

be heated over the fire, salt, fine wire pins with large heads, and scissors are required. Select designs of such flowers as large single poppies, cactus, arums, and other well-defined blossoms, and cut the shape of their petals from the natural petals out in cardboard. Soak the thin bits of leather in a basin of warm water, in which a good handful of salt has been mixed. Let the leather soak for ten minutes, then take it out, dry it with a cloth, and cut out the petals and leaves, vein the leaves with the points of the scissors, curve and shape them with the palm of the hand and the knobs of the pins, and crinkle them with the blunt sides of the scissors. Make the tendrils and stalks by wrapping small strips of leather round the wire, and glue them with the hot strong glue to the pots they are to decorate before adjusting the flowers and leaves. For the leaves and flowers heat a lump of glue, stick it to the pot, and attach the necessary petal, flower, or leaf to it at once, and when it is attached shape and arrange it before the glue has dried. In stamens and small berries, and other round objects, mix a little plaster of Paris with the glue, shape the berry in the hand, and stick it to the pot with the glue, but use the leather, as being lighter and more pliable than the plaster, wherever it is possible. Lay a coating of size over all the raised work, and then a coat of flake white oil colour, and then paint the flowers in their natural tints, using the ordinary tube oil-colours. Finish with a coat of pale varnish applied a few days after the painting is finished, and not until it is perfectly dry. B. C. SAWARD.

POULTRY AS FOOD, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

By PHILLIS BROWNE.



FANCY there are a good many people who never think of having poultry, because they are afraid of the cost. They believe in joints—good roasts and good boils—for they know

that these are substantial and thoroughly satisfactory. Meat is ever so much a pound, it is true, but then (they say) one knows how far it goes and what are the possibilities connected with it. Fowls, on the contrary, are troublesome to prepare, and when they are done there is scarcely anything on them. They may be very good for invalids, or for very small families, or for people of ample means; but for ordinary folks, who have to provide for numbers and consider the cost, they are altogether out of reach, and must be left alone entirely.

There is a good deal of truth in statements like the above. Poultry is, I am sorry to say, exceedingly dear; it is much dearer than it need be, if farmers' wives understood how easily it is reared and how profitable it might be made. Nevertheless, poultry is very agreeable food; it is very easy of digestion, and supplies a most welcome variety in the everyday fare when it can be obtained, so I think it is worth our while to get to know what we can about it, especially as it happens that if ever there is a time when it is more easily obtained than another, it is just now. Fowls, as we know, are never out of season—they are to be had all the year round by those who can pay the price. They are generally supposed to be most plentiful from May to October. In the

early part of the year they are, however, very expensive, and from one cause or another they keep a high price until the end of August or the beginning of September—then, if ever, they begin to go down a little, and they are at their cheapest in September, October, and November. As Christmas approaches they get dear once more, and rise far out of the region of economical marketers. The present, therefore, is a particularly favourable time for us to think about poultry.

I suppose that the reason why fowls are cheap just now is that people do not care to keep their poultry during the winter. They therefore take the opportunity to send to market all but their most valuable birds. In acting thus they are very sensible, but then it is evident that while they will most likely dispose of the superabundant young birds, they may also be tempted to send very old birds to market, and this constitutes a danger for the inexperienced purchaser, and makes it necessary that she should know how to make a judicious choice when laying out her money. Yet even persons of experience are sometimes taken in, in this matter. I am not one of those who think you can learn to go to market by reading a book. The way to learn how to lay out money to advantage is to make actual experiments, and even to make mistakes a few times. It is very easy to give hints, and to say that the legs of poultry should be smooth and pliant, the toes being easily broken when bent back, and that if they look hard and bony the bird is old and will be tough; that the skin should be clean, white, and finely grained, because in old birds the skin has a sort of knotted look, well known to the initiated; that the gristly parts should feel tender when pressed; that the neck should not be too thin; that fowls with white legs are best suited to boiling, and dark fowls are best for roasting; and that very large fowls should be avoided, because they are likely to be old, etc., etc. All this is true, and yet when novices come to buy, they generally take what the poulterer chooses to give them. Adepts in marketing, on the contrary, decide more by the general appearance than by any special details, and in this they are right, although, as I have already said, even they occasionally make mistakes, because certain poulterers are particularly clever in adopting little tricks for plumping up their poultry, and making them appear better than they are.

Chickens or young fowls are always tender, and there are many cooks who say that old fowls are good for nothing, and ought not to be eaten. I do not approve of this idea at all, because I do not believe in throwing away good food. A good cook is never an extravagant cook, and when so many people are wanting food all round us, we are not going to commit the wickedness of scorning valuable food. I should never think of buying an old fowl for preference, of course. Yet where people keep poultry they must occasionally be called upon to deal with old fowls, and if they will take a little trouble about the matter they may convert the birds into very satisfactory dishes. If an old fowl were roasted very quickly after it was killed it would be most unpleasantly tough. We read in one of the handbooks published in connection with the Health Exhibition that Mr. Gladstone owes his good health to the fact that he has always been careful to chew his meat thirty-two times before swallowing it. I should think that if he or anyone else were called upon to deal with the old roast fowl referred to he would have to chew it thrice thirty-two times before it was sufficiently masticated.

To treat a fowl thus, however, would be practically to throw it away, because no one could eat it. Nevertheless, an old fowl will be very palatable if it is hung for as long as it will keep sweet before being dressed, and then

is skinned, cut up into joints, and stewed slowly, gently, and for a considerable time. It will keep best if not drawn when hung, because, if drawn, the inside is likely to get musty. The crop, however, ought to be taken out, because the food might go sour, and that would affect the taste of the flesh. By rights, however, a fowl ought not to be fed for twelve hours before it is killed, and then there is no fear of an accident of this kind.

There is a way of making an old fowl tender which sounds absurd, but which is in my opinion quite worth trying. The recipe was published some years ago in the *Live Stock Journal*, and came from someone who seemed to know all about poultry. He advised that an old hen should be plucked as soon as killed, wrapped in vine leaves and a napkin, buried for twenty-four hours, then taken up and cooked slowly. This plan may be adopted when it is not convenient to let the bird hang for awhile. In either case, however, it should be cooked slowly, and long enough. All poultry should be thoroughly cooked, but old poultry should be cooked for a long time—three or four hours.

I am not sure that it is possible to write down with sufficient clearness to be understood instructions for trussing fowls. In towns this business is generally performed by the poulterer, and thus the cook is saved both time and trouble. It is, however, always an advantage to know how to do a thing for oneself, and therefore I will do my best to describe the operation. If I fail to make myself understood it will not be for want of trying.

To Truss a Fowl for Roasting.—Pluck the feathers out carefully, not to tear the skin, and singe off the hairs with lighted paper. Lay the bird on its breast and cut a nick down the neck three inches below the head. Put the finger in this and loosen the skin all round, then cut the neck off close to the head, and be careful not to cut through the outer skin, because it is wanted to fold over. Take out the crop, which lies in the front of the neck, and try to remove this whole. Unless this is done, and if the crop contains food, it may be scattered all about, which will be very unpleasant. Put the finger into the opening, and keeping quite close to the body of the bird, work round, and loosen in doing so everything with which the finger comes in contact. Turn the fowl round and cut a slit just above the rump, then put the finger in again and work round once more. Take hold of the gizzard with a cloth, draw out the inside, pressing the breast-bone to push out the giblets, and be very careful not to break the gall-bladder, which adheres to the liver. Its contents are very bitter, and will impart an unpleasant taste to anything they may touch. It must be taken from the liver at once and thrown away. Look through the fowl to be sure it is entirely cleared, and wipe it out with a clean cloth. The liver, heart, and gizzard must be put into a little salt and water; everything else may be thrown away. Cut off the claws and hold the legs in boiling water to loosen the skin, then peel off the latter as far as the first joint. Cut across the sinew which lies between the leg and the thigh, as this will help to keep the bird in good shape. If the bird is an old one, draw out these sinews by making an incision just above the claws, getting someone to hold the bird firmly and pulling it away. Old-fashioned cooks very often accomplish this business by putting the foot in the crevice of the kitchen-door, closing it to hold the foot firmly, and then pulling the fowl till the sinew comes away. In a young bird this would be quite unnecessary, but it is a great assistance to the carver of an old bird. (Professional trussers also break the breast-bone to "plump" the bird. To do this they put a knife between the breast-bone and the skin till the breast-bone can be felt, then knock it

with a rolling-pin to flatten the bone. This is one of the tricks of the trade which is not considered legitimate. If not well done it is apt to spoil the best cuts of the breast.) Sometimes a roast fowl is stuffed with veal stuffing. This stuffing is put in the place where the crop was. The piece of loose skin which is folded over will keep it secure. A boiled fowl is never stuffed. Prepare the gizzard by cutting carefully through the outer skin down the seam, draw off the outer skin, which alone must be taken, and throw the stones away. If liked, the liver can be put under one wing and the gizzard under the other. Turn back the loose skin of the neck, and twist the wings backward over the backbone. Keep the fowl breast upwards, with the neck towards the operator. Thread a trussing needle with fine twine. Put the finger up the back and loosen the skin round the legs, then put the bird on the table breast upwards, and press the legs down so that they feel firm on the table. By doing this the bird will lie flat on the dish, instead of shaking about, to the great discomfort of the carver. Pass the needle right through the body, taking the wing, joints, and the thighs on both sides, and turn the fowl over, fold down the loose piece of skin, and pass the needle again through the little bones called "sidesmen," which are in a line with the backbone, taking up the loose skin which was folded over on the way, draw the skin tightly, and tie securely at the place where the needle was first put in. Turn the fowl over once more, again take up the needle, put the finger in the place where the giblets came out, lift up the end of the bone, and pass the needle through the skin over the bottom of the breast-bone, over the leg, back through the body close to the backbone, and over the other leg, then tie securely.

To Truss a Fowl for Boiling.—A fowl which is to be trussed for boiling should be plucked and drawn as above, but the gizzard and liver should not be put in the wings. The wings of the bird may be trussed as for roasting, and the legs should be cut off at the joint of the thigh. With the fingers loosen the skin round the thighs, and be careful not to tear it; then press the bones of the legs up, and draw the skin down till the legs are inside and out of sight. Bend the rump upwards inside the body. Pass the needle through the end of the breast-bone and through the sides, and tie securely, so as to leave no opening.

When fowls are roasted they should be hung to the fire neck downwards. The usual rules for roasting should be observed with regard to them; that is, they should be put close to the fire for a few minutes, then drawn back, and they should be thoroughly and constantly basted with butter or dripping. The flesh of fowl is dry, therefore some cooks put a piece of buttered paper over the breast; others wrap a very thin slice of fat bacon over it to keep it moist. When these measures are adopted the covering must be removed a few minutes before the fowl is taken up, and the breast must be well basted before a hot fire to brown. A chicken will be done in from half to three-quarters of an hour, according to size; a large fowl will take an hour. When two fowls are roasted together they may be put back to back, and it is a sign that they are sufficiently cooked when the steam draws from them to the fire. Their backs should be put to the fire for a minute or two last thing to give them the proper colour. Brown gravy, bread sauce, and slices of bacon fried are usually served with roast fowl, and they are very suitable and agreeable accompaniments, although bread sauce is not so popular as it once was. The gravy may be made of the giblets, which will not then be too much cooked to be used for giblet pie.

Brown Gravy for Fowl.—Put the giblets into a stewpan with a little piece of butter,

and turn them about over the fire till they are brightly browned. Pour over them about three-quarters of a pint of water, and add a little salt, an onion, a little piece of turnip, and a little piece of carrot, one clove, and three or four peppercorns. Cover closely and stew gently till the gravy is good, stirring occasionally. Strain, cool, and clear away the fat. Mix a dessertspoonful of flour with a little cold water, add this to the gravy, and boil for two minutes. Add a few drops of browning, if required. Pour a little of the gravy into the dish, and send the rest to table in a tureen. If preferred, the cooked liver of the fowl can be employed to thicken the gravy. It must be rubbed with a spoon after being cooked, till quite smooth, and mixed with a little flour and water, then stirred into the gravy and boiled. Very often when the fowl is bought ready trussed, the giblets are sold separately. The liver is, however, usually sent in skewered under the wing of the bird, and as it is not really needed there, it may with advantage be taken to thicken a little stock for gravy. In this case it should be put into the oven with a small piece of butter, pepper, and salt, left for about ten minutes till quite cooked, then rubbed with a spoon till smooth, adding flour, water, a little Worcester or other sauce, and a few drops of browning.

Bread Sauce, I suppose, everyone knows how to make. About three ounces of stale bread is rubbed through a sieve or colander, and boiling milk, as much as the bread will absorb, is poured over it and left to stand (covered) for about ten minutes. The whole is then turned into a saucepan with a little salt, a pinch of white pepper, and a slice of butter, and boiled up. The addition of a little cream is a great improvement. When the flavour of onion is liked, a small onion may be boiled with the sauce, and taken out before serving; or a small onion may be boiled separately in water till tender, then chopped very finely, and added to the preparation. In the same way a small blade of mace may, if approved, be boiled with the sauce. The bacon employed to garnish the dish and to serve with the fowl may be either fried in the usual way, or, better still, because easier and more elegant, may be formed into small rolls and baked. For this purpose it should be cut very thin, in small slices about four inches long and two wide. Roll these up, put them on a skewer, place them in a dripping tin, and bake in a good oven for six minutes.

Boiled Fowl is usually wrapped either in a floured cloth or in a greased paper for boiling, in order to keep it a good colour. I confess that I am not partial to this method, because the liquid in which meat or poultry has been boiled should always be used for making soup, and one does not relish the idea of drinking liquid in which either a cloth or greased paper has been boiled. Besides, I think the precaution is quite unnecessary, because if proper care be taken to remove the scum as it rises from the liquid to prevent its adhering to the bird, and if a slice of lemon be rubbed over the breast, the latter will be a very good colour, especially as it is usually covered with sauce before being sent to table.

It may be noted, however, that the water in which a chicken or fowl has been boiled is not by itself good enough for making soup, because if the chicken is properly boiled very little goodness will come out of it. On this account white stock is to be preferred to water for boiling a fowl, or the liquid in which a fowl has been boiled may be used also for boiling a rabbit or a leg of mutton. In boiling the fowl, also, a carrot and an onion may be put into the pan, and they will help to flavour the liquid, and will render the fowl less insipid. Even if nothing but a fowl had

been boiled in liquid, the latter ought not to be thrown away, as it would in itself be valuable for making white purées, such as potato purée, artichoke purée, etc.

The usual rules with regard to boiling meat may be observed concerning poultry; that is, it should be put into boiling water, boiled for a minute, then drawn back and simmered gently till done. Many cooks advise that poultry should be put into lukewarm water, brought gently to the boil, and simmered till done. This is certainly advisable if there is a doubt about the bird being young and tender. If the bird is really old it should be put into cold water and simmered for three or four hours. If there is uneasiness about its age it may be put into warm water, but if it is young it may be put into boiling water. Only, it must be remembered that the goodness which it contains will be more likely to be drawn out in cool or cold water, and will be kept in if the bird is put into boiling water. If we wanted chicken broth we should certainly use cold water. In this matter, therefore, as in so many others, there is room for the exercise of common-sense. The bird should be put into the stock or water breast downwards, and if large will need to simmer about an hour; if small will be done in half an hour; the time will depend upon the size. It should by all means be thoroughly cooked. Boiled bacon, tongue, or ham is always served with boiled chicken or fowl.

It has already been explained that sauce of some kind is usually poured over boiled chicken, and the dish is named after its accompaniments. English people are often very fond of calling their dishes by French names. For my own part, I think this is very pretentious and absurd. If we were speaking to a Frenchman, or if we were wanting to practise the French language, or if we could express ourselves more clearly in French than in English, it would be justifiable. But I am afraid that while the French are the best cooks amongst civilised nations, the English are understood to be about the worst; and as we cannot compare with them in cookery, we want to *seem* as if we could. "Seem to be what you are," is a good motto for girls, whether they can cook or whether they cannot. If our dishes are made of good food, well cooked and prettily dished, they will be enjoyed, no matter what they are called; and, if they are badly cooked, no amount of French names will make them pass muster.

So many persons nowadays use these French terms, however, that it is well to understand what they mean. Yet here a difficulty arises, for the names have been used so promiscuously that they have become mixed up, and are very confusing. However, we may generally take it for granted that a chicken or young fowl is poulet, or *sometimes* poulette; a capon or large fowl is poulard. The French terms which follow these words determine the sauce, garnish, or accompaniment, whatever it is. Thus, poulet (or fowl or chicken, if only half the French terms are used) à l' estragon is chicken with tarragon in the seasoning; poulet à la soubise is fowl with soubise or very good onion sauce; poulet aux cressons is fowl with watercresses; poulet aux huîtres is fowl with oyster sauce; poulet à la jardinière is fowl with a mixture of vegetables cut small; poulet à la mayonnaise is fowl with salad and mayonnaise sauce; poulet au riz is fowl served on rice; and poulet en béchamel is fowl masked with good white sauce, and so on to any extent. There are so many ways of cooking fowls that we might fill pages with nothing but recipes for preparing dishes which sounded quite differently, and yet when all were done the foundation of every one would be chicken or fowl.

With this list of recipes it is evident that I cannot now deal. I will, however, before closing give two of the simplest and most usual recipes.

Fricassee of chicken is a boiled chicken cut into joints and heated up in good white sauce, to which mushrooms, parsley, and sometimes onions have been added. I copy the celebrated M. Gouffé's recipe, who in giving it says that a fricassee of chicken is deservedly held to be one of the very best dishes of domestic cookery:—

"Pick, draw, and singe a chicken weighing about three pounds; this will be sufficient for four or five persons. To cut it up, place it on a table with its head towards you; make an incision from the point of the breastbone to the wing-joint on both sides; turn the chicken and make two other incisions to separate the legs from the body; cut off the neck, the pinions at the second joint, and the feet at the first joint; take off the wings and legs, separate the breast from the back, and cut each across in two pieces; then trim them neatly, keeping the skin on each piece.

"Soak the pieces in cold water one hour; drain and put them in a three-quart stewpan with a quart of water, an onion (say four ounces) with a clove stuck in it, two small pinches of pepper, a faggot (that is, a bunch of parsley, a sprig of thyme, and a bay leaf fastened together), and two pinches of salt. Boil and skim, then simmer on the stove corner for half an hour, the stewpan not quite closed.

"When the chicken is done, drain in a colander, and cool it for five minutes in water. Reserve the broth in which it has been boiled. Put three ounces of butter and three ounces of flour in a two-quart stewpan. Stir over the fire for five minutes without browning, add the broth and the liquor from a pottle of mushrooms, and after the sauce comes to the boil let it simmer for half an hour. Put the pieces of chicken into a *sauté* pan; strain over them half a pint of the sauce, and warm on a slow fire. Thicken the sauce with the yolks of four eggs and one ounce of butter, then strain through the pointed gravy strainer and add the mushrooms.

"Dish up the chicken as follows:—Put the two pieces of the back in the centre. On them lay across, one above the other, first the feet, then the two pieces of neck, and lastly the two pinions. Against each side of the square thus formed lay the two legs and wings, and on the top put the two pieces of the breast. Pour over the sauce, and garnish with the mushrooms."

Perhaps I may be allowed to explain with regard to this recipe that we may have a pottle of mushrooms, or, what is nearly equivalent to it, two dozen button mushrooms. We must wash these well in cold water, cut off the end of the stalks, and put them into a stewpan with a little knob of butter, a squeeze of lemon-juice, and a tablespoonful of cold water, and shake them over the fire till they boil. We then turn them out, and they are ready for use. The trimmings of the mushrooms may be stewed with the chicken broth to flavour it.

If we thicken the sauce with eggs we must first take the sauce off the fire for a minute or two to let it cool a little, mix a little of the sauce with the beaten egg-yolks in a basin, pour the mixture into the remainder, and stir over the fire till near boiling. Many people would, however, object to use four eggs to thicken sauce. In this case they may make the sauce with an ounce of butter, an ounce and a half of flour, the stock in which the chicken was cooked boiled down till reduced to a pint, and a few spoonfuls of cream.

Marengo of Chicken.—This dish is supposed to have been invented by Napoleon after the battle of Marengo. He had some young chickens caught and killed, cut up into oints and fried in oil, but as he was in a great

hurry, there was no time to skim off the oil. Marengo of chicken, therefore, should properly be sent to table with the oil floating about the dish and over the sauce. People who are afraid of being made bilious drain the oil away, and their cookery is not historically correct. I give a recipe for those who are afraid of being bilious:—Cut up a chicken as for fricassee, put about half a tumblerful of oil into a stewpan, with a bunch of herbs, a small blade of mace, and half a dozen peppercorns. When the oil is hot put in the joints of chicken and fry them a good brown colour. Drain the pieces of chicken from the oil, and remove the herbs. Return them to the same stewpan, with a pint of good brown stock, and let them simmer for three-quarters of an hour. Add two tablespoonfuls of tomato purée, a tablespoonful of good brown gravy, and a small pinch of sugar. Strain the sauce, add a few drops of lemon-juice to it. Arrange the chicken in a dish, pour the sauce over, and, if approved, put a dozen button mushrooms round by way of garnish.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EDUCATIONAL.

SPHINXGRIN.—We are glad to hear that we have helped you so much with reference to your reading society at Newport, and thank you for sending us the prospectus and rules of a society for studying languages by correspondence (English, French, German, and Italian), as it offers a prize of 10s. to the writer of the best papers sent in during the half year, and of 5s. for the second best; additional encouragement is offered to the girls wishing for help in their home studies. Secretary, Miss M. Hedge, East Gate, Colchester, Essex. Some of our correspondents have asked us for an early-rising society, and we thank you for giving the address of one, together with walking and handwriting societies, hon. sec. Miss Ellman, Berwick Rectory, Sussex.

KELLY AND CO.—We are quite willing to accede to your request, and state, for the information of those inquiring at the "Post Office Directory" publishing offices, 51, Great Queen-street, W.C., that you "very seldom have a vacancy, and that when one does occur, it is filled by selecting one of the daughters or sisters of persons already in your employment, of whom you have a list on your books, so that it is hopeless for any stranger to apply."

HOUSEKEEPING.

AGGIE (Aged 15).—The grease may be taken from the pages of your book by wetting the spots with ether, placing blotting-paper on each side of the page, and holding a hot iron on the place.

FAIRY.—To make soap jelly, or soft soap, shred a pound of yellow soap into a gallon of water, add two ounces of soda and the same of pipeclay; set these ingredients on the kitchen stove, where they will dissolve after a few hours of gradual heat. The next day the soap jelly will be fit for use.

POOR BIDDY.—Zinc is cleaned with salt, which takes off the grease and dirt. Tin is cleaned with whiting and soap, mixed to a cream in boiling water. Rub it on the articles, including dish covers, and let it dry; then rub off with a leather and dry whiting. Boards and deal articles may be whitened by scrubbing them with soft-water, sand, and slaked lime.

PALE DAISY, BLUE BELL, and Others will find an article on "Summer Drinks" at page 547, vol. ii.

FIDDLER.—At page 399, vol. i., you will find an excellent recipe for rhubarb wine, which can also be used for all kinds of fruit as well, as it is quite reliable. Put a breakfast-pot of cocoa nibs into a good-sized tin coffee-pot; fill up with cold water, and let it stand on the stove all day and night. It will be ready for use when boiled up each morning. Do this every morning. Empty out the pot each week, and begin afresh.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A LOVER OF TRUTH.—Of course, you need not, and ought not, to be baptised a second time; and no one would hinder you accompanying your husband to receive the Holy Communion in the church to which he belongs. Later on you may feel a desire for the other privilege to which you refer, and then you can easily obtain it.

NANCY.—Nothing will prevent the hairs coming off; the fur is not of good quality, and it has had the moth in before you purchased it.

AGENORIA.—We are well acquainted with the Zenana Mission, and the offices in town have often been

named in this paper to those desiring missionary training. 120 millions of Hindoo women are the objects of our Christian charity, and this missionary organisation the means by which we can reach them and bring them under the influence of the Gospel of Christ. We thank you for the little tract which you enclose.

A. L. W.—A home for the sick, who can pay for it, and for treatment and for nursing, is provided at Bolin-broke House, near Clapham Junction Station. Apply to J. S. Wood, Esq., Woodville, Upper Tooting, S.W. Application should be made for the prospectus and forms, a statement of the case being sent in. Persons suffering from fits or mental disorder are ineligible. There is also a similar hospital home at 4, South Hill Park-road, Hampstead, N.W., where partial payment is accepted, and where private rooms may be obtained by special arrangement. R. A. Outhwaite, secretary.

IGNORANT STRANGER.—Read our series of articles on the subject of good breeding and the usages of polite society. In England it is the lady who bows first, the option of making any recognition of a gentleman resting with her. When she has bowed to him he may speak. You need not bow to your friend's acquaintances unless previously, or at the time, introduced. It is polite to give the inside of the walk to your companion, if you wish to show her respect or take care of her.

VIOLETTE DE CORMONDI.—We give you the directions that we have just given to an "Ignorant Stranger." There is no reason whatever against your rowing in a regatta belonging to the school. It is very good exercise and a very harmless recreation.

CINDERELLA.—No absolute rule is laid down in the Scriptures in reference to the subject of recreations, nor are any special amusements indicated as being either suitable or otherwise. We are only told to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and are given such-like general directions. Much difference of opinion exists amongst religious people on these points, and thus we are warned not to judge one another, but to be "fully persuaded in our own minds" on all essential points of doctrine and faith. We have already replied fully to all such questions as yours. We thank you for your nicely expressed and well-written letter, and for your approval of our paper.

BLONDINA'S letter is creditable to her, and deserves our thanks. All the monthly numbers are still to be had. Write for any to Mr. Tarn, 56, Paternoster-row, E.C. 2. We cannot advertise particular soaps, but you need only ask at any chemist's for the kind you require.

MY FAIRY GODMOTHER.—We are glad that you like our stories so much. We cannot recommend you the sort of books you require, but you can obtain them through any bookseller by explaining what you want.

BRUNETTA'S great approval of our stories is gratifying. See reply to the above in answer to her first question. In reference to her second, we think the following a good recipe for Everton toffee:—Take one pound of brown sugar, one teacupful of water, a quarter of a pound of butter, and six drops of essence of lemon. Put the water and sugar into a brass pan, and beat the butter to a cream; add it to the water when the sugar is dissolved. Stir the mixture over the fire until it sets, which may be known by pouring a little on a buttered dish. The lemon drops should be added just before the toffee is done.

E. B. MORRIS.—The origin of the term "Star-spangled banner" dates from the year 1812, the morning after the British attack on Fort M'Henry, at Baltimore. A poem was written by Frances Key, who had witnessed the bombardment during the night, concluding with the lines—

"Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

A. M.'S letter came too late. Answer gone to press. Very sorry.

ROSABEL FERNER.—The origin of the name London is not absolutely decided upon, but is supposed by some to be derived from "Llyn Din," or "the town on the lake," having been built on a swamp. In the time of the Heptarchy it was called *Landenceaster*. See our "Girls' Christian Names."

J. B.—The phrase, "these sort of things," although very generally said, is incorrect, because a plural pronoun cannot be applied to a singular noun. You should say, "this sort," for "sort" and "kind" are employed as nouns. Ask the question, "Which sort of mantle would suit you the best—the long or the short one?" Could the answer be, "I like these sort?" or could you say, "I prefer these breed of poultry?"

POLLY is not likely to win the friendship of the companion for whom she has so great a liking by following her about and teasing her with attentions which are not acceptable. On the contrary, they would annoy, and so awaken a feeling of disgust. Friendship, so far as the element of esteem and respect may be concerned, she might feel for you if you did not "make yourself too cheap," but showed a little more self-respect and dignity. Affection is a matter of arbitrary personal attraction, and must grow of itself. You cannot force anyone to love you. Try to win her esteem, and show a little more common sense.