Marching onward, ever onward,
Struggling on for truth and right,
We are letters of earth's history,
Shall this page be dark or bright?
Fighting, though but feeble maidens;
Powers of ill are on each hand;
Yet, we dare not plead our weakness,
When the word has gone forth—"Stand."

Marching, gaining ground each minute,
Yet unburied aye our tread,
Stopping not to mourn past failures;
"Let the dead past bury its dead."

Marching, with our faces upward,
Shaking off earth's clinging dust;
We are hidden to "press forward,"
And we can do what we must.

Marching on, for time is precious;
Ev'ry moment, set in gold,
Of high aims, enshrined in action,
Shall be blessed a hundred fold.

Learned at last the hard life lessons,
Trained each virtue, pruned each fault,
Mid the setting sunlight glory,
Then the word shall go forth—"Halt."

E. A. S. K.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Dora Hope.

over everything, and never get into a slovenly way of letting things go till a more convenient season. With but one servant, my experience is that the only way to keep domestic affairs from utter confusion is to have a regular time for doing everything, and to do it then in spite of all obstacles. I mention this particularly, because I think your weak point is a habit of procrastination, and perhaps a little tendency to unsupervuse too."

"Yes, I know," said Margaret, dejectedly.
"But, oh dear! what a bad thing it is when elder sisters get married."

"There is one thing I have to suggest, Madge, that might be a help to us both, which is that you should write my regular housekeeping-letter, say once a month, and tell me how you get on, and about any difficulties you meet with, and how you get over them, and I think by comparing notes of our experiences we may very likely help one another."

"Agreed; it is a splendid idea—it will be the greatest comfort to me. I shall not feel left so entirely to my own resources; whenever I feel despairing I shall write to you for advice, but in the meantime it is getting late, and I have several things to prepare for my personal adornment to-morrow. The toilet of a first bridesmaid is not a matter to be left till the last moment, and you have to finish arranging your presents, you know."

Joanna's wedding had only been deferred till Margaret was old enough to take her place as housekeeper. No very easy post for a girl coming straight home from school; but she had plenty of spirit and determination, and was resolved not to be easily daunted. The household consisted, besides herself and sister, of the father, and two boys, aged respectively 13 and 15. Though not by any means a poor man, Mr. Colville was neither able nor willing to indulge in extravagant expenditure, and the children had been brought up to understand that though they might have all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, anything like waste, or needless extravagance, could never be allowed.

Margaret left school six weeks previous to the wedding, in order to have the benefit of a little instruction from her sister, whom some years' experience had formed into a first-rate manager and skilful housekeeper. In fact, it was whispered in strict confidence that the bridegroom elect had at first been attracted by the admirable way in which she managed her father's house.

Margaret threw herself heart and soul into the work of learning. She felt that her only chance of filling her sister's post, even fairly well, lay in the good employment of these few weeks.

The time flew by all too quickly for Margaret's peace of mind; as the day approached she redoubled her efforts to imbibe the greatest possible amount of information, till on the eve of the marriage she declared that she felt her brain was "cramped with observation" as that of the clown in As You Like It.

It was some days before the excitement and upset of the wedding had subsided, and the Colville family had resumed its ordinary Quiet; but at the beginning of the week following Mr. Colville gave Margaret the customary sum for the week's expenses.

"My dear," he said, "if you make me as comfortable as your sister did, I shall be more than contented; but, of course, I do not expect that just at first. My only advice is—do not get into debt."

So Margaret began her work; Monday had always been a particularly busy day with Joanna, and Margaret made up her mind to keep to all her sister's arrangements until she had had a little experience.

At half-past eight Mr. Colville and the boys always started, the former to business,
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

not to return till tea-time, at six o'clock; the latter went to a day-school in the neighbourhood, and came home for dinner and tea. Accordingly, after their departure, Margaret betook herself to the kitchen to make her arrangements for the day. It had been a strict rule that the weekly supplies of groceries should all be bought at once, and no more allowed unless under exceptional circumstances; this plan she had found of great economy and help. Immediately after they had left the house, Margaret proceeded to inspect the jars of sugar, rice, and all the other content of her cupboards, and having marked out the list of things required, she set out on her marketing. Weekly books had been long ago abolished, as being an unsatisfactory way of keeping her stores and of limiting her expenditure. It is difficult to remember how much she has in hand, and how much must be reserved for those flights of fancy, which every woman contrives to slip into her household accounts. But generally speaking, she had a considerable sum of money, and therefore, though not a rich woman, she was by no means poor, and she and her children were very comfortable.

The abolition of books, of course, does away with the experience of tradesmen calling for orders, and necessitates the housekeeper herself going to the shops. In some cases this might be an obstacle to the readiness of the supply of such a boundless and inexhaustible store as Margaret, felt it anything but a grievance to be compelled to go out every day, wet or fine, as she said, if the weather permitted, and if she felt I was really too busy to do so just for pleasure, and so should lose a walk altogether, whilst as it is, I am sure of having at least one every day. Besides the advantage of getting a regular walk (a very important advantage, by the way), Joanna strongly advised her to keep the shop in her mind, in case anything should happen, and she had found that this manner of carrying things about her head was much easier to carry about her mind.

The milkman and baker alone were permitted to call, and keep a weekly account, but as Joanna found that they treated entirely to maternity, for the rest of her week she would often shop at the grocer's shop crowded with some fruit or vegetable of which they had been glut in the market, but which she would never have thought of buying if she had not seen it. The milkman and baker alone were permitted to call, and keep a weekly account, but as Joanna found that they treated entirely to maternity, for the rest of her week she would often shop at the grocer's shop crowded with some fruit or vegetable of which they had been glut in the market, but which she would never have thought of buying if she had not seen it.

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THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

After that I thought I should have to leave the reading of the account for another day. However, this morning I met Mrs. Trent, and she was so very kind that in a burst of confidence I told her my difficulty. She advised me to postpone the reading of the account for another day. She imparted to me a plan which I had not thought of before. She suggested that I should make a column in my account book in which I should record the total expenditure of the week, and also each item. She also suggested that I should keep a record of all the various items of expenditure, and that I should write the description of each item in the column. This would enable me to keep a check on my expenses, and to see at a glance whether I was spending too much or too little.

I thanked her for her advice, and I followed her suggestions. I made a column in my account book, and I started to record the total expenditure of the week. I recorded all the various items of expenditure, and I wrote the description of each item in the column. I also recorded the total expenditure of the week, and I made a note of each item.

I was very pleased with the result. I found that I was spending too much, and I was able to see at a glance whether I was spending too much or too little.

I also found that I was spending too much on clothing. I found that I was spending too much on vegetables, and I was able to see at a glance whether I was spending too much or too little.

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May had been listening intently to the conversation, understanding little or nothing. But when Edith spoke, she looked into her face so inquiringly that Edith explained to her in English what had passed.

"And we shall have newspapers and magazines and books and tea and coffee, if we can, and a harmonium, and I don't know what besides, if only we can get the money! and Meredith as secretary," she said, rapidly.

"Then religious services, at which the vicar will assist when he can," added Evan.

"And the study of Holy Scripture," supplemented Miss Richards.

"And all sorts of treats," put in Miss Soply, who was of a more volatile turn of mind than her sisters.

May's hand was fumbling in her little pocket. She drew forth something which she slipped shily into Edith's hand, and then help to make the big room." It was the penny Uncle Luban had given her that morning.

"Our first subscription!" exclaimed Edith, holding it up. "We will put it under the foundation-stone," and then, as she counted on the fingers of one hand, she kissed the abashed child. "How cold she is! And all of a tremble. Peggy, she cannot be well," she added, in Welsh.

"That is just what I have been thinking, for she has scarcely touched her bread and milk," returned Peggy, "and I'll warrant this head-washing has finished it."

This was a thrust at Evan, against whose somewhat arbitrary commands she would have occasionally rebelled if she could; but she was too obedient a wife, perhaps, and had too solemn a fear of her husband, to do so openly. He understood her, however.

"I am afraid I was hasty," he said.

"Make the child a posset and let her go to bed,"

While this passed, Miss Edith was asking May if her head ached, and being informed, in confidential whispers, that it did.

"Do you think Turpin'sc's aches too?" enquired May.

"I am quite sure it does not; and yours will be well to-morrow if you will take a dose that I will bring you," replied Edith, rising and telling Peggy that she was sure a few spoonfuls of her mother's pick-me-up would be more efficacious than a posset.

The young ladies took their departure, after each had fondled May in her own particular manner. The child looked wistfully after them, but said never a word.

"I wish George was here," said Evan, rubbing his head.

George was one of Evan's many descendants, who was a young doctor, and was likely to come to reside in the neighbourhood, Mr. Richards having offered him the post of surgeon to his miners.

"Mrs. Richards is better than an oaf of a boy like George," responded Peggy, who was feeling irritable, and who was helping the still trembling May to undress by the fire.

Mrs. Richards was, indeed, as good as a medical man, for she had made medicine a study with a view to helping the poor, when female M.D.'s, were unheard of. It was to her, principally, that her daughters owed their useful education, and it was she who had early inculcated into their minds that they could find scope for all their energies in the sphere in which they were born. She said they had only to look around them, and they would find plenty of extraneous work; while, at home, they were the greatest comforts and helps to their father and herself.

She returned with Edith to see May. They found the child in bed, covered up, as it would seem, with all the clothing the house contained. Peggy's scarlet cloak on the top of it.

"She is very feverish, in spite of the shivers," said Mrs. Richards; "and we must take off all this heap of clothes. I think you may venture to give her the effervescent dose, Edith."

May was caressing Edith's hand much as she was accustomed to do her doll; but she let it go, and obediently swallowed the not unpleasant medicine her friends had brought her. Mrs. Richards thought that old Peggy should have some younger person with her, and Edith asked to be allowed to remain until May fell asleep. The request was granted, and Edith seated herself by the crib. But May was far too restless and excited to sleep. All the events that had crowded into her young life during the last two or three months, which had culminated in that of the previous evening, had overpowercd the silent, self-contained child, and resulted in an attack of fever. By degrees the pale, wan, little face grew flushed, and the limbs began to show a restless head, with its offending golden hair, tossed hither and thither on the snow-white pillow.

"MY DEAR MARGIE,—You will be surprised to have another letter from me so soon after the last. But it has occurred to me that, as you have always been at school during this time of year, you may not know exactly how to arrange for your Christmas preparations. It seems very early to begin to talk about Christmas on the 10th of November, does it not? But having only yourself and one rather inefficient helper (as I fear Betsy will prove) to depend on, you must allow yourself plenty of time.

"There will not be very much to do by way of preparation in our little home, as you may imagine, but last year I was quite busy about this time. I suppose you have already bought most of the summer things, curtains, linen sheets, &c. I generally begin that the first week in November, as it takes a long while to look over and mend each article before putting it away. I hope you remembered my advice to have all the curtains and other things which are usually starched rough dried before the winter, as they are apt to become rotten if laid by starched.

"The next step in my preparations was to look over the inventory of glass and china, replacing the missing articles, so as to start with my list complete for the next year. And I generally found that the sets of padingcloths, and sometimes knife, glass, and teacloths wanted renewing. Should you have to buy new ones, be sure you get them stamped, 'Glass,' 'Tea,' and so on, according to their use. They are sold at most good linen-drapers; now, if too dear, mark them very plainly yourself, and be sure that Betsy keeps each to its own proper use. It is a curious phase in the character of some servants the fondness they have for using one cloth for all sorts of purposes, but the habit is always slowly, and often disgusting, and should never be allowed.

"Then the cooking utensils ought to be inspected. If you do not know exactly what you have, I advise you to hold a grand parade in the kitchen some leisure morning. I fear I forgot to give you the inventory I made last year, so perhaps the easiest way for you to
Always make a rule of clearing up as you go on; it is a habit you will soon acquire, and which will save you a world of trouble. It is quite as easy to put in its proper place when done as to leave it in a jumble, but I do not think I explained its use to you. I was reminded of this morning by a great commotion next door; their kitchen chimney had taken fire, and it was very much. It was entirely owing to negligence in allowing the chimney to get blocked with soot, so I determined to send you a word of caution lest you should encounter a similar disaster. Once a week, or even oftener if you are having much cooking, you should instruct Betty to sweep away the soot that you cannot get up as she can reach, with the brush provided on purpose. Your parlour chimney, and others with registers which are much used, will require doing oftener, as the soot collects and catches fire so very quickly round the register.

When all these matters are looked to, and put to rights, it will leave you a little breathing. But some household graces, such as the children's indentures, and Christmas puddings. You will find such minute directions for both of these in the cookery book, and perhaps something about the other, but will only suggest that you begin in good time, for cold, stoning the raisins, because if anything should happen to you from finishing off quickly, these will be well for you after stoning in a covered jar, while if you begin with the other ingredients and were hindered from mixing them quickly the credo is all well.

One word more, dear Madge, before closing. I hope you understood what I meant in my last letter about Tom and Dick. I have been slow in writing as I wrote last I had not explained clearly.

What I think you should aim at, is not to have to tell them to do this or that, but to have such a good influence over them that a hint will be enough. And until you have acquired this influence I think you should ask rather than order them to do what you wish; that is, with your children, and others, if asked politely, but they naturally resent being told peremptorily. To do anything, particularly by one so nearly of their own age, and then strongly pointed out, they probably will not want of will. You will find that love works wonders. Take the words of the Bible for your motto: "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, even towards your brothers. Above all, do not love your temper, for all boys (and girls, too) feel they have the best of the argument if they succeed in ruffling the temper of their elders. Do not be offended at any speaking so plainly, I appreciate your difficulties, and know that it is no easy task to keep order without giving any cause for offence to boys gifted with a lively imagination and good spirits as ours are; but be assured, dear Madge, that in your efforts you will always have the sympathy of your loving sister,

P.S.—I must tell you that in a letter a day or two ago father spoke of your management with the highest praise, and you know he never says anything like that unless he feels it very true.

The chilly days at the end of October were over, and November had set in damp and cold, proclaiming that the very threshold of winter was reached. A week or so before Margaret had prepared the task of putting away all the now cast-off summer garments, and had prepared the household for the approach of winter by getting out the warm clothing. This piece of work had been anticipated with some trepidation, and it did truly seem to be a formidable undertaking.

There were two boxes amongst the winter stores, each Margaret had examined with some curiosity. They contained some of her father's and brothers' winter flannels, and her own fur jacket, muff, and so forth. She had been at home previously in consequence of sickness in the school, and in helping her sister to pack these things away there had been some discussion as to the best methods of preventing mice with which they were a good deal troubled.

"I am going to try something new this year, Madge. I cannot bear the smell of camphor, and a good deal of lavender would do just as well," said Joanna.

Margaret was firmly of opinion that nothing could be so good as camphor, having heard it mentioned in a chemistry class, or some such lesson at school, that this substance was absolutely fatal to insect life, if sufficiently strong. She was, however, too wise to argue the point, when her sister's opinion was strengthened by that of her betrothed, but agreed to an experiment. One box was accordingly packed with two large lungs of camphor (bought at an auction to save money), while the other was to be dependent on bitter apple and two lavender bags.

It was these rival cases that Margaret felt certain to come to a decision. First the lid of the camphorated box was carefully fitted, the top article removed, the next, and on through the box. "No," she cried exultantly, "I am a man of living thing; now for the other.

The lid was opened, and a cloth coat raised. Pout! out flew a moth! "Catch it, catch it," cried Betty, "be quick and Miss Joanna.

And, alas for the dignity upon which she prided herself! mistress as well as maid started round the room. The swallow of the other box, who had finally flicked down by a duster and captured. Now this was a very foolish proceeding, as in the meantime the other moth had been anywhere, and might have followed their leader, and gone in search of new fabrics in which to take up its abode.

But happily there was but one more to be found, in spite of their diligence and thorough searching, of Margaret the superior merits of camphor. In her heart of hearts she had a shrewd suspicion, which was rewarded, for any future ill success would do equally well, provided the scent was only strong enough, the great superiority of camphor being due to its ready use in such a long time, and being cheap and convenient. She discovered afterwards another property of scents, that of preventing the formation of mould on ink, paste, leather in all its shapes, and even seeds; and very useful she found her discovery, for by putting amongst such things, kept in a damp cupboard, a piece of camphor, and little else, she had frequently preserved them from mould, that pest of housekeepers.

In looking over the winter things, she found some new ones made especially for the boys' beds; instead of the white ones, she was wise enough to buy Cranimate blankets, which have a better appearance than any cheap red or blue goods and were also superior results, being lighter, though quite as warm, and the boys were delighted with their bright red colour. Margaret was in the habit of cleaning any objects that were not of this description, and always when reading books or articles kept her eyes open for any which would be likely to be useful; if it did not quite apply at the moment, but note it in Joanna's miscellaneous book for future use.

At the same time Margaret took the opportunity of looking over the house and table linen. She found, as Joanna warned her, that
one or two of the sheets were wearing thin in the middle; these she cut in two lengthwise, sewing together the sides, so that the strongest part might come into the middle, which always were the first to be troubled by general darning naphrakin, too, which seemed beyond darning for table use, were degraded to the rank of fish or potato napkins; the worn table-cloths she cut into halves neatly with double-thread that she flaxted herself no one would notice the holes, but lest any fastidious visitor should come with prying eyes, these were reserved for the family, and the space of new ones bought for grand occasions.

In mending the summer clothes before putting them away, Margaret had found a drawer, a most useful institution founded many years before, in which were kept pieces and patches of all sorts and sizes rolled up in next little bundles, which, however unlikely it might seem, were sure to come in for use sooner or later.

It will be readily believed that with this amount of mending to do, Margaret had her hands quit and for some days. Betsy proved to be one of those good-tempered, willing girls, who, though slow at learning and requiring constant looking after, seemed capable of an almost endless amount of work. With her assistance, cheerfully given, the mending was soon accomplished, and Margaret was recovering from her exertions when her lover's letter came. It was at breakfast, and she groaned aloud when she read it.

"Why that heartrending sound?" asked Mr. Colville. "Has Joanna discovered that Arthur is not the perfect man she supposed; or have either of them broken their arms, or what?"

Oh, no, father; nothing of that sort. Only—well, I do think Joanna is really too particular and methodical for anything. Truly, if everything has to be looked after and bothered about to the extent she makes it, the whole world will have an easy life compared to mine and the unfortunate Betsy's.

"Who shall decide, when doctors disagree?" laughed her father. "I do not feel myself competent to act as go-between for such accomplished housekeepers. But I do not want you to do too much drinking and dancing. I have a charwoman in to help you at any time when you feel you have rather more than you can manage.

"Oh no, father, there is nothing more than this is, really very lovely," she replied, scorning the idea of a charwoman, "and I have no doubt in all that Joanna is right; but it was rather a blow, just when I thought there was nothing that could want doing for the next week, to be told by my mentor that the pots and pans have to be looked at at this identical time.

"As you are so overwhelmed with work for the next day or two I suppose I must send a refusal for that," remarked Mr. Colville, with a twinkle in his eye as he tossed off with a laugh his conclusion.

It was signed Willfred Trent, and its purport was to request Mr. Colville's acceptance of tickets for himself and his daughter for a concert to be given in the town hall some few days later.

"How delightful!" she cried, her eyes sparkling and her cheeks rosy with pleasure. "A concert? Why, it is perfectly lovely, and it is such an age since I have been to a good concert!"

"But what about those pots and pans?" asked her father, a little nettled by this time-to-morrow, I'll engage, father. Oh, boys, I wish you were coming too!" she added, turning to them with a burst of kindling, her eyes glowed with the promise of her pleasures.

"I should not have gone even if Trent had sent me a ticket," said Tom, grudgingly; "there is a match on that evening, our eleven against Southall Grammar School, that I am compelled to be at. Thanks all the same, you know."

The prospect of the pleasure in store kept Margaret in the best of spirits all that day, and the disagreeable "grand parade" in the kitchen, which Joanna recommended, was carried through with a light heart. Finding that, as is so often the case, her enamelled saucepan was considerably chipped, and as she meditated having all manner of dainty dishes at Christmas, she went to the extravagance of buying two of the china-store pots Joanna mentioned, not the elegant but fragile French china lined with white, but common brown ware, like pipkins with covers to them. They proved afterwards most successful, as she could wash them out quickly, and then use them for one thing after another, without the unpleasant result of the flavour of the first thing cooled permeating the whole number. Having been rather economical during the previous weeks, too, and saved a little money, she expended two shillings and sixpence on a frying basket, which soon repaid her for the outlay by the clever and economical way in which rissoles and all other "fries" could be cooked in it, and the quickness and ease of dishing them up from it.

The evening of the concert came at length, and Margaret set out with her father for the hall, being assured by her admiring brothers as she stepped into the cab that she looked "awfully jolly," and ought to be dressed like that all day and every day.

And very sweet she certainly looked in her pretty pale blue cashmere dress, dainty lace muffles at throat and wrists, and a knot of blue ribbons nestling amongst the shining waves of her soft brown hair. She thoroughly enjoyed the music, and as she sat drinking in every note and expression, many a head was turned to look at the bright, happy-faced girl, who, with glowing cheeks and shining eyes, seemed oblivious of all around her, seeing and hearing only her own. The floods of melody they poured forth.

At the close of the concert Mr. Colville suggested that as it was a beautiful starlight night, they should walk home, to which Margaret joyfully assented. As his road lay in the same direction, Mr. Trent joined them, and they walked home together. On reaching the house, Mr. Colville asked him to come in to get a set of engravings which he had promised to lend him, adding, "I suppose there is nothing in the way of a thing for supper, Maide, if Mr. Trent will join us?"

By that time they were in the hall, but Margaret's rather dubious, and hesitating, "Yes, father," made Mr. Trent reply, "I am afraid it will not be convenient to Miss Colville; she actually does not approve of so late a visitor.

"Oh, it was not that; it was very rude of me not to speak more cordially, and I hope you will stay; but—well, the real truth is, I am afraid you will findI am always playing the 'maid of all work,' for the last time you came I was all over four, and now I told our servant not to set up for us, as we have to be so early in the mornings, and that I would get the supper myself."

"Then, Miss Colville, I must thank you sincerely for giving me the opportunity of saying that there is not one lady in the town (which I have had cause to doubt lately) who treats her servant as a fellow-creature and not a machine, and also (which I doubt still more) is one who does not consider it derogatory to understand and practise household work herself."

While this conversation was going on, Margaret had slipped off her gloves and bracelets, and doffed the large white upon and sleeves which Betsy had put on to make the tray ready for her. Only she found the small saucepan, the contents of which, a savoury stew, she emptied on to a dish put into the fender to warm.

"You see," Mr. Trent said, laughing, "we are all blessed with such very good appetites, I knew it would be no use providing a few little delicate nothings, or they could have been laid out ready before hand, and besides, one needs something warm this cold weather. But our kitchen is not only downstairs, but down a very disagreeable flight of stone steps, so Betsy and I invented this arrangement between us. The second course is invisible to the naked eye, until pointed out; wherein the stew from underneath the gratin, in a perfectly well, with an inverted tin baking dish. 'This is only an experiment,' she remarked, "but it seems to have been successful; it is a plain and humble rice pudding, made very milky to allow for some drying up.

A capital idea, Maide; was it your own?"

"Well, not entirely, father; as Betsy says, 'we goes partners' in culinary matter; I supply the brains and she the experience. I should simply have put the stew on the top of the saucepan, instead of a lid, most easily and so; but with the notion the latter our chimney has taken to smoking, and of course that would have spoiled both.

Supper over, and after a pleasant chat over the fire about musie and musicians, Mr. Trent departed, and Margaret rose to go to bed, tired indeed, but full of delight at her happy evening.

"You are a wonderful child," said Mr. Colville, "I must tell you before you go to bed how pleased I am at the pains you take to make everything comfortable for others. You are a capital little housekeeper, and in your kind thoughtfulness for others you constantly reminded me of your dear mother. That you may remain in all this, dear child, the greatest blessing I could wish for you."

Need we say that Margaret's sleep that night was sweet, and her dreams happy?" (To be continued)
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Doty Hope.

It was with something of an effort that Margaret rose rather earlier than usual the morning after the concert, so her eyes looked especially bright and dewy as she entered the kitchen where she found Betsy engaged in lighting the coal-stove with wood and paper to light the fire.

"Betsy," she said, "I'm going to lay and light the dining-room fire now and have it ready for to-morrow morning, and I want you to come and watch, so that you can do it in exactly the same way yourself for the future."

"Well, Miss Margaret, I 'ope I knows 'ow to light a fire without being showed," said Betsy, rather huffily.

"Well, how much wood does each fire take?"

"Pretty near a culkin, one with another."

"Why, Betsy, I think it is time somebody showed you, then, for you ought to make one bundle light three fires, including the kitchen. Do you know that you waste, at the very least, fifteen shillings a year by extravagance in firewood alone?"

Betsy was rather staggered at those plain statistics, and followed her young mistress without more ado.

"Now, you see, I first of all put a scanty layer of cinders at the bottom of the grate, next some crumpled paper, and about half a dozen pieces of wood laid carelessly, and lastly some kinds of coal. You must be careful always that the whole is well back in the grate, and leave plenty of air-holes between the pieces. When it has caught light you can put a shovelful of cinders on the top, and you will have a hot fire in no time. And that reminds me, Betsy, that I want to talk to you about cinders after breakfast. I am afraid we do not manage them as well as we might; but we must get on with the other work now, or breakfast will be late."

Betsy looked dejected, she did not altogether like Margaret's burst of energy in the morning; it was much less trouble to keep on in the old routine.

Breakfast over, Margaret returned to the kitchen.

"What do you do with the cinders, Betsy, after you have raked out the fire?"

"Oh, I puts a few large bits on the back of the fire, and throws the rest in the dustbin."

"Well, I have had a letter from my sister about it. I will read you what she says:--"

"You must remember that cinders are as much fuel as coals, and there is no more excuse for wasting them in the kitchen and other parts of the house. They are much better than coal for some purposes; for instance, in a bedroom they are safer, as there is not the danger of sparks flying from them, and a bedroom is always much cleaner if cinders can always be made with part cinders than with coals alone. The best fire for cooking is made up of heaps of coal in front and cinders in the back."

"So you see, Betsy, we have been very wasteful; but I hope we shall reform now. This wooden box on rockers, which I bought yesterday, is a proper cinder-asher; and for that reason I want you to place all the ashes through this wire tray at the top, put the lid on, and rock it for a minute; then if you leave it for a little while before taking off the lid, you will find that all the useful parts of the ashes will be held through the tray into the box beneath, leaving on the top only large cinders ready for use.

"Bless me!" said Betsy, "I never was in a place before where they could not afford coal, and had to burn up old rubbish."

Margaret flushed up, and felt inclined to be sharp, but the more she thought of the unceremonious and uncomfortable feeling herself that it was rather mean to watch every firething so carefully; but she was determined not to lose her temper, so took notice of Betsy's readiness, and went on--"

"For the next week or so I want you to save some ash in this large box, instead of throwing it into the dust-bin as usual, with this very cold weather I am afraid all our plants in the garden will be killed; so as soon as you have collected a good quantity, I will get my boy to come and heap it round the roots of the delicate ones to protect them."

"But it won't spoil the look of the garden, miss?"

"It will not show much, and at any rate it is better than letting our plants be frost-bitten, and next spring we will have it dug into the ground, and it will very much improve our heavy clay soil. If the boys begin keeping fires in the spring, as they talk of doing, they will be glad of all the ash we can get for the fires to scratch amongst."

"Please, miss, there ain't no 'mergeries left."

"No what, Betsy?"

"Why none of them 'mergeries in tins, miss, that you use when anybody comes in unexpected."

"Oh, all yes, Betsy, I understand," said Margaret, smothering her laughter; "I am glad you reminded me."

The meaning of Betsy's curious statement was very clear to Joanna, and by suggestion, Margaret always kept a few tins of meat, soup, and fruit amongst her stores in case of emergencies, such as the unexpected arrival of visitors. Have you forgotten the injunction to take care of the pears, for the pears will take care of themselves? But look at it another way. If you find that you can save threepence a week, that would save for the schooling of some poor child. If you spent your savings in that way you would fall sick.
It is true that at the close of the week sometimes a small balance would be discovered, but this was only occasionally, and any such surplus was sure to be needed, sooner or later, for new dishes, or to top up the supplies of cleaning brushes, or some such incidental expense. Margaret had a small cash box for these little savings, which was never opened except for a few shillings on Christmas Eve, when she wished to spend Christmas at the old home. During this visit the expenses of the house would of course be greater, and the savings of previous weeks would all be needed. Now the happy time was drawing near, and all Margaret's perplexities were being saved up till she could talk them over with her sister. The pleasure with which Joanna anticipated the visit was, it must be confessed, tinged with curiosity. Although conscious of her sister's strong desire to do well, she could not but wonder how the house would be furnished, conducted by such a young and inexperienced woman, would strike a new comer.

Thinking that perhaps Margaret would feel a little nervous about the approaching visit, she determined rigorously to avoid noticing any little delinquencies, or at any rate to appear complacent.

During the first day or two, though there were very few mishaps of any kind, still it was amusing to mark her air of utter unconsciousness when anything in the management went wrong. Even when Betsy got a little mixed over the sauces at dinner one day, and handed Joanna pansey and butter with plum pudding, the appearance quite suggested that it was not a usual accompaniment to sweetmeats.

Betsy related this little episcope to her young mother, with much satisfaction, and in conversation; Margaret laughed at her sister's deficiency, and at once saw through her schemes to spare her feelings.

"It is very kind of you, Joanna," said Margaret, in an amusing way, "not to see things, and of course I am thankful in a way, to see you looking abstractedly in another direction when accidents happen. But, dear, whether you were right or wrong about and find fault, and tell me of things you see wrong that perhaps I do not notice myself," said Margaret, as the two sat having a chat in the nursery.

"There is little or nothing to find fault with, Madge; in fact, so far from disagreeing, I am learning myself, but there is just one thing I thought of at dinner that might be a useful suggestion to you, that is, to avoid getting so many spills on the cloth. You should not have the gravy put on the dish, round the waist, as you do at present; it is almost impossible to serve without spilling it over, and it is altogether much more convenient in a sauce-tureen. Then you should always serve the lettuces, the carrots, the tomatoes, and plates to catch anything that may be dropped. I am afraid it would offend the guests, or I should advise you to have under their plates too. Some people always have them—on to each person, or a long narrow cloth down the whole length of the table. They are after all moved with the crumbs in them, which does away with the necessity for a crumb brush; but I do not recommend that to you, as the waiters are as expensive as frequent clean-clothes.

"Thank you, that was one thing I was going to ask you about. I have a whole list of necessary things here for a great occasion. Now, stand still like a good little girl, with your hands behind you and your head up, and tell me how to prevent the pipes burning."

"Have you had any burst already?"

"Yes, Didn't I tell you? In that last week, directly the water began to come into the cistern, Dick came running along to say that there was a leak in my room, and that the water of the whole world was come, for his room was flooded with water. It was pitch dark, like the dead of night, but it was really six o'clock in the morning. Figure that dress and rush off for the plumber, and have him put it right, but the room was in a dreadful state, and the platter is all broken off the ceiling; and you must help me wash and wipe the middle of the night, when we could not get the plumber, and whatever should we do?"

"Well, dear, in this case, as in many others, prevention is better than cure, and the best advice I can give you is, in frosty weather keep your taps just dripping, and if there is a gas jet near any pipe likely to freeze, let one burner be always alight; that will generally give enough warmth to prevent it. And also any outside pipes should be covered up with straw or old carpet. They generally burst and crack during the winter, I think, if that should happen again; haste in spite of your precautions, till a plumber can be brought you should fasten down the ball in the cistern, tie it down with a good piece of that at hand to stop the flow of water; and if you can get the part of the pipe that has burst, stuff up the hole as well as you can with something that is handy to hand."

"Well, I think I will try the prevention first. My ideas are generally a little hazy on first waking in the morning, and I am afraid I should not have presence of mind to tie down the ball. Now I will let you off the rest of my cuching for a little while, though I hope I have begun my last, but the other suggestions will keep me.

On Christmas Eve the pleasant task of decorating the dining and drawing-rooms was accomplished, and it was a merry party that engaged in the work. Some of the fruit was put on the carpet, and Joanna and her sister sat dexterously weaving wreaths and festoons, and giving directions to Arthur, Tom, and Dick, who were performing feats of gymnastics on the top of step ladders, in their endeavours to satisfy the demands of their task-mates as to the position of the decorations.

In the midst of the work Betsy appeared at the door, with a face of dismay, and beckoned Margaret to the side-board. "I wish you knew," said Betsy, "that the turkey was frozen as hard as a brickbat, and so was the sirloin of beef for Boxing Day."

"Well put them before the fire till they are melted."

"La! Miss Margaret, that will make them so awful tough; besides they will only freeze again as soon as I put them out, and that turkey won't taste no better than an old goat," (a favourite simile of Betsy's)."

"Oh! dear me! wait a minute and I'll ask Mrs. Haller."

A hurried consultation between the sisters resulted in the turkey and all the other meat in the larder being hung up in the kitchen, near the fire, and there left all night, which proved the happiest way of thawing and preventing their again freezing as the frequent plan of washing in warm water, with the advantage of not taking the flavour.

Christmas Day came and went, as happily as it always must when a family, scattered as we were, met to celebrate the anniversary of our Saviour's birth. A few days later found Margaret in a bustle of business and excitement, preparing for the grand evening that had been invited to celebrate the young bride and bridegroom. This would be the first time that Margaret had had the ordering and management of anything larger than the addition of one or two guests at their usual evening meal; but now friends, to the number of twenty, had been invited, so that considerable preparation was necessary. The guests were invited for tea at seven o'clock, and supper was to be at half past nine. Happily Margaret's little savings-box were not yet exhausted, so that she was able to provide for the party with the additional only ten shillings extra from her own pocket.

The plan of the evening was as follows: hot soup; turkey, ham, tongue, and cold saltee of beef; hot Christmass puddings; and, afterwards, a salad of trifle, jelly, one blanmange, and sundry little dishes of tarts, biscuits, and fruits.

This list being decided upon, everything necessary for the carrying out of it was bought in and prepared, as far as possible, the day before; the soup was made and the meats cooked; the pastry, too, was made, and the jelly and blanmanges—the two latter being kept in the moulds; then the dishes of biscuits and preserved fruits were set out and tastefully ornamented with twigs of holly. Even the Christmas clothes and decorations were set up so that the next morning would be left clear for arranging flowers and giving finishing touches, for Margaret was determined not to be caught unprepared by any炙热 moment. Such a bustle and flurry all the day of their party that when the evening comes they are quite too tired to enjoy it.

Immediately afterward, Margaret laid the table for supper, and very pretty it looked with its display of spotless linen and glittering glass and silver. Mr. Colville had a great deal to do, and the staff of cooks and waiters were insufficient for the number of guests, but the dinner-table being so high as to intercept the view of his opposite neighbour, and sometimes did not scumble to rise in the middle of the table, and lift off such dishes, so that his daughter happen to have forgotten his objection. Margaret therefore wisely contented herself with placing several small bowls here and there about the table, containing a few feather grasses and bright red leaves (gathered and pressed in the autumn for winter use), and whenever there was likely to be a large gap between the dishes she laid a device of coloured leaves and fern fronds flat on the cloth, completing the whole by inserting in the middle the top of some old china bowl full of gloriously many-hued chrysanthemums.

Her tasteful fingers had also prepared some delicious dishes, and placed and placed and placed on the table to indicate the place he or she was to occupy. Some of them were decorated with little pen and ink sketches, copied from pictures, the selection of which had occupied the boys several evenings; others had a little painted flower, or a group of pressed flowers gummed on them.

This done, she was able to breathe freely and take a little well-earned rest, before proceeding to give a final look round in dining-room and kitchen (the drawing-room door was left to Joanna's discretion). She found the cold viands all on the table, and the sideboard well stocked with clean plates, knives and forks and glasses, and then with a little effort to avoid any mistake she went to dress for the evening.

In the guests began to arrive. Betsy took the ladies upstairs, and ran down again immediately to be ready for the next arrival. Each party was met at the drawing-room door by Betsy or Walter, while Margaret stood near a small table in a corner of the room, to dispense tea and coffee after welcoming her friends. The two boys proved capital assistants, with their cups and plates and biscuits as though to the manner born.

When all had arrived, Margaret rang the bell, and Betsy removed the tea things, leaving the table free for the display of Mr. Colville's
engravings, and a number of books and pictures, part of which they had borrowed from friends for the occasion. The evening passed pleasantly for guests and hosts alike. Nettie had never permitted even the busiest day to pass without devoting a little time, though sometimes only ten minutes, to practising her music. Her father liked her to play to him in the evenings when he came home sometimes tired and jaded, and she was always ready to do her best, even though that best was not always of the first order. Her voice was not powerful nor of great compass, but it was clear and sweet, and several times during the evening she sang with such much expression and with such simple a grace that even the critic listeners, true pleasure. She had pro-
vided a number of glees, and part songs, too, in which the musical members of the party joined, while those who did not care for singing, played various games, headed by Mr. Heiliger, who proved a great acquisition in the way of originating new entertainments.

In the meantime Betty after making sure that Mrs. Good and pudding were progressing favourably, had added a soup-plate for each person on the supper table, and a few minutes before ten o'clock she carried up the soup, hot and savoury, in a large jug, from which she filled each plate; then running up stairs she knocked at the drawing-room door and announced that supper was ready. She came down again quickly to dish up the turkey, and directly the soup was finished, she placed it on the table for the carver to begin operations while she removed the empty soup plates. In the same way, all the appli-
ances for the second course being ready on the table, she now went down to prepare the pudding and mince pies, which plan answered so well that there was not a minute's delay between the courses.

After supper the games were begun again with renewed energy, and it was nearly twelve o'clock before the last guest left, being unani-
mous in their expressions of pleasure at having spent so delightful an evening together.

So passed this happy Christmastide, rendered all the happier for the Colvilles in that they did not forget, in their own rejoicing, the sufferings of others who had nothing wherewith to make merry.

It had always been a rule during the lifetime of their mother that each of the children should try to give some poor child, if not a merry Christmas, at least a happier one than they could otherwise have had, and the plan was still kept up. For weeks beforehand Margaret had been busy mending old clothes and making new ones, while the little hand-bags, bright tops and balls, and denuded themselves many little indulgences to have the more for charity. Mr. Colville, too, had given them some money to spend on meat and materials for Christmas puddings, so that when they started on their rounds, directly after breakfast on Christmas morning, they found their supply of presents so much larger than they could carry. They had to way-
lay a schoolfellow who happened to pass and press him into the service. Dick added to this the general merriment by imitating the Holy and mistletoe in each poor room they visited, "to make it look Christ-
masy," as he said. Many cheerful homes were made brighter that morning, and it was with joyous hearts they joined on their return in the grand old song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill to all men." (To be continued.)

MISS ROSAMOND CHAMPFLOWER.

AND HOW SHE SPENT HER CHRISTMAS.

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERIOUS BOX.

That evening, just when the grey curtain of early winter twilights was falling on that Christmas Eve over Belmin-
ster, a strange and wondrous thing happened in the house of Miss Champ-
flower. A railway van called at her door and delivered a large box. The servant-girl took it in, for just then Miss Champflower and Keriah were out, and great was their surprise on their re-
turn to find it standing in the hall. Miss Champflower was certainly expecting no box of any kind, as she declared loudly, but then this box bore most plainly outside her name and full address.

With eager curiosity mistress and servant opened the mysterious lid. What could be hidden beneath all this cunningly wedged-in mass of paper padding? Miss Champflower's hand went searching about inquisitively, and pulled out something. She gave a little scream as she held it up to the light of the candle. It was a grotesque paper mask.

"Why, dear me, what is that?" cried Keriah.

"I don't quite know," said Miss Champflower, turning the ghastly face about between her fingers rather ner-
vously. "It's something horrible and odd, I think."

Keriah now put in her hand in her turn, and took out a popgun, which went off in her unwaried grasp, and made her start and cry out.

"How can such extraordinary disagreeable things have been sent me?" exclaimed Miss Champflower, in indig-
nant plaintive surprise.

"That's more than my headache can answer, ma'am," replied Keriah.

"It's like Maze Monday in our house to-day, first that important letter, and then this here box. But we'll go further into the brains of it before we've done."

Keriah's next discovery was a doll with a sadly tumbled latin petticoat.

"There's a bit of trumpery finery for you," was her remark. "Dear me! whoever could have wasted their time in packing up such a lot of rubbish?"

"Well, in all the years that I have lived in Belminster I have never experienced such a Christmas Eve as this!" cried Miss Champflower, her cheeks growing more and more flushed as the mysterious box revealed more and more of its incomprehensible contents.

"We shall have all Troy town here by-and-bye," said Keriah, as she brought to light a prancing wooden horse and a gaily painted parrot.

Miss Champflower sat down, as overcome by the unpleasant novelty of the situation. Keriah per-
vferred in her task of emptying the box, and before long the two elderly spinster grandmothers were busy in a nursery full of rattles, whistles, balls, tops, jumping mice, squeaking dogs, climbing monkeys, and nine-pins. They were a comical sight enough, as they sat gazing blankly now at each other, now at this strange addition to their household effects, with their perplexed minds looking out of their bewildered eyes.

There must certainly be some mistake about the box," said Miss Champflower at length. "I shall send down to the railway station, and see if we can make anything out about it."

Keriah shook her head and mur-
mered something to the effect that, in her opinion, it would be no use, for im-
perience had to do with the box as well as the letter; but Miss Champflower sent to the station nevertheless. She received no light from thereon, however; and officials could only state that the box had arrived, by goods-train, ad-
dressed to Miss Champflower, as she herself had seen, and that they had for-
warded it to her in their van accordingly. Miss Champflower and Keriah had, therefore, to go to bed that Christmas Eve with the box and its contents under their roof, and with the strange mystery quite unsolved.

Just at the time when Keriah and her mistress were in their deepest wonder over the box, the lady of the crimson-bows was standing at her window in the next house. A big round Christmas moon was just rising over the town, turning the church spires to shafts of silver, and the girl, as she looked up at it, kissed a ring that shone on her finger, and blushed softly, while the moonbeams shed a rosy halo round her face, and whispered a prayer.

It was Christmas morning, and all the air was full of a great golden harmony of bells, that went on and on in waves of melody until the frosty breeze; and hearts that had their cradles of child-
A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER'S DIFFICULTIES.

A. M. B.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

BY DORA HOPE.

I am curious to know if you have arrived at about the same result that I did in my time.

Margaret looked blank. "I do not quite see what you mean; I do not portion it out at all; it goes just as I happen to want it."

"Oh, but you ought to have an idea of the proportion spent in each branch of the outlay. If you will bring the account-book we will compare the bills for the last few weeks, and find the average."

This done, it was found that in Joanna's opinion the butcher's and grocer's bills swallowed up too large a proportion, which latter she said she had expected, as she had noticed Margaret's taste for all kinds of fancy dishes and sweet puddings. She advised her, therefore, to curtail her expenses in that direction.

"I will put down on paper, as nearly as I can remember, how I divide my money," she went on. "You know Arthur gives me thirty shillings a week on which I pay for the same things that you do. I always keep the food expenditure under a pound, that is to say, when we are alone, though if we have friends, or anything extra like that, I cannot quite manage it. Now here is the list, which shows a fair average, though, of course, it varies a little. For instance, I often have fish instead of, or as well as, meat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grocer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread and Flour</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greengrocer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and bacon</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk and eggs</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lardens</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Butter and cheese</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
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This leaves me about ten shillings for sundries, under which head come stationery, breakages in the house, cab or Omnibus fares, and small charities. To make a fund for kitchen requisites, such as scrubbing-brushes and pots, I put by one shilling at the beginning of each week, and at the end I should be inclined to think I could not spare it, unless anything were really pressing."

"That is really wonderful, Joanna. I should not like to have to provide for this household on thirty shillings a week."

"You will have to allow more for meat in proportion to the other expenses than I do."

Two growing boys, with splendid health and appetites to match, will not be contented with those little dainty-made dishes which satisfy us, and can be made out of a morsel of meat and a few bones; but I still think your meat bills are much too high."

"But, Joanna, though my butcher's portion is to be so low, you had no fault with the large greengrocery average I have been having."

"No, I do not think the greengrocer is high; indeed, I think you should try to have a little more green food than you generally provide. Two vegetables at dinner, for instance, make much more of a meal than having only one, with very little difference in the expense. But to counterbalance it, if there is any, you might have boiled rice occasionally, instead of potatoes, not too often, you know, but just now and then as a change. Lentils, too, and haricot beans are very inexpensive, and make a variety."

"Then you certainly ought to buy a little fruit occasionally. At this time of the year I know fresh fruit is dear, but you can get plenty of berries and the like. They may be obtained in so many different ways that you need never be at a loss."

"I wish I knew how to preserve them, like those we had at Mrs. Barclays on Tuesday."

"I think I can gratify you, for she very kindly gave me the receipt. Here it is:"

"It is: a little of the vine, either a diamond-shaped piece here and there or a ring all round; then put the oranges in cold water for three days, changing the water twice. Tie each separately in thin muslin, and boil in fresh water till quite tender. Weigh the oranges before boiling, and make a syrup in the proportion of two pounds of sugar to a pound of the fruit, and as much water as will be required to completely cover the oranges; boil till the scum ceases to rise, then put in the fruit, still in the muslin, and boil gently for an hour and a half, which will ensure their keeping well. Put into jars and cover with syrup. Mrs. Barclays says if you follow this exactly you can make enough to last all the year round."

"But that would be too troublesome and expensive for everyday use."

"But there are many less troublesome ways of preparing this fruit. Nothing could be simpler than orange salad, for instance. You have only to peel the oranges, being careful to remove every particle of skin, then
either cut them in slices or scoop out all the pulp with a spoon, or leave them whole, and lay them in a glass dish, and sprinkle powdered sugar thickly over them a few hours before you require them, and if you find that you look particularly nice, cover the whole with whipped white of egg and sugar. For another variety there is compote of oranges.

There is another one very easy to make. Cut off the yellow outer rind in thin strips till you have about three ounces, which put on one side. Then peel them properly, and put them in a pan; pour over them plentifully (here calling the little divisions), being careful not to break the thin skin which covers them. Then make a syrup by boiling the rind with a pound of sugar in a pint and a half of water, and carefully remove the scum as it rises. When it has boiled about a quarter of an hour, put in the pieces of orange, and let them simmer gently for five minutes; then take them out with a spoon very carefully or they will break, and arrange them on a dish. If the syrup seems too thin, let it boil fast for five minutes longer to thicken it; then pour it over the oranges, and put the dish in a cool place till wanted.

"That sounds very easy; I think I shall make a large quantity now oranges are so cheap."

"If you do, you must make the syrup with two pounds of sugar to a pint and a half of water; one pound is only sufficient for immediate use."

But to return to the subject of the butcher: you really spend too much on meat, and I think you might easily economize a little in that way. Because though boys require a good quantity, you need not get them the more expensive joints. Keep strictly to the rule of having soup for dinner, if possible, if not, quite every day. Have the stew-pot always going, and put all sorts of scraps into it; not only meat cooked or raw, but also scraps of vegetables, or even crumbs, and add to the strength or flavour of the soup, and should the pot be getting low, you may buy a few pennyworth of bones. Be sure to ask the man to chop them up very small for you; some people even pound them, but chopping is much more thorough, and does well enough for ordinary purposes. When you have a good stock of soup, you will find that you sometimes thicken, and flavour it in endless different ways, according to the directions in the cookery books. One of the nicest soups we have won our expense was made in this way. We soak some lentils for nearly twelve hours, and simmer them for twelve more; then we pour the stock on to them, with scraps of anything and everything you find in them, and if the ladle happens to be particularly empty, we make up the flavour with a pinch of celery seed, burnt onions, or a small quantity of Liebig's extract, which improves it very much. If you begin the dinner with good substantial soup, the onslaght on subsequent courses will be considerably lessened.

"Oh, poor boys! fancy measuring their appetites and counting their mohlsheads in this way. What is one does become under a course of housekeeping?"

"Then there are one or two other economical in trifles you might practise, dear, with advantage. Let me say something here on the subject of the bedrooms, still bringing her oldfashioned duty, she trips downstairs to the kitchen, where a damper is awaiting her in the shape of good Betsy in beforehand."

"Oh, Betsy!" she cried, "what is the matter?"

Betsy managed to explain amidst her sobs that a letter from home that morning told her of her mother's dangerous illness, and she must go home without delay. "Though in course, Miss Margaret, dear, I won't go till you are salted."

A looker-on, at this juncture might have witnessed a melancholy tableau. The maid, in attitude of dejection, sobbing and sighing by the window; the mistress collapsed into a wooden chair, looking likewise, but less insensibly. Each ashamed of her weak-mindedness, the latter soon recovered, however, and, having her maid had not noticed it, she wiped her eyes and said brightly, "Poor Betsy, I am indeed sorry for you, and very sorry that we shall lose you. But you must not think of giving up till you have been to see your mother and find a charwoman to come every day, and while I am out you must get forward with the dinner and then pack up so as to go by the two o'clock train; and you must take that soup that is in a jelly in the larder for your poor mother, and I will bring you a few lessons to take too."

To get an honest and clean charwoman, who would come at seven o'clock in the morning and do the work of a general servant for the sum of two shillings a day, which was all Margaret felt she could afford to give, was not very easy task, but by inquiring from the tradesmen, one was found at last.

The next day Margaret went round to see her good old aunt Mrs. Trent, hoping and expecting to have the difficulty about a new servant solved at once, as so many former ones had been overthrown by her kind advice. On entering that lady's sitting-room our housekeeper was a little taken aback to find not only Mrs. Trent, as she had expected, but also her niece, who, his difficulty in rising from the sofa was a better proof of an invalid state than his appearance, which betokened his usual health.

"My nephew is suffering the penalty of neglecting his own aunt's good advice," said Mrs. Trent, smiling at her niece, for whom she felt almost the affection of a mother, and on her uncle, by her kind advice, who, having been invalid ever. On enquiring that lady's sitting-room our housekeeper was a little taken aback to find not only Mrs. Trent, as she had expected, but also her niece, who, her difficulty in rising from the sofa was a better proof of an invalid state than his appearance, which betokened his usual health.

"My nephew is suffering the penalty of neglecting his own aunt's good advice," said Mrs. Trent, smiling at her niece, for whom she felt almost the affection of a mother, and on her uncle, by her kind advice, who, having been invalid ever.
THE WORKER.

Words by E. E. WEATHERLY.
Music by C. GODFREY.

He was a student, and very poor. He had gone to Oxford late in life. An honest wish to do good, as one of God's ministers, had sent him there; not that common and detestable notion that, by being ordained, he would be made a gentleman, for he was a gentleman born. He had been junior partner in a mercantile firm, and his share, when capitalized and re-invested, only gave him a pitance. But he had a brave little wife, and not brave only, but thifty and industrious. And by the cleverness of her fingers she managed to keep their slender means. His disadvantages were great. What little classical knowledge he possessed when he left school, at the age of sixteen, for the counting-house, he had almost forgotten. For the small necessary amount of mathematics his business life had kept him in good training. How different his coming to Oxford was from that of so many of his fellow students! There was no one to grieve him and carry him off to the old school club, to renew the pleasant acquaintance of college life. He was no obsequious scoundrel to welcome him to his college rooms; no bright, cheery dinner in the hall; no little notes to invite him "to smoke and good words." He simply arrived in the hubbub of the "first night of term," and drove off in the omnibus—a weary, tiresome round of the town—to be deposited, the very last of all the passengers, in their dingy lodgings.

"They are shabby, dear," he murmured apologetically, as he fancied he saw a shadow on his young wife's face. "But, you see, Oxford is such a dear place for lodgings!"

"What do you mean by that?" she answered; "we can be as happy here as at home. Besides, we can soon brighten up the place."

And so she did. That was just what she was always doing; she was like that. Brightening up his life, and charming him when he was growing gloomy and downhearted. Brightening up everybody, from the rowdy bear who was servant there, to the fatuous scavenger's man, who scarcely thought it worth his while to call at the little box of refuse from their tiny abode.

With all their own personal happiness, it was a melancholy life. To be one of the many students, and yet not to be one of them. To see them at lecture, at St. Mary's, on the river, on the cricket-field, and yet not to be really one of them. It was a great deal more than the smallness and friendliness of settling in a new town at twenty-four, to be outside the parish responsibilities, and so forth, sooner or later to be shown the door. Further, there is no bright pleasant association with the picture of his own life. He is not always brought into contact with others like himself and yet unlike.

But John Shirley had his work to do. And John Shirley's wife was not the one to complain because she was not dressed as were the fellows' wives, and because she had to live in lodgings. There was much, too, to amuse and interest them; intellectual contacts only to be enjoyed in great centres like Oxford—the lectures of the professors, the sermons at the University church, the beautiful services in the college chapels, and even in later days the gaiety of college concerts.

"And all," as the little lady would say, laughing to her husband, "all for nothing, John."

By degrees, too, they found friends. The cure of the jaded, eligible young fellow, whose zeal John Shirley had admired at first and soon came almost to worship, called upon them; his popularity brought them other acquaintances. Through their little society may have been, as one grand Oxford madam termed such society, "On the margin of cultivation, don't you know?" John Shirley was not only very, very happy, but popular in their little circle. By dint of dogged perseverance and judicious teaching John Shirley passed his examinations one by one, till at last there was only one left, and the last term of necessary residence was reached.

They returned to Oxford after the long vacation, in a state of nervous excitement. Six weeks at the most would settle the matter, and it all went well he would put on his gown before Christmas; and as he had already attended several of the divided college lectures, he might be ordained at the ensuing Easter ordination.

So they pleased it all. So they talked of it, so happily, so hopefully, to another, to their immediate friends. But the young curate, who saw them most and knew them best, though he did not dare to cloud their happiness, could not forget John Shirley's energies. He saw the hollow cheeks and the hectic flush that was the result of more than human exertion.

Just before the examination a little baby was born. And it was with happy pride that Shirley began his work. Poor fellow! how little he thought, as he sat writing in the schools, that in a moment the scale of life had turned, and that his wife, whom he had left apparently in safety, lay hovering on the brink of life and death. Next morning no letter at Shirley's place in the schools, and the blinds were drawn in Cherisy-terrace. Inside there were a broken-hearted, crushed man, a little, weakly baby crying for its only comfort, and a white, dead woman lying on a bed.

The days and weeks went by. The baby dropped and died; it was happier so, people said. Shirley himself seemed too distracted to notice the little one's death. His ordination, his degree, seemed to fade out of his thoughts. He was as one in a dream. He was about to say that the summer was almost over, and the summer. Then he left Oxford for the vacation. And what a vacation it was—a blank, dreary emptiness. He had few friends, and those he had almost came back to Oxford after a week's absence, took a miserable lodging in a more remote part of the town, and once more commenced his reading, but he had no heart. She who had cheered him, she for whom he had toiled, she with whom he had been cheerfully the hardships of their laborious life, was gone. And he had said nothing. After a while a calmer and a more soberly in the reality of prayer took the place of his despair. And then, in the stillness of the night, his presence was near him, cherishing his loneliness.

All through the cold and mild winter he weathered with a vigour that was all but needless, depending on the necessities of life, seeming to find a sort of satisfaction in bodily privations. It was in vain that his friend, the curate, warned him that he was killing himself, urged him to take more exercise, more food. The kindly advice, even if it had been heeded, came too late. John Shirley would never take his degree. He would not be ordained, as the words were sung on Magdalen tower in the early May morning.

One night he closed his books, and had turned round the fire for a moment's rest before going to bed, when he heard, as plainly as if in life, his wife's voice calling him from the bedroom. He started, pushed aside the chair in which he was sitting, and without looking at the whole place was filled with light. The poor, cheap paper on the walls faded away. The common room and all its rickety furniture were gone. He was lying in a large divan, with a large vault of heaven, and there clear, as when she was with him, he saw his wife's face, looking as it were over the blue clouds, happy, longing at him. And through the stillness of the night he heard her voice:

"I come to thee anon, Toll on, my beloved. Thy work is well nigh done."

And then she was gone, and he was once more in his poor garret.

The next day, and the next, and the next, and the next, he worked with all his energy, but with a tranquil earnestness he never had before; and at the third night, reaching to replace a heavy book on its shelf, he overbalanced himself, strainl, recovered his hold, fell, and burst a blood vessel. There was no one to tell the ghost, but for it was late and the household was asleep.

He lay half unconscious till the first light of the morning. Then stretching out his arms, as he always did when lying down to lead him home, he fell back dead.

He remembered how they found him there as asleep on the floor by the ashes of the fire. They saw the smile upon his lips, they said it was a smile, they said that he died without pain. But they had not seen the dead spirits that had flown to heaven that night: they had only seen their joy, for he had sent the wife to fetch his husband back to earth.

E. E. WEATHERLEY.
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

IN MY GARDEN.

BY DORA HOPE.

We own no widesprent lands,
Our store of worldly wealth
A single cricket that stands
A furlong from the shining sands;
And mine a pair of willing hands,
And youth and strength and health.

When daffodil betray
The coming of the spring,
The blackbird pipes his roundelay,
The earth is very fair and gay,
And all the garden kers, but the day
I bithly work and sing.

"There is such a tiny patch,
But full of simple flowers,
The cherry blossoms meet the thatch,
And panies bold the sunbeams catch,
And in this little nook I snatch
My brightest, sweetest hours.

For pleasant thoughts must come
When budding boughs are seen;
Then through the woods I love to roam,
Or wander by the rippling foam;
And in my garden and my home
I'm happy as a queen."

S. E. G.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

"My dear Joanna,—Do you know,
Spenor has her faults! I know you will be surprised to hear it after the description
I sent you of her. I am very loth to confess it even to myself, because I did really think she was so perfect when she first came.

"For one thing, she is unpractical and procrastinating. Every meal is a few minutes late, and nothing is ever done till the last possible moment. But I cannot blame her very much for that, because I feel too painfully that it would be a case of the kettle scolding the pot for being black. I remember there was a time when I was always late, and I think I was then quite as busy as Spenor is now."

"But that is not the end of my grievances; the table-cloth never looks fit to use a second time, because she has quite a genius for avoiding the pretence of tidiness; so that it is crumpled and untidy. I have told her and shown her how to do it properly, and it was better for a day or two, but now it is as bad as ever again.

"She does not at all approve of the stock-pot, and when I insist, she neglects to scald it out every few days, so the soup is often sour.

"Then the sink! You should see it. It is generally pilled up with dirty plates and dishes waiting to be washed, a saucenpan standing in a frying-pan, and most of the holes in the sink stopped up because she will empty the tea-pot straight into it, leaves and all, and even the scrapes of the plates are left there till the end of the week, when she has a great clean up for Sunday.

"Perhaps I am not stern enough; I read the other day in a good book of maxims that if you are of a hasty temper you should never scold your servants till the day after the offence has been committed, but it does not answer at all in my family, as my wrath is immediately evaporated by the next day, and Spenor is not in the least affected by my mild insinuations.

"But, to be honest, I am afraid the real cause of my non-success in making her mend her ways is that I cannot teach others what I do not understand myself, and I really have no idea what is the correct thing to do with the contents of a half-empty tea-pot, for instance; nor why some people make glass look quite dazzlingly bright, while others never do, even when they have tried to clean the glass for private myself, and therewith certainly was not equal to Betsy's.

"If you could send me a few hints about these matters, and others of the same kind, you would confer the greatest kindness on

"Your loving sister,

"MARGARET CIVILIZE.

"T.S.—I had such a beautiful bouquet sent me on Valentine's day; I cannot think who it could have been from."

"A few days after Margaret had written this letter, Mrs. Trent called to ask how she liked her new servant.

"She looks nice, does she not, Mrs. Trent?"

"At the first glance, yes; but feeling rather responsible for her, I took the liberty of looking more particularly at her than I should otherwise have done, and, on closer inspection, I am afraid she is not at all neat. I notice that pins too often place the lace of hooks or buttons, or a fold of her dress is carelessly arranged to hide a hole which ought to be darned."

"I think that is a very fair index to her whole character; as long as one does not notice details it is all right."

"But the details are just what a good housewife does particularly notice. You know the old saying:"

"If you would thrive most prosperously,
Yourself must ever come see."

"Yes, I suppose that is true; but Spenor cannot bear my going downstairs and poking about amongst the cupboards, so I shun from doing so, as it always causes more or less of a tempest. Though I must say that very fact makes me the more uneasy, for, do you know, Mrs. Trent, I hardly like to suggest such a thing, but I am very much afraid she drinks rather more than she ought. I found several bottles which I did not remember in a cupboard, and when I smelt them to see what they contained I felt certain it wasspirits, and two or three times she has seemed so very strange and excited, that I was quite afraid of being alone in the house with her. But if she had any weakness of that kind, her mistress would have been sure to mention it in her character, would she not?"

"No, I am afraid you cannot depend upon
That. So many mistresses, from a false idea of kindness, give most deceptive characters, quite forgetting that honesty and truthfulness are quite as much a duty in domestic affairs as in anything else. They quiet their consciences by not actually stating anything false, but nevertheless they do hesitate to give an entirely wrong impression by being silent on disagreeable points; and no doubt the reason the character you received was so carefully worded."

"But it seems to me absolutely dishonest, and I do not see that it is really a kindness to the servants, for if they are allowed to go from place to place with impunity, a bad habit of that kind is never likely to be checked.

"You are quite right, but people yield to a feeling of compassion without properly considering the facts of the case; of course, it is equally wrong, if not worse, to give a bad character to a servant, for she may be discharged in a temper, or because of some slight fault. What is wanted is a stronger sense of justice and honesty, and a desire to act honourably by both the lady and the servant. But in the meantime I am not helping you out of your difficulties; I would offer to speak to Spenor for you, but she would naturally resent my interference."

"Yes, I am afraid I had better speak to her myself, but I do so dislike doing it; and hope you might get her to speak to her."

"I certainly should not advise you to say anything till you are sure; but the next time you think her manner strange, wait a little while, and see if she has had a fit, or got over it, and then ask her to explain it."

The opportunity Margaret wanted came only too soon. That very evening, on going into the kitchen to give some directions, there was such an unmistakable odour of whisky, and Spenor looked so confused at Margaret's sudden entrance that there was no choice but to ask the meaning of it. She protested that it was imagination, and that she did not smell anything; but Margaret insisted that she was right, and asked further what were those bottles in the cupboard. At the mention of the bottles, Spenor lost her temper, and putting on an air of injured innocence, said that no one had ever accused her of such a thing before, and if she was not trusted she had better leave.

"Not at all," said Margaret; "I do not wish you to go away, you; if you can prove that I am wrong I will not only trust you entirely for the future, but apologise for having accused you falsely now. All I want at present is to know what is in those bottles, so if you will tell me it will settle the matter at once."

This, however, Spenor absolutely declined doing, and answered so rudely that Margaret could not but say she had better leave; and
after a private consultation with her father, told her she had better go the next day, and she was to take her wash to the mill, instead of the usual morning’s washing.

The next morning Margaret went to tell her troubles to her unfailing advisor, Mrs. Trapp. She gave her advice as to how to get another servant.

"I should recommend you," said that lady, "to call at the shops at which you deal, and inspect the way of working of any one likely to suit you. Respectable servants in want of a place very frequently mention it to the tradespeople with whom their mistresses have dealt; and if that fails, you must either go to a registry office, or answer another advertisement—but in any case let this be a lesson to us both, never again to be satisfied with the written character. It is time I had had that already, but I confess I was deceived by the girl’s quiet, respectful manner.

"Even if it involves a good deal of trouble, you should make a point of seeing the girl’s former mistress. It is the only way in which you can be sure of getting at the truth, and also by her appearance, and the house in which she lived you will know the kind of work for which she has been accustomed.

"I have heard just the same tale from a barbarous man," said Mrs. Trapp, "who had come in during the conversation. "He had a very evasive sort of character for a man servant, but being ignorant of the correct method by which one is to approach in giving characters, he supposed it was all right, and engaged the man; but now he finds that as soon as he has gone to bed, this estimable servant slips quietly out of the house, and spends the first few hours of the night conversing with his friends, leaving a window open through which to return quietly, which is not very convenient for the easy entrance of robbers."

Margaret was much impressed, and went to ask of the tradespeople if they could tell her of a good servant.

While she was still prosecuting her inquiries in the neighbourhood, she had a letter from Betsy, saying that her mother was dead, and as she was no longer required at home, if only her "Dear Miss Margaret" would take her back, she would work as much as two servants.

This put Margaret rather in a dilemma. She had now learnt to appreciate Betsy’s honesty and good temper, but it was a trial to have to go back to her rough ways and unclean habits. As she was willing to turn the letter, telling her frankly the state of the case, and saying that she could not take her again unless she promised to be more careful and thoughtful over her work and cleaner in herself.

All this Betsy eagerly agreed to, adding that her mother, who was "as gentle as a lady," had talked about her rough ways, and she had promised her to try to be more "polite in her behaviour."

So once more Betsy was installed in the kitchen, and peace reigned in the house of Colville.

But before her arrival, Margaret had received a long letter from Joanna, in which, after describing the children’s troubles, she went on to answer her questions as follows:-

The knives are very often a difficulty, as servants persist in putting them whole into the water, which not only discolors and cracks the handle, but in time loosens the cement which fastens the blade to the handle in cheap knives. Thinner blades only should be washed in this way. If not left in a pot, not left in, and wiped at once; the handle is then washed quickly in warm water without soda. You will find this very satisfactory and will enable you to take this trouble, but you should insist upon it, or your knife handles will soon be spoiled.

"As for the glasses, they are generally smears through careless drying: they should be washed in the water, as is usually probably used (near boiling), and rubbed first with a coarse glass cloth, and then polished for a moment with a soft cloth the same. These sounds troublesome, but really takes hardly a minute longer than drying with only one cloth, which probably is wet through before you get to the bottom of the pan of; of course if that is the case you cannot expect to have China bright. There should always be a basin at hand into which to drain all the cups and jugs. The plates should be put aside till the smaller things are finished, and then when all the pieces have been collected and thrown into the basin, you can in the first place wash those forks who will devour them with a relish, wash the plates in hot water, not lukewarm, give them one rinse in a pan of cold water, and put them on the tray. The racks are kept till the plates are very greasy a little soda or soap may be added, and above all, do not be sparing of water, but change it frequently."

"I have learned to hear of your difficulties about the sink, because it is really an important matter. Take great care that nothing that can possibly clog the holes is ever thrown in. The trent must be unlined, from the pot into the sink, if it is really necessary to waste the tea, then the leaves should be taken out and thrown behind the fire, unless you are likely to want tea from the same pot for some considerable time, you should lay them in an old plate or basin, till they are required, but must have the air on them or they will go mouldy. Do not use more than are quite necessary, as they are apt to leave a stain on the carpet. The teapot must then be rinsed out with hot water, but not emptied into the sink, as the water will wash out the small leaves which have remained in the pot, and they will certainly clog the holes."

"There are very nice little wooden sink fillies to be borrowed without, with a division for soap and others for sand or flannel, which would help you to keep the place in order. I suppose you have a sink brush, if not you should buy one, and use it upon its being used every day. They are made very much like those for saucepans, but an old scrubbing brush does quite as well."

"If, as you say, your litchens are left in a dirty disorderly condition, I advise you to have a chambermaid before your new servant comes, to thoroughly clean up, and re-arrange it all according to your own taste, you will find it much easier than making alterations after she has arrived."

"I think that is the end of your questions. But there are two or three things which I have to make you to on other domestic matters."

"The worst is that pork is just in season. I am quite aware that you do not like it, but probably the boys do, and at any rate it is less expensive than other meat, and it is convenient at a moment’s notice. I should advise you to have it once or twice before it is too late. But you must take especial care that it is very well done; when undercooked it is most indecent. Get a little sweet oil rubbed on the pork with a brush or feather, it makes the cracking more crisp and brown than dripping does. Do not forget this."

"As an additional advantage, it also renders the pork more whole-some by assuaging its digestion."

Certain vegetables will soon be over too, in particular celery cabbage, and root, though the latter may sometimes be obtained all through the year. Beetroot are cooled in so many different ways, nearly every farm having its own system, and they can hardly be served in any other than that of their own. They need careful handling or they will lose all their colour. After washing, they must be put into a saucepan of water, and boiled for a long time. They take about an hour and a half; then lift them out very carefully, so as not to break the skin, and lay them in a dish till quite cold before attempting to be served. Carrots and turnips are to be served hot as a vegetable, in which case they must be peeled and cut into slices as quickly as possible, and sent to table covered with boiled butter. Parsnips can be stewed with onions, but perhaps the nicest way, and one which I am sure you will find the boys, is to boil a little vinegar with some spice in the proportion of a small half ounce of peppercorns and three cloves to a pint of vinegar. Many people add pounded ginger, and horseradish or capers, but I find it much better when I eat it cold, cool, strain this, and pour it over the sliced beets. This pickle can be used at once, but is improved by keeping two or three days.

"What you especially need for boys is, that they feel they are eating pickle, which they always like; but at the same time they may safely be allowed to take as much as they like of it, which I generally permit with ordinary pickles."

"You must remember the pancakes on Shrove-Tuesday. Let you have not a recipe for them, I have a very nice one, which is a capital one. Put a quart of a pound of flour into a basin, break into it two eggs, with a little nutmeg, and half a pint of milk. Mix as before, and when your pancake is done, serve it up with a little sauce, such as mayonnaise or mayonnaise sauce be like cream. Put a little butter in the frying-pan, and when melted pour in two or three tablespoons of the batter. As soon as one side is done turn over to the other. When well browned lay it on a dish, one on the other, till all are done, then sift sugar and squeeze a little lemon juice on each, roll them up, cut them in two, and serve directly. Should there chance to be any snow at the time of year, it takes the place of eggs, allowing two heaped table-spoonsfuls to one egg. In this case the batter should be thick enough to hold two or three hours or a cool place before cooking."

"As to marmalade, which you asked me about, you must watch your opportunity for getting the Seville oranges when they are really cheap and good. The best time is usually about the end of March or beginning of April. Choose the largest oranges, with nice clear skin; cut them into thin slices, carefully removing all the pips, of which there are innumerable small ones. Put the sliced fruit in a pan, cover with water, and leave for twenty-four hours. Then boil till the pieces of rind become soft, and let stand another twenty-four hours. Now add sugar in the proportion of one pound and a half to one pound of rind and 1/2 pint of water. Bring up again for about an hour, or until the peel looks transparent and the juice thickens. Then add much more sugar, say twice as much as ordinarily used, and will, I think, please you better."

"I have neglected to tell you before to look out carefully at the covers of your mattresses, to see that they are not dirty. You will notice, if you have not already done so, that before I left home I made new covers of satin linen, which I think on without the thread, to cover the edges of the mattresses. They are very strong and stiches, so that they are easily taken off to be washed when necessary, and not once or twice a week, as is housekeeping, thinking them one of the unnecessary fails of housewives, but I soon
changed my mind, for the sides of one bed became so dirty that I had to take the whole bed to pieces to wash the tick."

This letter came just in time to allow of Margaret's following the advice it contained, to have the kitchens well cleaned and re-arranged before Betsy's return.

She bought a sickly, tidy, and brush, and arranged the kitchen drawers and cupboards according to her own fancy, so that on Betsy's around she was able to take her round domain, and show her that there was to be a place for everything, and everything in its place.

(To be continued.)

THE QUEEN O' THE MAY.

By Anne Beare.

CHAPTER XXI.
A MUSICAL TOURNAMENT.

Flourish of trumpets heralded the appearance of the Welsh choir in the orchestra of the Crystal Palace—a flourish of trumpets and cheers long and loud. As they took their places and turned their bronzed faces to an audience of twelve thousand people, it is no wonder that the cheers were prolonged. That five hundred Welsh miners should come all the way from the Principality to do battle with the musical world, if that word so chose, was matter of general interest.

When Caradoc, the ex-blacksmith as they called him, appeared, baton in hand, it seemed as if the noise that greeted him must have shimmered the glass roof above, and when he took his seat in front of his choir, waved his wand, and so moved them to stand, the very foundations must have shaken.

May sat among the soprants, by the side of Rachel, conspicuous for her fairness and sunny hair. The mine song was in her eyes, and her heart throbbed as if it must burst, as the uproar subsided and she fixed her eyes on the leader. But emotion soon ceased when, at a stroke of the baton, the competition began.

The pieces selected were not only classical, but difficult of execution. They were—Bach's motett, "I wriest and pray"; Beethoven's "Hallelujah chorus," from The Messiah; and Mendelssohn's "See what love hath the Father," from St. Paul; and "Come with Torches," from The Faust, also by Mendelssohn.

It is sufficient to say here that all these fine works were reproduced with a mastery that astonished and delighted the audiences, and that the applause, which succeeded each was vociferous and unanimous. But the two pieces that suited best the story were the choirs where were the well-known composers and musicians, Sir Julius Benedict, Mr. Barnby, and Sir John Goss, who entered into rest only last year.

"The English have done best! We shall lose the challenge cup!" whispered May to R.

She had listened with breathless attention to the rival choir, and, by an intuitive appreciation of what was excellent, had discovered much in them that she liked or fancied the Welsh lacked, and with a generous generosity had silently awarded them the palm.

Indeed, she had much sympathy with "the palefaces," remembering her own childhood. But her divided affections were soon reunited when she heard the mighty words that the judges had decided in favour of the Welsh choir—that the challenge cup was theirs, and they were "the champion singers."

It was long before the hubbub, noise, enthusiasm—call it what you will—subsided.

"I am so sorry for them; they deserve the prize as much as we do," said May, her heart much troubled at sight of the white, still Londoners.

She was somewhat consoled, however, when she learnt that a fifty guinea harmonium was awarded to them as a consolation prize, while, in addition to the challenge cup, the Welsh choir were to receive a purse of one hundred guineas.

"I think it is better to lose than win. I should not like to compete again," said May to Uncle Laban and Meredith, as they walked on either side of her through the wonderful masses of the Crystal Palace, when the choir were on their way to luncheon in jubilant procession.

"Is your name Madeline Goldworthy?" suddenly exclaimed someone in the crowd.

The trio saw a gentleman making his way towards them through the procession that immediately preceded them. They could not pause, so he joined them and walked astride with them.

"That is her name," said Meredith, making way for him between himself and May, who looked with wondering curiosity at the stranger, but did not recognize him.

"I am sure it was the same; there could not be two heads of hair precisely like that—every hair a separate golden thread, untameable by art. Do you remember sitting for your portrait about twenty times? You stand with your arms over your head, a little, dancing, airy, golden-headed child!"

"I do! I do! Oh, sir, how did you know it?"
NEW MUSIC.

Boosey and Co., 292, Regent-street, W.—

The First Letter. Words by F. E. Weatherly. Music by J. L. Mollov (in two keys).—A Gail letter from a sailor lad, of which the singer says—

"This the first time I've had from my sailor lad,

There are no fine words of tenderness in it,

But it's as true love as I think it should be.

In his own true, simple, honest fashion.

"My dear little girl, I'm so hard and so rough;

And yet I love you well, and I'm not good enough," &c.

Let us hope that love did not blind the sailor lad or mislead him into supposing that his "dear little girl was better than she really was. This is a charming and simple song, sure to be successful if sung brightly.

The Children of the City. Words by F. E. Weatherly. Music by Stephen Adams (in two keys).—This is a truly beautiful song, the study of which is sure to be profitable. It tells of the unfortunate children of the city with no one to care for them. In the workshops and in the street, falling for bread, and life seems so hard for them that—

"They lose the glimpse of heaven,

And there seems no better life.

Abba Father, Abba Father,

From their bondage set them free

Abba Father, Abba Father.

Suffer them to come to Thee."

Stephen Adams has illustrated these beautiful words sympathetically and well, and we heartily recommend the composition.

The Old, Old Song. Words by Theo. Marsiils (compass, D to F).—Every girl knows the words, "I think when I read. This simple and familiar hymn is suitably set to music, and forms a composition admirably adapted for Sunday use.

The Cavernous Music Book.—Messrs. Bossey are sure to have a large sale for these books (about thirty in number). Each book is sold for one shilling, and contains thirty-two pages of valuable music—songs, duets, &c. No. 1 is "The Rose," No. 2 is "Love's Light," No. 3 the tenor (transcription), No. 4, the colbrone (folly), No. 5, yellow jasmine (elegance and grace); No. 6, "Lily of the Valley" (return of happiness); each of which is so composed as to demonstrate the charac or of its subject.

It is arranged both as a solo and duet for the pianoforte, and if only as a study for clever reading, will be found useful to the diligent student.

Goddard and Co., 4, Argyl-place, Regent-street, W. —

Resignation. Words by Longfellow. Music by Percy G. Moscati. —Every girl knows the poem—

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,

But one dead lamb is there;"

and many will be glad to have this suitable setting of it.

Augustin Buhl has written seven short studies for the strengthening and equalising of the fingers of young players; and "a wrist and finger exercise" in a single study, which must be of immense benefit to any one who will carry out the author's advice of practising them from ten to fifteen minutes daily. These exercises are not intended for a beginner, as they require the hand to be sufficiently developed. The method of fingering each exercise should be carefully attended to, and practised slowly and firmly until perfectly mastered.

A Romance Sans Parole. By Henri Steichl. —The air, which is produced by the left hand, is very smooth and pleasant. The accompaniment is light and graceful and played with the right hand.

Lamborn Cocks, 23, Holles-street, Oxford-street, W.—

Has sent us four of six musical sketches by Claudius H. Cowdery.—Nos. 1 and 2 are separately for two cantors—all of which are admirably adapted for young players, well fingered and marked, so that, by careful practice, there can be no doubt as to the success they will afford. Nos. 3 and 4 consists of only two pages: an andantino, easy to read, and very sweet.

No. 2—Another two-page piece, is of a different style, graceful, and well-defined.

Nos. 3 and 4, published together.—No. 3 is in Waltz time, and No. 4 is a beautiful slow movement which must become a favourite.

A Geronno. A very spirited piece in march time, quite military, with its staccato and crisp octaves.

Pieces selected from the instrumental works of Haydn: No. 1, a romance from the symphony, Le Reine de France. A smooth and easy arrangement in three flats, without any great difficulties either in execution or time.

An Allegretto Grazioso, by Charles Steggall, requiring a little more advanced pianiste and careful playing. The composer has marked the character of each bar most plainly.

A Rondo à la Valois, upon one of Rossini's well known operatic airs, not at all difficult, and well executed.

Gai Réveillé. By Henri Steichl. —A brilliant little piece, working up to an accelerando crescendo which will awaken the dullest listener.

Lost. A romance for the pianoforte. By Richard Dressel. —The introduction in the first page prepares for the andantino movement, which is a "singing" leaving the player to imagine and arrange her own romance according to the suggestions of the music.

Metzler and Co., 37, Great Marlborough-street, W.—

The Language of Flowers (by Frederic H. Cogswell) is a much more pretentious composition, capable of testing the high taste and execution of the performer.

Six flowers have been selected: No. 1, the daisy (innocence); No. 2, the lily (first emotions of love); No. 3, the fern (fascination); No. 4, the colbrone (folly); No. 5, yellow jasmine (elegance and grace); No. 6, lily of the valley (return of happiness); each of which is so composed as to demonstrate the character of its subject.

It is arranged both as a solo and duet for the pianoforte, and if only as a study for clever reading, will be found useful to the diligent student.

Novello, Ewer and Co., Berners-street, W.—

Pianoforte Solo. Gounod's sacred song, "There is a green Hill Far Away." Transcribed for the pianoforte by Berthold Tours. —The name, both of composer and transcription insures a production of more than ordinary merit. The well-known air is treated in a simple and effective style, and is sure of success.

An easy arrangement for the pianoforte of Fritz Spindler's Hameemritz. By Berthold Tours. —In the key of D. We can recommend this as being easily committed to memory, and sure to give pleasure.


The Sisters. Duet for female voices. Words by Alfred Tennyson. Music by Arthur Sullivan. Surely it is a sign that the magazines issued from 56, Paternoster-row, are keeping pace with the progressive musical culture of the English public when we see in its oldest magazine, the Leisure Hour, a duet, the words of which are written by the Poet Laureate and set to music by Arthur Sullivan. The words are taken, by Mr. Tennyson's permission, from "The Sisters," a long poem recently published in his new book of "Ballads," and characteristically set by Mr. Sullivan in his usual charmingly-melodious style. Every musical girl who desires to keep herself well posted upon the subject of new music should at once procure the above number of the Leisure Hour.

Robert Cocks and Co., New Burlington-street, W.—


J. B. Cramer and Co., 201, Regent-street—

Minster Visions. Words by Jetty Vogel. Music by Ciro Pinsutti (in three keys). An easy, effective song, with a moral which is cheering to a saddened heart. The stained Minster window of martyr and saint soothed the heart, for they "show of a sorrow greater than mine."


THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Dora Hope.

Fanny's return was indeed a happy event for the young mistress of the house. The visit home and intercourse with her sick and dying mother had had, as Margaret phrased it, a chastening effect on her; with the little brusqueness and angularity rubbed off, the maid was all that could be desired, willing, neat-handed, scrupulously clean, and honest as ever, and to be doubted whether Margaret ever again longed for a pretty, refined attendant.

One fault still remained to trouble both mistress and maid, for the latter regarded it almost as much as the former, namely, punctuality.

"I can't think how it is, Miss Margaret," she said one morning, "only last night, I thought as I was sure to be in time with the tea, and yet before I'd done laying the cloth I heard your pa's knock, and when I finished it off as quick as I could, and run downstairs, I give a look at the clock, and there it was gone seven, and my meat not dished up."

"In future, Betsy, you must come up and lay the cloth half an hour, or even longer than that before the meal, then you will not be all a drive at the last; there is nothing like being beforehand in preparing for everything. You know you take your time early in the morning and afternoon, and then as the meal hour approaches you get quite in a flurry. So try to be quicker early in the day, and geteward
with the work beforehand; that is the only way to be punctual."

"Then you see, miss, perhaps I shall get a bit too punctual, and have things done too soon, and that would be a bad thing, wouldn't it? Quite true, Betsy; that is almost as bad as being too late, in cookery. But if at any time you should have to keep roast meat after it is done and cold, I would prevent your spoiling by putting it in an old dish on the oven, with a dish-cover over it, and over that a cloth. To keep greens hot you should put them into the coals, leaving the vinegar on the saucepan; then cover them and set the coals on the saucepan, and the steam from the boiling water will keep them quite hot without the necessity of any other dry cloth on top. Potatoes are the greatest difficulty; it is almost impossible to keep them hot without getting discoloured. The best plan is to strain off the water till they are quite dry, then lay over the saucepan first a cloth, several times folded, and then the cover; take off the lid of the boiler, our fortunately being one which you can open, and stand the saucepan over the entrance in the place of the lid. But of course there is no reason for adopting these plans unless papa is late home, or the meal delayed from some other cause. Margaret is part of the household, and just coming into season, I should like to you to boil some, and if you do exactly as I tell you they will be as nice as mackerel. When you have boiled them, cut a çıkar of water, quite hot, but not boiling. Put the fish in a little salt, and boil them pretty fast for about fifteen minutes. You must be sure to boil them exactly as I tell you, and serve up in a fish napkin as usual. They will not require any butter, they are quite rich enough without it."

"There's no meat in the house but the cold beef, miss."

"No, but it is no use attempting a great meal, so we will make that do. I want you to go to the store to-day. The new day's bill is perfectly easy, and I will tell you how to do them:—"

"Peel the potatoes, and cut them. Give me names, I should exactly know how to do it. There, you see, I have cut it into slices, as thin as possible, the thinner the better. When this is done, take the small frying-pan and half fill it with dripping, and as soon as it boils put in the slices of potato. Boll them for about five minutes, take them out with the egg slice, and serve directly on a nice hot dish, but do not cover them, as that would take away the crispness. The only thing you must take particular care about is that the fish is hot enough before you put in the potatoes, not lukewarm, and if it is not, change the sign of its being at boiling-point. The dripping, of course, can be used again, so you may keep your potatoes within some to spare."

"And what pudding will you have, miss?"

"I shall make a small rhubarb tart."

"Rhubarb! why, miss, it isn't even showing itself in our garden."

"No, of course what we get now is forced; the garden rhubarb will not be ready for a long time. But the forced is not at all expensive, and then they're better than wild rhubarb."

"Margaret had taken the opportunity of Betsy's return to make one or two changes in the arrangements for some that had thought would be an improvement. First, as to the maid's tea and sugar. Hitherto there had been no special allowance of there items, but now it was arranged that she should have a quarter of a pound of tea and half a pound of sugar per week, to use how and when she chose, which plan proved more satisfactory. All this while, however, she had never took anything of the sort, and was still too unsophisticated to ask for money in place of what she never dreamt of requiring; so that Margaret, when next a day, or two days, pointed out to her the extension to which so many housekeepers feel compelled to grumblingly submit. Even with Spinner she had not paid bawdy money, as Miss. I mean she had not asked for money, as she understood the subject before engaging her."

"Then there was the 'day out' question. Betsy's father had now come to live in the same town, and it was quite right that it only right that Betsy should have a little time with him occasionally. So it was arranged that once a month, when convenient, Betsy should have a half-day to spend with her father, besides which Margaret arranged as often as she could spare her, to send her out for a walk, frequently giving her permission to spend half an hour with a friend, on condition that she always came back punctually at the time fixed for her return, and as Betsy soon found that the repetition of these short detours through the town, made compulsion of the time, she took care that there should be no complaints about unpunctuality."

"A little management was necessary to arrange for a little receiving, but without inconvenience to the household. Betsy cleared away the dinner with the greatest expedition, and at once laid the clothes for Tea. Cold meat was made to follow that meal on these occasions, and everything put ready in the kitchen; there was nothing for Margaret to do but make bread and toast, and bring the cold meat up into the dining-room, which, with the assistance of her brother, was an undertaking she rather enjoyed."

"After tea a pause and her young assistants would carry down to the larder any viands which would spoil by remaining in a warm room; then the family adjourned to the drawing-room, leaving the rest of the clearing away, and the washing up, till Betsy's return; unless, which frequently happened, the young mistress had a burst of kind feeling towards Betsy, on which occasion it was arranged that the young mistress should wash, or Margaret would wash them up; but that her gay handmaid might not find a great quantity of work awaiting her on her return. The only draw-back was that she was not sure to choose that very day for coming to the house. Margaret was forced to open the door to them with the best grace she could. "If she considered at all, she would at the same time explained how matters really stood, and those whose opinion was worth having thought none the worse of her for her candour."

"Among other preparations for Betsy's return had been the organisation of a housemaid's cupboard. Hitherto all the requisites for housemaid's work had been kept here and there in the larder; but it had occurred to Margaret that a small cupboard under the cistern on the top floor would answer the purpose of a regular housemaid's cupboard, for it would not be so imposing a name. Here were to be kept a pair, half-brush and brush, hot-water cans, brush for cleaning water bottles, cloths, dusters; in fact, everything that could reasonably be put in the top- bedroom use. As there was both hot and cold water laid on upstairs, none of these articles had to be taken down to the wash-house, but with the exception of the cloths which were to be returned immediately after drying."

"It was a little trouble to Betsy at first to keep all these lovely cupboards in their place, but she soon came to appreciate the increased convenience and orderliness gained by the arrangement."

"It must not be supposed that our young housekeeper's mind was to take up with domestic matters as to have no interest in pleasure and amusements."

"As the Easter holidays drew near she joined with other girls of her own age in the hope of having some. Many were the discussions as to how the week should be spent. Joanna's house boasted but one spare room, so that an exodus of the family was quite out of the question."

"Mr. Colville thought that, for himself, two or three days spent quietly at home would be the most refreshing form of holiday, and that Joanna declared that on these occasions she could not possibly go to her sister's, even had it been practicable in other ways."

"For you and Betsy between you would turn the house upside down without me to look after you," she cried, when her father suggested her leaving her.

"But it was that the two boys set off in high glee, the day after breaking up, to spend a week with Joanna and her husband, whilst Margaret reconciled herself to the prospect of a quiet, very quiet, week."

"As she went to her room the night after the boys' departure, she thought to herself, with a smile, that now she was indeed settled down into a hundred old household."

"Oh dear! how dull it will be without the boys," she pondered, as she brushed through the thick hair of a bar of soap, which she flung into the basin, such a dull Easter as this is going to be! How different it was last year with Joanna at home, and Arthur Helier staying here, and I, a scatter-brained young ignoramus, without a thought of such horribly prosaic matters as boiling potatoes and balancing accounts. Oh! who'd be a housekeeper! Fancy a whole week of dullness; when everybody else is merry making!"

"Then, feeling repentant, she went on, "There, now I have grubbled enough for one day; I consider, I am quite enough to do to keep father from being dull when severed from the charms of business, without getting so myself; and he certainly deserves a good holiday," and throwing him an imaginary kiss, she hopped into bed, and was soon asleep."

"The dreaded week passed only too quickly; Mr. Colville had never had such a week to himself before, nor had she ever before thoroughly appreciated his companionship and bright clever conversation. Mr. Trent, too, who was always so kind, shared Margaret. She felt that Mr. Colville should find the leisure days dull, for he came in repeatedly, and seemed to have an unfailing supply of new books and pictures for her entertainment. They had often visited marked privately to Margaret after one of his visits, he must have thought him interested in a strange mixture of subjects, for a large number of the books and magazines seemed much more adapted to interest a young lady than an elderly gentleman, but he supposed he bought anything the bookseller recommended without trouble."

"Easter Monday was the day Margaret most dreaded; for, as usual on Bank Holidays, the town was not agreeable; being full of holiday traders making a bid about and wanting anything but a festive air, though certainly as the day wore on they became decidedly noisy."

"Mr. Colville spent the day in a long walk out into the country with an old friend. Heating of his intention, his never-failing skill at telling a story, accompanied them to the house of a relative some miles away, which was reached by a pleasant drive through pretty country lanes through which the trees and hedges were just bursting forth into foliage, and the fields were dotted with early spring flowers."

"Here, far from the haunts of men, one could go one's own way without being con-
stately reminded that it was Bank Holiday. After early dinner, a walk through the woods was unanimously agreed to. Under a blue sky, the air filled with the songs of birds, and the early evening light, it was hard to realize that it was not already summer.

"I really think spring is the jolliest season of all the year, don't you, Miss Coville?" asked Mrs. Trent.

"I used to once," replied she, plaintively, "but now I always associate it with that dreadful spring cleaning; however, I suppose you have something that needs doing, eh?"

"Ah! Is there anything you aren't going to inspect as you might suppose, for anyone who has once suffered from a spring cleaning will never forget it?"

Every article of furniture put out of its proper place and turned quite upside down wherever such a revolution is possible; meals eaten in any room but the right one, and all for no earthly reason that I can discover, for I declare when it is all over looks precisely the same as it did before, neither better nor worse."

"That is because gentlemen never do appreciate clean furniture and rooms; but I assure you it is the proper thing, or else why does everybody do it?"

But though Margaret expressed so decided an opinion, she was far from feeling equally sure of her own in her own mind, and determined to consult Joanna on the earliest opportunity as to the possibility of doing without the disagreeable affair.

It had been arranged that Mr. Coville should terminate his walk at Mrs. Trent's house, and, accordingly, soon after the return of that lady and her party, he arrived at the hospital mansion, and, as Margaret said, "after they reached home," "Their delightful day was wound up with a still more delightful evening. Mr. Coville was in his most lively mood, and kept the whole company merry, while Margaret frequently enhanced them by some of her sweetly-sung ballads.

Seizing an opportunity when the gentlemen were deep in talk, Margaret whisperingly asked Mrs. Trent whether this alarming spring cleaning were really necessary.

"Well, dear, not to the extent to which some of our neighbors make it," she said; "another day or two, and the house, if properly swept, will be in a most genial state, however, to do this until it is warm enough to leave off fires, for the dust and dirt arising from these suns will complete the purity of the most sanitary state of the house.

"Oh, thank you; I should never have thought of fires affecting at all. There is one other thing I want you to understand. You promised the other day to tell me of some variety in the way of sweets, and as it is still so dear I thought you would not mind reminding me of it?"

If you knew a prime tart? No? Well I think your father would like it. You must give the stew till quite tender; being dry, they require a good deal of water, about a tablespoonful to a pound of fruit. Let them get cold, put them in a pie-dish with the juice and a little sweet sauce, cover with a rather thick crust, and bake it.

She also spoke of some which was simply for a good but not economical plum pudding; not that it could be considered a rare dish, but it is such a favorite with young people I thought it might be worth your while to look it up. It is a mixture of flour, suet, sugar, and scraped carrots each a quarter of a pound; half a pound of potatoes boiled and mashed, and half a pound of currants and raisins. Mix it with half a pint of wine and 2 spoons of lemon, and boil it in a cloth for six hours.

"Why, do you know, Mrs. Trent, there is a

1. "It only is in debt that it is repulsive, I can answer for the most whining well received; but now, dear, try and forget your house and its puzzles. My nephew has been frowning at me for the last ten years for monopolizing you so much, I believe, I am sorry."

2. "I gave you my favourite 'Mary Morrison,' please, and you shall come and lunch with me on my repulsive plum pudding to-morrow." Thus the hospitality was sufficiently ample. Tom and Dick were heartily welcomed home, and their first evening was merry with tales of the adventures and fun of the holidays. As the right of the guests was left to Margaret said, with an arm round the neck of each sturdy boy, "Well, father, boys are a great trouble in some ways, but I should not like to be without them at all, should you?"

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COKKERY.

MADIE STUART.—Put one egg less in the recipe, as there may be more than sufficient. I think it would be a cool one for coconut cakes also. Your writing is neat.

CHRISTMAS—Inquire at a furnishing ironmonger's for the frying basket. It is a light wire one with a wire handle. If you omit of continuing the acquaintance, recall yourself to his memory by mentioning where you were previously introduced.

P.T.—The oven used for your cake was probably too hot—perhaps the cakes must be first dry a little, so as to turn out properly. Wash the condiments with a mazer, if clean with bran and well rubbed, they really do not need washing, but they take more time in the cleaning.

J. H. L.—The bouquet is first put in the pot-hatch as follows:—"Grate coarsely two young carrots, and slice three carrots, three turnips, and three onions; then cut out one teaspoon and a bunch of parsley. Take a plate of green peas, salted, and the spring of a cardewby, and put half the peas away in a basin. In a four-quart saucepan place three pints of meat broth, and all the vegetables save the peas in the basin, as well as some half-dozen cloves of the neck of mutton. Let them come slowly to boiling. Add two ounces of rice or pearl barley, and simmer till the meat be ready. Then, and season with pepper and a little loaf sugar. Boil the remaining peas separately, and add to the hot-pot just before serving.

HOUSEKEEPING.

PERSKY.—We have just given full instruction to another correspondent touching the preparation and management respecting the house-linen that may be required. As to materials, that for the table should be damask linen, more or less fine; the sheets either of linen or calico, or perhaps linen for the top and calico for the under sheet and calico, and then pillow cases for the servants’ beds. Hotchback and Russian diaper for the hotch-pot, and bed-linens. Linens for the best pillow-cases.

MADIE K.—The market is a marble chimney-piece; read what has been said, and at pages 29, 25, 21.

F. T.—Your factor, besotted, which you may secure, and it might be made very handsome by means of good decorative panel painting in the over, in imitation of oil paintings. In a private house, work, fresco, would be in a very bad taste. Had it been of old oak, we should have advised the removal of the panel with every care, and a thorough waxing and polishing.

D. A.—Dining-room—having some unstable line in the bottle to remove the coating and, when clean, keep an eye on it.

ART.

VINK.—We propose to give some instructions on the art of colouring photographs. Grey hair at an early age is not only a sign of extreme old age, but they may show a need for the strengthening of the general health.

NAVE, TASMANIA.—Our competitions take place about three times a year, every one being taken at a farmers' or a town meeting, as you choose in your responses, and as the male take only six weeks only, we think you will find it a very good plan. Thank you for your kind letter of acknowledgment.

CELY.—We could not tell you how much it would cost, but it could be made by an ordinary carpenter. Probably the cheapest way of procuring a screen would be to utilize a picture frame which you might cover for yourself. Your writing is in very faulty.

CHARLOTTE.—Procure a manual on the subject of painting. You may paint in oil either on canvas stretched on a frame to hang on the wall. You should advise no delay in concluding a doctor.

HAROLD.—Unless the music suited, or you thought them likely to have it, you would not take it. We could not say, unless we knew what kind of a performer you are.

EDEN A.—We think you could improve yourself much more by a week and diligent practice. We knew of no method for your case.

TERRYN.—Read "How to Play the Harmonium," page 31. To dispel the idea of taking off the rent, your writing is shocking.

G. L.—Your writing is good. We do not give away a prize.

FLOODY.—We do not advise you to sing under the circumstances. A trial for a short time, we think it extremely likely that you will break down. You sing very well, but write a poor and badly-handled hand.

EVE M. H.—We have told you how to use soap to improve your tenor. We are the most and in one of your games on Saturday, we are the nearest to finding that branch of work, and endeavour to find employment.

MELTON.—All the hospitals appear to be glad of magazines and newspapers. The horse surgeon is interested in the question sometimes.

EDUCATIONAL.

ECONOMY.—Approaches to maintain a very good correspondence to Miss Arabella Shore, Taplow, Maidenhead.

F. T.—The first step is knowledge to know your own ignorance. The most learned have been once the greatest fools. I have no idea how you can teach the blind to read. I do not think that is the purpose of your question; so do not be discouraged by your "profound ignorance."

We think that the Handbook of English Literature, by Mr. Andrews, of Paterostrow, C.R., would be a most helpful book for you, and would instruct you how and what to read. You could learn French alone, but you will need good quarters for the preparation of it.

JUNE.—The "New Commentary on the Bible," is especially suitable to your purpose, J. Paterostrow, C.R., price 2s. 6d. It is a service that can be reconnoitered by the entire discontinuance of your musical studies.

BRIE F A R A K. If the lesson be gratuitously given in a friendly manner, you would probably give brain in lesser moments; you should have no objection to your taking advantage of the opportunity of your season to gain knowledge.

Descanso.—Maps issued for the current time and suitable, for candidates for the Cambridge and Oxford Examinations are to be found in the map shops round Traveler-square; one in the square, one at the top of Parliament-street, and a third in the St. George. Your writing is good, but too upright.

CHÂTREUSE.—The correct way of writing the French sentences which you quote is "Nous ne sommes pas, nous n'en avons pas," not "nous iron," "J'ai fer de ma vie," "J'aur avoir," and "Fer de ma vie.

We cannot give advertisements. Inquire for the book at the bookshopper's, who could procure it. You write well.

STUDENT.—It is quite impossible for us to tell you what an imaginary foreigner may charge for private lessons in modelling.

A LOCAL STUDENT.—Your question seems to entirely personal one that we can give no opinion on, as we do not, of course, concern ourselves with the services to the managers of your school. The whole question hinges on that.

W. A. N.—"Conscience," page 18. You will find excellent and near rules for the "smell," which he says "ought always to be pronounced at the beginning of a sentence." The conclusions to this rule are—"hir, hedron, hour, humour, hostler, honest, honorable." Your handwriting is good, but illegible.

AN APPRECIATIVE READER.—1. We should not advise the purchase of the "Handbook of the English Tongue," page 18. You will find excellent and near rules for the "smell," which he says "ought always to be pronounced at the beginning of a sentence." The conclusions to this rule are—"hir, hedron, hour, humour, hostler, honest, honorable." Your handwriting is good, but illegible.

2. It would be advisable to have your mother's advice.
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

By Dora Hope.

He time for Margaret’s breeze, the dreaded spring cleaning, had now indeed come; had it been longer deferred, its name would have been a welcome sight. For the spring was passing swiftly away.

Margaret was in good time, her spirit buoyed by Mrs. Trent’s advice not to begin until all the necessary preparations were made. She felt that there was no time to lose, and with a sense of accomplishment, she began the task.

When all was said and done, the winter curtains were taken down, shaken, brushed, and scented to ward off the dampness and dust. The sun blazed down in all its glory, illuminating the room with a warm, inviting glow.

As night fell, the calm atmosphere of the house was disturbed by the sound of Margaret’s voice as she called out to her children.

"Dinner is ready," she called, her voice carrying through the open windows.

The children rushed in, their faces lit up with excitement, eager to sample the delicious meal that Margaret had prepared.

As they sat down to eat, Margaret smiled, grateful for the peacefulness of the moment. She knew that, despite the challenges of housekeeping, there was always reason to be thankful.
Margaret could not but be amused at Betsy's utter want of thought in sweeping a room. She had never before happened to wake up at the outset and was amazed to see her maid begin to sweep just inside the room, and sweep away from the door, leaving the corners till the last, when she would rake out the ashes as much as she could get, of the dust she had just swept in. As she frequently left the windows shut during the performance, the result of all her labour was simply the dust heap out from the carpet and settled on the sheets with which the furniture was covered, till they, in their turn, were hastily taken off, when it was shaken back on to the bed. A similar process was there was perhaps more evenly distributed over the room than it had been before, but certainly none of it was entirely removed.

The morning's dusting was conducted in much the same way, simply being a flapping of dust from one place to another.

Betsy was astonished at her own stupidity when it was pointed out to her, and saw at once the wisdom of brushing from the corners into the middle of the room first, when a good deal of the dust and fluff could be collected in the centre and swept into the fire. The advantages of the wide open windows were so evident that they hardly needed pointing out. Margaret advised her also, instead of hastily dusting the bedclothes, to fold them and make them carefully so that the dust which had been allowed to settle on them should not be shaken off again, and then to carry them straight out into the yard and hang them up to dry. In finishing the room, all possible articles were quickly wiped over with a slightly dampened cloth, that being, as Margaret had often observed, the only way of removing dust. The sheets of the bed, which would not bear this treatment were done in the ordinary way, only that she insisted upon its being performed carefully, so as to, as far as possible, obliterate the dirty spot it was. She was then taken inside, instead of being slapped about in the usual style.

"Well, miss," said Betsy, "it do seem so simple when you just point it out to me, but then I never can think on these things unless I'm showed."

And Margaret felt thankful for a servant who was such a willing student. Her perplexity had lately been about the management of the linen press. This was placed in a small room, the rest of which was used for a sewing room. The press was placed against the wall of the house, it was somewhat damp, and now and then a few spots of mildew on the linen would fill Margaret with dismay, especially as she felt powerless to prevent this evil. A letter from Joana in answer to one telling of her difficulties contained some suggestions:

"It is indeed a great trouble to have a damp linen press. Do you remember how capital mine is? Of course ours being a new house we have many nice arrangements that you do not meet with in old houses, and amongst these is the press which is here. The water pipe from the kitchen. I cannot tell you what a comfort it is.

"In your case I should recommend you to have everything thoroughly dried and aired before putting away; take the linen straight from the fire to its place in the press. Then on any bright clear day you should put the things out of doors to dry, and also the window and door of the room in which it stands, so as to get a draught of air passing through. You do hit on there any favourable moisture in the air, that would cause further harm.

"If the things feel damp now, take them all out and hang them on the sun or before a good fire, and leave the press doors open wide for a couple of days, then replace the contents and start fresh on my plan of airing everything before putting away; if you do this, I think you will not be troubled with mildew again.

"To ensure using the linen in proper order, you may not want perhaps to have one come from the wash, week by week, at the bottom of the pile, then of course you take from the top, and there can be no using out of turn.

"I should think, however, you may put the house linen inside the press door if I were you, so that it cannot possibly be lost again.

"If any tablecloths are really too far worn for you, you may perhaps hang a piece out over the middle large enough for a sideboard cloth, or at any rate for fish napkins.

"Apropos of napkins, you know that Arthur has been having his potatoes quite hot, and yet it is impossible to keep the cover on the dish or they become sodden. Well, now, I always have them brought to the table blazing hot in the dish, then when you take one you just raise the napkin with the spoon; it keeps them beautifully hot, and dries them as well."

"I should think none of your white curtains will require mending if you repaired them before putting away last autumn; but if at any future time you need it, let Betsy help you to turn them inside out, and use the old way before they are sent to be got up. If any are too far gone for repairs they will be useful for many purposes; the large pieces will make good wall-hangings, and the small pieces are useful for tying up herbs and spices when making soup—for straining, and so on.

"Possibly it may not occur to you when putting away the milk that it is likely to be attacked with the same, so do not forget to put plenty of camphor bags between the sheets.

"You asked me in your last how to preserve eggs for winter use. I have never been able to buy them sufficiently cheaply to make it worth while to preserve them, but if you are fortunate you can preserve them either by rubbing them over with butter, which closes up the pores, and so prevents evaporation; or a still better way is to put them when quite fresh laid into a tub of lime-water, in the proportion of one pint of unslaked lime, and one pint of coarse salt to a bucket of water. If too many eggs are put in it will soon be full, but the shells. The eggs should be covered with the solution, and kept in a cold place, and they may be new laid, or they will not keep.

"You asked me last about getting from the young tops, and a few drops of either will be sufficient for a small tureen of gravy. Of the butter, if you do not object to the flavour, the amount only which you buy at the grocer's do very well.

"The letter then went on to other household topics upon which Margaret had been in correspondence with her sister Joana. Perplexity about Betsy's cookery was melted butter, so-called, for certainly the solid starch-like mass sent to table under that name was like anything rather than the real thing. It remains a mystery, but after once adopting Joana's plan she never returned to the former style. The recipe was as follows:

Take two pounds of oil butter; cut up small, that it may melt more easily; put it, with a large teaspoonful of flour and two tablespoonfuls of milk, into a stewpan; mix these with a tea-spoonful of salt, and add about six tablespoonfuls of cold water with a small pinch of salt, and still less of pepper, put it on the fire, and stir one way till it begins to thicken, then put the gravy string, and 'when it boils it is done. To make the batter thinner add more milk.

One evening soon after this, the boys called on their way towards the cottage and lay just outside the town. They had provided themselves with baskets, old gloves, and knives, and told her sister they were going on a search of conger eels. What was her surprise when they returned with baskets full and brimming over with young nettles!

"Oh, boys, what did you get all that rubbish for?"

"Now, Madge, don't call it rubbish till you know what it is used for. You've got to boil them or fry them or something, and then they will be just like cabbages," responded Tom, knowingly.

"That's the way the world goes. You think nobody makes inventions but yours-" "Oh, Madge, he's telling stories," chimed in Dick, excitedly, "we didn't think of it at all. Only one day at school young Melrose made up his mind what he had got. I guessed hedgehog, and Tom guessed cut, and all the fellows guessed things, and then he said 'nettles,' and then we didn't believe him, and he said, 'Well, then, and his rate never told him what it was till they had eaten it all; and they kept on saying what nice spinach it was, and so we we'd have them cut the young tops off, so they are sure to be good. Only, Madge, if ever you go gathering them, mind you go alone, for if there's another fellow with you, and he's stooping down getting them, you feel you can't resist tipping him over into them."

"Yes, that's what he did to me; only I wasn't head enough to back him on my back, so I didn't get stung a bit, so it was a sell for Dick," remarked Tom.

"Well, I'll try them to-morrow, certainly, though I don't know how to do them," said Margaret, resignedly.

Accordingly the next day this enterprising family enjoyed a dish of nettles, which were prepared in a successful manner, and flavoured—in fact almost indistinguishable from young spinach. They were cut up small and boiled in exactly the same way as spinach. After this Dick's fourteenth birth-day came round, and on this important anniversary he was to have the privilege of inviting a select party of his friends to tea and games. Margaret felt a little anxious concerning this entertainment in both its branches. As to the tea, she wished to make it as far as possible agreeable to boys, and have them get on as well as possible. As to the party the arrangement of her small house took some time. In the end it was very simple: plates of white and brown bread, and of various kinds of jam, were a matter of course; then followed Dick's favourite dish, potato-cakes, which he had specially requested might be included in the bill. It was all decided on, and even Margaret some time before the mother of Dick's particular friend, Melrose. She was an enterprising lady with a very fond husband, and her cookery, as was proved by her dish of nettles, and as she was always ready to give away the benefit of her experience, Margaret found her a very useful friend. The recipe was as follows:—Boil a few potatoes (or use any
NEW MUSIC.

J. & W. CHESTER, Brighton.

We can very highly recommend a "Suite in A flat," composed by John Glendh
ill, No. 3—Cradle Song, No. 4—Darwallin,
No. 5—Lied; each differing in style, accord-
ing well with the lines which inspired the
composer. This "Cradle Song is a perfectly peaceful "lullaby," and we are sure we shall be thanked for advising our
friends to procure the pieces and to commit them to all kind and charitable
hearts.

WILLIAM CEZER, 346, Oxford-street.

Haut et fort mais pas de foin—A pretty little
Caprice Mélodique. By A. Erpman.—A
very pleasing, lively, and showy piece.

NOVELLO, EWER, and CO., Berners-street.

Rouget's "Grossea." By Berthold Tours. It
is in the key of "D," and consists of two pages of appren-
castard. The melodies were borrowed round the fire
the evening before Dick's birthday, Mr. Col-
ville mentioned that he would not be home
till the last night, and hoped Margaret
would not find any difficulty in superintend-
ing the amusement of her guests.

"But they will not want any amusing, I
hope," boys generally seem to shake down
and enjoy themselves when they are away
of their shyness. And Mr. Trent said he
would very much like to drop in after tea, and
play at the piano, and then go to school again, but I thought
perhaps Dick might not like it so, as it is his
party, I did not respond very warmly."

"But I should like it very much, he is
such a jolly fellow, and I'm sure the other
fellows would like him, and we'll make do
those conjuring tricks he knows. I vote
we ask him," cried Dick.

"Might I don't think you had better get
him to come in," said Mr. Colville. "If he
really offered to look after the boys it would
save you all anxiety."

"But I am awfully often Trent comes here
lately!" said Tom, meditatively, from his post
on the hearthstone, where he lay sprawling
at full length.

He expected to be reproved for saying
"awfully," but no one noticed it. Not
choosing to have his remarks thus ignored, he
went on, "I like him; he's an awfully good
sort of a fellow—don't you think so, Madge?"

"I certainly see nothing "awful" about him," replied his sister, severely.

"I say, father, I don't believe he would
come if the boys were four weeks away,
don't you?" he went on, with that knowing air
peculiar to budding youths, raising him-
sel on his elbow and staring at Madge. Whereupon, to his unstaking, Mr. Col-
ville replied, unconcernedly enough,—

"I don't perceive that he shows any partic-
ular partiality for any one member of the
family above the rest, but his father was a
very old friend of mine, and he naturally feels
at home among us. I am glad if you boys
think of coming, for I'll say so; for he is a
nice, intelligent, sensible young fellow. Now,
lads, off to bed with you, it is getting late."

"All right, father. Give us a hand up,
Dick, and add me to your number. Why, how
nearly your face is to be seen, and you're not near
the fire either."

And with this parting shot the irrepressible
boy departed.

(TRUE, TO BE CONTINUED.)
ness to me; it will be sweet news for her, I'm thinking.

"Tell her, oh, tell her, Bessie," went on the girl, her voice trembling; as the rising tears made their way down her face, saying, "tell her I love her, though I never saw her face; tell her, I strive so hard to be brave and true for God."

"Yes, I'll tell it all, Miss Ruby."

"Are you in pain, darling?" asked the father, drawing now nearer. "What is this God knowledge, that you want to bear it for yourself?"

Bessie looked up with a smile as sweet as that of the sleeping child.

"Don't grieve, father dear," she said, "He is making it all so light and easy for me, as light and easy as it used to be when I ran home from school; and I am going home now too."

"But you were coming home, in those old days, to your mother and me, Bessie, and now you be leaving us."

"Oh, not just the hard part of it, leaving you and mother; but you'll come after me, both of you, won't you? You'll try to live so that we shall all be in heaven together. And then think what a dear Lord and friend I'm going to; and read that Holy book I can fear to go to be with Him."

"Ay, child. He is a friend; your mother and I found Him one, sure enough, in the time of sickness and scarcity of work when you were born; your mother said, when she first looked upon your face, 'See, John, God has sent an angel to help and comfort us in our trouble, and an angel you have been to us ever since, my Bess.'"

"And father, mother, went Bessie (then went Bessie, bearing over her now, grasping each other's-towel-worn hands the while), 'bring up little Annie as you brought up me, to know the dear Lord who bought us, the Lord who took the little children from father. His arm, and she will be your joy and brightness as years go on; He who is doing well I know for us all in taking me, though we can't see how yet, will make His own child.'"

"That day, until she takes your place, Bessie," sobbed the mother.

"And mind," began Bessie again, "you take care of my hymn book for Annie, and the three little books I won as prizes at school; my Bible, that I should like Ben to have, if he would but prize and read it."

Ben was Bessie's only brother, and, strange to say, considering the honest, God-fearing family from which he came, one of the wildest lads in the parish. Ruby, who was especially fond of teaching boys, had coaxed him sometimes into the Sunday-school, and she and his sister had a certain good influence over him; but it was a power that often grew faint, and died altogether.

Bessie was silent after she had made her little will, looking in turns at Ruby and her father and mother. At first her face was very calm and bright, but gradually an uneasy expression came into it, and she began to cast restless glances towards the door. By-and-bye, she said, "If only Ben would come; I am so afraid he won't be in time," and her breath began to come and go more heavily and slowly.

After that, there was a great stillness in the house, a stillness broken only by the sound of the very, very, laboured breath, and the faint sighing of the wind at the window, and the ticking of the tall clock which had belonged to Bessie's grandmother, and had been ticking just the same when Bessie's mother was born. The father's lips were moving all the time, and once a fragment of prayer broke from him, as if he could not hold it back.

"Help us, Lord, who died on Calvary, help us in thy mighty, everlasting love, wash beneath her breath, in her husband's ear:"

"John, I'm thinking that any good thing comes to me I shall grieve and weary so to tell it her."

"Very like, Mary, the Lord in heaven will let her know it," he answered in the same soft tone.

And Bessie, too, once broke the silence to say:

"Mother, I had forgotten one thing, I should like you to have my warm shawl to wear on Sundays."

Those were the only words uttered for a long time, and still the slow breath struggled on, and the wind sighed on, and the clock ticked on, but the brother did not come. Those wished, shining eyes of Bessie watched ever the door, but the pale lips breathed no impatient sound. Ruby wanted to say something to comfort them all, but her young spirit could not find exactly the right words; and, besides, she knew that a better comfort was with each one of them. She pressed Bessie's band from time to time, and the girl's face showed that she thanked her for her sympathy.

"Hark! What was that sound? It was only the little child stirring in her cradle, and murmuring something in her lisping baby talk. The mother bent over her to soothe her.

"She is dreaming," she said, and, saying something out the angels."

"I have often heard Bessie telling her beautiful stories about them," answered the father in a whisper. "Mayhap, who knows, she can see them coming for her sister.""

The minutes sped on, the trembling breath grew weaker; the sister's eyes grew piteous in the anguish of their long watch; would he, or death's mighty angel, be there first.

"Could he go out to look for him?" asked Ruby in a low tone, turning to the father.

"It's a chance where he may be, Miss Ruby, and, besides, I do set such store on every minute with him too."

At length there was a patter of quick feet on the frost-hardened road outside, and a ring of shrill, boyish laughter; an instant after, a handsome, but resolute-faced lad of fourteen or thereabout burst into the cottage, calling out "Good night!" to some companion as he entered. Bessie raised herself, a great, joyful light flashed across her face, and her voice, which had been lately very low and weak, rang out sweetly as she cried,

"Ben! Ben dear Ben!"

When the boy came in, eyes and lips were all dancing with mischievous smiles, but the moment his glance fell upon his sister a deep, sorrowful breathing fell upon his face. At first he stood still, as if half shy and abashed, as if he were on the threshold of some holy place which he feared to enter. But when she held out her arms towards him, and fixed upon him those earnest, pleading eyes, he drew nearer slowly, and knelt at her side, and her weak embrace clasped him closer.

"Ben, dear Ben," she whispered, with her hand nestling in his shoulders, "come and trust in Him. He is making me feel so safe and happy now."

Then there were some moments again of solemn stillness, broken only by great sobs from the boy; and so full was the breath came weaker and weaker. After that there was one long, quivering sigh, and Bessie had gone to join the waiting angels.

(To be continued.)

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Dora Hone.

Dear me, what a headache of reading! sighed Margaret one Monday morning, as she raised the already partially open lid of her stocking basket. "The basket actually will not shuts—it's so full and so ragged! However is it that boys' socks always wear so much harder than anyone else's?" Taking out the top pair, and unravelling them, Margaret held them at arm's length, to see how the yarning chasms of holes, and so many of them, it would be but labour lost to attempt to mend. She remembered that very pair of socks, a week or two previously, having looked decidedly thin in several places, but having no actual holes in them they had been rolled up and put in Tom's drawer, ready for wear. And this was the result; and as she reluctantly put the mutilated socks aside for kitchen use, remembering at the same time one or two previous similar experiences, she learned anew how the old but invaluable lesson about "a stitch in time."

Never again would she leave thin places to come into these awkward, even unmanageable holes, but, by taking them betimes, save herself endless labour, expense, and time.

The stocking basket, well stocked with needles, yarn, scissors, and socks was kept handy in a work cupboard, or the mantelpiece could be lifted out whenever there was a little time to spare.

Margaret found she could not afford to waste even the odd five minutes which come to the busiest people sometimes. The two brothers would rush home from school, perhaps with some long-continued story or news to explain to narrative, or Mr. Colville, before starting in the morning, liked to read extracts from the paper, commenting thereon; and Margaret, not from want of interest in either,
THE GIRL’S OWN PAPER.

could not help feeling fidgety at letting the precious moments slip away when there was so much waiting to be done. Quietly she went to the scullery and took a piece of pastry and a jug of milk from the dresser. At the same time she took a piece of bread from the cupboard and go on with it the while, or falling mending, she kept always a piece of luck for her, for she knew that a little loaf is good for the stocking for herself—which could be readily taken up and laid down again.

Thus she soon got into the way of almost mechanically taking up work in these odd minutes. But like friends she felt she could spare time for a real rest, she did rest—no work then, but snugly nestled in the recess of the largest and easiest of easy chairs; and perhaps gazing up to the enjoyment of a favourite author or poet.

For it must be confessed that this young dairymaid was not by nature fond of work. It was probable that, had her lines fallen in different circumstances, her time and energies would have been chiefly devoted to music, reading, and so on, without a thought among household affairs or the conservation of leisure moments. So she may be excused for harassing even her knitting, when, on very rare occasions, she got it going.

But to return to Margaret as she sits examining her pile of mending. Her thoughts are not solely fixed on the task, for they will whisper of the harder work of the day, and not present here, and, moreover, must speedily be filled, or else dinner will be late. The problem was what to have for dinner, for this question is a never-ending one, particularly on Monday, when it was advisable to have a joint that could be eaten cold next day, because Tuesday was washing day. But Tuesday was not a very imposing matter in the Colville household, because nothing was washed at home save the kitchen clothes, starched, and so on, and Betsy’s clothes, excepting her aprons, which are saved for a cold-meat day, and then a nice savoury hash or stew formed the Tuesday’s dinner, as it could be gaily simmering by the fire while the washing was going on. But Betsy would have felt aggrieved at being expected to cook anything more elaborate than a stew on this great day, and hence the problem.

"Let me see! Last time we had hot meat on Monday—it was roast beef; and the time before I think it was roast mutton, and before that it was a leg of mutton. We will dine off boiled mutton with the usual trimmings, à la Mr. Weller—and that will give an opportunity for telling Betsy the rules for boiling mutton, which they say are very positive. She is likely ‘mixed’ about it.

The next few minutes were spent in insinuating into the mind of the domestic the fact that if you want to extract the goodness of the meat—for bee-sts, for instance—put it on the fire in cold water, because the act of boiling draws out the juices of the meat. But if it is wished to keep the strength and gravy of the meat—put it on the fire first and then put it in, as otherwise it cannot but be tasteless and poor, because all the goodness has boiled away in the water.

And you must, of course, keep the liquor the mutton was boiled in, Betsy,” went on Margaret, “and on Wednesday we will use it for a beef soup. You have the recipe.”

"Yes, miss, but will you be so kind as read it out to me, I can seem to take in the meaning better when you read it up to me.

"Never mind,” she said to herself, “I must smother my feelings till this is over, then I will rush for Joanna’s book and seek a remedy like fresh ginger, lemon, and cake in the dining-room before going home.”

This she did, and luckily found there an excellent and simple way of removing grease spots from marble. Carefully detaching with a knife as much as she could without scratching the surface of the marble, she applied some finely-powdered magnesia, to be left all night, and then, with an easier mind, rejoined the merry party in the next room.

The following morning, when we were wiping off the magnesia, the grease marks had disappeared, and a second application was not necessary.

The Colvilles’ house was an old one, and though it had not all the modern improvements such as heated linen rooms, yet it possessed one advantage rarely met with in a new house, namely, a fairly large garden.

It was not a remarkably productive garden, but that was, perhaps, because there was so little attention given to it. The lawns were almost a gravelly waste, the paths neat and trim, but beyond that the old-fashioned rose-bushes still blossomed on (or not, as the case might be), free from the rivalry of standards; the lilacs and azaleas, the box and yew, the poplars with their long drooping branches, the bluebell, the violet, and the crocus, the banks of colour rising into perfect bowers, whilst honeysuckles and Clematis climbed and wandered about in a delicious tang, just as their own sweet wills led them.

One corner of the garden was dignified by the name of orchard, though all that remained to merit the title was one gnarled old apple-tree, where with age it had lost its fruitfulness. But here were a number of fine hardy gooseberry and currant bushes, which some enterprising tenant had planted, and in spite of the frost and the great deal of family, the bushes were laden with fruit, year after year, with unabating plenty.

Tom and Dick would commence their occupation with the crop in May. After that, a few bunches of strawberries, one of blackcurrants, and a small crop of green grapes, were the more important. But the grapes were eaten raw, and in the condition of small green bullets, acid and indigible beyond words to describe, and continued as long as there was a berry left, but still there was abundance left for pies and puddings and preserving.

This year Margaret resolved to be content with bottling a quantity for winter use, instead of eating them raw, as she used to do. She thought that she felt a little timid of trying her ‘prentice hand on preserves. Following what she took to be the traditional family recipe for gooseberries in the miscellany book, she selected the fruit when fully grown but before it was ripe. They were gathered on a dry sunny day, and with the “heads and tails” left on, they were put into the marmalade or mouthed bottles, which had to be perfectly dry inside. These, well corked, were put to stand up to the neck in a pan of cold water over a gently warmed fire. They were returned when the fire was not so furious tricks. The room after a time becoming warm, a window was slightly opened, and the draught blew directly on to the mantelpiece, causing the corks to fly out with great energy and begin to drip grease down upon the marble.

The conjuror stood immediately in front of the fireplace, and Margaret did not like to interrupt the performance by getting up to remove the candles, so she had to sit just and watch, with growing anxiety, the likewise growing heaps of wax.

Her precious marble mantel! It was very handsome, fine, and white; the one thing in the house in which she felt a pride. Every day, with her own hands, she rubbed it to a perfect shine, and now she would lightly ‘mash’ it.

“Never mind,” she said to herself, “I must smother my feelings till this is over, then I will rush for Joanna’s book and seek a remedy like fresh ginger, lemon, and cake in the dining-room before going home.”

The currants require rather more care in gathering, so as not to bruise the fruit, and their treatment afterwards is somewhat different. To every pound of fruit, half a pound of sugar is allowed, pulverised and well mixed with the currants. When the sugar for a minute, then when cold put into bottles with a little sweet oil on the top. A piece of bladder and a little sheet lead are good coverings for excluding air, and finally, the bottles are put away in a cool, dry cupboard, and their contents subsequently testify to the excellence of the way of preserving, for they are rare.

It was during the gathering of this fruit that Betsy confided to her mistress a very agility and interesting piece of news. It seemed that the last and present lady of the house had been delivered that morning. The child was a "downy" little one in Betsy’s pleasant face and manner, and her devoted attention to her sick mother, had quite won the heart of a rising young nurse. In fact, so won she was to that, not being
NEW MUSIC

J. B. CRAMER and Co., 201, Regent-street.—

Lost on the Prairie. Descriptive song for baritone or bass. Words by Charles W. Rowe. Music by Ciro Pinsuti. Compass, A to Ta. The vigorous, joyous, and pleasing variety after many mandolin sentimental love songs. It may be that Lost on the Prairie is more suitable for a man to sing; nevertheless we are sure that many girls will enjoy a change of subject upon which to exercise their vocal talents, and this song can safely be recommended both for its invigorating and the music and the descriptive composition. If Signor Pinsuti had not written hundreds of other excellent songs, this alone would have made for him an enviable reputation, but it seems to us that each new song written by this composer is better than its predecessor. This song is full of variety and contains a mine of excellent themes with which to play up the emotions of an audience. It opens with a recitative in E minor:

"Silence profound, no path, no track is there To guide the wanderer on his homeward way, Lost on the Prairie, far from human ken; Save for my steed alone, through night and dawn, He, the dear comrade of my many toils, Hungied, thirsted, exhausted, near me lies; While cariol vultures, scenting quick new prey, Sail circling round and watch with greedy eyes."

The time and key change as his descants on his visions and dreams of home, and asks with declamation, "When will I touch the promised gold?" for which he "feared with such wild haste." But the key changes again and the time increases, and in a pianissimo accompagnato we hear the gallop of horses on the allegretto recitative the lost man cries, "But hark! what sound is that? It speaks of help, of life, of hope, of home!" and the finale of this splendid composition ends with:

"O God, I thank thee for this aid Sent in our dire need! Courage, my steed, my gallant steed, We're saved!"

Three Tokens. Words by Nella. Words by S. P. Parry. Compass, compass, C to G. My Treasures. By the same writer and composer. Compass, D to E. — Sung by Madame Patey. These two songs are melodious, and written in a popular style. They will suit all girls whose voices are not crisp and flexible.

Autumn. Words translated from the German. Music by King Hall. Compass, C sharp to D. And by the same composer, The Most Rose. Compass, E flat to E. — The words of this song, translated from the German of Krummacher, give the legend of the moss roses growing in the Arms of the flowers for an additional grace, the rose had thrown ever it a veil of moss, which has since that time made its appearance different from the other roses of the garden. The music of Autumn and of The Most Rose is quiet and beautiful.
from you it may receive nothing but what is good.

After the bath a baby is generally ready for its food, and the meal is pretty certain to be followed by its morning sleep. If the mother nurses her and a young nurse has bathed and dressed it, the latter should put away the articles that are done with, empty and dry the bath, and expose night clothes and towels, if possible, to the open air. Never be in a hurry to wrap clothing or cover up beds. Let them have plenty of fresh air, or at least as much as you can possibly give them. I ought to have said the moment the baby is taken out of its cot, the bed should be shaken up and all the bedding spread out and thus exposed. It is an excellent plan to have two sets of sheets in use, one for four nights and the other for days; then this airing can be well carried out.

Often, when travelling in Switzerland, I have been struck with the carefulness of the people in airing their beds. As you pass through a village in the early morning, if you look from the windows of the diligence, you will see the beds, which are small, light, and much more portable than ours, hanging from every casement. They are turned over and exposed for hours to the fresh air and light, a process which must tend greatly to their purification and to the health of those who use them.

By all means imitate as far as possible this example of care, and, though our cumbersome beds cannot be hung out in like manner, we may give them the benefit of frequent exposure to air and light.

If the little bed or mattress, from its small size, has a better chance than any other, so let him have the full advantage of this.

In my next chapter I shall try to give similar instructions on "How to Nurse the Baby." (To be concluded.)

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Dora Hoy.

So your friend is to arrive very shortly, the Madge?" said Mr. Colville, one morning in June, as they sat at breakfast, "Miss Dobabella—let me see, what is her name?"

"Dorothy, papa; Dorothy Snow!"

"Sweet thing in names, certainly," remarked Tom. "I say, Madge, what is she like?"

"Well, I have not seen her for more than two years, as, being my senor, she left school before I did, and we have never since seen much of her. She was very tall and very dark and handsome, and I thought her very clever, but then I think school girls will always exaggerate the good qualities of their friends whom they like." "H’m, glad she’s nice-looking," said Tom, complacently, with a glance at the pier-glass, as he fingered his collar and the delicate pin in it to make sure they were not as arranged as they should be. Tom was at that age when, though exceedingly boisterous in many ways, he still had a very refined and refined sense of beauty. He began to feel an interest in the cut of his coat, and displayed even anxiety about the shape of his hat.

"Oh, my dear boy, she will very soon catch you if you try and avoid an imitation, I’m quite sure," cried Margaret, laughing. "Do so splendidly strong and tall, she could pick you up in her fingers and thumb-nails." "May we call her Do, too, Madge?" asked Dick.

"No; of course you may call Miss Snow, unless she objects to it. She used to be so teased about her name at school, they always used to call her Do, Snow, but I beg you won’t do that.

The meeting between the friends was hearty and warm, for, though a correspondence had been kept up, they had not seen one another since the old days at school, and there would be large amounts to make up during Dorothy’s forthcoming visit.

Margaret knew quite well that her friend’s home was a more luxurious one than her own. With plenty of servants it was not likely that she would take any part in household matters herself, and Margaret could not help wondering what she would think of the innumerable duties which devolved upon the mistress of the Colville household.

The morning after Dorothy’s arrival, Margaret, with some hesitancy, remarked if she could not spend half an hour, and having no idea of attempting to hide anything of the sort, explained that she usually made the pastry herself instead of trusting it to a not very efficient servant.

To her surprise, Dorothy begged to be allowed to come and help, or at any rate look on, for more would be likely taken up the idea of her learning all about cooking and cleaning, and so, having been "learning hard!" lately, she would be delighted to continue her education.

Of course Margaret was only too pleased, and so it happened that some of her merriest times were spent by the two girls in the kitchen.

One morning, as Margaret was tending on her large apron and rolling up her sleeves preparatory to a plunge in the flour tub, Dorothy bethought her of certain items of cookery in which she considered herself proficient.

"Did you not say, Margery, that the Tren’s are coming to supper to-night?" asked she.

"Yes, that is correct, Margaret. I was to see you to Mrs. Trent, she is such a good friend to me."

"Oh, then, do let me make some delicacies for supper, Dorothy. You need not look so alarmed, I can make a select few dishes beautifully. Now, if you will consent, you shall have the loveliest jelly you ever saw, which is a fact. Do you happen to have any very cheap claret in the house? That at tod, a bottle will do."

"No, I fear we have not, but Betty shall go and get a bottle; or stay, perhaps, as she is a teetotaller, she might not like the claret, so we will go ourselves as my pastry will not be required."

"But we must provide something else for supper besides. One jelly is hardly enough."

"No, hardly. Let me see, there will be the cold lamb and mint sauce. Will you not have a salad with mayonnaise sauce also? I feel competent for that; even mammas praises my mayonnaise sauce!"

"That will do for me, with a dish of gooseberry fool, I think there will be enough. We do not usually make much difference for the Tren’s."

After the table was set, the girls went to work at their cooking, Dorothy having borrowed one of Margaret’s aprons and pairs of sleeves.

"Now, look here, Margery, you ought to learn how to make this jelly; it is so nice and cheap withal," said Dorothy, as she uncorked the bottle of wine. "See now, I simply put into my earthenware pot 1 c. of gelatine, a fourpenny jar of red currant jelly, the rind and juice of one lemon, 1 lb. of sugar, and the claret. They are to simmer gently. The gelatine is melted and held for half an hour. Then it is poured into this bowl, and steeped in cold milk for five minutes. That is the whole process. Now I strain it into this mould, which has been standing in cold water meanwhile, and there it is.

"That is an easily-made jelly, certainly," said Margaret, admiringly; "and I must say it looks nice, too."

"That should it be nice indeed!" Dorothy exclaimed. "At home, when we want it specially good, we put in a small cupful of brandy also. If we take the claret out, we pour round it some cream, sweetened and flavoured with almonds or anything we choose. It is quite good enough for ordinary occasions without these expensive additions."

"Now for the mayonnaise sauce, Do. But would it not be better to leave the making of that till nearer the time?"

"Oh, no, it will not matter; of course we will not pour it over the salad till just before supper. You have to put the yolk of an egg into a basin, so (chuck the yolk and white!) also a little white pepper and salt, and a quarter teaspoonful of mustard. Then you mix them together;

"How much salted oil shall you allow?"

"Ask Margaret, looking on with much interest."

"I believe tastes differ about that, but I have an invariable rule to follow. If there is any oil whatever on the table it must not be put in at once, you observe, but just very slowly, drop by drop, stirring all the time with a wooden spoon, until about three-quarters of a tablespoonful is used. Next, I put in the least little drop of vinegar. Tarragon and the orcy mix kind, and then go on very slowly adding the remainder of the oil. There, this is all running out very nicely, and yet not oily-looking. Now I ought to have a teaspooonful of whipped cream added, but perhaps town milk does not yet cream?"

"Yes, it does, more or less," answered Margaret, fetching a basin from the pantry.

"Betsy always puts it to stand when it comes in, and though the cream is not so thick as it might be, still we should not fancy our tea and coffee without it. Why, how clever you are, Do; and you pretend to be such an ignoramus!"

"Yes, I am; I have very nearly come to the end of my cooking capabilities already, and I know simply nothing of the management of a house. Now we must put this sauce on the table, and while it is being prepared, we shall be wanted, and then, please, let me watch you make the gooseberry fool."

Margaret began by putting the green gooseberries into a jar with a little water, and a good deal of sugar.

This was set in a saucepan of boiling water, which was let boil till the fruit was soft enough to mash. After being reduced to a pulp, it was worked through a colander into a basin.

Next some cold milk and cream should have been added, but as our milk was put plentiful, Margaret used a little corn flour instead. Allowing a pint of milk to the same measure of pepper, she put it on to boil, then mixed the cream in, and divided the whole into the number of portions in which each pint of milk is a cup of cold milk, and added it to the rest in the saucepan. After boiling, it was slowly stirred into the fruit. Margaret had tasted it, and made a very face at the appearance.

"What, your after all that sugar?" exclaimed Dorothy.

"But it does make such a quantity," Margaret replied, as she added more. "and it is simply unnecessary if you stint the sugar. Now you have seen the whole mystery of gooseberry fool, so, when I have told Betsy to be sure and put plenty of sugar to the mint sauce,
suppose we have a run round the garden before dinner?"

Mr. Colville unexpectedly joined them at that meal. As this was a very rare occurrence, he was treated as a guest, and refused to take the head of the table. Post Margaret was anxious to vacate, declaring she would be too nervous to carve properly in her father's absence.

"But you carve splendidly, Madge; I have often noticed and admired your skill," said Dorothy.

"Oh, better than some girls, I think, because it is not usually considered necessary for them to know how. I was determined to learn, because I have to do it so often,"

"That is a most enviable accomplishment," said Dorothy, "one to get utterly stupid at having to refuse if asked."

"It is still worse to make the attempt and fail," remarked Mr. Colville. "Too many Snow, many people, ladies particularly, think it quite enough if they are able to cut a joint to pieces; anything beyond that they consider to be overwork. Of course, one undoubtedly enjoys one's dinner more if it be well cut, but the chief thing is that a joint goes twice as far, so it is most economical. And I was saying... A considerable carver will help half-a-dozen people in half the time one of your would-be-thought polite ladies wastes in making civil faces to a single guest."

"What delightedly plain speaking," laughed Dorothy.

Then, every carver ought to know which is considered the best part of whatever, he may be serving," continued Mr. Colville, "for some people would be quite offended if, when dining out, they were not helped to it, for instance, the joint part of the roast, as well as the thick, or the fins of turbot, or if they had any other part than the wing of a fowl, the back of a hare, or the breast of turbot, and quite a few of the better sorts of fish. I do feel that your essay on the merits of good carving till a more favourable opportunity, for I see it is time I was off."

The next day the two girls had betaken themselves to a pretty summer-house in the garden for a chat after dinner, when Betsy brought some letters to them which the postman had brought just before.

The summer-house was a rustic and, it must be added, an unstudiedly-looked creation. It had been built, at great pains and labour, by the two friends in their own time, borrowing their father on his return from a recent short absence from home. They intended the family to have tea in it on the evening of Mr. Colville's arrival; but Margaret thought she detected a slightly slanting tendency about the walls, and trembled for the safety of her pretty tea-set, and likewise of their own heads.

She suggested tea on the lawn, from whence they could look at the summer-house, and, as she pointed out, see it much better than if they were inside. And a happy thing it was that she was right, for the very next day her every meal Dick stepped into the edifice, and, to prove its strength, rashly shook one of the windows in the head of the table, which was considerably wounded, and with the aid of a carpenter the summer-house once more reared its head in beauty and strength, repaired by the original himself.

In fact, it could now be pronounced safe, and here it was that Margaret and Dorothy met to read their letters that late June day, when Betsy must have had a letter from her dear bairn, she looked so happy," said Dorothy. "I have heard from home, and mammy says she hopes I shall one day blossom forth into another such a model young housewife. Hence, although she does not seem so very sagacious about it, I must confess."

"Now, Don, do you not fatter me so; pray, what do you say about Snow?"

"What do you mean about me? I must write and tell her the truth. My letter is from Joanna, and I think I will read it out loud to you, because, whether you like it or not, I will be very useful for your education. I asked a number of questions the last time I wrote, and she says, in answer to your digressions of my bill, by all means keep your meat and pickles. Of all of them, excepting those for very telling sums. Put them on the file till the end of the quarter, then take them off, and having labelled and stiched them together, put them away in some safe place.

"For cooked summer drinks nothing is better than different sorts of ices. The most possible lemonade is made thus:—Remove the peel and every scrap of white, and also the pits, from three lemons. Slice them thin, and put them with the peel of one, in a quart jar. Add half a pound of rock sugar, and fill the jar with boiling water. When cold, this is just as good as some of the complicated lemonades. Another pleasant drink is made by mixing equal parts of slices of apples, pears, and peaches, and these are immensely improved by the addition of a lump of ice."

"Why did you ask me, I think, about preserving?"

"Yes, I did," put in Margaret, "but I changed my mind, and am now going to write about something else."

"I should like to hear about it, though, please," said Dorothy. "It may come in useful some day.

"Well, I have Joanna's sentiments on the subject:—Let the fruit be perfectly dry when you gather it—that is to say, no rain ought to have fallen for at least twenty-four hours previously. If it should chance to be showery weather, so that you cannot keep to this rule, boil the fruit an extra long time, or it will soon be mouldy. The fruit should be preserved in sugar, and a little lemon rind or leathen. Use good sugar; it is economy in the end, as it requires less skimming, and hence there is less waste. As a rule, allow 1b. of sugar to each stone of fruit. If trying quite dry, keep away from the sun, and do not add the sugar till the fruit has boiled some time, and all the skimming is done; but I do not think the preserving would be thoroughly sweet, nor would it keep, I fancy, keep equally well. If you use a brass pan, be sure it is perfectly clean and dry; the least dirt or moisture left in it after the last time of using will have poisoned your end result, as doubtless you know, is deadly poison."

"If you ever have to preserve, do take my advice and use an earthenware pan—then your fruit will always keep better."

"But Joanna mentions the brass one because she knows we have one. Let me see your pan."

"It is here; I have it on the shelf of the table, which is considerably wounded, and with the aid of a carpenter the summer-house once more reared its head in beauty and strength, repaired by the original himself."

"Have a good red fire—not a blazing one. Let the preserve boil as fast as possible, but be careful not to over-stir. Stir all the time with a wooden spoon, but do not let the scum rise. When it thoroughly boils, do not stir violently, or you will mash the fruit, and the变为 preserving it. If you leave off stirring, the fruit will stick to the bottom of the pan in a mass, and thewhole will be spoilt. When it has boiled, and is cold, pour it into a little glass or earthenware plate; if it sets in five minutes or so, it is done enough. Pour it into pots, and when cold, cover it down. The best and simplest way of covering is to take a piece of paper the size of the pot, line it well over with white of egg slightly beaten, and press it over the pot. It will adhere firmly, and is quite a tight, tight fit. An improvement to strawberry jam is to put it into the bottom of the jam jar in a cool oven till the juice is thoroughly out; strain it, and pour it into the strawberries, allowing the same proportion of sugar as for the common fruit."

"Are you tired of this infaust letter, Don?" asked Margaret, laying down the third sheet. "Please say if you are. You see I ask a question, and Joanna's letters are necessarily rather long."

"No, indeed, I am not tired; pray go on if there is any more of the same nature."

"You have been reading the account of Missed Margaret. Gather them before they are quite full grown, and throw them at once, after shelling, into boiling salt and water, with a bunch of summer savoury, which is boiled with them, as mint is with peas. When done serve them in a vegetable-dish, with a piece of butter stirred amongst them, or else make a tureen of boiled butten, in which is chopped the cooked savoury."

"Arthur tells me that beans and bacon are quite an aristocratic dish now. I always consider them to be rather spicy; they may be cooked separately, as the bacon spoils the colour of the beans. Put the former into cold, and the latter into boiling water, when cooking them.

"Now I come to "lastly," which is the rather unpleasant subject of the dustpan. You must be most particular that no greases, cabbage leaves, and suchlike are thrown in, neither should there be scraps of meat or bone. In fact, try to keep it free from everything which a disagreeable colour could arise. Then it will be clearly not the most pleasant work during the summer; do not on any account let it go longer, and now and then have the inside whitewashed. You might occasionally also throw in a little chloride of lime.

"There. Do, I hope you feel a great deal the better for hearing all that?"

"Oh, Madge, I think it is well to be you to have such a sister. What would you do without her?"

"Indeed, I do not know," answered Margaret, "if you had not told her letter. But, you know, I feel daunted at finding I am away from my friends, for in the least difficulty I always go, at least, write, to Joanna. Then Mrs. Melrose, with those with Ideas, as you call her, is very kind in giving me hints; and then as to Mr. Trent—"

"And as to Mr. Trent?" interrogated Dorothy, unmasking her friend's tone.

"Well," said Margaret, stilly, "I don't know that Mr. Trent's acquaintance is of vital importance to my housekeeping."

"So, Madge, why, you are ungrateful after the cunning way in which he extricated the stopper from the decanter last night."

"Did he do so? It must have been whilst I was not looking."

"Yes, it was most firmly fixed; we all tried in vain, when Wilfrid, with charming modesty, said he thought he could get it out. I fetched, as I was about to go to the kitchen, and he should have plunged the neck of the decanter, tapping it gently on each side. Still it would not come out, so the ingenious thing asked for some water, and then, with great ease, he got the stopper, just where it enters the bottle, heelt it before the fire for a minute or two, and out it came without suchlike."

"Oh, it was rather sharp, perhaps," replied Margaret; "but it was a pity to spoil the sherry by mixing it with oil."

"I doubt, Madge, you are in a very contrary frame of mind. There was not much wine in the decanter, and it was not spoiled, because I very quickly wiped the inside of the neck with
ELEANOR'S AMBITION.

By the Author of "The White Cross and Dove of Pears." "Selina's Story," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

SAVING STEPS OF KINDNESS.

"We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live!"

HOUGH there was nothing Eleanor liked better than an evening at the Recoltery, she did not, on this particular evening, recover either her spirits or her self-satisfaction. When she reached home the sight of Catharine's happy face made her feel more woe-begone by its contrast with her mood. James Lovell was there. He stayed to supper, and took more notice of Eleanor than he usually did.

Mrs. Townley asked her if she had heard any more particulars of Anna Filton's illness.

"Only that as the important day drew nearer she worked all the harder, and scarcely allowed herself any sleep," said Eleanor in a low voice.

"Mind that you don't follow suit," said Mary Lovell. "I feel now as if I had a brotherly right to dictate to you. I hope you won't resent it."

"No. If my angles are not rubbed off by incessant friction they ought to be," she said, with a poor attempt at playfulness.

But soon an animated discussion was going on pro and con, the higher education of women.

Eleanor took no part in it. To her great disgust, Frederic, who had done much, years ago, to form her mind, and for long had given her great encouragement in her endeavours to improve, declared that women who were omnivorous readers, and who cultivated a specialty or two, without carrying it to the pitch of boredom, were charming; but these young girl graduates were the nectar of sweet, in spite of their golden hair.

Eleanor was annoyed; yet she knew how Frederic had been embittered against girl-graduates, and that the views he now expressed were due to the revolution she had wrought in his former opinions on the subject.

Everything combined to irritate her.

She was glad when James Lovell took his leave, and the hour came for retiring. Then, in the solitude of her own room, she thought that this had been no white-letter day.

Fuel had been added to the painful excitement of her mind. She had gone to the Bible-class for relief, hoping that, by some kind of magic, she might be made to feel more amiable—for there is sometimes more superstition mixed with our religious faith than we are aware of; and, even without a subject so foreign to the events of her day as the wedding at Cana, the Rector had managed to convict her of fresh faults. She had a strong impression that he had been talking of her. Then, though the conversation at home rose naturally out of poor Anna Filton's illness, it was most painfully personal, and perhaps not quite unconvincingly so.

As Eleanor went over it she grew more and more resistant, but she took up her little text-book, as was her wont, and this text met her eye,—

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast your burdens upon him, and he will support you."

Her eye softened as it dwelt on the inspired words. Was it God who was the humbling her, and making her so dissatisfied with herself? Then she must be willing to be humbled; she must not contend with him.

All she could do was to pray, "What I see not teach Thou me"; and above all, others she must commend to God's love and care her suffering friend. As she lay awake she wondered how Anna would view the circumstances of her illness if she recovered. Would she own to having made a god of intellect? Would life, when consciousness returned, seem to be given her for any deeper purpose, any loftier aim than she, for all her noble aspirations, had as yet recognised?

What was meant by finding life in losing it, losing it in finding it? Of course, for Eleanor's part, she was as much as to say she didn't know what those words meant. She knew what finding life would consist in to her, but such a finding God might call "losing," inasmuch as it included no gain or ministry of love to others.

In a maze of confused impressions she fell asleep, but there was a "kindly Light" waiting to lead her through the tumble, and none who follow that Light with any sincerity would leave them to walk, lest it may seem to them.

Now it so happened that Eleanor, with all her troubles, had gone to sleep more easily than Catharine. Catharine was awake, not to build castles in the air; not to think of James Lovell; she was thinking of Eleanor.

Naturally kind, her new happiness had made her think only of the look on her sister's face when she walked out of the conservatory, her expression when she thought she was not noticed in the Bible-class, and again when she came home. The younger sister was unhappy, and they were all teasing her; no one was saying a kind word to her.

It was true that lately they had been shut out of her confidence so that no one could tell what the workings of her mind might be, but if she were in want of a helping hand how hard it was not to reach it out to her. As Catharine felt for her, she had received that she had not always been so forbearing and so kind as she ought to have been. She had been impatient with her faults, had spoken sharply now and then, and had sometimes joined others in the snare which her absence of mind and want of savoir-faire occasioned. And Eleanor, too proud to show that she was wounded, had perhaps been secretly stung.

"She is running on wrong lines," said Catharine, "but I do wish I could help her to get off them. She used to be such a fine girl, and no one knows what she might be yet, if she would not turn her mind into a magazine of miscellaneous knowledge that she will never have any use for!"

And Catharine wondered if she could be induced to retire from the list of competitors and submit to a year's daily house-visit. If she married she married might take her place and not feel at a loss. Catharine thought that to train Eleanor to the performance of her duties would be the very best thing she could do for her and for her family. But since neither mind of man nor woman can admit of two absorptions at the same time, she wisely resolved that it should be conditional on the abandonment of her present enterprise.

She did not know how Eleanor might regard such a proposal. She might be very indignant. So she would not urge it too much upon her lest she might after all be in the right and might live to regret being turned aside from her own stead-fastness of purpose.

Both the sisters wore an air of deep thoughtfulness next morning at breakfast, but neither knew what was passing in the other's mind.

Harry had had earache all night, and his cheeks were white and his eyes swollen. His mamma told him that he ought to have laid in bed. She had been to him two or three times and had put a little cotton-wool dipped in laudanum in his ear; but though it had blemished the pain it had not taken it away. Of course there was a dispensation for a child, but what would he do with himself?

"I know what would be jolly," he said.

"The pain mightn't come on bad again if I could forget that I had any ears. I'd like to lie down on the sofa and press the back one hard against a cushion, and have such a stunning good story read to me as Eleanor once read when I was a little chap and had the toothache."

"How long was that ago? I mean, how long is it since that little boy?" asked Catharine, laughing.

"Oh, it's an age: quite two years since I had the toothache and Eleanor read, oh, such a jolly tale she wrote out in the German. Do you remember, Eleanor? It was called 'Aslango's Knight,' and it had no long words in it?"

(To be continued.)
sat down to her machine with a full, bursting heart. She knew well what happiness was, though this was something worse. Tears blinded her eyes as she tried to work, and she longed to run away and hide herself. But there she was in the crowded workroom, and there she must stay. But God that ever Kendallly she remembered Miss Johnson’s words: “You cannot feel a sorrow, but He feels it, too.” “Jesus knows,” said she to herself. “He knows how hard it is to bear.” Why? It was only the other day she was reading how they placed a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and blindedfold Him, and struck Him on the face, and spit on Him. That must have been far worse, and yet He was so gentle, and never answered back. And I suppose I mustn’t, either.”

Just at that moment the girl whom Katie had helped passed behind her chair.

“Never mind, Kitty dear,” she whispered; “I like you much better now than I did, and the girls will soon get tired of teasing you.”

Happily, the time came for leaving; they were in too much of a hurry to get home to pay any attention to Katie, and she was allowed to go her way in peace. Only Bridget said, as they stood together outside for a minute, “Well, Kitty, you are a brick! Why, if anyone had said all that to me, I should have knocked them down, bang! Well, good-bye. I told you you’d catch it hot, but I never thought you’d be as plucky as that!”

Months have passed away since then, and Katie has found Miss Johnson’s words come true. “Looking unto Jesus,” all things have become easy. In His strength she was able to bear the petty persecutions which met her day after day for many weeks. But, one by one, her companions have left her alone, and she has made not a few firm friends among the gentle kind-hearted people ready help. It was not so long ago that one called her “The Sunbeam of the Factory,” so surely and steadily has she risen in their favour. And if, now and then, an ill-natured remark is passed, she takes no notice, and lets it drop.

She still lives with her stepmother, but the home is different now. Many a peering remark and harsh word did Katie have to bear at first, but the changes in her life was too vast, to be mistaken, and gradually the ice round Mrs. Morton’s heart melted away in the sunshine of Katie’s forbearance and love. Her manner now is more gentle, times almost respectful—towards the young girl, and it was a happy Sunday to both when Katie first induced her to attend the simple service in the missionhall on the hill.

Katie herself is happy. She still has her trials—who has not?—but she has learnt to pour them forth—even the least—into the ear of Him who cares for us all. Meanwhile, more than one tear was shed that Katie Morton was born into the world. Her life may be long or short, but, let her go on as she has begun, and one day she will hear the voice of the Saviour whom she loves: “Well done, good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By DOA HOPK.

THE Difficulties of a young housekeeper, and how she overcame them.

KATIE was in charge of the kitchen of the house where she worked. The weather being warm and sultry, Margaret found herself confronted by several difficulties which during the cool weather had not presented themselves to her mind.

The principal of these was the extreme difficulty of keeping meat and fish sweet, for the larder was small, and not sufficiently ventilated by the small window; yet it did not answer to leave the door open, for once when she had done so a cat had got in and was discovered by Betsy in the very act of devouring a sole which had been put there in readiness for Mr. Colville’s tea. The next difficulty was the mother of invention, and Margaret being several times driven nearly desperate by perceiving that the meat was slightly tainted, had no choice but to invent a remedy. She sent for the carpeter, and after a consultation, they devised the expedient of taking the larder-door off the hinges, and substituting for it, just for the summer months, a sheet of perforated zinc, fitted into a wooden frame. This answered capitally in so far that it caused a thorough draught through the larder, but its very success was the cause of another difficulty, for where the air could enter so freely, flies could enter too. This further difficulty was met by keeping the meat always under one of the common wire-netting meat covers, and by placing in the middle of the floor a saucer of strong green tea, well sweetened, which attracted and destroyed the flies. The ordinary fly papers, being poisonous, could not of course be used where food was kept.

It required a little extra trouble to keep the butter cool and hard, in fact Margaret had almost given up the attempt, being convinced that soft and oily butter was an unavoidable evil in warm weather, but Tom, who considered himself an authority on all matters of natural science, explained to her one day the principle of keeping things cool by evaporation; so she thought she could not do better than test his theory on the butter. Accordingly she half filled a soup-plate with water, and put the butter-dish in it; then she spread a wet cloth over the dish, letting the ends dip into the water in the soup- plate, and soon the cloth was kept constantly moist, and she found to her delight that the butter was always cool and firm.

In spite of all her care, on one or two occasions, Margaret perceived that the meat had become slightly tainted, not very much, or she would have been afraid to use it; indeed, Betsy, whose olfactory nerves were not so at all akin to those of her master and mistress, declared it was all nonsense, and declined believing that there was anything at all wrong.

Joanna, on being applied to as usual for advice, recommended her, whenever she perceived the slightest taint, to dust the meat over with charcoal, an hour before dressing it, and said her also to keep a piece of charcoal in the larder during the very close weather. She always adopted that plan herself, said, except in the case of meat intended for boiling, when she found the heat more effectually extracted by putting a couple of pieces of charcoal, about the size of an egg, into the pan in which the meat or fish was to be boiled. Deep soup and stock sauce, she said, seemed very well when first made, and skimmed off every particle of fat, and again strained it every day into a clean vessel which was always kept uncovered.

One evening towards the end of July, Mr. Colville, who had been silent for some little time, suddenly broke in upon the conversation.

“Madge,” he said, “do you think you could tear yourself away from home next week for a little while?”

Margaret looked up questioningly.

“Well, the fact is, I mean to go away for a little holiday next week, and I thought perhaps you would like to come, too. What do you think?”

There was no need for Margaret to say what she thought; her face sufficiently expressed her delight, till, catching sight of the boys rather would face, she reflected that there were others to think of besides herself.

“But what about the boys, father?”

“Perhaps we might prevail upon them to come, too.”

The delight of the boys knew no bounds, and Mr. Colville was overwhelmed with horror as to where and how, and how. To all these inquiries he replied that he would leave it entirely to them to decide; all he wanted was a quiet holiday.

The next hour was spent in the study of maps and time-tables. A dozen plans were proposed and rejected; but at last they decided to go to the sea-side town they had visited as children, and the boys were soon deep in consultations about fishing-rods and other boy matters.

“Father,” said Margaret, when quiet was obtained by the departure of her brothers, “do you think it will be safe to leave Betsy alone in the house for a while?”

“I dare say she would be safe enough; but I would rather you did not try it. How should you like a mouth alone in a house, your own?”

“Oh, father, the very idea of it makes me shudder! But then, you know, I am an ardent coward. It is to be hoped that Betsy has the strength of mind that you have.”

“Probably she has; but I think it is too much to expect of so young a woman as Betsy; nor do I think it advisable, even if she were willing, only going for two or three days, it would be a different matter. But you had better write and consult Joanna; I shall be quite content to leave it to the decision of you two able housekeepers.”

Margaret had no need to write to her sister,
THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

however, for the next post brought tidings from the postman that mentioned a letter a few days previously that he hoped to be able to take his children for a holiday, and Joanna, foreseeing Margaret's perplexity, wrote:—

"You will probably feel some difficulty about leaving Betsy. I advise you to inquire at once for some respectable woman to come and work in the house. It is very likely the tradesmen people may know of some one whom they can recommend; but I need hardly say you cannot be too careful whom you employ—far better to go without than hire one in the house whom you do not know to be thoroughly honest and clean. You will probably find some person who goes to work during the day, and who would be glad to keep Betsy company at night for the sake of the breakfast and supper which would be provided for her; but it is better to pay her a small sum, and let her provide for herself.

As for Betsy's provisions, it is much the most satisfactory plan for all parties to give her board wages, and let her buy whatever she fancies. It is also a great saving. A week's work; it seems a good deal, but you know it is so much more expensive, in proportion, to provide for one person than for a family.

It is not unimportant to understand with Betsy before you go, about all the cleaning you expect her to do in your absence; of course you will take the opportunity to get your maids and employées to wash the carpets shaken. I advise you not to let her attempt the heavy washing alone; if you have a charwoman for the day it will be done better; but if you must do it yourself, you should give her full instructions how to wash the blankets and other woollen things, for nothing is more easily spoilt in the washing. Perhaps I had been better at this; that is about it. In short, you do not quite understand the subject yourself.

In the first place she should not accept boiling water, nor will I tell her how to boil in the copper, as I have seen careless servants do. The water should be only warm, in fact the cooler the water is the better, as long as it is just warm enough to cleanse the blankets thoroughly. First of all, give each article a good shaking, to rid it of any dust and sandy feathers that may have caught on it. This is the best way to put the cold water for a little, then well washed in a lather made of soft soap. They will remove stains after an hour. Then put the cotton cloth or a cotton flannel rather hotter than the first, but still not near boiling. The best way to make this father is to use some of the best yellow soap, boiled in a jelly. Do not wring the blankets after washing. It destroys the soft pile, and makes them go into hard patches; but let them drain for a little while, and then hang them out in the sun, well shaking them dry, as they get a fresh smell then. This is the particular care with rubbers.

"You say father has taken a fancy for rubbers, and he does. They are said to be one of the most wholesome of vegetables; but I can quite sympathise with your finding them so expensive. Perhaps you do not know, or have not kept in mind, it is really as simple vegetable, tinned ones do quite as well as fresh. They are best cooked in one of those invaluable earthen pikkins with lids, which I use for all small dishes now. There is nothing like them for cleanliness and convenience.

"To serve as a vegetable they simply require boiling without any other treatment, but for sauce you should add a few spoonfuls of stock or gravy, a little chopped onion, carrot, sweet herbs, and cloves, with salt and pepper. About half an hour. Strain it through a hair sieve. Some add Tarragon vinegar, but I think the sauce quite sharp enough without it.

"If you object to drainers from the tomatoes, you can make a very pretty dish by laying a few red and yellow ones on a dish of lettuce and endive. Most people who like tomatoes at all like them thus, and I have a little supper dish, cut off the tops of some fresh ones, and scoop out the inside with a spoon. Then make a paste of finely-minced meat and the remains of the same vinegar, a few breadcrums, a very little strong gravy, and the pulp you have taken from the inside of the tomato, and seasoned it with a mace, and whatever other flavouring you may fancy, and, of course, salt and pepper. Fill the tomatoes with this mixture; put on the tops again, and bake them in the oven with a little butter. I think you will find this a very popular dish.

"I wonder if ever told you about our watercress bed? I have heard so much lately about the wonderfully health-giving properties of watercress, and even from my own experience I determined to have a good deal of it for the future; but my gardener was a little damped by discovering that some of the professional authorities were not at all sure that we should get it, and do not confine themselves to pure water. Also, I visited a very poor and very dirty family in a small back room the other evening, and found that the head of the family, who was a watercress vendor, kept all that was left of one day's stock-in-trade in the room where all the family lived, till he started on his rounds next day. But now I have found a brilliant expedient. I cannot take the credit of it myself, however, for I always thought watercress would only grow in water, till a friend of Arthur's told me he always grows his own, so I thought I would get some seed and try, and it answers splendidly. I water the plants plentifully every day, and by good fortune, I watered a little earlier in the morning I am in time to gather a dish of it for breakfast. He cooks it sometimes, but I buy it for that purpose as I cannot afford to gather sufficient from our little bed; and I think the boiling must wash out all impurities. I wash it first in salt and water to clear away excess of salt, then I steep it for half an hour. When I drain and chop it, add a little butter, pepper, and salt, and heat it again in the saucepan. Before serving, I give it the smallest possible sprinkle of vinegar, and garnish the dish with little sprigs of toasted bread.'

The same evening that she received this letter Margaret had a visit from Wilfred Trent.

"Miss Margaret," he said, "I know you are always ready to help any one in distress, so as my aunt is away from home I have come to tell you about a poor woman, the widow of one of our men, who died a few weeks ago. He was a very steady fellow, but since he died she has been ill and lost her work in consequence, and came to me to help her, for her husband's sake; but as I don't know much about women's work I am at a loss how to advise her. She was a woman of very few ideas of charity, and only wants some work.

"Why, how fortunate," cried Margaret, "she is the very woman I wanted to come and see. I'll give Betsy work when she is ready, if she does pretty well I can recommend her amongst my friends, and she is sure to get plenty of work.

And so that difficulty was settled, and Margaret was able to leave home a few days later with an easy mind.

They found the watering-place they had fixed upon even more beautiful than they expected; and Margaret and the boys went quite wild with delight, and even Mr. Colville forgot business, and cares of all kinds, and gave himself up to having a thoroughly "good time."

After they had been there a week, Margaret was one day astonished and delighted to meet Mr. Trevett.

"How delightful!" she cried. "Did you know we were here, Mrs. Trevett?"

"No, my child. My nephew said there was a place in the country, and Mr. Fane, who knows all the people, and insisted on spending his holiday in bringing me here for my health. I thought it was a splendid idea."

"How very thoughtful of him!" Margaret broke in.

"Yes; oh, yes, very," replied Mrs. Trevett; but the spoken words were not enough, and the nephew's entire self-sacrifice in the matter had been a little shaken by the meeting.

(To be continued.)
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

By Dora Hope.

The middle of August found the Colville family home again, and settling down to work, each in his own or her own direction.

For Tom, the most important epoch in life, he had now left school, and was to begin business as clerk in a commercial house in the town. Not a very exacting position, it is true, but Tom, that lover of outdoor life, from the little concerts and fêtes usual with boys of his age, had got wide to perceive that by industry and careful attention to his work he could not only confidently expect promotion and ultimate success, though the beginning was but small.

Knowing how easy it is for a youth to pick up undesirable acquaintances, and by joining in their pleasures to become careless and neglectful of home, Margaret determined that this should not be the case with Tom. If she could prevent him from hearing any thing he had to tell of the affairs of the day, and to help him in any little difficulty, and always ready to join him in any amusements or walks in the evenings, she proved such a pleasant companion and confidante that there was nothing which Tom did not tell her about. She would see him off in the morning with a cheerful word and smile from the doorstep, and make a special point of being at hand on his return in the evening. A sister’s loving attention in little matters like this, bestowed indiscriminately on all, would in many cases keep a young man straight while otherwise feeling, there was no one at home specially interested in him, he might be led astray.

Dick meanwhile was developing a somewhat roving spirit. Never too fond of study, during the past year or two he had found school life irksome, and now improved his father’s age at leave with Tom, and go to sea. This idea of going to sea, however, was considered by the authorities to be merely the passing fancy of a transitory youth not out of every ten, and was promptly quenched, though Mr. Colville consented by saying that after a year’s steady, earnest school work, he thought his son might go to join an uncle who was cocoa planting in Ceylon, and who was anxious to have one of his nephews with him. Dick was delighted with the idea, and forthwith set to work at his studies with a will during school hours, though to work overtime, as the more studious Tom had occasionally done, was too much to expect in a boy. Half-a-dozen of the sleepy old round the country in search of “fresh fields and pastures new.”

One Wednesday in September, he arrived home with a large basket full of capital looking mushrooms, which he had hitherto sought in vain in the wild.

I had to go over the hills and far away for them. Aren’t they beauties?” he cried, turning them out on to the table.

“Yes, but are they all really mushrooms?” asked Margaret.

“Oh, they are all right; see how easily they peel,” he answered.

“Ah, yes, they do; but that is not always a true test, and I should feel more easy to try them in my own way, which is to sprinkle the underside with salt. If they soon turn black, I shall know they are false; if they turn yellow, or any other colour, they are poisonous.”

Finding them all to be real mushrooms, Margaret had some cooked for tea in the nicest way she knew of. Selecting some large ones, piece from grit and insects, she removed the stalks and skins, and laid them on a dish. She then put on each sleeve a little piece of butter, sprinkled them with salt and pepper, and put them in the oven. The fire being very hot, she covered the dish with an old plate, and when the juice began to run out, and the gills fell down, the mushrooms were taken out and served at once.

A second supply of the small button mush-rooms brought in by Tom for breakfast the next morning, was stewed thus:— The peel and the ends of the stalks being removed, they were left a minute or two in a dish of salted vinegar, slighted with pepper and lemon juice; next they were laid in the stewpan with a little butter, pepper, salt, and lemon juice, covered and stewed for nearly half-an-hour, then a sprinkling of breadcrumbs and flour and slightly flavoured with nutmeg, was added, and the mushrooms stewed till perfectly tender, when they were ready for service.

The skins and stalks, it should be said, were saved for ketchup, in which Margaret was particularly successful by following a recipe, of preparation of which she had obtained from her usual advisers in these matters. To a gallon of mush-rooms, stalks, and skins, a quarter of a pound of salt was allowed; the skins were put in a pan in layers with a sprinkle of the salt between, and left for two days. At the end of this time they were well stirred up, and the whole squeezed through a cloth till all the liquor was out. To this was added half an ounce of bruised ginger, of whole pepper, and of allspice, and a morsel of garlic, chopped fine; and then the liquor was poured off, and the same process repeated, till the ketchup was in the same way as bottled fruit.

It was the first time that Margaret had braced her up to a state of unusual enthusiasm in domestic matters, but at any rate she was full of reforms in the culinary department, and was resolved to have everything cooked as well as had been done at the hotel which they had visited, and set herself to find out how things were done, and to give them the best of her researches.

“Betsy,” she said one morning, “our vegetables are not so nice as they should be. It is partly because we cannot always depend on them, for they being quite fresh, but you can revive them very much before cooking by laying them in a pan of water with a handful of salt in it.”

Well, Miss, I always put them stalks up-wards in salt and water, to get out any insects there might be in, but I haven’t noticed no particular reviving in them after it.”

“Not quite, but then you must have them in the salt and water an hour or more to freshen them up, whilst a quarter of an hour is all you allow them to wash out the insects. Then you can always use soft water for boiling green vegetables in, it preserves the colour wonderfully more than the hard; and also the vegetables in as quickly as possible.”

“I haven’t always got the soft water, though, miss; it often runs short this dry weather.”

The rains at last were over, and a period of sunny weather gave the inhabitants of the farm a healthy and vigorous start in the new season. The garden was now in full swing, and the kitchen table was constantly supplied with fruits and vegetables from its produce. The dairy was also doing well, and the milk was in demand for the supply of the village.

The weather was now becoming increasingly warmer, and the days were longer. The mornings were now bright and clear, and the nights were warm and sultry. The birds were singing their sweetest songs, and the trees were in full leaf. The flowers were blooming in profusion, and the fields were covered with a carpet of green grass.

The children were now beginning to enjoy the freedom of the open air, and the pleasure of playing in the fields. They would often be seen running about, gathering flowers and leaves, and making bunches to put in the pantry or to hang on the walls of the rooms.

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THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

"But I can always soften the hard water for you by adding a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda, as you wish," said Margaret. Betsy opened her eyes very wide at this, but made no remark. She did not altogether enjoy her mistress's reforming moods. Though she was perfectly polite about acting on whatever she was told, still she listened in a silence which betokened disapprobation.

"I have ordered some damsons for making damson cheese, which will be coming soon, and I want you to do the first part for me, Betsy, and I will finish them off in a few days. You have only to pick off the stalks, and put them in a small blueandwhite platter, and then fill the bottles from the store cupboard, without water or anything; cork them loosely, and put them in a very slow oven for four or five hours. Then you will find them in firm jelly, and you can then be side with the mouth downward till I have time to finish them."

At this moment a discordant shout outside the kitchen window announced the arrival of one of the tradesmen, who proved to be the greengrocer with the said damsons.

"Why, them's nothing but bullaces, miss," Betsy said, as she turned to do them in, "they're no damsons. Why, these things grow wild by the bushel down home, and nobody trouble to pick them." 

"Babyish," said Margaret, in a melancholy tone, "I thought they were so nice, and they are certainly the best to be had in the town. Perhaps they will do for some of those China dishes, and fill the rest of them with walnuts."

"Oh yes, miss, well enough for anything of that sort, but a real damson is as large as a small plum, and full and plump-looking—quite different from them little hard things. As they're here so early, perhaps I can finish them off for you miss, if you will please to tell me the rest of the way." 

"Darling Betsy!" said Margaret, "I had half a mind to make some damson cheese, but I was afraid of half roast the other, then it will keep several days longer, and will be just as good as ever when re-toasted. The bread-sauce for to-night is very simply made; break up some stale bread, taking off all the crust and hard pieces, till you have three-quarters of a pound of crumb, then pour in a pint of milk over it, and leave it to soak. While it is soaking get a small onion, cut it across twice, and put it into hot water for about a quarter of an hour, to steam out the strong taste and smell."

"Well, I never! Why, it will wash all the goodness out, miss."

"It has quite as much flavour as anyone likes. Very few ladies will eat onions at all, simply because the strong taste and smell are so disagreeable, while if they would only try them, they might have them in all sorts of dishes without any unpleasantness, but to finish the sauce. When the bread has soaked long enough, put it in a saucepan and bring it to the boil, and you will find that it is made all right."

"How long must I leave the onion in, miss?"

"Oh, you can leave it in all the time, and serve it up in the sauce. Many gentlemen like it, and in that way they can help themselves to it if they like them."

"Yes, miss. There's three birds, and one of them—well, they do seem as tough as an old goat, and his legs are as blue as your new bonnet; instead of nice and yellow, like the others, they are all covered with some kind of that." "I have never heard of partridge soup," said Margaret, dubiously; "but I will look in the cookery-book, and if it says anything about it we will certainly try it."

The soup proved a decided success, and the tough old partridge furnished an excellent soup, treated in the following way:—It was cut into pieces and fried with a little butter and a slice of ham cut small. When the butter was thoroughly melted, a little flour was added, and all kept well stirred till it was lightly browned. Then the breast, legs, and wings were taken out and put aside, and the other contents of the pan put into a stovewrap with a pint of stock flavoured with onions and celery, and a half-pint of water. It was then strained, and the breast and the legs and wings and other portions put back, together with a lump of sugar and a little salt and pepper. The whole was boiled up once more, and then served up, of course, all being served up with the game. And Betsy was very anxious that one of the partridge should be boiled, instead of roasting them both, for the sake of a change; but Margaret declared she would not, and that birds, even for the sake of variety, murmuring to herself, as she left the kitchen, the old cook's adage:—

"By roasting that which our forefathers boiled, And boiling what they roasted, much is spoiled."

During the first week of September, Margaret and her brother were much occupied in the arrangement of a boating excursion to be made on Margaret's birthday, which fell during that month. The spot chosen was a good way up the river, where the woods came down almost to the river bank. The day came—fortunately, glorious and very sunny; the lunch, consisting of cold joints, fruit pies, and Mrs. Trent's cake, was packed into the hampers before breakfast, so that all was ready by the time the party assembled at ten o'clock. They landed for a very early lunch on the river bank, and after a good walk, they went up-stream, following the stream, going through the woods by the hay ones, and in a long walk to look at the ruins of the old abbey by the energetic ones. The tea was fixed for them, and so it was the duty of the hostess to see that it was ready at the time; but when the guests came to the trysting place, all with excellent appetites, Margaret was not to be found. Mr. Colvile was quite anxious, and feared she must have got lost in the woods; but Dick, who seemed to be struggling, not altogether successfully, with the desire to go off into fits of laughter, assured him she was all right, and proceeded to play such ridiculous pranks during the business of getting tea ready, that one old lady lost her hat, which Dick had bet the chance of a little pleasure, whispered to her neighbour a fear that "Richard's end will not bear the strain's head," and she hoped poor dear Mr. Colvile would not have the grief of seeing one of his sons go crazy.

At last, Margaret really being kept waiting unreasonably long, Dick volunteered to go and fetch Margaret, and he appeared to know where to find her, for they soon came back. He had not Wilfred Trent in the woods, for he came too, looking at her neighbour as though he had been doing his duty, and attending to the other guests all the afternoon. Everyone was sorry when it was time to return; and as they floated gently down the stream, more than one of the party noticed how silent Margaret was. And yet her eyes glistened, and her face was flushed with a radiant happiness which made her sweet face beautiful, and left no need to inquire if the day proved successful, and the mysteriously radiant and rather excited state of our young heroine, we may be allowed to intercept and read. It ran thus:—

"MY DEAREST DO,—"

"I have a wonderful piece of news for you. I do not know how to tell you, for I can only write to you now, as I am really true myself on my birthday, yesterday, we went for a picnic, and what do you think happened? Mr. Trent asked me to be his wife. You can just imagine how surprised I was, for I never thought such an idea had entered his head. I am not half good enough for him. He ought to have married somebody grand and beautiful—you know he is so rich, but I am so insignificant—oh, dear Do, I am so happy! And father is very pleased, and says he could not wish for any happier lot for me; so we are really engaged. As to dear Mrs. Trent, she seems nearly as happy as I am, which is saying a great deal. But I am really too happy to write any more. I must go and have a long talk with Mummy, for I feel certain that she is going to be quite as good and lovely. I am not a bit fit to be his wife; it makes me feel so dreadfully ignorant and stupid when I think how clever he is.—Your loving,

MAUD."

(To be continued.)

DURHAM DEGREES FOR WOMEN.

The University of Durham has for many years past conducted examinations of girls, as well as boys, on a system very similar to that of the Cambridge local examination. But lately decided to make women eligible for the actual degree of B.A.

To obtain this degree, it is necessary for the candidate (a) to pass a matriculation examination; (b) to reside for not less than two years in a house provided by the University, attending lectures and conforming to special discipline; (c) to pass a second examination at the end of the first year, and the third and final examination after the conclusion of the required period of residence. The subjects of all the examinations will be the same for women as for men, and they may either take a pass degree, or enter for honours; or they may take a pass degree, and then take the examination for the Bachelor of Arts degree.

Matriculation examinations will be held on October 11th, and at the beginning of each term afterwards.

Plate scholarships are open to both men and women, but it is probable that the friends of higher female education, at whose request the University has decided to admit this class of students, will shortly come forward with the funds necessary to establish a suitable college endowed with adequate scholarships.
THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

By Mrs. Melrose.

Once again we find Margaret full of pleasure and excitement, at the near prospect of a visit from her sister and brother-in-law. They had now been married nearly a year, and were coming to spend the anniversary of their wedding-day at the old home.

Margaret had taught her so much, that she thought the visit might anticipate the visit without much fear. Nevertheless she was a little more particular than usual in searching in all holes and corners for any trace of dust or neglect, which she felt sure would never escape Joanna’s eyes, though it might have done her own. Duster in hand, she went from room to room, and not a table-leg or board-cornice was there which was not shining.

The weather having already begun to turn chilly and autumnal, Margaret, without waiting till the orthodoxy of the 1st of September, commenced to put away the thin blankets, and lightest cotton and linen garments, on a spare shelf at the top of the linen press, replacing them by others. Then, a little more carefully, she lighted the curtains and quilts she determined to keep in use a little longer, for she was in no mind to hurry the approach of winter, in spite of dressing the windows. But a little more carefully she also wrapped them over, mended, and washed, and put away roughly but carefully folded and covered, up in the same convenient places on the linen press, where there remain till the spring should come round again.

Margaret was interrupted in her occupation by the entrance of Betsy, with the announce-ment: “Mrs. Melrose to see you, miss, awaiting in the ‘ll.”

“Oh, where did you come from?”

“Well, miss, I know you was busy, so I never asked her in, but she is sitting on the ‘all chair, though,” replied the maid, smiling pleasantly at her mistress.

Margaret looked aghast, and began to run over in her mind all the callers who had been to the house lately, and to wonder how many of them had been there before.

“Oh, dear me, Betsy, I thought you knew that you must always ask people in, however busy I am,” said Margaret, agitatedly plucking off the scraper and leaning to her dress from contact with the blinkets. “I know you meant it kindly, but please don’t do it ever again, it is enough to offend anyone.”

There was no rejoinder from Mrs. Melrose’s face as she rose to greet Margaret, but she cut short the latter’s apologies by declaring, she knew exactly how it had been, and thought Margaret ought to congratulate herself on having so considerate a maid.

“I came to bring you some new wheat, for your flour...” she went on, with a particular air of anxiety about her (Daisy’s) welfare. Cecily, the countess, kept her old love warm in her heart, and would never let it go, no matter what changes the coming years might bring.

(The conclusion.)

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER, AND HOW SHE OVERCAME THEM.

By Miss Hove.

often times, I keep a little bag into which I put all the string, each piece folded together and tied, so that it does not get lost or entangled. In the same way I keep an old envelope for scraps of writing paper, labels, etc., which are often wanted for memorands of various kinds.

What brilliant ideas you have, Mrs. Melrose! I shall certainly try to see if perhaps you would like another one. In addition to the tool-box, which is always in the box-room ready for use, I have a small wooden box in which I keep all sorts of odds and ends, and a set of chairs and that kind of thing, and sometimes little pieces get broken off the furniture, and they are put in the box till the convenient opportunity arrives to patch it.

My husband often laughs at my little contrivances, and says I was cut out for an old maid, and ought never to have married, but in spite of his ridicule I find the house is much more orderly than it would be without these little neat ways.

How does your farmyard prosper, Mrs. Melrose?” asked Margaret.

“Oh, capitally, thank you, though it is rather reduced in numbers at present, and deserves the title of farmyard less than ever. To tell the truth, I used to think it was larger than I supposed, as we are so often at care with them, and we never put up in our milk puddings except on special occasions. I almost never heard of such a thing. Betsy would scorn to make a pudding without at least two.

“Then I advise you to make a change in that department at once, for it is really quite unnecessary. If you allow them plenty of time to cook slowly, indeed, the milk thickens and it tastes so rich you would hardly know there were no eggs in it, and I always thought that really needed, I exchanged some of the few fine goslings, one of which is being fattened up for Missinammas. You know how so patriotic and we rate his exploits that I never neglect an anniversary of that kind.”

Margaret looked so utterly mystified that Mrs. Melrose went on to explain.

“Why, surely such a learned lady as you must know that it is in commemoration of the destruction of the Spanish Armada that we always eat goose on the 1st of September.”

“I am very sorry to be so ignorant, but I really did not know it, and I do not quite see the connection now.”

“Oh, there is no particular connection between geese and Spaniards, only Queen Elizabeth happened to be dining off roast goose when the news was brought her, and she was so delighted that she commanded that a goose should always be served on that day in memory of our country’s deliverance. I cannot vouch for the truth of the story, but I have it as the origin of most of our anniversaries. By the way, Miss Coville, to start another domestic subject, since attending those lectures in the town on hygiene, I have read quite a lot of the theories propounded in them.”

“Oh! I did not hear them. I think father was afraid of my trying experiments on him, so he did not recommend my going.”

“The lecturer said a good deal about the excellence of haricot beans as an article of diet. Such a high value was placed on them, not only as a substitute, but as nourishing; even better than lentils. I have found them most excellent, and very easy of digestion. I should like to try them some time, but they do not quite agree with my taste, so I often make a stew of haricots and other vegetables, with just a little meat in...”

Mrs. Melrose talked on, not noticing to which she strongly objected, and I find it agrees with us all very well; sometimes I use them simply as a vegetable. I put them...
to seek over night. Next morning I set them on the fire in plenty of cold water, and let them simmer till quite tender, which will take about three hours. Then I drain them, and put into a stew-pan with butter, salt, and pepper, a few shreds of onion and a squeeze of lemon well, and serve at once. The liquor I save for soup.

After a little more conversation Mrs. Melrose took her departure. Margaret returned to her work much amused, and yet full of admiration for her original friend, the lady with ideas," as Dorothy called her. Shortly after Joanna and her husband arrived, and a few very happy days were spent in refection with her family and brother.

The party at dinner on the anniversary of the wedding-day was increased by the arrival of Wilfred Trent, and the young man was cordially received by his future sister and brother.

The year had wrought many changes in the family. Joanna and Arthur were, as the former declared, settled down into a sober, married couple; Tom changed from a noisy, mischievous schoolboy into a business man, as he fondly thought; whilst Algernon had grown from that tall, thin, mild boy, who was so much afraid of me when I was so dashing your leaving me alone with all the cares of a household. When I think of it, it seems as if years had passed, and that was long ago, in the sunny days of childhood 'that we used to sing about."

"Why, dear, you will feel much older when you are a year married," said Joanna, with cheerful conviction.

"Oh, but I am not going ever to be married, Joanna," cried Margaret, emphatically. "I don't care if I am engaged, but—why, how could I ever leave them and those sweet boys? and, however could they spare me? It is simply absurd to think of such a thing."

And here we must leave our little heroine for a time; and where could we better leave her than in the company of those dearest to her, and happy in the consciousness of having sisters to do her duty.

Perhaps before we next meet her she may have changed her mind.

BOTH IN THE WRONG.

CHAPTER IV.

It was a rainy day, and meant that two miles away from home A. Tremaine was lying upon the sofa, less and unceremonious; Ridgwell was in the gathering darkness, his horse’s feet had churned up a treacherous ice-concreted pool, and he had fallen heavily upon his head. He did not know what to do with violence to the ground as he fell.

They found Tremaine as he lay there, and quietly and carefully he was borne home, and the assistance of both surgeon and physician called into requisition. But for long their best skill was powerless to rescue the injured man from death, and it was clear he must die. He had sustained a severe wound on his head, and the surgeon feared serious internal injuries, while coupled with these was the exposure to these were, you shall see, the right air. There was cause for the greatest anxiety.

And so, suddenly, fear and tremble fell upon the inmates of the Towers, and for days the angel of death hovered over that stately home with its own sweet spell.

From his deadly stupor Tremaine only awoke to the delirium of pain and fever, and each day the doctor paid his visits he grew graver and graver, and had no word of hope or encouragement for the young wife, who hung upon his verdict as if her very life depended upon his word.

She watched by her husband’s side with unwavering love and care, with no thought for self, apparently unconscious of fatigue in her terrible dread and anxiety.

Poor Sophy was excluded from the sick-room, though it was hard to be permitted to share the watching.

"You could do no good, my dear child," said old Dr. Merlin, who had known her all her life. "It is no sight for you, nor would it be kind to look on what you shall hear when there is the slightest change, and God grant it may be a favourable one. Go and rest, my dear," he added, pitying, touched by the white misery of her face.

But Sophy could not rest. Instead she would sit for hours just outside the bedroom door, that she might ask news of each and all who passed, more for the comfort she would derive in the quietness of her hearth, and the hope of near her father and herself, reviewing her own coldness and called behaviour, and seeing all at last in its true light.

"Oh, papa, papa," she moaned to herself, "I will be a better daughter to you than I have been if only you will live! To please you I will even try to love her, though she was who she seemed to separate us first. And yet—no; it is too late. Don’t love me, you really loved me all the time, didn’t you, papa? And you’ll love me again, if only God will spare you to us."

And then she would bury her face in her knees, with broken prayers that seemed too deep and heartfelt for utterance.

And so the weary days of anxious suspense passed by, and the fear and gloom deepened.

One day old Dr. Merlin with difficulty prevailed upon Evelyn to go and rest for an hour in the drawing-room. He thought there might be a change that night, he told her, when she would need all her strength and endurance.

"I am not at all tired now, doctor. Please let me stay," she pleaded. "I cannot bear to leave him."

"My dear lady," he replied, with gentle authority, "there cannot be any change just now; or, if it be called at once. You have not closed your eyes for so long that, though your anxiety causes you to forget your fatigue, I fear your strength may fail you at this most need it. Let me persuade you to rest for an hour at least, and you shall be told when the smallest change comes."

Reluctantly she obeyed, and slowly left the room for the drawing-room, as she had been bidden. Dr. Merlin had spoken of a crisis coming soon, and though he had spoken very guardedly, she could tell only too well that he feared the worst results. The fever had run its course with such unabated violence that the strength of the patient was exhausted, and it was altogether possible that all medical skill, all love and care, all prayers and tears, would be impotent to stay the death angel’s word.

"But I will flee all my strength for the last good-bye," she said to herself. "Oh, I cannot bear it! It would kill me to lose him."

She was sitting in the drawing-room as she entered with her weary step and wan, white face. The girl was standing by the window looking out over the wintry waste of country through the leaves of the evergreen and with a heart full of bitter trouble. She did not turn round as Evelyn entered; she hardly was conscious of her approach. But the young wife, almost exhausted, but peace in her soul, and with a passionate yearning for sympathy in her extremity, drew nearer, and, sinking down upon a chair, held out her hands imploringly towards the saint, who had failed to do. "Oh, Sophy, help me to bear it!"

Sophy started at the words, but more at the tone in which they were uttered, and turned round round, to the young step-mother sitting there, with her hand across her face, and grief-dimmed beauty; with dark shadows under her blue eyes, caused by sleepless nights and anxious watches, and with a world of misery in her appealing tone. It seemed to Evelyn just then that she must have some help, or the strain would be too great for her.

The piteous appeal of her tones, and the sight of the young wife’s anguish, roused all that was best and noblest in the girl’s heart. In a moment she had forgotten all the sordid thoughts of her own family, had cheerfully wiped away the tears, and put out the jealousies and trifling annoyances; and she remembered only how the wife was breaking her heart for the sake of one who was the dearest in earth to her daughter’s heart, and who even now might be slipping away from them. She only remembered now dear he was to both of them, and in the unity of their common sorrow she overcame her private sorrows, and in this hour of bitter sorrow all the barriers had fallen down between them, and this storm of trouble had done what the calm sunshine of prosperity had failed to do.

"Don’t give up all hope," Sophy whispered at last. "I cannot think God means to take him from us, and he so dear to both of us."

And then she persisted Evelyn to lie down upon the sofa, and sat by her side until she fell into an easy slumber, when she stole away silently, returning almost immediately to be ready, when the weary eyes closing, with a refreshing cup of tea and dainty little repast to tempt her appetite.

But it was the thoughtless care and the girl’s unassuming gentleness which old Evelyn saw that the true godson was no longer kim the girl who kissed the girl and glided back to her anxious watch it seemed to her as if her mind was soothed by all her overwhelming bitterness by the thought she had gained the girl’s heart.

And Sophy stole away to her own room to pray, to watch, and, if it were possible, to sleep. And her heart was warmed, and