

# Victorian Times

Vol. II, No. 2

February 2015



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E. Nesbit's School Days • Curious House Mottoes • French Pastries  
Hasty Dishes • Recipes for February • Factory Girls and Their Stories  
Making Bead Flowers • An Anglo-Californian Ranch • Some Clever Rats*

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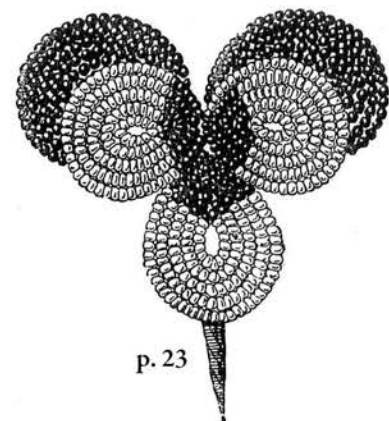
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\*The Girl's Own Paper

# Hooray for Annuals!

This month, *Victorian Times* is proud to continue a wonderful tradition amongst Victorian magazines: The bound collection. Most Victorian magazine publishers routinely issued either annual or semi-annual bound collections of the previous year's issues. *The Girl's Own Paper*, for example, issued *The Girl's Own Annual* in October of each year. (*The Girl's Own Paper* was a bit unusual in having a "year" that ran from October through September; most publications began their year in January.) Magazines like *The Strand*, *Harper's Monthly*, and *Century Magazine* issued collections every six months. Collections, whether annual or semi-annual, tended to run between 600 and 900 pages.

We've opted for the semi-annual: A bound collection that will be issued every six months. One reason for this choice is that CreateSpace simply wouldn't be able to manage an "annual"—the file size would be enormous! So would the book itself, and I confess, as I get older, I'm less enthusiastic about volumes dense enough to create their own gravitational field. Hence, we will issue bound collections in January and July, each being a fresh "volume" (i.e., July-December 2014 is Volume I, January-June 2015 will be Volume II, and so on).

However, this isn't why I'm shouting "Hooray for Annuals" (or "hurrah" if you're British). I love annuals because, without them, *Victorian Times* and *VictorianVoices.net* (formerly *Mostly-Victorian.com* - see page 41) wouldn't exist.

The practice of creating hardbound collections is perhaps the single most important factor that preserved Victorian (and older) periodicals for posterity. Magazines are, by nature, rather flimsy things. By the time one had been delivered by post and handled by a number of readers, its chances of long-term survival were slim. Paper was also more scarce and more costly, and Victorians were experts at "repurposing" and "recycling" long before those terms became trendy. Hence a magazine might line a birdcage or a dresser drawer, wrap a parcel, or even hold one's fish and chips—again making it rather less than readable.

The bound collections issued by magazine publishers, however, were as sturdy and durable as any book—and they were meant for the bookshelf. If you tour a country manor in England, chances are you'll see rows of bound periodicals in the library. Ordinary subscribers (i.e., folks who didn't live in manors) bought them for their own shelves. Libraries either bought bound collections or bound their own; library bindings tended to be less ornate but more durable, and libraries would often rebind collections if the original bindings began to wear out. And it is thanks to these bound collections that so many Victorian periodicals have survived to the present day.

Some publishers created unique, elegant covers for each edition. Many of the bindings of *The Girl's Own Paper* were embellished with lovely artwork and highlighted with touches of gilt (a tradition I've decided to emulate!). Other publishers, like *The Strand*, issued collections in a standard cover that remained the same year after year. Sometimes, a publisher would "tip in" extra engravings or color plates; *The Girl's Own Paper* usually added a black and white, monochrome or full color plate at the beginning of each month.

Publishers weren't the only ones to create annuals, however. I've already mentioned that libraries often handled their own binding—but so did subscribers. Many annuals on the market today were bound by the original subscriber. You can often tell a subscriber collection from a publisher (or library) collection by the cover; subscriber-bound annuals tend to have a generic cover, often consisting of "boards" covered with marbled paper. There may be a title on the spine, but rarely on the cover. If the cover doesn't match the type routinely issued by the publisher (like *The Strand's* distinctive blue covers with the picture of the Strand on the front), it was probably bound by a subscriber. I have one annual in which each issue was obviously folded for mailing; they even bear the address of the subscriber in pencil! Subscriber-bound editions also won't have extra prints or engravings.

Bound collections of Victorian magazines aren't that difficult to find. I've located many on Amazon; another good source is ABEbooks. Prices vary, depending on the publication; volumes of *The Strand* that include Sherlock Holmes stories, for example, can be pricey indeed!

Fortunately, our bound collections of *Victorian Times* aren't pricey at all. We've designed them to offer an affordable way to add your favorite issues to your bookshelf—in a beautiful volume that you can enjoy for years to come! Which, really, is what the tradition of "bound collections" was all about!

For more information on our collection, visit <http://www.VictorianVoices.net/VT/print/Vol01.shtml>

—Moira Allen, Editor  
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FEBRUARY.—VALENTINE DAY.



'Twas on the morn of Valentine, when birds begin to prate,  
 Dame Durdon's servant-maids and men, d'd each betako a mate.  
 There was Moll and Bot, and Doll and Toi, and Dorothy draggie-tail,  
 And Kate who was a charming girl to carry the milking-pail.

Old Song, entitled " Dame Durdon.

FEBRUARY brings with it Valentine Day. It is the month of billing and cooing when youthful lovers have a most mysterious affection for hearts and darts, wings and rings, Cupids and altars, and no end of nameless emblems surrounded with lace-edged paper, and borders of flowers in all kinds of unnatural colours, which hang temptingly in the windows, and greatly bewilder the senses of both youth and maiden, while they gaze. What a fluttering there is amongst young hearts, what a trembling bashfulness do the fairer purchasers display if the vendor of these cherished love-tokens chances to be a handsome young shopman, assuring him, should he request permission to write the address, that they have only purchased it to please a young friend, and that on no account should they themselves think of sending such nonsensical trifles. "Oh, dear, no! on no account." But St. Valentine's is a day of little harmless deceits; it seems to have been dedicated to disguised handwritings and false signatures; when letters that are only sent to the next door are posted a mile or two away, yet, strange ending of all, each fond lover hopes to be detected through this thin disguise. What a knowing and important look does the postman assume on the morning of Valentine Day, especially in the country, where almost every rustic maiden is known

to him personally, and where he is as confident as if he had opened and read the missive, that it is not the only messenger of love that has been sent, but he can give a shrewd guess as to whence and from whom the little packet has been despatched. The country barmaid seems rather more demure on such a morning; and even hard-handed and red-armed Betty looks brighter about the eyes than the tin and copper utensils which she daily scours—coming to the door over and anon—peeping down the road, and wondering whatever it is that makes John, the postman, so late. Then the ostler has a struggle with Betty in the kitchen, endeavouring to get a peep at her Valentine; while the postboy looks with eyes askance upon Jane, the barmaid, on whom he is, as they say in the country, "rather sweet." He finds more to do than usual in the stable amongst his horses, whistles a great deal to himself, and when asked by the pretty flirt what is the matter, answers "Oh, nothing at all!" wondering all the while to himself who can have had the impudence to write to Jane, and only wishing that he knew. She, perhaps, to make him a little jealous, has bought and posted the Valentine, and addressed it to herself, for such manoeuvres are occasionally practised by the maidens when they wish to bring a distant lover to the point at

Issue. Another picture which we have seen of Valentine Day would have looked well in the minute painting of a Wilkie. The fond old mother, with her spectacles on, reading the Valentine to her husband, who smiled as he listened attentively to every line, which said

The rose is red, the violet's blue,  
Carnation's sweet, and so is you.  
The ring is round and has no end,  
So is my love to Mary, my friend.  
First we eat lots, and then we draw,  
Kind fortune said it must be you.

While the pretty daughter to whom these old-fashioned lines were directed sat with her hands clasped together on her knees, looking thoughtfully in the fire and wondering to herself whether or not William really meant what he had written, and if he loved her truly, as much as he pretended to do. Then when she had retired to rest, the old people would sit down and think over what they could spare Mary towards housekeeping, when she married, and they would enumerate nearly everything they possessed, and deprive themselves of many little necessary articles, to add to the comforts of Mary, for ten to one they knew William's mind much better than she did: as the lover and the intended father-in-law, had often met on a Saturday evening at the Plough, where, over a pint and a pipe, they had discussed the whole affair even down to what they should provide for dinner on the wedding-day.

Many antiquarians have endeavoured in vain to unravel the origin and mystery of Valentine Day, but their labours have hitherto been in vain; if discovered, it would likely enough be as unmeaning as the source from whence so many of our old customs have sprung, and not worth the labour wasted. Our ancestors were pretty close observers of nature, and there is but little doubt that, as they noticed the birds, which first begin to build and pair at this period, when the weather is favourable, so natural an occurrence might lead to youths and maidens imitating the custom by selecting lovers, glad of any amusement after the dark mid-winter had passed, and that Valentine Day had no other origin. As far back as we have been enabled to trace this love-making day, we find it linked with the mating of birds, which seems inseparable from St. Valentine; and we are at a loss to imagine how the worthy bishop, whose name is associated with it, first fell into such company.

The earliest Valentines were nothing more than slips of paper, on which the names of both sexes were written: they were placed apart, the men drawing from the pile on which the women's names were endorsed, and they again taking the first they touched from the opposite heap. These names were worn for a number of days—sometimes inside the coat, waistcoat, or bodice—sometimes only on the sleeve, just as the feigned or real lover intended to express his passion; and there is no doubt but that such a game, begun in jest, ended at times in earnest, and that by this means many of our forefathers won their fair brides.

Even in our own day (and in the country the harmless superstition still exists), the first maiden we met on this auspicious morning was considered our Valentine, and as such was hailed; and no little trouble do the rustic lovers put themselves to occasionally, to meet the one on whom their choice has before been fixed. We can remember ourselves in the hey-day of youth being foolish enough to walk two miles in the snow and darkness, and waiting until the cottage door opened, to claim a cherry cheeked farmer's daughter for our Valentine. Too poor, perhaps, to purchase the printed epistle, with Cupid's altar, hearts, and doves, we presented the original, and thereby saved both paper and postage. Gay, in his "Shepherd's Week," thus describes this old superstition:—

Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind  
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find,  
I early rose, just at the break of day,  
Before the sun had chased the stars away.  
A-field I went, amid the morning dew,  
To milk my kine (for so should housewives do)  
Thou first I spied: and the first swain we see,  
In spite of fortune, shall our true-love be.

We have in our possession, framed and glazed, a Valentine, which was sent to a dear old lady we well know, more than half a century ago. It must have taken many hours to have cut out the hearts and diamonds in scissor-work, and printed the border which surrounds the unsailor-like looking gentleman, who is standing under a tree, and pointing to his ship. Both Chaucer and Lydgate make mention of Valentine Day, for the "Morning Star of Poetry" says—

Blessed be Saint Valentine,  
For on his day I chose you to be mine—  
Without repenting, my heart sweet.

—proof that five hundred years ago it was celebrated in England.

Towards the close of the month, if the weather is fine, the gardeners begin to bestir themselves. You see the little children out beside the cottages, with their tiny spades, assisting to clear away the withered boughs, and delighted at the fire that is kindled to burn up the rubbish, into which they thrust almost everything they can lay hold of that will burn. Days are longer, and they remain out to the very last minute, it is light, to play in the village street. Such a picture have we now before us. The scene is a rough-hewn wall dividing a church-yard from the high-road: on the opposite ascent stand a row of little cottages, which overlook the low stony barrier, and command a view of the resting-places of the dead. A plot of grass, that already wears a green spring look, slopes down to the edge of the high-road; beside which a clear water-course goes tinkling into the distant valley, then empties itself into a deep sluice, which goes murmuring along through the dark flood-gates that open into a neighbouring river. The stream is crossed by a strong plank, which leads to the cottages. Some of the children are throwing stones and bits of sticks into the stream; others are watching them float away, and anxious that this boat, as they call it, should beat the other. Cold as it still is, a little boy and girl are sitting on the sloping greensward: their mother, who stands sewing at the cottage-door, has twice warned them that they will take cold unless they get up; but they pay no regard to her. Two others are sitting astride the low church-wall; a third is jerking stones into the brook. Lower down another group are running after each other. Beyond these you see the light from the blacksmith's shop falling faintly across the road. Most of the cottage doors are open, for, although only as yet February, the air is as mild as if it were April. An artist might sketch such a scene for a summer evening, were it not that the trees are still leafless; for the little green on the elders beside the brook, and the tiny buds on the gooseberry-bushes, are as yet the only heralds that proclaim the coming of Spring.

The cloudy brow  
Of winter smooth'd, up from her orient couch  
She springs, and like a maid betroth'd, puts on  
Her bridal suit, and with an ardent smile  
Comes forth to greet her lover. Graceful 'tis,  
Ay, passing sweet, to mark the cautious pace  
Of slow-returning spring, e'en from the time

When first the matted apricot unfolds  
Its tender bloom, till the full orchard glows.—HURDIS.

In our description of February last year we only made slight mention of the rooks. We will now endeavour to do more justice to the habits of these dusky gentlemen, who go marching over field and furrow as if they were alone the sole proprietors of the land. Like many other social communities, they are made up of good and bad, and, in spite of a tolerably vigilant police, are not free from the depredations of their own light-fingered gentry, who do not hesitate to carry away the whole of a neighbour's house when his back is turned; or sometimes instead of removing it, they take possession, and although generally turned out in the end, they have been seen to maintain their ground with a spirit worthy of a better cause. Sometimes a young married couple having laid a good solid foundation for their future home, return with a couple of rafters in their beaks, which, after a careful survey, they have borne over hill and valley, with weary wings, an immense distance; when, lo! instead of finding the half-finished house as they left it, the very foundation is gone, and nothing but the naked fork of the branch on which it was laid remains. Well may they bob their heads and caw to one another, and wonder what impudent thieves have been so busy during their absence. They set out on the search, and find on the next tree every stick and stake twisted into another nest, on which one of the plunderers is resting, while the other robber, a down-looking dark-faced rascal, is perched on the branch beside his companion. After exchanging a word or two of a sort on each side, the battle commences: the whole neighbourhood is alarmed; the police interfere; and being beaten the culprits are driven out—transported to some solitary tree—and not allowed during that season to return to the rookery.

Your rooks are not a proud people, who refuse to mingle with strangers, for they will frequently allow the noisy jackdaws to build beside them, and are not above dining with the starlings in winter, so long as they conduct themselves respectfully. Every one who has rambled out in spring or summer must have noticed the hundreds of small caterpillars which are often seen suspended by their own threads from the trees, especially the oak, the beautiful foliage of which they soon destroy. Here the rooks find a rich repast; and instead of waiting until the insects have spun their way to the ground, these birds alight upon the trees, and, fluttering their great black wings, send down the caterpillars in thousands, and having strewn the greensward with a plentiful banquet, the rooks then descend and eat their fill.

Although the hooded crows do not live and build together in common like the rooks, but in pairs, and generally at some distance, yet they hold what naturalists have called a Crow-Court. For two or three days may be seen assembling together on some particular hill or field; and Dr. Edmonson, in his work on the "Shetland Islands," describes them as delaying the trial for a day or two, until sufficient numbers have arrived to form the court. Whether the prisoners are driven thither by force, or come to defend themselves, are found guilty by witnesses, or what, cannot be known, though it is an undisputed fact, that the whole assembly are heard to croak as if in argument; that this lasts for some time—when the court rises like one *crow*, and begins to peck and beat the prisoners to death. Sometimes three or four of these victims are left dead on the floor of the court; and when the execution is over, the whole tribe disperse, betaking themselves in couples to their solitary trees, nor ever assembling together again in numbers until the next great crow-court is summoned.

The swallow and the martin, if the weather is very favourable, often arrive by the end of this month, and we hear the old familiar twittering under the eaves in the early morning.

"The nest of a bird," says Mr. Crouch, "is so interesting an object, so curiously and admirably contrived for an evident purpose, of materials apparently so little calculated for the formation of such a structure, and its form and position are so varied according to the aptitude for comfort of its inhabitants, combined with security from discovery and danger, that it has ever been contemplated as a surprising manifestation of skill and intelligence in the little beings engaged in its fabrication."

Some to the holly hedge  
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some:  
Some to the rude protection of the thorn  
Commit their feeble offspring.—TIMSON.





Vol. I.—No. 7.

FEBRUARY 14, 1880.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

## ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

ST. VALENTINE'S day, the 14th of February, is one of the best observed and most popular festivals in the calendar, at least with young people. It is the only festival when correspondence by letter plays the chief part, and when the language of the heart flows in streams

through the post. Valentines are said to be on the decrease, but they are not so to any appreciable extent. If there is a slight falling off, it is owing to the introduction of Christmas, New Year, and Easter cards. But any decrease from this cause is balanced by the increase in the

population and the extension of education amongst the lower classes, by whom the art of writing is more generally cultivated than formerly.

It may be roughly estimated that last year the number of valentines which passed through



A USEFUL VALENTINE.

the London offices for despatch to the provinces amounted to 1,300,000.

Nearly every officer employed in the Sorting and Letter Carriers' offices in London gives voluntary extra attendance at the valentine season, for which extra pay is allowed, the amount varying according to the rank of each officer.

When the number sent from London is so great, it may be imagined how vast the total must be throughout the country and within the metropolitan districts. In fact, the whole administration of the Post Office is put out of gear through the extraordinarily heavy work of this season.

So far back in the mists of antiquity is the origin of the various observances of St. Valentine, that a veil of legendary story covers them like a cloak. In England, however, the origin of poetical valentines can be traced to the year 1415, when Charles, Duke of Orleans, was a prisoner in the Tower of London after the battle of Agincourt, and beguiled the weary hours of his captivity in writing the poetical effusions which are still to be seen, in the original manuscript, in the British Museum. John Lydgate, in a poem in praise of Queen Catherine, written in 1440, alludes to the practice of sending valentines as being then in fashion. Two hundred years later the practice appears to have varied, at least in the counties of Hereford and Worcester, according to the diary of Mistress Joyce Jeffereys, which appears in the pages of the *Archæologia*. This lady makes careful note in her account-book of the pecuniary value of her valentine every year, between 1630 and 1640; showing that it was then the custom for the lady to give the present—her valentine being the first person of the male sex who encountered her on the 14th of February. Her entries are amusing:—

"Gave Tom Aston, for being my valentine, two shillings. Gave Mr. Dick Gravell, Cam. (*sic*) to be my valentine, one shilling. I gave Timothy Pickering, of Clifton-on-Teme, that was my valentine at Horn Castle, four pence."

No light is thrown on the reason of her valentine's decrease in value year by year, so we may imagine what we please—either that the lady grew stingy, or, perhaps, poor. Why was Tom Aston worth "two shillings," and poor Timothy Pickering, of Clifton-on-Teme, worth only fourpence? Mr. Dick Gravell had evidently lowered his value by "coming" to be the lady's valentine—for though she honours him with "Mr.," she values him at a shilling below Mr. Tom Aston, who had certainly found a warm corner in her heart.

In the reign of Charles II. the practice seems to have been a little different, if we may judge from the gossiping diary of Mr. Pepys; and the custom of sending some substantial and tangible proof of affection on the part of the gentleman to the object of his affection was in vogue. Mr. Pepys boasts, in the "Diary," that he sent his wife, when she was staying at Sir W. Battens, "half-a-dozen pair of gloves, a pair of silk stockings, and garters, for her valentines"; indeed Mrs. Pepys seems to have been rather sought after as a valentine, if we may judge from the diary; and her husband, in another place, makes entry of the fact that he has "chosen my wife for my valentine, which will cost me £5." No small sum in those days, though we do not know why "my wife" was so expensive a one. In the Paston Letters, too, are various records, during the 15th century, of valentine choosing and the giving of presents.

In "Notes and Queries" we find an entry of a written valentine of the year 1684 in rhyme, the author and the sender being one John Birchall:

"These loving lines, which I to you have sent

In secrecy, in my heart's blood are pent.  
Ye knife I slipt, as I the pen did make,  
And freely bleeds, and will do, for your sake."

And so the valentine was written in the blood of the cut finger, the faded lines still showing the ruby stain; the manner in which Mr. John Birchall turned his accident to account being eminently praiseworthy and ingenious.

Early in the next century we find a peculiar and entertaining custom obtaining ground both in the United Kingdom, and in many parts of the Continent, particularly in Maine and Lorraine. On St. Valentine's Eve the young persons of both sexes were used to assemble together, and, after writing the names of their respective friends, male and female, on little billets in equal numbers, they threw them into two receptacles, and then drew them out in pairs, lottery-wise, when the two persons whose names were drawn together were valentines to each other. It was incumbent on the gentleman to remain bound to the service of his valentine for the space of a whole year, until the next 14th of February, and marriages were very often the result of these engagements. This was in some measure a revival of the chivalrous allegiance of mediæval knighthood. Misson, a learned traveller at this period, writes that "the man stuck faster to the valentine that had fallen to him than to her to whom he had fallen!"

An interesting mention of this habit of drawing valentines by lot is to be found in the "British Apollo" of January, 1761, where a querist asks, "Supposing he has selected a valentine of the fair sex, whether he or she ought to make the present?" and, breaking into rhyme, concludes:—

"Suppose I'm her choice,  
And the better to show it,  
My ticket she wears  
That the whole town may know it."

These tickets sent to the fair one, it has been suggested, might have led to the present fashion of sending valentines by post, and possibly it is so; but it must not be forgotten that, although there was no Post Office (as we now know it), there were plenty of messengers in very ancient days in England, and written valentines were both sent and received, as we have stated, soon after the battle of Agincourt, A.D. 1415. The practice, however, seems to have fallen into disuse in favour of drawing valentines by lot, or the chance of a first meeting on Valentine's Day.

From a collection of the last century valentines we select the following, which was very tastefully cut out with scissors:—

"Some draw Valentines by Lot,  
And some draw those that they love not;  
But I draw you, whom I love best,  
And choose you from among the rest.

"The Ring is round, and hath no End,  
And this I send to you my Friend;  
And if you take it in good part,  
I shall be glad with all my heart.

"But if you do these lines refuse,  
The Paper burn, pray me excuse.  
Excuse me now for being so bold,  
I should have wrote your name in Gold.  
But Gold was scarce, as you may think,  
Which made me write your name with ink.

"THOS. GROOM—ANN JEBB."

In this valentine was a gold ring, as shown by the stitches in the paper; but Miss Jebb married a Mr. Nunnerly, 1788, and became grandmother of one of the "noble six hundred of the Balaclava charge," who, on their retiring, carried back in safety one of his wounded officers, and received the Victoria Cross. I

have quoted this effusion at length to show how very little changed, although nearly a century has passed, is the style of both the rhyme and the reason: the well-worn sentiment,

"I choose you from among the rest  
Because, my dear, I love you best,"

is very popular in the present year 1880.

I had nearly forgotten to mention that special provision was made, in the days of choosing valentines by lottery, for the chance of the 14th of February being Ash Wednesday. In case it fell on that day, the knights and ladies were to assemble in the afternoon, having given the morning to their religious duties. In Bailey's Dictionary the word Valentine is given under two headings:—1st, "Valentines in England. About this time the birds choose their mates, hence the custom of young men and maidens choosing valentines or special loving friends." 2nd, "Valentines in the Church of Rome. On this day saints are chosen as patrons." Apropos of the latter, a writer in "Notes and Queries" says that in religious communities, in Roman Catholic countries, it is quite customary on St. Valentine's Day to draw a billet for the ensuing year, which is headed by the name of some saint, followed by a list of the virtues for which he or she was famous. The person who draws the billet proposes to imitate the virtues of the saint during the coming year. The origin of this custom is of remote antiquity, and can be traced to heathen times.

The feast of the Lupercalia was held by the old Romans on the 15th of February, at least, only two days later than that of the saint. It was held in honour of the god Pan; when, instead of taking up arms in defence of the gentler sex, it was the barbarous custom of the young men to run about the street and lash them with whips; and the women suffered without protest because of some superstitious fancy as to the special good luck attending the custom on that occasion. This feast was also kept in honour of Juno; who was called from it Februaria, Februialis, and Februlla, according to Mr. Douce in his illustrations of Shakespeare. In these early times the names of young women were drawn out of a box by young men, and it is said that some Christian teachers used to substitute the names of saints for those of the women; and that they brought about the substitution of the 14th day of the month, being St. Valentine's Day, possibly from the very appropriateness of the choice, with reference to the chivalrous conduct, which led to his ultimate martyrdom, as occurring within two days of the time of the Lupercalia. The heathen rite, however, was not set aside by this attempt on the part of the Church to supersede it with one less objectionable and barbarous; although strenuous the exertions made, time after time, to suppress it. St. Francis de Sales, in the 17th century, went even further than his predecessors, for he even condemned the custom of drawing the names of living valentines, and strove to substitute those of saints, as before remarked, as patterns for the imitation of those who drew them.

There is no English dedication in the name of St. Valentine; nor, according to Mrs. Jameson—the best authority on the subject—is there any recognised type, nor style, for representing him in religious art. So far as St. Valentine's story can be gathered from history, it seems that he was put in chains by the Emperor Claudius the II., during his persecution of the Christians, for having assisted and succoured many of the martyrs. Calpurnius, the Prefect of Rome, in whose charge he was left, committed him to the care of Asterius, his chief officer. Valentine used the opportunity to preach to and convert his guard from heathenism, and Asterius was baptised, with all his household, by Callistus, who was

then Bishop of Rome. On this reaching the ears of the Emperor, Valentine was condemned to be beaten with clubs, and afterwards beheaded. He suffered on the Flaminian Way, February 14th, 270. The connection of the various customs I have mentioned with St. Valentine is considered to be purely accidental by some writers; although it seems not impossible to trace its origin to that source in the way before suggested, that St. Valentine having met his death in his endeavours to shield and help his fellow-Christians, in commemoration of his chivalrous conduct, his name may have been considered a suitable one under the circumstances; and adopted to give the sanction of Christianity to a practice of much earlier and heathen origin, which it was found impossible to uproot.

That well known Norman antiquary, Frederic Pluquet explains the word "valentin" as signifying "*petit galant*"; and it seems that, in the dialect of Normandy, both *valentin* and *galantin* are used in this sense, *galant* and *vallant* being derived from the Latin "valens." The English word "galant" combines both the meanings, distinguished the one from the other by the differing accentuation.

In Normandy Valentine's Day is still a

great festival, the peasantry having a custom of drawing lots for lovers, much resembling those I have described as existing in the middle ages; so I must leave to wiser heads than my own the task of deciding whether the word be derived from the custom or the custom from the word.

In Norwich and Norfolk, the keeping of this festival has grown into a universal system of giving presents. The principal recipients are, I believe, the children of the family; and the method is, to bring the parcel containing the presents to the door of the house for which they are intended, to give a loud rap, and then to run away, so that, when the door is opened, no one is to be seen. From recent accounts I should imagine that, in Norwich especially, the festival was more kept than anywhere else in England.

The allusions to valentines are frequent in English Classics, from Chaucer to Goldsmith. Shakespeare makes poor Ophelia sing—

"Good-morrow! 'tis St. Valentine's-day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I, a maid at your window,  
To be your valentine!"

In America St. Valentine's Day is universally observed; the sums spent on the wonderful concoctions of white paper, satin and

flowers, called a valentine, being very large. Grown people encourage the practice of sending them for the purpose of amusing the children, rather, of course, than for their own edification. In England there has been a slight revival of the custom of sending a valentine in the shape of a present, and last year in the shops such small articles as purses, portemonnaies, fans, fancy neckties, were to be seen put up in ornamental boxes, ready for transit by mail. If this good custom is revived, the more that the useful supercedes the merely ornamental the better.

That this is the opinion of our accomplished artist, M. E. E., is seen from her picture, where two girls have received the useful present of some pairs of gloves, which probably cost the sender no more than the pretty but flimsy and useless trifles which crowd the shop counters and windows. It would be a pleasant and praiseworthy custom to make St. Valentine's Day a season of good deeds, expressing the feelings by them far more eloquently than in high-flown sentiments or silly rhymes. It might be a time when charitable gifts were sent, and when the poor and the friendless might be helped, without superseding the fun and the frolic of the young.

\*wallet or purse DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.

## RECIPES FOR FEBRUARY.

**STEWED KIDNEY AND MACARONI.**—About a pound of ox kidney will be required for this dish. Cut it into slices and fry until a nice brown on both sides. When done sufficiently take out the meat and fry some sliced onion. Place the kidney and onion in a stewpan, mix a dessertspoonful of flour with the remainder of the dripping in the frying-pan, add to that salt, pepper and a pinch of dried sage, a few drops of soy or caramel, and then half a pint of warmed stock; let this boil, then pour over the kidney in the stewpan; then, keeping the stewpan in a corner of the oven or stove, let it simmer gently for at least an hour and a half. Break a quarter of a pound of macaroni into inch lengths, throw the pieces into a saucepan containing boiling salt and water, boil for ten minutes, then drain and arrange in a circle on a dish. Pour the stew into the centre and garnish with the yolk of a hard-boiled egg passed through a sieve.

**SAVOURY PUFFS.**—Mince half a pound of cold veal freed from skin and gristle, and mix with it three or four ounces of minced ham or lean cooked bacon; season well with pepper, salt, some fine dried herbs and a little freshly grated lemon rind; add to this a little cold gravy or a beaten egg to mix the whole together. Cut some squares of good puff (or very light) pastry, this may be bought from the pastrycook's if not convenient to make at home; cover one half of each square with a little mince, then fold over the other half, trim the edges, then place on a baking tin, and bake in very hot oven for twenty minutes.

**NOTTINGHAM STEAK.**—A good undercut from the sirloin, or a slice off the rump is best for this. Rub it over first with the following mixture. A spoonful of Worcester sauce, same of salad oil, ditto vinegar, a little brown sugar, some salt and pepper. Rub well on both sides, then let the steak lie in this *marinade* for an hour. Wrap it in buttered paper, and toast or bake carefully for about thirty or forty minutes. Serve with thick brown gravy, in which a few tomatoes have been cooked; flavour with horseradish. It should be carved in thick slices across the steak.

**POTATO MOULD.**—Take a small quantity of well-mashed potato, season with pepper and salt, a little butter and a spoonful of milk. Press down into a fancy mould or dish which can appear at table, mark in diamonds with a fork, sprinkle a few raspings over and several bits of butter, place the mould in the oven until the surface has become crisp and brown, then serve as it is. This will accompany the first given recipe very suitably, should potatoes be desired as well as the macaroni.

**GALANTINE OF RABBIT.**—This is a useful way of doing a rabbit for a luncheon or breakfast dish. One or two young rabbits are cut into joints after being well washed. Place in a stewjar with an onion, a stick of celery, a carrot, bunch of herbs and salt and pepper; add water enough to just cover, and then stew gently until the meat will come away from the bones. When done, remove the meat from the bones, and cut it into neat pieces one or two inches square, leaving out all skin, gristle, and bone. Reserve the meat on a dish; strain the liquor through a fine sieve that it may be quite clear, colour it a nice brown and add to it half an ounce of gelatine (previously soaked in cold water), flavour with the juice of half a lemon and a little piquant sauce, boil it slowly until quite clear, then cool it. Arrange the pieces of rabbit, alternating with strips of bacon, slices of hard-boiled egg and minced parsley, in a fluted mould. Add a little liquor by degrees as the mould is being filled. When full place a small piece of wood that will nearly fit the top over all, then put a weight upon it, setting the mould in a cold place to remain until it is solid. When turned out cut into thin slices right down, not across.

**AUSTRALIAN STEW OF MUTTON.**—Peel and slice two pounds of potatoes, two onions, four carrots, and boil them for a quarter of an hour, then pour away the water. Add enough stock to cover the vegetables, season highly, and simmer for a good hour. Then take the whole or part of a tin of Australian mutton and add it to the vegetables, let it stand and simmer until the meat is hot through. Serve with chopped capers sprinkled over.

**TURNIP PURÉE.**—Pare thinly four or five large white turnips, cut them into pieces and fry slowly in a stewpan with two ounces of butter. Do not let them brown. When tender add to them a quart of white stock or milk, let all simmer gently for three quarters of an hour. Rub through a strainer, return to the stewpan, add pepper, salt, a pinch of sugar, a grate of nutmeg, and when nearly boiling take off the fire and stir in threepennyworth of cream. Serve very hot, with strips of thin crisp toast.

**HADDOCK TOAST (for breakfast).**—Take the meat from a cooked smoked haddock, and pound it until smooth (overnight). Next morning put it in a saucepan with some pepper, a few drops of lemon-juice, a little anchovy essence, and a few spoonfuls of thick white sauce or melted butter. Stir this until very hot; have ready some small squares of toasted and buttered bread, pile the haddock lightly on these, sprinkle some chopped parsley over, and serve.

**EVERYDAY CHEESECAKES.**—Four ounces of cake or fine breadcrumbs. Two ounces of butter, a quarter of a pound of castor sugar, two eggs, the grated peel and juice of a lemon. Cream the butter and sugar, add the eggs, one at a time; when well mixed, stir in the crumbs, lemon peel, and juice by degrees. Line some patty-pans with puff paste, and half fill with the mixture, then bake to a light brown. A light flakey paste will do equally well for everyday purposes, and is more quickly ready.

**BEEF-SKIRTING PUDDING.**—One pound and a half of beef-skirting, and half a pound of beef steak are needed, and make a much nicer pudding than beef steak alone. Cut the meat into two-inch squares, dip each piece into seasoned flour. Make a light suet crust, roll out to a third of an inch thickness. Line a greased basin with crust, and fill it with the pieces of meat put in lightly, add a little more seasoning, and half fill with cold water. Cover closely with an upper crust, tie down with a buttered paper, and steam the pudding four hours. Take up when ready to serve; turn out on a hot dish.





Godley's Lady's Book, 1867

**THE OLD BACHELOR'S VALENTINE.**

## Vanishing Valentines.

By W. G. FITZGERALD.



At the present day, when ladies in bifurcated nether garments may be seen awheel in Piccadilly, or enjoying a cigarette in the smoking-room of their own club, it is no wonder that the pretty custom of sending valentines is fast falling into desuetude. In the days of Chaucer and Shakespeare, the charming, if fanciful, theory obtained that birds chose their mates on the 14th of February. Later on, shy maidens and laggard lovers took advantage of this uncertain object-lesson from Nature, and were emboldened to go through a form of betrothal on St. Valentine's Day. In the course of time, however, this ceremony was preceded by an exchange of fancy cards, on which were written declarations of love in more or less shaky doggerel. Now, as it is not given unto every man to be a poet, there was clearly a brilliant commercial career before the man who would put on the market a quantity of passable sentimental verse, accompanied by appropriate designs—in a word, valentines as we know them.

Here is one of the very earliest of these

prints, published in 1827, and remarkable for its graceful simplicity (Fig. 1). The subject of the sailor and his lass, by the way, has served the valentine designer on more occasions than we care to count; nor is this surprising, in view of the fact that Jack has at all times loyally observed St. Valentine's Day. Indeed, we are quite satisfied that in the dock districts of London and Liverpool, the guileful retailer has a special tariff for sailors, whereby the latter are not only induced to pay double prices for a valentine that suits their fancy, but are also charged a comparatively large sum for a pipe or tobacco pouch which is introduced into the purchase, and which the dealer could never otherwise dispose of.

It may be interesting to mention here that this ingenious system of business reached the Midlands; and the Birmingham manufacturers hailed it as a Heaven-sent notion for pushing the sale of shoddy jewellery. They ordered hundreds of gross of sentimental valentines in boxes, stipulating that the design should include a piece of loose blue ribbon on which might be hung watches, engagement rings, pencil cases, and charms, such as only Birmingham can produce. The finished valentines were then re-tailed at audacious prices, and found wonderful favour in the eyes of persons of a utilitarian turn of mind.

Artists of some repute soon turned their attention to valentines. Our next reproduction is from a design by Kenny Meadows, in 1832 (Fig. 2). At this time, comic valentines were unknown; people took their love affairs somewhat seriously, and paid so generously for pictorial love-letters, that manufacturers were enabled to employ first-rate artists. Simple though the design appears, this valentine of Mr. Meadows



FIG. 1.—THE FIRST PICTORIAL VALENTINE.



FIG. 2.—VALENTINE DESIGNED BY KENNY MEADOWS IN 1832.

sold at two shillings—a sum for which one can now buy a gorgeous and perfumed arrangement of silk and hand-painted satin, artificial flowers, and gold and silver lace paper.

Novelties in valentines came but slowly. No departure from a somewhat sickly sentimentality was made until the “fourteenth” came to be regarded less seriously. Then came valentines containing a certain element of mechanical contrivance—a tongue of card-board, which, when jerked, caused the figures in the picture to move. We are enabled to show here the origin of this type, which dates from about 1840 (Fig. 3). The design consists of a church, of no known architecture; and, on folding back a flap, the recipient of the valentine has a view through the wall of this remarkable edifice, in which it appears a wedding is taking place. The minister’s hand is raised in benediction, but the bridegroom seems to be a little ill at ease,

Valentines now became more elaborate and expensive. Here is a photograph of one specially made for the Hyde Park Exhibition of 1851 (Fig. 4). This valentine is still preserved in a massive frame by the manufacturers, Messrs. Goode Bros., of Clerkenwell Green. It is composed of thousands of leaves and beads, put together by hand; it took the most skilful lady designers of the day about a fortnight to make, and it cost ten pounds. At this time the above firm used a thousand pounds’ worth of artificial flowers in a week, solely for sentimental valentines. Satin was purchased in quantities of 5,000 yards at a time, and the annual bill for lace paper came to £3,400. A thousand a year was paid for

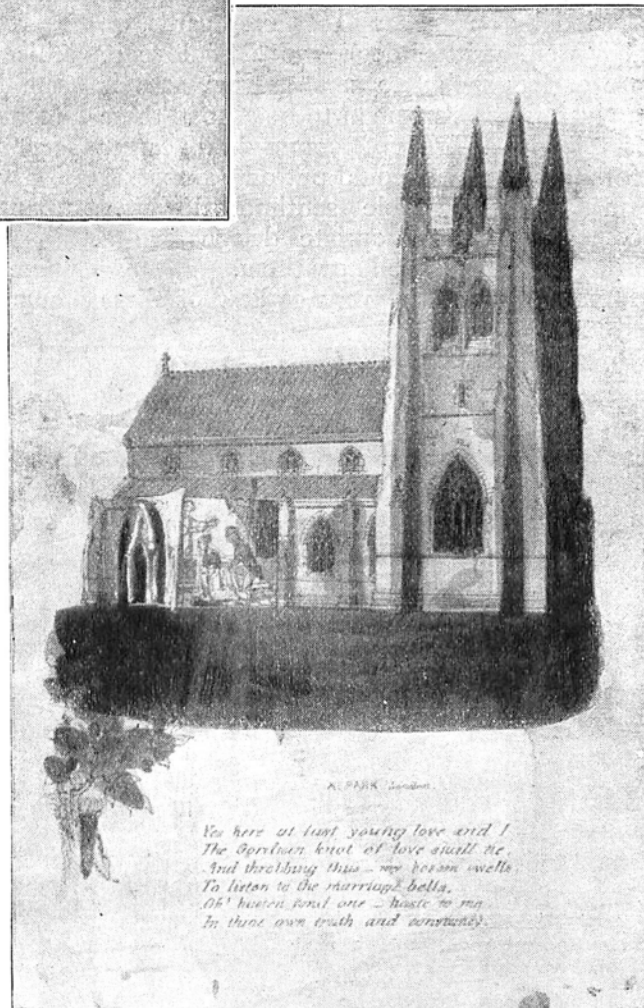


FIG. 3.—THE FIRST MECHANICAL VALENTINE (ABOUT 1840).



FIG. 4.—MADE FOR THE HYDE PARK EXHIBITION OF 1854.

boxes, and small fortunes were spent in humming birds, birds of paradise, and dry perfumes, such as kegs of lavender powder, Tonquin bean, and orris root.

Fig. 5 illustrates the fashionable valentine of this period, which can only be described as a kind of satin pillow inclosed in a box, and perfumed and ornamented. Sending valentines of this sort to friends in the Colonies caused such an export trade to spring up, that single houses in Sydney and Melbourne soon began to send in orders for a thousand pounds' worth at a time. And very expensive, too, were these Antipodean valentines, the wholesale shipping terms in many cases being 200s. per dozen. Never again, we may safely predict, will valentines fetch such preposterous sums as were realized by the class to which Fig. 6 belongs.

The Ballarat gold fever was at its height when the Australian houses sent urgent messages to the London makers for a special "line" suitable for the gold-laden, improvident miners. As might

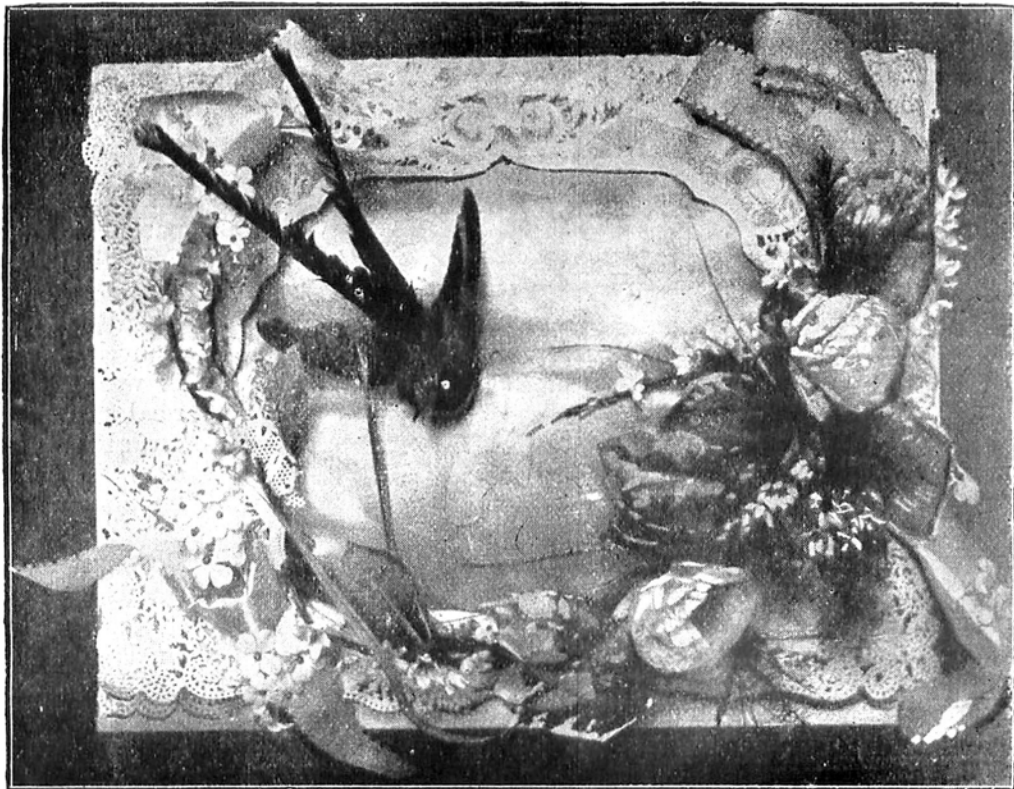


FIG. 5.—SACHET VALENTINE, 1855.

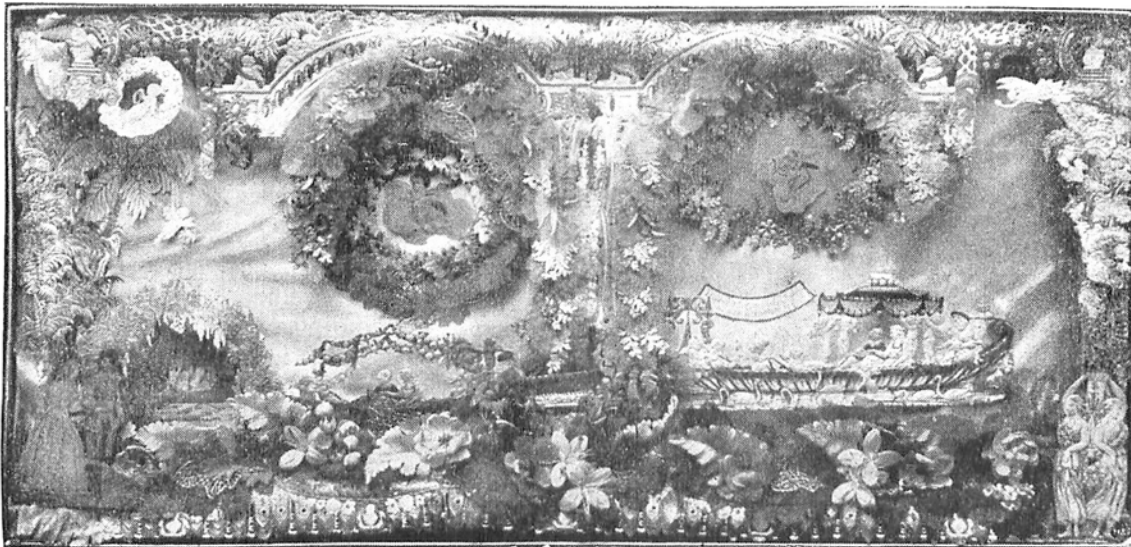


FIG. 6.—DESIGNED AND MADE FOR THE BALLARAT GOLD FIELDS.

be expected, the designers set to work with amazing celerity, and produced an extraordinary valentine more than 2ft. long and inclosed in a shallow box. It was made up of artificial flowers and leaves, paintings on satin, and imitation gems. The gold-seekers paid from £10 to £25 each for these valentines, one of which is depicted in Fig. 6. The original belongs to Mr. King, of 304, Essex Road, N., who, we have no hesitation in saying, possesses the largest and most complete "valentine museum" in the world. Another curious and elaborate valentine, made with paper springs, was in great request half a century ago.

From this time we note the genesis of the comic valentine, and, curiously enough, the policeman figures in the very first.

Fig. 7 is a reproduction from a very old proof, the caricature being directed against exaggerated officialism; and Fig. 8 is a photograph of a page of one of Mr. King's innumerable albums. The "suit" thus quaintly depicted was described

as being of "real cloth, cut by a tailor of repute." No sooner were these and similar humorous productions sprung upon an admiring public, than the designers cast about for

further novelties, the result being that sentimental valentines were for a time somewhat neglected.

Fig. 9 shows another page from one of Mr. King's albums; and it should be noted that the whimsical figures are clad in real cloth, and that the wild-looking lady in the middle has a profusion of woolly hair, pasted on. "Cupid's Official Telegraph" (Fig. 10) was next hailed with delight as a novelty in valentines. It was sent out in a reddish-yellow envelope, and was altogether so close an imitation of the real article, that the then Postmaster-General set about binding the makers with red tape, and finally con-



FIG. 7.—AN EARLY COMIC POLICEMAN.

demned the quaint little missive altogether. Not to be beaten, the designers instantly produced a Post Office Order, worded in the drollest possible manner. This was also withdrawn "by order," the authorities being

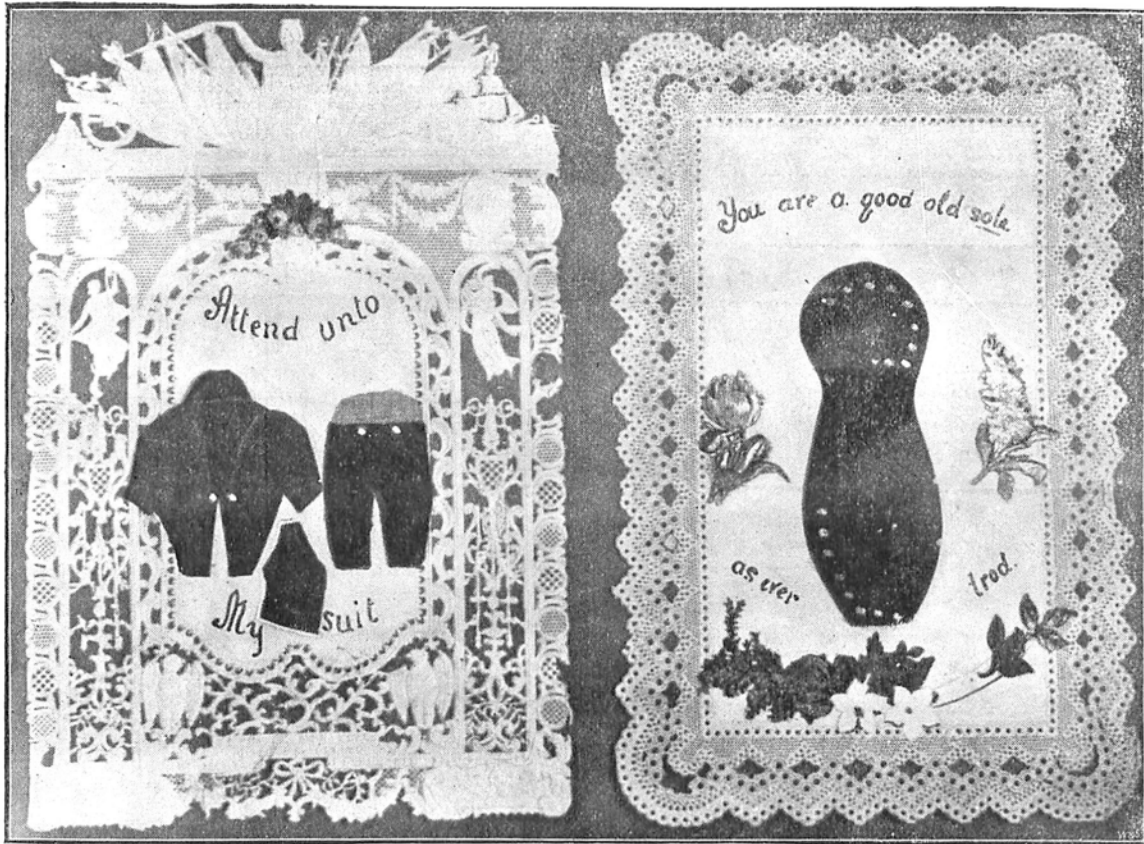


FIG. 8.—NOVELTIES OF HALF A CENTURY AGO.

apparently quite destitute of humour; at any rate, one would have thought such small game as this unworthy of serious consideration by a Government department.

There must have been a tremendous

demand, though, for this sort of valentine. Baffled by the Post Office, the ingenious designers turned their attention to the Bank of England, and issued thousands of notes on that world-renowned and long-established



FIG. 9.—ANOTHER DEPARTURE—CARICATURES IN CLOTH.



# CUPID'S OFFICIAL TELEGRAPHS.

No. of Message } 100,000.  
Dated Stamp of

If the sincerity of the sentiments conveyed in this Telegram be doubted, they will be repeated, but double the number of kisses anticipated will be required in payment. If too many are given by mistake, the sender of this will gladly repay such excess on the ruby lips of the fair recipient of this Telegram. When the cost of a reply to a Lover's Telegram has been prepaid, and the number of words in such reply are in excess of "Well I'm sure," "Be quiet do," garnished by a few blushes, the sender of such reply is bound to pay extra for such excess, by an extra number of endearments. Fractions of kisses do not count, and when Telegrams are taken in by a third party the same must not open them and kiss by proxy.

N.B.—This Form should occupy a lady's thoughts on the Festival of St. Valentine.

Charges to pay *Unlimited Smiles*



Handed in at *Cupid's Bower* Office at *7 45* Received (it is hoped) at *8 1*

Delivering Office.

From

To

*Your adoring Admirer,  
true and faithful*

*The sweetest Girl  
in the World*

*Be at your Casement one minute after sunset, and when  
I see your shadow on the window blind I shall know  
that my darling is at home You may as well warble  
"Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad"*

FIG. 10.—A TELEGRAPHIC VALENTINE.

institution, the "Bank of Love" (Fig. 11). The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, however, would have none of it, so she compelled the manufacturers to withdraw the notes from circulation. They were, therefore, "called in" in the orthodox manner.

But the craze for commercial, official, and

financial valentines was far from being dead. Swayed by the public, the makers continued to produce I O U's, jury and other summonses, promissory notes, official reports, writs, marriage certificates and licenses, School Board notices, wills, and acceptances. One of these latter is reproduced in Fig. 12,

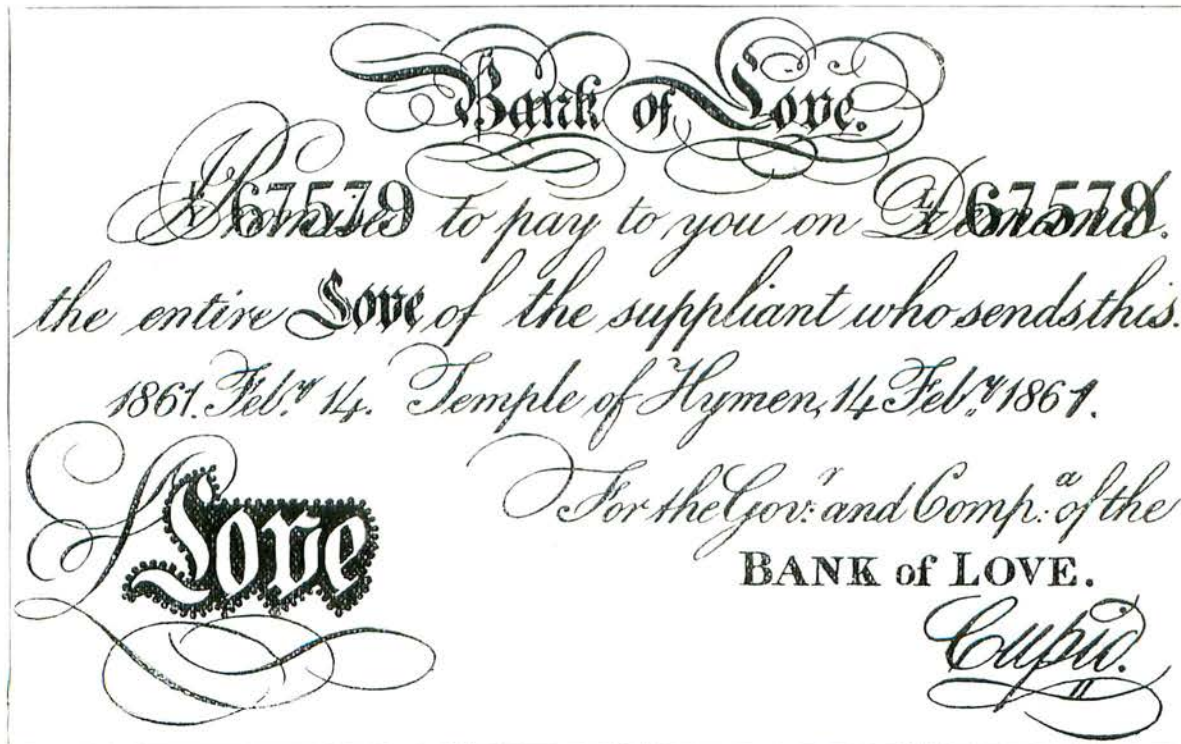


FIG. 11.—A NOTE ON THE BANK OF LOVE (REDUCED FACSIMILE).

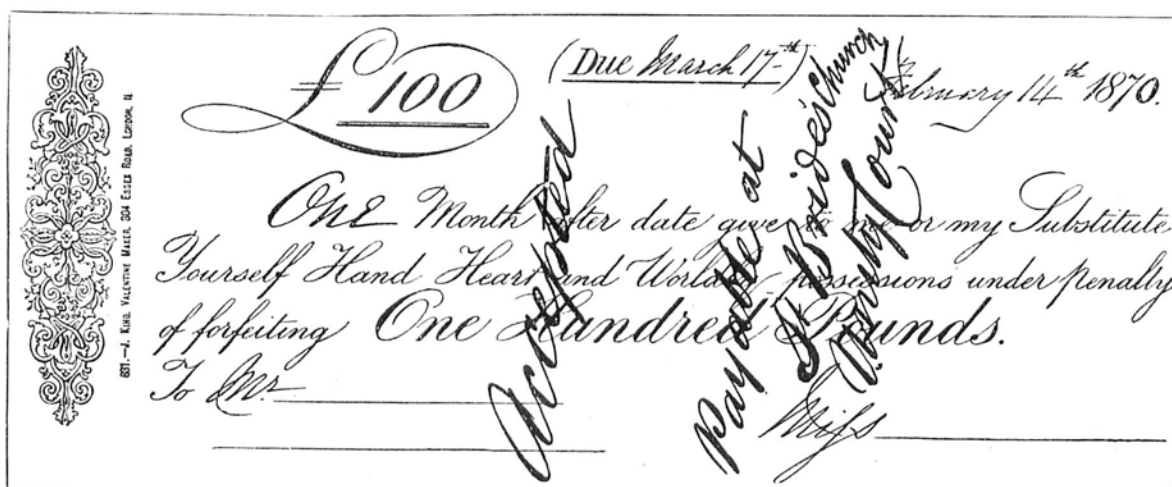


FIG. 12.—A TRAP FOR THE UNWARY.

and seems to have been specially designed with the view of expediting matters in breach of promise actions. Correctness of phraseology was observed with such scrupulous care, and paper and printing were imitated so closely in these valentines, that there can be no doubt of their being formidable weapons in the hands of practical jokers and unscrupulous persons. Will it be believed that change in hard cash was given for notes on the Bank of Love! Women were deluded by the strangely-worded marriage certificates and licenses, signed by Peter Tiethemtight, M.A., whose name is not to be found in Crockford; and busy men lost time and money over jury summonses, issued in the vague county of "Eithersex." This class of valentine gave place to the cheap comic prints, coarse and vulgar, as a rule, which we see in fancy shops prior to the now decadent "fourteenth," and which sold like wild-fire about twenty-five years ago.

Practically, there is but one firm left in the valentine trade, namely, Messrs. Goode Brothers, of Clerkenwell. The astonishingly rapid decline of the valentine within the past ten years brought ruin to many a wholesale manufacturer, to whom the trade was worth perhaps £20,000 a year, between the years 1870 and 1875—the golden age of the valentine. At this period a single maker would keep six designers and eighty girls employed on valentines all the year round. Rice paper from China was bought by the shipload; plush, in wholesale quantities of 9,000 yards at 2s. per yard; and silk fringe, from Coventry, in bales of a hundred gross of yards. Twenty years ago, too, the big valentine dealer's turnover was a thousand pounds a week during the three months of the season; and in his workrooms a quarter of a ton of the finest white gum disappeared in

the dainty trifles. Four well-paid male artists designed the "comics"—mainly trade skits and domestic incidents—and these were reproduced on 1,500 reams of paper. The machines were kept going night and day, turning out a million caricatures a week, of which some 5,000 gross were dispatched to Australia by sailing vessels in May and June. From a hundred to a hundred and thirty different comic designs were produced every year, and one house would have five smart "commercial" showing the pattern-books to retailers in all parts of the kingdom.

When one knows these things, it is extremely interesting to listen to the great wail that goes forth from whilom valentine makers. "Valentines belong to the past," say they; "therefore we have given up making them." One is then referred to Messrs. Goode Brothers for practical information; thither we went for the purpose of seeing how valentines are made. It seems that plush, satin, lace paper, fringe, and sachet powder are still bought wholesale, but in sadly reduced quantities. There is left but one solitary lady designer, and she must have ready two sets of about fifty different designs of sentimental valentines in the month of September, the retail prices to range from 1d. to 5s. One set, packed in trays, is taken away by the traveller, and according to his reports large quantities of certain designs are promptly put in hand to be made. The second set is retained at head-quarters for guidance. Nor must we omit to add that, in many cases, scope is left in the design for the introduction of such foreign matter as cheap jewellery and the superfluous stock of fancy dealers.

Our photograph (Fig. 13) shows the interior



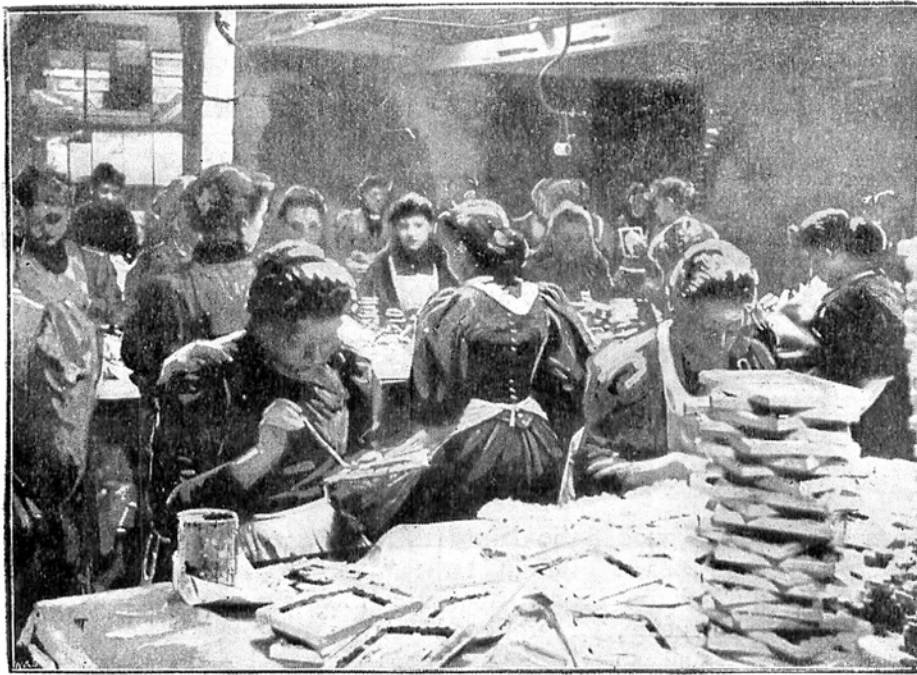


FIG. 13.—THE "SENTIMENTAL" WORKROOM.

of the "sentimental" workroom. The "hand-paintings on satin" which mark the superior article are reeled off at a perfectly amazing rate by outside lady artists, who earn about 25s. a week at the work. This is as it should be, seeing that for each separate work of art the sum of three farthings is paid. As a rule there is a church, with a pond in the foreground bordered with a few straggling rushes, and over the surface of the water a small flock of strange birds are hovering. During our investigations, by the way, we noticed but few of these "hand-paintings" without the birds.

"They are done in a moment and are *so* effective," was the curious comment of the forewoman. The sheets of satin given out to lady artists are folded into squares, and measure 15in. by 12in.

The rates of pay for comic and sentimental valentine poetry are not such as would tempt either Mr. Morris or Mr. Swinburne. Time was, indeed, when the wholesale houses were con-

strained to advertise for designers and poets; but now, we grieve to say, sixpence for eight lines of verse is considered fair remuneration. This being so, it seems rather strange that our informants should, in the season, be almost overwhelmed with poetry, sent chiefly by ladies, many of whom ask comparatively enormous sums for their rhymes, and never fail to mark even the veriest nonsense "copy-

right," in aggressively bold characters. The firm whose premises we visited now keep but two comic valentine artists. These gentlemen produce about twenty different designs every season, and 10,000 copies of each design are made.

Our illustration (Fig. 14) depicts the interior of the comic designing room. The artist in the middle is drawing on stone one of his own designs; for each finished design he receives five shillings, or half a sovereign if he reproduces it on the stone. Comic valentine artists may not be as clever as Phil May,

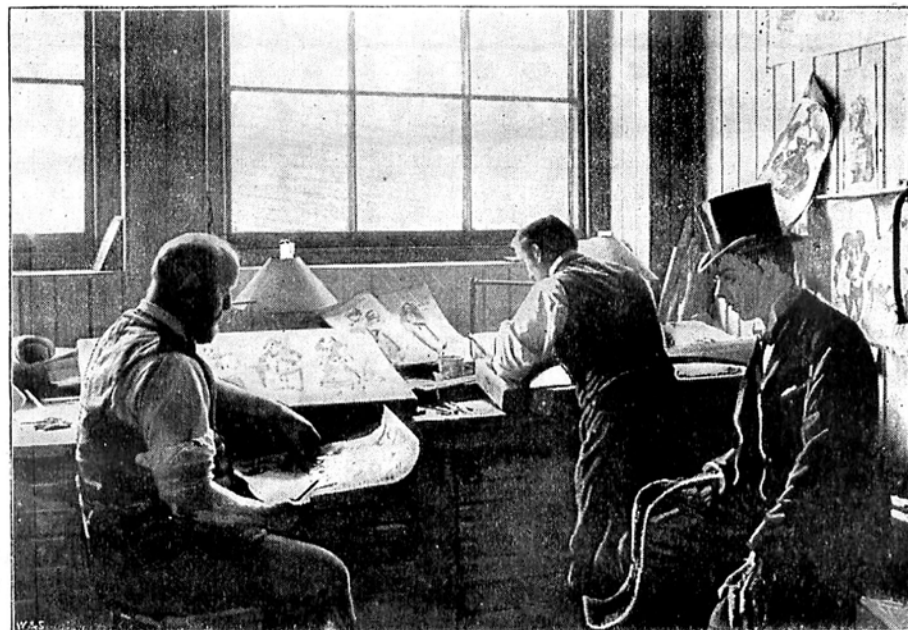


FIG. 14.—"COMIC" DESIGNING ROOM.

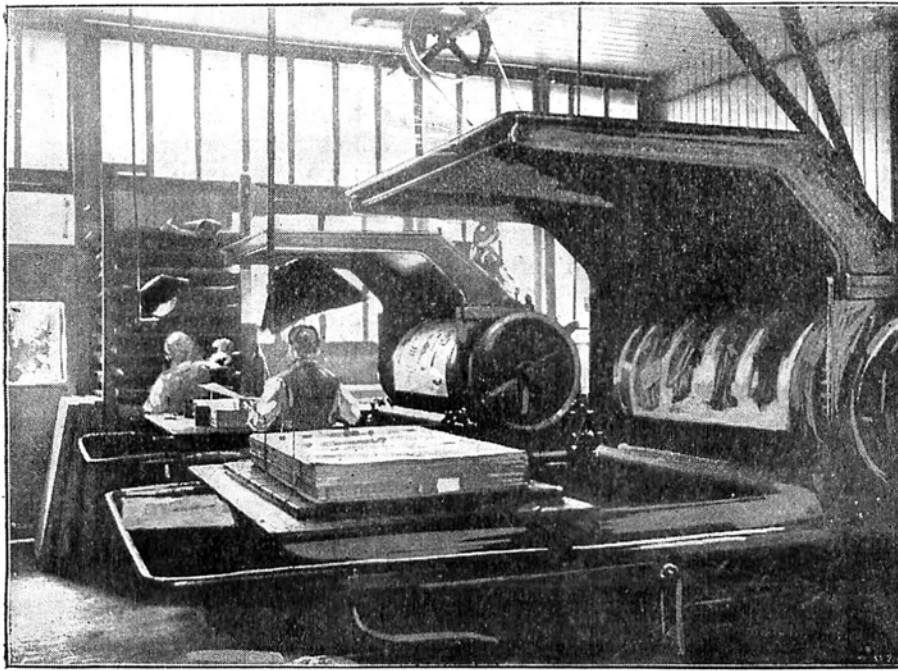


FIG. 15.—“COMIC” MACHINES AT WORK.

or as careful in detail as Sambourne, but that they are observant and up-to-date will be seen from a glance in the stationers' windows at the beginning of February. It is interesting to note that there are certain districts which are dear to the designer's heart by reason of their having a marked partiality for a certain subject. For example, a comic valentine showing a stalwart athlete, who has apparently sustained serious bodily damage on the football field, is certain to command a great sale in the North of England, and especially in Lancashire. It is absolutely necessary, however, that the football itself be seen in the picture.

Again, the favourite comic designs of Plymouth and Portsmouth are those which caricature in a genial way our gallant soldiers and sailors. The photograph we reproduce in Fig. 15 shows the “comic” machines at work. It is not a little amusing to watch the cylinders turning out these grotesque pictures with a rhythmical swing. The sheets of four are then cut

up and sent to the dispatch department, where the designs are mixed, in order that retailers may get a complete assortment. Here the perennial comic policeman, who seems to be for ever receiving surreptitious grog or rabbit pie, has for his companions jovial soldiers and sailors, domestic servants of all grades, impossible tradesmen, more or less happy parents, and even several varieties of the so-called New Woman.

One of the very few of the valentine “commercials” left in London tells a woful tale of the dying trade. Every season a fresh batch of fancy dealers shake their heads at his approach, with the remark, “I don't think I'll go in for it this year.” The valentine trade in the Metropolis is simply infinitesimal; the matter-of-fact Londoner prefers to send his lady-love a box of gloves on the “fourteenth,” and we opine that the damsel herself prefers this useful valentine even to the chastely designed “sentimental” of to-day, though the latter be resplendent with aluminium frosting which costs a guinea a pound.

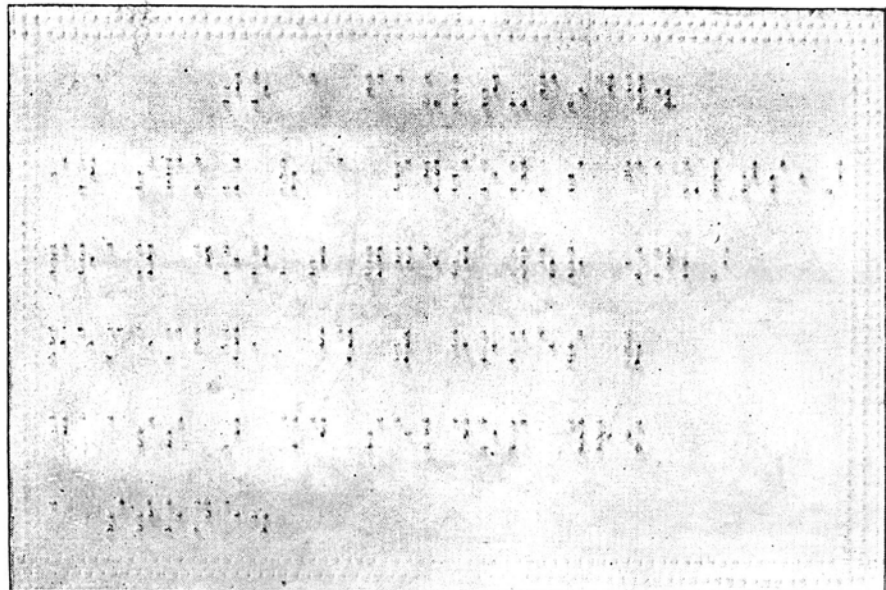


FIG. 16.—VALENTINE FOR THE BLIND.

It is a noteworthy fact that Ireland and Wales continue to take sentimental valentines in some quantities, the miners of Cardiff and the Rhondda Valley district paying as much as five shillings each for suitable designs ; it goes without saying, of course, that appropriate valentines are designed for these places. Yet, notwithstanding support of this sort, there can be no doubt that the custom observed on the 14th of February will soon be numbered among the interesting memories of the past.

Perhaps the most extraordinary valentine we are enabled to reproduce is that shown in Fig. 16, a veritable valentine for the blind. It is to Lady Falkland that the idea is due ; and this lady is one of the most charitable and industrious of the philanthropic "seeing workers" who devote themselves to the well-being of their sightless brethren. Here is a translation of the playful verse in Braille type already given, which consists of raised dots systematically arranged :—

**TO A FAULT-FINDER.**

In speaking of a person's faults  
Pray don't forget your own ;  
Remember, those with homes of glass  
Should seldom throw a stone.

Designs or figures of any kind are never put upon valentines or Christmas cards for the blind, simply because such designs and figures, being flat, would convey false impressions to these afflicted, but generally cheerful, people. Here is a photograph of the blind writer turning out valentines for the amusement of hundreds of his fellows all over the country (Fig. 17).

As a rule, a seeing person prepares the first design ; this enables the blind copyist to dispense with a seeing reader, who would otherwise be required to dictate the text. The photograph shows the copy beneath the left hand of the sightless operator. With his right hand the blind man is punching the dots on the soft, thick paper, with a style resembling a gimlet, about 2in.

long. The paper is held firmly on the board by a transverse piece of brass, which also guides the lines and is punctured to allow of the dots being made through it. We are indebted for our reproductions of both valentine and photograph to Mr. G. R. Boyle, of the British and Foreign Blind Association.



**FIG. 17.—BLIND OPERATOR MAKING VALENTINES FOR THE BLIND.**

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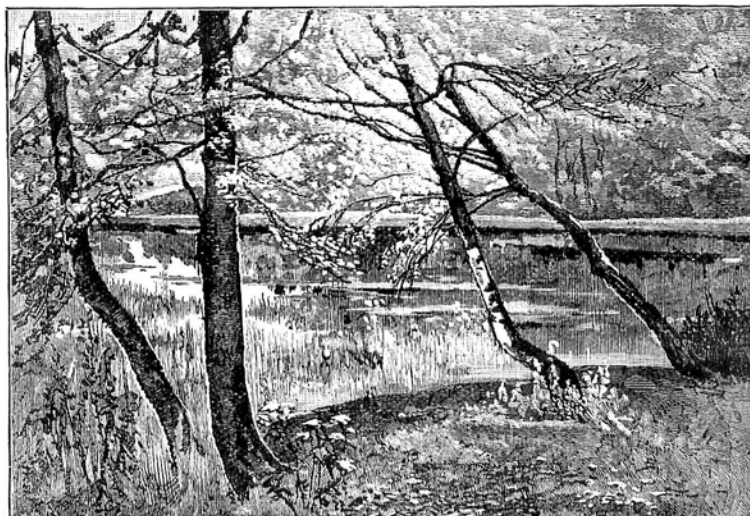
Editor's Note: I chose to run these three articles on "Valentines" and "Valentine's Day" in chronological order to provide the reader with a view on how Victorian Valentine traditions changed over the years. I suspect, if I could have found an article yet another ten years forward, it would have discussed the amazing resurgence of the Valentine - thought nearly dead in 1895! As these articles show, the Victorian "era" was far from homogeneous or stagnant, but subject to rapid changes in styles and customs!

## A WISH.

By NORA GRAY.

If I might nestle to your side and soothe you when you're sad,  
If I might know your sorrows, dear, and make your life more glad,  
If I might kiss your tears away as quickly as they fall,  
Then I should be content, because I love you more than all.

If I might give my sight that better you might see,  
If I might still my voice that yours might sweeter be,  
If I might give my youth and life that brighter yours might shine,  
Then, dear, I should be happy, for your happiness is mine.



## HOUSE MOTTOES.

By S. F. A. CAULFEILD.

### PART I.

THE history of inscriptions of all kinds, whether of mottoes, or historical records, "graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock" (Job xix. 24 and Jer. xvii. 1) carries us back in our researches even to prehistoric ages of the world. The Pelasgi left records in stone, and so did the Assyrians, of whose history we gather precious fragments from the "pen of iron," of which the visitors to the British Museum may find examples, in their study of the colossal, human-headed, and winged bulls therein preserved. In Egypt also, of which, without visiting the National Museum, you may see a wonderful example in the Obelisk, which once stood before the Temple of On, or, "House of the Sun." You may remember that Joseph's wife, Asenath, was a daughter of Potiphera, priest, or prince, of On, when Pharaoh set him (Joseph) over all the land of Egypt. Space in a brief article would fail me to speak of the inscriptions in Persia, on the still extant ruins of beautiful Palmyra, and in the far western world, where the history of the Nahnans, who settled in the gulf States of Mexico, of whom we know little more than the few inscriptions still to be deciphered on the beautiful specimens of art, displayed in the majestic ruins of their temples and palaces. Of the Greeks and Romans, the Saracens, and other nations I need make little remark; but turn to those with which we are more especially concerned. As revelations of human thought, characterising certain epochs of the world's history in divers lands and climes, such records must awaken the liveliest interest in any reflecting

mind, and often prove most highly instructive. "He, being dead, yet speaketh," and those old-world men, whether dating back a few hundreds, or as many thousands of years, have left us lessons in a multitude of instances, from which we may learn wisdom.

Some of the earlier centuries have given evidence of a more naturally religious drift and bias of mind and feeling, than (at least, in our own country) has been exemplified in recent times, when the rule is said to obtain, that "the subject of religion, like that of politics, should be prohibited in our social reunions."

I have already given two articles in this paper, on the mottoes inscribed on sundials; these find a corresponding *animus* in those on bells, posey-rings, and monumental memorials, as well as in those of which I must specially give a selection of examples, on public and private houses, and ancient castles. It does one good to see the devout feeling exhibited by those who have gone before, and so far left us a lesson of Christian faith. But some are of another class, and are full of quaint humour, and of these I shall give a few examples likewise.

At Speke Hall, near Liverpool, there is an inscription of special interest on the frieze of the panelling in the hall, which is credited with having been transferred to its present position from Holyrood Palace, after the battle of Flodden Field.

"Slepe . not . teil . ye . hathe . considered .  
thow . hathe . spent . ye . day . past . if . thow  
have . well . don . thank . God . if . othways  
repent . ye."

Over the door of the oak drawing-room there is another admonition, which runs thus—

"The streightest way to Heaven, is, God to love and serve above all thing."

In the old castle of Rockingham, Northants (the remains still existing of the original castle built by the Conqueror), the following lines may still be read on the roof of the hall—

"The house shal be preserved, and never will decay,  
Where the Almighty God is honoured and served daye by daye."

In olden times, not only were mottoes placed without the walls of the mansions and feudal castles, but were, as you will observe, given a place within them; as again may be seen in Haddon Hall, Cheshire, where, in the banquet room, the words are inscribed—

"Drede God, and honor the King."

At Chichley Hall near Newport Pagnel, Bucks, the seat of the Chester family, the following inscription will be seen on a beam in a large room—

"*Cave ne Deum offendas, cave ne proximum liedas, cave ne tua negligentia familiam deseras, 1550.*"

which, being translated, means—

"Beware lest thou offend God; beware lest thou injure thy neighbours; beware lest by thy negligence thou neglect thy family."

There is an old Norman inscription at

Farnham Castle, the residence of the Bishop of Winchester—

*"Au Dieu foy, aux amies foyer."*

"To God, faith, to friends, a hearth."

The Montacute House, Somersetshire, boasts of at least three mottoes. Over the chief entrance we find the hospitable welcome—

"Through this wide opening gate,  
None come too early, none return too late."

The second surmounts the north porch, making the visitors truly at home—

"And yours, my friends."

The third is inscribed over one of the lodges—

"Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest."

This last motto has been repeated at Pontnewidd House, Monmouthshire, painted round the cornice in the modern dining-room.

Kent supplies our collection with a specimen of house mottoes. At Lullington Castle, the seat of the Dykes (baronets), the following inscription surrounds a rose nearly two feet in diameter—

"Kentish true blue,  
Take this as a token,  
That what is said here,  
Under the Rose is spoken."

There is a curious old inscription carved on wood, of the time of either Edward VI. or Mary I. in an ancient manor house in Yorkshire, viz. :—

*"Soli deo honor et gloria,  
I. H. C. for thy wovnds smerte,  
On thy fet and hondes two, make  
me in x x    x x    x x  
x x    x x    x x    x x  
ter is Poverte wi    x x  
nes then    x x    x ise  
with soro and sadnes  
I. H. C. kepe the Fownder.  
Amen."*

It is a pity that time should have obliterated so much of it.

At Skipton Castle, also in Yorkshire, there is a single word, inscribed in French, but with what special reference remains unexplained, viz., "*Desormais*," meaning "hereafter," or "from this time."

In the same county we find an appeal to the worshippers in Almondbury church under the date "1522."

"Thou man unkind, have in thy mind,  
My bloody face;  
My wounds wide, on every side,  
For thy trespass,  
Thou sinner hard, turn hitherward,  
Behold thy Saviour free;  
Unkind thou art, from me to depart,  
When mercy I would grant thee."

And at Hardwick Hall we find—

"The conclusion of all things is, to feare God, and keepe his commandments."

There is an inscription in Greek on Conway Castle, which may be translated—

"Bear, and forbear," rather a curious motto for a feudal castle!

Over the door of a house at Towcester, Northamptonshire, we find a very sage little hint, which many would do well to remember—

"Hee that earneth wages  
By labour and care. By  
The blessing of God may  
Have something to spare.—T. B., 1618."

Somewhat in a different spirit is the inscription, dating some years later, to be seen over the entrance-door of the Plough Inn, at Alnwick, the lines being written without reference to the comparative length of the lines, nor their due punctuation—

"That which your Father  
Old hath purchased and left;  
You to possess, do you dearly  
Hold, to show his worthiness."

Taking a flight to Harleyford, Marlow, we find some thirty-one mottoes severally surmounting the doors. Of these I can only give a few examples, that over the portico at the entrance being a specially good one—

"If thou speakest evil of thy neighbour,  
come not nigh the door of this house."

"Peace on Earth, good will towards women"

(a little change from the original, somewhat prophetic of the present day!).

"For God, Queen, and Country" (resembling the national motto of the Tyrol).

A very noteworthy piece of advice, anent the rules of good breeding, appears over another door, i.e.—

"In waiting for a late guest, insult is offered to the punctual ones."

Over that of another room—

"As creatures passing from time to eternity,  
let us remember our bed may be the bridge."

Yet one more wise saying, worthy of special consideration, must conclude my selection from this rich collection—

"An obedient wife governs her husband"

(a statement worth consideration—young wives, take note of it!).

Specimens of art very often accompany the inscriptions on and inside the houses of our predecessors. This is notably the case at Moreton Hall, Cheshire, a beautiful, two-storey, gabled house, thoroughly representative of the county. It is lined and decorated all over with characteristic outside beams, with which travellers in those and many other parts of England are familiar. In this picturesque mansion we find a figure of Fortune, on traversing the long gallery to the extreme end. It is carved in the panelling, and there is a representation of a wheel, bearing the Latin words—

*"Qui modo scandit corruet statim,"*

which means, "Who in a hurry climbs, will quickly fall." Underneath this there is a second line—

"The Wheel of Fortune, whose Rule is Ignorance."

At the eastern end of this gallery there is another figure, that of Fate, holding a globe in one hand, and in the other a pair of compasses (could a pair of scissors have been intended? we think so), and the explanatory lines—

"The Spere of Destiny,  
Whose Rule is Knowledge."

Another of our admonition mottoes may be seen at an old half-ruined country-seat, called Earlshall, a few miles distant from St. Andrews. The panelled ceiling of the large hall was at one time covered with coats-of-arms, and the walls with inscriptions, which are now unfortunately unreadable, with little exception. Time, "the destroyer," and the continual changes of atmosphere, having touched them with "effacing fingers." The poor remains of one inscription reads as fol-

lows; the small crosses appear on the original, between the several words—

"Be x merrye x and x glaid x honest x and x verteous. For x that x —ficet x the x anger x of x the x invious."

"Try x and x put x trust x —eeter x gude x assurance. Bot x trust x not x or x ye x try x for x fear x of x repentance."

There is a Latin motto surmounting the entrance of Benthall Hall, Shropshire—

*"Tende bene, et alta pete,"*

to be rendered in English, "Strive on well, and seek high place," otherwise, "maintain a high ideal, and let your aspirations and efforts be towards the best and highest."

Before giving any more specimens of the type with which I have commenced, the reader must be diverted with a few of a comic character. At Wymondham, Norfolk, one of this kind is to be found engraved on an oak board, all on one line, viz.—

*"Nec mihiglis servus, nec hospes herudo."*

This motto is cut in antique Roman capital letters, and translated from the Latin would be rendered thus—

"No Dormouse as a Servant for me;  
Neither a Horse-Lecch for a Guest."

(The word "glis" is not Latin.) In reading this shrewd advertisement, and warning to all who would seek a domicile within, it seems that the old-time owner of the house had had experience of a guest such as some years ago imposed her company on a friend of my own. She was a travelling acquaintance of a few hours only, and cunningly exerted herself—as an item of her "stock-in-trade"—to make herself specially agreeable. The bait took my hospitable but most unwary friend, and when parting at the post-town near her own country-house, she said that "If the pleasant stranger were ever passing that way again, she would be pleased to see her." What was her surprise and consternation when, without one word of warning, a cab drove up to her door covered with luggage, not a mere valise with the requirements of a night's sojourn, and the once fellow-traveller entered, saying sweetly, "You see, I have taken you at your word, and am come to pay you a visit." My poor friend endeavoured to smile blandly, though her Irish hospitality was being rudely taxed, and she had at once to prepare a room, and make new housekeeping arrangements. A week passed over, but no word of parting was uttered. A fortnight dragged through its weary length, and hints began to show the impatience of the family; but "none are so blind as those who will not see." Then a third week began its creeping course, so, driven to desperation, the hostess had to inform the "leech" that they were all leaving home, and the house would be shut up during their absence. Thus at last they shook her off, and saw her no more. I was residing in the same parish when this episode took place.

Another curious and quaint inscription is to be seen on a house on Dinmore Hill, between Hereford and Leominster. It is illustrated by the figure of a man holding an axe, the words running thus—

"He that gives away before that he is dead,  
Take this hatchet and chop off his head."

Another of these humorous mottoes, one in High Street, Rochester, is worth recording. It is an old house, standing on the original site of "Watts's Charity," and an inscription states that "by his will, dated 1579," he founded it "for six poor travellers, who, not being rogues or proctors, were to receive a night's lodging, entertainment and fourpence each." Now, the dictionary tells us that our

modern proctor is an attorney in a "spiritual court," or a "college official;" so it would seem that their morals were of no great account, as they were debarred from any participation in the benefits of this institution; being placed in the same category as the "rogues."

Still of the order of the grotesque, I may give an inscription to be seen at West Stow Hall, Suffolk, where some paintings were discovered within the present century. I cannot tell the precise date, but that they are very old is evident. One represents a boy hawking, who is saying, "Thus doe I all the day." The next shows a young man courting, who says, "Thus doe I while I may." The third picture is that of a man of middle age, who says, with apparent regret, "So did I, while I might;" and the last of the series shows the fourth epoch of human life—an aged man, groping along on his weary way, and exclaiming, "Good Lord, let not this life last for ever!" a somewhat unnecessary petition.

I can scarcely regard the inscription (so suitable in a material, rather than a spiritual sense) to be seen over the door of a certain church in Sussex, as intended to be grotesque, or anything more than a curious coincidence; the edifice being of a most unsightly character; yet it borders on the ridiculous, viz.,

"How awful is this place."

Passing on to a type of a different character, we find on the end of the colonnade at Knowsley Hall, Lancashire, there is rather a long memorial of the ill-return made by Charles II. to the Derby family.

"James, Earl of Derby, Lord of Man and the Isles, having been beheaded for his adherence to him at Botton xv. Oct. *M.D.C.L.II.*, and was rewarded for his fidelity by the King's refusal to sanction a bill, passed by both Houses of Parliament, for restoring to the family the estate lost by his loyalty to him."

There is a couplet to be seen on a beam of what remains of the fine old country seat in the same county (Lancashire), called Bradley Hall, now reduced to the level of a farmhouse. It runs thus—

"Here mister doth, and mistress, both  
Agree with one accorde,  
With Godlye mindes and zealous heartes  
To serve the living Lorde."

Over that of the drawing-room—

"*Probis, non pravus,*" or, "To the good, not to the wicked," and over the cellar door—  
"*Sisi, non ebrietati,*" or, "Sufficient, not drunkenness." In another place we find the inscription—

"*Aversos compon animos et seculæ cogo.*"  
"I compose estranged hearts, and bring together (distant or separated) ages."

There are few houses so rich in mottoes as Loseley House, or Park, near Guildford, Surrey, comparing well with Harleyford, Marlow, before-named. At one time it belonged to the More family; and we find, amongst others, rebus allusions to the family name carved on the ceilings of the rooms. On that of the drawing-room there is a representation of a mulberry-tree, and round this, in four panels—

"*Morus tarde Moriens Morum cito Moriturum;*" in English, "The mulberry-tree slow in dying (long lived) warns More that he will soon die." A moor-hen is introduced into several of the compartments of the ceiling of

the principal bed-room. Over the entrance there is the motto—

"*Invidiæ claudor pateo sed semper amico,*" which may be translated, "I am closed to envy (ill-will), but am always open to a friend."

Those acquainted with Worcester will doubtless have noticed the motto over the principal entrance-door of the Guildhall, *i.e.*—

"*Floreat semper fidelis civitas,*"—"May the faithful king always flourish." On one side is a statue of Charles I. holding a church, and on the other side one of Charles II.

"Up and bee doing, and God will prosper,"

may be seen on a kind of memorial stone in Althorp Park, Northants, which had reference to the plantation made there by Sir William Spencer, ancestor to the Earls of Spencer, in 1624. A subsequent peer of the name placed another stone in the park, having improved the estate in the same way in 1798, and again a third in 1890. The first bears the words—

"*Serus factura nepotibus,*" or, "One being struck up," and the second inscription—

"*Uno avulso non deficit alter,*" or "Another is not wanting," being a quotation from Horace.

When giving some inscriptions to be seen in Yorkshire, I might have mentioned one over the schoolmaster's house at Leyburn. I cannot give the date. It is of the same character as those on our ancient sundials—

"Time is, thou hast, see that thou well employ;  
Time past, is gone, thou can'st not that employ;  
Time future, is not, and may never be;  
Time present is the only time for thee."

Amongst those of our old houses in the United Kingdom which have Latin mottoes (as well as Dutch and German), I may name one in the village of Stoke Bishop, near Bristol. The house dated from about the middle of the last century, and had not only a Latin, but an English motto, the latter constituting its name.

"Wise in time," and, over the front door, carved on the stone—

"*Ut corpus animo,  
Sic domus corpori;*"

"As the body is to the soul, so is the house to the body."

At about a mile distant from Cheltenham there stands a house called "The Dutch Farm," which is distinguished by the motto:

"*Nichts zonder arbyt,*" or, "Nothing without work." This inscription runs along the front of the house.

There is an admirable motto over the Wentworth Arms, Kirby Malory, Leicestershire, to wit—

"May he who has little to spend, spend nothing in drink;  
May he who has more than enough keep it for better uses;  
May he who goes in to rest never remain to riot,  
And he who fears God elsewhere never forget him here."

We must admire the poor Boniface, whose conscience triumphed over his pecuniary interests. But, unless inherited from his

father, we can only wonder he became a tavern proprietor.

Carlisle supplies a brief but excellent motto to our collection—

"Be just and fear not."

I have already given a contribution from Cheshire, and may add two more. The arms of Queen Elizabeth are sculptured on the hall chimney-piece of old Bramall Hall, accompanied by the inscription, "*Vive la Royne.*" Again, in the most unique and picturesque street of Chester, known as Watergate Street, there is a specially interesting house and memorial of long past times, viz., "Bishop Lloyd's house," which is covered with sculptured representations of Scriptural history; but no mottoes nor writings of any kind; but one house bears the grateful acknowledgment of the special mercy of God towards its occupants; where, amidst all the plague-smitten neighbouring houses, it was the one solitary dwelling where the gruesome "black death" entered not. Thus, over the wooden colonnade the motto appears, engraved by the proprietor—

"1652. God's Providence is mine inheritance. 1652."

At West Marlocks, Norfolk, there is an inscription over the door of the entrance hall of the vicarage, which runs thus—

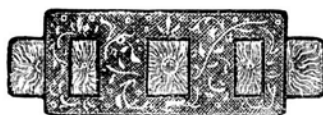
"God bless and God keep all those that pass this doorway, and those that spend their nights beneath this roof."

On the first Eddystone Lighthouse, of ill-fated memory, the too-confident architect caused decorations to be made—pictorial, interspersed with mottoes—in great variety and dispersed all over the exterior. Amongst the pictures were representations of suns and compasses, and amongst the mottoes the words, "*Post tenebras Lux,*" "After darkness light;" "Glory be to God;" "*Pax in Bello.*" The architect, Winstanley, was a retired London mercer, and so sure was he of the stability of his work, that he declared he "would like to be in the lighthouse himself during the greatest storm that ever blew under heaven," in reply to a warning that the structure was not strong enough to resist the power of the waves. The unfortunate man had his wish. Having gone into it to superintend some repairs shortly before a great storm came on, the warnings only proved too true, and together with five other persons, Winstanley was swept away in its destruction. The terrific and memorable hurricane, which was of a week's duration, commenced on the morning of November 27th, 1703; but for how many days the edifice withstood its violence, and the indwellers saw themselves face to face with a terrible death, beyond all hope of succour, I am not able to say. It is pleasant, at least, to note that the responsible man amongst the victims gave evidence of being a devout and God-fearing man, by the mottoes he inscribed on his work, and trust that he realised the blessedness of one of those he selected:

"After darkness light."

Here it may be well to divide my collection. In the second part (the last) I propose to give some examples gathered from a few cottage homes, and others in London or the near neighbourhood, and to conclude with a selection collected in Scotland and Ireland.

(To be continued.)



## MY SCHOOL-DAYS.

By E. NESBIT.

### PART II.

#### LONG DIVISION.



SPENT a year in the select boarding establishment for young ladies and gentlemen at Stamford, and I venture to think that I should have preferred a penal settlement. Miss Fairfield, whose school it was, was tall and pale and dark, and I thought her as good and beautiful as an angel. I don't know now whether she was really beautiful, but I know she was good. And her mother—dear soul—had a sympathy with small folk in disgrace, which has written her name in gold letters on my heart.

But there was another person in the house, whose name I will not put down. She came continually between me and my adored Miss Fairfield. She had a sort of influence over me which made it impossible for me ever to do anything well while she was near me. Miss Fairfield's health compelled her to leave much to Miss —, and I was, in consequence, as gloomy a cynic as any child of my age in Lincolnshire. My chief troubles were three—my hair, my hands, and my arithmetic.

My hair was never tidy—I don't know why. Perhaps it runs in the family—for my little daughter's head is just as rough as mine used to be. This got me into continual disgrace. I am sure I tried hard enough to keep it tidy—I brushed it for fruitless hours till my little head was so sore that it hurt me to put my hat on. But it never would look smooth and shiny, like Katie Martin's, nor would it curl prettily like the red locks of Cissy Thomas. It was always a rough, impossible brown mop. I got into a terrible scrape for trying to soften it by an invention of my own. As we all know, Burleigh House is by Stamford Town, and in Burleigh Park we children took our daily constitutional. We played under the big oaks there, and were bored to extinction, not because we disliked the park, but because we went there every day at the same hour.

Now Harry Martin (he wore striped stockings and was always losing his handkerchief) suffered from his hair almost as much as I did; so when I unfolded my plan to him one day in the park, he joyfully agreed to help me.

We each gathered a pocketful of acorns, and when we went to wash our hands before dinner, we cut up some of the acorns into little bits, and put them into the doll's bath with some cold water and a little scent that Cissy Thomas gave us, out of a bottle she had bought for twopence at the fair at home.

"This," I said, "will be acorn oil—scented acorn oil."

"Will it?" said Harry doubtfully.

"Yes," I replied, adding confidently, "and there is nothing better for the hair."

But we never had a chance of even seeing whether acorns and water would turn to oil—a miracle which I entirely believed in. The dinner-bell rang, and I only had time hastily to conceal the doll's bath at the back of the cupboard where Miss — kept her dresses. That was Saturday.

Next day we found that Miss —'s best dress (the blue silk with the Bismarck brown gimp) had slipped from its peg and fallen on to the doll's bath. The dress was ruined, and when Harry Martin and I owned up, as in honour bound—Miss Fairfield was away in London—we were deprived of dinner, and

had a long Psalm to learn. I don't know whether punishment affects the hair, but I thought, next morning at prayers, that Harry's tow-crop looked more like hair than ever.

My hands were more compromising to me than anyone would have believed who had ever seen their size, for, in the winter especially, they were never clean. I can see now the little willow-patterned basin of hard cold water, and smell the unpleasant little square of mottled soap with which I was expected to wash them. I don't know how the others managed, but for me the result was always the same—failure; and when I presented myself at breakfast, trying to hide my red and grubby little paws in my pinafore, Miss — used to say:

"Show your hands, Daisy—yes, as I thought. Not fit to sit down with young ladies and gentlemen. Breakfast in the schoolroom for Miss Daisy."

Then little Miss Daisy would shiveringly betake herself to the cold, bare schoolroom, where the fire had but just been kindled.

I used to sit cowering over the damp sticks with my white mug—mauve spotted it was I remember, and had a brown crack near the handle—on a chair beside me. Sometimes I used to pull a twig from the fire, harpoon my bread-and-butter with it, and hold it to the fire: the warm, pale, greasy result I called toast.

All this happened when Miss Fairfield was laid up with bronchitis. It was at that time, too, that my battle with compound long division began. Now I was not, I think, a very dull child, and always had an indignant sense that I could do sums well enough if any one would tell me what they meant. But no one did, and day after day the long division sums, hopelessly wrong, disfigured my slate, and were washed off with my tears. Day after day I was sent to bed, my dinner was knocked off, or my breakfast, or my tea. I should literally have starved, I do believe, but for dear Mrs. Fairfield. She kept my little body going with illicit cakes and plums and the like, and fed my starving little heart with surreptitious kisses and kind words. She would lie in wait for me as I passed down the hall, and in a whisper call me into the store closet. It had a mingled and delicious smell of pickles and tea and oranges and jam, and the one taper Mrs. Fairfield carried only lighted dimly the delightful mystery of its well-filled shelves. Mrs. Fairfield used to give me a great lump of cake or a broad slice of bread and jam, and lock me into the dark cupboard till it was eaten. I never taste black-currant jam now without a strong memory of the dark hole of happiness, where I used to wait—my sticky fingers held well away from my pinafore—till Mrs. Fairfield's heavy step and jingling keys came to release me. Then she would sponge my hands and face and send me away clean, replete, and with a better heart for the eternal conflict with long division.

I fancy that when Miss Fairfield came downstairs again she changed the field of my arithmetical studies; for during the spring I seem to remember a blessed respite from my troubles. It is true that Miss — was away, staying with friends.

I was very popular at school that term I remember, for I had learned to make dolls' bedsteads out of match-boxes during the holidays, and my eldest sister's Christmas present provided me with magnificent hangings for the same. Imagine a vivid green silk sash, with brilliant butterflies embroidered all over it in coloured silk and gold thread. A

long sash, too, from which one could well spare a few inches at a time for upholstery. I acquired many marbles, and much gingerbread, and totally eclipsed Cissy Thomas who had enjoyed the fleeting sunshine of popular favour on the insecure basis of paper dolls. Over my memory of this term no long division cast its hateful shade, and the scolding my dear mother gave me when she saw my sashes' fair proportions docked to a waistband and a hard knot, with two brief and irregular ends, was so gentle that I endured it with fortitude, and considered my ten weeks of popularity cheaply bought. I went back to school in high spirits with a new set of sashes and some magnificent pieces of silk and lace from my mother's lavender wardrobe.

But no one wanted dolls' beds any more; and Cissy Thomas had brought back a herbarium: the others all became botanists, and I, after a faint effort to emulate their successes, fell back on my garden.

The seeds I had set in the spring had had a rest during the Easter holidays, and were already sprouting greenly, but alas, I never saw them flower. Long division set in again. Again, day after day, I sat lonely in the schoolroom—now like a furnace—and ate my dry bread and milk and water in the depths of disgrace, with the *faux commencements* and those revolting sums staring at me from my tear-blotted slate.

Night after night I cried myself to sleep in my bed—whose coarse home-spun sheets were hotter than blankets—because I could not get the answers right. Even Miss Fairfield, I fancied, began to look coldly on me, and the other children naturally did not care to associate with one so deficient in arithmetic.

One evening as I was sitting as usual sucking the smooth, dark slate pencil, and grieving over my troubles with the heart-broken misery of a child, to whom the present grief looks eternal, I heard a carriage drive up to the door. Our schoolroom was at the back, and I was too much interested in a visitor—especially one who came at that hour and in a carriage—to be able to bear the suspense of that silent schoolroom, so I cautiously opened its door and crept on hands and knees across the passage and looked down through the bannisters. They were opening the door. It was a lady, and Mrs. Fairfield came out of the dining-room to meet her. It was a lady in a black *moire* antique dress and Paisley shawl of the then mode. It was a lady whose face I could not see, because her back was to the red sunset light; but at that moment she spoke, and the next I was clinging round the *moire* skirts with my head buried in the Paisley shawl. The world, all upside down, had suddenly righted itself. I, who had faced it alone, now looked out at it from the secure shelter of a *moire* screen—for my mother had come to see me.

I did not cry myself to sleep that night, because my head lay on her arm. But even then I could not express how wretched I had been. Only when I heard that my mother was going to the South of France with my sisters, I clung about her neck, and with such insistence implored her not to leave me—not to go without me, that I think I must have expressed my trouble without uttering it, for when, after three delicious days of drives and walks, in which I had always a loving hand to hold, my mother left Stamford, she took me—trembling with joy like a prisoner relieved—with her.

And I have never seen—or wished to see—Stamford again."

(To be continued.)

## HOW TO MAKE BEAD FLOWERS.



**B**EADS are now the great *furor* of the day, and sparkle in every kind of trimming. The bead outline or filling-up of a design is an easy matter, but the shaping of detached ornaments and flowers requires a little more ingenuity and dexterous handling. For this reason I have prepared a few specimens of different kinds, and after a little practice upon them the worker will find no difficulty in reproducing other sorts of flowers, butterflies, &c., provided, of course, that she has a good eye for form.

The materials required are few and inexpensive, comprising but a small assortment of beads and reel wire of different sizes, some sold as cheap as three yards for one penny. As to beads, everyone of you girls knows all about them; have they not been the delight of your childhood? and even since then, with a little sixpenny box of mixed beads have you not often made a baby girl as happy as a queen? The hours of peace and quietness for the house while she has been threading herself most wonderful rings, bracelets, and necklaces!

Nowadays beads offer a far richer choice both in shape and colour: there are the round, tubular, faceted, oval, pear-shaped, &c.; however, for our lesson this time the first two kinds are the only ones required. Regarding colour your field is unlimited—opaque tints of every description, transparent ones shot with a contrasting hue, phosphorescent, sunlight, and moonlight shades, besides a great variety of gold, silver, and steel. Necessarily the price varies very much, some beads being sold by the hank, and others by weight. Having some black-jetted lace rather the worse for wear I bought a twopenny ounce of what are called in the trade “repairing bugles,” for which purpose they are mixed in different sizes, and amongst them are a few white ones. The methodical young lady will find an ounce of these, safely kept in a box, very handy for replacing at once any lost bugles on her fringe, lace, or bonnet ornaments. The seed beads, always in such requisition, are sixpence per ounce, and a larger kind, either opaque or glass, fourpence per ounce. Coloured bugles are, of course, much more expensive, being about one shilling and sixpence per ounce, and naturally an extra charge is made for delicate tints, ordered, for instance, to match the hue of a dress. Gold and steel beads can be bought by the hank, ranging from sixpence to tenpence, according to size, and the common kinds of rainbow and moonlight beads from a penny three-farthings to threepence three-farthings.

With these general hints on the materials let us at once set to work. The illustrations show the work so clearly that I feel almost inclined to give you no further description. There are, in fact, no stated rules for these trifles, and each of you may execute them in the way you find most convenient, provided you twist them firmly. I will therefore advise you to try at first to do the ornaments by yourselves, without looking at the directions. Select your wire to go with the beads you intend to thread on it; bugles, of course, will require a much coarser size than

the tiny seed beads. Have the beads themselves assorted in a box with small compartments, easily contrived by gluing in place various strips of cardboard. From this collection choose the sort just wanted at the moment, and shower them on a piece of white paper spread before you. From there you can easily pick them up, but perhaps the best and quickest way is to damp the side of the left hand, between the thumb and forefinger; then dab it down on the paper, when plenty of the beads will adhere to it; the partly-closed hand thus forms a kind of palette, whence the beads can conveniently be taken up.

Here is an easy thing to experiment upon (fig. 1).

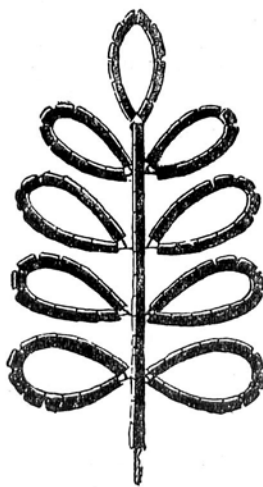


FIG. 1.—LABURNUM LEAF.

A branch of leaves, which most of you will at once compare to the laburnum, and those perhaps with a little knowledge of botany will proudly call it the pinnate leaf, from its pairs of leaflets branching from one stem. For this you require three-quarters of a yard of wire and small jet tubes. Thread twelve beads, slip them into the centre of the wire, which you double, and give the two wires one twist close up to the beads to set them in a loop; this will stand for the upright leaf at the top of the branch. Then pass, through the two ends of wire, two beads for the stalk, and, on one wire only, twelve beads for a side leaf, the same on the other wire for an opposite leaf. Now turn the work, and twist the wire of both petals at the back, close up to the stalk; then screw both wires firmly together in the centre, and continue the stem by threading four beads on the doubled wire. Repeat side petals of thirteen beads, next four for the stem, and, twice more, leaves of fourteen beads with three for the stalk. Finish off by twisting the wires, snipping the ends if need be, and passing the points upwards through the last bead.

For quick work a trade hand forms another kind of leaf, replacing the beaded stem by a covered stalk cut just the right length. On a bit of ordinary wire she threads a certain number of beads for the top leaf, makes them fast at one end, doubles them into a loop, and taking the prepared stalk in the left hand, twirls the hanging wire round it. The worker then threads the beads for the side leaf, and winds the wire once over the stalk; she repeats the same operation alternately on the right and left until near the end of the talk. Thus the leaves have been shaped by a single wire, and necessarily do not lie in regular pairs; besides, in this case, the twists are slightly visible at the back.

The forget-me-nots (fig. 2) are made separately and afterwards mounted on a stalk,

the unsightly wire being hidden by smoothly-wound cotton or silk. To execute the flower, thread five beads and draw them up into a round by passing the long end through the first two beads; secure the other one by twisting it over the ring between two of the beads. Next thread six beads, slip the wire through one on the ring, six more and pass through the following one, and so on until you have five loops or petals.

The ox-eyed daisy (fig. 3) can also be made



FIG. 2.—FORGET-ME-NOTS.

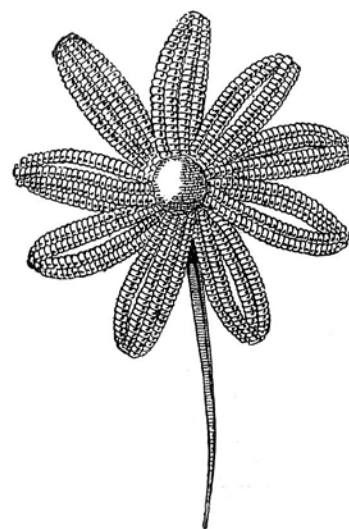


FIG. 3.—OX-EYED DAISY.

with a circle of double wire from which all the petals spring. These are shaped by bending two distinct loops, or by intermingling them at the point in this wise: thread on each wire half the number of beads necessary for the petal and join them together by slipping the left-hand wire through the last bead of the right-hand one, and *vice versa*.

Another mode is to shape each petal singly and afterwards entwine their nine stalks into one large one. In either way the junction or circle is concealed by a jet *cabochon* or stud, pierced underneath with holes to receive the thread or wire.

The marigold (fig. 4) starts with a ring of six beads, and an outer one of eight, festooned by eight scallops of six beads each. Then follow four rounds of petals overlapping each other and gradually increasing in length. For the first round, thread fifteen beads and loop them by slipping the wire through the second, the first being left free to stand for the new circle. Repeat this nine times, close the round, and at the same time connect it to one or two beads of the ring below. For the next three rounds proceed in the same way, adding more beads and more petals as judgment guides you till the last circle consists of seventeen loops of from thirty-eight to forty beads.

So much for the quick way amongst the many for producing this flower; perhaps a more compact style consists in forming five rings enclosed within each other, and, starting with the largest, thread a series of loops taken into every other bead; in returning



make another layer of petals, supporting them on the alternate beads previously

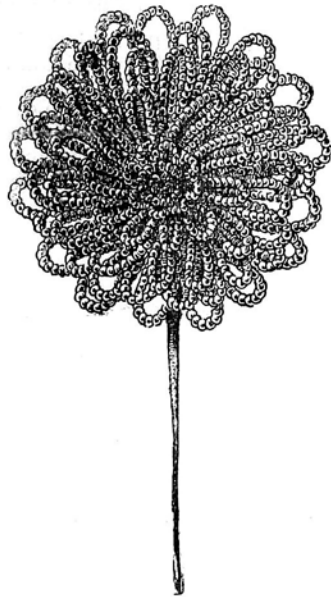


FIG. 4.—THE MARIGOLD.

missed. Work the fourth ring likewise with a double row of petals, on the third circle make a single one, while round the second secure the scallops. The first is left untouched as the heart of the blossom.

Each petal of the lily (fig. 5) is executed

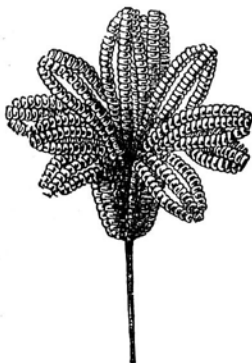


FIG. 5.—THE LILY.

singly, the number of beads naturally depending on the length you wish to give to the petals, as well as on the size of the beads themselves. Commence with the midrib, and thread the required number on a double stalk, bending it up to secure it at the end. Once arrived at the tip of the petal, bend down the wires on either side to shape the outline, and thread the same number of beads, allowing two or three extra for the curve. Twirl the three ends of wire very tightly together, and bend the petal into shape, spreading it out at the top, and pressing the lower part firmly to form the cup. When the other petals are finished, join together the stems of all, and tie them strongly to a covered stalk.

For the jessamine flower (fig. 6) cut five short lengths of wire, and on three of them thread thirteen beads, uniting them into a loop by passing the wire through the first. On the two remaining lengths thread eleven beads, and, the five petals being thus ready, attach their double stalks for the cup thus:—With the left-hand wire of one petal and the right-hand one of the next take up four beads, do the same with the other four pairs of wires,

and, closing the five stalks into a compact cup, twist them tightly and cover with cotton or wool.

The trefoil looks particularly effective in the fashionable amber and fiery red beads. The darker part, though apparently raised and detached, is merely managed by the correct mingling of the colours while threading the beads. For the lower lobe thread two red beads and fourteen amber ones, pass the wire through the two red beads again to close the first or inner circle. Second circle—Three red beads, nineteen amber, two red; unite. Third circle—Four red, twenty-five amber, three red. Fourth circle—Six red, thirty-two amber, five red. Fifth circle—Seven red, forty amber, six red.



FIG. 6.—THE JESSAMINE.

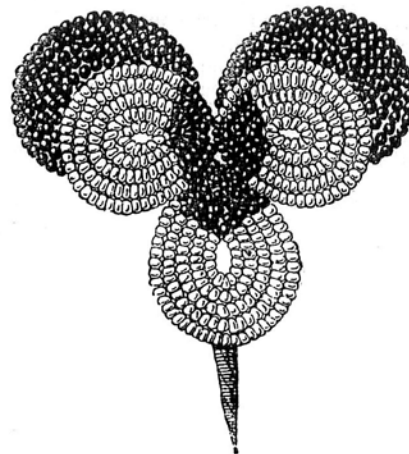


FIG. 7.—TREFOIL IN TWO COLOURS.

For the two side lobes proceed in a similar manner, attaching them at the last round to the lower one by slipping the wire through a bead or two near the point. Make the outside semi-circles with red beads. Carry the wire back almost to the centre of the lobe, thread seven or eight beads, and secure them to the previous ring, then work thus backwards and forwards four times, gradually increasing the number of beads at each semi-circle. The opposite leaf slightly differs, according to the taste of the worker.

The stalks of all these flowers are neatly bound, as for other artificial flowers, with tiny strips of tissue paper, coloured wool, or silk. Is it not almost idle to give young girls any hint as to the use of such sparkling trifles? Their busy brains will be sure to hit upon thousands of little nooks for them, either in their bonnets, muffs, coiffures, on the puffings of their tarlatane dresses, or even—in a larger size—to brighten up Christmas decorations. Butterflies and countless insects can be modelled on the same plan, and indeed, after a little practice with the several items shown in the illustrations, there is no telling what deft fingers will be able to produce with a piece of wire and some bright beads.

M. KARGER.

## USEFUL HINTS.

**FLIES.**—It is said that flies will not enter a room where a wreath of walnut leaves has been hung up.

**TO BURN CANDLES SLOWLY.**—Candles are sometimes kept burning in sick rooms or nurseries the whole night. An easy method of preventing a too rapid combustion is to place salt finely powdered from the tallow to the black part of the wick of a partly-burnt candle; of course, the light is only sufficient for a bed-chamber.

**LIGHT BATTER PUDDING IN SMALL CUP SHAPES.**—Take three eggs, three spoonfuls of milk, and three of flour; butter some cups well, pour in the batter, and bake the puddings quickly in a hot oven. When done, turn them on to a dish, and serve with sweet sauce made of butter, sugar, and nutmeg.

**STEWED PEARS.**—To six large pears add half-a-pound of white sugar, half the rind of a lemon cut thin, five cloves, and a little prepared cochineal to colour them. Cut the pears in halves, and core them. Put them in an enamelled saucepan; water enough to cover them. Let them stew gently till quite soft without breaking them. When done, place them carefully on a dish sufficiently deep to hold the juice. Strain the syrup, and reduce it over the fire; then pour it over the pears.

**SCALDS.**—In an emergency the readiest and most effectual application for this very common, and frequently fatal accident, until medical assistance is obtained, is *flour*. This should be dusted on thickly with a dredger, so as to absorb the discharge, and cover the injured part completely. The application should be continued so long as any discharge appears.

**SLEEP.**—The amount of sleep needed differs according to the constitution and habit. Persons who perform much brain labour need much sleep. Children need more sleep than grown people, because construction is more active than decay in their brains.

**HERB GATHERING.**—The right time to gather herbs for drying or other purposes is when they are just beginning to come into flower (about July). They then possess their peculiar virtues in a higher degree than at any other period. When cut, they should not be laid in the sun, as excessive heat causes them to dry rapidly, and the leaves and stems become brittle. They should be laid in the shade, carefully protected from rain or any dampness.

**TO REMOVE DIRT FROM OLD OIL PAINTINGS.**—Sponge the soiled surface with warm water, then cover it with spirits of wine, renewed every ten minutes. Wash this off with water, but *without rubbing*. Repeat the process until the whole of the spirits of wine be removed.

**SOILED MANUSCRIPTS.**—These may be renovated by washing with a hair pencil in a solution of prussiate of potash in water. The writing will again appear when dry, if the paper has not been destroyed.

**MUSHROOM CATSUP.**—Bruise the mushrooms and sprinkle them with salt. Let them stand ten days. Strain, and add a little cloves, garlic, mace, pepper, ginger, and bay leaves; boil, and when cold, cover for a month. Boil again, strain, and bottle when cold.

**CHEESE CAKES.**—To a breakfast-cup of boiled hominy stir a large cupful of new milk, beat well, so as to remove all lumps, add a cupful of currants, an ounce of candied peel, cut into small pieces, and a *pinch* of salt; after mixing add two eggs, well beaten. Sugar and flavouring to taste. Line patty-pans with short paste, and fill with the mixture and bake.

# CHRONICLES OF AN ANGLO-CALIFORNIAN RANCH.

By MARGARET INNES.

## CHAPTER II.

AFTER we had very exhaustively explored this middle part of the State, we determined to go to San Francisco and see how we liked the conditions in the North.

We took rooms in a fairly comfortable boarding-house, and settled down for an indefinite time. Our boys went to the public schools, which, in the towns, are very good indeed.

We found a great charm and attraction about San Francisco, with its splendid bay and curious town; the latter, built partly on a tract of land snatched from the sea, and partly on the drifting shifting sand hills, which stretch for miles around, is a triumph of energy and enterprise. Some of the streets had to be carried up at an angle of almost forty-five degrees, and the quays, water front and business quarter are built on what was at one time a shallow part of the bay. Now innumerable electric and cable cars fly up and down the steep hill streets. It is a strange sensation to "go the round trip" on any of these beautifully built machines; a sensation not altogether comfortable at first. One seems to be either slipping down the polished seats, on to the top of the next person, from the steep upward incline of the car, or one is trying to look quite easy-minded as the thing glides smoothly up to the edge of a cliff, and, without pause, runs straight down the face of it. Accidents, however, seem very rare, and all is so well managed, that one soon forgets to be uneasy, and some of these rides are delightful. One in particular—to the Cliff House—where the railroad is cut out of the cliff half way up its steep side, with the beautiful Pacific Ocean spread out below, and the Golden Gate in full view, is magnificent. China Town was thrillingly interesting to us, and we behaved like veritable *gamins*, hanging and dawdling about, flattening our noses against windows, and trying to see all we could of the ways of these mysterious people. Our impressions were, and still remain, that they are marvellously quick and clever, but unlovely.

Now began again the same diligent search that had kept us so busy in the South; far and near, to different neighbourhoods on all sides we went, seeing a great deal, and receiving much kindness from strangers, anxious to aid us to find what we wanted. Indeed, all over the United States we were impressed with the goodwill everyone showed, taking trouble and thought to help us if possible, and ready to be most hospitable, though we were absolute strangers.

This was often very comforting during those long months of undecided wanderings, when we felt so particularly homeless, and so anxious about the future, and the great importance of choosing wisely.

We were often amused to find what very unexpected people had ranches, somewhere in the Golden State. The black porter on the train; the man who swept out and attended to the church opposite our boarding-house; the driver of the hotel omnibus; our Chinese laundryman, and the Irish woman who succeeded him. This last-named proprietor was very anxious to warn us against unwise speculations. She considered speculation the only business worth going into, and herself made quite a good deal in this way. Then there was the learned head of a university, and the pretty young lady teacher at one of the Normal schools; also the rich Easterner, coming over three thousand miles

in his private car to escape the cruel winter of the East. All these had ranches of different kinds, and all were ready to help and advise.

The only people whom we were very shy of consulting were the "real estate" men. It is true we had many a useful drive with them to inspect new neighbourhoods, but we would never have dreamt of buying on their recommendation. We had heard too much from others of the tricks they play, and the schemes they carry through, to influence possible buyers, and we took a rather wicked delight in making them useful, while remaining perfectly independent of them. We discovered that everyone who had a ranch spoke as though that part of the State were the only possible neighbourhood where ranching was sure to pay; yet we could not but notice that each one was most ready to sell his ranch.

It is said that every ranch in California is for sale, if the proper price be offered. But an explanation of this is that there seems to be a kind of restlessness and a speculative spirit in all Americans, which leads them to undertake everything in a tentative spirit, and makes them always ready to change, if any profit or advantage can be assured. Most of the ranches have that air, very plain at least to English eyes; there is nearly always the appearance of the owner being ready to move on to something else.

Such changes are regarded in America as perfectly natural occurrences. A man who changes his business often, from whatever cause, in England is looked upon as unsteady and unreliable, almost good for nothing in fact; but here the habit is so universal that it calls for no comment.

Considering how very difficult it is for an ordinary young man entering upon life to hit upon just the best thing for his abilities and tastes, it seems a sensible view to take that the door should be left open for change, without any slur being cast on the stability or steadiness of the worker.

The changes made by men over here are most unexpected and often quite startling. The man who did all the hauling of our heavy furniture out to the ranch from the water front in San Miguel, some seventeen miles by road, was once a lawyer in the East. The indoor life did not suit him, and he never really liked his profession, so he came out here and has drifted into this, becoming one of the most skilled teamsters in all the neighbourhood.

On a neighbouring large ranch, where a good deal of labour is employed, and which the proprietor only visits occasionally for a few odd days, the manager and overseer is, or rather was, a doctor, and a very good manager he makes.

An elderly rancher we came across had been a soldier during the Civil War; a farmer in the East; had driven an express waggon, and after ranching a short time in the South and finding it difficult to make both ends meet, emigrated to Oregon and became a member of the State Legislature, in which position the salary was probably not the only pecuniary advantage.

We had not been long in the North when we decided that the climate was not good enough. We had left home and come six thousand miles, and were critical. It was damp and windy. In the fruit valleys, the summers were quite as hot, if not more so, than in the middle South. Most of the early fruit comes from this part, and in the winter

there was rain, more or less constantly, for four months.

In consequence of the heavier rainfall, the North is much greener than the South; the hills too are beautifully wooded with every variety of tree. But in many neighbourhoods the work of ranching is more fatiguing than in the South; the soil is heavier, and the longer wet season has many disadvantages for people who do their own ranching.

By this time the uncertainty and general homeless feeling of our lives was beginning to be almost unendurable.

There were so many things to consider; firstly, which kind of fruit paid the best and was the least subject to accidents and the disappointments of bad seasons; secondly, the quality of land best suited to such fruit and the conveniences for getting it to market; thirdly, the amount of water to be had; this last quite as vital as any point whatsoever about the land. In fact one might almost be said to buy water with land attached, so great is the value of a certainty of enough water.

We were so much impressed with this, that we were quite determined to buy land only where there was a well-tried and well-established irrigating system, and where all the water difficulties of the neighbourhood were solved and settled.

This resolve, with some others, had eventually to go by the board; but of this much we made sure when we bought, that there was water enough running in a satisfactory flume some two miles from our land. The part which had to be taken more or less on trust was the piping of the water to our little settlement, and the dividing of it in a fair and workable manner; this has given us more trouble than we would care to undertake again. The climate, too, had to be carefully examined, even in California. And the view meant a great deal to us; we were very unwilling to settle in a plain or valley, where soon our own windbreak trees would be the only outlook, year in, year out.

A school within reach for the younger boy was another point about which I was resolved to be stubborn.

Then, though we had so unhesitatingly chosen the absolute freedom of country life, in preference to pretentious villadom, we did not want isolation.

I was haunted with the remembrance of those terribly lonely farms which one passes as the train rushes through Kansas and Missouri, where each de-olate building stands absolutely surrounded by miles and miles of dreary-looking prairie waste.

We realised before long that if we could find a place fulfilling some of the most essential qualities for which we were striving, we should have to let the rest go. Indeed, in our diligent search, which brought us into contact with so many ranchers of several nationalities, we heard and saw so much that was discouraging, that we determined not to take any definite or binding steps for some time, but go south, see how we liked the climate and other conditions of San Miguel, and then make our decision.

There is something of the same spirit of jealousy between San Francisco and San Miguel as there is (or used to be) between Manchester and Liverpool; we could therefore hear very little but the proverbial faint praise of San Miguel while in the North. All the same, we were resolved to try to find a better climate, after travelling six thousand miles in search of it.

(To be continued.)

## USEFUL HINTS.

### VEGETABLE HAIR-WASH.

One ounce of tincture of cantharides, one ounce of spirits of rosemary, four ounces of oil of sweet almonds, ten drops of oil of lavender aug., twenty drops of oil of bergamotte super, five drops of otto of rose. Mix well. To be applied every other morning.

### CREAM OF HONEY.

Eight ounces of oil of sweet almonds, one ounce of best spermaceti, two drams of best palm oil, three drams of oil of citronella, two drams of essence of lemon super. Stir well.

### EAU DE COLOGNE.

One-eighth of an ounce of essence of bergamotte, one-eighth of an ounce of essence of lemon, two ounces of essence of musk, forty drops of oil of neroly super, ten drops of oil of citron super, sixteen ounces of spirits of wine, four ounces of orange flower water.

### MOSS ROSE.

Ten ounces of extract of rose, three ounces of extract of ambergris, two ounces of extract of musk, three ounces of extract of orange, five ounces of rose triple.

### CASTOR-OIL POMADE.

Two ounces of spermaceti, five ounces of Italian castor oil. Melt and add gradually with constant stirring, five ounces of spirits of wine. Then add one dram of oil of bergamotte, five drops of oil of neroly, five drops of oil of cloves, ten drops of oil of lemon grass, five drops of oil of geranium. Stir well.

### SAPONACEOUS DENTIFRICE.

Seven ounces of powdered orris root, one ounce of powdered Castille soap, fifteen drops of oil of geranium. Sift.



## CHRONICLES OF AN ANGLO-CALIFORNIAN RANCH.

By MARGARET INNES.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE JOURNEY DOWN SOUTH. HOUSEKEEPING. CHINAMEN.

THE journey from San Francisco to San Miguel, some six hundred miles, we took by steamer, and it was the most delightful episode of all our Californian experiences. It was the month of April, and with exquisite weather; the sea was like a pond, so calm and still; the sun was not too hot, and there were numberless interesting living things to watch as we moved along the summer sea. Several enormous whales went past, generally in couples, their great fat backs rising out of the water side by side, and passing our boat swiftly and with the greatest ease, when we would see them in a few moments, far in the distance, spouting up big fountains of spray. Not far off from the whales were generally flocks of the tiny whale birds, which seemed to use these monsters as their jacksals, feeding greedily on the shoals of fish they drive before them, so greedily indeed, that many of them were too gorged and heavy to rise out of the water and our way, but, after a helpless attempt, would duck under only just in time. The flying fish were more alert, and would rise away out of the water, going many yards through the air before dropping again into the sea, and glittering with every rainbow colour in the sunshine.

The coast scenery is not beautiful; it is too bare and dry-looking, especially after passing Santa Barbara, but the glamour of the southern sun is over everything, and gives all a caressing smile, at any rate, from a distance. It was a delight to see these wonderful effects again, and we felt glad to be once more in the warm sunshine.

When we arrived at the bay of San Miguel late in the afternoon of the fourth day, it looked so radiantly beautiful in the soft glow of the setting sun, as if it might indeed be the gate into a real land of promise; a land flowing with milk and honey.

It is a splendid bay, and the position of the town is quite ideal, and though the most has not been made of its possibilities, many improvements are going on steadily. Given money and taste, it should be one of the most lovely places in the world.

We found comfortable rooms in a boarding-house, and settled down to rest awhile from searching and questioning. The boys went to school as in San Francisco. These free State schools are exceedingly good. The teachers are among the most charming ladies we have met, and the plan of using the same books, and the same system of teaching all over the State, saves much loss of time, since a child coming to a new school can at once be

placed in exactly the same position where he left off, in his former school, some three hundred miles away.

But in spite of our determination to let ourselves drift for a time, we were very soon drawn into the same old probing and exploring, more especially as we were delighted with the climate of San Miguel. On the strength of this, and because our English hearts were hungering for some place more homelike than any boarding-house can ever be, we took a little house, hired the necessary furniture, and began our first experiences of Chinamen as general servants.

We had the most wonderful procession of Celestials through the little kitchen before we left that wee house. There was no room convenient for the Chinaman's bedroom, without giving him one close to our own, which was not to be thought of, so the arrangement was, that when supper was over, and the work done, he should retire to Chinatown, coming back in good time in the morning to get breakfast and do his other duties. He seemed quite pleased with this plan, and we got along swimmingly for a fortnight. Then he dropped the news casually to me that he was going to Los Angeles the next day. When I exclaimed at the shortness of the notice, he beamed all over, and said, "Me bling other boy, him allie lightie, him stay."

Before I had quite made up my mind what to do, I heard breathless jabbering in the kitchen, and on going in there, was introduced by Sing Lee to Quong Wong, our new cook. Both of them were very friendly and smiling. No. 1 was showing No. 2 where everything was kept, and giving him what sounded like most eloquent instructions about his duties, both of them being very grave and business-like over this. I did not seem to be needed, and so quietly went back to the sitting-room. Supper was prepared and cooked by the two together to an unending accompaniment of Chinese chatter.

This was the beginning of the procession. Some men stayed a week, others three weeks or a month, and each brought and carefully installed his successor, I taking no part whatever, except to learn a new Chinese name. We had tall fat fellows, tall lean ones, little dumpy ones and spare wiry ones; all of them clever and quick beyond anything I had ever seen or known. They keep themselves exquisitely neat, in their white linen coats and aprons, which seem always to remain spotless. Their hands are perfectly fascinating; such delicate tapering fingers, and such a masterly way of touching everything. One member of the profession, I remember, who had the most dainty taper fingers, was very fond of music, and, seeing that I was interested, sat down

very simply at my Broadwood grand (the only piece of furniture which we had brought from Frisco) and played some hymns quite nicely. He used to sing, too, at his work—all day—in a curious high falsetto, of which he seemed very proud. He had learnt to play the piano at the mission schools, where many of them go, and are converted—so they say. But they find the free lessons in English, which are given there, so cheap and convenient, that their motives in being converted are rather mixed. When he left me, it was to go the very next day to San Francisco on most important business, so he said. That, of course, was only the usual way of giving notice, and did not prevent his greeting me smilingly whenever I chanced to meet him in the streets of San Miguel. He came to the rescue also, when, through some hitch, the chain of succession was broken, and I was left to struggle alone in my little kitchen, and he stayed with me till he could find another "boy." I began to be haunted by a story I had heard often repeated. A certain lady was much puzzled and distressed because she could never keep any Chinaman beyond a few days; they would arrive, smiling and seemingly much pleased with everything, but invariably on the third or fourth day they would insist upon leaving at once. At last, in despair, the poor mistress persuaded her Chinaman to explain the mystery to her, before he had carried himself and his bundle away.

He led her to a dark corner of the kitchen, and showed her some Chinese writing high up on the wall, which he interpreted, "too much talkee here." That was all. But it had been enough to upset all the comfort of the household.

Probably after that she took the hint and let her Chinaman do the work in his own way, with as few words or instructions from her as possible. They are so marvellously clever in taking up the work of a new place the very moment they arrive, exactly as though they had been always in this one house only, that it is no wonder they resent any interference; and the sooner one learns to leave them entirely to themselves, the sooner one reaches some kind of peace.

However, I found to my relief, that no secret sign had gone out against myself or the house; the difficulty was the long daily walk to China-town. With their small feet and uncomfortable shoes, they are all bad walkers, and each in turn had tired of the effort, and handed the place over to a friend. This explanation, kindly given me by Mr. Kee Mane, who kept the Chinese stores, lifted a weight from my mind, and I resigned myself to continuing my lessons in fresh Chinese names.

(To be continued.)



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## HASTY DISHES.



**W**HAT a host of housekeepers there are who may fairly be entitled good managers as long as the wheels of life run smoothly, but should any emergency arise, such as the arrival of unexpected guests, they will often meet it in as flurried and unprepared a manner as a week-old wife would do. We will, in the present paper, run through a brief list of dishes that may be made, cooked, and presented at table in half an hour's time, in many cases, assuming that the cupboard is not entirely bare, and that the groceries are of as varied a nature as is customary in present middle-class households: and what a comprehensive order *can* be given to one's grocer now, compared with one of a dozen years ago! And not only groceries, but vegetables must not be allowed to run out, or hasty dishes—many of the nicest—will be impracticable.

It will be found advisable, not only for such dishes as are here recommended, but for every-day cookery, to keep at hand a bottle of raspings, another of ordinary bread-crumbs, a small quantity of grated cheese—Parmesan is best, but ordinary good cheese *will* do for some dishes—and a nice variety of powdered herbs and spices. Where the supply of "stock" runs short, a

few ounces of "glaze" will also be found invaluable, especially in the case of soups; for when a bowl is wanted in a hurry, a morsel of glaze dissolved in boiling water will form the base, which may be converted into many kinds of the well-known brown soups very readily. A spice-bag, filled with the following ingredients, will be found a great time-saver; it should be boiled in the soup until sufficient flavour has been extracted:—a tea-spoonful of peppercorns, a dozen cloves, a dozen allspice (pimento) berries, a blade of mace, a couple of bay-leaves, half a tea-spoonful of celery-seed, and a bunch of sweet herbs—thyme, basil, marjoram, &c.; these ingredients must be renewed as their strength decreases. A cheap colouring, equally useful for gravies or soups, can be made by boiling two ounces of the darkest chicory in a pint of cold water for a quarter of an hour, when it should be carefully strained, and bottled for use when quite cold.

We may take this opportunity of calling attention to "Rizine," as it has the merit of being prepared in less time than many farinaceous foods, and answers admirably for thickening soups and other savouries, as well as for making custards, blancmanges, and porridge. Macaroni, vermicelli, and other kinds of Italian paste, are all nice for soups, but should be parboiled before adding, or the soup will look muddy.

Crushed tapioca, a French preparation, is another excellent medium for thickening purposes, especially

for white soups ; the liquid to which it is added must, however, be stirred continually, or it will turn lumpy. About fifteen minutes will cook it, and as soon as it looks transparent it is ready. This is largely used on the Continent in celery, onion, potato, and many other white purées, to which it imparts body and a velvety softness. Mention must be made of the numerous soups known as "desiccated," "prepared," and "dried." Many of them are excellent, and deserve all that is said in their favour, while their cost is merely nominal. In some instances a dash of extra seasoning would be considered an improvement ; however, as a *base*, they are a great boon in the hands of a practical house-keeper.

Macaroni, usually associated with cheese in this country, can be most successfully utilised in a variety of ways. *Macaroni mince* is tasty-looking and delicious ; any cold meat, poultry, or game can be used. It should be cut small and moistened with gravy, an equal weight of macaroni being separately boiled and cut up into quarter-inch lengths ; the whole is then made hot in a stewpan, and piled high in a hot dish, with croûtons of fried bread as a garnish. If the meat used be white, viz., rabbit, veal, or chicken, a spoonful of cream is a good addition.

Cold fish, with any sauce, such as parsley, may be converted into a similar dish ; then the base of the pile may be garnished with slices of pickled beetroot, gherkins, or walnuts.

*Macaroni with tomatoes* is thus prepared :—Turn half a pound of tomatoes into a saucepan, with a spoonful of stock or a bit of butter ; let them cook until tender enough to pass through a coarse sieve or colander, then re-heat, season nicely, adding a few drops of lemon-juice or vinegar, and pour over a flat dish covered with nicely-boiled macaroni, *not* the pipe : *that* answers when it is to be cut into short lengths. Cover the surface with grated cheese and bread-crumbs, put a few bits of butter over, and brown it before the fire or in a sharp oven.

Preserved tomatoes answer for this as well as fresh ones, or tomato conserve will do. It may be well to point out that "conserve" is simply tomato pulp, while "sauce" is flavoured and seasoned. The latter keeps some time, but a bottle of conserve must be used in a few days, at most, after it is opened. No one, now, can object to preserved tomatoes, fruits, &c., on account of the taste of the tin, as they may be readily obtained in glass ; and some firms now put up meat extracts and other goods in tins lined with earthenware ; indeed, the packing of preserved provisions is now-a-days quite a special feature, and the demand for them increases daily. All that *are* in actual contact with the tin, such as salmon, lobster, and sardines, should be at once transferred to an earthen vessel, never left in the tin, then no harm is likely to result if they have been bought from a good firm, as it is the action of air upon the food while in an opened tin that works the mischief.

Besides the above-named, shrimps and prawns are very useful for hasty dishes ; they are excellent curried, and those who are not *au fait* at making curries will

be wise to use curry sauce, sold by all good grocers, with which a delicious curry may be quickly made.

*Savoury toasts* are invariably appreciated. Many can be obtained if a small jar of potted meat or fish is in the house. They are improved by moistening with gravy or butter, while, for the white kinds, cream or a spoonful of white sauce answers as well, or better ; the toast should be free from crust, and buttered, then spread thickly with the preparation, cut into fingers, and made hot in the oven.

*Sardine toast* is excellent, made from boneless sardines, well seasoned, and flavoured with lemon-juice. The fish should be made hot before laying them on the toast ; each piece to be large enough to hold one sardine.

*Bombay toast* will only suit those who like piquant flavours. To make it, put a table-spoonful of Indian chutnee, and the same of piccalilli, and good gravy, into a stewpan with any cooked meat or fish, cut small, sufficient in quantity to make the mixture of a suitable consistence ; as soon as it is hot through it may be poured on to the toast, and that cut into squares. With cheese toast most people are familiar, but those who may have hitherto regarded a few ounces of cold meat as not worth re-serving will do well to make a few experiments in the way of toasts, for after one or two trials many varieties will suggest themselves, and they are now quite a feature of nice dinners.

The mere mention of batter suggests a long list of dainties that can be hastily prepared. *Golden fingers* are thick strips of cold beef, dipped into batter and fried brown ; these, lightly piled on a hot dish and garnished with parsley, look very appetising. They can also be made from cold veal, each strip being rolled in a thin slice of boiled ham before coating with the batter. In this case, slices of lemon form a suitable garnish. The meat should not be over-cooked ; hence this is a good way of using up the most under-done portions of a joint.

*Cavalier's broil* is very good. A cold shoulder or half-shoulder of mutton is the thing for the purpose ; it should be neatly trimmed, or it will look uninviting, then scored right to the bone, and a mixture of butter and ketchup, or any good store sauce, with salt and pepper rubbed into the cut parts : the meat should be well coated all over with liquefied butter, then cooked on a gridiron over a clear fire until hot through. Any gravy left from the joint should be re-heated, and flavoured with vinegar from any nice pickles, some of the latter being cut up and used for garnishing the dish.

*Bachelor's broil* is similarly made, but curry powder is rubbed into the scored portions, and curry paste used for thickening the gravy, and the joint sent to table with a border of boiled rice.

Some of the tinned salmon, notably that put up in tins of 2 lbs., is in large pieces, and makes a very nice-looking dish. *Salmon au gratin*, prepared as under, will be found equal to that from the fresh fish. First drain it from the oil, and lay it on a trivet set in a baking-tin, then spread a sheet of white paper

with some of the oil and lay it over the fish, which must first be seasoned with cayenne pepper and a few drops of essence of anchovies or shrimps. Cook in a good oven until hot, then remove the paper, sprinkle the fish with raspings, and in five minutes it will be hot enough to serve. Pour round it a little sauce, with chopped pickles added, or a border of pickles made hot in a spoonful of sauce.


*Flaked haddock* (dried) is a nice change from the usual ways of serving this popular fish. Choose a fleshy one, and pour boiling water over it, in which it should soak for ten minutes, covered to keep in the steam, then take out the bone, and flake the fish, free from skin. Put a pound, or thereabouts, in a saucepan with half a pint of milk and a seasoning of cayenne, bring it to the boiling point slowly, and let it simmer for ten minutes, then thicken with a little flour and butter, again boil up, and serve on a flat dish: hard-boiled eggs make a suitable garnish. The remains of

any kind of previously cooked fish may be served in the same way, but will require the addition of salt, and any sauce may take the place of part of the milk.

Eggs lend themselves very readily to great variety of treatment, so does cheese, and both are of great value for hasty dishes. The under-mentioned dish of the two combined will be new to most people, and well deserves a trial:—Slice thinly six ounces of rich cheese, Cheshire or Derbyshire, into a saucepan, add a little salt, pepper, and mustard, and a quarter-pint each of milk and cream; stir until the cheese is melted, and the whole looks rich and custard-like, then pour on to a hot flat dish, and cover with poached eggs, five or six, and sprinkle them with grated Parmesan cheese and bread-crumbs; transfer them to the oven until the surface is hot, then serve without delay. Cheese dishes of all kinds, to be worth eating, *must* be hot.



## VALENTINES.


**N**CE more the shops are full of valentines!  
 And some are sweet ones,  
 Full of fond wishes out of which love shines;  
 And some are passion-tinged with deep designs;  
 Some merely neat ones;  
 Others, with naught to read between the lines—  
 No inner meanings and no secret signs—

Are most discreet ones!  
 Oh! in this world, where grief with joy so twines,  
 This great, full world, with secret springs and  
 mines,  
 Fixed loves and fleet ones,  
 What must there hang on all these valentines,  
 Sweet, neat, discreet ones?

WILFRED WOOLLAM.

## GIRLS WHO WORK WITH THEIR HANDS.

INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE AND WORK OF FACTORY-GIRLS GIVEN BY THEMSELVES.



Competition of "My Daily Round," has done good service, if only that it has cleared away many hazy ideas we had formed about Factory-

girls; like all notions formed without knowledge, they vanish as soon as the light of truth is flashed upon them.

Forty-four of the Competitors are Factory-girls representing almost every kind of work in wool, cotton and silk. The description of their special occupation is most interesting, and shows that intelligence, patience, industry, cleanliness and self-control are all necessary for its successful performance. Self-indulgence can have no existence in the life of a factory-girl, if she is to earn enough to live upon.

As a rule, both in winter and summer, the girls rise at five o'clock, and start work at six. We will quote from some of the papers, to show the efforts made to be at the mills in time.

"Click, click, click! That is the first

sound that falls upon my ear every morning in the week, with the exception of Sunday. It is the 'knocker-up.' There are several 'knockers-up' about here, but they are for the most part men; but here and there, one comes across a woman who does this early morning work; just fancy being out in the dark, cold, lonely streets from four o'clock to half-past five, going round from door to door, and waiting at each until an answering knock is heard. One comes to our house at five. Having washed, dressed and said my prayers, it is about fifteen minutes to six, and wrapping myself in my nice warm shawl, I hurry off to the mill, and oh, how thankful I am to get inside out of the wet and cold and darkness of out-doors."

"My sister and I are calico-weavers; every morning, except Sunday, we rise at half-past five. We knock at our neighbours' walls, and they knock back to wake each other. Mother gets up too, to make a fire, then we get something warm, as a rule, porridge and milk, and then set off. We have ten minutes to walk."

"I rise between five and half-past every morning, eat a light breakfast and then set off on half an hour's tramp along a lonely country road; for my home is in the country. I am

a cotton-weaver and am expected to be at work when the clock strikes six."

"I am a factory girl in a large woollen factory. I rise at a quarter past five every morning, no pleasant task in winter; and I have about eight minutes' walk to the mill, where I must be no later than six o'clock. No extra time is allowed, the gates being closed as the last stroke of the town-hall clock dies away."

"Whin . . . ting-a-ring. I wake with a start to find it is only my little alarm clock warning me that it is half-past five, and as I must leave the house at six, I know there is no time to spare, so hastily shaking myself up, I begin my daily round by calling 'awake, awake,' to my niece who shares my room; but she is too sleepy, and I shake her well. I hurry her as I wash and brush my hair, and in a few minutes we are both down-stairs drinking a cup of tea made by my dear father. I start from home at six prompt in order to reach the distant factory at half-past. I take the shortest cut through one of our worst slum-districts, but it is still at this early hour, and I am not afraid. As I near the factory I see a long stream of girls and boys, men and women flocking hurriedly along, and I pass

through the big iron gates with them, very glad to be inside, for if I was more than five minutes late I should find the gates locked till eight."

"When I awoke this morning the rain was beating against the windows, and I hoped it was only two or three o'clock, but I was disappointed, for presently I heard a whistle and I knew it was a quarter-past five and time to be getting up if my two sisters and myself were to be at work in time. I am a weaver and have to be at the mill at six in the morning. We live on a hill about twenty minutes' walk from the village where we work."

"I am a calico weaver. My usual hour of rising is five o'clock. After prayers and toilet I have my breakfast and then it is time to start. Soon numbers of mill-whistles or 'buzzes,' as they are known about here, begin to blow, and the sounding altogether to us factory girls has its peculiar charm, denoting that the factories are in full work and the workers in receipt of full wages. On a crisp, frosty morning the whistles, varying from the high shrill note to the deep bass, may be heard for four or five miles. The gates are shut five minutes before starting-time, 6.30; entrance then having to be made by means of a little office the door of which is kept open till 25 minutes to 7. All the hands who are later are fined twopence which is stopped out of their wages."

#### OPINIONS OF COMPETITORS QUOTED FROM THEIR PAPERS.

"It is a mistake to think all girls who work in factories are alike; there is as much difference between them, as there is between a duchess and her scullery-maid."

"Superior minds are found everywhere, and a factory is no exception to the rule."

"How often we hear the expression, 'only a mill girl,' as though factory workers were a class of people not worth speaking about. Of course some are coarse and rough in speech and manner, but these are not the majority. I can truly say that many of the girls are not only intelligent and industrious but good, pure and high-minded."

"Many girls in this factory attend both Sunday-school and service regularly."

"Whatever work a girl does she can always command respect if she is quiet and courteous in her manner, good disposed to others, and neat in her attire."

"This is what hurts most—everybody seems to look down upon us."

"People forget that we have feelings, desires and aspirations to better things, and that we appreciate the beautiful in Nature and Art as they themselves do."

"A girl if she desires to do right, doing her work quietly soon gains the respect of those around her."

"It is not true in every case that factory girls like fine and gaudy colours in clothing and do not care how their feet and hands are clad. Lancashire girls in the country like to have clean clogs, and the whiter their aprons the prouder they are. It is not likely they will go about when away from their work with untidy shoes, skirts, and gloves."

"Factory girls with all their faults are very tender-hearted and generous. If a hand has had an accident or is ill for a long time a collection is made through the room, and each one subscribes liberally."

"Should one of the girls get married there is great pin-bows of white ribbon put on in honour of the parties."

"Factory girls take great interest in voting affairs, and in their dinner-hour go and hear their side speak."

"The girls, although they have to work for their living, are always willing to help those who are less fortunate than themselves."

"Some of the girls are lovely singers."

#### COMPETITORS' ACCOUNT OF THEIR 8 O'CLOCK BREAKFAST AND 1 O'CLOCK DINNER.

"Eight o'clock, the engine stops for our breakfast-hour. As there is no provision made for making our tea on the premises, we have to scamper off to the shops near the factory, where we are supplied with hot water and milk twice a day for threepence a week."

"I and my sister prefer coming out of the mill for breakfast; we pay threepence each weekly at a cottage near for having tea brewed and anything warmed we may have brought to eat."

"Boiling water is provided at the mill for those who care to have it instead of going outside for breakfast, but mother sends mine every morning. We sit together in groups for this meal and there is always fun and laughter going on and occasionally singing."

"We often make the place ring again with some hymn or carol in the few minutes after breakfast which helps to cheer us up."

*Dinner.*—"In the hour allowed for dinner most of us read and sew."

"True, my dining-room chair is an inverted welf can, and I have to dispense with such things as brown Derby china and serviettes, but I have always the best of company to sit down with me; sometimes it is Lord Lytton who keeps up a brilliant talk on old Pompeii; at other times it is good old George Herbert who sings so quaintly and sweetly."

"If we are inclined we fill up our dinner-hour with reading and sewing."

"It is very interesting to hear some when they have time after dinner talk over the events of the week's end just past, it influences those who are told sometimes for good and sometimes for evil."

#### INFORMATION GIVEN BY THE FACTORY GIRLS ON OTHER MATTERS.

"We are paid by the piece," says a weaver, "so the more expert and industrious we are the more we earn. Broadly speaking, I average over one pound a week."

"I am a coat machinist; this comprises the putting together of the coat generally; the various pieces are given to us as they come from the cutters, and when they leave our hands they are finished with the exception of buttons and buttonholes. A stranger would be surprised to see the speed with which a coat is evolved by a skilful machinist from a mass of apparently shapeless pieces. The machines are all worked by steam power. The prices paid for each coat vary from threepence-halfpenny to tenpence-farthing, according to the quality of the article and the amount of work entailed, and by working about fifty-four hours a week we can earn from 4s. to 12s. a week."

"The dress of a weaver in the mill is a striped cotton skirt and blouse, a white coarse linen apron, a square calico 'fent' tied over the apron, and a leather belt for reed hook and scissors."

"As for companions, men and women, boys and girls flank and face each other at every turn, each doing exactly the same work and each expected to keep pace with the other, so that in our little sphere at least the vexed question of the equality of the sexes has been settled long ago."

"Mother gives us a penny for every shilling we earn, to save, and we mostly have a five days' holiday at the seaside in August."

"In the glove factory where I work, the fines of those who are late are kept in a box till the end of the year when they are divided among those who have not been fined once in the year."

"Being fined is called being 'pennied.'"

#### FACTORY GIRLS DESCRIBE THEIR LEISURE.

"When I reach home there is a nice warm tea and a bright cosy fire, and when I have helped a little in the house-work I wash and make myself tidy, and adjourn to a pretty little sitting-room upstairs where all my books and writing materials are, and here two or three hours are spent in reading or writing."

"I know nothing of art needlework, but I make all my own dresses and underclothing, so I think my day is fairly filled up."

"After tea I make my way to school where I am studying science this session."

"We very often influence each other by telling of any work we are doing at home or classes we are attending in the evening, for most factory girls are able to do something well beside the work they earn their living with. Some are good cooks, some like dress-making, others singing, piano or violin-playing, reading and fancy needlework. There are some good Sunday School teachers among factory girls."

"On Sunday we go to church, and every other Sunday I teach in the Sunday School."

"I go out once every week to class, being a Wesleyan, and then to the Christian Endeavour."

"I wend my way homeward about a quarter to seven, and after tea I enjoy my reading and writing."

"All factory girls are fond of fancy work; we exchange books with each other or patterns for fancy work, and many of us attend evening classes, so that we never need be dull."

"Some of the girls attend classes in the evening. I read and paint in the evenings."

"Occasionally I go to a concert or a Sunday School party."

"I am in a lace factory; I leave work at half-past five and at six o'clock I have to go to night-school for one hour four nights a week because I am under seventeen; this is the rule of our factory. The girls who attend can obtain THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER for threepence through the school-mistress, the firm we work for paying the remainder."

We have some most interesting papers from milliners, dressmakers, shop-girls and telegraph clerks, and one from a girl in a village shop and post office, and last not least, one from a young married woman describing her home-life.

#### A FEW PARAGRAPHS FROM THEM.

"I am a dressmaker or cheap costume hand.—The costumes I obtain at a factory and execute my work at home. I sit down at my machine on Monday morning and try to put away the thought that I am only to receive one shilling and twopence per costume, viz., bodice and skirt fully lined and finished throughout ready for the wearer to don, including a dozen buttonholes worked with twist. Sometimes there is a deal of trimming on the said costume which makes double work, but the remuneration remains just the same. I can only afford to snatch twenty minutes for dinner and ten for tea. Sometimes I do not stop for meals at all."

*Daily dressmaker.*—"I have found time in the winter months to attend our Technical and Art School. This has put quite a new element into my life, opening a new world to me."

*Dressmaker in a very large shop.*—"Girls in work-rooms get the name of being very careless in religious matters and of spending all their leisure time in the pursuit of pleasure, and some of it of a questionable character, but I am sure it is not so with the majority of work-girls. The greater number of our girls attend church or chapel, bible-class or Sunday school regularly on Sunday."

*Milliner.*—"One meets with many different characters in a large work-room, and get to

know one another better than those at home know us."

*Milliner in a children's millinery warehouse.*—"In the afternoon, an errand girl comes round to us and we each give her a farthing for milk, and she takes in the milk for us all. We put our tea in our own teapots, and put them in the kitchen. At a quarter to four, a bell rings and we have tea. We have only to bring it from the kitchen."

*Milliner.*—"The daily work of a milliner is very interesting; it has its trials like other trades. I say trades, yet it is more than that, it is an art, and only those who have taste for it can ever succeed."

*Assistant in a draper's shop.*—"I always notice as it gets late the people are much easier to serve than in the early part of the day. About seven o'clock we get rushing busy. About half-past ten I go home, having worked since nine. I receive six shillings a week."

*Dressmaker.*—"There is no royal road to dressmaking; it means perseverance and application and not a small amount of patience."

*Mantle-maker.*—"Since I have been 'second hand' I have lived entirely in the house and have found it much more comfortable than lodgings. We work from eight to seven-thirty."

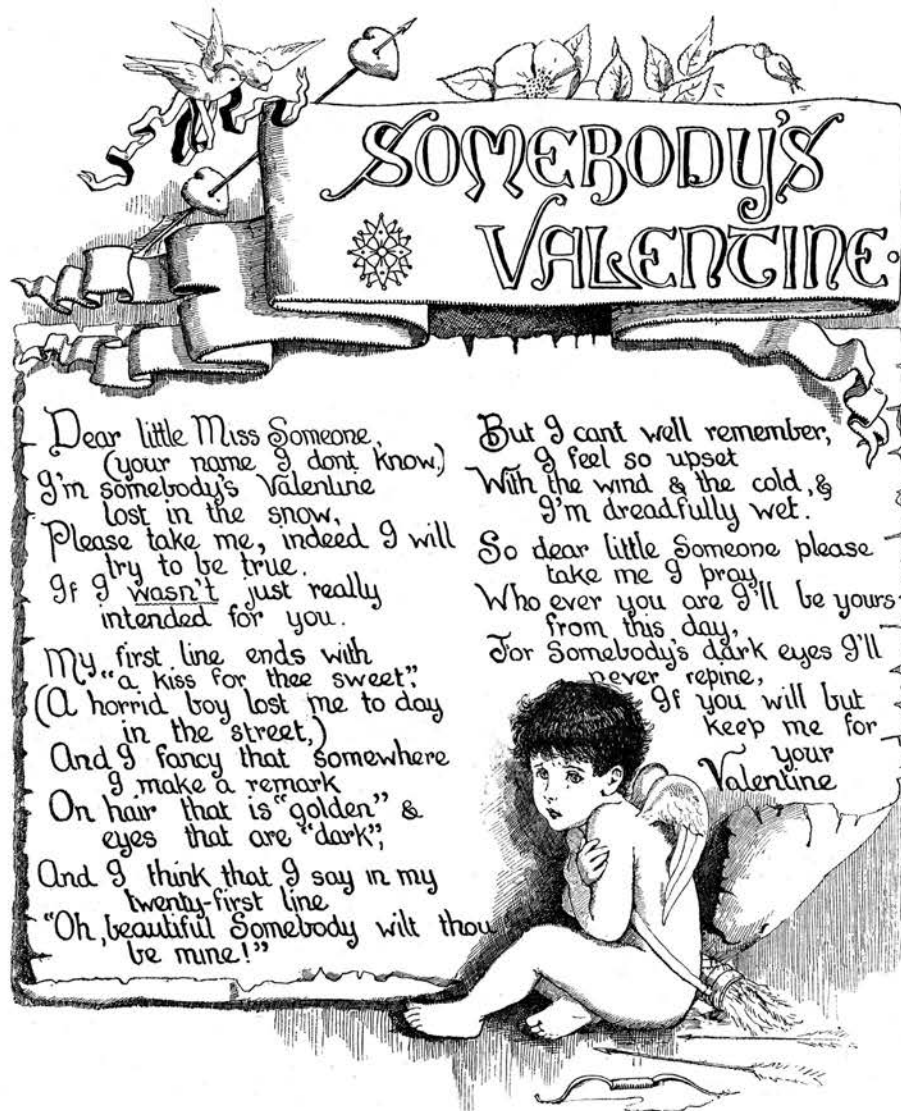
*Dressmaker.*—"I should like to speak a word or two for the average workroom girl, according to those I have met; they are of a very kind and genuine disposition, always

willing to help one another whether in home or workroom troubles. It was only last week that I was speaking to one of our girls, and she told me that every Thursday she and a girl friend go visiting some very poor people, and at the time we were talking over the poor, this young girl was working on a pair of woollen shoes, as a certain old lady had not got a pair to her feet. This was in our tea hour, half an hour allowed. This is only one instance of many."

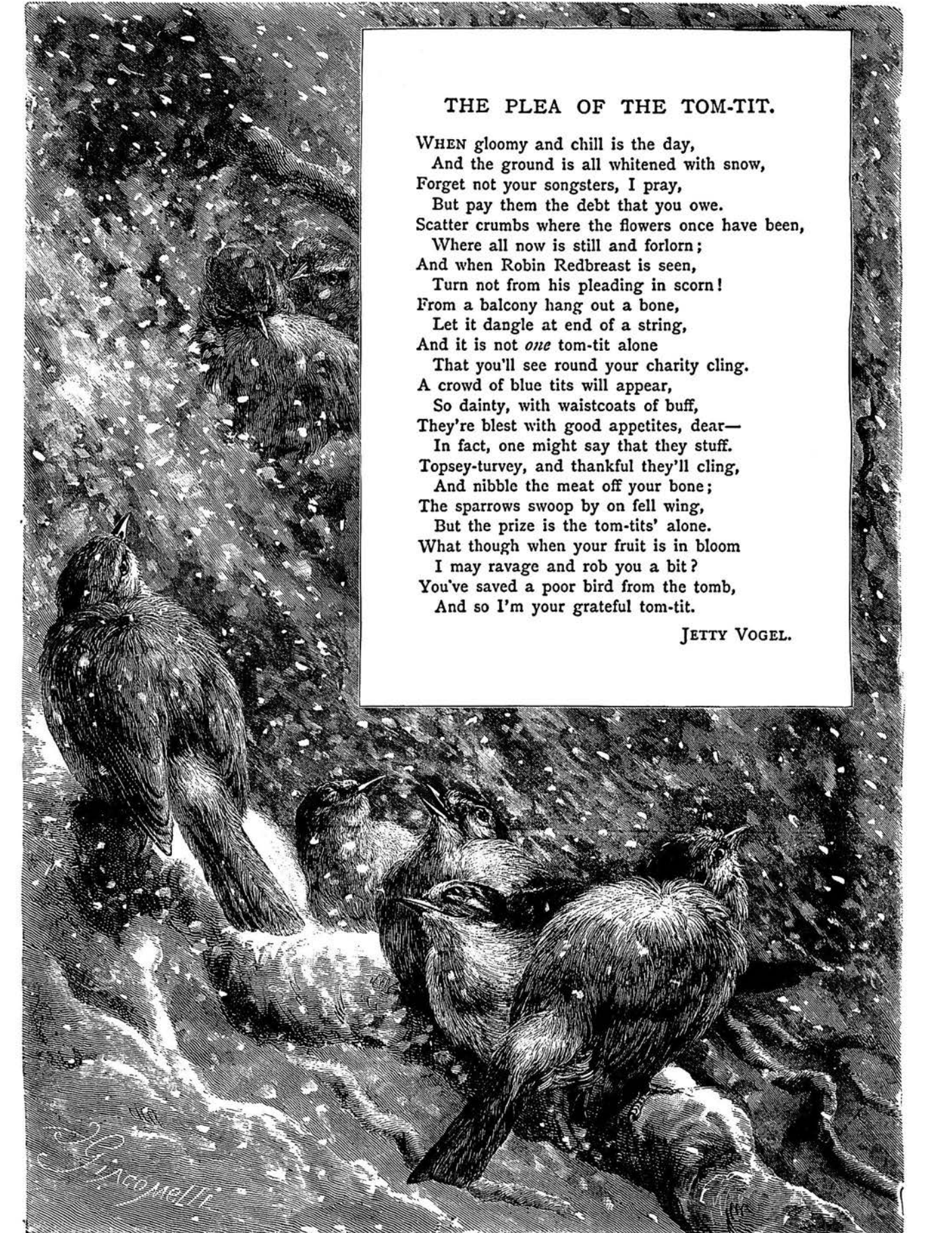
*Girl in village shop and post office two miles from a town.*—"Seven o'clock in the morning I receive the sealed letter bag from the postman, open it, sort the letters and send the post-boy round the village with them. Now customers begin to come in for little things that they want for breakfast, for the poorer people seem to live from meal to meal, only buying a small quantity of food as they want it. After breakfast I help to cut up pigs, send the joints out in time to cook them for dinner. Eleven o'clock the postman returns for first despatch of letters. I make all the bills and do the booking and ordering of goods. One o'clock my dinner, which is very interrupted by customers; one wants a chop for his dinner, another a knot of thread to finish some straw bonnets for the warehouse. Four o'clock, postman is here again with more letters. People who are expecting them call for them. Our tea-time is as much interrupted as the dinner-hour."

"Six o'clock, and the postman is here again for the last despatch of letters, I have to seal them in the letter-bag and he takes them to the town office. Now we begin making sausages, I only season them and string them ready for sale. Customers now flock in and their wants are numerous; one wants groceries, another meat or some medicines or pills, or a ready-made shirt, or calico, or brushes, or paraffin oil; all this comes within my work and I help in it all. Aunt and I do all the work; she pays me as she would a stranger."

*A young married woman.*—"I have on my hands the entire work of my house including the washing and baking. Beside the house-work proper I make a good many of my own dresses and find time for visiting, keeping up my small store of accomplishments and reading. In summer there is the garden to attend to. My experience is that by doing my own work and so saving the expense of labour we can live very comfortably on one pound a week, this including dress and all personal expenses. I have carefully kept account to be sure of this. We have the comfortable consciousness of living much within our income. In the evenings while I work, my husband often reads aloud; at nine o'clock we have a very light supper, and after this we have music as a rule. I would not like to exchange my home-life for any profession in the world."







THE PLEA OF THE TOM-TIT.

WHEN gloomy and chill is the day,  
And the ground is all whitened with snow,  
Forget not your songsters, I pray,  
But pay them the debt that you owe.  
Scatter crumbs where the flowers once have been,  
Where all now is still and forlorn ;  
And when Robin Redbreast is seen,  
Turn not from his pleading in scorn !  
From a balcony hang out a bone,  
Let it dangle at end of a string,  
And it is not *one* tom-tit alone  
That you'll see round your charity cling.  
A crowd of blue tits will appear,  
So dainty, with waistcoats of buff,  
They're blest with good appetites, dear—  
In fact, one might say that they stuff.  
Topsey-turvey, and thankful they'll cling,  
And nibble the meat off your bone ;  
The sparrows swoop by on fell wing,  
But the prize is the tom-tits' alone.  
What though when your fruit is in bloom  
I may ravage and rob you a bit ?  
You've saved a poor bird from the tomb,  
And so I'm your grateful tom-tit.

JETTY VOGEL.

## BITS ABOUT RATS.

THE following anecdotes illustrative of the marvellous sagacity and strategical powers of rats were told me by a gentleman who, during a long life, had been much given to studying the habits and natures of animals; he assured me there was not the least exaggeration in his account. Should any doubt arise as to its veracity, I have no objection to giving my informant's name.

As far as I can remember I will repeat them in his own words—

"I used to keep in a cupboard, in my studio, a stone jar partially filled with oil. When I left home for a few days, I dipped all my oil-painting brushes in this jar to keep them soft, not, of course, leaving them there. Naturally they absorbed but a small quantity, yet I invariably found on my return my stock of oil considerably diminished. I had strictly forbidden the servants interfering with any of my painting materials, and they assured me they had never done so. One day I took the key of my cupboard away with me, so you may imagine how surprised I felt when, on my return, I found my stock of oil had disappeared at a greater rate than ever.

"One day I found some clue to the mystery. I had mounted a ladder outside my window to nail up a clematis which grew round it; as I looked into the room I saw a rat come out of the cupboard, look cautiously round in every direction, then rush across the room; his flight was followed by that of four others, and they all disappeared under the skirting board.

"I went indoors at once, visited my oil jar, and found, as I expected, it was emptier than when I last saw it; but what thoroughly puzzled me was, by what means these little thieves obtained the luxury they were so fond of.

"After various conjectures on my part, I could come to no conclusion on the subject. I therefore determined to watch them at work. The next day I left the oil jar in the middle of the room, and again mounted the ladder outside. In a very few moments a large rat, evidently the leader of the troupe—the one who had first come out of the cupboard the day before, to see if the coast was clear for their escape—ran across the floor towards the cupboard, but stopped short as he passed the jar, attracted by the odour of his favourite beverage.

"He walked round it, stood on his hind legs, leaning against it, and then rushed back to the hole in the wall. He instantly re-appeared, followed by his companions; there was evidently a consultation as to whether an attempt would be safe; they ran round it, looked in every direction, and finally decided the chance was too good to be lost.

"You may imagine how excited and interested I was, and if you did not know me well enough to be sure I would not tell a falsehood for your amusement, you could hardly believe what I there saw. One rat stood on his hind legs, leaning against the jar, his face towards it; a second climbed up his back, and stood in the same position; a

third mounted on the shoulders of the second. Clever as this certainly was they could not reach the oil by this means, and I was all excitement to see how that feat was to be achieved. A fourth rat climbed up the others, and, turning round carefully on the shoulders of number three, sat on the edge of the jar, his face turned my way, his long tail hanging within the jar. In a moment or two he turned round again; the secret was discovered. The aforesaid long tail had been thoroughly soaked in the oil, and the head rat, the captain of these brigands, standing upright, with evident relish licked the oil off the instrument his friend had kindly lent for the purpose.

"When his appetite was satisfied he changed places with the top rat, and performed for him the same service; the other rats then took it in turns to feed, and he fed them. After they

flight of stairs without breaking it. The cupboard I spoke of before faced my door. I made in it a small hole through which to watch the operations; I then left the room door wide open, and placed an egg on the landing outside my mother's door. I did this two or three days after treading on the egg in my room, expressly to give them time to recover the fright I had caused them before. My cupboard was a very large one, and I was enabled to sit down and wait patiently for the entertainment I expected.

"Before long a rat crossed the room and went out at the door, came back directly, and, I suppose, told his family of the grand find he had made, for they all followed him up the stairs, walked round the egg, smelt and touched it, then coolly rolled it to the top of the stairs, one going in front, I suppose, to break its fall. Now comes the marvellous part of the affair. When within five or six inches of the top stair, the rat in front turned over on his back, with his four feet in the air; then turned on his side towards the egg, and the other rats arranged it for him between his four legs, with which he tightly grasped it. His friends then raised him till he was on his back again, the egg safely resting on his chest; two took him by the head, two by the feet, and lifted him to the very edge of the stair; then two went to the next step to receive him, and he was absolutely lifted down by the two left above, the other two breaking his fall. The other steps were descended in the same manner, and when they reached level ground they rolled the egg along, preserving the same precautions as adopted before starting their clever descent.

"I am sure I need not tell you I allowed them to carry it safely home, before I came out of my hiding place."

M. R. L.



"CUCKOO! CUCKOO!"

The cuckoo, as everyone knows, lays her eggs in her neighbour's nest. The people of Denmark account for this fact in the following way:—

When in early spring, they say, the voice of the cuckoo is first heard in the woods, every village girl kisses her hand and asks, "Cuckoo! cuckoo! when shall I be married?" and the old folks, borne down with age and rheumatism, inquire, "Cuckoo! cuckoo! when shall I be released from this world's cares?"

The bird, in answer, continues singing "cuckoo" as many times as years will elapse before the object of their desires will come to pass. But, as some old folks live to an advanced age and many girls die old maids, the poor bird has so much to do in answering the questions put to her that the building season goes by: she has no time to make her nest, but lays her eggs in that of the hedge-sparrow.

## ON THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF MUFFS.



all the accessory details of feminine toilette the muff is the most fascinating. Be it of costly fur, a triumph of millinery, a piece of twisted velvet with coquettish bows of ribbon in consequence

placed here and there, or of plain cloth demurely braided and corded, with wise-looking tassels, it is always an incident in woman's appearance that cannot be overlooked.

It serves a two-fold purpose—it is the greatest boon to cold-nipped fingers; it answers all the requirements of a pocket.

If the tailor makes the man it is woman who makes the muff.

It sprang originally from the fertile brain of an unknown Venetian lady at a vague date towards the end of the fifteenth century. She appeared in public one winter day carrying a rolled piece of velvet lined with fur, its two ends fastened with crystal buttons, and from that time muffs became necessary and important items in all *trousseaux* or wardrobes. Individual taste made variants of the original, but the pattern remained the same for many years, brocade and silk being pressed into the service as well as velvet, the crystal buttons being sometimes replaced by those of gold or pearl.

The word "muff" was already in use at the time, being used to designate the *révers* of fur which were then worn upon the sleeves, a quaint instance of this being the sermon of Robert d'Abrissel, prior of the Abbey of Fontevault, against the extravagance of his nuns in wearing "muffs" of ermine upon the sleeves of their pale blue dresses.

On its first appearance on the shores of the Adriatic in that Queen of Cities from whence came so much of the culture and luxury of the

Middle Ages, the muff was very small in size, but as it passed into new countries it became the sport and plaything of every outrageous fashion that held the hour, sometimes long and straight like a box, at others short and round like a barrel, sometimes reaching above the elbow, at others scarcely covering the fingers.

In the days of powder, of rouge and of beauty spots, when dresses were preposterously wide and manners theatrical and artificial, an attempt was made in Paris to discard fur and carry muffs made solely of cloth, of delicate brocade or silk.

The furriers were in despair, even going so far as to petition the Pope to excommunicate all those who carried muffs of cloth. Their request having been refused, a general council was held at which, after heated discussion, a brilliant plan was evolved.

Time after time the public executioner appeared upon the scaffold, his hands warmly folded in a muff of the hated cloth, and as in England the muff fell into disuse because Mrs. Turner, the poisoner of Sir Thomas Overbury, was hanged in one of extravagant proportions starched yellow, so in France the cloth muff disappeared from polite society because of its patronage by the despised Monsieur de Paris.

Thus the furriers conquered fashion, and as England then slavishly followed the *modes* of France, muffs of fur became *de rigueur* in each country. Ermine, vair and sable held popular favour from that time forward, otter and blue fox not coming into vogue until a later period.

When skating became a fashionable pastime muffs reached a colossal size, almost taking the place of a cloak. They were generally made of the wool of the Angora cat, covering the knees and protecting the middle of the body against the cold.

It was towards the end of the eighteenth century that the muff reached its smallest

form, a French author describing it as "a casket for letters lined with white satin." But notwithstanding the many changes it has undergone, the many forms it has taken, it has ever been in harmony with the costume in fashion; and, curiously enough, it was only when worn by men that its extravagance of shape and decoration became ridiculous.

Henry III. of France took the muff under his special protection, his courtiers imitating their sovereign, who sheltered his hands in masses of ribbon laced together with gold thread with heavy fringes thereto of twisted gold and jewels.

And thus for the first time in its history the muff became vulgarised.

In England men did not take very kindly to the invention of the Venetian lady, but the *beaux* in the earlier part of the reign of George III. made an ineffectual attempt at its revival amongst the sterner sex, Sir Benjamin Backbite in Sheridan's *School for Scandal* showing the fashion of his day in wearing a grey astrakhan muff of large dimensions suspended round his neck by a cord.

Like so many other articles of dress in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was made the subject of sumptuary laws, all but those of gentle birth being compelled to use skins of cats or dogs in the making of their muffs.

In later years the form of the muff has altered but slightly, although it has gone through many phases of ornamentation. Extreme plainness and simplicity are now its chief characteristics, whilst the happy medium in form has been reached.

Whether plain or highly adorned the muff is essentially an adjunct of femininity, useful, pleasant to the sight, and a perpetual proof of the wisdom of the unknown lady of fair Venetia to whose inventive brain it owes its existence.

FRANK HIRD.



## HOW TO MAKE CONVERSATION.\*



CONVERSATION is an intellectual battledore and shuttlecock. If one player is inert, uninterested, or ignorant, he fails to return his fellow-player's well-aimed blow, the shuttlecock falls to the ground, and the game is at an end. So in conversation, there must be give and take. You cannot give what you have not got, and "nought from nought, nothing."

A *morning call* is essentially a visit from a lady to a lady, and naturally begins with inquiries after children or mutual friends.

You pass on to some topic that you know to be of interest: flowers, pets, parish work. All these sub-

jects may be enlarged on. Flowers may lead to some speciality: roses, orchids, ferns, mosses, hothouses, vineries, new gardening apparatus, fresh modes of culture, botany or botanical literature.

Most women have pets—either dogs, cats, birds, or horses. Poultry, bee-keeping, and the anxieties of the dairy will interest some.

Parish work has so many branches, that if you have met with a worker, you certainly may get some information, if you cannot give it. Temperance work, Sunday schools, district visiting, the Girls' Friendly Society, or Young Women's Christian Association, mothers' meetings, savings banks: one or all are of interest to the parish worker.

Perhaps your visit is to some one in whom mission work at home or abroad, Dr. Barnardo's boys and girls, the sick in the hospital, or the poor in the work-

\* To this paper was awarded the Prize of THREE GUINEAS offered for the best paper of suggestions of the most original and suitable topics of conversation.

house, have a staunch advocate. I have heard it said of a lady, "She skilfully steers the conversation round to the 'Deep Sea Missions.'"

Some of our friends may be able to dilate on the beauties of the School of Needlework, whilst others may appreciate the British Museum. One friend may have some clever daughters, who are delighted to describe the Scientific Dressmaking System, amuse you with an account of their Cookery Lessons, or give you a graphic sketch of the students at the School of Art.

When two ladies meet, there is of course a comparison of social notes. Who is coming, who is going, in the neighbourhood? The newest baby, the coming marriage, the latest sorrow, fêtes, concerts, parties, tennis, are discussed, and also I am afraid must be added, servants—a most objectionable subject.

In spring you question your friends as to the most desirable holiday retreat, or you talk of their proposed trip to Norway or America.

If you have a mutual interest in the Army or Navy, you announce the latest promotions and retirements, and speculate as to who will be appointed to the vacant posts.

Schools will frequently be discussed; the advantages of public and private schools; modern education; the pressure of examinations; Oxford and Cambridge; Girton and Somerville; and above all, that perplexing question to the modern parent, What is to be done with the dull boys and girls?—a question which will probably lead to some remarks on emigration, and the various openings in the different colonies.

Between ladies, some talk on dress is allowable; and it would be well, whilst avoiding the extravagance of some dress reformers, if women would endeavour to cultivate amongst their friends a healthy opinion as to women's and children's clothing.

The intellectual woman does not always make a good conversationalist, but most probably she can give you plenty of information on the subject in which she takes a special interest, if you have the tact to draw her out: history, mathematics, social science, archæology, the higher education of women, the training of lady doctors and nurses; or it may be that she organises emigration, is a member of the Kyrle Society or the British Association.

Geology, entomology, natural history, physiology, music, sculpture, painting, all have their votaries. We meet every day with the enthusiastic collector of old china, engravings, autographs, old books, stamps. There may be such divergence between our neighbours' tastes, that one may have a good collection of drawings of fonts, and another may have expended her energies in amassing many varieties of *buttons*. Whatever may be the tone of the mind, a good conversationalist will endeavour to tune his conversation to the same pitch, or if that pitch is low, he will strive to raise it.

Conversation in the *drawing-room before dinner* can only be fragmentary. Guests are arriving, and the announcement of dinner may cut short the most interesting discussion.

A hostess will often be able to start a conversation between strangers by a few words skilfully added to a bare introduction. "Mrs. A., whose pictures we admired so much at the Exhibition;" or "Miss B., like yourself, belongs to the Browning Society." The hostess will also have photographs, engravings, sketches, miniatures, magazines, scattered about, to attract attention and offer topics ready at hand. It is much the custom to admire the artistic arrangement of the room, its elegant draperies, curious furniture, pretty ornaments, and old china. Even the softly-shaded lamps may claim attention and turn conversation to the modern facilities for lighting, to the wonders of the Electric Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1882, and the instantaneous illumination of the Collinderies last year.

Amongst friends, there will be an exchange of family news and congratulations, the success of A. at college, B. at Woolwich, C.'s engagement.

The last cricket or golf match, yesterday's hunt, the proposed bazaar, "that delightful picnic on Wednesday," Mrs. D.'s garden-party on Thursday, the Academy, Grosvenor, and other exhibitions of the day, *the book of the season*, the last-discovered prima-donna, any subject that is occupying the public mind, and does not require much thought or long argument, befits such conversation.

To talk well across a *dinner-table* is an art. A good conversationalist will go provided with a certain amount of material. Here comes in the opportunity for the good story and the clever repartee.

Last year, the Queen's Jubilee must have been talked over at hundreds of dinner-tables. The statues erected, foundation-stones laid, the processions, fireworks, bonfires, dinners, and teas, must have occupied hours of talk; whilst references to former jubilees, coronations, and other State pageants must have been numerous. Even now, the Queen's presents are before the public, and may not such gifts as that of the Khedive—a necklace and earrings of gold lotus-flowers, scarabs, and sphinxes—carry our conversation to the land of the Pharaohs, with its ancient civilisation, its wonderful ruins, its present decrepitude? or may not the old ivory fan, painted by the daughters of George III., presented by Lady Holland, bring to our recollection Holland House, and the group of celebrities connected with it? whilst their many witticisms may be recalled to add the necessary spice to our reminiscences.

If the lady or gentleman at your side is young, amateur photography is a subject on which you are pretty sure to meet with some response; most people have a friend who photographs, even if they do not themselves dabble in photography.

Travels are always a safe subject. You have been to Fiji, and your neighbour to Iceland, and you exchange experiences; or you have both been to Switzerland, and during the whole of dinner you ascend mountains, cross glaciers, criticise hotels, and gaze at waterfalls. Perhaps, however, you have to do with an anxious mother, who consults you as to the danger of her boy riding a bicycle, and wishes you to

endorse her opinion that a walking tour is the best holiday trip for him.

Most people have some knowledge of music, enough at least to *talk* of Rubinstein's playing, of Wagner, and "the music of the future"; or to uphold their preference for popular music.

The "Greenery Yallery, Grosvenor Gallery" young man or young woman may afford you some amusement, unless you are yourself inclined that way, in which case you will no doubt have something to say about the æsthetic.

Possibly, at a dinner-table, the ruffles and wristlets of your *vis-à-vis* may be admired by the person sitting next to you, and if you have some knowledge of Point, Mechlin, and Alençon, you can continue the subject, or else turn it off to the poor lace-makers of Ireland, and the efforts made to help them.

Flowers adorn every dinner-table. The quick eyes of those interested in their culture will detect the new and choice specimen; or it may be a simple lover of flowers, who is delighted at the effect produced, and whose enthusiasm will lead you on to speak of the grouping of plants at flower-shows, and the comparative merits of bedding-out and old-fashioned gardening.

In towns, the streets, the shops, the advertisements—who, for instance, would meet those striking advertisements, the hooded friar, or the three barristers driving through London, without having a word of amusement or indignation to say on the subject—new buildings, the railway, the tram, the omnibus, all suggest topics of conversation to the thoughtful.

In the country, the subjects discussed are different—the prospects of the shooting season, the fox the keeper saw yesterday, the Agricultural Show, the visit of the Archæological Society, the last joke at the Board of Guardians, the coming of age of Lord E., the restoration of F. Church, the Volunteer Parade, the new regiment quartered in the county town, its past victories, its present character, the last box of books from London, and the advantages of circulating libraries, sixpenny telegrams, and parcel post.

Conversation in the *train*—if between strangers—would generally be carried on by gentlemen. Probably it would be started by a courteous offer of a newspaper, with some remark on public affairs, which might be responded to by the intelligence that an opposition paper denies the statements mentioned. The value of newspaper intelligence, and comparisons of their literary style, will probably follow.

The country through which the train passes, suggests fresh topics every few minutes. Suppose a start is made at Southampton, our travellers discuss the docks and shipping they are leaving behind. Two nurses in their grey costume, on the platform of one of the next stations, remind them of Netley, its hospital, its abbey. At Bishopstoke, they reflect on the intricacies of railway junctions, retail the latest accidents, and talk of the advantage of insuring against them.

Now they are in the chalk cuttings, and discourse on the flora and fauna of the cretaceous system. They emerge at Winchester, to speak of its ancient im-

portance as the capital of the kingdom, of its cathedral, of St. Cross, of the colleges of St. Mary, and of their founder, William of Wykeham.

They fly past quiet villages, with grey churches nestling amid the green trees, past the ripening corn-fields, catching every now and then a glimpse of a big house, and their theme is English country life.

The train has reached Basingstoke, and they wonder, as they look at the ruins that adjoin the railway station, what the monks would have said if they could have had a glimpse of the noise and bustle that now so closely invade their sanctuary. Probably one of our travellers is a thorough-going conservative, and will lament over the "good old times," their quiet and their leisure; in which case, some fellow-traveller is sure to maintain that "these are the better days," and asks his companion if he desires to return to post-chaises, and run the risk of being stopped by highwaymen. This, perhaps, may compel him to acknowledge that life is now safer, and that there is far less crime; and so they may go on to talk of prisons, reformatories, and what after all is the best thing, preventive work.

At Farnbro', the station for Aldershot, some reference to military matters will be *à propos*; whilst as they pass Woking they will reflect on our funeral customs, or advocate the establishment of cremation.

As London is approached, they talk of its enormous extent, its rapid encroachment on the surrounding country, its wealth or poverty; they rejoice in the many opportunities for study and advancement it offers, or deplore its vice and misery. Now they are slowly crossing the Thames, which suggests such wide-apart subjects as Sir Thomas More, and many another prisoner, passing down to the Tower, and—the Universities Boat-race.

There is St. Paul's, to call to our memory Sir Christopher Wren, Nelson, and Wellington, who lie at rest in the heart of the great City. But our travellers have reached Charing Cross: their conversation must come to an end with their journey; but on many another journey, on each different line of rail, may not the traveller as he goes past town and village find in the passing landscape food for thought, and subjects for conversation?

In the old coaching-days, a celebrated conversationalist was taking a journey. As soon as the coach was started, he began to talk to his fellow-traveller. He talked first on one subject, and then on another, without eliciting any response from his companion. At last, getting impatient, he said, "I have talked of religion, politics, agriculture, but you have said nothing. Is there any subject you can talk on?" Waking up, the man inquired, "Do you know anything new about leather?" If we find our companions do not take up our ball of conversation, whether it be during a *morning call*, at a *dinner party*, or in the *train*, let us do our best to find out in what directions their interests lie; and, *failing all others*, I would suggest they might show some animation if you ventured upon that most *original, uncommon, and un-English* subject, *the weather*.

J. BIBBY.

## DIFFERENT WAYS OF MAKING AND SERVING FRENCH PASTRY AND CAKES.



**A**s I write I have in my mind's eye the tempting-looking chocolate and coffee *éclairs* that most high-class confectioners display. But these high-class confectioners are not to be found in all towns, to say nothing of the numberless small country places where any variety of that species is unknown, and yet it is often here that hostesses are at a loss to find something a little out of the common which to regale their guests at the small social functions in which most people find enjoyment. Chocolate *éclairs* are universal favourites with old and young, and yet they are seldom to be seen where the refreshments provided are home-made. Let no one say, "How absurd to try to make these delicacies from written instructions!" a remark, I must own with regret, that I should not be surprised to hear, for truly in many of the recipes one reads the quantities are vague, and the length of time required for cooking often left to one's imagination, while whether the oven should be hot, cool or moderate, is a point apparently not worth consideration. I can only suppose that in these days of cookery schools and County Council classes scattered all over the country, writers think details are superfluous. And yet generally it is the details which make or mar not only the recipes, but many other things in life. Want of detail, then, shall not be laid to the charge of this paper, and if attention be paid to that, I feel sure I can promise my readers success.

Personally my experience is that French pastry is easier to manipulate than puff pastry, and it is a great deal more digestible and not any more expensive, though cheapness cannot be claimed for it; but there are occasions when it is necessary to launch forth a little in the matter of expense.

Before giving the actual recipes I should like to say a little about weights and measures. My reason for doing so is this: a little time ago, in speaking to a friend with whom I was staying, about the usefulness of *reliable* recipes, she remarked, "I do wish that in giving quantities the American plan of measuring in cups and spoons was followed instead of always employing weights and scales, for it frequently happens that the latter are not available in houses of modest means," and she went on to say that her scales were far too cumbersome to weigh anything under pounds, and that as she often had to do her own cooking when anything special was required (for her *ménage* consisted of two inexperienced domestics), it was a great boon and a real help if cups and spoons replaced scales. "A word to the wise is sufficient," and I made a mental note that henceforth in writing cookery articles I would always give the equivalent for *avoirdupois* weight. I shall carry out my resolution by beginning the reform to-day. After this digression we will come back to the subject in hand.

**French Pastry.**—Five ounces (five tablespoonfuls not heaped up) of pastry flour, two ounces (two tablespoonfuls) of castor sugar, three ounces of butter (one ounce is a piece the size of a walnut), half a pint of water (one tumblerful), a quarter of a teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of flavouring of any kind, three small eggs. Take a saucepan of the capacity of two pints, put in the water, butter,

salt and sugar; when boiling fast sift in the flour with one hand and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon with the other. Remove from the fire and heat well until the lumpy-looking mass becomes perfectly smooth; when this is accomplished add the eggs one at a time (unbeaten). As each egg is added you will find the mixture again separates and has a lumpy appearance, but it will get smooth with beating and stirring. The lightness of the pastry depends entirely upon the beating, for it is in this process that the necessary air is beaten in. In passing I might say that we *stir* when we wish to mix, but we *beat* when a mixture depends upon the amount of air beaten in for its lightness. The flavouring goes in last, and then the pastry is ready to make up into any desired shape, the most popular being a roll. Take a dessertspoonful of the mixture and roll lightly with the hand on a floured board until you have a roll three and a half inches in length, and about two or two and a half inches in circumference. They should be free from cracks, and if made this size you will get at least fourteen *éclairs* from the amount of pastry I have given. Place on a slightly greased baking tin, and bake in a moderately hot oven until well risen and of a pale fawn colour. Twenty minutes is generally long enough for this; afterwards they should be allowed to dry and become quite firm in a rather cooler heat for three-quarters of an hour. I must expatiate upon the baking, for it is so important. Many people can make, few can bake, and I think most will agree with me, that the latter needs far more experience than the former.

If the oven for French pastry be too cool at first, it will not rise properly; and when it has risen be careful not to move it until the surface is firm to the touch; if the cold air (which is much heavier than hot air) is allowed to fall upon it before being set, the weight of it will cause the pastry to fall irremediably. Now we have the reason for never banging the oven door. Therefore a moderately hot oven for first twenty minutes, and a more gentle heat for rest of time. To be very exact, 350° F. to begin with, and 300° to finish. When cooked enough the pastry should be crisp and of a pale brown colour. Sift on to a sieve or place round a plate to allow the steam to escape from underneath, and when cold finish them off with whipped cream or custard inside and icing on the outside.

The rolls must be split open with a knife, a spoonful of cream or custard nicely flavoured inserted. If the cream is unobtainable make a custard as follows: One tablespoonful of cornflour, one cup of milk (half pint), one tablespoonful of sugar, two eggs beaten, flavouring. Mix the cornflour smoothly with the milk, add sugar and eggs. Stir over a gentle heat until quite thick. Turn on to a wetted plate and when cold, use. This is a very good substitute for cream and not much trouble to make.

**Icing for coating.**—Eight tablespoonfuls of icing sugar, two tablespoonfuls of coffee essence, four tablespoonfuls of water. Put coffee and water into a small saucepan and then stir in the sugar. Stir over the most gentle heat until the icing is smooth and thick enough to coat the back of the spoon. By coating the spoon I mean the icing should only just run off, for if too thin it looks poor and unfinished, and if too thick the pastry lacks the professional appearance it should have. The icing may be varied by using the juice of a lemon or orange instead of water and

coffee; if chocolate icing be preferred, allow one ounce of chocolate, Fry's soluble is best, to half a small cup of water, boil until dissolved, and add sugar as before, flavour with vanilla, and use. Instead of making the *éclairs* into rolls, they look very pretty made in the shape of meringues. Tea-spoons must be used for shaping, and being smaller they will only take forty minutes to cook; of course, the finishing off is the same.

**Victoria Sandwiches.**—These are most superior and, as far as I know, are only to be obtained at one well-known confectioner's in the West End. Make the pastry exactly as for *éclairs*, except that the sugar and flavouring are left out and a little more salt added. Make up into rolls and brush each over with a little beaten egg, bake until crisp. When cold, split open, have some mustard and cress washed scrupulously clean, place some inside each roll with a teaspoonful of good salad-dressing and a boned sardine. Serve daintily on a folded napkin garnished with parsley. Watercress, shred lettuce, or any other green-meat may replace the cress, while it is hardly necessary to remind my readers that any cooked fish, hard-boiled eggs, or finely-cut pieces of chicken will find as much favour as the sardine.

A very favourite sweet which one often meets with abroad and occasionally in England is a *Gâteau à la Princesse*. It is so pretty that I really must give the readers of the "G. O. P." the benefit of the recipe.

**Gâteau à la Princesse.**—Make some French pastry as directed for *éclairs* and drop it in rounds about the size of a halfpenny on to a greased baking-tin. If a forcing-bag and pipe are at hand, put a tablespoonful of the mixture into it and force it out sharply; this will ensure the drops being of a uniform size. Do not have them too large. Bake for half an hour. The little cakes look much nicer if brushed with beaten egg before being cooked. Take a round of sponge cake (or short crust not rolled too thin) as large as a breakfast plate. Dip each cake into syrup (which I will give instructions for presently), and arrange in a circle on the flat round of cake. It must be done quickly and a strainer used for dipping the cakes into the syrup. This makes them adhere to the foundation besides giving a brilliant surface. Place two more rows on the top of this until you have formed a kind of wall with a well in the middle. Whip half a pint of thick cream flavour and sweeten to taste, pile it high in the middle and decorate with few dried fruits. Custard may be used instead of the cream; whichever is employed it must be piled high to give a handsome appearance to the dish, which should be served on a round silver dish.

**Syrup for coating.**—Three-quarters of a pound (three teacupfuls) of loaf sugar, a quarter of a pint of water (one cup). Put sugar and water into a saucepan, and when dissolved boil briskly over the fire until on dropping a little into cold water it sets; use *at once*, as it very soon goes sugary. When taken from the fire it is an excellent plan to plunge the saucepan into another utensil containing hot water. This prevents the syrup getting sugary or crystallising. Stir as little as possible for the same reason. While the sugar and water are boiling skim if needful; it depends entirely upon the sugar whether there is little or much scum. Inferior sugar throws up a good deal; cane sugar is the best to use.

There is another kind of pastry which is much more lik; cake both in appearance and texture. It is made with the following

ingredients: Three large eggs, four table-spoonfuls of good flour, five tablespoonfuls of castor sugar, three tablespoonfuls of butter (melted), pinch of salt, flavouring. Put the eggs into a good-sized mixing-bowl, whisk in the sugar, place the basin over a pan of hot water and whisk until the mixture is quite thick and light in colour. It will take at least twenty minutes to get it the right consistency; the heat from the water helps the eggs to thicken more quickly. The flour and butter go in alternately. They should not be stirred in but folded in with a few turns of the whisk. Have ready a small Yorkshire pudding tin greased and lined with unprinted paper. Pour the cake into this and bake in a moderate heat for about thirty minutes. Turn out upside down on to a sugared paper. Remember that, if the oven is not the right heat, this, like French pastry, will not rise

properly. It should be the colour of a sponge cake when finished and one and a half inches thick. It is much nicer for cutting up when stale, and does not get dry even if kept for longer than a week. This is a great advantage when one wishes to get forward with the making of the fancy cakes. The same advantage cannot be claimed for French pastry, which cannot be too fresh. To finish off the flat cake, cut with a sharp knife into small squares or diamonds, coat with chocolate, coffee or lemon-icing entirely so that the cakes are completely hidden beneath it; on the top of some place half a blanched almond, on the rest a cherry or star of angelica, or anything that presents itself for decoration.

So far I have said nothing about the ingredients used, but as it is a matter of importance as far as the success of these

recipes is concerned, I will conclude with just a few hints worth remembering.

*Flour.*—This must be of good quality, and the tests by which you can distinguish superior from inferior flour are that a good flour is always perfectly dry and is of a yellowish tinge, smooth to the touch, free from all trace of grittiness, and lastly the smell should be pleasant.

*Butter* ought to be fresh, but if salt butter be employed, wash it in a basin of cold water first and dry in a floured cloth.

*Eggs* need not be touched upon, as very few people think of using a stale egg.

*Icing Sugar.*—This is best procured from a confectioner, and should not cost more than fourpence per pound, at the outside fivepence. This, like flour, should be perfectly smooth after passing through a sieve.

A. M. B.

## PAINTED AND EMBROIDERED PHOTOGRAPH FRAME.

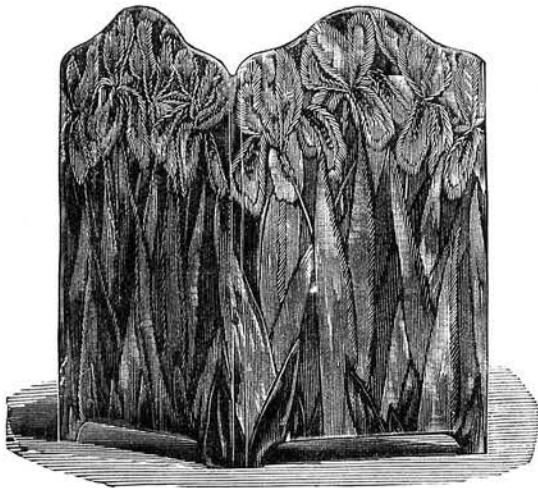


FIG. A.

IN this two-leaved photo-frame brush and needle are united in the most charming manner. Each leaf is about seventeen inches high and seven inches broad, and the material used is bright calf-skin. The pattern is first "pounced" on a piece of the calf-skin which should be nine inches wide (to allow for turnings) and twenty inches long, then the painting is carried out in *gouache* colours. The leaves and stalks are in various shades of green, and the blossoms are heliotrope. The enlarged detail of the work (Fig. B) shows how the individual blossoms should be executed, but, of course, these may be arranged according to individual taste. All the blossoms have rather sharply marked black edges. The painting being finished, the shading is carried out in flat embroidery stitches (as may be seen in Fig. B), using filosselle divided in half. On the other side the frame is completed by rose-coloured silk arranged in fans to hold photographs.

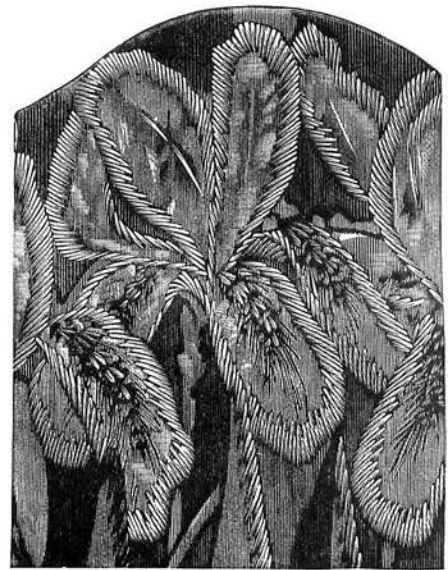


FIG. B.

## SOFA-CUSHION OF GAUZE AND LACE APPLIQUÉ.

THE foundation of the cushion may be made in any size preferred, of soft white material stuffed with down or pulled cotton wool. You cover this with bright-coloured silk, attaching to the corners, as in the illustration, flat pieces of velvet to match, so shaped as to leave a circular centre of the silk. Now take a gauze scarf, which must be wide enough to entirely cover this centre and must be about twenty or forty inches longer; gather both edges of it and attach one edge to the velvet all round; the other edge is entirely drawn up and securely fastened in the centre, so that folds radiate from thence to the sides. Then the outer edge of the gauze next the velvet is embellished either with embroidery or lace appliquéd lightly on, and single sprays are also appliquéd on the velvet corners. A huge puff or rosette of gauze (used double) is fastened in the centre. You must reckon five or six times the width of the cushion for the gauze, as it spoils the look of it altogether if the latter be not full enough. The back is covered with plain silk or velvet. Any colours or combination of colours may be used, though delicate shades are preferable, but our girls may safely

be left to their own taste in the matter, though the following suggestions may be of use. Orange looks especially rich, the gauze being



always white, the velvet being either a contrast or some shades darker in tone, and the surrounding frill of the gauze may also be lined with orange silk, which looks charming under the white gauze, in which case it need not be quite so thickly gathered. Chiffon would also be suitable instead of gauze. Pink silk, crimson velvet and white chiffon, would be delightful; also pale turquoise-blue silk, a darker shade of velvet and white chiffon. The remains of old evening dresses, if tolerably fresh, might be utilised in this way, but made of entirely new material the cushion would be an elegant gift. It would be most elegant though extremely perishable if made entirely in white or cream-coloured silk with velvet to match, and the lace pattern accentuated with jewels such as turquoises or gold spangles. If any of our girls contemplate making a wedding-present, I recommend the above suggestion, as it would be decidedly unique, besides being very delicate. It has also the advantage of not being expensive to make at starting, though of course to ensure its attractiveness it would have to be renewed directly the chiffon or other materials became in the least degree soiled.

## Odds and Ends.

THE negroes in Jamaica are most particular in their observance of Sunday. The women go to church in spotlessly white dresses, whilst the men are exceptionally well-brushed and tidy. They go to the nearest place of worship in families, the head of the party being entrusted with an umbrella, which he solemnly bears aloft as a sign of wealth and good breeding. They carry their boots in their hands, putting them on near the church door. It is the one aim and object of the average negro's life to come to England.

THE "Hope" blue diamond is probably one of the finest diamonds in the world, and is almost an indigo blue in colour. The present stone is only a portion of a much larger jewel 250 years old. In 1642 the great French traveller, Tavernier, brought the original from India, selling it to Louis XIV. in 1668, by whose orders it was cut. The *Grande Monarque* used to wear it round his neck upon a ribbon. During the Revolution the diamond disappeared, but was recovered, only to be stolen in 1792, from the French regalia at the *Garde Meubles* in Paris, and nothing was heard of it until 1830, when it made its re-appearance, but differently cut. Sixty years ago it was bought by the late Mr. Hope, from whom it takes its name, for £18,000. It is now in Chancery.

THE cliff where more sea-birds are said to build their nests than in any other place in the world is on the coast of Norway. It is 1000 feet high and goes by the name of *Sverholtklubben*. Kittiwakes have built their nests of bent and seaweed here for ages in innumerable quantities. They remain from year to year on the narrow shelves of the cliff-side, being repaired, like rooks' nests, for each coming season, and added to until they hang into space. When tourists come to inspect this colony a gun is usually let off, whereupon so many birds arise that the mass darkens the whole sky for the moment.

A MILLIONAIRE in San Francisco has recently built some baths which he has presented to the city, and which are certainly original. A tunnel was bored through the rocks which lie between the capital of California and the Pacific Ocean, through which sea-water is brought, and stored and heated in immense reservoirs. About twenty thousand people can bathe in these reservoirs at one time. The baths are surrounded by tropical plants, and outshine in splendour the famous public baths of Diocletian and Caracalla at Rome.

IN the tenth century no woman was allowed to appear at church without a veil, covering and entirely concealing the features, so that the prayers and meditations of the men might not be disturbed by the sight of feminine beauty. The custom is said to have originated from the order of a great French saint. When a young man he met a little girl with features so noble and beautiful that, although many years her senior, he fell in love with her because he traced some resemblance to a lady to whom he had been engaged, but who had died, in her lovely face. The man shortly afterwards became a priest, famed for his sanctity. Many years passed, but one day as he was entering the pulpit, he saw the child, now a woman, in the congregation, and the sight disturbed him so greatly that he was unable to preach, and therefore ordered all women henceforth to wear veils at church.

A RETIRED manufacturer owned a very handsome gold snuff-box of which he was inordinately proud. One day, in a railway carriage, he offered a pinch of snuff to all his fellow-travellers with the exception of a Frenchman, who, he thought was asleep. But the Frenchman was awake, and leaning forward said politely, "S'il vous plait, monsieur," not wishing to lose his pinch. "Silver plate!" cried the manufacturer, "it's pure gold, every bit of it, sir."

FOR two or three centuries the little town of Brock, a few miles from Amsterdam, has been famous as being the cleanest town in the world, as well as for its fanciful houses, gardens and streets. Its inhabitants are only peasants, but their one aim and object in life seems to keep their houses freshly painted, their gardens in apple-pie order, and their yards and streets as clean as a parlour. No cattle or carts are allowed in the streets, which are paved with polished stones, intermingled with bricks of various colours, and kept so clean that a lady might walk upon them in white satin slippers without soiling them. The people of Brock depend for their livelihood upon the raising of stock and the butter and cheese industry, but the cattle are kept in lovely green meadows at the backs of the houses, their stalls being scrubbed and washed like the floor of a kitchen.

AN extraordinary story has recently been revived, although in the thirties it occasioned much excitement. Some sixty years ago, the cashier of a merchant in Liverpool received a Bank of England note in the course of his business. On holding it up to the light to test its genuineness, he saw some indistinct red marks traced on the front of the note and upon its margin. After much trouble he deciphered the following:—"If this note should fall into the hands of John Dean of Longhill near Carlisle, he will learn thereby that his brother is languishing a prisoner in Algiers." Mr. Dean, on being shown the note, immediately applied to the Government, and on payment of a ransom his unfortunate brother was released by the piratical Bey. He had been a slave for eleven years, and with a piece of wood for a pen, his own blood for ink, had traced the words upon the bank-note, in the hope of them being seen sooner or later.

THE young Queen Amelia of Portugal has begun the study of medicine with the greatest enthusiasm. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of her husband and the entreaties of her *entourage*, she allowed herself to be inoculated as a preventative against diphtheria, and reads assiduously all the books she can procure on anatomy and pathology.

MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE is the oldest living poetess. She is seventy-five years old but scarcely looks fifty, and has written verses for sixty years. On her seventieth birthday Oliver Wendell Holmes said of her, "She is seventy years young to-day."

THY life, wert thou the pitifulest of all the sons of earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all that thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as He has done and does, "like a star, unlasting yet unresting."—*Carlyle*.

LOOK how thou walkest. Take good heed thy feet do not tread on the heels of thy poor brethren.—*Dante*.

ADVICE, like snow, the softer it falls the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into, the mind.—*Coleridge*.

A YOUNG woman named Ella L. Knowles, a barrister in Montana, has recently achieved a wonderful success. A lawsuit concerning the floating of some mining companies has been dragging on for nearly two years at great cost and anxiety to the parties concerned. Miss Knowles having been consulted suggested an agreement to which both sides instantly agreed, and the clever lady got 10,000 dollars as her fee.

A SCHEME for the advancement of women is rapidly gaining influential support in France. The idea is to raise the *morale* of French women, and thereby lift them to higher standards of social excellence and usefulness, and for the purpose it has been decided to hold an international congress next year when all social, political, and philanthropic associations of women in the world, whatever their tendencies and aims, are to be invited to attend, so that the fair daughters of France may glean the best methods of solidarity.

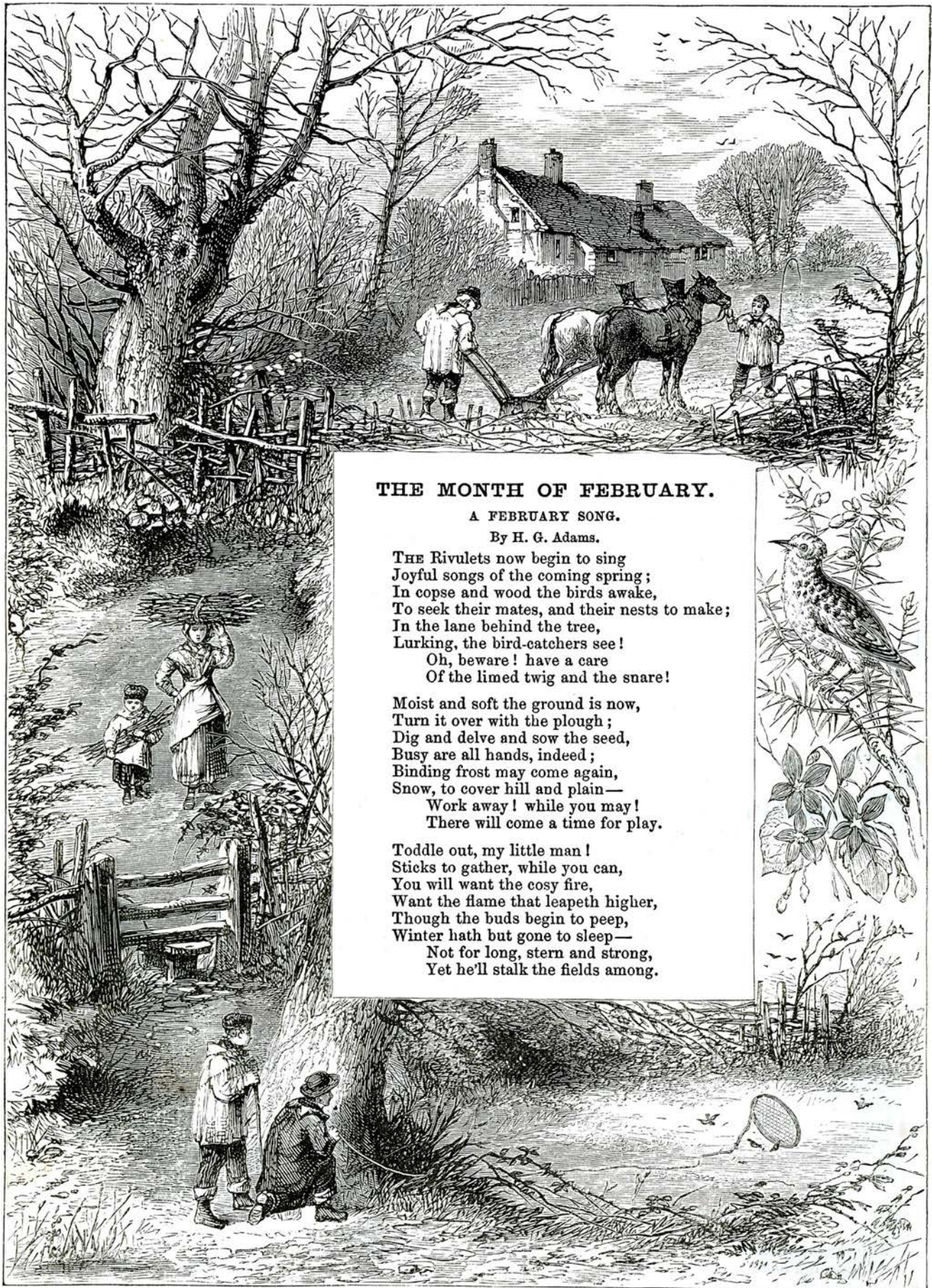
AMERICA still proves itself to be the land of the future for feminine enterprise. In Gotham there is a blacksmith's shop entirely managed by three women. The shop originally belonged to their father, who died twelve years ago. The mother then took charge of the business and had her daughters not only taught to shoe a horse, but every branch of the trade as well. The mother died, and now the three girls, one of whom is married, employ five men, and carry on a very prosperous business. They superintend personally the shoeing of every horse.

ANOTHER American woman is known as the "woman fruit-grower of Southern California." Her name is Mrs. H. W. R. Strong, and she owns one hundred and fifty acres of walnut trees alone, growing many other kinds of fruits and nuts also. Lately she read a paper before the State Board of Trade to show the value of pampas grass and the pomegranate as Californian products. She herself makes a considerable amount of money annually out of both, the pomegranates making jellies and syrups of superior quality, whilst its rind yields a large amount of tannin.

THE army of France does not now possess a marshal. The late Marshal Canrobert was the last, and the first was Marshal Pierre, appointed by Philippe-Auguste in 1185. At first the dignity was purely ornamental, and from the time of St. Louis to the time of François I., the number of marshals was fixed at two. François I. raised it to three, Henri II. to four, whilst Henri IV., Louis XIII., and Louis XIV., all three exceeded this number, until in 1703 there were twenty. The dignity of Marshal of France was abolished in 1792, but was restored by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1804, when he created twenty-five. Of the succeeding monarchs of France, Louis XVIII. created six, Charles X. three, and Louis Philippe ten; whilst the Republic of 1848 nominated only one—Prince Jerome Bonaparte, the brother of Napoleon. Napoleon III. raised eighteen of his generals to the position; these are now all dead, and as the present Republic has not appointed any new ones to fill their places, it is thought that the honour will entirely lapse.

THE Queen of Italy has put the phonograph to a novel use. She has the rare gift of improvising upon the piano, but cannot recall the melodies she evolves. A phonograph has been placed upon the instrument, and records faithfully all her Majesty's playing, to her great delight.





## THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY.

A FEBRUARY SONG.

By H. G. Adams.

THE Rivulets now begin to sing  
Joyful songs of the coming spring ;  
In copse and wood the birds awake,  
To seek their mates, and their nests to make ;  
In the lane behind the tree,  
Lurking, the bird-catchers see !  
Oh, beware ! have a care  
Of the limed twig and the snare !

Moist and soft the ground is now,  
Turn it over with the plough ;  
Dig and delve and sow the seed,  
Busy are all hands, indeed ;  
Binding frost may come again,  
Snow, to cover hill and plain—  
Work away ! while you may !  
There will come a time for play.

Toddle out, my little man !  
Sticks to gather, while you can,  
You will want the cosy fire,  
Want the flame that leapeth higher,  
Though the buds begin to peep,  
Winter hath but gone to sleep—  
Not for long, stern and strong,  
Yet he'll stalk the fields among.

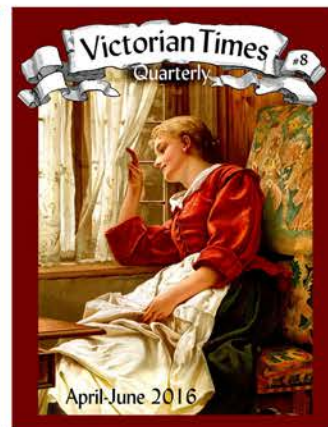


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