen. The other girls will have returned from their walk by this time; let us go and see what they are doing."

(To be continued.)

## ESTHER.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Nellie's Memories, &c.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### FLURRY AND FLOSSY.



"HAT a funny little name! I could not help saying so to Miss Lucas as I followed her up the old oak staircase with its beautifully carved balustrades.

"It is her own baby-abbreviation of Florence," she returned, pausing on the landing to take breath, for even that slight ascent seem to weary her. She was quite pale and panting by the time we arrived at our destination. "It is nice to be young and strong," she observed, wistfully. "I am not very old, it is true"—she could not have been more than eight and twenty—"but I have never enjoyed good health, and Dr. Cameron says I never can hope to do so; but what can you expect of a crooked little creature like me?" with a smile that was quite natural and humorous, and seemed to ask no pity.

Miss Ruth was perfectly content with her life. I found out afterwards she evoked rare beauty out of its quiet everyday monotony, storing up precious treasures in homely vessels.

Life was to her full of infinite possibilities, a gradual dawning and brightening of hopes that would meet their full fruition hereafter. "Some people have strength to work," she said once to me, "and then plenty of work is given to them; and some must just keep quiet and watch others work, and give them a bright word of encouragement now and then. I

am one of those wayside loiterers," she finished with a laugh; but all the same everyone knew how much Miss Ruth did to help others, in spite of her failing strength.

The schoolroom, or nursery, as I believe it was called, was a large pleasant room just over the drawing-room, and commanding the same view of the garden and cedar-tree. It had three windows, only they were rather high up, and had cushioned window seats. In one of them there was a little girl curled up in company with a large brown and white spaniel.

"Well, Flurry, what mischief are you and Flossy concocting?" asked Miss Lucas, in a playful voice, for the child was too busily engaged to notice our entrance.

"Why, it is my little auntie," exclaimed Flurry, joyously, and she scrambled down, while Flossy wagged his tail and barked. Evidently Miss Ruth was not a frequent visitor to the nursery.

Flurry was about six, not a pretty child by any means, though there might be a promise of future beauty in her face. She was a thin, serious-looking little creature, more like the father than the mother, and no one could call Mr. Lucas handsome. Her dark eyes—nearly black they were—matched oddly, in my opinion, with her long fair hair; such pretty fluffy hair it was, falling over her black frock. When her aunt bade her come and speak to the lady who was kind enough to promise to teach her, she stood for a moment regarding me gravely with childish inquisitiveness before she gave me her hand.

"What, are you going to teach me?" she asked. "I don't think I want to be taught, auntie; I can read, I have

been reading to Flossy, and I can write, and hem father's handkerchiefs. Ask nurse."

"But you would like to play to dear father, and to learn all sorts of pretty hymns to say to him, would you not, my darling? There are many things you will have to know before you are a woman."

"Humph," observed Flurry, a little doubtfully; "I don't mean to be a woman ever, I think; I like being a child better. Nurse is a woman, and nurse won't play; she says she is old and stupid."

A happy inspiration came to me. "If you are good and learn your lessons, I will play with you," I said, rather timidly, "that is, if you care for a grown-up playfellow."

I was only seventeen, in spite of my *prononcé* features, and I could still enter into the delights of a good drawn battle of battledore and shuttlecock. Perhaps it was the repressed enthusiasm of my tone, for I really meant what I said; but Flurry's brief coldness vanished, and she caught at my hand at once.

"Come and see them," she said; "I did not know you liked dolls, but you shall have one of your own if you like," and she led me to a corner of the nursery where a quantity of dolls in odd costumes and wonderfully constrained attitudes were arranged round an inverted basket.

"Joseph and his brethren," whispered Flurry. "I am going to put him in the pit directly, only I wondered what I should do for the camels—this is Issachar, and this Gad. Look at Gad's turban."

It was almost impossible to retain my gravity. I could see Miss Lucas smiling

they are larger and longer at the back than they were.

A revival of the "jersey" in several forms may be seen at many of the first-class drapers' under various names. They are some of them very elaborately braided, and some of them for out-of-door wear have a cape to match. One of them I most admired was of dark green, and quite plain except for six or seven rows of narrow gold braid on the edge of the basque, cuffs, and collar.

## GRADUATES IN HOUSE-KEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

THE room in which the cookery classes were held was, on a small scale, like the lecture theatre of a college. At one end was a cooking range, while rows of seats, raised one above the other, ran round the other three sides of the room, the middle of which was occupied by tables. Miss Down occupied a raised seat at one side, whence like a presiding genius she watched and directed; whilst the girls whose turn it might be to practise worked away at the tables or range, with rolled-up sleeves, larged bibbed aprons, and caps.

Sometimes there was no actual cookery done, but Miss Down delivered a lecture, the amphitheatre seats being filled with students, note-book in hand. They were expected to write out their notes in full afterwards, and were questioned on the subjects treated the following morning. These lectures dealt generally with the principles of cookery, rather than with the actual details, and the first one which Narcissa attended was on the important subject of soups.

"It is a useful habit," remarked Miss Down, in beginning, "to reflect before preparing a dish, what your object is in making it." She then went on to explain the various kinds of soup, and their suitability to various purposes. There are thick soups, clear soups, and purées; meat soups and maigre soups, with almost endless possibilities of varying each kind. There are, however, a few general principles which apply to all. Meat, and bones from which it is wished to extract the goodness, must be put on in cold water, and should be allowed to simmer, and not to boil, altogether five or six hours. The reason is that the albumen, which is one of the principal components of meat, will only dissolve in cold or tepid water, and hardens when boiled, just as we see to be the case with the white of eggs, which is the same thing as the albumen of meat. Therefore, if we have a joint of meat to boil, we put it at once into boiling water, in order that this albumen may immediately harden and form a kind of coating, to prevent the other valuable parts of the meat from escaping. For soup, however, our aim is to extract all the juices—therefore, the albumen must be dissolved. After it has dissolved, it will coagulate again, and, with the fat, rise to the top of the water, forming a scum, which must be skimmed off at once, as it brings the impurities in the stock to the surface with it, so clearing the soup; but if allowed to remain, and the stock allowed to boil, it would partly dissolve and partly sink to the bottom again, so making it almost impossible to clear the soup. As I said before, white of egg, which is commonly used for clearing soup, is albumen too, and collects the impurities in just the same way as the albumen in the meat.

Hot soup has great restorative properties and is easily digested—hence the favour in which it is held as a preliminary to the more solid portion of the dinner. For this purpose,

when not intended to form an important part of the meal, clear soups are generally preferred. When intended to supplement a somewhat plain or scanty meat course, purées or thickened soups are more useful, though the lighter kinds of thick soups are used alternately with the clear ones, and if there are more than a few persons to partake, it is usual to have a tureen of each of the two kinds on the table. For hungry boys or for the servants' table, a more substantial soup of a nondescript sort is made by adding to the stock any pieces of meat, bread, vegetable, or anything else the larder contains, cut up into small pieces and served in the soup.

Maigre soups—that is to say, those made entirely from vegetables with no meat stock—are generally used as clear soups, for an invigorating commencement to a dinner. Many persons who dine late prefer to take no meat in the middle of the day, but take strong soup. For such purposes, a nourishing maigre soup can be made, which would be too substantial for dinner, by putting into a purée of lentils or haricots, a little milk, and a quantity of finely chopped vegetables.

There are a few other general principles to remember about soups. The stock, of whatever kind, must never be allowed to remain in the saucepan after it has been sufficiently cooked, or it will certainly have an unpleasant flavour, and probably go sour. It must be turned out at once into an earthenware pan, and left in a cool place till wanted.

The thickening, whether flour, tapioca, or whatever it may be, must be mixed smooth in a basin with a very little cold water, or stock, and only added to the hot soup a few minutes before it is wanted, after which it must be stirred all the time.

It is no use trying to make good soup from bones unless they are well broken up, as the gelatine, the valuable part of the bones, is only dissolved in the outer portion of the bones, that with which the water comes in contact. Therefore the greater extent of surface exposed, the more gelatine you will obtain.

Gelatine, though very useful, has no flavour, therefore soup made from bones alone is very tasteless. The portion of the meat which supplies the flavour is called ozmazome, and the object must be to obtain as much of this as possible, therefore remember that freshly killed meat yields more than that which has been hung some time, that veal and lamb contain less than beef and mutton, and that brown meats in general supply more than white.

Stock must not have the vegetables or other flavouring added to it till shortly before it is served. If put in when the stock itself is made, a day or more before it is used, they will lose their flavour, and the vegetables become discoloured.

These were a few of the main points of Miss Down's lecture, which was illustrated by experiments. Some bones, unbroken, were set to stew in one saucepan, and an equal weight pounded in another saucepan, which proved her theory of the importance of chopping up the bones. The necessity of using cold water to dissolve the albumen of meat was also triumphantly asserted by the superior strength and clearness of some stock made from a pound of meat in cold water, which one of the elder girls had been carefully skimming, while another saucepan in which a pound of meat had been set on in boiling water presented only a muddy-looking and comparatively tasteless fluid.

"Now, before we leave the subject of soups," said Miss Down, "Miss St. Adrian has kindly promised to enlighten us a little about German soups, which I believe are rather different from ours." So saying, Miss Down vacated her raised seat, and sitting down amongst the girls, motioned to Narcissa to take her place.

Narcissa looked dismayed. To deliver a regular lecture in this way was an ordeal she was not at all prepared for, and though she had made a few notes beforehand, it was only with the idea of assisting her memory in a sort of confidential chat with a small class of girls. However, there was no help for it, so after an appealing glance at her aunt, who persistently looked the other way, she ascended the steps into Miss Down's high seat, and, trembling with nervousness, began. It being her first essay at anything of the kind, her language and manner of description were neither fluent nor clear, so we will give the substance of her remarks in a few words.

She explained that soup is used at least once a day in all German households, frequently twice; but though they often use meat stock flavoured with vegetables, such as is common with us, in many parts of Germany meat is scarce and dear, while milk and fruit are plentiful almost everywhere. Therefore, necessity being the mother of invention, they make a great deal of their soup without either meat or vegetables.

Milk soup, which is served almost daily in country houses in Germany, is a general name for any kind of soup of which milk forms the foundation. Narcissa said that on first going to live in Germany she had asked a native how to make milk soup, and the reply was, "My dear, you ask me how to make milk soup! It is as though I asked you how you English make pudding. We make it every way."

The most common form of it is a quart of milk, with a small teacupful of sago, pearl barley, ground rice, grôats of barley, oats, or buckwheat. Oats must first be washed in warm water and skimmed. For oats, barley, and buckwheat the water in which they are set on to boil must be hot, for ground rice boiling, for sago and pearl barley cold. Tapioca and semolina are not known in country places in Germany, but might be used in the same way as sago. The three first mentioned must boil an hour, ground rice a quarter of an hour, and sago and pearl barley rather more than an hour. When done, the milk is added cold, with salt to taste, the whole boiled up once and served. Each ingredient to be stirred while being mixed with the water, and occasionally while boiling. This is the general principle of milk soups, but other things are added according to fancy. One of the favourite additions is pumpkin, peeled, cut in pieces, and boiled in water; then pressed through a colander and added to the soup at the same time as the milk. Chestnuts are also used. After removing the outer husk they are put in a pan of warm water for a few minutes, then taken out, peeled, and stewed in a little cold water till soft, rubbed through a sieve back into the stock, and the milk poured on to them, and flavoured with mace.

This amount of information would not have been given if Miss Down had not extracted it by means of asking leading questions, the girls chiming in also with questions and remarks, as they were encouraged to do when Miss Down herself was speaking. Narcissa stopped speaking now, and was evidently meditating a descent from her high seat, when one of the girls asked if she was not going to say something about the fruit, which she had mentioned in connection with milk.

Thus reminded, Narcissa resumed her seat, and explained to them that in districts where fruit is plentiful it is very much used for soup. Apples, currants, plums, bilberries, chestnuts, all kinds of fruit are used. It is stewed in water, then taken out and rubbed through a strainer back into the water. Some kind of thickening has been boiling meanwhile, as for milk soup, and when done enough the fruit stock is poured on to it, as was done with

the milk, and flavoured with a little cinnamon, lemon-peel, or cloves. That made with plums or bilberries is of a beautiful rich red colour. If apples are used, they must be rather sharp, and while they are stewing the peels and cores have been cooking separately, and are poured through a strainer on to the apples. This soup is flavoured with sugar, grated lemon-peel, and pounded almonds and cinnamon, and thickened with a little potato flour.

Miss Down had a habit, which the girls thought very unpleasant, of perceiving everything that went on around her, even though she appeared to be gazing absently in the opposite direction. She always knew in a moment if anyone was not attending to what she said. Such an one might fix her eyes ever so firmly on the teacher, and stare most unwinkingly, but if her thoughts were away Miss Down seemed to know by instinct, and would suddenly ask the delinquent a question, to her great confusion. On this occasion, the moment Narcissa had ceased speaking Miss Down rose and said, as their time was not quite up she wished to finish what she had been telling them the previous week about steaks.

"Annie Black, do you know what different sorts there are?" she asked, suddenly.

Annie Black had been engaged in drawing an elaborate sketch of a lady in full evening dress in her note-book, a vision of herself in the golden future, perhaps, and weakly imagined that the lecturer would believe that the rapidly moving pencil was jotting down her words of wisdom. Perhaps a lurking smile or a look of interest greater than Annie usually evinced at her lessons betrayed her, but as the last fascinating twist was being given to the ringlets of the lovely being, Miss Down's sharp voice roused the artist, who blushed and stammered, and answered not.

"Can no one tell me anything about steaks?"

"Yes," answered a voice from the back row; "rump steaks are the tenderest and the dearest. Beef steaks are three or four pence a pound cheaper, but are generally tough and hard."

"Then you would always buy rump-steak, would you, Janet?"

"No, if I only wanted it for mincing, or stewing, or any dish where it would be cut very small, I should buy ordinary beef-steak; but if it was for boiling I should have rump-steak; unless I was poor," she added, thoughtfully, which raised a laugh amongst the girls, as Janet was famed for her cautiousness.

"Can anybody think of anything else Janet might try, if she could not afford rump-steak?"

"Yes, I should buy fillet steak," answered Ruth Stanley. "It is quite as tender, but has not quite so good a flavour, and does not look quite so nice, but it is at least a penny a pound less than rump-steak, and very few people would know the difference. That was fillet we had yesterday, Janet, and nobody ever suspected it was not rump-steak."

"Please, Miss Down, what is Chateaubriand? Isn't that a sort of steak?" asked another voice. "While I was away with my aunt we had it at a restaurant, and it was tenderer than any steak I ever tasted."

"Chateaubriand is a dish you do not often get in private houses in England," replied Miss Down, "though it has the best flavour of any kind of steak. It is really the undercut of the sirloin, consequently it is expensive, and many butchers object to cut it, as it spoils a favourite joint. In large households, where a sirloin of fourteen or fifteen pounds weight can be used, people sometimes take out the undercut and broil it as a steak, so as to avoid paying the exorbitant price charged for it alone; but you cannot get a sufficiently large piece unless you buy a very large sirloin."

This ended the day's instructions in cookery, and they soon dispersed, to assemble again shortly for more intellectual pursuits.

(To be continued.)

## THE GIRL'S OWN HOME.

TO OUR READERS.—The Editor, in presenting the following additional subscription list, just sent to him by Mr. Shrimpton, wishes to express his great dissatisfaction at the lack of enthusiasm shown by his readers in collecting money for the establishment of their home, which is intended for the poor work-girls of London. It has taken fourteen months to collect £630—only half the amount required. The readers of *The Girl's Own Paper* collected more than £1,600 in less time. Surely the girls will not allow such a disgraceful contrast to the generosity of the masculine gender to remain, but will prove their sincere Christian sympathy with their sisters in a humbler station by doing all in their power this glad Christmastide to raising them from miserable lodgings, and from a highly dangerous condition of life, to the brightness and comfort of a GIRL'S OWN HOME.

Do, dear readers, for the love of the Holy Child and the poor, come forward to the rescue—send for collecting cards to Mr. Shrimpton, of the Homes for Working Girls, 32, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, or to the Countess of Aberdeen (the originator of the movement), Haddo House, Aberdeen, and thus interest your friends in the work, that the home may become a reality during the coming year.

Collected by Miss G. Christian, £1 15s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Flowers, 13s. 6d.; Collected by Miss G. Hall, 10s.; Collected by Mrs. G. Hope Murray, 16s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Unwin, £1 3s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Ina Holme, 5s. 6d.; Collected by Miss A. Booth, 14s. 6d.; Collected by Mrs. Soden, 1s.; Collected by the Residents of Garfield House, 10s. 2d.; Collected by Miss Florence Middleton, 9s. 10d.; Collected by Miss A. G. Watts, 10s.; Collected by the Misses Shaw, 5s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Ailie Lugar, £1 3s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Maggie Dalton, 10s. 9d.; Collected by Miss Deane, £2; Collected by Miss Radcliff, 5s. 11d.; Miss Edith Laws, 5s.; The Old Pupils Working Party of the Burlington Middle Class Schools, £1 12s. 10d.; Collected by the Residents of Morley House, £5 2s. 1d.; Collected by Miss Winifred Wood, 6s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Marie C. Sturgeon, £1; Collected by Miss Maggie E. Coe, £2 11s. 6d.; Collected by the Residents of Victoria House, 17s. 4d.; Collected by Miss Rose Hardeman, 7s.; Collected by Miss Agnes J. Newham, 4s. 8d.; Collected by Miss Blanch Gunn, 8s. 8d.; Collected by the Residents of Norfolk House, £3 5s. 7d.; Collected by Miss Strachan, £1 3s. 6d.; Collected by Miss Ethel Peters, 3s. 6d.; Collected by Miss A. Stirk, 11s. 6d.; A Friend of the G. O. P., 2s. 6d.; Annie, 1s.; Linda, 5s.; Collected by the Residents of Alexandra House, £2 5s.; Collected by Miss M. Sharp, 14s.; Collected by Miss Jessie Offin, 7s.; Collected by Miss Rose Hardeman, 2s.; Miss J. M. Stevenson, 3s.; B. T., 2s.; A. L. D., 1s.; Collected by Miss Mary Maggs, 7s. 6d.; Marie, 2s. 2d.; Collected by Miss Alice Currie, 12s.; Collected by Miss Grace Ling, £1 15s.; Miss Magdalene Scott, 2s.; Little Emily, 3s.; Miss S. Silke, 5s.; Collected by Miss Mary K. Keeling, 11s.; A. P., 5s.; Collected by Miss Gertrude Peel, £4; L. F., 2s. 6d.; Sandown, 3s.; Miss M. Tarrant, 5s.; Miss Cunningham, 1s.; "Every Little Helps," 3s.; A Sympathiser, 2s.; E. O., 5s.; Wynnefrede, 1s.; J. A. G., 1s.; Collected by Black Bess, 3s. 6d. Total, £43 7s. 6d. Total amount received to October 30th, 1883, £632 7s. 6d.

## THE ORNAMENTS WORN IN MANY LANDS.

By RUTH LAMB.

### CHAPTER I.

"CAN a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?" is the question asked by one of the greater prophets in Holy Writ. I was reminded of it when, at the Crystal Palace a number of years ago, I witnessed a little scene which made an interesting comment on the text quoted above.

I was standing with my friends in such a position that I could distinctly see one of those mimic groups which represent the natives of far-away and still savage lands. Each figure in the group wore, as an ornament, a large ring through the nose. Whilst glancing towards it, I noticed two well-dressed females, one of whom was talking and gesticulating with much animation. She pointed towards the savage group, evidently in much displeasure, whilst her companion, a gentle-looking lady, whose face was turned in our direction, endeavoured to pacify her indignant friend.

At a loss to understand this little scene, and wondering at the loud tones and excited gestures of the one speaker, we drew a little nearer, so as to catch a glimpse of her face. To our astonishment, we saw that the woman, though neatly dressed in the English fashion, was evidently a native of the land which had furnished the original types of the mimic group before us. Features, complexion, and hair were identical, and in addition there was the large, plain gold ring in the nose of the angry woman.

Her story was subsequently told to us. She was a convert to Christianity and a person of great intelligence, who had come to England with the lady who was with her at Sydenham, a missionary's wife. Her indignation had been aroused by the scene presenting her countrymen in all their native barbarism of dress, which was almost undress, and it required all the eloquence of her friend to pacify her. At length, by much talking, in what was to all beside an unknown tongue, the lady explained that these groups had been formed for the instruction of those who could not travel in far-away lands and see for themselves how the inhabitants looked and lived when at home.

The sight of the nose-ring brought the text to mind.

The young woman had given up her idols, left her country and her father's house, and adopted a different dress, but even when amongst strangers she clung to her nose ornament, and could not be induced to lay it aside.

We are very apt to laugh at the idea of putting a ring through the nose, yet make no objection to hanging the most elaborately wrought gold and the most costly jewels through the ears; yet the one is quite as ancient an ornament as the others. It is thought that the ornament called an earring of gold, which Abraham's servant gave to Rebekah, was really a nose-ring, though in the margin it is translated "a jewel for the forehead." One learned Roman writer in the fourth century translates the words, "an ornament for the nose." Whether correctly or not in this case, we have abundant evidence in the Bible that nose-rings were worn by the Jewish and other Eastern ladies.

Isaiah gives a list of the ornaments of which the daughters of Zion were so proud in his day.

There were "tinkling ornaments about their feet" which made a noise as they walked, cauls for the head, and round tires like the moon, probably crescent-shaped semicircles of gold and precious stones which



## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.



THE establishment at Spike House was increased about this time by the addition of a boy, though what position he would fill did not at first appear.

His advent occurred in this way. Narcissa, who was hardly yet reconciled to school life, the

rules and regulations of which were a constant trial to her after the free life she had led, was one day sitting at her bedroom window, gazing dreamily at the canal which lay about a quarter of a mile away. Her attention was

presently attracted by a coal-barge, creeping slowly along, drawn by a decrepit old horse, harnessed with a rope to a short mast on the barge. His pace was exceedingly slow but steady, and Narcissa thought the presence of the very ragged, barefooted boy at his side hardly necessary to goad him on, for the poor beast seemed like a machine which, being wound up, would continue to work without any attention. The boy evidently found his calling rather dull, for he was seeking desperately for amusement in various ways. At last Narcissa saw him, with a hasty backward glance at the barge, scramble up on to the horse's back, where, after a series of futile and ludicrous attempts, he succeeded in gaining his feet and standing erect. He had probably seen the performance of some travelling circus recently, for he next attempted the tip-toe, butterfly poise, which so wins the heart of youth when performed by the fair equestrienne of the circus. The result was hardly so fascinating when the actor was a particularly dirty and clumsy boy, and as he stood jerking one disreputable leg in the air, and kissing his hands to an imaginary audience, the effect was so utterly ridiculous that Narcissa laughed aloud.

The old blind horse, with swollen knees and starting ribs, bore it patiently enough; but even a worm will turn, and when the performer, growing bold with success, began dancing a hornpipe, the animal thought it time to rid himself of the too troublesome mosquito playing such pranks upon his back, and gave a sudden little jump and shake. This remonstrance of the long-suffering steed was so unexpected that the boy lost his balance and fell heavily upon a heap of stones by the side of the towing-path. Narcissa's diversion was changed to anxiety as she saw him lie motionless, whilst the horse went limping on as before. A man who sprawled lazily smoking on the pile of coals in the barge, took his pipe from his mouth, the better to stare at the prostrate figure past which they were slowly moving, but made no movement towards stopping the boat, and before Narcissa could believe in his heartless indifference, the whole affair, horse, barge, and all had disappeared round a wooded bend of the canal.

Narcissa ran to her aunt, and at her desire guided Green, the old coachman, to the spot where the boy still lay unconscious, and between them they carried him to the house. Miss Gwen, who always knew what to do in an emergency, applied remedies which soon restored consciousness, and then, examining a bad cut on the boy's head, and various smaller

ones, said with decision, "There is nothing here that we cannot cure ourselves without a doctor. Green, carry him into the little basement bedroom, and I will soon shave and plaster his head."

"You're never going to have him in the house and nurse him yourself, m'm! Why, them canal boys is the worst little limbs as is, and I should have thought that last youngster as you took without a character, and turned out a bad 'un, would have learnt you a lesson, m'm."

Green had served Miss Gwen for many years, and felt at liberty to speak his mind freely to her; but their differences of opinion always ended amicably in the mistress having her own way; and before long the bewildered boy found himself for the first time in his life in a clean bed, with most of his matted hair cut off, and himself washed clean, a condition which, being unparalleled in his history, was rather uncomfortable.

"Where are your parents, James?" asked Miss Gwen of the waif she had rescued, as soon as he was well enough to talk.

"I dunno," he said, indifferently, "I never 'ad any real father and mother, not as I ever heard of, but I 'ad a step-father once, in the hawking line, and we got along pooty comfortable, till he went and hooked it."

"Did what, James?"

"Oh, took himself off, yer know. I ain't se'd 'im since."

Miss Gwen talked for some time to the boy, and thought she saw, beneath a very rough exterior, signs of a good disposition. She found, too, that he was very unwilling to return to his hard life on the canal, so after a good deal of questioning, she asked—

"Would you like to stay here for a time, and help my man in the garden and stable? I will give you good clothes, and board and lodging, and after a while, if you behave well, you shall have wages."

Jim did not take long to decide, but emphatically assured Miss Gwen that he would like it very much indeed, and gladly agreed to do his best to give up all the low language he indulged in, and to cultivate a more respectful manner of addressing his betters. And so he came to be a permanent addition to the staff at Spike House, and before long, so satisfactory were his efforts to please, that he was promoted to indoor work.

Miss Gwen was always trying to do good in some way, and encouraged the girls to think of and relieve the sick and poor. She would sometimes take one of them with her to visit sick people, and would talk over with them the best way of relieving their misery.

To make the girls the better able to help the poor, they had occasional lessons in economical cookery for the poor, and the making of nourishing dishes for the sick.

They had, for instance, lectures on economical stews, eking out a small quantity of meat, with various vegetables, or potatoes, peas, rice, haricot beans, or lentils, which are being both cheap and nourishing. But as rice, as well as potatoes, carrots, and other roots contain very little nitrogen, which is the tissue-forming element in food, it is necessary, in order to provide a strengthening as well as palatable dish, to mix these with some of the leguminous seeds—lentils, peas, or beans—which have an excess of this element. They were taught, therefore, to use rice with haricot beans, lentils with carrots, and so on, the variety making the dish more palatable, digestible, and nutritious. The lentils and beans were well washed, then soaked all night, and boiled in the same water as they were soaked in. They were then further cooked, with a small quantity of meat cut into small pieces, and any other vegetables, in a Bain Marie, an excellent contrivance for preventing the stew

from ever reaching boiling point, which is the condition most carefully to be avoided.

But as Miss Gwen's object was to enable the girls to teach the poor themselves, who would certainly not possess anything but the most ordinary cooking utensils, she let them devise all kinds of make-shift stewing pans. These were generally a large jug, or jar, or pudding basin, in a saucepan of water, care being taken that the jar was not of too thick earthenware, so that the heat may get through to the contents—the meat and vegetables being in the jar, while the water in the saucepan was kept boiling; the contents of the jar being kept below that of the water by the evaporation which is always going on. The one main principle which was impressed upon the girls' minds in connection with stewing, was that the temperature during cooking should never exceed 140 degrees, nor be less than 130; for the reason that, as they had learnt in their lectures on soup-making, the albumen of the meat hardens when the water is too hot, as is the case with the white of an egg; this is to be avoided, as it makes the meat hard, and does not allow the juices of the meat to mix with the vegetables and make good gravy. On the other hand, if the water is so cool that all the albumen is allowed to dissolve, the gravy becomes strong, but the meat itself remains tasteless and insipid. It is important, therefore, to keep the stew just so hot that the albumen is beginning slightly to coagulate, not sufficiently to harden it, but only enough to prevent its too free escape. Skin of beef and other coarse parts of the meat are quite as nutritious as the most expensive joints, but owing to their coarseness are tough and hard. Cooked in this way, however, they are tender and easily digestible.

Sometimes these stews were made stronger by cooking the vegetables in weak stock instead of water. Bones were bought for the purpose, and after being broken up as small as possible were stewed for some hours and then carefully strained out, as little pieces of bone are dangerous amongst the meat. Additional flavouring was given by a sprinkling of sweet herbs, and a little onion and carrots or turnips cut in slices and fried, with any other vegetables that happened to be plentiful—celery, mushrooms, greens of all kinds, or tomatoes, tinned or fresh.

There was a constant demand for these appetising stews from the parish visitors in the neighbouring town, and the little pony-carriage rarely made a journey without leaving a jar of some savoury stews for the hungry or nourishing broth for the sick at some address which had been sent them for the purpose.

For their own home-cookery, Miss Gwen was almost as particular about the manner of serving as of cooking a dish, and nothing was allowed to pass without reproof that did not look as well as taste as nice as possible. Meat pies, for instance, were always ornamented with a little bunch of parsley in the hole at the top; cabbages were chopped up and pressed into small moulds, each large enough for a single helping, so that a dish would hold five or six pretty shapes of cabbage. Stewed Normandy pippins and baked pears were ornamented with very thin strips of lemon-peel laid crosswise on each piece. The dishes containing joints of meat were ornamented in the German fashion, with slices of turnip, carrot, or beetroot, with a touch of white of egg to secure them, and prevent them falling into the gravy. Fowls, in addition to the ordinary forcemeat balls and bacon, had round the dish slices of hard-boiled eggs, the white and yolk separated, and the white coloured by dipping into the juice of stewed beetroot. Great care was always taken that the dishes were not too full, so as to spill, or make the dish look untidy by

overflowing on to the rim. By attention to all such trifles, the table was made to look attractive and the dishes appetising; and Miss Gwen bestowed unbounded praise on any girl who invented for herself a new style of serving or garnishing a dish. She had a great objection to the use of steel knives for anything but meat, and always used silver for cutting all kinds of pastry.

Narcissa had heard a good deal of the occasional little parties, or social evenings, given at Spike House, and looked forward with interest to the first to be given after her arrival.

The girls did not all join them at once, but the elder ones were invited in rotation, a few at a time. The new-comers rather dreaded these occasions, but the more experienced ones looked forward to them as a pleasant break in the monotony of school life.

"It is really very pleasant, when you are used to it," said Minnie Selby to Narcissa, who was chatting with a few of her favourites amongst the elder girls; "but, you know, Miss Gwen leaves it nearly all to us—the entertaining and managing, I mean. Of course, she is always there, and I expect she really keeps an eye on everything, though she pretends not to; but it is a great anxiety for us." And Minnie threw herself back in her chair with a tragic air of being weighed down with her cares. But no amount of groaning could make her merry face look careworn, and she went on: "We have to sing, or play, just when there seems to be a suitable moment, and that is the point that most weighs me down—when is a suitable moment? I always give Miss Gwen a sort of a look when I think the entertainment is flagging, and she gives me a sort of a look back, which I have to interpret into either "play," or "sing," or "don't do anything," as the case may be. Oh! this is an anxious world!" and, with another groan, she subsided into temporary silence.

"Yes, Miss Gwen has these evenings, she says, to make us get out of awkward ways in company, and get accustomed to entertaining people, which I suppose girls cannot do by nature," chimed in Ruth Stanley. "But she is very angry if she thinks we put ourselves forward too much. She always says we had better be too bashful than too bold, but she expects us to hit the happy medium. As I am the eldest girl, I have to take care of the new ones who come in, and we always have one fresh girl each time, so that they get used to it by degrees."

Narcissa privately wondered if the guests did not rather object to being experimented on in this way; but when the evening came she changed her opinion, so pleasantly did the time pass. Miss Gwen had a large circle of friends, and she knew how to select those who would be pleased to meet, and would have some common objects of interest. The girls were told beforehand something of the guests who were expected, and had to provide a supply of suitable books, music, or pictures for their entertainment.

It was by no means a large party, for Miss Gwen would have been very sorry to begin introducing the girls to the gay society which, as she said, so soon rubs off the bloom of girlish modesty.

There was a little music, in which both hostesses and visitors joined, a good deal of it part-singing, with plenty of lively conversation, and some games amongst the younger guests. The girls were not permitted to stand in groups talking together, but were directed to move about amongst the visitors, forgetting themselves and thinking of others' comfort and amusement.

Two of the elder girls were always deputed to arrange the tea which was handed in the evening, and they were responsible for its being served properly; and they had to call

two or three girls quietly to help them in handing the cups and cakes, with only slight assistance from the servants. A small table was laid at one end of the drawing-room, with tea, coffee, bread-and-butter, and cakes. On this occasion the girls in charge had exercised their ingenuity in making new cakes. The two most successful attempts were two German varieties, which Narcissa had suggested. The recipe for the first, "almond cakes," was as follows:—

"Rub a quarter of a pound of butter into ten ounces of flour; add ten ounces of white sugar, and two ounces of almonds (blanched and chopped). Beat up two eggs, add to them twenty drops of essence of almond, and mix with the flour into a soft dough, adding a very little milk if necessary. Roll in the hand, and cut into small round cakes, flatten slightly, dip in white sugar, and bake lightly in a rather quick oven on flowered tins, not letting the cakes touch one another."

The other cakes, which are known in Germany as "Schürz-Küchen," are very quickly made, and most delicious. The ingredients are 4 teacupfuls of the best flour, 1 teacupful of cream, and 1 of fresh butter melted, 6 eggs (yolks and whites), well beaten, sugar to taste, not too much. The ingredients must be thoroughly well mixed, and the paste rolled out to the thickness of a florin. No butter must be used in the rolling out, and as little flour as may be to prevent sticking. Then with a spur paste-cutter cut the paste in strips of about three inches long, and cut with the spur a slit in the middle of the strip, something in this shape



Have ready in a saucepan boiling lard of depth sufficient to float a light object. The lard must be thoroughly hot, or the cakes will be spoilt. Throw one in, and if it rises almost immediately to the surface, the temperature of the lard is right; if not, the lard is not hot enough. The cakes must boil in the lard till they are of a light golden brown; they require but a few minutes. Take them out, lay them on a sieve to drain, sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar, and serve as hot as possible.

It was Narcissa's duty to instruct James in his duties on this evening, which was his first appearance before company as an indoor servant, and in his new "Buttons" suit, his excitement and importance were great. He handed the trays of cups very quickly and well, and when this light repast was over, he whispered to Narcissa:

"Is that all, miss?"

"Yes; you have done very nicely, and can go for the present, James." But her dismay was great when she saw him, having removed all the tea-things, come back into the room and sit down amongst the guests, settling himself with folded arms to enjoy a duet just then being sung!

(To be continued.)



## A PLEA FOR MUSIC.

By CLARA A. MACIRONE, late Professor in the Royal Academy of Music.

### SECOND LETTER.



MY DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I broke off in my former letter to you, on the above subject, with the thought that the principle of "a life for others" might have something to say upon this music question.

I think we may take for proved that it is a great power for good, and that it has been so used in the most remarkable manner throughout all the ages of the world—of which I gave a few instances in my former letter. There remains to be seen, firstly, whether its power be not needed now as much as ever, and, secondly, whether it is now an integral part and parcel of the education of the young as it ought to be.

On the first question, I know many opinions so much more deserving of a hearing than my own that perhaps your readers will forgive me for quoting a few, in case they may not have met with them, from the writings of men of the present day, whose testimony is valuable both from their knowledge of the power of music and of the present need of its influence.

If we refer to an article in the *Quarterly Review* on music, it tells us, "Music excites, represses, regulates, and relieves the life of emotion. These are its functions, and these are its uses. Life is rich, almost in proportion to its emotional activity. As a physical fact, music recreates exhausted emotion by nerve-currents generated through direct vibration of the nervous tissues; and by the same means music arouses and cultivates emotion with its highest activity. Again, life is noble, almost in proportion to the strength and balance of emotion, while control of emotional activity is as essential to worthy life as abundance of emotion." Now, if we appeal to the feeling and cultured opinion in America we can see what Boston has to say to us on the same subject. It speaks very much in the same tone and with still stronger emphasis.

"The very idea of a university is incomplete if it do not include music in its full circle of the elements of culture, and count it as one of the humanities. For music is a science, and music is a language, and on these grounds at least it claims a place among the branches of literature and science. The more prosaic and sordid a man's daily occupation, the more he needs outlooks and leadings to a higher life. The more he dwells among things, the greater his need of contact with a spirit greater than mere things; the material life must touch the immaterial; the body must have an indwelling soul with aspirations and affinities, with a life above and beyond the daily needs of this world. After the instincts of self-preservation, the strongest motives spring from the emotional nature; all that is best and most inspiring claims kinship with it. To the purest element in that emotional nature music appeals, always soothing if it cannot solace, rousing always the higher, never the lower, nature; it is a subtle, potent influence, moulding not only individual but national character."

Nor, if we turn to another side of the same subject, are the writers less united and strenuous in their opinions. In a remarkable article in *Good Words*, Mr. Haweis writes:—

"Music will one day become a powerful and acknowledged therapeutic; and it is one

## L A B O U R .

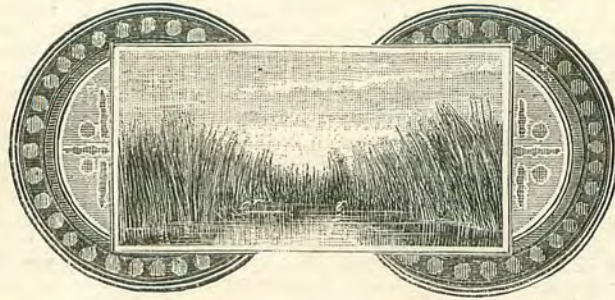
By J. H. A. HICKS.

Now the rosy hours of morning  
Wake thee from the night's repose,  
Fresh, with vigour crowned, uprising,  
Labour till the day shall close.  
Not with idle thoughts be musing,  
Up, be noble, and be true!  
In life's field of ceaseless labour  
Something waits for thee to do.

Every hour and every minute  
Brings its store of toil and care;  
Up, arise! and do thy duty,  
Act thy part and claim thy share.

Leave not till to-morrow's dawning  
What to-day might well be done,  
For the golden morrow coming  
May perchance thy life outrun.

Let the morning sunbeams find thee  
Working out some noble plan;  
Up, and bear thy standard bravely,  
And in earnest play the man.  
Toil with pleasure, cease not doing,  
Toil and care will soon be past;  
Labour now, while thou hast power,  
Rest comes sure and sweet at last.



## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

"AUNT, is it true that you keep Lent so strictly as not to allow any meat for the whole forty days?"

"No, my dear Narcissa, it is not true that no meat is allowed, as there is always some provided for any who choose to take it; but very few of the girls care to do so, as they prefer the novelty of a fish and vegetable diet. And I keep the whole time strictly, not because I think there is any particular sacrifice in abstaining from meat while eating dainties of every other kind, but because the change of diet is good for the girls, and it is useful for them to learn the value and methods of cooking the too-much-neglected vegetables, as well as fish."

"But does not their health suffer from going so long without meat?"

"My dear Narcissa, you are evidently very ignorant, and your mind is full of old-fashioned prejudices, which benefit nobody but the butcher. The girls are beginning their lessons on vegetables to-day. I advise you to join them, and pick up a few ideas for yourself."

Thus admonished, Narcissa went at once to the large cookery-room, where she found the girls already assembled, and Miss Down just beginning her instruction with a little scientific explanation of the use of food, and value of the various kinds.

"You must know," she was saying as Narcissa entered, and slipped quietly into a seat, "that the object for which we take food is to replace the wear-and-tear of the actual material of which the body is composed, and which is used up and replaced so rapidly that it is said we get an entirely new body about every forty days. But to keep the body in proper working order it is necessary not only to take food containing flesh and muscle making ingredients, but also some which tend principally to produce heat and vital energy, as well as those which contain minerals. A little child is taught that it is no use putting

stones on a fire and expecting to get a bright blaze, as from coal, and in the same way I want you to learn that it is no use eating food from which no useful substance can be extracted; and as you will get a brighter fire by feeding it with just enough good coal than by heaping it with rubbish, so you will get greater bodily energy and strength by eating just enough good food to replace the waste, than by overloading the digestion by too much food, however good. Can anyone tell me what are the principal mineral substances in our bodies?"

"Salt," cried a voice.

"Water," answered another.

"You are both right," replied Miss Down, "but water is by far the most important, though salt too is necessary to life. Three-quarters of the whole body is composed of water, and it is essential that we should take a considerable quantity of it in one form or another. Now beef contains more than seventy per cent. of water; that is to say, more than half of every pound of beef you buy is nothing but water, whereas peas, beans, lentils, oatmeal, and rice contain only about fourteen per cent., so that one pound of any of these contains more than three times as much solid nourishment as one pound of beef. Then, as for the other essential ingredients, while beef (fat and lean together) contains only about seventeen per cent. of flesh-forming substances, and about forty of heat and force-forming, the vegetables I have just mentioned contain, roughly speaking, about twenty per cent. of the former, and at least sixty of the latter. So you see that it is quite a delusion to imagine that meat supplies the chief or best kind of nourishment; in fact, we only obtain from animal food the very elements which the animal has previously obtained from the cells of plants."

"But I thought you said, Miss Down," put in one of the girls, "that water was the most important ingredient of all, and there-

fore, as beef contains the most of it, that must be the best food."

"You are quite right about the importance of water, Nellie, but we have to pay a shilling a pound for beef, which is rather an expensive way of purchasing water. It is decidedly more economical to use the kinds of solid food which contain the least water, supposing them to contain the other essentials, and make up the requisite quantity of liquid from the filter. Cheese is another much neglected article of diet; for it contains the same proportions of flesh-forming and heat-producing ingredients as beef, with only one-third as much water; so that a third of a pound of cheese contains as much nourishment as a pound of beef."

"But, Miss Down, it always gives me indigestion."

"That is because you eat it uncooked; many people find it indigestible in that way. We will take up that subject another time, as there are many ways of cooking so as to make it perfectly wholesome. But with cheese, as with the class of vegetables we have been speaking about, the danger with inexperienced vegetarians is of using too much of them, as they are too nutritious for people who live sedentary lives, except eaten sparingly, just as one would eat meat; the necessary quantity of food should be made up with fruit and fresh vegetables."

"But you allow eggs, Miss Down, and they are not vegetable."

"The very strict vegetarians will not use butter, eggs, or milk, but the majority use all three, as they do not invoke the killing of animals. I will give you a few simple vegetarian recipes, to show you the kind of dishes used, and shall expect you to invent some more elaborate ones for yourselves. There are plenty of soups without meat stock to be found in the cookery books, as well as those for milk, and fruit soups which Miss St.

Adrian told us of a short time ago; so that course need be no difficulty. A course of substantial dishes to take the place of meat and game can be managed with a Melton pie, which is made thus. Soak a dessertspoonful of tapioca and boil it; soak some haricot beans all night, and next day boil them till quite tender, which takes a long time; fry a very little onion and celery, or celery seed, in butter or oil, and put all, with the tapioca and beans, and an egg (a cold boiled one, cut up small, will do), and a little more butter, into a pie dish, cover with paste, and bake in a moderately hot oven.

Substantial and savoury dishes can be made, too, of either haricot beans or lentils, soaked and boiled, then drained dry, and either baked in the oven with a little milk, salt, and butter, or, better still, fried in butter with a little parsley and a very little onion chopped fine. The beans are sometimes simply soaked, and boiled for several hours, then drained and served with parsley butter poured over them.

Potatoes can be served in at least a dozen different styles, and tomatoes and celery, two of the most wholesome vegetables, can be cooked in a great variety of ways. Savoury rice is another useful dish; the rice must be boiled till nearly soft, then put into a baking-dish with a little butter, chopped parsley, pepper, salt, and mushroom ketchup, and baked slowly till all the liquid is absorbed.

The sweet dishes require no special preparation, except that neither suet nor dripping are allowed, and butter and oil must be substituted for them. I need only give you one new recipe, which you can vary a good deal. It is for a very light rice tart, suitable for supper, or to follow rather rich dishes. Wash and boil some rice, drain it, and put it in the oven with a few spoonfuls of milk. Leave it, stirring occasionally, till the milk is absorbed. Stew some apples, or any other fruit, with plenty of sugar; fill a tart dish nearly full of the fruit, and lay the rice over the top. Sprinkle sugar and nutmeg over it and bake in the oven till it is a nice brown colour.

"I think I have told you as much as you will remember about vegetables, but before we separate I want to know how to choose fish. Margery, can you tell me what kinds of fish will be in season during Lent this year?"

"Cod, soles, oysters, lobsters, and plaice."

"Those are the commonest ones. Does anyone know any others?"

"John dory and whiting."

"Whiting is only in season during the first half of Lent, and you have neither of you mentioned salt fish. Janet, do you remember how to choose the different kinds of fish?"

"I know some of them, Miss Down. Dory should be as thick as possible, and the medium-sized ones have the best flavour. The large ones are boiled like turbot, and the small ones are either baked or fried. Cod should have a thick head, and with flesh that looks white and flakey when it is cut, and the gills ought to be very red, and the eyes bright, and you can cook it in all manner of ways."

"Does anyone know how to choose a lobster?"

"Oh yes, Miss Down," answered Annie Black, who so rarely was ready with an answer that when she did know she replied eagerly, lest any one else should get before her. "Their tails have to be stiff and springy, so that if you lift them up they fly back with a jerk, and they must be heavy, and yet not full of water, which you have to find out by shaking them, and they ought to be a bright red, because they fade when they are stale, and then you have to smell them, and if they don't smell nice you don't buy them." Annie stopped breathless, amidst the laughter of the girls, with whom she was a never-ending

source of amusement, and Miss Down began again.

"Ruth, can you tell me the general rules for choosing fish of all kinds?"

"It should be short and thick, with bright silvery scales (if they have any), and bright red gills, and firm and stiff to the touch, instead of soft and flabby, and the eyes should be bright. But, Miss Down," Ruth went on, when she had replied to the question, "surely fish must contain a great deal of water? I wonder at your recommending it so much."

"It does contain a great deal, about seventy-five per cent. of water, and I should not recommend it as an economical food except in places where it can be bought at a low price. But, on the other hand, it contains less of the oleaginous elements than meat, and is less feeding, which makes it especially suitable food for people who lead sedentary lives and have a good deal of mental and little physical labour. It is valuable, too, for a change of diet on account of the mineral matters it contains. But now one more question before we stop. Minnie: Can you tell me, in a few words, any rules about boiling and frying fish?"

"Fish for boiling should be put for a short time after cleaning into water with a little vinegar and salt in it to make the flesh firm. The water it is boiled in must be slightly salted and just warm, unless it is a very large fish, then the water should be cold. It must be only simmered, and not boiled at all, till the skin begins to crack, which is a sign that it is done enough. For frying, there must be sufficient boiling fat to completely cover the fish, and the easiest way is to put the fish in a frying-basket and use a much larger and deeper pan than an ordinary frying-pan; the fish is not so likely to get burnt, and the basket can be easily lifted out and the fish drained, and the fat can be strained and used again."

"Very well remembered, Minnie; you have only forgotten one point, that fat which has been used for fish must be kept separate, and not used for anything else but fish afterwards, or it will give an unpleasant flavour. Baking is an easy and palatable way of cooking almost all kinds of fish, either whole or filleted. The fish must be well dried after cleaning, and then either baked in a Dutch-oven before a clear fire, or, if this cannot be managed, in a side oven in an ordinary baking-dish with a little butter, or small slices of fat bacon laid over and round it. Some kinds of fish are improved by a squeeze of lemon or a sprinkling of chopped parsley and breadcrumbs, and all kinds should have a little salt and pepper over them. The tin should be covered with a sheet of buttered kitchen-paper, and when served, the butter in which it is cooked should be poured over the fish. This is one of the most satisfactory ways of cooking fish, and though it is suitable for all kinds, it is specially so for fresh-water fish. I need only give you one recipe for fish cookery, as there are so many in all the cookery books. It is fish pudding, a favourite dish in Norway. Almost any kind of fish will do, though the Norwegians generally use cod. It is freed from bones, then chopped small, with salt and pepper, and mixed with a beaten-up egg, a little milk, flour, and butter, and boiled in a basin for an hour and a half, or two hours if a large quantity. It is served with melted butter, or any kind of fish sauce. If boiled in an ornamental mould instead of a basin, and covered with lobster or shrimp sauce, it makes a pretty as well as a light and palatable dish. And now you have had a very long lesson, and must be anxious for your walk, so we will stop at once."

Jim, Miss Gwen's new protégé, had been improving under her careful teaching, and was developing into a quite respectable "button," though he had not yet attained to the gravity

and quiet manner befitting an orthodox manservant. In character he was a curious mixture of good and bad; it seemed as though he was by nature frank and straightforward, but from his rough life he had acquired a number of faults which were difficult to overcome. The worst of these was an invincible habit of pilfering, which seemed to have become second nature to him; but if suspected of a theft he always confessed at once, and was never known to tell a lie.

Ruth Stanley took a special interest in the poor waif; she was always trying to improve him, and was much grieved by his thieving propensities.

"Oh, Jim!" she said, one day, "one of the lead pencils from my drawing-case is gone, and I am afraid I saw one in your hand this morning—did I?"

"You're always a askin' me if I ain't took somethink or other, miss; and it's too bad on a feller as is tryin' to live honest," he answered sulkily.

"But did you take it?" she persisted.

He hesitated, then went on rubbing his fender with extra zeal.

"Oh, well, there, I did take 'em, miss, and here they are in my pocket," he said at last, producing two pencils unblushingly.

"But you must learn not to steal, James; it is so very wrong, and foolish too, for you know I would have given you a pencil, if you had asked me."

"Yes, I knew you would, miss; so where was the good of me botherin' you with askin'?"

So ended nearly all his thefts. It seemed impossible to make him understand that there was any reason why he should not help himself to anything he wanted without the unnecessary trouble of asking permission. He looked upon it as one of the ladies' extraordinary whims, which were quite unaccountable to reasonable beings like himself, and he mentally classed it together with sundry other fads which afflicted him, such as not being allowed to join in the conversation while waiting at table—even though he might have a very thrilling anecdote to relate, which he was sure would interest the young ladies—and being expected to go all the way across the hall to show callers into the drawing-room, instead of pointing from the hall-door to the room in which they were likely to find Miss Gwen, and leaving them to introduce themselves. He spent many leisure moments in philosophical reflections on the strange manners of "the gentry," and the very unnecessary amount of trouble they gave both themselves and him.

But he was quite willing to indulge their whims, as they were very kind to him, and if Miss Gwen had requested him to stand on his head instead of his feet during dinner, or any other freak, he would have done his best to please her, for there was really no accounting for ladies' tastes.

Miss Gwen, on her part, though by no means blind to his serious faults, considered his perfect truthfulness a great point in his favour, and confidently hoped that with time and patience the evils might be overcome.

(To be continued.)



Janet shall go in the carriage to meet her."

"I am afraid, my dear, that Lydia will not be able to come so soon as we expected. My brother Maurice is seriously ill, and as you know how things are just now, Lydia has felt it her duty to set off at once to help to nurse him and look after the family."

If there is one test of character more reliable than another, it is bad news. We see at once of what sort of stuff people are made by the way in which such intelligence is received and the consequent words and actions of the recipients.

The first thought of the selfish is, "How will this affect me? Will my comfort, means, or convenience be interfered with by what has happened?"

The loving, tender-hearted listener pictures at once the position of those who are most immediately concerned in what has happened, and by force of hearty sympathy suffers with them. Her thought is all for the troubled ones; "She weeps with those who weep."

The active and helpful ask themselves, "What can we do to dry the tears, or, sharing the burden, make it the lighter for the shoulders on which it is now pressing?" With them the feeling of sympathy produces active effort on behalf of the sufferers. Words and tears of pity will not suffice for such as these; their sympathy is satisfied with nothing less than personal effort.

Then there are the easy, good-natured hearers, who never feel very deeply what concerns themselves, and can, therefore, hardly be expected to trouble their minds much about what happens to others, and more especially the absent. They hope that all will turn out right in the end, say they are sorry in a decent sort of fashion, and then dismiss the whole thing from their minds as rapidly as possible.

These last are very much like the good-natured people, with plenty of money in their pockets, who subscribe to everything, not because they care a single pin about the work or the object to which the contribution is to be applied, but because they find it easier to give than to say no to a friend. As to the success of the sowers, or the harvest reaped from their labour of love, they neither give a thought to the one nor offer a prayer for the other.

There were hearers of all the above sorts amongst the family group round the Brinnington breakfast-table that morning.

Miss Cranswick was the first to express her views, and she did so, not a little to the surprise of her hearers.

"What a nuisance!" she exclaimed. "If people must be ill, I wish they would manage it so as not to inconvenience everybody else. But surely Aunt Lydia will not think of staying to nurse Uncle Maurice! She had promised to go to Fell Foot, and I do not see that she has any right to break one engagement of long standing to enter upon another. If it only concerned herself, it would be different; but there are more of us to be thought of besides Uncle and Aunt Maurice, with their tribe of children,

sadly too many already. There is one comfort in it. She was not going with our party, and so our trip will not be interfered with."

Everybody turned with astonished looks to the speaker, hardly able to believe that, at such a time, self could so far assert its reign as to make a young girl forgetful of all beside. Forgetful of the father and active man of business taken from his work of bread winning, and laid prostrate and helpless; of the mother, in her weakness, rendered doubly hard to bear, because of the extra anxiety and call for additional strength to sustain it; of the troop of little ones, too young to be of much use, and wanting constant motherly supervision.

If Hilda thought of these at all, it was evidently only as so many possible hindrances in the way of her own pleasure.

Mr. and Mrs. Oakley were deeply distressed at the tidings received, and the latter even began to think if it would be possible for some new arrangement to be made, which would enable her to share the task of nursing and house-keeping with Aunt Lydia. But against this there was raised a chorus of dissenting voices.

Mamma needed rest and change, and must have them. "What could the young ones do?" was rather the question to be considered.

To give them justice, whilst feeling that all their delightful plans might be reversed, all their aerial castles demolished, no selfish remark issued from any lips save those of Hilda Cranswick.

Genuine sympathy was manifested in various ways.

In a thoughtful, manly fashion by Frank and Allan, the former being particularly alive to possible results, should the head of a large concern be long absent from his place.

Dorothy's tearful blue eyes told of the tender heart which realises the sorrows of the absent. Jack and Janet could hardly understand all the possibilities, but they were far from indifferent to the fact that Aunt Lydia was not coming, for one immediate disappointment awaited themselves. There would be no going in the landau to the station; no sitting on the box in turns and taking lessons in the art of driving a pair of horses, as they had hoped to do.

With the happy temperament of children they left all in papa's hands, and, with equally blessed faith in the paternal wisdom, felt sure that he would be able to make everything right somehow.

It would not, however, be true to assert that there was not a strong sense of disappointment in each young breast, and that the feeling was shared by the parents who realised, more fully than their children could do, the probable consequences of that innocent-looking letter.

They left the room in turns, that father, mother, and Frank might talk things over and decide for the rest.

Gladys was the last to go. She lingered a moment, however, until the rest were out of earshot, and then turning her sweet face towards her parents

said, "Mother, if it is only a question of finding a companion for you in place of Aunt Lydia, there need be no difficulty. I will gladly—no, I should say, willingly—give up the Swiss tour and go with you and the children to Fell Foot."

The three hearers turned loving looks towards the good, true face of the girl who had so cheerfully and readily offered to fill the gap if, by a sacrifice of the long-anticipated tour, she could smooth the way for the others to enjoy it.

"That is like you, Gladys," said Allan, who thoroughly understood the sister between whom and himself there were close *union and perfect confidence*.

"I could not desire a better companion, my dear," replied Mrs. Oakley, "if I thought of myself only. But I know what the loss would be to others and your own disappointment if you were left behind."

"I do not pretend to say that I should be glad to stay behind, only willing. We have all reckoned so much on this trip. But it would be better for one to relinquish it than for all to suffer by what cannot be helped, and what we are so sorry for. And when they were once fairly off, I should settle down very happily at Fell Foot. With you, mother, I could not help it, though I might seem a little grumpy at first."

Gladys gave a little bright laugh as she suggested this possibility, but Mrs. Oakley shook her head.

"Ah, Sunny! you need not threaten me with a first dull chapter in our holiday annals. You would be sure to make any place bright. But I hope some plan may be devised to render your presence at Fell Foot unnecessary. Now go to the others, my dear. We shall not forget your proposal."

(To be continued.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSE-KEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

MEANWHILE, how were Adrienne and her aristocratic father faring? Their fortunes had been more varied than Narcissa's, for after she left them the quiet little English town where they had settled for a time seemed intolerably dull, and they soon went abroad again. Moving from place to place, they presently lighted upon a little town in Normandy which seemed to suit them admirably. For here living was so inexpensive that Adrienne was no longer worried beyond endurance with the struggle to make both ends meet; and Mr. St. Adrian was happy in meeting with plenty of his fellow-countrymen, whom he was pleased to consider his equals in position. Some extracts from a letter from Adrienne to her sister at Spike House will tell us best of her welfare.

Ouville. March 1st.

"My dear Cissa,—Many thanks for your nice long letter. You seem to be busy at any rate, which, I suppose, in Aunt Gwen's opinion, ought to constitute happiness for a right-minded girl. . . .

"We are getting on very happily here in our little white cottage, and this is such a delightfully cheap place. Is it not dreadful of me, instead of being struck first of all by

the beauty or interest of a place, my first thought is always of the sordid kind! But you have not forgotten the old days yet, so you can excuse it.

"The people we mix with here are all, happily, in the same impecunious state as ourselves, though of course we none of us mention such vulgar facts, and all live here because we prefer Normandy to England. . . .

"You ask me to tell you any new ideas I pick up on domestic affairs, for the benefit of your most eccentric school. Perhaps I can give you a few new hints. Some of our friends here, who have lived a good deal in Russia, when they hand you tea also hand a plate with slices of lemon about the size of a crown piece. You take a piece of lemon and drop it in your tea instead of cream and sugar. It is rather sharp, certainly; but when you get used to it it is very refreshing, and improves and brings out the flavour of the tea.

"Everyone here lives on very light fare, at least so it seems to me after being accustomed for some months to the very substantial food of England. But I really like the light food better, and shall soon get into the way of making a hearty breakfast on an omelette, and dining fully on soup maigre and a salad.

"Our last new friends are an Italian family, who have introduced us to all sorts of cookery, new to me, which makes a great show, and, as they candidly admit, costs next to nothing where eggs and milk are plentiful, as they are here. They use cheese on all occasions, and I must tell you how to make a delicious cheese fondu, or puff, which they have constantly. They use the ordinary skim-milk cheeses, which, you remember, are so common everywhere on the Continent under different names. Our friends say they are quite as good for the purpose as the Parmesan cheese they have been accustomed to use in Italy, and I am sure the English or American cheese would do better still, as it is so much richer than either Parmesan or Normandy cheeses. If you find it too rich, try using half Cheddar and half Gruyère or Parmesan. This is the recipe for the fondu:—

"Put 2 oz. of butter, 1 oz. of flour, a salt-spoonful each of mustard and pepper, with a very little nutmeg and salt, into an enamelled stew-pan, with half a pint of milk. When the butter is melted add  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb of grated cheese, and three eggs, beaten up, yolks and whites (but if I were not in this land of plenty I should use egg powder instead; I have tried it and it does quite as well). It must be well stirred, till it is about the consistency of a soufflé, and quite smooth, but it must not boil. Then pour it either into small paper cases, or scallop shells, or small tins, or anything else you like, but they must not be filled too full, as the mixture rises a good deal; bake in a hot oven for about twenty minutes.

"Another kind of fondu is prepared just in the same way as the last, only before putting in the eggs, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb of macaroni, which has been previously boiled and cut into pieces about an inch long.

"Either of these dishes are very nice after a little French dinner, or they would do for entrées at the vegetarian dinners you tell me you are going in for.

"Then there are two or three rather more substantial cheese puddings which they have taught me to make; we often have one for our déjeuner. This is one of them:—

"Six oz. of stale bread-crumbs, dried in the oven and pounded, 4 oz. of grated cheese, mixed with one well-beaten egg, a little salt, pepper, and mustard, 1 oz. of butter, and about half a pint of milk. Pour it into a dish, sprinkle a few more bread-crumbs over the top, and bake in a rather hot oven till it is a light brown. It takes about three-quarters of an hour.

"The other variety is made by soaking some slices of bread in milk, in which an egg has been beaten up. Put the bread in layers in a pie-dish, with grated cheese sprinkled thickly between each layer; when the dish is full pour the remainder of the milk over the top, but it must not be too moist; grate a very little nutmeg over it, and bake in a moderate oven.

"Of course, too, they always hand grated cheese to sprinkle over clear soups, as well as with soups thickened with tapioca, vermicelli, and such like; but you will remember that peculiarity from our old days in Italy. Nor need I remind you of cheese ramakins, and macaroni cheese, for if I remember rightly there are various recipes for both in all English cookery books; but I think it is a pity that they, the latter especially, should be used solely as a small item in the course of a long dinner, while they are quite sufficiently nourishing alone to form a luncheon, with the addition of fruit, or other similar light dishes.

"Father is very well and happy, for all the neighbours think him a prince in disguise; or at any rate he thinks they do, and that answers equally well."

Adrienne's letter came opportunely, just before Miss Down's promised lecture on cheese was given. Narcissa read some extracts from it aloud, and explained to the girls that dishes of this kind are much used in foreign countries, where people depend less upon meat than we do.

Miss Down then took up the question of the nutritious value of cheese, and informed her scholars that it is a very valuable article of food, because, like peas and beans, it contains a large proportion of a tissue and force or heat forming element, called "casein;" almost too much, in fact, and it needs to be eaten with fruit and vegetables, which contain but little. Further, it contains very little water, only about half as much as the average of meat. Cheese is unusually rich, too, in phosphate of lime, which is a valuable bone-making substance. The only objection to its constant use is that, uncooked, many persons find it indigestible, but this can be overcome in two ways; first, by cooking it in some of the methods already described; and secondly, adding carbonate of soda, which has the quality of dissolving casein, and thereby aiding in its digestion. These dishes can be made perfectly harmless, therefore, by the addition of a small quantity of carbonate of soda to the ingredients mentioned, about a teaspoonful to each half-pound of cheese used.

The rules Miss Down gave the girls for choosing cheese were that it should have a smooth skin, neither rough nor very dry, nor having cracks in it. No cheese should be bought which is much swollen, though on the other hand if it has sharp edges, and straight sides, not at all rounded, is certain to be poor. For the rest, tastes differ in cheeses as in everything else, and they should always be tasted before purchasing. For cooking in any way for which it has to be grated, a rather dry and not very rich cheese should be chosen, taking care, however, that there are no mites in it, and that it is not mouldy.

Miss Down always tried in her lessons to give the girls a little instruction suitable for the poor as well as the rich, and accordingly told them to try some experiments in economical cookery with cheese. Amongst other dishes, they made porridge of oatmeal, sago, or rice, with grated cheese stirred into it directly it was poured into the plates, also several varieties of the cheese pudding Narcissa had taught them; and a very substantial dish, suitable for working men—a cheese and potato pie. Cold boiled potatoes were mashed smooth, with a little milk or gravy, a small piece of butter or dripping, pepper and salt, and some grated cheese. A pie-dish was filled with this, the top smoothed

over, and a few morsels of butter laid on, and then baked in the oven. The result was too substantial for any but hard workers, but several labouring men to whom they gave plates of this pie were warm in its praises. On several occasions, when there chanced to be remains of cold fish in the larder, this was taken off the bones and beaten up with the potatoes and milk, and added much to the savour of the dish.

The only cheese recipe for home use Miss Down gave them was one for an exceptionally nice macaroni cheese. The instructions were as follows:—

"Break some macaroni into pieces about two inches long, throw them into a saucepan of boiling water, and boil for about fifteen minutes. Drain it, and put it into another saucepan in which has been previously melted a little cheese, and a very small piece of butter, with some black pepper. Simmer the macaroni in this, with the addition of enough milk to keep it from becoming too stiff. Pour it into a dish, sprinkle a little more cheese over the top, and just brown in a hot oven, or with a salamander."

Meantime James had been getting on well, winning favour with the ladies and his fellow-servants too. They all liked his droll ways and his anxiety to please, while his truthfulness and efforts to overcome his faults all tended to make him a favourite. It is true that Green sometimes shook his head, saying that new brooms sweep clean, but Green was always known as a grumbler, and up to the present time nothing had occurred to shake confidence in Jim.

Now, however, something happened which considerably damped the regard in which he was held. Minnie Selby came running with tears in her eyes to Miss Gwen, to tell of the loss of a ring.

"You should not wear rings; I cannot bear to see them on young girls," said Miss Gwen, rather sharply.

"But it was the one papa gave me when he went back to India," said Minnie, crying outright.

"Then you should not have left it about," replied Miss Gwen, still unsoftened. "How did it happen?"

Minnie explained that whilst practising before breakfast she took her ring off and laid it on the piano, fancying she played more freely without it. When James came in to dust the room she went away, and forgot the ring till after breakfast, when she thought of it, and ran at once to the music room, but no ring was to be seen. Further inquiries from the servants and others elicited that no one had entered the room in the interval excepting James. Everyone knew his unconquerable propensity for pocketing any trifles that took his fancy, and no one doubted him to be the delinquent. But to the surprise of everybody he persistently denied the theft. Minnie repeated her tale, and was quite certain of having placed it on the little ledge above the key-board. Someone suggested that the playing had jerked it off, for Minnie's was a spirited, not to say thundering, style of performance. The floor was thoroughly searched, and the front of the piano taken out, though there was no crack down which the ring could possibly have slipped. But all in vain, and suspicion thus fixed itself immovably on Jim. Ruth Stanley had always been his particular friend and instructress, and if anyone could influence him it was she. So at Miss Gwen's request she took him alone for a quiet talk, but all to no purpose—he still denied it.

"Don't be afraid of confessing, Jim," she pleaded, "you have met with nothing but kindness here, and I can promise that this will make no difference if you will restore the ring, and promise not to steal again."

"I can't say no more than wot I've said, miss, which is that I never even seen it, so there!"

"I never knew you tell an untruth before, Jim," said Ruth, sighing sadly.

"No, nor I ain't telling a lie now, neither. I'll tell you what it is, miss; I wish I had a taken of it, that I do, and then it would have saved us all this bother. But I ain't goin' to tell no lie about it, not even to please you, miss."

The affair was quite a trouble at Spike House. Ruth and a few others still trusted that Jim would come to a better mind, and confess his fault, but all looked a little coldly on him, and there were many expressions of surprise that Miss Gwen did not send him away at once.

*(To be continued.)*

## ESTHER.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Nellie's Memories," etc.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## RINGING THE CHANGES.

WHEN Mr. Lucas took me to mother, she kissed me and shed abundance of tears.

"Oh, my darling, if only your poor father could know of this," she whispered; and when Uncle Geoffrey's turn came he seemed almost as touched.

"What on earth are we to do without you, child?" he grumbled, wiping his eyeglasses. "There, go along with

you. If ever a girl deserved a good husband and got it, you are the one."

"Yes, indeed," sighed mother; "Esther is everyone's right hand." But Mr. Lucas sat down by her side and said something so kind and comforting that she soon grew more cheerful, and I went up to Carrie.

She was resting a little in the twilight, and I knelt down beside her and hid my face on her shoulder, and now the happy tears would find a vent.



"WHAT, LITTLE WIFE, STILL SCRIBBLING?"

form, a faculty of distinction, a real interest in nature and in the human countenance, a power of looking below the surface of things for the meaning which they express—all these gifts, bestowed by God, but latent and crushed in most—gifts which are intended for both sexes, but are oftener exhibited by women than by men, may, I believe, be more successfully cultivated by the study of drawing (if it is honestly and faithfully pursued) than by any book-instruction whatever.

"I am only repeating the language of the best and wisest teachers of mankind when I speak of music as able to call forth even deeper perceptions than these, to be the instruments of more wonderful blessings. In how many has it awakened the sense of an order and harmony in the heart of things which, outwardly, were most turbulent and confused; of a spirit in themselves capable of communicating with other spirits; of a union intended for us upon some other ground than that mere formal and visible association, yet justifying, explaining, and sustaining that! For these reasons, and others which I am ill able to understand, but which I do not the less think to be solid, sages have spoken of music as the most important instrument in forming men and in building up societies, which purpose it surely cannot fulfil if it ceases to be the study and delight of women; scarcely, I think, if they are taught to regard it chiefly as an accomplishment, if they connect it chiefly with the acquisition or exercise of mechanical dexterity, if they are not set to view it more simply and therefore more profoundly, to care less for its displays and results, and therefore to have their hearts and understandings more open to the reception of its power and its principles.

"I was bound to notice this subject first, not only because it furnishes a striking illustration of the remarks which I have made respecting our general design, but also because from this region of study we derive the best precedents for our future course, and the greatest encouragement to hope well for it. Our valued colleague, Mr. Hullah, has gone before us in our experiment, and has proved the perfect reasonableness of it. No one is less competent to speak of his method than I am, and fortunately it does not want any other witness than its effects; but it is impossible for a person, the most utterly ignorant of his art, not to see, with infinite delight, that he has reclaimed it as a mighty agent in popular education, asserting and proving that, instead of being, as we had been taught to suppose, an ornamental grace, it is a great practical human study, testifying of that which is highest in all and common to all, meant for rich and poor, high and low together. In this way he has been a pioneer in a great moral revolution, upon the success of which it may depend in no slight degree whether a revolution of another kind shall be averted from our land."

Any words of mine would be irrelevant after these extracts but those of the gladness with which one welcomes from the silence and darkness of long years the words and thoughts of such men. Words and thoughts suddenly recalled to life to help a cause they loved, amidst the young they loved and served with such mastery and zeal.

(To be concluded.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.



THE morning the news spread through the school that a sharp attack of neuralgia would prevent Miss Down from giving the usual cookery lecture for that week; but those who expected a holiday in consequence were soon disappointed by the tidings that Miss Gwen herself was going to take her place.

"Oh, but girls, it will be such fun," said Minnie Selby. "Miss Gwen took it once before, and she does say such odd things; but you needn't think it will be all fun and no work, for Miss Gwen is as sharp as a needle, and takes good care that everybody listens, and learns what there is to learn."

Minnie Selby had been longest in the school of them all, and her opinions were respected in consequence, so the girls went to the lecture-room full of curiosity.

It was a novel sight to see Miss Gwen in the post of lecturer, and her style was one of sound, common-sense, unadorned with any unnecessary flowers of eloquence.

"Now, I am going to talk to you about economy, girls," she began. "I fancy I can see into some of your minds, and I can read there, 'Oh, I wish Miss Gwen would remember that my father has thousands a year, and that we never do, and never shall have to economise in anything.' Well, I hope you will always have thousands a year, but you cannot be sure of it, and, even if so, your money is only lent you as a talent to be used to the best possible advantage, and when you have to give an account of all the good you have done with it, you will feel very uncomfortable if you have to say it was all wasted through your ignorance and carelessness, and because you were too conceited to learn how to spend it properly."

Several of the girls had really been making remarks of this kind to one another that morning, and though they were sure Miss Gwen could not have heard them, they looked so conscious and uncomfortable that it was evident they took her criticism as addressed personally to themselves. But Miss Gwen took no notice, and went on:

"You have had a good deal of vegetable and fish diet lately, so we will go back to meat to-day; and I should be obliged if you would begin your study of the subject by clearing out of your minds the impression which is firmly rooted there, that meat at a low price is necessarily the same thing as economical meat."

Here Miss Gwen paused, and, casting a quick glance round the room, espied a girl whose blank expression betrayed the fact that her thoughts were wandering.

"Dorothea," cried Miss Gwen to her sharply, "which is most economical, meat at 8d. a pound, or that at 1s.?"

Dorothea awoke from her dreams with a start. She was always called Dolly except on solemn occasions, and was so taken aback at the sudden question, and at hearing her name in full, that she did not see that Miss Gwen was laying a trap for her, and replied confidently:

"That at 8d."

"Lily, you have charge of the meals to-day; see that Dorothea has meat at 8d. a pound for her dinner, and then she will judge for herself whether it is as good as the same weight of higher priced meat."

Dolly, who had expected to be praised for her reply, looked astounded, and Minnie glanced at the other girls with an expression which plainly said, "I told you so," but Miss Gwen went calmly on.

"The economy of the different parts of the meat depends upon the purpose for which you want it. Dorothea is so far right, that if you simply want to extract the juices for gravy or beef tea, it is cheaper to buy coarse meat, although the fibre is so tough as to be almost uneatable. But for ordinary purposes, the best joints, though they cost most money at first, are the most economical; there is much less skin and bone about them, which you have to pay for in the less expensive parts. For instance, trimmed mutton chops cost several pence more than the loin from which they are cut; but then, if you take the whole loin, you must take long ends of fat and bone, which cannot be eaten, which brings the actual price of the eatable portions to about the same. Then the best joints, being finer grained, shrink less in cooking, and are more digestible and nourishing, as well as having a finer flavour. Now, I suppose you will all go to the opposite extreme, and will imagine I have told you to buy nothing but the most costly pieces of meat; but that is a mistake. Mutton chops, for instance, though I have told you they are no dearer than loin of mutton, I consider extravagant, because you still get almost as much bone as meat; but in spite of that it may sometimes happen that they serve your purpose better than anything else, which would justify the expense, when you have to provide a hot dinner, for example, for just one person. The same remark applies to sweetbreads, and some other portions, which are expensive simply because the supply is limited. To buy them, therefore, is not economical. But now about choosing meat. I daresay none of you know good meat from bad, and you cannot expect tradesmen always to sell you the best meat if you are equally pleased with inferior quality. Do any of you know any rules for judging if meat is good? Margery, you have had some practice in buying, you ought to know."

"Beef should be of a deep red colour, with a fine grain, and streaked with fat so as to have a mottled appearance, and the fat should be whitish. Poor meat has a coarser grain, and little fat mixed with the lean, and the suet is very often a darker colour."

"Quite right, but you have only given the rules for beef. How do you choose mutton?"

"I do not know, Miss Gwen; you said what I bought last week was not nice."

"The meat itself was very good, but you have not only to think about the good quality of the meat, but also whether that particular joint will suit you. To buy a small shoulder of mutton, like that we had on Wednesday, of which half was fat, was very careless, even though the mutton may have been of good quality. In very small families, small joints are unavoidable, but under any other circumstances they are extravagant, as you get much more bone in proportion to the meat, and a larger dried-up outer surface in proportion to the juicy part in the middle of a joint. You must remember, too, that though mutton does not lose as much weight as beef in the process of boiling, it loses more in both baking and roasting. A shoulder of mutton weighing 8lb., before roasting, would be reduced to, at the most, 5½lb. when cooked; and the reduction would be much greater in one which was so fat as that you chose. If you are obliged to have a small joint, you should try





to get Welsh mutton, otherwise Scotch or South Devon is the best. Always be careful in choosing mutton that it has a fair amount of fat, but not too much; and that joints which have hung some time do not lose their dark colour and become whitish. Janet, should all meat be hung before cooking?"

"No; young meat, like veal and lamb, should not be hung long."

"I know more than that," chimed in another girl. "All red meats, like beef and mutton, require hanging a good while, and all wild creatures; but white meat, like pork and veal, and tame creatures like fowls, ought to be cooked at once, and most people like red meats a little underdone, but all white meats should be well cooked throughout."

"I suppose you mean game by 'wild creatures.' And you must remember that it is only meat for roasting that should be hung; if you intend to boil it, even red meat should be quite fresh. What game is in season, Ruth?"

"None, Miss Gwen."

"None, but ptarmigan; you must use pigeons and wild rabbits in their place; they are not really in season either, but you can get them all the year round. This is the most difficult month for housekeepers to find variety, as there are very few kinds of fish or vegetables to be had; but, on the other hand, lamb and veal are plentiful now. The only fish specially in season now is one which is not universally used, the lamprey; it is only to be had in perfection during this and next month. The river lamprey is the most delicate in flavour, but is small, rarely weighing more than a pound, while the sea lamprey attains to five or six times that weight. You can use the same recipes for cooking them as foreels. You can also get carp, mackerel, smelts, lobsters, and crabs, and salmon will be coming in towards the end of the month. In the way of vegetables, broccoli sprouts are still to be had, but will soon be over; and sea kale is plentiful, and new potatoes are coming in.

"But it is no use knowing what to buy, if you waste it in the cooking. Annie, tell me the different ways of cooking a leg of mutton."

"Roasting, boiling, and baking."

"Just what I expected. You have left out steaming, which is the most economical way of all. If you have a large party to provide for, there must be an ample allowance, and you can never be quite sure which dish will

be most asked for, so that it very often happens that you may have a leg of mutton, and very little be used from it. Now, if you have had the sense to steam it, you can roast it the next day, and by filling the part that is cut with mashed potatoes, serve it up as a fresh joint. In any of the kinds of cooking you have mentioned, Annie, especially roasting and baking, a great deal of the juices of the meat evaporate, and are lost in steam, which is pure waste. If you hold a cold plate over a saucepan in which meat is stewing, you will find that the moisture which will immediately condense on it, is not pure water, but has with it minute particles of fibrine, all of which would go up the chimney, or mix with the air of the kitchen. In steaming, on the contrary, you have a double saucepan, the outer one filled with water, the inner having no water, and a very tightly fitting lid; as soon as the water in the outer vessel reaches boiling point, the juices of the meat evaporate, but being tightly shut in, condense and fall back upon the meat, which is thus cooked in its own moisture; a very convenient and economical method, you will find. There is comparatively little shrinking in meat which is steamed; and, as I just explained, no portion is wasted, even though extracted from the joint, as it is all in the pan in the form of gravy; whereas it is calculated that a joint when roasted loses a third of its original weight, when baked nearly a fourth, and when boiled about a seventh. Not only does the joint itself lose least by boiling, of these three methods, but of the juices which escape, the smallest quantity are lost, as the pan is usually closely covered, so that the steam cannot escape, and the juices are consequently retained in the water, which can be afterwards used for soups."

Thus ended the lecture, and the girls dispersed to their other occupations. Narcissa's hands were full during Miss Down's indisposition, and she found herself coming forward and taking a prominent place which would have astonished her some months before.

All this time, Jim resolutely refused to acknowledge himself the thief of Minnie's ring. She, thoughtless and good-natured to a fault, soon got over her distress at her loss, and was prepared to forgive and forget very quickly, for it was against her nature to bear resentment for any length of time. But to the more thoughtful among the girls, the theft, and Jim's persistent denial of it, was a

real sorrow. Miss Gwen, after taking into her counsels Jim's faithful friend, Ruth, resolved to pass over this misdemeanour, trusting that in time he would come to a better mind, and see the folly as well as sin of his conduct. Unconsciously, however, their manner towards him was changed, and the lad evidently felt that he was no longer trusted.

He did his work as well as ever, but instead of his old amusing ways, he relapsed into sulky silence, or, when obliged to speak, his words were sullen and few. Of old his pride in his personal appearance had been ludicrously great. At first, the effort to keep himself clean and tidy had been almost too much for him, but Miss Gwen had given him a looking-glass for his own private use, and a droll vanity had developed itself in consequence, which displayed itself in many amusing ways.

His fall on the canal bank had caused an ugly scar on his head, which was a trial to his new-born vanity, till he presently obtained (no one knew whence) an old smoking cap, which he began to wear perpetually. When he first appeared in it to wait at dinner one day, Miss Gwen stared blankly at it, as though unable to believe her own eyes.

"James, remove your cap," she said, at length, in her severest tones.

"Oh dear, m'm," he replied, coming close up to her and whispering confidently in her ear, "it's this 'ouse is so horful draughty, I'm obliged to cover up my 'ead, or I should 'ave the tuthache that horful as you couldn't do nothin' with me, m'm."

"Oh, I was not aware your teeth were on the top of your head," she responded, grimly, "but I will speak to you about it after dinner."

Finding it was pure vanity which caused him to wear this queer headgear, to hide the offending scar, Miss Gwen ruthlessly took it from him, and he could only console himself by spending hours in the effort to make his refractory dark locks cover the place, in which he finally succeeded, very much to his own contentment, though everyone else thought the effect rather odd.

But all this was over now, and his pride in himself was gone. Even his "buttons" suit ceased to give him any pleasure, and it was all he cared to do to keep himself just tidy enough to satisfy Miss Gwen.

(To be continued.)

## A D O P T E D .

By ANNE BEALE.

### CHAPTER III.

PRISCILLA.

HOLIDAYS! To the weary worker the word has a delicious ring in it. You would scarcely have known Priscilla when hers came, and she went to her small home in Kent. Mother and brother received her with open arms, and many old friends greeted her with affection. The Fieldburns were much respected, and change of circumstances had not diminished the regard shown them both by rich and poor.

When Priscilla reached home, she found tea awaiting her, together with many farm delicacies, unusual at the cottage. Seated at the table, she exclaimed—

"This is grand, mother! How extravagant you have been!"

"Mrs. Roseberry sent the eggs, cream, and butter from Melton," returned Mrs. Fieldburn, who was a quiet, demure little woman, who still wore a widow's cap.

"And Charley desires his compliments, or something of the sort," said James Fieldburn, with a wicked twinkle in his eye. He was always joking his sister.

"Mrs. Roseberry! Charley! What has happened?" cried Priscilla, blushing.

"Nobody knows; but they are coming round. I mean, she is," replied the mother.

The Roseberrys were rich farmers in the neighbourhood, who had not been on good terms with the Fieldburns for a long time.

"I suppose I ought to be much obliged. I am," said Priscilla. "We don't see such cream as this in London. Oh! how sweet and pure it all is. Were there ever such roses? Was there ever such a sky?" she added, turning towards the open casement, as if to conceal some sudden emotion.

The truth was that Charley Roseberry and Priscilla had been fast friends, but a coolness had arisen between them through the breach

betwixt their respective families. None the less she enjoyed his mother's gifts, and there was a new light in her clear grey eyes as she heard how that mother had thought of her.

"Do tell me about the child—poor Lucy Long's child, I mean," said Mrs. Fieldburn, when tea was over.

"I will just run down to Brookside first, mother. I would rather go alone. I will be back directly. I will take those oranges with me," replied Priscilla, putting on the hat and mantle which lay on a chair, and taking up a bag of oranges.

"I will tidy up against you come back," said her mother.

"And I'll look over the farm," said James.

So Priscilla found herself wandering alone in the scenes she loved best in the world. She paused to look at the neat little garden which surrounded the cottage, and to gather some pinks from the flower-border. Then she

## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

MISS DOWN soon recovered from her slight indisposition, and was able to take her place in the lecture-room again, after a few days' holiday.

On her first appearance there, the girls found that she had provided herself with a blackboard and a series of diagrams.

"I have no time to think about anything when I am here with all you girls about me," she began; "but I have taken the opportunity of being away for a few days to reflect upon your ignorance, and the best way of instilling a few ideas into your minds. You need not look offended, Nellie; I daresay you know as much as most other girls, but then most girls know very little that is any use to them. So I have had these blank diagrams made, for you to fill the names in yourselves, to show the properties of various kinds of food. Perhaps you remember what I told you a short time ago, that the three elements in our food necessary to repair the waste in our bodies are, first, those which form flesh and muscle; second, those which supply heat and vital energy, but do not make flesh; and lastly, mineral substances, of which the chief are water and salt. Which are the principal flesh-forming substances, Ruth?"

"Casein and albumen."

"You have omitted an important one—fibrin. And what foods come under those three heads?"

"Albumen is chiefly obtained either from eggs or meat; but cocoa contains a great deal also, and there is a small quantity in some vegetables, especially carrots and turnips. Casein is found in milk, beans, lentils, and peas; and fibrin is provided either by meat, or by wheat and the other cereals."

"Very good, Ruth; I hope the others have remembered equally well. Janet, what kinds of food must be taken to supply our bodies with heat and force?"

"Sugar and starch?"

"Yes, they are very important. The commonest forms of almost pure starch are tapioca, sago, and arrowroot; but it is found in many vegetables, especially potatoes and rice. But you have forgotten a very important heat-producing element, animal or vegetable fat and oil. You must have heard of the enormous quantities of these substances people living in polar regions are obliged to eat; they know from experience their value in producing heat, though probably they never heard of the theory of heat-producing foods. But I want to-day to speak to you specially about the last class of necessary ingredients of our food—the minerals. Most of the articles used as food contain some of the necessary mineral salts, but unfortunately a large quantity is lost by being boiled out during the cooking; and our health would suffer seriously, but that we are able to supply the loss by the use of uncooked fruit and salads, which contain certain acids having a most valuable medicinal effect."

"Perhaps that is why so many people have indigestion, Miss Down, because they do not eat fresh fruit."

"I should hardly like to say that, Minnie, because indigestion arises from so many different causes, but I am sure that in many cases the health would be improved if more uncooked fruit were eaten; not, as is so often done, in the shape of dessert after a heavy dinner, but either instead of or before other food, especially at breakfast. You know how much sailors on long voyages used to suffer from scurvy, from want of green food, till the subject was investigated, and it was found that

the necessary acid could be supplied to some extent by lime-juice. Janet, do you know what vegetables are coming into season now?"

"Artichokes, asparagus, French beans, cauliflowers, green peas, cucumbers, and sea kale. That is the list I wrote out, but it seems to me that in the large towns you can get everything all the year round."

"You can get most fruits and vegetables long before and after they are really in season in England, but they are either forced or imported from abroad. Green gooseberries are getting plentiful now, and strawberries; and, as you say, other fruits can be obtained, though it is still early for the English grown. There are plenty of materials for salads to be had now: lettuces, endives, beets, mustard and cress, watercress, and sorrel. Do not forget, in preparing salad, that it must be very carefully washed and picked over, and afterwards well dried. The best way is to lay the leaves in a cloth, and gather up the corners, and then whisk it about. I need not give you any recipes for cooking fruit, as all the cookery books are full of them, and you can so easily invent others. But if you are even unable to obtain fresh fruit, or you wish to teach poor people who cannot afford to buy it, remember that you need not, therefore, go without any at all. There are so many kinds of dried fruits to be had, and if nothing else can be got, a very good dish can be made by soaking common pudding raisins for some hours, and then simmering them till they are quite tender. They make a most wholesome food; in fact, grape and raisin cures are sometimes recommended in cases of severe maladies, especially in some parts of Germany, and cases of apparently incurable disease have been restored to health by this diet."

"But, Miss Down, if the mineral substances in vegetables are lost by boiling, why are they not in fruit too?"

"They are in a great measure boiled out, but with fruit you eat the juice, while the liquid in which vegetables are boiled is thrown away."

A short time after this lecture, as a few of the elder girls were sitting in the little study which was the exclusive domain of the first-class girls, Minnie Selby came in, with an air of tragic despair.

"There is a dreadful prospect before us, girls, you may as well make up your mind to a week of hard work," she cried, throwing herself into the easy chair. "I just caught Miss Down and Miss St. Adrian deep in consultation, and as I passed I heard remarks about bushels of fruit, which to my experienced mind pointed plainly to jam."

But Minnie's prophecies were not exactly fulfilled after all; the first-class girls were not doomed to make jam this year. As Miss Down explained to them at one of the subsequent lectures, they had made it so often, if they had not learnt how to do it by this time, it was quite certain they never would learn, so the work was left to the second-class; and Miss Down contented herself by reminding the elder ones of a few of the rules necessary to ensure the jam being good and keeping well.

One of the girls left her note-book behind when they left the lecture-room, and the following are the rules, as they appeared in her book:—

"Clean out the preserving pan thoroughly every time you empty it, or it will burn. Don't put it right on the fire, but on a trivet or hot plate, as jam burns so easily. Only fill it rather more than half full, for fear it should boil over. Jars must be washed and very well dried, or the jam goes mouldy; glass is the best, as you can see through if there is any mould. Always stir it with wooden spoons: other kinds spoil the colour of the jam. Jam

will not keep well unless the jars are made air-tight. Cover them when full with papers dipped either in brandy or sweet oil, with another cover over it. An old-fashioned way does very well of dipping thin paper into gum-water, and pressing it down all over. When dry it is quite firm and air-tight."

But though the first-class girls had no actual jam-making, they did not altogether escape extra work in the fruit season, for Miss St. Adrian undertook to teach them the German method of preparing fruit syrup. Several kinds of fruit were used, raspberries, cherries, strawberries, and currants; a little syrup was made of each separately, and a little of currants mixed with each of the others. The fruit was picked, and then mashed up with a spoon in a basin, then pressed through a stout linen bag. In Germany a proper press is used, but as the school did not possess one, the girls had to exercise their ingenuity. Some managed by putting heavy weights on the fruit; but others triumphantly declared that nothing answered so well as their idea of putting the fruit through the mangle. The juice was then allowed to stand for the night, and was strained in the morning through a flannel bag. After this process 1lb of juice to ½ lb of sugar was put on a brisk fire, and was allowed to boil fast for a quarter of an hour. It was then left to become quite cold before being poured into bottles, and tightly corked down.

The refuse fruit remaining after the syrup had been extracted was turned to excellent account as a light and cooling luncheon dish. The bruised pulp, well covered with water, was put on the fire, and allowed to boil for some time. When thoroughly boiled, it was pressed once more through the linen bag, and the juice sweetened to taste. In the meantime some corn flour was mixed smoothly in cold water, as for a corn flour mould, then stirred into the hot juice, and all boiled together till the mixture thickened, being stirred all the time to keep it smooth. It was then poured into moulds, and left till cold. In Germany this dish is served in soup plates, and eaten with cold milk; but the girls having made it rather too stiff for eating in this way, it was served like blancmange.

Great dismay was caused throughout the school one morning by the mysterious disappearance of Jim. One of the maids knocked at Miss Gwen's bedroom door shortly before breakfast-time, in great agitation, to say that there was no breakfast ready, for the young ladies whose turn it was to prepare that meal were running all over the house and garden, calling for Jim, who could not be found. Miss Gwen started up at once to go and superintend the search, but as she was hastily leaving the room her eye fell upon a piece of paper, which had evidently been pushed under the door.

On opening it she read with difficulty the following note, from Jim, written in an almost illegible hand, for his progress in his studies had not kept pace with his improvement in other respects.

"dear miss,—i cudent stand it no longer so i took and hookd it hopen youll fergiv and furett youer obldige servant jim."

"hopen miss ruth won't think no wuss of me wich i never don it and ony sed so to obldige."

Miss Gwen stood pondering over this strange epistle for some time, and then rang the bell sharply for prayers, and when the girls and servants were assembled, she read them Jim's letter, and told them that she was convinced now that the blame had been laid upon the wrong person, adding that she hoped each one present would feel it incumbent upon her as a matter of common honesty never to rest till the ring had been found, or the real culprit discovered.

(To be continued.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

BY DORA HOPE.



ALL the girls were grouped together in the large hall, waiting for the few stragglers who were always late, and Miss Gwen stood on the stairs to see them start and give them a cheery good-bye.

For, on this bright June day, they were going on the first excursion of the summer season. It would probably be followed by many others, for during the summer the girls had a long excursion about once a fortnight, but there is something special about a first occasion, and there was a flutter of anticipation amongst the crowd waiting for the signal to start. They had to walk four miles straight off to begin with. Miss Gwen had no sort of patience with girls who said they could not walk, and the consequence was that the complainers generally forgot their weakness, and began to enjoy the long rambles as much as anyone.

To-day's expedition was to an open heath, but there was a clear deep stream hard by, and a view of hills and woods to right and left. Here the large party were divided into three sets, each with its own leader, and each started on its own campaign with a different object in view, for it must be understood that the excursion was not a mere holiday. It was to give as much education as the driest and dreariest of class-room lessons, but the teaching was to be conveyed in a pleasant form. As one of the naughty girls remarked, it was like taking a sugared pill, or a powder in a spoonful of jam.

Our party was to have a lesson in botany, with very practical demonstrations, each finding her own specimens and adding them to her collection in blotting book, or tin specimen case. Every botanist was to make a bouquet of wild flowers, having regard to symmetry, colour, and general beauty of arrangement. This came naturally enough to some, but others again seemed to aim only at crowding the greatest possible number of flowers into the smallest possible compass. The result was a hard solid mass, which, if thrown to an *artiste* on platform or stage, would form a really dangerous missile, but a pretty taste in such matters may be easily cultivated with a kind and capable teacher, and the array of posies spread out for Miss Gwen's inspection was generally a very satisfactory one.

Party number two were bent on the study of insect life, and the enthusiasts in this pursuit caused some amusement to the others by the agile way in which they skipped about, waving their green nets and pouncing upon their prey.

The third party were soon busy sketching, under the direction of the drawing mistress, who considered this branch of the art the most important to the ordinary student, though it is the one usually left untaught. "You may never be artists, girls," she often said, "but there is hardly one of you who will not be able to preserve a remembrance of every place you visit, if you will always remember the principles of making a characteristic sketch."

Thus the morning passed happily and profitably.

At half-past twelve the fat brown pony was seen trotting contentedly towards the meeting-place, drawing the little carriage with Miss Gwen therein, followed by a man from a farm

close at hand carrying a large can of milk. She first dispensed a store of buns and biscuits to the hungry girls, then looked at the result of the morning's work, bestowing a word of praise or blame to the anxious students; after which the sketches and specimens they had collected were packed into the carriage, and they all turned homewards, reaching Spike House in good time, and good condition too, for a late dinner.

Two or three girls remained at home that day, Ruth and Minnie amongst them, whose week it was to arrange and make the puddings.

Things were out of their usual order on excursion days, for most of the teachers accompanied the party; so when the two young cooks found a heap of apples and a bowl of green gooseberries set out for them, they knew not what to do with them.

"Gooseberry fool and apple charlotte, I propose," said Ruth.

"Couldn't we contrive to have something a little more original? Why not transpose them, and have apple fool and gooseberry charlotte?"

"Well, I never heard of either, and perhaps they would not be nice."

"Never mind, let us try; I do love variety."

So they set to work and picked the gooseberries, stewed them a little till soft, then put them in layers with plenty of sugar between thin slices of bread-and-butter, and cooked the whole just like an apple charlotte.

"It is a good thing apples do not stain," said Minnie, peeling away vigorously.

"But they do. You ought to be careful of your hands; the stain is so hard to get off, though lemon-juice is the best thing I know of. If linen is stained with apple or other fruit, you wet the place and stretch it over a cup of water; then light a brimstone match, and hold it over the spot, as near as possible without singeing, and slowly the stain fades out."

"But I shouldn't like to try that on my fingers, thank you," laughed Minnie.

They made the apple fool as they would with gooseberries, only with less sugar, and both experiments turned out successfully.

"Now let us be quick, Minnie, and write the list of things in season for June; as we have the first week in the month, you know, it is our turn to make out the list. If we are quick we shall be in time to go and meet the girls coming back."

"Oh, dear," sighed Minnie; "I never can think of anything but lettuces, and Miss Down always says it is not the best time for them."

"I think you will be right for once. I heard gardener say this morning what nice ones were to be had now; he says they are 'quite a picture.' Then there is asparagus."

"Why, Ruth, even I know better than that; I saw some in a shop a month ago."

"Yes, but that was forced; it is the out-of-door asparagus that is in season in June. Then gooseberries and new potatoes are plentiful, and cucumbers and young carrots and turnips. Now, Minnie, you must do the fish, or else the list will be all my work."

"Oh, Ruth, how hard-hearted you are; how often shall I have to tell you that I have a soul above cooking, and cannot stoop to remember these trifling details. But if you must drag me down to these degrading subjects, I presume goslings and ducklings will soon be ready for eating, as I saved a whole flock of them from being devoured by old Smith's dog in the village the other day, and

they looked so fat and tempting they really seemed to be waddling about on purpose to whet the appetites of the village dogs. But what are you laughing at, Ruth? It is perfectly true."

"Pray do not put on that injured air; I was only wondering if your lofty mind imagined that ducks and geese were fish; but that is, as you say, a trifle quite beneath you, and as it happens I got up early this morning and studied all the cookery books till I found out what fish were most plentiful. Here is the list: 'Whitebait, soles, trout, mullet, and salmon, and whiting towards the end of the month.' And do not forget to put down that venison came in last month."

All this time nothing had been heard of Jim. Inquiries had been made in the neighbouring towns; but all in vain, no trace of him could be found. Miss Gwen reproached herself bitterly, now that it was too late, for not having seen that there was something strange in the style of his confession of stealing the ring, to which he alluded in his letter as having "ony sed so to oblige." The confession had come about in this way.

In the three bath-rooms which the house boasted there had hitherto been sets of warm felt mats. There were a number of them, each girl having made one for herself of brown or grey felt, ornamented with a bold arabesque design of Turkey twill, or other fast-coloured materials, appliqué, with fleecy wool or yarn, and button-holed round the edge in colours to match the design. The glass panes in the doors had dried ferns, autumn leaves, and pressed flowers gummed upon them, and then a piece of book muslin pasted all over the pane, leaves and all. This had the effect of ground glass inside the room, while the leaves and flowers looked very pretty from the outside.

But to return to the mats. They were now, after long and constant use, completely worn out, and Miss Gwen had bought in their place a length of the new cork carpet, which she knew to be excellent for the purpose, being durable, and striking really warm to the feet of the bather, and she had set Jim to work with a sharp knife, to cut it into pieces the right length to lay by the side of the baths.

Miss Gwen never said more to Jim than she was obliged, and somehow, quite against her own wishes or intentions, her heart had become hardened against him. Though she really thought she had forgiven and forgotten, she could not feel quite the same towards the ungrateful boy who persisted in trying to deceive her. The servants and many of the girls plainly showed their distrust, and his life became a burden to him. He at last resolved to break down the barrier, and, if possible, get back into his former position; so he suddenly laid down the strip of cork he was carrying, and, turning abruptly to Miss Gwen, said doggedly, with his eyes on the ground, "Please, m'm, I'm going to confess."

"Oh, the ring? Well, I am really glad, James. I cannot tell you how glad I am that you have decided to speak the truth at last," she said, kindly. "How I wish you had done so at once; but better late than never, and I am sure it will never happen again. How was it, James?"

"I dunno, m'm," he said, with his eyes still on the ground.

"A sudden temptation, I suppose," she said, thinking to help him out; but as no further confession was elicited, she proceeded to talk to him kindly about the necessity of praying

for strength other than his own to resist these sudden temptations, adding, "so we will say no more about it. Give me the ring and I will restore it to Miss Selby privately."

"Oh, lor!" ejaculated Jim, as though struck by a new and startling thought.

"Why, did you not expect to give it up?" cried Miss Gwen, wondering at this imperfect style of repentance. "Go and fetch it immediately. Where is it?"

"I don't just know where 'tis," he stammered.

"Don't know where it is!" ejaculated Miss Gwen, in her sternest tone; "what nonsense, give it to me at once."

"I—I lost it as soon as ever I found it. I don't know where 'tis no more than nothin'. Expects I dropped it diggin' the 'taters. But you'll be all right with me again now I've took and confessed, won't you, m'm?"

Miss Gwen had thought this strange at the time, but supposing it to be only unwillingness to give up the ring, she had resolved to say no more, but wait patiently, hoping that a further confession would follow soon. But now it was too late, and Miss Gwen felt that her own dulness of comprehension was to blame for the poor boy being turned out alone into the world once more.

(To be continued.)

## A KING'S DAUGHTER.

By ISABELLA FVIE MAYO. Author of "Her Object in Life," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XI.

#### A FAMILY HISTORY.



WHEN May Castle, having composed herself after the long drive, and attired herself in her soft, black robe, with its plain, white muslin ruffles, was led into the Balacluva parlour to be introduced to Mrs. Stewart, she felt that she saw just the very one person needed to complete the picture of her new friend's home life.

Mrs. Stewart, who had herself been born on the island, being, indeed, of pure Norse descent, had not married before she had attained mature years. And partly through this, and partly through her delicate health, and, perhaps, the habits of her life, she had a general air of seniority beyond what need have belonged to her as Margaret's mother. After a first glance at her in her dark cashmere gown, with a cloud-like white shawl enveloping her shoulders, while her softly-waving, silvery hair was brushed under a net cap of quaint fashion, one carried away the idea of "an old lady." But one only needed to sit beside her a little while, and talk with her, to lose all idea of age or infirmity in connection with her. She seemed set aside from earthliness altogether, a pure spirit imprisoned in a fragile house of clay, through whose every chink it could refresh itself with the balmy breezes and genial sunbeams of its native paradise.

She had not had altogether an easy life—that lady of Balacluva, though her strong patience and sweet determination had made it to seem so, and in the end to be so. She had married against the prejudices of her own family, whose fortunes had suffered so severely in past times from the hands of Scotch invaders that they were inclined to hate all of Scottish race. She had had to bear the chafing of her husband's hot and sturdy temper against the coldness and rancour of her kinsfolk, and had had in the end to see the last of her brothers, poor, proud, and pitiful, receive help from the hands of the laird, and pass from the

island, the ancient line vanishing with him.

She had had to see her men children taken from her one by one, most of them from the cradle, but her youngest from the winsome glow of beauteous boyhood. She had wept long and bitterly, but she had not murmured: death was everywhere. God must know His own purposes, and why should she escape the sorrow she saw all around? She had found it less easy to reconcile herself to the enjoyment of blessings which did not seem so universal. Where the balance was apparent on her own side, she could not quite readily accept the easy creed that "there is compensation in all things." After she had visited the sick poor, she seemed to feel, under her own eiderdown, the chill of aged limbs beneath the weight of poor, coarse covering. She had even a tolerant word, and oh, what self-accusing reflections! concerning the poor old women who were strongly suspected of malingering for the sake of the pauper dole. What would become of her in their place? How could she carry cashies of peat on her back, and fetch bags of meal from the mills, and walk over miles of sopping roads in quest of divots to shelter the poor cows and ponies from the rain when a storm had unroofed the byre? "Oh, she was quite different!" Aye, indeed, she was, she would say within herself, and the benefactions of Balacluva were carried to the hovels around in no spirit of proud condescension, but in one of deep humility, and Mrs. Stewart did not thank God that she was not as others, but felt that she craved their forgiveness that it was so. She could not complacently assert with the old hymn writer—

"Not more than others I deserve

Yet God has given me more,"

for she felt but too strongly that there was one sentence of the Master's whose full significance the world has not yet fathomed—

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

So sensitive a soul had only been saved from morbidness by strong religious faith. Just because Mrs. Stewart could not believe that God cared for her more than for His poor, she was in no danger of feeling that He could care for her less. Somehow, she could always trust them and all her problems about them to His love and wisdom, and so she could trust herself. The sins of the world were not laid upon her, but upon Him. The

father does not make his children responsible for all the house, but only requires them to render a smiling obedience to those commands which are issued to them.

As her soft, elderly hand closed round May's firm young hand, and her kind eyes looked up in May's strong young face, there arose in the girl's mind a text, which was ever afterwards associated in her memory with the sweet mistress of Balacluva—

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

A continuous stream of talk flowed on round the little circle all through the course of the impromptu meal. It struck May afterwards that though she, an utter stranger, was thus thrown into a family group at its first re-union after a somewhat eventful separation, she received no painful sense of outsidersness. Both the laird and Margaret managed to involve her in their own recitals, and on any general subject the lady of the house invariably addressed the guest.

Mrs. Stewart did not talk very much herself, but her influence rested on all the varying conversation like summer sunshine on a restless sea. It brightened whatever it touched, and left its brightness upon it. It was not that Mrs. Stewart refused to smile at an oddity or to censure a fault when either came before her; possibly she gave less tangible praise than many do. But one felt that she saw things and people at their best; that she never took them at an unfair advantage, but did them full justice, and that her very blame was given in loving disappointment that they did not fulfil possibilities which her faith saw in them, and might soon help them to see in themselves. She had that truly Christian imagination which behind the commonest workings of daily life recognises virtue and romance. She read the secret of many a dull and humble soul, and could have told its history in a way that might have startled itself, and yet have been quite true to its chronicle in the kingdom of God.

May would have been tempted to think that she had arrived in a country peopled by saints and martyrs had she heard Mrs. Stewart speak only of the islanders in the narratives she gave to her husband and daughter of all that had happened in their absence. But in her questions to May she spoke also of certain Fowlis people, and the light in

thought from the grand schemes which constantly occupied her mind. She had taken upon her shoulders the whole responsibility of the fancy fair, and neither pains nor expense would be spared to ensure its success. There were to be seven stalls, and two young ladies were to preside over each stall. The Monkstone girls were good-natured and accommodating, and consented without a murmur to powder their hair, and wear the Lady Teazle costumes so strongly advocated by Miss Fenwood.

There were not many rich families in the town; not a single girl in the place could compete with Rosalie in profuse expenditure, and as she was an only daughter there were no sisters to thwart her whims. Her costume was ordered, and came down from town, composed of the best materials that money could buy. All her fellow-workers would appear in those chintz cambrics which Mrs. Otway had recommended; and Rosalie thought, with a thrill of pride, that she should quite eclipse them all.

The fancy fair was to be held on the first of June; and the day dawned clear and fair, but too warm (said many) for the time of year. It was like a day in July or August; and Rosalie, worn out with excitement a little and the anxiety of preparation, began to sigh for a breath of cool air.

"How does my dress look, mamma?" she asked, emerging from her room in all the glory of her splendid brocade and satin skirt. The gown was trimmed with fine old lace, and at her side hung an old gold *châtelaine* which had once belonged to a grand dame of other days, and had been purchased from a Bondstreet jeweller at a high price. Mrs. Fenwood was a meek, timid woman, accustomed to submit to all the decrees of her husband and daughter; and, as a rule, she never expressed the slightest surprise at anything they said or did. But at the sight of Rosalie's costume, she actually ventured on a faint remonstrance.

"It is very magnificent," she remarked; "but, dear me, what will the others say? They will all wear cambrics, won't they? Do you think it will look well for Miss Stafford to be helping you at your stall in a linen gown, when you are so richly dressed?"

"Why should it not look well?" Rosalie inquired, with rather an offended air.

"Oh, you know best, my dear; I merely thought they might fancy you wanted to throw them all into the shade. And the *châtelaine*—it is so very costly, you see!"

"Of course it is very costly, mamma; and it has a history," said Rosalie, fingering her golden pendants with pride. "I don't think Jane Stafford will feel jealous. Besides, she is a clergyman's daughter, and everyone knows she is not very well off. The Staffords always dress plainly."

"You know best, of course," repeated Mrs. Fenwood, meekly.

"I hope everything will go off well," sighed Rosalie, in an anxious tone. "Did I tell you that the Earl of Drymoor is coming here to-day? It seems that Mr. Stafford was once his tutor. I daresay the Staffords will tell him how much we have done for the church."

And then, after a parting glance at herself in the pier-glass, she hastened across the lawn to the great tent which sheltered the stalls.

(To be continued.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

BY DORA HOPE.



IN the hot summer days a number of the classes were held in the shady nooks of the large old-fashioned garden of Spike House, and though the sights and sounds perhaps tempted the thoughts to wander, the girls worked their best at their lessons lest any inattention should be punished by banishment to the schoolroom.

Ruth and Minnie, bracketed together as usual, with one or two others were in charge of the house-

linen one week when the weather was bright and warm, and having obtained permission to do the mending which their responsibility entailed, out of doors, they took up their position beneath the shade of the gnarled old apple-trees in the orchard, and worked away happily at the pile of napery in the basket between them.

"I cannot see the use of being so particular about using things in rotation," said one maiden, setting to work at a damask tablecloth. She had been told to darn it with flourishing thread with the utmost neatness, to prevent the graver task of mending a future hole. "Miss Down speaks as solemnly about it as though it were a matter of the greatest importance."

"Do you mean putting clean linen to the bottom of the heap, and always using from the top? Why, I think it is very easy to see the use of that. Don't you see, if you use all your stock by turns they all wear out slowly, and you get plenty of time to darn any doubtful ones, instead of having a few quite new while the rest are hopelessly far worn."

"But what a bother house-linen is! Every week there is mending to be done—sheets to be turned, or serviettes to darn, or new towels to mark; there is no peace in life," sighed Rosie.

"That is what Miss Gwen says is one of the things that taxes a woman's patience, that there is no end to the little worries and little duties," said thoughtful Ruth. "Men have some great piece of business occupying their minds for a time; they work hard at it, and then can honestly come home and rest, feeling that their day's work is done; but women never come to an end of their work, though their duties may be trifling in themselves."

"How unfair and horrid it is!" cried Rosie, petulantly. "But I am sure I will never darn tablecloths when I leave school."

"Perhaps not, because you will most likely always have plenty of servants; but it will be your duty to see that they darn them properly, and I have heard my mother say that is very often more trouble than doing the work one's self. And I don't see the unfairness either, Rosie. No doubt women have more little worries than men, but look at the responsibilities men have, and the risks they have to run, and the anxieties they have to endure. In different ways I think the trials in life are pretty equally divided; at least, Miss Gwen says so."

"Oh, dear! my trial just now is that Jim is gone," put in Minnie Selby at that moment. "I had always a feud with that boy when he

was here—he was so mischievous. But now I feel I wronged the youth; I did not appreciate his rare faculty for keeping us alive, and also for running errands. As the poet says, 'We never praise the snowdrops till the lovely flowers are fled.'"

Minnie adroitly tipped herself backwards into a hammock which was swinging between two sturdy apple-trees, in a way which told of long practice and careful training in the difficult art of gracefully entering one of these luxurious lounges.

"Fancy comparing the dusky Jim to a snowdrop!" laughed Ruth. "But why do you want him, just now?"

"Oh, it is the salad, you know. I hate asking Green to cut me lettuces and things; he is always so surly to me since I dug up the artichokes to see if they were growing; but Jim always got me anything I wanted with the sweetest smile."

"We are going to have a cold collation to-day, then, are we?" asked Rosie.

"Yes," said Minnie, "and you may be thankful I suggested it this hot day; you might have been left to the mercy of some unimaginative soul like Ruth, for instance, and have been made to live upon hot soup and roast beef, whereas you are going to have a supper of—let me see, where is my menu? Oh, here!—well, fish salad; that is, if I ever succeed in getting the things for it."

"What do you mean, Minnie? I thought salad was lettuce and beetroot, and all that," chimed in the piping voice of a junior.

"Oh, hearken to that little innocent! I'll teach you better than that. You can have any and every sort of salad; but this one is an invention of my own, and if somebody will kindly pour me, or tip me, or roll me out of this net, I will just inform the company how it is done."

Having succeeded in alighting upon her feet, Minnie proceeded to expatiate on her last new salad.

"This dish, my dears, is a very indigestible one. I wish especially to impress this fact upon your minds, because there is unfortunately only a small quantity of it; so I hope most of you will make a point of not taking any. Well, you may perchance remember that we had fish for dinner yesterday, and that there was some left. Now that has to be cut up into elegant little pieces, with the addition of as much of a lobster as you think proper."

"My dear Minnie, where are you going to get your lobster from?"

"Ruth, I wonder at you betraying the secrets of our craft in that way. You compel me to confess that I get it out of a tin in the store-room. Then you mix them all up together with all the usual ingredients for a salad—which I need not enumerate—pour the salad mixture over all, and behold your fish salad. Then we are going to have a chicken mayonnaise, which in plain language means cold remains of fowl, with sauce over it."

"Do tell how you make mayonnaise," put in Rosie. "Miss Down is certain to ask me; she always does ask me things I don't know."

"My dear Rosie, your praiseworthy thirst for knowledge compels me to divulge another secret. The fact is, I found some cream this morning in the very act of turning sour. I was just going to weep over it, when Ruth murmured in my ear that it would do for mayonnaise, and nobody would be any the wiser. Honesty compels me to add that I had no idea how to make it, so I meekly followed Ruth's directions, which were to put the yolk of one egg into a bowl with a little white pepper and salt and about a quarter of a teaspoonful of mustard. Then I got a quarter of a pint of salad oil—"

"You might have put more oil if you had wished, but you said you only wanted to make a small quantity."



"I was just about to observe, when I was so rudely interrupted," continued Minnie, in a severe tone, "that Ruth insisted upon my adding the oil one drop at a time, which I considered an absurd and unnecessary trouble; but as she assured me it would not be smooth otherwise, I did as I was told, and stirred it vigorously with a wooden spoon, which accounts for my present state of exhaustion. When I had put in about half the oil, and had just got into the way of doing it easily, she interrupted me to put in a little vinegar, plain and Tarragon mixed; then I had to go on with the oil, and then vinegar, until I had put in about two tablespoonfuls. By that time I was so exhausted that Ruth had to do the rest; but it was very easy; I had done all the difficult part; she had only to whip up a teacupful of cream and mix it up with the other things; and then the chicken will have to be arranged on a dish, and the sauce poured over, and it is done."

"He almost wished he could be picking  
An unsophisticated chicken,"

sang one of the girls. "No offence intended, Minnie, but sauce made of sour cream sounds so nasty that it reminds me of my favourite poem."

"I must say," chimed in Ruth, laughing, "Minnie's grand dishes reminded me of Hannah More too; in fact, I was just going to quote from the same poem—

'Twas all so foreign and so fine,  
'Twas easier to admire than dine.'

But I am responsible for the mayonnaise, Rosie, and I know it does not matter at all the cream being a little turned; it was not really sour. And the beauty of mayonnaise is that you can use up cold remains of almost anything, and make quite a handsome dish of it. But go on, Minnie, we are very much edified by your remarks, and we will take the

edge off our appetites with something substantial before supper."

"I consider the remarks of the company to be distinctly impertinent," replied Minnie, in a would-be indignant tone; "but to show what a forgiving spirit I have, I will add that I have made you a junket."

"Oh, how do you make that, Minnie?" asked the inquiring junior again. "I have tasted that in Devonshire, but they told me the milk grew like that in the south."

"Oh, you baby!" cried Minnie, when the laughter of the others had subsided. "You get two teaspoonfuls of rennet, of which you have previously purchased a bottle at the chemist's, and you put it in the bottom of a glass dish which will hold about a pint, or rather more. But first you warm a pint of milk—it is not to boil on any account, remember, baby, but to get well warm; then pour it very slowly into the dish on to the rennet, stirring slowly and solemnly all the time, and go on stirring till it begins to set. Probably you will think it is not going to set at all, and will begin to add more rennet, and just at that instant it always begins to set. So the moral is 'have patience,' but if it really won't set you must add a drop or two more rennet."

"And then?"

"Oh then, that's all. Grate some nutmeg on the top, and most people like sugar also. But now I am not going to give you any more gratis cooking lessons, or you will get the marks for my work. I must go and cull 'the lively lettuce and the costly cress,' or you will get no supper to-night."

Narcissa's foreign experiences were brought into constant use. With some difficulty she persuaded the household to try the favourite German dish, sour milk. The preparation of this dish simply consists in putting milk out in pans for a week or more, according to the state of the weather, till it had first turned sour, and then become solid, like junket, when it is eaten with sugar. In this hot weather

the idea of it was agreeable, and by degrees the girls began to think it a very cool and pleasant dish. To be eaten in the correct German way, it should have rye-bread crumbled over it; but as this is generally unattainable in England, the girls tried the nearest they could get to it—brown bread, but most of them preferred the dish with only sugar added.

Their meals at this time always included some dishes prepared from milk in various ways. There were the endless varieties of blancmanges and corn-flour moulds; some with small pieces, like dice, of preserved ginger in them; others with fresh strawberries or stoned cherries. Others, again, were made with half the usual quantity of corn-flour, and the remainder of sticks of chocolate, scraped and mixed smoothly with the corn-flour. Another favourite blancmange was made with a teacupful of arrowroot; twelve sweet almonds, chopped small, were boiled in a pint of milk, sweetened; six bitter almonds were boiled in it also, but in a muslin bag, so that they could be taken out when boiled. The hot milk was then poured slowly upon the arrowroot and mixed as smooth as possible, then poured back into the pan and boiled a few minutes, stirring all the while, and afterwards turned into a mould as usual. A substitute for custard or cream, for eating with fruit, was sometimes made of corn-flour. It was prepared, flavoured, and sweetened as for a mould, but with only half the quantity of corn-flour, so that after boiling it was still quite thin. When cold this was beaten up with an egg-whisk till quite light. If it had set too firmly to beat easily, a little cold milk was added. Sometimes, if other dishes had been prepared which required the yolks of eggs, the girls would whisk up the whites to a snow, and pile it on the beaten-up corn-flour, which made a very pretty dish.

(To be continued.)

## A KING'S DAUGHTER.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO, Author of "Her Object in Life," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### A KINDRED FACE.



ASKED you that question," said Mr. William Thomson, "because the very moment that I met you driving with the Stewarts to Balacuva, your face seemed familiar to me; it is so likethat of somebody whom I first met on a great estancia near Buenos Ayres. I never saw a more striking resemblance, but since you say you have no relatives abroad, of course it must be a mere coincidence."

May Castle's heart beat fast. Could it be possible that some kindred face thus loomed before her in this strange

unexpected way? Suddenly herself and her past history and her present surroundings, the boat rocking up and down on the blue sea, the jagged picturesque rocks they were passing, the form of Mr. Thomson beside her, and the voices of Margaret and the minister behind, all lost reality and seemed changed into the phantasmagoria of a nightmare, among which she could scarcely breathe, still less think or speak. She felt like a drowning creature, who, just ere it loses consciousness, sees a floating rope which it has no longer strength nor sense to grasp. With a strong effort of will she threw off that horrible spell, partly physical, partly mental, and partly moral, under which the opportunities of so many lives pass away.

"Mr. Thomson," she said, in a low voice, "I should like you to tell me more about this person. I know of no relatives abroad, but I know I must have relatives somewhere, whom I do not know."

The young man recognised the flutter of strong emotion in the girl's voice, and though he could not imagine what caused it, with the fine tact of a sensitive

nature he gave her time to recover herself, by seeming to have no extraordinary interest in the matter.

"I expect that is true of most of us," he said, "in such a wandering people as we British are. When I was once camping out in the Rocky Mountains, with a certain comrade thrown in my way by chance, on our getting into dreamy confidences over the camp fire, we presently discovered that we were connections by marriage, and had a family of cousins in common. But I must tell you all I can about my friend of the South American estancia. Only see, we have to land in that little bay, and as we are now so near, I had better not begin my story till I am likely to get it finished without interruption."

And then he pulled lustily at his oars. By the time the boat scraped upon the shingle, May was quite calm again, and could have even smiled at the strong storm of feeling which had swept over her.

Landing, they found themselves in a wild and lonely scene. Even on that calm and lovely day one's first thought was, "What must this coast be in winter

The happy days passed by in visits to museums and picture galleries, drives in the parks, and walks to look at the shops, sometimes accompanied by Miss Beecher, sometimes by her maid, Harvey. Then there was the more sacred enjoyment of hearing good men preaching the same great truths, and bringing fresh light to bear upon them; a new life for Nellie, teaching her practically what she had hitherto only learnt theoretically, and hardly realised, that, amongst all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, there is always a union in life's motive and aim.

A thrice happy week was that one Gerald spent with them, and how proud Nellie felt to show him about London! The evening before he returned to Upperfield, Miss Beecher told them a little more of her history.

"You have wondered, I know, Nellie," she began, "how it was I came to live away from my dear uncle and aunt. As I told you, my aunt was of French family. Well, the mother of my friend Lucille—who had married a Swiss pasteur—was taken with a long illness, and with my uncle's consent I went over to stay with her. I had visited them two or three times before. She continued an invalid, and I remained with her, taking a daughter's place in the house, and to me it was the happiest time in my life. When I had been with them three years circumstances occurred which compelled me to leave them, but I still thought it better not to return to my uncle's house, excepting from time to time as a visitor, and from that time I have been a wanderer, my faithful Harvey sharing my wanderings."

"How was it, Aunt Marian"—for so Nellie now willingly designated Miss Beecher—"how was it you never knew my mother?"

Nellie had long tried to get courage to ask this question.

"I really had heard so little about her. Your Uncle Beecher died when I was quite young. I remember seeing him once or twice, and from him we formed quite a wrong estimate of your mother. Now I know you, I can see how thoroughly wrong it must have been. When I saw the notice of her death, not long after I had come into my uncle's money, I recollected that she had children, and felt I should wish to help if necessary."

"And are your friends still living in Geneva, Aunt Marian?" asked Gerald.

"Yes, and Lucille still lives up on the mountains. We three must pay her a visit, one day."

"That would be delightful," cried Nellie. "Was she the only child?"

"No, there is a son."

Something in Miss Beecher's tone stayed further questioning.

Has our friend a skeleton cupboard? Let us not seek to unlock it. Good for her if the key be irrevocably lost; or, better still, if after years she can dare to open the door wide and, letting in the light of God's sunshine, find its grim occupant fled!

As the winter approached, Nellie's time became more and more occupied. Not only had she begun taking lessons in languages and music, and attending some classes, but she was very busy helping her aunt with some of her benevolent schemes. One of these they were both especially interested in. Miss Beecher, having a desire to help the poor in her immediate neighbourhood, had inaugurated a weekly class in her housekeeper's room, to which girls were invited. They were taught sewing, and Miss Beecher or Nellie read some entertaining, instructive book. Once a month they had what they called a concert, to which the girls might invite one or two members of their families, or a friend. This was held in the drawing-room, seats being placed in rows, but not too closely or primly set. Miss Beecher, who was an excellent pianist, played; and Nellie, with her

sweet rich voice, sang, delighting the audience with strains that helped to raise the taste and possibly through that dispel some of the coarser instincts that owe their birth to terrible surroundings. Not only by these means, but by showing them photos of pictures, telling the history of these or anecdotes of their artists, by talking to them of the different places she had visited, and seeking to awaken wider interests, Miss Beecher endeavoured to educate those who were thus brought under her influence—above all, desiring to be the means of bringing some spiritual health and purity to those lives, so stunted and lowered by cruel circumstances repressing the development of good.

During the evening, coffee and tea, with other wholesome refreshment, were handed round, Harvey taking a great interest in helping in this "freak of missus's," as the cook called it.

(To be concluded.)

## GRADUATES IN HOUSE-KEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.



THAT summer was the hottest that anyone could remember.

Morning after morning rose misty and dense, till the sun, gathering strength as he rose, dispelled the haze, and shone forth fierce and clear for the rest of the live-long day. Sometimes a few large heavy drops of rain fell, giving hope of the showers so sorely needed by the parched earth; but they soon ceased. "Them's only the pride of the morning," old Green would say, and so it seemed, for the days went on for some weeks bright and dry as ever.

At Spike House, various devices were adopted for keeping the rooms cool. The front door was always wide open, and another door, which admitted the air, fixed in front of it. This was all of wood, made like a Venetian blind fixed into a strong framework, and effectually excluded the sun, while admitting plenty of air. There were several side entrances to the house, but as these were not visible from the road there was no necessity for having doors of any kind kept closed, so they were simply left wide open, and the sun kept out, in some cases by an outside awning, and at one door by a curtain being across the doorway. The windows of the rooms were opened, and the outside shutters closed before the sun came round upon them, so that they were kept comparatively cool all day.

When the hot weather began, Narcissa was sent to the seaside in charge of a few girls, whose health seemed to require a sea breeze. A quiet boarding-house was found for them, Miss Gwen being of opinion that it was beneficial for everybody to have a change of society occasionally, as well as change of air; and she thought, also, that both teacher and scholars would enjoy having no duties at all to undertake, not even the anxiety of providing their meals. Lessons were not entirely suspended, however, for Miss Gwen required the girls to keep a sort of natural history diary, and to spend not less than one quarter of an hour each

day in writing a description of any interesting objects they found in their walks. She was not particular where the subjects were found, whether in earth, or air, or water, so long as the girls used their eyes and found something of interest somewhere, and used their brains just sufficiently to be able to describe what they saw. As a little extra inducement to effort, she offered a prize to the one who brought home the best collection to be added to the "Spike House Natural History Museum," which was always on view in the girls' own private domain—a large garet at the top of the house—where not even Miss Gwen herself intruded, except when specially invited.

Nor was work entirely suspended at Spike House, although it was holiday time. The housekeepers were busy gathering and drying stores of herbs for winter use, and bottling and preserving plums and late fruits. They had an unusually large supply of tomatoes in the garden also this year, so some small ones, the firmest and least fruity amongst them, were bottled for the winter, in the same way as fruit. Others were preserved by boiling; they were then pressed through a cullender, so as to get the pulp without seeds or skins; this pulp was then spread out in a number of flat dishes, and put out for a few days in the hot noon-day sun till a good deal of the water had evaporated, and the pulp was then put away in jars for the winter. This was one of Narcissa's recipes; it is the Turkish method of preserving tomatoes, and it is this preparation which they use for their national dish, pilaf.

Tomatoes were used a great deal this summer at Spike House. Miss Down had taken for the subject of one of her cookery lectures the beneficial action of the mineral substances in certain fruit and vegetables, and especially in the tomato, which is said by some doctors to be an almost infallible cure for dyspepsia.

They were used in various ways, those which had ripened well and evenly were eaten raw, the less perfect ones were cooked in the different methods usually suggested in cookery books—stewed, baked, and forced. They made tomato soup also; the fruit was stewed thoroughly well (all tomatoes require a great deal of cooking to be really nice), then the skins and stones strained out, and the soup thickened with grated potatoes, and all boiled together again for an hour.

Amongst the foreign dishes Narcissa taught the girls were several ways of using tomatoes. One was macaroni cheese with tomato sauce. The dish was prepared just in the usual way, except that before the cheese was added, sauce, made of tomatoes, and rather highly seasoned, was poured over the macaroni. For dyspeptic people, or those who do not like cheese, a much more wholesome dish is made by omitting that ingredient, and flavouring the macaroni simply with the tomatoes.

Another was the Turkish dish, pilaf, mentioned above. For this a quantity of rice was boiled and very carefully dried; then some butter was put into a saucepan—about a quarter of a pound of butter to half a pound of rice—and as soon as it boiled it was poured over the rice, and set in the oven till it had all soaked in and was thoroughly incorporated with the rice. Then the tomato pulp, bottled the previous year, should have been poured over all, but as the girls frequently made this dish before the tomatoes were ripe in the garden, and they had not learnt the art of preserving the pulp the previous summer, they were compelled to use the tinned tomatoes, which answered the purpose nearly as well as fresh ones. The liquor was poured off (and saved for soup), and the remainder passed through a coarse sieve, so as to get only the pulp, which was then made very hot and turned on to the rice, and stirred gently with a fork till all was

thoroughly mixed. This soon became a favourite dish, and was served as a vegetable.

Another method of preparing this pilaf, preferred by some Turks, is this: Wash the rice and put it in a saucepan with a small piece of butter, shake it about till the butter is melted and mixed with the rice. Then pour a little water on the rice, not enough to boil it in, but just to swell it a little. When this is all absorbed, add the liquid from the tin of tomatoes, having previously strained out all the solid parts, and boil the rice in this juice. There must be only just so much liquid that it can all be absorbed, leaving the rice dry, and each grain whole and separate and of a beautiful red colour. Turn this on to a dish, and pour over it some butter which has been melted in readiness. For both these dishes the rice must have rather more salt than usual.

Rice cooked in this manner, in tomato juice, makes a very pretty garnishing for dishes of cutlets, or any made dishes.

It happened that the first party to go to the seaside included nearly all the experienced housekeepers, and the younger ones consequently had a good deal more responsibility than they were accustomed to. The larders were one week in the hands of beginners, who found the difficulties of catering even for their reduced household very overwhelming, for though Miss Down was always at hand to advise, she never would do so till they had first made out a plan for themselves.

"Oh, Annie, this is dreadful," cried one, on entering the larder one morning. "Nothing but cold potatoes!"

"Yes, I knew you were ordering too many yesterday, Rose," responded Annie. "But it certainly is an array, and they seem such hopeless things. We have had them mashed, so as to use up cold remains, at least once every day already, and Miss Gwen will begin to make remarks soon. I know one other way; we can have them made into little balls after they are mashed, and browned in the oven; that will make a little variety, but I don't think there is any other way."

Their efforts to think of any fresh manner of serving cold potatoes being quite unavailing, they were compelled to go to Miss Down, who advised them to pick out the firm whole ones, cut them in slices, and put them in a pan with a teaspoonful of lemon juice, two tablespoonfuls of milk thickened with corn flour, one or two drops of tarragon vinegar, a little cayenne pepper, nutmeg, and salt, and a very small piece of butter. This was to be closely covered, and shaken over a hot fire for about ten minutes, but gently, so as not to break the slices, which were then served on a very hot dish.

Some of the broken ones were used for thickening vegetable soups, and some made into potato pie for the kitchen supper, and a few of the unbroken, but mealy ones, cut into slices and served in the German fashion, laid over salad.

Miss Down also showed them how to make an *entrée* dish of stuffed potatoes. A hole was made with an apple corer, and was filled with finely chopped meat flavoured with herbs and a good piece of butter. This was covered with a slice of the potato which had been taken out of the middle, and baked in a tin in a slow oven.

Miss Down had said so much to the girls in her lectures about the excellent effect on the human system of the variety of mineral matters contained in the potato, and their wonderful anti-scorbutic effect, that it was no wonder the young housekeepers, in their first ardour, should fall into the mistake of providing a great deal too much of so excellent a food. Miss Down's great grievance on the subject of potatoes was that they were not more appreciated when cooked in their skins. As she told

the girls constantly, it is the part just under the skin that contains the largest portion of the valuable potash salts, which are boiled out when the potato has been previously peeled. But she was obliged to content herself with keeping a strict watch upon the manner of peeling, to see that as little as possible of the inner skin was removed. As long as the potatoes were comparatively young, they were merely well washed and the outer skin carefully scraped off; but when they were too old for that to be sufficient, she insisted upon their being peeled as thin as possible.

Another use which Miss Down taught the girls to make of potatoes was to use a decoction of them for cleaning silk dresses. The raw potatoes were scraped into warm water, and left to soak for some hours, then strained off, and any dirty places in the silk were sponged with the water.

Meanwhile, what had become of poor Jim? He was not forgotten at Spike House, and his most sanguine friends still hoped that he might some day return and explain his strange conduct; but in spite of the renewed efforts of the whole household to find some trace of the lost property, the mystery of the missing ring was still unsolved. They could only conclude that the evil examples and bad training of his childhood had more seriously injured his moral character than they had supposed; and they had almost ceased to speculate as to what had become of him, when one morning Miss Gwen came into the schoolroom carrying a letter, and with an unmistakable look of pleasure in her face.

"It is from that poor boy Jim," she said, "and, in spite of his sad faults, I know you are all interested in him, so I have brought it at once that you may hear what he has to say." The note was as follows:—

"Honoured Mam,—I take pen in hand to let you no I am gettin' on pritty to'able, hopin' you and the young lads is well, as it leves me at present; which I have got a birth in the german sossidge makin' line, and food and close found, but no wayges. With my dooty to the laddys and mr. gwen, from yours obedently, "JIM."

"As soon as my carickter is cleered, and that there ring turned up, plees drop me a line to mr. james, care of mr. schmidt, sossidge mannfactory, broad road, london."

(To be concluded.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### EDUCATIONAL.

MOSS ROSE, MARIE SIMPSON, and Others.—For clerkships in the Post Office, see page 519, vol. v.

AIMEE.—As a rule, no governess sends in an account, as her employer generally pays her when the term or quarters are ended.

MOLLY and COLLY.—From five to six hours comprise the ordinary number allotted to study, eight hours to sleep, and the rest are divided between exercise, meals, etc.

ANNIE R. T.—We are much obliged for your letter, which, however, is not new information to us.

IGNORAMUS.—We think you had better apply to the Birkbeck Literary and Scientific Institution, hitherto at Southampton Buildings, Chancery-lane, W.C.; the new one recently erected in Bream's Buildings, Chancery-lane. You say you do not know how to talk or behave in society, so we advise you to study our series of articles on "Good Breeding"—"The Art of Conversing Agreeably," "Dinners in Society," "Habits of Polite Society," and others. Write copies daily, and improve your handwriting. Mere accomplishments, such as music and drawing, are of far less consequence.

MARYLAND.—We do not see how the reading of short paragraphs and miscellaneous news could serve to deteriorate the memory. The learning of poetry and prose for recitation would undoubtedly strengthen the memory. We also advise you to take a few lessons from some professor. We thank you for your gratifying remarks.

IDA.—The secretaries of the Edinburgh University examinations are Professors Calderwood and Laurie, Edinburgh University. We are much obliged for your information.

ANXIOUS A.—Your handwriting is good enough, but your spelling is much in fault, and when in doubt you had better look out such words as "education" in the dictionary. In Newcastle there are three institutions where you might inquire. The Church of England Institute, Mr. G. J. Baguley; the Science and Art School, Corporation-street, Mr. J. H. Rutherford; and the Young Men's Christian Association, Mr. T. Moffet.

FLORENCE ASHTON.—Home employment is most difficult to obtain. As your forte seems to be music, why not try to obtain some pupils where you are living?

PICCIOLA.—It is not necessary to have a certificate of any kind before taking a foreign situation, unless the employer should exact it.

ZOE.—Lavater is the best authority on physiognomy, and there is an edition of his essays at a moderate price, we believe.

STINGING NETTLE.—You appear, from your letter, to be fully capable of taking a situation as governess to young children; but your age would be an impediment. Why do you not wait and try to qualify for a clerkship under Government? Many thanks for your kind letter.

ANNIE BECK.—You will have to write to the secretary of the Civil Service Commissioners, at their office in Cannon-row, S.W., and ask for their prospectuses, stating your age. They will send you a form to fill up, by which you will know whether you be eligible for their competitions. There is but little chance of success, however, as the number of applications is so very great.

BRENDA TROLL.—We were much interested in your letter. It seems to us that you have neglected reading history and books of travels. If so, you should first procure a history of England. We also recommend Dr. Eadie's "Bible Cyclopædia," illustrated, price 7s. 6d. If you write for the latter to Mr. Tarn at our office (56, Paternoster-row, London, E.C.), we feel sure you will consider it a valuable book. He would also send you a General Catalogue of all our books, great and small, all the prices of which are named. We shall be glad to hear from you at any time, and are pleased that you like our paper so much. Accept our best wishes.

PHYLLIS K.—We are sorry that your writing was the cause of your failure. Get a good set of small round-hand copies and practise daily until you can write a free hand. It is not easy to obtain situations as clerks, and when obtained the work is dull and not improving to the mind. Of course, as a means of self-support, you might be thankful for one; but as you are independent you might make a better selection of useful employment.

APPLE BLOSSOM.—Henry VIII. was the first English sovereign to assume the title of King of Ireland. Former sovereigns governed as its lord—the title being Lord of Ireland. A grant of the country was made by Pope Adrian IV. to Henry II. of England.

SCARBORO.—We have known persons who learnt shorthand without a teacher; but we know nothing of your capacity or industry, so we could not say what you could do. Try, and if too difficult look out for a teacher.

HETTY.—Albany, or Albain, is the ancient name of the Scottish Highlands. The brother of Robert III., King of Scotland, was made Duke of Albany in 1398. Frederick, son of George III., was Duke of York and Albany; the title and name were used by the Stuarts until their extinction.

PEGGOTTY.—The Vörings-foss, S. Bergenhus, Norway, is a waterfall, 483 feet high, on the Björöya-elv.

RUTH.—We regret to tell you that you need not apply for the situation you desire in the Civil Service, as you can neither write good English nor spell. You had better try to improve your education.

SPEECHCRAFT.—1. "Mine" is a possessive pronoun. 2. "*Ne faites pas attention à cela*" is not idiomatic French; you should say, "*N'y faites pas attention.*" "*Il n'y a pas de quoi*" is usually said when someone thanks you for an act of politeness, and signifies that there is no reason for your feeling under any obligation. It is an idiomatic expression, or nothing exists to demand your thanks.

### MUSIC.

DOLLY PENRITH.—The fees at the Leipzig Royal Conservatoire for the whole instruction amount to 300 marks per annum, to be paid in advance—i.e., 100 at Michaelmas, 100 at Christmas, and 100 at Easter; an entrance fee of nine marks, and three marks per annum for servants of the institute. The prospectus of the internal arrangements of the college can be had gratis on application to Dr. Otto Gunter, of the Royal Conservatoire of Music, Leipzig. Write and make inquiries respecting the arrangements which are made as to the reception into regularly appointed houses of their students. You must abide by their regulations, and they will make provision of a respectable character for you and your friend.

DISTRESSED ONE.—You will find advice on the subject of your nervous complaint (hesitation in playing and failure of nervous power) only very recently given; and for the second time it will probably be in print, in reply to other correspondents, before you see this. We are of opinion that perfect rest from playing and the direction of the thoughts to other things, with *change* of air, may tend to restore your general con-



## GRADUATES IN HOUSEKEEPING, AND HOW THEY QUALIFIED.

By DORA HOPE.

"I AM sure the bread we have been having lately at Spike House does not deserve the name of the 'staff of life,'" remarked Minnie Selby, at the breakfast table, meditatively cutting the crust off the comfortable-looking cottage loaf. The girls were still at the seaside, but the holidays were nearly over, and their thoughts began to turn homewards.

"No, our bread has been bad lately," said Narcissa; "it is so spongy, sometimes, that one feels equal to eating a whole loaf without being satisfied; and at other times it is heavy and lumpy. But Miss Gwen is quite aware of its faults, and there are to be reforms."

"Is there not a regular bread-reform league somewhere, Miss St. Adrian?"

"I don't understand all this fuss about bread," interrupted Rose. "It must be made of flour, and as long as it is not heavy or sour, I don't see how one way of making can be better than another."

"I did not know either, Rose, till I began to inquire, at Miss Gwen's request, for the sake of improving our bread at school; and I was surprised to find how much difference there is in the satisfying qualities of bread. There is a bread-reform league, Minnie, but I have been getting information from a good many other authorities as well. The reason so many doctors recommend whole-meal bread now is that almost all the nitrogenous substance, that is, the flesh and heat-producing part, as well as some saline substances, which are very important for their bone-making properties, are in the bran, which in white bread is removed by the miller; so that whole-meal bread is altogether much more nutritious than the finer kinds."

"But there are one or two objections to brown bread; for one thing, it is not, as you imagine, economical, because, strange to say, bakers always charge a higher price for very coarse bread than for white; although, on the other hand, as you just said, Ruth, a smaller quantity is generally required. Then, again, though there is so much nourishment in the bran, many people cannot digest it, and consequently, of course, it does them no good. For them it is better to have part of the bran removed, which makes the bread less coarse. These different degrees of coarseness are easy to obtain, if people will take the trouble to make a few inquiries, as the miller always passes the flour through several sieves; the first, a very coarse one, only removes the coarsest of the bran; the next a little finer, and so on, so that you ought to be able to get flour with just as much or as little bran as you chose."

"I like aerated bread the best," remarked Rose, "though I should think there is not much bran left in it. I wonder why it is called aerated."

"Because that name exactly describes what it really is. The flour, instead of being mixed with ordinary water, is made into a paste with water into which carbonic acid has been forced, very much the same thing as ordinary soda water, which, as you know, is full of bubbles of air."

"I wonder why yeast makes bread rise. Do you know, Miss St. Adrian?"

"It is really a process of fermentation. There are several different kinds of yeast. The simplest way of procuring it, is to have a little dough over from one baking to the next; if this is exposed to the air, certain parts of it become decomposed, and in this state it is called leaven, and when leaven is mixed with

fresh dough, it has the power of converting the starch in the flour, first into sugar, then into alcohol, and finally into carbonic acid, which produces bubbles and makes the bread rise."

"But, Miss St. Adrian," put in Rose, "I do not see why leaving the old dough for a week should change it into yeast."

"The real reason is that, as you know, the air is full of tiny living germs; if the dough were entirely excluded from the air, it would not change, but, being left uncovered, these germs of life come in contact with the moist flour, and multiply very rapidly, and it is these living organisms which really act upon the starch, and make all the changes in it."

"What a very unpleasant idea!" exclaimed Minnie Selby. "I shall always be on the look out for minute animals in my bread for the future; and only think of a person with my teetotal principles having been unconsciously imbibing alcohol all my life!"

"You are not very likely to find your minute animals, Minnie, because, in the first place, the germs belong to a low form of plant, and not animal life; and, in the second place, what little life there is, is killed by the baking, which also evaporates the alcohol, so you need not be anxious about your principles. This old-fashioned leaven is not generally used now, as brewer's yeast or German yeast are found to be more convenient; but in country places, where these are not easily obtained, leaven is still used, and all the time I was in Germany I never saw the black bread made with anything else."

Miss Gwen's time had been filled during the vacation by looking over the papers prepared by the girls at the close of last term. Miss Gwen, who liked to do everything differently from other people, departed from the usual method of examination—the giving the girls a set of questions, which they had to answer; instead of this, every girl was expected to write a summary of each subject she had studied during the past term.

In addition to these summaries of the subjects they had studied, the elder girls were expected to give an account of the chief historical events which had taken place during the past year, with any special reasons why they were considered specially important; also a list of the six greatest men who had died during the year, and the manner in which they had distinguished themselves; and finally, an account of any great scientific discoveries or inventions which had been made.

Then there were cookery examinations, both practical and theoretical; and each of the girls who was leaving school had to undergo a severe cross-examination on the principles of cookery, as well as having to provide two or three meals entirely alone, her own arranging, purchasing, cooking, and serving; and only when this had been done satisfactorily, would Miss Gwen give her a certificate, stating that the student was fit to leave school, and, if necessary, take charge of a household.

When all this was over, and the prizes awarded, a special picnic, or garden party, was given to celebrate the close of the examinations. The rejoicings this year were mingled with pensive feelings to some of the girls, for it was their last year at school. Ruth Stanley was to leave at Christmas, to take her place as mistress of her father's house; Minnie Selby was going home at once; and several of the elder girls were to leave before long.

There is always a pleasurable excitement about leaving one sphere of life to set out on a new path; it is specially the case with girls leaving school, for life seems to lie so pleasantly before them; but none of those at Spike House could think of leaving without a pang of regret that the happy school days were over. The picnic passed off very merrily, and the general satisfaction was rendered complete

by the presence of Jim, with his character cleared at last.

It happened thus. Green was very proud of his skill as a gardener, and fond of trying various admixtures of soil, and took pride in varying the mould for special plants. One day he was going to lighten the quality of some rather heavy loam by a nice mixture of cinders, which he was sifting with the delicacy of a cook preparing a custard, when something bright caught his eye, which, on examination, proved to be Minnie's long-lost ring. Everyone was glad that it was found, but still the mystery remained unsolved.

"We must trace it back," said Miss Gwen, solemnly, "from Green's sieve to the piano ledge. I can easily imagine that it might have travelled unnoticed from the fireplace to the cinder-box, but for it to get from the piano to the fire accidentally, is impossible."

"Oh, Miss Gwen," said Minnie, falteringly and covered with blushes, "I believe I remember that I did move it from the piano to the chimney-piece; I thought it jingled when I was practising, so I moved it."

"Do you mean to say you have only just remembered that?" asked Miss Gwen, severely.

"I remembered it before, but not till after Jim had gone, and then I thought it would not do any good to mention it; I did not see that it made any difference either way."

"Of course it made a difference—all the difference in the world," replied Miss Gwen, in her severest tones. "It would be the easiest thing possible for it to be dusted off into the grate below, and no doubt that is the explanation, that Jim actually did himself dust it off, though accidentally. Of course you ought to have told every detail, when the boy's character was at stake. But there, don't cry, child; we must be thankful it is all cleared up at last, and get the boy back if he chooses to come."

So a note was despatched to the sausage maker, with the result that Jim was soon installed in his old quarters, a little more staid and quiet than before, and his old habit of pilfering quite gone; but with his pride in his personal appearance as great as ever, and with very little alteration in the quaint ways and odd speeches, which made him such an amusement to the girls.

On leaving school, Minnie gave him the ring which had been the cause of so much sorrow, telling him that if ever he wanted a friend, he must write to her, and her father would help him; and, in the meantime, he must keep the ring, to remind him of her promise. Jim bore her no ill-will for the unintentional harm she had done him, and secretly begged a piece of ribbon from his chief patroness, Ruth, with which he hung the ring round his neck, "to put him in mind," as he explained to her, "as how it's easier to lose your character than what it is to get another, so you'd best keep honest."

Narcissa, at the end of her year's probation, found that there is no life so happy as that which is filled with useful work; and though she often longed to see Adrienne and her father, she felt that she never could endure again the useless, aimless life she had led, with no object in existence but to hide from the world the fact that they were poor.

And here we must leave the girls, some remaining at Spike House for a few more years' training, under Miss Gwen's odd but efficient superintendence; the rest starting out into their new life, half fearing and half hoping for the future, but each one receiving a farewell injunction from Miss Gwen to remember that as they must live and die at home, it was more important for them to consider the happiness and welfare of their own homes than to acquire learning sufficient to rule the affairs of a nation.