

Victorian Times

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*May Queens • May-Day Customs • Crewel Embroidery Techniques
Cases of Mistaken Identity • An Anglo-Californian Ranch • Dried Fruits
A Frenchman's View of American Women • Our Fox Terrier
Postmen of the World • E. Nesbit's School Days • Table Decorations*

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- 2 Editor's Greeting: Not So Long Ago... by Moira Allen
3 May Queens, by Rev. W. Dallow (*The Strand*, 1892)
8 Soups (*GOP**, 1898)
9 Competition for Professional Girls (*GOP*, 1897)
10 Recipes: Pancakes & Fritters (*GOP*, 1897)
15 Poems: "A Difference of Opinion," by C.P. and Sarah Doudney (*GOP*, 1894)
15 The Queen's Tobacco-Pipe, by G.F. Millin (*CFM****, 1874)
17 Poem: "Change" (*GOP*, 1880)
17 How to Embroider in Crewels, Part III, by Dora Hope (*GOP*, 1880)
19 Mistaken Identity, by H. Savile Clark (*CFM*, 1885)
21 Chronicles of an Anglo-Californian Ranch, Part VI, by Margaret Innes (*GOP*, 1899)
22 Brother Jonathan's Womankind (*CFM*, 1885)
24 Seasonable Recipes (May), by Lucy Yates (*GOP*, 1896)
25 May-Day Games (*Illustrated London Almanack*, 1849)
27 New Dried Fruits, by Dora de Blaquièrre (*GOP*, 1899)
28 Centre-Piece Embroidery (*GOP*, 1901)
29 Our Friend the Fox Terrier, by H. Avery (*CFM*, 1893)
32 My School-Days, Part 5, by E. Nesbit (*GOP*, 1897)
33 Useful Hints – Recipes (*GOP*, 1889)
33 Postmen of the World, Part I, by C.F. Gordon Cumming (*CFM*, 1885)
37 Poem: "Memorial Day," by Lizbeth Comins (*The Youth's Companion*, 1886)
38 Odds and Ends (*GOP*, 1895)
39 Table Decorations (*GOP*, 1887)
40 Poem: "The Month of May," by H.G. Adams (*Chatterbox*, 1873)



p. 3



p. 17



p. 29



p. 33

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The Girl's Own Paper* *Cassell's Family Magazine*

Not So Long Ago...

Victorian times seem such a long time ago, don't they? Or... do they? As I put together this issue, I was struck again and again, not with thoughts of "Oh, how quaint," or "Wasn't it amazing/ wonderful/ ridiculous what they did back in the old days?" but with an overwhelming sense of familiarity and connection.

It started with the May-pole in the article on May Queens. The picture of the young folks gathered around the May-pole brought back *memories!* Not of Victorian times, certainly—I may be a dinosaur in many respects but I'm not a time-traveler—but of a past that isn't so distant as all that.

You see, I only missed the May-pole by two years...

In our grammar school in Berkeley, California, May-Day dances were a long-standing tradition. In April, each class would decide what sort of dance to perform. In 2nd grade, we chose a Native American dance (multiculturalism was a big part of the celebration.) To make our costumes, each student brought in a pillowcase, which we fringed and painted brown to look like buckskin (sort of) and then adorned with colorful Native American symbols (sort of). In the 3rd or 4th grade, we danced a Czardas—or rather, the rest of my class did, because I'm pretty sure that's the year I tripped and skinned my knee about 10 minutes before the dance was due to begin.

But the highlight each year was the 6th-grade performance of the May-pole dance. After all the rest of the classes had put on their show, the 6th-graders streamed onto the playground in gorgeous costumes and performed the traditional May-pole dance, braiding the long ribbons in a pattern around the pole and then unbraiding them again. How I looked forward to being part of that! But it wasn't to be; the next year brought desegregation and busing, and sent us all off to different schools where no such traditions existed. No doubt the tradition died at the old school as well, given that it no longer *had* a 6th grade to perform it!

Looking at the pictures of the young folks gathered around their May-pole in 19th-century Cheshire, I don't feel as if I'm looking across a vast gulf of time. I feel as if I'm looking across the playground of my own childhood—at a picture that at one time I expected would be my own future!

My next sense of connection came upon reading E. Nesbit's account of her encounter with some French mummies—mummies that were nothing like those that she knew from the British Museum! I felt like doing a fist-pump and shouting, "I *know* what you mean!" My own mummy encounter occurred when I was three or four years old, visiting the museum at Mesa Verde—where I came face to face (literally) with the shriveled figure of a woman buried centuries before and unearthed from the ruins. I'm sure Nesbit never forgot her mummy encounter; I know I've never forgotten mine! (And, of course, I've also seen her "friendly," well wrapped mummies at the British Museum as well...)

And what reader who has ever had a pet could fail to "connect" with the story of "Our Friend, the Fox-Terrier"? This tale reminds us that the Victorian period wasn't all starch, stuffiness and stiff upper lips. Grief—including grief over a beloved pet—was very much a part of Victorian lives, and it's nice to know that Victorians accepted (perhaps even more than some of us do today) that the loss of a pet is indeed a loss of a loved one.

Much about the Victorian period seems strange, unfamiliar, or even downright bizarre to those of us raised in the 20th century (and we can only imagine how it will look to those raised in the 21st). But articles like these remind us of how many things we share. It's pleasant to imagine that, if I were to have the chance to have tea with E. Nesbit (what a delightful thought!), we'd have something in common to talk about!

—Maira Allen, Editor
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May Queens.

BY REV. W. DALLOW, M.R.S.A.I.



WE make bold to say that nowhere is May-Day kept with such real zeal, earnestness, and splendour, as at the quaint old Cheshire town of Knutsford. Though, owing

to the extreme changeableness of our climate, the first of May is by no means a taste of the poet's "Gentle Spring," yet, never daunted, the plucky people have kept up this rural fête, despite all kinds of weather, with a resolution to be jolly worthy of Mark Tapley. Indeed, our usual English May-Day is but too often a shivering time, but fitfully cheered by occasional gleams of the sun. Yet the "Queen" and all the happy youngsters, some hundreds in number, who compose her Court, shrink not from the procession to the scene of the coronation, but enter heartily into the spirit of the entire affair.

One year, the writer distinctly remembers how the slate-coloured sky threatened the pageant, and at three o'clock, as the Queen was crowned, a brief but terrific hail-storm burst over the ground.

At Knutsford, the people have a curious custom of "sanding" the flags before their doors with various interesting patterns, a custom said to belong to this place alone. It is done on occasions of weddings and other festivities, and, of course, at no time so carefully as on May-Day. On this—the great annual festival of the town—its streets are festooned and adorned with a profusion of flags; a triumphal arch of greens and

flowers spans the chief street, and as the hour approaches for the "Children's Fête," the merry chimes from the church-tower welcome the thousands of eager visitors. As Knutsford is in the heart of Cheshire, it is easily approached from Manchester, Liverpool, and Stockport, and special trains

and special vehicles of every possible description bring in a vast crowd before two o'clock, which is the hour the procession starts. Before describing the actual festivities which occur on the occasion, it may not be out of place to give our readers a brief account as to their origin in recent years.

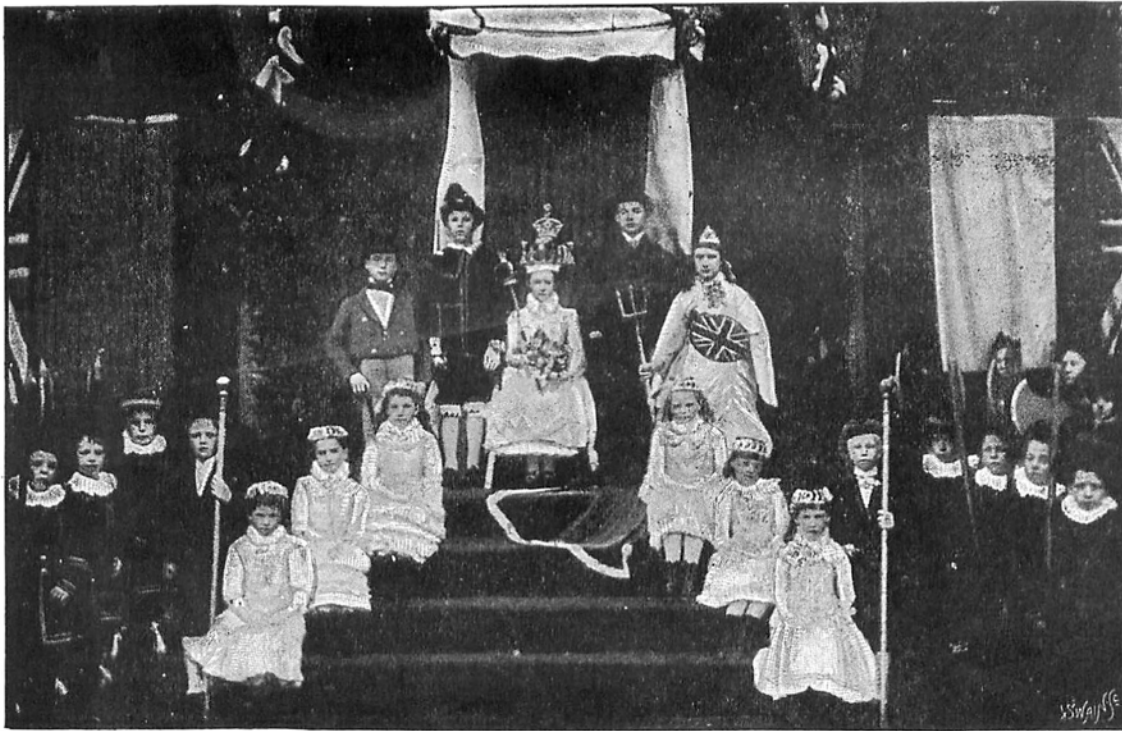
The May of 1864 was the first year which witnessed a revival of this ancient



MARY HICKSON, MAY-QUEEN, 1881.
(From a Photo. by J. Hill, Birkenhead.)



LILLIAN BEATRICE SANT, MAY-QUEEN, 1886.
(From a Photo. by G. B. Bradshaw & Co., Altrincham.)



From a Photo. by]

MAY-DAY, 1887.

[Birtles, Northwich.

The May-Queen and her Court waiting for the Visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

English rural festival, and the crowning of a May-Queen. On that occasion, "Her Majesty" was carried to the Green, or the "Heath," as it is called, in a chair, and, as but few of her liegemen and vassals gathered around her, the affair had but a poor effect, compared with the splendour of the present festival. Moreover, at the period alluded to, the whole fête was merely got up for the Church of England schools, and matters continued thus until 1877, when a new committee of the most public-spirited Knutsfordians was formed, who took upon themselves all responsibilities, and were determined to proceed in so open-handed a manner as to win support on every side. They resolved, therefore, to know neither sect nor party, and invited all the children of the township, whatever happened to be their belief or religious persuasion. The results far surpassed their most sanguine expectations, and the May-Day festival of Knutsford now proceeds on such a tide of popularity as to render its safety secure for all future time. Though, of course, the expenses of such a



MARY HOWARTH, MAY-QUEEN, 1887.

(From a Photo. by G. B. Bradshaw & Co., Altrincham.)

fête are very great, yet a very handsome dividend remains from year to year, when all bills have been duly paid and the balance-sheet issued to the public.

The "May-Queen" for each year is chosen by ballot, by the ladies and gentlemen of the committee; and she is always selected from the "maids of honour" who have attended on the previous "May-Queens." We give here the portraits of several of the May-Queens of former years. Whilst writing this article, the *new* Queen for May, 1892, has just been chosen, Nellie

side walks at the entrance of the town, and by the efforts of a host of constabulary (imported for the occasion) the roads are all cleared and the processions come forth amidst the sounds of martial music of two fine bands, the ringing of bells, and the admiring plaudits of the multitude. Here is the order of the *cortège*, which goes slowly around the chief streets, and reaches the Green by three o'clock, the hour fixed for the Queen's coronation:—

The Marshal of the Procession, on a white horse.
Battalion Band (3rd Cheshire), R.V.



MAY-DAY, 1889.

The May-pole Dance by the Characters.

Lee, daughter of Mr. Robert Lee, Knutsford, whose portrait will be found at the end of this article.

Whilst rude carts and quaint vehicles pour in at noon on May-Day, their loads of rustic visitors, special trains every half hour are discharging well-dressed thousands from the large towns near at hand, and of these children form the large proportion, since it is *par excellence* their special festival. Shortly after noon, the children begin to gather in the Town Hall, which is close to the railway station. As two o'clock approaches, the vast crowds are kept on the

The "Morris-dance," dancing as they proceed.

"Jack-in-the-Green."

Standard-bearer.

All the Schoolgirls of Town.

Children of the Workhouse.

All the Schoolboys of Town.

The Representatives of various Trades, viz.: butcher, baker, clogger, sweep, saddler, joiner, gardener, constable, lawyer, &c., each with their proper emblem.

Carts adorned with leaves and flowers, containing the Infant School Children.

Knutsford Temperance Brass Band.

The two Royal "Court Fools," in State carriage drawn by two donkeys tandem.

The Royal "Blue-Jackets" of Queen's "Navee."

The Boy-Soldiers of the Royal Foot Guards, in red.
Band of Flower Girls.

Party of Village Gleaners, with sickle and corn-sheaf.
 Milkmaids, with stool and bucket.
 Jack and Jill.
 Dame Dorothy and Red Riding-hood.
 Shepherd and Shepherdess, with pastoral crooks.
 Bo-Peep and Boy-Blue.



ETHEL PEARSON, MAY-QUEEN, 1889.
 (From a Photo. by Thorp, Knutsford.)

Cinderella and Witch.
 A Gipsy King and Queen.
 Italian Nobles (in fifteenth-century dress).
 Italian Girls (modern Neapolitan dress, with tambourine).
 Girls in representative characters of:—
 Africa—with crown of feathers and assegai;
 America—dress of "Stars and Stripes";
 Australia; Canada (fur costume with skates on her arm);
 India; Wales;
 Scotland, and Ireland.
 John Bull and Britannia (with her helmet, trident, and shield).
 Two boys, as a Huntsman and a Jockey, both on horseback.
 On a large lorrie, adorned with flowers and evergreen,
 Four Girls suitably dressed as "Four Seasons."
 Battalion Band of 4th King's (Liverpool Regt.).
 A Band of Foresters, in green velvet and silver, with bows and arrows, headed by Robin Hood.
 Two Heralds, in full dress, with trumpets.
 The Royal Falconer, with a Hooded Hawk.
 The Royal Swordbearer, bearing a drawn "Sword of State."
 The Sceptre-bearer.
 A boy in MacDuff Highland costume, bearing on cushion the Royal Crown.
 The "Yeomen of the Guard," in dress of red velvet and gold, as Beef-eaters.



HENRIETTA WINFIELD,
 MAY-QUEEN, 1890.
 (From a Photo. by De Vivan, Knutsford.)



HENRIETTA NEWTON, MAY-QUEEN 1891.
 (From a Photo. by De Vivan, Knutsford.)

THE MAY-QUEEN,
 in white and ermine, in her open carriage of State,
 drawn by four white horses, with postillion and two
 pages in red riding behind.
 The six Maids of Honour, in white and purple velvet
 and ermine, in open carriage and pair.

This most beautiful *cortège* moves slowly around the town, the youthful "Queen-elect" bowing her thanks gracefully, in return for the many salutations and acclamations which greet on every side her progress to her throne on the Green. When all have arrived there, and the Queen has ascended the dais, and taken her seat, all are grouped around to witness the ceremony of the coronation. The crown-bearer slowly advances to the throne, kneeling at intervals three times on one knee. Then, taking the crown from its beautiful velvet cushion, he raises it aloft, and places it on the brow of the young maiden as the three bands burst forth into a musical salute, and the loud cheers of the surrounding crowd rend

the air. The sceptre is similarly presented to Her Majesty, and then the programme of the afternoon is gone through. This consists of a Maypole dance, a morris-dance, manœuvres of footguards and sailors, drill by Robin Hood and his foresters, and



THE ROYAL MAY-DAY FESTIVAL, 1891.

last, but not least, a Scotch reel danced by the chief characters. This is a beautiful sight, as the little boys and girls in their brilliant costumes of every shade and hue flit about to the Highland music, and produce, as seen from the "Grand Stand," a wondrous and kaleidoscopic effect.

At five o'clock the "National Anthem" by the massed bands warns the company that the gay scene is coming to an end, and the too short reign of the "May-Queen" is nigh ended.

Between a double row of guards, sailors, maidens in every costume and colour, the May-Queen



NELLIE LEE, MAY QUEEN, 1892.
(From a Photo. by Messrs. May & Co., Northwich.)

walks slowly off the field in solemn state, her six maids of honour upholding her train of red velvet and ermine, to her Royal tent, to take tea with her Court. Here, in a glorious helter-skelter, Queen and jester, soldier and sailor, &c. — these little happy folks, once more again in private life, though gorgeously caparisoned—munch their buns and currant-loaf, and drink deep draughts of tea, as they innocently toast their May-Day Fête! Then, with an orange and a new penny each, they slip home, one by one, after what was to them such a red-letter day!

Soups.

BROWN SOUP.

Ingredients.—One pound of bones, one carrot, one turnip, two onions, a bunch of herbs, two ounces of barley, two ounces of dripping, two quarts of warm water, twelve peppercorns, one blade of mace, pepper and salt, one ounce and a half of brown thickening.

Method.—Prepare the vegetables and cut them in halves; chop the bones; melt the dripping in a large saucepan and fry the bones and the vegetables; pour off any dripping that is left and put in the herbs, spices, pepper and salt, and the barley (blanched). Put on the lid and let all simmer for three hours. Strain off the soup through a colander, put the liquor back in the saucepan with the vegetables cut up small, add the thickening and stir until the thickening dissolves and the soup boils.

WHITE VEGETABLE SOUP.

Ingredients.—One carrot, one leek, two onions, one turnip, a bunch of herbs, a blade of mace, one ounce and a half of dripping, two ounces of flour, a small lump of white sugar, one pint of skim milk, one pint and a half of warm water.

Method.—Prepare the vegetables and cut them into nicely-shaped pieces; melt the dripping in a saucepan, put in the vegetables, pepper, salt and sugar, put on the lid and let them cook gently for ten minutes without browning. Add the water, herbs and mace, and let all simmer gently until tender, from twenty to thirty minutes according to the age and size of the pieces of vegetables. Mix the flour smoothly with a little cold milk and stir it into the soup when boiling; take out the herbs and mace and add the rest of the milk.

CABBAGE SOUP.

Ingredients.—A small cabbage, one onion, two bay leaves, two sprigs of parsley, two ounces of cornflour, one pint and a half of water, one pint of milk, pepper and salt.

Method.—Wash the cabbage and shred it small, put it in a saucepan of boiling water, and let it boil three minutes and strain the water away (this takes away any disagreeable smell); put the cabbage back in the saucepan with the onion cut small, the parsley washed and chopped, pepper and salt and a pint and a half of water. Cook with the lid off for fifteen minutes; mix the cornflour smoothly with a little cold milk and stir it into the boiling soup, and when it has thickened add the rest of the milk.

CELERY SOUP.

Ingredients.—One head of celery, two onions, one pint of water or stock, one pint of milk, one bay leaf, one blade of mace, six white peppercorns, two tablespoonfuls of cream, salt.

Method.—Prepare the vegetables and slice them; put them in a saucepan with the stock, bay leaf, mace, peppercorns and salt; cook gently until tender, rub through a sieve, return to the saucepan with the stock, bay leaf, mace, peppercorns and salt; cook gently until tender, rub through a sieve, return to the saucepan, re-heat, add the milk (warm) and then the cream. Do not let the soup boil after the cream is added.

POTATO SOUP.

Ingredients.—Two pounds of potatoes, three onions, two sticks of celery, one ounce of crushed tapioca, one bay leaf, pepper and salt, one pint and a half of water, one pint of warm milk.

Method.—Prepare the potatoes and onions and cut them in dice; prepare the celery and cut it small; put all in a saucepan, with the water, bay leaf, pepper and salt, and simmer till tender, sprinkle in the tapioca and stir until clear, add the milk.

BROWN ONION SOUP.

Ingredients.—Two pounds of onions, two potatoes, two ounces of dripping, three pints of warm water, one ounce and a half of brown thickening, pepper and salt.

Method.—Pare the onions and slice them from top to bottom; melt the dripping in a saucepan and fry the onions in it; prepare the potatoes and cut them in dice, add the potatoes to the dripping and onions with the water, pepper and salt; put on the lid and simmer till tender; add the thickening and stir until it boils.

GREEN PEA SOUP.

Ingredients.—One pint of shelled green peas, a handful of pods, two sprigs of parsley, four shallots, two sprigs of mint, two lumps of sugar, two ounces of fresh butter, half a small lettuce, one quart of stock, two tablespoonfuls of cream, or one ounce of cornflour mixed with a little milk.

Method.—Melt the butter in a stewpan, put in the peas, shallots (peeled and sliced), parsley, lettuce (cut up), mint and sugar; let all cook very gently by the side of the stove for fifteen minutes; do not let it fry brown, as the soup must be kept as green as possible; warm the stock and pour it on and simmer gently until the peas are tender; rub through a hair sieve, return to the saucepan, re-heat, and if necessary, thin with a little stock; add the cream and salt. If a cheaper soup is wanted stir in one ounce of cornflour mixed with a little milk instead of the cream.

LENTIL SOUP.

Ingredients.—Half a pint of lentils, two onions, one carrot, one turnip, two sticks of celery, a bunch of herbs, one quart of water, one ounce and a half of dripping, a piece of bacon rind.

Method.—Wash the lentils in several waters, prepare the vegetables, cut them in dice and fry them in a saucepan with the dripping. Add the lentils, water and rind and boil for one hour and a half. When cooked add pepper and salt.

PALESTINE SOUP.

Ingredients.—One pound of artichokes, one stick of celery, two onions, one pint of water, one pint of milk, one ounce of cornflour, one blade of mace, one bay leaf, six white peppercorns, one teaspoonful and a half of salt.

Method.—Prepare the vegetables and cut them in slices; put them in a saucepan with the water, bay leaf, mace, peppercorns and salt; simmer till tender with the lid on. Rub through a sieve, return to the saucepan and re-heat. Mix the cornflour smoothly with a little cold water and stir it into the soup when it boils; add the milk (warmed) and serve.

LETTUCE SOUP.

Ingredients.—Three-quarters of a pound of lettuce, a bunch of herbs (including chervil), one ounce and a half of butter, one pint and a half of white stock (made from mutton or veal trimmings), two yolks of eggs, a quarter of a pint of cream, two spring onions (chopped), a little green colouring, a little grated lemon rind, a few drops of lemon juice.

Method.—Put the butter into a stewpan, and when melted add the shredded lettuce, lemon rind, onions and herbs; cook these gently in the butter for about fifteen minutes, and then add the stock and simmer gently for half an hour. Pass through a hair sieve, re-heat the soup and add the lemon juice; beat up the yolks of the eggs and add the cream. Pour upon this the hot soup, whisking rapidly all the time to prevent the eggs curdling. Return the soup to the saucepan and whisk until the soup is thickened and the eggs cooked. It must on no account boil; add a little colouring if necessary; serve with *croûtons* of fried bread.

TAPIOCA SOUP.

Ingredients.—One pint of bone stock, one pint of milk, a piece each of carrot, turnip, and onion, one stick of celery, a bunch of herbs, a blade of mace, two large tablespoonfuls of crushed tapioca, pepper and salt.

Method.—Prepare the vegetables and simmer them very gently in the milk with the mace and herbs for half an hour; warm the stock and strain the flavoured milk into it; bring to the boil and sprinkle in the crushed tapioca, stir until the latter is clear, which will be in a few minutes, add pepper and salt and serve.

SCOTCH BROTH.

Ingredients.—One pound of scrag of mutton, one large carrot, one turnip, two onions, two ounces of barley, one teaspoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of washed and blanched parsley, one quart of water.

Method.—Wipe the meat with a damp cloth and cut it in pieces; trim away some of the fat and remove the gristle. Wash the carrot and turnip and peel the onions; blanch the barley. Put the meat and vegetables in a saucepan with the water, barley and salt; put on the lid and simmer gently for two hours, skimming from time to time. Take out the carrot, turnip and onions, cut them in dice and put them back in the soup. Have ready the parsley and stir it into the broth at the last minute before serving. If a better soup is wanted use good beef stock instead of water, and use the best end instead of scrag. Trim the cutlets very neatly and serve one to each person.

TOMATO SOUP.

Ingredients.—One pound of tomatoes, one onion, two sticks of celery, one bay leaf, one blade of mace, a small piece of cooked ham, pepper and salt, one pint and a half of water, one ounce of crushed tapioca.

Method.—Slice the tomatoes; prepare the celery and onion and cut them in pieces; put the vegetables in a saucepan with the mace, bay leaf, ham, water, pepper and salt, and cook till tender; rub through a sieve or colander, return to the saucepan, bring to the boil, sprinkle in the tapioca and stir and cook till clear.



Chapters on Animals, by Philip Hamerton, 1901

A FASCINATING TALE.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Madame Ronner.

OUR COMPETITION FOR PROFESSIONAL GIRLS.

ONE of the remarkable features of our Queen's long reign is the vigorous, earnest way in which her girl subjects of all ranks are taking their part in the battle of life. They are no longer content to idle away their days and let the men bear the whole burden of existence. One reason of this is not far to seek: deep in the heart of every girl is love for her Queen, who stands first in the army of workers; for fifty years

her example has been gradually but surely making its mark in every home in Great Britain. It is no longer the fashion to be idle, for the highest in the land are the most diligent workers, and our Queen the hardest worker of them all.

The knowledge of this gave an impetus to girls, hitherto idle, to bestir themselves and get out of the groove in which custom had

placed them; and the reward they have reaped by so doing is that they work now for the love of it and for the health and satisfaction it brings into their lives.

If we wanted proof of this we have it in the hundreds of papers which have been sent to us during the year from girls of all classes describing their work, the manner of doing it, the effect upon themselves and their families,

and the way in which, as workers in the world's hive, they are treated.

Perhaps nothing has ever afforded us greater pleasure in our Editorial capacity than the insight we have gained into the honest, straightforward, conscientious daily round of our girls, whether the occupation be of head or hand.

In comparing the professional competitors with the hand-workers, we are struck by one or two points of difference; for example, the hand-worker if she be a good reliable girl, may slip into work at once with a moderate wage without any serious preparation or previous outlay, while the professional girl must spend time and money in procuring a high-class education and in gaining experience in her special branch of art or science, and even when she is fully equipped for the battle and eager to try her powers, she finds herself on the outside fringe of a mighty army with only a remote chance of being enrolled for active service. Even when this difficulty has been overcome, the wage or salary is so small that it is barely sufficient for her daily wants, while help for the home is impossible.

Again, the handworker's hours and labours are strictly defined, and she can arrange her life accordingly; the professional girl, on the contrary, has no such chance; she goes on from morning till night too often at starvation salary.

Again, the hand-worker is shielded by the government, who will allow no mean advantage to be taken of her willingness to work beyond hours; but who, we would ask, takes care of the gently-nurtured girl-governess in a private high-class school, whose hours are from half-past six in the morning till eleven or twelve at night, and even to the small hours of the morning previous to the examinations, and all this for £18 a year; and not an hour she can call her own?

Or who is there to shield a young governess from her lady employer? One was engaged to teach a little boy, take charge of him night and day and mend and make for him.

Gradually the lady has put upon her so many duties that she has drifted into a drudge, till, as she says, she does not know how to describe herself, and this for a salary which no cook or housemaid would accept.

It is pathetic to read some of these competition papers and note how ambition and hope have been almost crushed out of the writers notwithstanding the love of their profession and the desire to help those at home.

Still there is much to be thankful for in the fact that during our Queen's reign many other ways have opened out by which girls may earn an income beside teaching in private schools and private families.

The last fifty years have developed in girls the power and desire to work, and at the same time opportunities have increased for employing their powers in many directions hitherto unknown.

Girls young, bright, full of hope and motherly tenderness find an outlet for all that is best in them in the wards of a hospital or infirmary, and the papers we have received show how successful they are in the work.

Other girls find suitable work as typists or clerks in telephone, telegraph and post offices; or, if they are clever at figures, as clerks in large wholesale houses. Music and painting form the life and daily round of many, although the income is not so reliable as in many other kinds of work.

Extremely touching are some of the references to parental self-sacrifice in order that their children may pursue their career without let or hindrance. We could fill the whole number with interesting matter culled out of these competition papers, which are excellently written; but this is not possible. We congratulate our professional girls on their excellent work.

We hope to print the prize papers next month.

PRIZE WINNERS.

FIRST PRIZE (£2 2s.).

Agnes Eugenie Smith, Hospital Nurse, Sunderland.

SECOND PRIZE (£1 1s.).

St. John's Wort Folk-Lore Collector, Port Charlotte, Islay, N.B.

THIRD PRIZE (£1 1s.).

Pimpernel, Organist, Plumstead.

FOURTH PRIZE (£1 1s.).

Cauliflower, Literary Woman, Brixton Hill.

FIFTH PRIZE (£1 1s.).

Dandelion, Post Office Clerk, Islington.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Polyanthus Narcissus, Governess in private family, Norwich.

Clover, Nurse, Ickley, Yorkshire.

Lily of the Valley, Clerk in a Wholesale Confectioner's, Hackney.

White Violet, Daily Governess, Stoke Newington.

Shamrock, Governess in private family, Eaton Place.

Tea Rose, Sorter of postal orders in General Post Office, Barnsbury.

Alice Mary Townsend, Lady Principal of Girls' School, Stewarts Town, Jamaica.

Amy Clare, Shorthand-writer and Typist, Goswell Road.

Holly, Typist and Shorthand-writer, Old Broad Street.

Mignonette, Teacher in high class private school, near Baldock, Herts.

Wild Rose, Photographic Retoucher, Manchester.

Heather, Hospital Nurse, Wakefield.

Christmas Rose, Nurse, Guildford.

Emily Archer, Edgeworthstown, E. Longford.

Water-Lily, Typist, Glasgow.

Pansy, Elementary Teacher, Nottingham.

Fuschia, in Fancy Needlework Factory, City Road.

Isabella S. Lyall, Teacher of the Blind, Arbroath, N.B.

Pansy, Postal and Telegraph Clerk, Liverpool.

Marsh Marigold, Teacher, Manchester.

RECIPES FOR THE MONTH.

EGG COOKERY.

EGGS are now cheaper and more plentiful, so we ought to make free use of them.

Fricasseed Eggs make an excellent dish. Dissolve two ounces of butter in a stew-pan, then stir in a small tablespoonful of flour; boil six eggs for five minutes, remove their shells and cut them in halves; add them to the butter and with them a good spoonful of minced parsley, a pinch of aromatic herbs, some seasoning, and a grate of nutmeg. Shake well over the fire until the sauce is cooked, place the eggs in a dish, pour the sauce over and garnish with slices of lemon and tufts of parsley.

Eggs with Brown Gravy are another variation of the above, using the eggs in the same way, only making a good rich brown gravy, leaving the eggs uncut, and garnishing the dish with sippets of dry toast.

Baked Eggs.—Take a shallow fire-proof china dish, butter it thickly. Break into it, without damaging the yolks, as many eggs as it will conveniently hold without their overlapping each other. Drop a small pat of butter on the top of each and sprinkle salt and pepper over all. Set them in the oven for a few minutes; as soon as the butter frizzles and the whites are well "set," the eggs are done. Serve at once. Done this way eggs are much more digestible than when fried. Bring to table in the dish in which they were cooked.

Pancakes and Fritters.—Pancake Day will soon be with us. This institution is so faithfully observed that every cook finds it essential to be acquainted with the method of making King Alfred's favourite dish. There is nothing more wholesome than a well-made and light pancake, and few things are more simple in composition.

Pancakes.—According to the number of those who will partake, allow one large egg and a tablespoonful of flour with a quarter of a pint of milk per person. Separate the whites and yolks of the eggs and whisk them until very light. To the yolks add the number of spoonfuls of flour, a pinch of salt, and the milk by degrees, beating the batter until perfectly smooth; then lightly but thoroughly stir in the whites. Make the batter at least an hour before it is needed for frying, it will be all the lighter for so doing. A thin batter makes the lightest pancakes, therefore add more milk or a little water, if necessary. An iron frying-pan is the best to use, and lard is better than butter or dripping. Refined beef suet is excellent for frying purposes of all kinds. Let the fat be very hot—boiling, in fact, then pour in a small tencupful of batter, tilting the pan that it may run equally all over; as soon as the pancake is lightly browned on one side, turn it sharply over on to the other, using a thin broad-bladed knife for the purpose. Slip each pancake on

to a sheet of paper that is well sprinkled with castor sugar; roll them up and arrange neatly on a paper d'oyley. Keep very hot. Send oranges and lemons cut in halves to table with them, also more sugar.

Almost synonymous with pancakes are—

Fritters.—As the same batter makes them, only to the batter is added a little sugar, a few raisins or currants, or the grated rind of a fresh lemon, etc., to give flavour and character. A small pan should be used for frying these, and they should be folded over in half instead of rolling them.

Apple Fritters are differently treated, or, we should say, made. The apples are cored and pared, then sliced through; the slices are dipped into a batter that is made from the white of an egg beaten to a froth, two spoonfuls of salad oil, two of flour, and a little water. The batter must be rather thick. Drop the rings of apple into boiling lard, fry them very quickly to a crisp golden colour, sprinkle with sugar, and pile on a dish.

Oranges sliced make very nice fritters, and apricots and peaches cut in quarters also.

Any remaining batter after pancakes are made may receive the addition of a little fine oatmeal flour and a spoonful of barm, then it makes exceedingly nice flapjacks or oatcakes for tea.

COMPETITION FOR PROFESSIONAL GIRLS.—THE FIVE PRIZE ESSAYS.*

FIRST PRIZE (£2 2s.).

MY PROFESSIONAL WORK.

WELL! I am a Hospital Nurse, and such a world of meaning is contained in that short sentence, that as I have often said—had I known all I should never have had the courage to begin such a work; but no one can know until they themselves have gone through it, and that is why I am going to try and tell you girls a little bit about this profession.

It is no play—far from it! downright hard and earnest work. There *are* those (a shame that it is so!) who dabble in the work, but these never stay long at it, and perhaps best so for all parties concerned, so we will pass quickly over them, and if *you* want to be a nurse, do make up your minds to give up the worship of such gods as "Pleasure" and "Self" and let your high ideal henceforth be—"I was sick and ye visited Me."

Had Charles Kingsley still been with us, I think he would have thought me justified in using his words when I say it is truly the case that we

"Do noble things, not dream them all day long,"

though more often than not the "noble things" consist in being very common things after all, but then—"He has learnt to live well who has learnt to do common things uncommonly well."

My first impressions on entering upon my hospital duties were anything but pleasant, in fact if my home had been within walking distance my apprenticeship might have been brief, as it was I had taken good care to go out of my own town. I began work on my twenty-third birthday, and a more wretched day I have seldom spent! Instead of kind looks, and the dear familiar voices wishing me "Many happy returns of the day," I had to pass through the ordeal of being stared at as "the new pro:" and spoken to accordingly. Now I look upon it with different eyes, and may I never live to regret the step I took that day.

I said it was hard work for you will rarely find nurses working for less than twelve hours a day, though we do not in consequence "strike" for eight hours like many of our abler brethren! Is it because we work with the motive that all we do shall be for others, and not that we may grasp all we can get for ourselves?

So in hospital we were content to rise at 6 o'clock—no! rather must I say we were *called* at 6 o'clock, for to be honest we did not rise then: I shall not mention the correct time but shall trust to your finding ready excuse for us if our caps *were* rather crooked, and if our beds *were* only "smoothed up"—we were tired nurses! To be in time for 7 o'clock breakfast was compulsory, woe betide the one who appeared after Grace was pronounced by the "Sister" at the head of the table. Breakfast and Prayers over we began the day's routine—Patients' breakfast first and the bed-making then the medicines to be given round, and next the dusting of the wards, and the arranging of plants and flowers etc. in which one and all of us took great pride, and vied with one another as to whose should look best. All this took time, but we were supposed to have finished by 9.30, when the matron went her rounds distributing in each ward the ever welcome letters, though

to read them then was an impossibility for now we were busy with the dressings, the poultices, rubbings and what not; doctors coming and going of course "Just when we did not want them." But 1 o'clock would see us all clear again and serving out our patients' dinners amidst the usual grumbles and thanks. More routine, and then our own dinner, and I noticed we did not climb the stairs quite so easily as we had scrambled down first thing in the morning!

On alternate afternoons it was our luck to be off duty for two hours, and many were the arrangements made at the table as to what we should do, and where we should go. And here let me add that if when entering upon this life we should be willing to give up everything for it, I do not for one moment hold that we should, as it were step outside the world altogether—should give up our music and singing, our bicycling and our visiting—by no means! a girl will find in her time off duty that a run on her "bike," or an hour at the piano, and even a pleasant chat over a cosy cup of afternoon tea will all help to invigorate her, and so she will be more fitted for her evening's work, than if e.g. she had gone to her *bed*—a practice of which our wise matron highly disapproved. So *my* advice is to go on with such innocent pleasure, but just so long as you do not give it the first place in your life, tho' to do so at times is a temptation, and no very small one either, and often when I hear of others going to every concert, attending theatres and dances, well, then like the little boy in the old old poem—

"... I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see."

but since they never were "promised me" I just make up my mind to submit and not to be "dull."

So the afternoon would find only half the staff on duty. During the first hour as a rule we would have nothing very special to do, though it varied: on admission days I have gone to my ward to find several new patients waiting, and if women or children this meant a good deal—if men the warders attended to them. Oh! those women! I remember one who insisted she had had a bath only that very morning. I said it mattered not for all were treated alike, unless their temperatures were much above normal, or for some other equally good reason. Poor thing! her scare upon reaching the bath was pitiable, and in her wild despair she let the cat out of the bag for alas! she had never seen such a thing before! Once in bed, and fully alive to the fact that for *this* time, at least, her life had been spared, and she had not been "drowned," she looked much happier with her now clean face, tidy hair and the orthodox red-flannel "Nightingale" across her shoulders.

At other times "urgent cases" would arrive, or an accident. Now we each had our turn for receiving these, so during our respective weeks we had always to have a bed ready in case of emergency—What lessons to be learnt by the side of some terribly mangled form, sometimes beyond human aid, and sometimes, indeed, where life was altogether extinct! Truly, "In the midst of life we are in death."

So time rarely hung heavily upon our hands, and at 4.30 the big bell would sound when we knew we might go to the kitchen for our patients' teas. By 5 o'clock we were

generally ready for ours, and needed not many little delicacies to tempt our appetites—plain bread and butter sufficed! In the evenings, besides attending to our patients, we would water our plants, tidy the lockers, (and what treasures we would find concealed therein!) and cupboards etc. for in a hospital everything must be kept as neat as a new pin; our matron would look sorely displeased if on opening a linen cupboard for visitors' inspection, she found it not up to the mark!

In the children's wards, where several nurses worked it was so arranged that every one got alternate evenings off duty, but when with the adults it depended upon our work, as to when we could get free. Sundays I confess I never liked, and would fain have taken my seat in the pew at the old church at home: the routine was similar as on other days. We got to church once a day and Evening Service was held in our chapel for all patients able to attend. And so, in spite of long hours and tired feet how short the weeks seemed, and sped past in a remarkable manner, carrying us on to Christmas and Christmas festivities, which all meant extra labour if extra pleasure. The holly to put up, the texts to choose and illuminate, and still the daily work to be got through. What wonder if our friends looked in vain for letters that week! It was at such times as these that those nurses who could play or sing were in great demand. Oh! the pleasure in getting up the "Patients' Concert"—the excitement in choosing the glees, tho' at times the weariness in singing them! I smile to think of one night when we all gave it up as a dead failure, each found fault with her neighbour for being "flat," till at length we all joined in a hearty laugh and agreed *in totum* that "Operation Day" was the wrong day on which to have a practice. So we crawled off to our beds and hoped for better success the next night!

So the time of training passed by, and though ill health will at times prevail dominant, and it was only with a struggle that I got through the last few months, yet it has not been without a feeling of regret that I have turned over the leaf to begin a fresh chapter and have joined the Private Staff, still you see in the same great work—that of nursing the sick, and still do I call myself a "Hospital Nurse," and very proud am I to hold forth my three years' certificate as testimony. But now I almost tremble to think of how Xmas will this year dawn for me, for the Private Nurse is on very different footing, often only appreciated because necessary, and after all that is not the most comfortable feeling for the poor "Necessity"! But here again the great Ideal of a nurse's life is to do for others, so I must bury such selfish thoughts, and instead shall begin to wonder what I may do in order to brighten that Day for the sick one whose lot it may be to be cast under my care, so that at night I may lay down my efforts as a birthday gift worthy for the Great Master to accept, and my Christmas will have been bright indeed, if my lot it has been to have heard His kind voice saying, "Well done! good and faithful servant,"—"She hath done what she could!"

I declare the statements in this paper to be true.

AGNES EUGENIE SMITH,
Nursing Institute,
December, 23rd 1896. Sunderland.

* These essays are printed without correction or alteration of any kind.—ED.

SECOND PRIZE (£1 Is.).

MY PROFESSIONAL WORK.

FOR some time back I have been engaged in Folk-Lore collecting. To me it has become most interesting, as well as being a means of making me so far independent of circumstances.

I. How I began my profession.

Having a good deal of time on hand, and seeing many things I would like to get with a little extra money; if I could only earn it at home, I began to wish I had something to do, that would be interesting, and profitable. I had learned no trade, or profession, and as my home is in an out of the way part of the country, home employment was difficult to get. Well, I was in this frame of mind about three years ago, when a person asked me if I would care to do some Folk-Lore collecting.

I asked about the terms, and the work, and whether he thought I could undertake to collect information on a subject with which I was practically unacquainted. Receiving encouragement from my friend, and making myself so far acquainted with what was wanted, and the terms offered for such work, I resolved to make a start. Although I confess I had little expectation of being successful. Indeed it was two months after that, before I summoned courage to send off my first collection of Lore; which I may say here, was a very meagre production.

II. My method.

At first I had no method. I simply talked to people about old times, who told me many stories of such things as constitute subjects of enquiry by Folk-Lorists. These stories I wrote on scraps of paper in the first instance, and then when I had time, I transferred them to my collecting sheets. The penciled scraps I burnt. As time went on however, I found that I would need to take note of what I was sending, as well as what I had on hand, otherwise, I would be in danger of repeating myself. I therefore decided on the following plan. I bought some large minute books; these I paged, and indexed, and I also provided myself with a few small note books, and pencils which I gave to some of my young friends whose help I solicited, keeping one for my own use. I then took note of every item of information I could get on anything bearing on the subject in hand, and if a story, a rhyme, a legend, a riddle, or anything else was incomplete, I told my young friends, and we all did our level best to get it completed. From the note books the information was

transferred to the large minute books, with the headings written with red ink, and the page entered in the index-table. This enabled me, when filling up my sheets, instead of filling them up with all sorts of scrappy information, as I had been doing at first to fill them up page after page with one, subject. It had the further advantage of giving far less trouble to the receiver, for at a glance he could see how much information he had under each heading. My sheets I paged, and joined together at the left hand corner. I numbered each item of information given in them, and where the reciter's name was not to appear, I marked the top of the page with red ink. While to keep me right as to matter already sent off, I drew a blue pencil line through every page of the big book, so soon as the matter had been transferred to the sheets, as well as marking off the corresponding page in the index.

I have said nothing so far, as to the manner of dealing with those from whom information is to be got. At first I thought women would be much better versed in Folk-Lore, and much more communicative than men. In that I soon found out I was mistaken. Men I found to be much more willing to tell what they knew, and they really seemed to know more. With either sex however, a F.L. collector need not expect to succeed unless she herself is interested in the subject, and has something in common with the reciter. There is no use going to a house and proceeding to pump the inmates right off. This would simply have the effect of freezing them up. The only way to succeed is to go in when you are invited; to be pleasant, kindly, and polite, and to converse with those from whom you expect to get information, as you would converse with your most intimate friend. Another thing that chokes the spring, is the presence of a note book. And this brings me to the difficulties.

III. The Difficulties of my profession.

My residence being in the Highlands, it was a great drawback to me that I knew so little of Gaelic. I could understand that language pretty well, but could hardly converse in it, and as for writing it, I could do absolutely nothing. In these circumstances, my work at the commencement of it was very much up hill. I could not use a note book in presence of my informants, for I found out from experience that if I did, it would interfere with the freedom of the conversation. My plan was to get things repeated over, and over

again, until they got fixed in the memory, after which, I took the first opportunity, to commit to my note book such information as I had obtained. The Gaelic I wrote phonetically, pending an opportunity of getting assistance from some qualified friend to have it reduced to proper form, after which I transcribed it into my large collecting Book. It will be seen that this at least was a slow process, and many a time I found that I had forgotten important points of my information, and had in these cases to go back to my informant to have it repeated, and this I had even to do in many cases, two and three times over. Such experience soon convinced me, that if I was to have any pleasure in my work, or success; I must face the learning of Gaelic, I therefore made a commencement with the result that I can now speak it wonderfully well, and am besides able to do a good deal in the way of writing it. And now I am able to tell something of my encouragements.

IV. My Encouragements.

First among my encouragements is, that I have been giving entire satisfaction, and instead of the fee at first offered, I have all along got two thirds more, and consequently I make a fair salary. Then my Gaelic has improved so much that it is a great pleasure for me to hear a story in that language, and I have seldom now to search my dictionary for any word I hear. Folk-Lore is a wide subject, and the Study of it is most educative; so that to my profession I am indebted for a great deal of my culture, and general information, as well as the ability to put my thoughts in writing. It has also shown me my ignorance. Before I began collecting I was inclined to think that book learning was the only kind of learning under the sun. Now I know that there are people who may not be able to read a line, who nevertheless have their minds stored with most useful information. They know plants, and their uses; they know the names of stars, when, and where they rise, and when, and where they set; they know how to extract dye from plants, and even from the scuff of stones, and can tell far more of how our forefathers lived than can many who profess to have studied history. All the same I think it would add much to the pleasure, and profit of my Highland friends, if they had a Gaelic G.O.P.

I declare the statements in this paper to be true.

“ST. JOHN'S WORT”
Portcharlotte.

THIRD PRIZE (£1 Is.).

MY PROFESSIONAL WORK.

I AM a musician, a sort of local celebrity in a small way, having at nineteen years of age been chosen out of ten candidates for the post of organist of a church. Before that I had been assistant-organist at the largest church in the district. Since then I have been able to spend four years at the Royal Academy of Music, where I was moderately successful as a student. I left with silver and bronze medals, and what is better, the highest award of the Academy, the Certificate of Merit. I have also gained the medal of the Society of Arts, and the gold medal of the London Academy of Music entitling me to put L.A.M. after my name, which I never do.

So much for my credentials. Now for my work. When I left the Academy I hoped to

do something as a singer, but I found that I could not get enough engagements. There are so many girls who want to be singers: it looks such a very grand thing from the outside. I fear I have not the requisite “push.” But however that may be, I took the work that lay nearest and began to teach. Now it happens that the music-teaching profession is also very overcrowded. There are quite a large number of teachers within a stone's-throw of where I live. Then too we are near London, and people have a great idea of going to town for lessons. All this makes it difficult to get pupils, and also keeps fees low. Unfortunately the public does not discriminate at all between good and bad music-teachers. In the scholastic profession it is quite different; the standard is very high, and so it ought to be: but in ours, nobody seems to care whether

you know anything or not, so long as you do not charge much. The true evil is that there are a lot of bogus degrees and worthless certificates obtainable in music, and that girls rush into teaching directly they have got a certificate from anywhere and of any grade. This is a sore point with every qualified musician so I hope I may be excused the writing so much upon it. When people advertise to teach for sixpence an hour, and get pupils, there is something wrong somewhere.

My terms are two guineas for twenty-five half-hour lessons. I do not think this is at all good pay, but I frequently have to take less because if I do not I lose the pupil. I am not at all sure that it is right, but what else can one do? As a matter of fact not one of my pupils pays me my full fees. Recently a lady

sent for me and offered me fifteen shillings instead of my two guineas! "That is all Miss So-and-so charges!" she said. I was aghast, but seeing I should get little if any more I said I would take her little boy for a guinea as a great favour and since he was one of my choir-boys. She held out for a long time, haggling and haggling, and I do not quite know whether to be ashamed or proud to say that I held out too, but at last she said, "Let us split the difference, Miss Pimpernel. Take seventeen-&-six."

That is the sort of thing one meets in the music profession.

As for the work, nothing can be more delightful. The hours are very irregular, because I must suit my pupils' convenience, & some of them must come at a certain time or not at all. Many of my lessons are given in the evening, and I am sorry for that, but in this district many people are engaged all day & have only the evening free. On Mondays I have little to do: two lessons, I think. On Tuesdays two lessons in the day, and lessons from six till nine in the evening. Until lately I then went out to give a lesson at half-past nine to a girl who is in a shop and cannot get home till then; but I gave that up as I did not get home till half-past ten, & in winter I found it very trying. On Wednesdays I have a pupil at two, then I rush off as a rule to an afternoon orchestral concert given here in the winter: home to tea, then out to give two lessons from six till seven, then off to church. Service is at half-past seven. Only the boys of the choir attend that, and as we sit in the gallery out of sight, it is all I can do to keep them in order & attend to my own work as well. At half-past eight the rest of the choir comes in and we practise for an hour at least, frequently more. I play and conduct as well. It is quite easy to me now to detect faults in the singing although I am accompanying all the while, and of course I have to stop and correct them. After practice I have to write down the numbers of the hymns for the next Sunday, and give the paper to the vergers for the hymn-boards. Also I must make a copy for myself, with the numbers of chants &

everything else for the service-lists. Then I have to see that the books and music are gathered up and the place left tidy. I get home between ten and half-past.

Thursday is rather an off-day with me as far as teaching goes. I usually go to London to the house of an eminent professor of singing who very kindly invites a few young teachers and students to come and discuss with him & each other the difficulties which arise in our work. It is wonderfully good of him, but he says he learns as much as we do.

On Friday I have five lessons to give, and I often have the younger boys of the choir, new ones especially, come to me for an hour for a little extra teaching. I do not do this every week, neither am I expected to do it at all, but I think it is a good thing. Choir-boys want no end of attention: indeed some organists say that you cannot make them really efficient unless there is a daily service at their church.

On Saturday mornings I begin at nine o'clock with a girl who teaches in a school all the week. She takes both pianoforte and singing lessons, and is now preparing for the Trinity College Senior Local. At the end of her hour, two little boys arrive, twins of nine years old. They are darling little fellows: both learn pianoforte, and they are also being trained for a church choir. They enjoy their lessons thoroughly and consider me their especial property. On Sundays they come to church with their parents and are very delighted if they can make me smile from my perch at the organ. After them comes the boy whose mother "split the difference," and then my head choir-boy for his singing-lesson. I give him one lesson a week for nothing, because he is a good boy and quick to learn. At two o'clock I begin again with another piano-lesson, and so on till half-past three. Then I usually write the service-lists for next day, and then I am free till five o'clock. After tea I hurry away to church for the boys' practice, which lasts until eight o'clock. We go through the next day's psalms and hymns, as well as any anthem or "service" which we have in preparation, & I usually manage, even if there is ever so much to be done, to give them a few minutes talk about

keys, time, how to produce their voices, how to manage the breath or say the words. I often think that the shorter this little interpolated lesson, is the better they remember it.

Then comes Sunday. There are only two services for me, at eleven and at half-past six. The afternoon service is merely hymns, and a young man in the Sunday-school expects & likes to play, so he is quite welcome to do so. Our services are not very ornate, since it is a Low Church, but I find quite enough to do in preparing the choir for them. We have ten boys and eight men in the choir. By the way, we sometimes use a hymn-tune of my own, & some of my chants are quite favourites. I have a nice little organ by Robson, recently renovated. It has nine stops on the great & room for a trumpet, six on the swell & room for an oboe, one pedal stop, three couplers & three composition pedals. I have given recitals for charities, got the church full & good press notices. My salary is twenty-five pounds. No extras except an occasional wedding, when as a rule the interested persons object to pay me anything, but go off & ask somebody to play—on my organ—who will do it for nothing.

Of course I get concert engagements, but the same thing is found. Cheap people can be got, so I must be cheap too. I am quite commonly offered half-a-guinea. Country engagements pay better. An oratorio engagement in the West of England last month brought me £2. 10. 0, but the expenses ran away with most of it. These are cut-throat days, and one must take what one can get. Last year I gave a Vocal Recital. Everybody called it an artistic success, but I only made about thirty shillings. However I was lucky not to lose on the venture.

Nevertheless, in spite of my grumbling I know I have a good deal to be glad about. In 1896 I made between seventy and eighty pounds, and there are many girls who work far harder for far less.

I declare the statements in this paper to be true.

"PIMPERNEL."

5th January 1897.

Plumstead.

FOURTH PRIZE (£1 IS.).

I EARN my living with pen & brains; my sister works in the same office (a publisher's), and we two have a little room all to ourselves; it is a very ugly little room, & not very tidy, I fear: paper is dreadful stuff for getting scattered about; when I screw up useless sheets, I always aim at throwing them into the waste paper basket, which stands by my desk, but somehow or other I but rarely succeed. On one side of our room is a large window, where my desk stands; the window commands a not very extensive view of dirty roofs, but above them is always the sky—at which I gaze when in search of ideas. Another side of the room is almost entirely occupied by a sofa, which, even if it were not usually piled up with papers & books, would hardly be conducive to repose, for it is a very hard & uncomfortable piece of furniture; by this sofa, in true foreign fashion, stands a table, at which my sister works, & where I work too, when I require plenty of room; on the opposite side of the apartment is a gas-fire (horrid thing: I would far rather have a coal fire!), & in the corner a cupboard & book case combined; against the fourth wall of the room are just three chairs which, like the sofa, are generally piled up with books & periodicals. In one corner is a typewriter on a small stand. On the walls hang a few coloured fashion-plates, a thermometer, sundry notes & reference lists, pinned up at random, a portrait of the Duke & Duchess of York, an almanac &

a picture of four chickens & three frogs playing tug of war with a poor unfortunate worm; over the mantel-shelf hangs a card upon which is printed: 'My Work is for the King': that card sometimes calls me to account when I am wasting my time.

So much for our room; on the same floor with us is a large room where four girls work at patterns, & next to that is a dining-room for those of the girls who do not go home to dinner. We are on the first floor; below us is the shop, two offices, & a room where two more people work at patterns. Downstairs is the machine room, where 3 men work at cutting out paper patterns, packing etc. On the 2nd floor of the house is the care-taker's sitting-room, where my sister & I take our meals; also a kitchen. On the 3rd floor are 2 bedrooms belonging to the care-taker, a store-room for books, patterns etc. & a large workroom where several girls work at patterns—cutting, stamping & folding them. On the 4th & last floor is another, still larger workroom, where a good many girls work; I do not exactly know how many. These workrooms are all reached by a back stair-case. The three ladies who do the bulk of the editing work, do not come up to the office, except occasionally: they send their work on by post.

At home we breakfast at 8, & a few minutes after 9, my sister & I go off to business; we have a good long omnibus ride before we get

there, but I enjoy that; we always ride outside, so as to get as much fresh air as possible; besides, when we ride outside, we are not tempted to read & so spoil our eyes & make ourselves sleepy. I find it exceedingly interesting to look at all that passes; to watch how cleverly the driver dodges between all the vehicles on the road; & to note familiar faces. At 10-o'clock we start work: my sister does various odd jobs—if I may use so inelegant an expression; my work is to write descriptions of dresses & other garments for five monthly fashion magazines; that is my chief work; some of the descriptions I translate from the French; some I write by looking at the illustrations; but of most I have the patterns given me, which I open out separately on the table, & write from those, aided by notes & explanations which accompany each pattern. I also have to write descriptions to send abroad—lists of such being sent up to me as pleasant little surprises now & again: most often when I am very busy, seems to me. Another branch of my work is to read & correct the proofs of the magazines, before the latter are printed off; this needs careful attention to every detail, as the printers make very funny mistakes sometimes. I also have to read all French & German papers that are sent up to me, & translate anything that I consider worth translating; occasionally, too, I have French or German letters sent up to me to translate & answer. Sometimes I find

myself with nothing particular to do; then I employ my time in writing stories & things that come into my head; if these be worth anything, I get paid for them, which is nice for me; my regular pay is £1 a week, but more has been promised me in the near future. We work from 10-o'clock till 1-o'clock, that is, my sister & I do; at 1-o'clock we go upstairs, where we find a hot lunch awaiting us; I generally spend the luncheon hour in reading a book or the newspaper; then at 2-o'clock we recommence work, and keep at it till 4-o'clock, when we lock up & go home—arriving there in time for tea. After tea we of course do as we please; our evenings are always pleasant, & home is all the more appreciated after a day at the dingy office—for it is dingy: there is no denying the fact. On Fridays, we do not get home until about 7 or 8-o'clock, but we do not mind that, as we have a whole holiday on Saturdays. Every Tuesday evening we have a sewing-party

(which consists of six members), from 5.30 to 7.30; why I mention this is because I wish some more girls would do the same; very likely there are many who would, if once the idea were put into their heads. We get from our clergyman the address of some poor woman who has a family to provide for; then, somewhere about October, two of us go and visit the woman, and ask permission to make clothes for her children; these we work at every Tuesday evening; when we have made one garment for each child, we take them round, & perhaps a cake or something as well; then we go on to make them something else each; we make for each child two sets of underclothes and one dress; then we leave them & go on to another family. Worked thus, I think a sewing-society is very interesting. So far, we have only been able to manage one family a year, as we stop work in the Summer; but every little helps. If all the girls who could, would!

Of course I occasionally find things to grumble at. For one thing, it is rather a bother getting up to business and going home again, when the weather is bad. It also annoys me that I cannot get my work regularly: sometimes I have ever so much to do in a very short space of time, and sometimes I have very little to do; sometimes I get through a whole day without having done anything in particular; and then, just when we are thinking of going home, something is sent up for me to do at once. Then again, it is very vexing when, through no fault of my own, I have to do the same work twice over, as sometimes happens. But there, we cannot have everything just how we like it; and these are, after all, but very minor troubles.

I declare this all to be perfectly true.

"CAULFLOWER,"

Church Road,
Brixton Hill.

Jan 4th, 1897

FIFTH PRIZE (£1 IS.).

MY PROFESSIONAL WORK.

WHEN I was fifteen I made up my mind to earn my own living: so I went to my father and said—

"Father, I want some work to do."

He smiled at me encouragingly.

"Find some," he said.

After that I went about for days turning things over and over in my mind. The result was a letter, written in my neatest style, to the village postmistress. This letter took me some hours to indite, but was very satisfactory in its result, for the answer arrived promptly by return.

My delight when it was given to me was unbounded. It was the first step toward the end I meant to achieve. I can remember the words it contained to this day—

"In answer to Miss P—'s letter, the postmistress wishes to state that she will undertake to teach all post-office duties, and telegraph instrument, for a fee of £4. 4. 0."

I carried this precious document to my father. He read it, silently laid upon it four bright sovereigns, and four shillings, then passed it back to me.

I squeezed his hand affectionately, and went away.

Those four guineas were a perfect mine of wealth in my eyes, and indeed they must have seemed almost as important to my father, for times were very hard then, and there were so many hungry mouths to fill. I was old enough to understand a little of the look of care that rested upon my mother's brow, and the money seemed to put a dreadful responsibility upon me. What if I were to fail, and so waste it all! I determined to try so hard, and all the way—as I walked to the office, with my little purse clasped tightly in my hand, for my first lesson—I was asking God, in my heart, to help me in my self-chosen career.

I was to have two hours tuition a day, and after the first week the strangeness had considerably worn off, and I found myself getting used to the duties. I remember how pleased I was, because, when I arrived exactly at 10

one morning, my teacher said "she needed no timepiece with such a punctual pupil." That was the character my father had earned. I wanted to copy him.

Of course there were difficulties to be overcome. The dots and dashes of the telegraph instrument were very bewildering, and the different rules for everything—Registered letters and parcel-post and a thousand other things puzzled me exceedingly; but I laboured—(I had almost written *manfully*) on.

In those days I slept with a penny edition of the post-office handbook under my pillow, that I might have it in readiness to study the first thing on waking, in the quiet time before the children were up. Looking back upon them now those short three months seem very bright ones, for long ere they ended my work grew full of interest to me.

I was quite sorry to leave the office, and really begin alone, although it was something delightful to bring home my first earnings. I proudly gave the money to my father. I meant to pay my four guinea debt—for it was a real debt to my thinking—as quickly as I could.

After that the way became comparatively easy. I took several holiday engagements in the country, and greatly enjoyed the novelty of seeing fresh people and places. I can safely add that I never met with anything but the greatest kindness and consideration in all my wanderings, being always treated more as a child of the home than a hired assistant.

I would like to tell you a little about my present situation, because among so many girls in business who have real grievances, it is nice, I think, to hear of those whose lines have fallen in pleasant places.

This is a small London sub office. I always thought I should hate London. Maybe it was my country up-bringing that led me to expect to find everybody in the great City rogues and "sharper." It was not without a feeling of dread that I first took my place behind the counter here. Here—where day by day I meet with honest hearts and true as ever country villages produced, where, amid

the busy stream of men and women who hurry into the office for letter stamps, on their way to the city, in the morning, scarcely one is too busy or self-occupied to wish a pleasant "Good-day," or make some kind courteous remark, before they mingle with, and are lost in the never ending procession of toilers for daily bread. I often laugh heartily over the comical questions people put, and the strange ideas they hold. Once a lady, very aged and feeble, came to deposit the savings of her lifetime. When I gave her a bank-book with the amount entered, she looked earnestly into my face and said, "I am pleased to lend you the money, my dear, and I hope God will bless it to you."

Such confidence was certainly pleasant.

One dear old gentleman never comes to draw his monthly allowance without bringing me a nose-gay from his own tiny garden-plot, or in the winter-time from some precious indoor plant, and one hot afternoon a great basket of strawberries came. Everybody down to the smallest telegraph boy remembers what a delicious feast they were.

The hours are long. On duty from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. without only about 15 minutes for each meal, but by the kindness of my employer I get half an hour's rest after dinner, in which time I do all my odd jobs of mending and brushing my clothes. I have to keep the accounts, and see that everything runs smoothly in the office, but I do all in my own way, and just as, and when I like. My salary is only a pound a week, but I have Sunday quite free, beside one evening. At 8 P.M. sharp I close the office, and, as I am engaged, and hope to be married before so very very many months are over, I spend the rest of my leisure time in making pretty things to adorn, what to me, at least, will I am sure be, the most wondrously beautiful little home in the whole world.

I declare the statements in this paper to be true.

"DANDELION,"

Southgate Road,
Islington, N.



A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

QUI M'AIME, AIME MON CHIEN

BECAUSE he's big, and wild, and black,
And has undoubtedly a knack
Of looking quite demoniac—
My poodle dog,

Some friends of long acquaintance lack
Courageousness his points to track,
But from his innocent attack
(Sweet poodle dog)

Will fly like mad, and turn and tack,
Until I fear they'll ne'er come back,
And then I think his head to crack—
Poor poodle dog.

But rather than my dog to whack,
I'll let all cowards race and pack,
Deserting all—yea, each "man-jack"—
My poodle dog

And me; for e'en if pain did wrack,
Or he were tied up in a sack,
His master he'd scent out and track—
Good poodle dog!

So insincerity may quack
On each day of the almanack,
I shall not feel alone with Jack,
My poodle dog.



C. P.

CAVE CANEM!

WHO haunts your doorstep night and day,
And scares your faithful friends away,
In spite of all they do and say?
Your poodle dog.

Who drenches ladies' cheeks with tears,
And fills their gentle life with fears,
And hurries them to early biers?
Your poodle dog.

Who makes a man a horrid bear,
And when the parson tears his hair,
Puts out his tongue and doesn't care?
Your poodle dog.

Who strews the road with shoes and socks,
And fragments torn from women's frocks,
Then shows his teeth, and grins and mocks?
Your poodle dog.

Who spoils the fun at every feast,
And won't obey you in the least,
A bouncing, barking, blatant beast?
Your poodle dog.

Oh, when his place of rest is found,
I'll dance with glee upon the mound
That hides at last from sight and sound
Your poodle dog!

SARAH DOUDNEY.

THE QUEEN'S TOBACCO-PIPE.



AMONG Custom-house officers and other frequenters of the docks along the Thames, it is considered to be a joke—and a capital one too—to say that Her Majesty Queen Victoria is the greatest smoker in the United Kingdom. It is a good, serviceable old joke, and no doubt it is very funny; but what is a great deal funnier, to one who strolls about and chats with different officers of the Revenue, is the manner in which one after another of them will tell it—sometimes with a knowing wink and a waggish dig with the thumb, and always with the air of a man who is conscious of being rather an original wit.

But though given as a joke, the assertion is perfectly true, the only qualification of it necessary being, of course, that Her Majesty does her smoking by deputy!

The "Queen's Tobacco-pipe" is a furnace or kiln for the consumption, not of tobacco only, as its popular name would seem to imply, but of anything and everything it is necessary to dispose of without removal from the docks. There were formerly three or four such furnaces on the banks of the Thames; and when articles liable to duty were more numerous than they are now, the fuel with which these "Pipes" were fed was often of a singularly miscellaneous character. Goods such as Bandanna handkerchiefs, lace, gloves, hams, tobacco and cigars, tea and coffee, and innumerable other dutiable articles, were handed over to the representative of Her Majesty in the person of a Custom-house officer, and consigned to the flames.

The importation of Bandanna handkerchiefs was at one time of day entirely prohibited; nevertheless they were smuggled into the country in such quantities, that at the very time they were under prohibition they found their way into general use. Vast numbers were, however, seized and destroyed. In the case of a similar seizure of other articles, such as lace or gloves—articles not prohibited, but merely subject to duty—they would be forfeited to the Crown, and if of any value, would be sold: otherwise they, too, would go to the furnace. It would sometimes happen that goods in transit would be so damaged as not to be worth the duty levied on them, and the consignee, therefore, would decline to redeem them. On one occasion 13,000 pairs of French gloves were thus abandoned, and were consequently mixed up with the tobacco in the Queen's Pipe. A still more curious consignment were 900 hams, which were kept in bond until unsaleable, and then similarly disposed of, several of the best of them affording Her Majesty—that is to say, Her Majesty's servants—many a hearty meal before finally disappearing. It has been stated that occasionally there have been broken up and thrown into these furnaces, articles in the manufacture of which metals of various kinds have been employed, and that among the ashes taken out molten gold and silver have been found. Among importations that have been thus treated, stories are told of large numbers of rank impostors in the guise of valuable gold watches, shipped from foreign ports apparently for the express purpose of imposing upon the unwary.

The truth of many such stories, however, appears to

be open to some question. Certainly nothing of the kind has taken place for very many years—indeed, the remission of one tax after another has gradually reduced the fuel of Her Majesty's Pipes, and at the present time all have gone out but one.

St. Katharine's Docks used to have one ; and in the adjoining London Docks was the largest of them all. It was this one which took in the 900 hams and 13,000 pairs of French gloves. It still stands, shut in within a small quadrangle, bricked off from a corner of what was formerly a huge tobacco warehouse, from which it drew the greater part of its supplies. In years gone by this kiln was always burning, both by night and day ; and every week tons upon tons of merchandise, brought from distant parts of the earth, or manufactured at enormous cost, were converted into ashes, to be sold by auction and employed as manure, or by chemical manufacturers. The gradual adoption of free trade, and the diversion of nearly the whole of the tobacco importations to the Victoria Docks, put out this furnace as well as the rest, and now the only Queen's Tobacco-pipe to be found in the Metropolitan dockyards is in this latter vicinity.

The journey down to it is not to be lightly undertaken. It stands perched on what in the docks is known as "the knuckle of the C jetty;" and unless one sets out with a tolerably clear and distinct idea of the position of this "C jetty," he is very likely to find that his travels only fairly begin just where he expected they would terminate. In and out among forests of shipping and piles of merchandise, brought together from every point of the compass, hustled by natives of every climate, jabbering all sorts of unknown tongues, and at almost every step apparently incurring the risk of being run down by trucks and barrows, or unceremoniously hooked up into space by hydraulic cranes, or flattened into a pancake by some erratic hoghead or descending "lift," the explorer makes his way, until at length a whiff of very vile tobacco-smoke blows over with the thousand and one odours, good, bad, and indifferent, which always seem to constitute the atmosphere of shipping London ; and the adventurer knows that he has found the Queen's Tobacco-pipe, and that Her Majesty is still a great smoker, if not a very choice one.

Truth to tell, one's first impression of this unique little establishment—unique at least in London—is one of profound disappointment. It is a shabby-looking, insignificant little affair, altogether unworthy of its great name, and presenting nothing to the outside world but a chimney and a pair of gates, with a little loose lumber lying around. Nor are appearances very much more inviting when a vigorous kick at the gates calls forth the somewhat disputatious-looking head of a servant of Her Majesty, posted inside to see that nothing is brought out again when once it has been taken in as fuel for the Pipe, and who seems to think it altogether unreasonable in anybody to expect that he can get through his arduous and exhausting day's work if he is to be bothered with half-a-dozen questions from one and the same individual.

The place itself is merely a little enclosed yard, with

sheds on one side of it, in one of which is a huge furnace, with an iron door sliding up and down, and capable of holding a good cart-load of fuel. The whole concern is very little bigger than an ordinary village pound, yet in the shipping world it appears to be as well known as the Custom House. Many, indeed, outside the shipping world have good cause to know it, at least by repute ; for many a luckless *voyageur* has made an involuntary contribution to the flames that are pretty steadily kept up here all the year round.

The great bulk of the fuel is bad tobacco—tobacco which has come into port in such a condition that it is not worth the duty which must be paid upon it before it can be removed from the docks. To this are added the sweepings of the warehouses and other odd litter. Altogether, the quantities of combustibles which find their way into this capacious pipe-bowl in the course of the year are something very large. Merely the ashes carted off every week amount to several tons in weight. These have a considerable market value ; and ladies who occasionally take a peep into this out-of-the-way little nook are generally found to express great faith in their merits as a dentifrice, and often carry away little packets for their own use. One might have supposed, however, that in these days of manufacturing economy such great quantities of refuse materials would have undergone some transformation more profitable than the mere conversion of them into ashes.

Some such reflection as this is still more forcibly suggested by the contributions which passengers aboard vessels coming into the Thames are frequently called upon to make—often, no doubt, very much to their astonishment. Any book of which a copyright exists in England, but which has been printed abroad, is ruthlessly seized and committed to the flames in this little temple of destruction. Nor are there, in a general way, any means by which such a sacrifice may be averted, when once the book has fallen into the hands of Her Majesty's representatives, even though, over and above its intrinsic value, it may have a value as a keepsake or a birthday present. This of course is done not in the interest of the Revenue, as there is no important duty on books, but simply as a protection to the proprietor of the copyright, to whom an appeal may be made, and who may, if he thinks proper, forego his right to have the books destroyed. Some authors have been especially indulgent in this respect. To the late Charles Dickens, for instance, such an application was rarely made in vain ; and there are some living proprietors of copyrights who are equally generous in this respect. In a general way, however, the law takes its course, and hundreds of volumes that might enrich the bookshelves of hospitals and other places, into which they would never otherwise find their way, are flung into this omnivorous furnace on the "C jetty" of the Victoria Docks. Of course, there is much to be said against any such distribution of forfeited books ; but it cannot be denied that absolute waste of this kind is very much to be deplored.

G. F. MILLIN.

CHANGE.

WISHING for something new,
Vainly creation we range,
Searching the land and the ocean too,
For something, perhaps, neither worthy
nor true,
But that bears the stamp of change.

Is not the earth the same?
Morn comes first, then night;
And winter cheers with its mirth and
game
When summer has fled from sight;
And each new year rolls on again,
When the old one takes its flight.

My song, like the magic glass,
Shifts into figures rare;
Ye may watch the mystic fancies pass
Into forms more strange than fair;
But 'tis only a different grouping cast—
Still the same tune is there.

Then, while our good old earth
Ever the same form bears,

And rolls as it did from its early birth,
With its cycles of days and years,
Let us learn to value all good and worth,
Though time's dull use it wears.

M. M. P.

HOW TO EMBROIDER IN CREWELS.

PART III.

I HAVE in previous papers briefly described a few of the many beautiful things which can be made for the house by skilful and industrious fingers. I must now say a few words on the subject of art embroidery for articles of dress. Generally speaking, this is more used for summer and evening than for winter dresses, as bright flowers are hardly appropriate to dull and wintry weather; but dark dresses can be handsomely and suitably adorned with coloured leaves and berries. For instance, a plain, dark material might be made into a pretty walking dress, with a fish-wife tunic, embroidered with either vine, blackberry, or Virginian creeper leaves, and a collar and cuffs to correspond. These leaves

are mentioned because they all take such beautiful tints in the autumn; but there are many other suitable subjects which can be selected by the worker. Girls who have plain winter dresses of which they are getting tired might entirely alter the appearance of them by working a spray of leaves here and there, on the pockets, collar, cuffs, &c., even if the style of the dress is not suitable for embroidering in a regular border. Should any portions of the dress be beginning to look shiny with wear, arrange the pattern as far as possible so as to cover those parts. Dresses generally give way in one or two places before the rest is half worn out, and we are often at a loss to know how to hide the shabby parts.

Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to emulate the deacon described by Professor Wendell Holmes, and to have our dresses made like his "Wonderful One Hoss Shay," so equally strong in every part that after a hundred years there should be merely—

"A general flavour of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say."

So that—

"It went to pieces all at once;
All at once, and nothing
first,
Just as bubbles do when
they burst."

In spite of every precaution, they persist in wearing out unequally, and the only thing we can do is to make a virtue of necessity, and as we hear of clever architects converting an ugly buttress or arch necessary to the strength of the building into an ornament to the whole by their skilful workmanship, so we can comfort ourselves with the reflection that the necessary patches and joins, though ugly things in themselves, if made the medium for a little tasteful embroidery, will really appear to be the finishing touches to an elegant dress, instead of the unsightly necessities of a worn-out one. Fig. 1, a small design of apple-blossoms, will look pretty worked here and there on a dress of rather light-coloured material.

For evening wear any light material is used, even Bolton sheeting is often employed; though, without the addition of crewel-work, such a homely fabric would be quite inadmissible. One of the prettiest costumes for a dinner that I have seen was a long sleeveless polonaise of ivory beige, the skirt and sleeves being composed of pale blue satin or silk. The polonaise was ornamented down both front and back and round the bottom in crewel silks, with blue corn-flowers, wheat-ears, and fern-leaves, and the ivory satin slippers had each a spray to match. When



"WISHING FOR SOMETHING NEW."

short sleeves are worn, the long gloves, whether silk or kid, should be worked up the back to correspond with the dress.

Costumes for all occasions are similarly trimmed by enthusiasts for the revival of art-needlework. At a recent fashionable wedding the bride, instead of wearing the orthodox orange flowers, had her white satin dress embroidered with them, and wore the real ones only in her hair; while her bridesmaids were attired in dresses of cream-coloured camel's-hair cloth, made precisely alike, but each one embroidered with different flowers. One had wild roses and honeysuckle, another buttercups and daisies, with fern-leaves and moss, and so on. Amongst the bride's *trousseau* was a very handsome-looking dress of black silk, much embroidered in silk crewels. Upon my noticing it she laughed at my admiration, and told me it was one which she had worn till quite tired of it, and yet it was too good to cast aside, so she had transformed it from old to apparently new, by means of a little taste and industry.

It seems premature, while hardly out of the winter, to speak of summer dresses; but all who have not much leisure will do well to look forward a little, and employ some of the long, dark evenings in embroidering, in prospect of more genial weather. It is a drawback that the prettiest amongst light materials soil so quickly, but if good and carefully-selected crewels be



FIG. 1.

outside cover only, leaving the lining untouched to make the inside neat, and join the seams up again as before. Many people make their crewel-trimmings in strips, which can be easily transferred from one dress to another; but the effect is not good, though it is certainly less trouble. When a new dress is to be embroidered get it cut out, fitted, and tacked together before beginning the design; with care you will find no difficulty in working over the seams, and when done it can be lined and finished off, looking neat both inside and out.

Lawn-tennis aprons should be made of coarse holland, or something of the sort, with a deep pocket to hold the balls. Either a trailing pattern or simply little groups of flowers are suitable for them; they sometimes have a couple of rackets crossed on the breast, and a net, or smaller rackets and balls, on the pockets; but these do not look elegant, and a floral design is usually preferred.

While speaking of aprons, I may mention that a winter dress which begins to look dingy may be brightened up wonderfully by the addition of a little apron. Make it

rather narrow, a good length, and it should be made of crash, and edged with torchon lace, or, failing this, it can be button-holed round with wool the colour of the principal flower. They are sometimes made to come high up on to the shoulder-seams, of course being hollowed out for the neck, and, if preferred, can be made much shorter, only the length of a jacket-body, and pointed or rounded according to the

shape of the dress body. It is pinned on to the dress where required; but the cuffs to match are generally made with buttons and button-holes.

Before closing these few hints on crewel work, I have been asked to suggest one or two more pieces of embroidery suitable for birthday or wedding presents. This depends so much on the requirements of each particular case that it is difficult to give any hints suitable for all.

A very handsome present is a set of embroidered bed-room hangings, but of course this involves a considerable amount of work, and would hardly be undertaken by any but a quick worker. I saw a beautiful set of this sort amongst a display of wedding presents lately. The ground was pale blue serge, and the embroidery consisted of a broad band of large buttercups and moon daisies, intermingled with every variety of grass and leaves. The valances and other parts which would not be seen very closely were worked more coarsely than the conspicuous parts, two or more threads being in the needle at once, and the stitches being made larger than would be allowable in finer work.

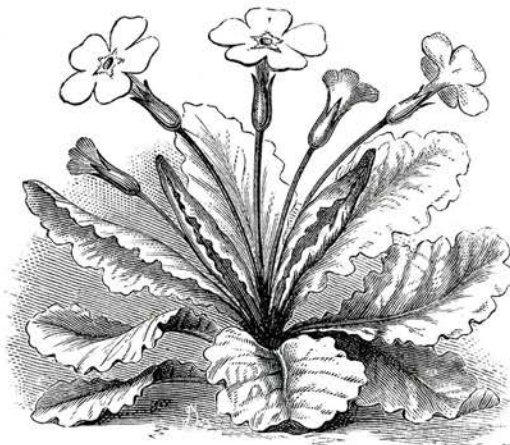
The effect of the whole was charming, and the gift was more admired than many which cost three times as much. The greatest care is necessary to avoid puckering in curtains; though this defect can to some extent be remedied by the method described in a previous paper, still the curtain will never hang well, and the appearance of it will be much impaired.

Probably, however, not many girls will wish to give such a valuable present, and for them I should suggest a straight-backed chair, with an embroidered seat, or, if that is too expensive, a cushion. The accompanying illustration, fig. 2, would do for either, and is a most effective design, and the colours would not look out of place in any room. It might be worked on almost any material; dark green silk sheeting would do very well. The flower-petals are pale yellow at the tips, getting darker, with a tinge of green towards the stem; the cup in the centre of the flower is deep yellow. The little sheath or "spathe," as botanists call it, at the junction of stem and flower is light-brown, tinged with green, and the stalks and leaves are different shades of yellow-green, none of them very light. Stem-stitch is the only one required in the working of daffodils, so they are recommended for anyone who has not yet mastered the more intricate stitches, some of which are necessary in most floral designs.



FIG. 2.

used there will be no difficulty in washing them. Some colours are more apt to run than others, and, unfortunately, greens, which cannot be dispensed with, are amongst the worst. Be careful to buy only yellow-greens for washing purposes; they can generally be depended on to keep their colour, and china-blue and most of the reds and pinks wash well. It is a good plan to work in rather deeper shades than would generally be chosen, as then a little fading of colour will be of no consequence. For garden parties it is a pretty addition to the costume to embroider a piece of the material for a crown to the hat; the parasol, too, should be worked to match. This can be done by unpicking it at the spokes; then work a pattern on each separate division, on the





MISTAKEN IDENTITY.



MOST people, if asked whether they could identify a friend they knew well, after he had been absent for a few years, and pick him out from among a number of other people, would answer the question in the affirmative. But when they came to reflect upon the extraordinary likenesses they must at times have perceived between different individuals, and how time can work strange changes in the human countenance, they would probably be more doubtful, and decline to be as "cock-sure" upon this particular subject as Sydney Smith said Macaulay was about everything. Had they studied the matter at all, they would certainly reply that the question of identification of a person is often one of extraordinary difficulty, that grievous and terrible mistakes have been made, leading, as we shall see presently, to judicial murders; and that those writers on medical jurisprudence who have concerned themselves with this subject have borne eloquent witness to "the utter uncertainty of testimony to identity when based on mere resemblance of face and figure." As to the ravages wrought by time, the following beautiful passage of "Marmion" will be doubtless familiar to many of our readers:—

" Danger, long travel, want, and woe,
 Soon change the form that best we know;
 For deadly fear can time outgo,
 And blanch at once the hair.
 Hard toil can roughen form and face,
 And want can quench the eye's bright grace,
 Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
 More deeply than despair."

It may not be uninteresting, then, if we collocate a few instances out of the many on record wherein mistakes as to identification have led to disastrous and sometimes tragic results. But before doing so it may be noted that we have instances of extraordinary resemblances handed down to us from antiquity, for Pliny, in his Natural History, calls attention to certain persons who could hardly be distinguished from each other, such as the Emperor Pompey and a person named Vibius in a much lower station of life; Lentulus and Metellus the consuls; and one Artemon the impostor, who was curiously like Antiochus, the King of Syria. Thus there is in truth nothing new under the sun, nor is it surprising to find that what is a matter of common experience at the present day was well known to, and commented upon by, the ancients.

One of the most remarkable cases occurring in comparatively recent years was that upon which was founded the famous play of *The Courier of Lyons*, or, as it is sometimes called, *The Lyons Mail*. On the 27th of April, 1796, the mail going from Paris to Lyons was stopped, and the courier and postillion murdered. A young man named Lesurques, of spotless character and very good position, was arrested for the crime and executed, on the testimony of nine people, though he vainly proved an *alibi*, and though a woman who knew the real criminal, Duboscq, testified that he, and not Lesurques, was the murderer. Lesurques went to his death, leaving a very pathetic letter to the then unknown man in whose stead he suffered; and it was not till years afterwards that Duboscq confessed, when the same witnesses recognised him as the criminal, declaring that they had been misled by the remarkable resemblance between him and the innocent man. What makes this case all the more extraordinary is that these two men positively had scars of the same size in similar positions. Little wonder then that such a fact, coupled with their resemblance, caused them to be mistaken one for the other.

About the middle of the last century a certain Mr, Killet was convicted and executed on the positive oath of a man named Jackson, who swore he had been robbed, Killet's innocence being afterwards proved. Another tragical case was that of two men named Mackley and Clinch, who were executed for the murder of a Mr. Fryer in Islington in 1797, their identity being positively sworn to by Miss Ann Fryer, the cousin of the murdered man, who was with him at the time. Yet years afterwards two criminals severally confessed to the crime for which Mackley and Clinch had innocently suffered. Another unfortunate man named Coleman was executed in 1749 for the murder of a girl, Sarah Green, who swore positively to him as one of her assailants, the real criminals being discovered afterwards through one of them turning king's evidence, as it was called in those days.

Turning from these tragedies to cases wherein the accused persons escaped, we shall find equally remarkable instances of resemblance between different persons. A certain Mr. Frank Douglas, a man of fashion in the last century, was arrested on a charge of highway robbery, much to the horror of his friends, and would certainly have been hanged but for the following providential circumstance. A notorious criminal named Page happened to be caught and

brought to Newgate at the same time, and when the victim of the robbery saw *him* he recognised his real assailant, the extraordinary resemblance between the two men amply explaining his former testimony. A similar case occurred in New York some forty years ago or thereabouts, which created much excitement in that city. A hotel-keeper was charged with presenting a forged cheque, and, the bank clerk swearing to his identity, he was convicted. A new trial was, however, obtained, and after the unfortunate man's business and reputation were gone, a notorious forger happened to be arrested, who turned out to be the real criminal, a remarkable resemblance between the two being once more the cause of much misery to an innocent man.

Scores of such cases indeed might be quoted, and testimony based on resemblance has, says a great authority, been proved to be utterly uncertain, even when given by the most conscientious witnesses who desire to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Dr. Gilman, in his edition of Beck's "Medical Jurisprudence," says on this point, "The wife has been mistaken as to her husband, the father as to his child, the sister as to her sister, the life-long friend as to his friend. Such mistakes have been made, and I suppose will be made, on such evidence. Lives have been sacrificed, judicial murders have been committed, and what the law has once done, we all know it will (for that sole reason) do again."

Fully as interesting as the foregoing cases, though not ending, or nearly ending, so tragically, are the cases in which the question to be decided is whether an individual is the person he pretends to be. And in this connection a famous case, the *cause célèbre* of our own times, will at once occur to the reader—the attempt of Arthur Orton to pass himself off as Sir Roger Tichborne. The extraordinary length of that trial and its many curious incidents are too fresh in the public mind to need any recapitulation here, though it is quoted by the most recent authorities as one of the most curious cases on record.

Let us go back to 1590, to a French case, that of Martin Guerre, which came before the Parliament of Toulouse in that year, and certainly sounds more like a fiction than a true story. Martin Guerre, foolish man, left his home and his wife for eight years. Thereupon one Arnauld Dutille made his appearance, bearing a great resemblance to the errant Martin, was received by the wife as her husband, and took possession of the property. Children were born to them, and for three years Arnauld Dutille was accepted by Madame Guerre, and Martin's four sisters and two brothers-in-law, as her lawful husband. The matter, however, fell into dispute, and then came the tug of war. Hundreds of witnesses were examined, and of those some forty swore that the impostor was Martin

Guerre, while as many were equally positive that he was Arnauld Dutille, and again a number of judicious persons testified that the two men were so much alike that they could not decide which was before them. The judges were naturally very much puzzled, and Arnauld Dutille brazening the matter out with consummate effrontery, they were positively on the point of deciding in his favour when the real "Simon Pure" appeared on the scene. Martin Guerre claimed his own, and the imposture collapsed.

Equally curious in its way was the claim of Pierre Megé, a soldier, to be the son of a certain Sieur de Caille who had fled to Savoy, being a Protestant, on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. His son died in De Caille's presence at Vevay, but nevertheless the impostor was after a trial declared to be the said son, in spite of documentary evidence from Switzerland of the man's death. The wife of Megé, however, let out the secret, and on an appeal the Parliament of Paris decided against him. This imposture, as has been pointed out, was in many respects like the Tichborne case, for there seem to have been no points of resemblance at all between the two men.

Another cause tried in France was that of Baronet, who was condemned to the galleys on the false evidence of his sister, who had taken possession of his property, but he afterwards regained his rights, mainly owing to the evidence of Louis, a celebrated surgeon of the period.

It is needless, however, to go on multiplying instances of remarkable resemblances. Enough has been said to prove that these exist much more often than many people imagine, and to show how careful we should be in our courts of law as to the admission of evidence of identity based upon facial expression and contour of form. And if any more proof were needed, let our readers ask themselves how many of their friends resemble each other, and how often they see people in the streets that they take in the distance for acquaintances, until a closer scrutiny dissipates the illusion. They will, we fancy, be rather surprised at the result of such investigations, if they have not given attention to the matter before.

We have only in this paper dealt with the identification of living people. The question of identifying the dead is beset with still greater difficulties, is too painful, and involves too many purely medical details to be dealt with in these pages. Not to part with our readers, however, in too sombre a spirit, we may mention that some years ago a gentleman at Hammer-smith, who was supposed to be deceased, turned up precisely at the moment when the hearse containing, as was thought, his remains was leaving his door, and could, had he been so minded, have attended his own funeral.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

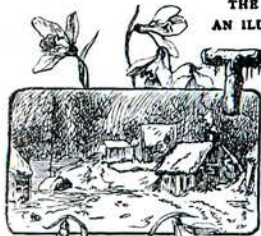


CHRONICLES OF AN ANGLO-CALIFORNIAN RANCH.

By MARGARET INNES.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BUILDING OF THE HOUSE—THE WORKMEN—
THE COLOURED LADY—
AN ILLNESS IN THE BARN.



HE plans for our house were finished. We had been very fortunate in the choice of our architect, and he had delighted us by working into them, with great taste, all the peculiarly English features, which we had set our hearts upon having, far-away Californian home.

There was to be a roomy ingle-nook, and large open fire-places, latticed windows with green shutters, and deep window seats, and great overhanging eaves to the roof. On the gables outside we were to have black beams in white plaster, to look like an old farm. To make the housework easier, and also because we liked it, all the rooms were to be on one floor, the whole second storey being one large attic.

Finally after many negotiations, the contract was signed, and we began to look daily for the coming of the men. We had learnt to dread the desert wind, which according to tradition, comes along in spells of three, or at most four days, but which we found had a nasty habit of staying longer, leaving one painfully parched, inside and out, body and spirit. At such times we watched anxiously for the great bank of white sea fog, rising up behind the mountains on the west, and always a sign that the fresh sea breeze was coming back to us.

It was on a Sunday evening, during a specially diabolical dose of desert wind, when there were bush fires on nearly all the mountains round us, and the air seemed filled with smoke and the pungent smell of burning sage, that our men arrived, bringing with them two waggon loads of materials for putting up the various sheds and tents needed for their comfort, during the eighty days, which was the contracted time for building the house.

They had had a breakdown on the way out from town, and what with this and the scorching heat of the day, had been much tried. However, they were very good tempered, and seemed to consider the whole business as a kind of picnic—a holiday in the country. The contractor, Mr. Scott, who was also the principal carpenter, was a huge man, very capable, as we soon found, and a splendid workman. He had brought his wife with him, to serve the two-fold purpose of a change of air for her, and a satisfactory cook for himself and his men! They had also their two little children with them and Mr. Scott's dog. Four more carpenters arrived with them; the plumbers, plasterers, and painters, were to follow later, when their work would be wanted.

The whole first day was spent in putting up the temporary houses needed for the little settlement. They were going to make themselves quite comfortable, though it was all done with extraordinary quickness. There was a "cookhouse" as they called it, which was the most ambitious building of all the

settlement, and we thought it showed Mr. Scott's good sense, and promised well for the undertaking, that he provided so royally for the men's comfort in this particular. The cookhouse had one good-sized dining-room, with a long table down the middle, and a bench on each side; out of this was the kitchen, with two beautiful gasoline cooking stoves, containing large ovens and all the newest American contrivances. A nice cool cupboard or larder opened out of the kitchen, and was made with walls of wire gauze to let the air in freely and keep out the flies. The tent put up for Mr. Scott and his family was quite a work of art; nicely floored and with walls of wood about four feet high, to keep out draughts, the rest of the walls and roof being of canvas. They had it comfortably furnished, and seemed at once quite at home there.

The tents for the men were simpler, but satisfactory. By evening all their preparations were made, and when the lights were lit all over the little settlement, we were strongly reminded of the "Buffalo Bill" shows we had been to at home.

By early morning the men were hard at work, laying the mud sills of the house; and now began an exciting time for us, for these wooden houses are built so quickly, and American carpenters are such clever workmen, that it is most interesting to watch them. They were all good humouredly amused at the plans of our house, and said they had never put down such an irregular and unexpected outline of a house. Now, too, we proved the very great advantage it was to us to be at hand during the building; in this way several mistakes, which would have caused loss of time and vexation, were corrected at once, and some very decided improvements on the original plan were carried out.

Meanwhile our life in the barn was very dusty and hot. The coloured lady had unfortunately taken a great dislike to me, and though she did her work, she was so brutal in her manner, and scowled at me so savagely, that, half in earnest and half in jest, I made an arrangement with my husband and the boys that I should never be left alone with her after dark. In appearance she might have been first cousin to the gorilla, with his large, protruding mouth and big teeth. On Sundays, she would go off hunting for wild bees' nests, an occupation which seemed to be an absorbing passion with her. At such times, she would wear a very dilapidated print gown, her feet were thrust into men's boots, her head was covered with a red cotton sun bonnet, and she carried in her hand a tall, heavy stick; and as she came striding along, over the rough hill-side, with a peculiar movement of the hips, like a wild animal, and waving her great club, she looked like some man-eating aboriginal! One day, when her manner had become quite unbearable, I arranged with my husband that I would speak to her before him, for I did not dare tackle her alone. I hoped at least to find out what provoked her specially aggressive manner to me; for she made some slight attempt at friendliness to my husband and the boys. We got no satisfaction however; all she would say, standing meanwhile outside the open barn door, and shouting in her deep bass voice, was, "What does the woman want? I didn't insult the woman!" We felt it was hopeless, and as the quarters were so rough that few good servants would have put up with them, we decided to bear with our gorilla and

her angry mutterings till the house was built. But I was quite determined that whatever happened, she should not set foot in the house, even if I failed to find anyone else.

She much preferred to work with the ranch man, at any outdoor labour, however heavy, rather than do so-called woman's work. Especially she loved managing the horses, and we could hear her big guffaw out on the ranch, where she would try with the rest to trick or compel Dan, who was giving more and more trouble, into doing his work. All the workmen had some never-failing plan to coerce him, but each in turn was beaten by Dan's obstinacy, and his readiness to spend all day fighting out the question as to his way or theirs. Poor Dan! before long we discovered what was really amiss with him: he was going blind, and was in a constant state of irritation and excitement at not being able to see. No doubt the two young men who sold him to us, had known that this was coming on (though his eyes betrayed no sign of it), and were glad to be rid of him. Eventually we gave him away, and got a pair of young greys, giving the other horse Joe in part payment for them. Dan has been our only dead loss; all the other animals have turned out particularly well.

"Poll," the little Indian pony for Tip, the younger boy, is quite a character. She finds a trail through the most hopeless-looking bush, without a moment's hesitation, is as sure-footed as a goat on the steep rocky hill-sides, and has no vice about her. So that Tip, who was far from strong when first we came here, has become a very good rider, without accidents or trouble of any kind. He gallops her, bare-backed, up and down the steep hills around us at full speed, sitting on the reins and playing an accordion, waving it about over his head, and making her fly with excitement. Then there is Jennie, a pretty mare belonging to Larry, the elder boy. She is very nervous and high strung, fond of polo, and racing, and good at both, but never quite satisfied to go along on any quiet, everyday business. Ben is a strong, heavy ranch horse, dutiful and hardworking; Rex and Dick, the greys, are general favourites. They were only four years old when we bought them, and they needed always close watching, for they were full of spirits; but now they are more sober, and do their part bravely. Dickie is "the gentleman," and rarely does much ranch work, but trots the buggy for miles and miles about the country.

By this time, all was going forward wonderfully quickly with the building of the house. The carpenters and workmen enjoyed their trip in the country, and indeed Mrs. Scott prepared such comfortable meals for them in the cookhouse, that I fancy these alone would have reconciled them to a much worse lot. She was very proud of her cooking, and used often to show me her pies, and roasts, and biscuits, etc., as I passed to and fro.

She was rather a grand lady too, and felt very virtuous about working so hard at this job for her husband, but she told me privately that, though he made no show of praising her for doing so well, he always "came down handsome" after any such time, and that this one would probably mean a silk dress for her! So though she grumbled in an ostentatious way at times to me, when he was within hearing, she was really very cheerful and helpful.

Nowadays, when I see our Chinaman, in his clean white jacket, wandering about, carrying a basket in his hand, and returning presently with it full of beautiful tomatoes,

we think gratefully of Mrs. Scott and the cookhouse; for the odd bits she threw from her door in those days, came up very shortly in fruitful vines, and by this time they have distributed themselves all over the ranch.

The barn was not a nice place to be ill in, nor was Liza, the darkey, a nurse any invalid would willingly choose, and during a sharp attack of influenza I had while we were there, I wondered sometimes if she worked evil charms over the poultices, before she brought them to me, with such an angry face. To be ill at all was, I think, in her opinion a piece of fine ladyism, to which I had no right whatever. Fortunately I did not depend upon her nursing, but had my three tenderhearted, helpful menfolk. I lay very ill indeed, the influenza bringing on a bad attack of congestion of the lungs, which nearly killed me, and of course

in addition to the illness, there was the hopeless discomfort of the surroundings, the heat and dust, and when I was at my worst, a spell of desert wind, and oh! the horror of it all. The barn seemed no protection whatsoever. It was swept through and through by that parched, scorching air, like a draught from a red-hot furnace. The cracking and groaning of every wooden thing was like the wrenching and straining of a ship in a storm; the barn and everything inside the barn protested loudly. Fortunately our furniture was not to be housed for long in a building one plank thick, or there would have been but very little use in bringing it so far; soon it would have been lying about us, in disconnected bits, all sprung apart during desert wind spells.

Once we were in the house, by shutting all doors and windows we could keep the fiend

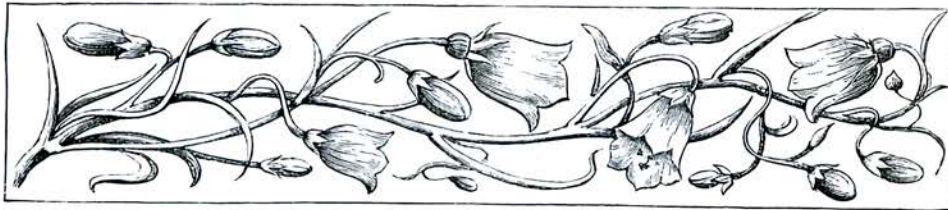
out, sufficiently at least to prevent mischief; though no one can boast of much comfort till our blessed friend the sea breeze returns to us.

However, notwithstanding the desert wind, Liza's illwill, and the influenza, I recovered a little strength and crept out again before long to see how the house was progressing.

I found the plasterers and brickbuilders hard at work, and their different encampments added to the rest. Each man brought at least one horse, often two, with his "rig," and a dog and a gun. The horses were tethered all about the land, and we seemed more "Buffalo Bill" like than ever.

The building of the house went forward splendidly, and it promised to be both very pretty and very convenient.

(To be continued.)



BROTHER JONATHAN'S WOMANKIND.

A PAIR OF PORTRAITS.

I.—ONE TYPE OF NEW ENGLAND WOMEN.



WOMEN are all accustomed to hear great praise awarded to the persevering ambition of such men as Hugh Miller, Elihu Burritt, Robert Burns, and others, who have educated their faculties and developed their talents in the face of overwhelming obstacles. I propose to speak of a class who, in most cases without the incentive of genius—that restless and consuming fire—are daily pursuing self-culture

under the most disheartening circumstances, and without the neglect of a single household duty. It has often occurred to me that the life of the average New England woman, such as I am about to describe, would be impossible to any other than she who is born in the bracing air of Yankee-land, and descended from a goodly stock of sternly resolute Puritan ancestors.

We must consider, to begin with, that although the wife of a farmer, our Priscilla is by no means to be compared with persons of that station in England, but rather with the wives or daughters of thrifty merchants, who have had opportunities both in

school and in society to assist their development into sweet, refined, and cultured women. It is rarely, I believe, in England that one meets with education without a certain amount of material prosperity as a forerunner, so that an English woman who converses agreeably and intelligently may be pre-supposed to lead an easy life, comfortably pursuing her studies, whilst the drudgery of the house is performed for her by others.

Now contrast with this picture that of a Yankee farmer's wife, who was perhaps herself the daughter of a farmer. She has received a certain amount of instruction at a public school, then marries young, and begins her, to me, Herculean labours. It is her part to perform all the daily household tasks with but seldom any outside aid. She must make butter, milk the cows, feed the chickens, and attend to the kitchen-garden, as well as to her special pet flower-beds and vines. Then she harnesses her horse and drives to a neighbouring town to barter (as no one else can) with her butter, eggs, and garden produce. If anything is broken or out of order in the house or farm she mends it, and being a woman of infinite resources, she may even construct some of her own furniture or paint her fence. Her "parlor" is adorned with all the latest absurdities in the way of worsted-work or pressed bouquets, while her store-closet is well stocked with preserves, and her garret hung with dried fruits. It is probable that she has children, and none are more thoughtfully tended in all their needs, be they physical, moral, or mental. The clothing of the family, even to their stockings and mittens, is her handiwork, while occasionally a garment is made for one of the village poor.

But where is her self-culture? say you. Ah! there

is the mystery; how and when is it accomplished? And there is no denying the fact: a narrow provincial education it may be, but that is owing solely to her circumscribed life.

If you were to enter a small, common-place, white-washed farm-house in any of the straggling New England villages, which appears little else than a cluster of huts in a wilderness to English eyes—if you were so bold as to enter in, and so fortunate as to have an uninterrupted conversation with the mistress of the house, you would find her a plain, probably faded, woman, clad in neat calico, sharp-voiced, and sharp-visaged perhaps, but gentle in manners, and displaying as she talks a well-cultivated intelligence, and more or less familiarity with literature in all its branches of history, philosophy, science, and *belles-lettres*. You would find her a member of the nearest library, and a subscriber to all the leading periodicals. But in order to make this a strictly truthful account, I must add that she seldom reads the newspapers, and is utterly devoid of that knowledge of current affairs that distinguishes particularly the women of New York and Chicago. But then, consider how precious to her is each moment of time, and how far is she removed from the centres of life and civilisation! She has no amusements, no diversions, no trips away; nothing but the dull, everlasting grind. And yet is she patient, and never resting from her round of necessary duties, and that, to her, no less necessary one of self-culture. Some one has beautifully said that “the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rocks the world.” The children of Priscilla—or, more correctly, “Sairey Ann”—will doubtless be rich, and some will call them *parvenus*, perhaps; but as for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, what may they not become!

II.—A NEW YORK BUTTERFLY.

In contrast with the foregoing sketch, I append a pen-portrait of another type of American woman.

Many people have the idea that a New York woman is an epitome of fashion and frivolity, and this impression is indelibly imprinted on the hearts of her New England sisters. But there is a daily-increasing number of women in the Empire city to whom this is certainly an injustice, although they would still amiably deprecate any comparison with the staid and talented belles of Boston. As clearly as possible in a short outline sketch I would demonstrate to you what the New York woman really is, and does. Imagine, reader, that you are a sojourner and a stranger in America, passing through her proudest city. Owing to a letter of introduction, you are invited to dine at the home of a young couple, of whose hospitality, amiability, and gaiety you have heard much. The young wife, in particular, is an ornament to society, which she illumines with her beauty, wit, and fascination. On repairing to a quiet side street, and after treading its monotonous path for some distance, you arrive at a French apartment house, plain but spacious, and without much difficulty succeed in finding the suite occupied by your hostess. After being ushered into a small but beautifully furnished reception-room,

you glance around, and note the pure artistic taste that has selected the chairs, the hangings, the *bric-à-brac*, as well as the few choice pictures, and many good books peeping out from low, uncovered book-cases. Now rising at the entrance of your host and hostess, and surveying the latter furtively but critically, you perceive that she is pretty, graceful, and exquisitely arrayed. You will notice her enchanting manners afterwards, but half-unconsciously, as you feel the warm glow of her hickory-wood fire. This is when you are comfortably seated in the small but cheerful dining-room, talking at ease with your new friends while a little course dinner is faultlessly served, and with the daintiest possible table appointments. You talk of anything and everything, but change about from topic to topic as you may, you will find your hostess well-informed about the subject in hand.

“Tell me,” you say at last, “how you find time to keep abreast of current history and literature, while at the same time you go about so much in society?”

In reply she will smile, and relate to you her daily life. In the morning, after going to market, and perhaps taking a short walk, she returns home in time to give her baby a bath and put it to sleep; then stops a moment to rest and peruse the morning journals before going out to take a singing lesson, or meet a class of friends to read English or German literature. In the afternoon she makes ceremonious visits, and attends a reception, a concert rehearsal, or a lecture; while her evening is occupied during the season by the usual entertainments. That keeps her pretty busy, apparently, and yet she will always squeeze out one or two hours a day in the morning, the afternoon, or both, in which to read alone. What does she read? you ask. Oh! she has always a plan and system about her reading. Just now it may be a course of political economy or mental philosophy.

“I always take notes,” she adds, “as I read; and, on finishing a book, I write a *résumé* of its ideas and a review in criticism of the whole.”

One more item of her daily life, which she does not tell you, is that she is interested probably in both public and private charities, as far as her means will allow; and perhaps the night before you meet her she has sat up with, and read to, a sick and suffering friend. She is not only a good mother, but, what is far more rare, she does not sacrifice in any degree her husband's comforts to those of her child. When night comes baby must be asleep, while she is clothed like the “lilies of the field” to meet her husband, and devote to him her time and smiles. She is a good friend, an amiable member of society, and less of a gossip than any other of her American sisters in town or country. She is also a devout church-goer, notwithstanding that she reads the German philosophers.

Have you not met her, my friends, this fair daughter of Manhattan? And if so, did you not leave her presence carrying with you a subtle bright remembrance, like a faint but lingering perfume? When at other times and in other places you hear her called a “New York Butterfly,” stop and consider if, after all, this is not a misnomer.

A. Z. S.

SEASONABLE RECIPES.

AT this time of the year we have recourse to lamb and veal—both in prime condition—forming as they do a most welcome change in our somewhat limited choice of meats.

Ribs of lamb, bought without the shoulder, is the least expensive part of the animal, and in the opinion of most people, it is the sweetest in flavour. It is economical too. From the neck and scrag part an excellent pie may be made for eating hot or cold; and the remaining piece will be a delicious roast.

Lamb requires gentle roasting and a fire not too brisk—in this particular resembling veal and pork.



A delicious stew from breast of veal is the following, and this also is an inexpensive dish.

Poitrine de veau aux câpres.—About two pounds of the breast of veal is cut into convenient pieces some two inches in length. Each piece is rolled in seasoned flour, then laid in a stewpan. A slice of unsmoked bacon or salted pork is cut into strips and laid over the meat, also three or four spring onions finely chopped, three or four leaves of fresh sorrel, thyme, etc., with a sprinkling of seasoning; then pour over a teacupful of warm water and set the stewpan in a corner of the oven to cook gently for an hour and a half. When quite tender, take out the meat and arrange neatly on a hot dish. Remove the fat from the gravy, and then add to it half a small bottleful of capers with about a table-spoonful of the vinegar. Make hot and pour over the meat.

A dish of spinach should accompany this, then it becomes true summer faring.



A *Veal Pie* is an excellent reserve or picnic dish. Was it not "Sam Weller" who pronounced it good "for melling the orgin?"

A slice off the leg near to the knuckle, or piece from the shoulder blade makes up in this way better than the expensive fillet. Shape neat pieces, flour them slightly, and sprinkle in among them strips of unsmoked bacon or ham, a spoonful of minced sweet herbs, slices of hard boiled egg, and fill up spaces with small forcemeat balls. Add just enough clear well-seasoned stock to cover the meat, and covering the pie with a lid, allow it to simmer gently for at least an hour. Make a rather rich "short" or "flakey" crust, roll it out to half an inch in thickness, fit it over the pie, then brush with beaten egg and ornament according to fancy. Let the crust also be well baked.



Braised Leg of Lamb.—When the joint is not to be eaten until cold this is a far better way of cooking it than roasting.

To braise properly doubtless requires a braising-pan, but an excellent substitute for this is an earthenware or stone jar (glazed, of course) with well-fitting lid. Whatever the vessel, it must be large enough to take in the whole joint and allow of the lid to fit securely down.

A small teacupful of water, or a little clear dripping is all that is needed in addition to the meat, although a bunch of sweet herbs may be put in for the sake of their flavour.

Very gentle cooking for some three or four hours in a slow oven will be needed according to the weight of the piece. When done let the vessel be put aside in the larder that the meat may cool in its own gravy, only

tilting the lid slightly that the steam may escape. The gravy will be found a solid jelly when cold and may be used for ornamenting the joint. The latter will be proved to be much more juicy and tender than when simply roasted, and its weight not so much lessened.



Veal Cutlet aux Petits pois.—Take about a pound and a half of veal cutlet, cut it into pieces two inches square. Dip each one in beaten egg and breadcrumbs and fry on both sides in very clear fat until nicely browned.

Stew the peas by preference, rather than boil them, doing them in a covered stewpan with a little butter, seasoning, a spring onion and half a lettuce. They will take about half an hour to cook them through, and should be ready by the time the cutlet is done. Remove the lettuce and onion and pour the peas into the middle of a round dish, heaping them towards the centre. Place the veal around the outer edge, and pour a small quantity of nicely-made and slightly thickened gravy around also.



Veal Croquettes.—The remains of cold roast or boiled veal to be minced finely with a little fat bacon or ham and an ounce or two of sausage meat. Mix with enough nicely flavoured gravy to moisten it well, add seasoning and a few breadcrumbs or a tablespoonful of mashed potato.

Roll out a sheet of very light flakey pastry, not too thin, cut into small rounds and place a teaspoonful of mince in the centre of each; roll up the pastry and close the edges with a touch of egg.

Have ready a saucepan containing some boiling lard. Drop each croquette into this and fry them until slightly browned and crisp. Serve on a d'oyley and garnished with parsley.



Tomatoes are plentiful and cheap this month. An excellent and savoury dish is:—

Stuffed Tomatoes.—For this choose them of even size and rather large. Scoop out a piece from the stalk end and take a portion of the inside with it; in place of this put a spoonful of savoury forcemeat highly seasoned, and scatter some breadraspings over the top. Place the tomatoes in a buttered baking-tin and put a few bits of butter among them. Bake in a quick oven about twenty minutes.

Tomatoes cut in quarters and frizzled in the fat make a delicious accompaniment to grilled or fried bacon.

A *purée* of tomatoes (cooked until soft in a little nice dripping, then passed through a sieve), well seasoned and slightly thickened, makes an admirable medium for warming-up the remains of cold meat. The meat should be cut into small, neat pieces and slightly frizzled on both sides before putting it into the *purée*.

With a dish of cauliflower and macaroni boiled and dressed in the usual manner—with or without grated cheese, a pleasant change from white sauce is to serve a *purée* of tomatoes in its place.



Tomato Salad.—Cut them in slices and place in a glass dish laying morsels of ice among them. Make a fringe of sprigs of watercress around the edge of the dish, and dress with pepper, salt and vinegar, oil if liked.

Light Scones (made from sour or "butter"-milk).—Stir a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda into a pint of sour or buttermilk until it froths. Rub a pinch of salt and a teaspoonful of baking-powder into a quart of flour. Make into a dough with the milk, roll out to the thickness of an inch, cut into shapes, and bake either in a quick oven or on a girdle. To be eaten either hot or cold, but whilst fresh.



Rice Shape to eat cold with custard or stewed fruit.—A pint and a half of milk and four ounces of best Patna rice; place these in a saucepan with a dozen lumps of sugar, a pinch of salt and a morsel of lemon rind. Let simmer gently for fully an hour or until the rice has absorbed nearly all the milk, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking at the bottom. Pour into a wetted mould, removing the lemon rind. Turn out when cold, pour custard or cream around it.



A delicious Bread-and-Butter Pudding.—The secret of success with this is to make the pudding some two or three hours before it is to be cooked. Butter a mould and sprinkle it inside with desiccated cocoanut and shred lemon peel, then about half fill it with pieces of bread and butter without crust, putting them in lightly and sprinkling more cocoanut between. Pour over this a custard made with two beaten eggs and a pint of sweetened milk made hot; let the pudding stand aside covered with a buttered paper, then bake in gentle oven for thirty or forty minutes. Turn out and serve either with more custard (boiled) or cream, or a little dissolved jelly.



Raspberry Cream Tart.—A summer dainty. Roll out some light short pastry, line a shallow tart tin, put in raspberries and sprinkle castor sugar thickly over them; then roll out an upper crust, place it over but do not fasten the edges closely. Ornament, and glaze if you will, then bake the tart, and when done remove the upper crust, pour in half a pint of custard or sixpennyworth of cream, replace the cover and let it stand till cold before it is sent to table. Gooseberry or currant tart may be made the same way, but will not be so rich as the raspberry.



Green Gooseberry Jam.—The berries are best for this purpose when just on the point of turning colour. Pick them on a dry day. Boil the fruit until it is thoroughly cooked before adding the sugar to it, add this in the proportion of three-quarters of a pound to a pint of fruit, and boil for twenty minutes after boiling has once well begun. Pour into hot jars. For gooseberry jelly strain the fruit through a jelly bag; a little water may have been added to the berries while cooking to make more juice when they are intended for this purpose. To the strained juice put sugar in proportion of a pound to a pint, boil this also for twenty minutes after it has come to boiling-point. Jam should be kept well stirred, but not so with jelly, which is best left to boil gently until ready to put into jars.

L. H. YATES.

MAY.-MAY-DAY GAMES.



Hark ! how Dolly
Knocks with her silver wings at every sense,
For merry May her pastimes doth commence.
Hark ! how the peasant, with their music loud,
Raise many an ancient ditty ; while a crowd
Of snow-clad maidens, crowned with garlands gay,
Are tripping lightly round the Queen of May.—*Cleveland's May-Day.*

ONE of the oldest and most poetical of all our country amusements was the celebration of May-day. Mention is made of it by our earliest chroniclers and poets ; and so great is its antiquity, that the very origin is lost. Some believe that it is a custom which has descended down to us from the times of the old Druids ; others, that it was introduced into England by the Romans. But, as it is not mentioned by any historians who have recorded the manners of that period, I shall leave the matter to rest where it is ; for it is sufficient to know, that, four or five hundred years ago, May-day was a great holiday in England. Our forefathers were great lovers of nature, had more holidays than we have now, and had few of those in-door amusements which we possess ; and I have always considered May-day as one of those joyous celebrations with which they welcomed the return of spring—the season which brought back the birds, and flowers, and long green leaves, and threw open once more, as it were, the gates which led to their summer amusements, their joyous out-of-door pastimes, which, during the long, dark winter, had been closed. It seemed but natural that they should set

out on their merry pilgrimage to the woods, when the trees were again putting on their green garments ; when they could, on the darkening hedges, point out the very spots where the May blossoms would be hung ; when the daisies were once more strewn, like radiant pearls upon the grass ; and, in deep woodland nooks, the blue-bells lay sleeping like an azure cloud that had fallen from heaven ; and primroses and violets nestled side by side on the warm and sunny banks. It was then that they sallied forth, with axe in hand, to fell one of the tall, straight, tapering trees which grew in the forest, for they always brought home the most beautiful one they could meet with for their May-pole. Sometimes it was dragged from the woods by oxen garlanded with flowers, and accompanied by music ; while men and maidens, bearing green boughs, swelled the procession ; and thus they brought home May. Spenser, who lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, presents us with the following description of bringing home May, in his "Shepherd's Calendar." The scene here painted he had, no doubt, often witnessed :—

Young folk now flock in every where,
To gather May-bushes and smelling brere,
And home they hasten, the poets to delight,
And all the church pillars, ere daylight.
With hawthorn-buds, and sweet celandine,
And garlands of roses, and sops of wine.
Even this morn'ng—no longer ago,
I saw a shoal of shepherds out go,
With singing, and shouting, and jolly cheer;
Before them went a lusty labourer,
That unto many a hornpipe play'd
Where to they danced, each one with his maid.

To see these folks making such j-ranoo,
Made my heart after the pipe to dance.
Then to the green wood they speed them all
To fetch home May, with their musical:
And home they bring him in a royal
throne,
Crowned as king; and his queen, fair one,
Was Lady Flora, on whom did attend
A fair flock of fairies, and a fresh band
Of lovely nymphs. O that I were there,
To help the ladies their May-bush to bear.

On the village green, the tall May-pole was reared, amid merry shouts and loud huzzas, and the deep sounding of music; they built up arbours out of the branches they brought from the forest; they decorated the fronts of their houses with boughs; and on the tall May-pole hung many a garland of beautiful flowers. A bow was placed at the head of these arbours, which stood higher than the others. Within and without it was decorated with flowers, and set apart for the Queen of May, who was, generally, some peasant girl, selected by the unanimous consent of her companions. Sometimes the daughter of the Lord of the Manor presided as May Queen, and the whole family issued from their old ancestral hall to join in the May-day games. Then there were rustic youths dressed up in the costume of Robin Hood and his merry men, and Maid Marian; recalling the days of old, when these daring outlaws were the dread and pride of Sherwood Forest, plundering the rich to feed the poor; and chasing the dun deer through the thickets, in spite of Norman keepers and cruel forest-laws.

It was a season of rejoicing throughout the length and breadth of the land. Nor was London a bit behind in the celebration of this ancient festival. Even in the City, the tall May-pole was erected; and any one who had passed along Cornhill on May-day a few centuries ago, would have seen green arbours erected there, and huge oaken boughs hanging over the street, and the milk-maids, and all the merry old citizens, with their wives, daughters, maids, and apprentices, congregated about the May-pole, many of them dressed in old fanciful costumes, and giving themselves up to all the fun and jollity of May. But time has not preserved even the names of the mazy measures which they danced; and nearly all we know of the ancient pipe and tabor, the favourite music to which they timed their footsteps, is gathered from glancing at some scarce engraving. "Gone are the days of Gamelyn." "The May-pole," says an old writer, "was consecrated to the Goddess of Flowers, and the garlands were left upon it the whole year, without being disturbed by any one;" and I well remember passing through a village, at the end of April, in which a tall May-pole stood, only a few years ago, and seeing the last year's garlands hanging upon it, all wan and withered, and beaten by the storms of the past winter.

In those times, it seems to have been a custom to set out for the woods soon after midnight, so that by sunrise the May-pole was felled, and the branches gathered, and the procession ready to start, on its way home. In a book written during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, it is stated that sometimes as many as forty yoke of oxen, each having a sweet nosegay tied to the tip of his horns, were employed to draw home the May-pole; that they covered it all over, from top to bottom, with flowers and sweet herbs, which they bound round with strings; fastening, at equal distances, cross bars upon it, to the end of which they attached garlands; and thus decorated, it was hoisted up, amid the leaping and dancing and joyous shouts of the assembled multitude.

A sum of money was allowed in those days for the erection of green arbours around the May-pole. The King and Queen, or Lord and Lady of May, as they were called, were dressed out in scarfs and ribbons, and plumes of feathers, and made as fine as it was possible to array them.

Henry the Eighth, one morning in May, attended by several of his nobles, dressed in the quaint costume of Robin Hood and his merry men, suddenly entered the chamber where the Queen and her ladies were seated, much to the alarm of the latter, who were thus taken by surprise; for it appears that the King and his followers were armed with bows and arrows, and swords and bucklers, like the outlaws of old; and fine screaming there was, no doubt, amongst the Queen and her ladies, when their apartment was broken into by a troop of armed men; who, however, instead of carrying them off, like the ancient freebooters of the forest, and keeping them prisoners under the greenwood tree until they paid down a handsome ransom in gold, contented themselves by performing several wild woodland dances, then taking their departure.

The same Monarch, also, once rode out with his Queen and a whole concourse of nobles, one fine May morning, to the top of Shooters-hill, above Greenwich, and there they were received by a large troop of men, amounting to about two hundred, who were all dressed as foresters, in a costume of Kendal green, and headed by a captain, whom they called Robin Hood. These May-day foresters, dressed up for the occasion, amused their Royal and noble visitors by showing them their skill in archery; and when this was over each blew his bugle-horn, and conducted the King and his train into a wood under the brow of the hill, where a large arbour was erected of green boughs, consisting of a hall and two chambers, all decorated with flowers and sweet herbs; and here a mighty feast stood ready prepared, quite in keeping with the scene, consisting of venison, venison-pasties, and a copious supply of the blood-red wine, for such, the old ballads say, often formed the forest-banquet of Robin Hood and his merry men. A joyous May-day must that have been, presided over by the King and Queen of England; for Henry the Eighth was then a young man, greatly beloved by his people; and in the laughing merry Monarch who presided over that woodland repast, who drank deep healths to the Lord and Lady of May, and was the foremost to lead off the joyous dance in that summer hall, roofed over with green branches,—few would have traced the future murderer, or read in the outlines of the then jocund Monarch the cruel beholder of so many of his wives. For the Royal tiger seemed then as harmless and playful as a lamb; and those who were around him but little dreamed that his memory ever after, throughout all time, would be preserved in one of the darkest stains that ever fell, and lay an eternal blot upon the pages of history.

On their return from this woodland banquet, they were met by two ladies, richly attired, who rode in a beautiful chariot, drawn by five horses; and on the back of each horse was also seated a lady, one of whom was called the Lady of Showers; another, the Lady of Green; the third, the Lady of Vegetation; the fourth, of Pleasure; and the fifth, of Sweet Odour. Of the two who occupied the chariot, one was called the Lady of May, and the other the Lady of Flowers; and they entertained the assembled company with songs, as they returned to Greenwich. Such was an English May-day in the reign of Henry VIII.

But few works are fraught with more amusement than our old English treatises on angling: there is such a simple cunningness about these honest old fishermen, that it is difficult to refrain from laughter while perusing the most serious passages. You almost fancy that many of these quaint writers must have had certain prayers, which they ever and anon repeated while following so peaceful an occupation—brief pious sentences, offered up in the full simplicity of the heart while dropping in the line, or when the finny prey was landed. In one book the angler is recommended "to be

full of humble thoughts, when occasion offers; to kneel, lie down, or wet his feet and hands, as often as there is any advantage to be gained thereby:" nor is he to mind "a little dirty water or mud," if he can get anything out of it. He is also advised to render himself skilful in music, so that whenever his spirits are melancholy, or his thoughts heavy, "he may remove the same with some godly hymn or anthem, of which David gives many examples." Again, he is to be strong and valiant, not to be amazed at storms, nor frightened at thunder. Nor must he, "like the fox which preyeth upon the lambs, employ all his labour and cunning on the smaller fry; but, like the lion that seizeth elephants, think the greatest fish that swims a reward little enough for the pains he endures." He must also "be patient, not feel vexed when he loses his prey, although it is almost in his hand." Neither must he swear: and we still retain the old saying, "those who swear will catch no fish;" besides it would hardly have been the thing to have ripped out a thundering oath, after having chaunted some "godly hymn or anthem." The angler also ought to be "a scholar and a good grammarian," as, no doubt, the fish being an ancient people, and from the earliest ages acquainted with respectable society, must have felt bad grammar grate upon their ruddy gills. Further, he must have sweetness of speech, to entice others to follow his art; have also a knowledge of the sun, moon, and stars; be conversant with wind and weather; and have a constant and settled belief that where "the waters are pleasant and anything likely, there the Creator of all good things hath stored up much of his plenty." How religiously did these old rascals set about a little quiet murder! thanking Heaven when they succeeded, and, as Cromwell said, "had good execution."

But we must not forget the business on hand, which is to continue our remarks on angling from April; and these must necessarily be brief. From early spring, until the close of autumn, perch angling is pursued; they are very fond of lingering in shadowy places, as bridges, old mill-dams, and flood-gates, and such like quiet spots, where they readily take the bait. The perch is a beautifully marked fish; the back and a portion of the sides are of dark green, varied with black, while the belly is white and red. In form it is deep, arched, and has a large mouth, with rich golden irides. It will bite greedily at a worm.

As there are so many kinds of trout, I must confine myself to the common one, which is generally from twelve to fifteen inches in length, is of a dirty yellow colour, brownish on the back, and spotted. Early in spring the trout will take a ground bait, for which nothing can be better than a worm. Fly-fishing for trout would occupy the whole space we dedicate to the description of the month, so we must pass it by. Remember, in fishing for trout, to keep out of sight; once throw your shadow upon the water, and away the shy visitor goes. As soon as you have landed a trout, kill it—a sharp blow on the head is pretty sure to finish it; and this is better than leaving it to pant on the grass, or gasp in your fishing basket, to say nothing of the richness added to its flavour. The grayling is fond of clear, rapid streams, especially such as flow through hilly countries. It is rather less than the trout, beautifully formed; the head small; the eyes prominent, and circled with silver; the teeth very small; the head a dusky colour, and the gills a bright green, which in time become dark. The back is of a greenish blue tinge; the sides of the richest silvery grey, though when first caught glittering in the sunlight like gold, and almost gaudy, through the rich dark irregular spots which dot the shifting silver. It is a rapid swimmer, and is lost to the eye in a moment. When full-grown, it is about fifteen or sixteen inches in length; and although taken all the year round, is not considered in season until September, and from then to February or the middle of spring. At the latter season, they will take almost any bait used in bottom fishing, such as worms, gentles, grubs; nor are they at all particular, if they have had a narrow escape from the hook, of attacking the bait again, even with a torn jaw. The tackle ought to be fine. The flesh is very white, and the flavour highly prized. "No life," says Walton, "is so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler: for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as the silent silver streams which we see glide so smoothly by us."



NEW DRIED FRUITS.

By DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.



MOST of my readers can recall, I fancy, the days when we had only prunes and Normandy pippins in the way of dried fruits. The dried apricots, apples, and plums of the present day are very modern and recent gifts to

a grateful world. So recent are they indeed that the ignorance about them is very great; and, strange to say, the grocers who have them for sale have not been supplied as they should have been with small printed papers describing how to cook them.

In using the term "dried fruits," you will notice, I hope, that I am dealing with what may be called stewing fruits; for, though we stew, or can stew, raisins, figs, and even currants, I believe the first treatment of these fruits is not to cook them in that manner. Raisins and currants speak to us more distinctly of our Christmas mince-pies and plum puddings, and of a regular dessert dish throughout the year in some houses, than of any other kind of cooking.

The stewing of raisins was introduced, I believe, by vegetarians, and in this form with a flavouring of lemon-peel. They are not at all bad when added to a milk pudding or some blancmange.

The stewing of dried figs comes almost under the same description, and their chief objection lies in their extreme sweetness, which is a cause of quite unmerited and needless toothache at times. The best way of cooking figs will always be in the way of a fig pudding, which is an excellent though rich dish.

Dried apples have always been a great household requisite in cold countries like Canada and the northern states of America, and I remember that the making of them constituted a very large part of the many winter preparations which used to be necessary when the country was less civilised than it is now, the fruit less plentiful, and the means of keeping it very imperfect.

It was not always easy to guard against the frost, which penetrated the ground to a depth of four or even five feet when the winters were too snowless. On these occasions when the earth is left bare and without her warm coating of snow, the frost has been known to penetrate even six feet into the ground in exposed places. This fact is verified in cold countries like Canada in a very painful manner when graves have to be dug. So difficult is this that in large cities where there are many to dig a cemetery hall is built to contain the bodies of those who die in the winter, so that the frost may be out of the ground before the graves are dug.

This will explain to you why in Canada all kinds of root crops and apples must be so carefully guarded from frost; and when the country was less settled, and even to-day in the less inhabited parts, the apples are still dried in a primitive manner. They are peeled generally by a small machine, then quartered and cored, and strung on long threads by

means of a coarse needle. Then they are dried, either near the stove or else in the sun; but this last is not often possible, because of the lateness of the season. The apples thus dried are very good, but if cooked carelessly are apt to be rather tough.

In Italy figs are dried in the sun by the peasantry. Each fig is cut open, but not divided, and carefully dried. Then, when dried, they are closed together so as to look like whole figs again, and strung one by one on the long flexible mulberry twigs. They are very good and are less sweet than the dried fig of commerce, as no sugar is added to them in drying.

Last year I saw quantities of figs dried by the peasantry in this manner for sale in Switzerland, where they appeared to be quite a novelty. I could not find out where they came from; but I daresay from the Italian canton of Ticino, or, as the French call it, Tessin. This is, of course, warmer than its sister cantons on the northern side of the Alps. I have not seen these yet in England, but there have been some Californian dried figs that were very good for eating, and perhaps we shall see more of them in the future, as the market for them grows more assured.

Dried figs are said by the scientists to contain nerve and muscle food, heat and waste, but to be bad for the liver. The same is said of dried prunes, but they afford the best and highest kind of nerve or brain food. They also supply heat and waste; but they are not muscle feeding.

All stone fruits are said to be injurious for people who suffer from the liver and should be used rather cautiously.

Apples are thought a most valuable food in every way but one—they do not afford staying properties, but they supply the highest nerve and muscle food.

If you be fond of almonds, you may like to know that they afford no heat, but give the highest brain, nerve, and muscle food. I hope this applies to the salted almonds which are so popular.

The process of drying is called "desiccation" or, usually in America, "evaporated." The original desiccator is an apparatus much used in chemistry and physics and the word comes from the Latin *desiccō*, "I dry up"—meaning that the water is evaporated out of the fruit or any substance to be dried. This idea was carried out into the drying up of the water and fruit juices for commercial purposes. An oven with trays in it to hold the fruit is one of the forms of using heat, and in Lower California the heat of the sun is utilised for the drying of prunes. Some time ago there were notices of the commencement of this industry and the importation of work-people from the neighbourhood of Tours.

The ordinary prunes sold in the shops are the fruit of the St. Julian plum, a common species which is grown everywhere in France for the purpose. The best French or dessert prunes come from Provence, and the Californian prunes must be of the same variety as the Brignole plum. The latest competitor in the English market is Bosnia, and those which I have tried were quite as good as the French plums. Under Austrian rule, Bosnia has developed wonderfully, and the climate is a delightful one, well suited to fruit growing.

The best of all the French dried prunes come from Provence, the land of poetry and romance. They are made of the kinds of prunes called the *Perdrigon blanc*, and *Violette*, and *Prune d'Ast*. The two former come under one category and are called *Pruneaux*

de Brignole, from the place where they are prepared, the small town of Brignole, in Provence, a name I am sure you will have often seen on the boxes of prunes used for dessert. The common kinds of prunes are gathered by merely shaking the trees; but those for preparing as French plums must be gathered in the morning, before the sun is up, by taking hold of the stalk without touching the fruit and laying each plum very gently on vine leaves in baskets. The latter must be filled without the plums being allowed to touch each other, and then they are carried to the fruit-room and exposed to the sun and air for three or four days, after which they become quite soft. The next process is to put them on trays into a spent oven and shut up quite closely for twenty-four hours. Then they are taken out, the oven is re-heated, and made rather warmer, and the plums are put in again for the same time; then they are taken out, carefully turned over, and the oven is heated to one-fourth hotter than it was before, and the plums are returned to it again for the third time, and after remaining the twenty-four hours, are taken out and left exposed till they become quite cold. Then comes the most curious part of the process, which, when once explained to me, was a solution of an enigma over which I had much wondered, namely, why the stones of the good French plums are loose and unattached, while those of the common prune are so much more fixed in the fleshy substance of the fruit. This part of the process is called "rounding," and is performed by turning the stones in the plums without breaking the skins, and the two ends are then pressed between the thumb and finger to flatten the fruit. Then they are once more laid on the sieves for drying and placed in a rather hot oven for one hour, the oven being closely shut. Lastly, they are put again into a cool oven, left for twenty-four hours, when the process is ended, and they are packed in bottles or boxes for sale and exportation. Now I have given this long account, taken from a recent authority, because I know my readers of the "G. O. P." are world-spread, and because this is the kind of process adopted with any kind of dried fruit; and an ordinary brick oven for bread-baking can be perfectly well used for doing it. All varieties of the plum can, I am told, be dried in this manner, some, of course, with better success than others.

After the prunes come the kind which, I daresay, most of my readers have seen in the grocers' shops, namely, the crystal or dried yellow plums, which are likewise said to be from California. They are so-called silver plums, and are yellow, not black, and were first seen in 1897, I believe. They require soaking over-night in just enough water to swell them, and the next day should be put into a prepared syrup, which has had a little lemon peel boiled in it, and very slowly stewed, without breaking them. I find a war rages about this question of soaking dried fruit over-night, as many people consider that long slow stewing is equally good, or better.

Apricots are amongst the dried fruits that have been introduced within the last few years; and although they may be a novelty to us, they have been used in the East in this way for centuries. The apricot grows well as a wall fruit in England, and is interesting because it was brought here and first grown in the gardens of Henry VIII. by his gardener, Wolfe, who was a Roman Catholic priest, and who brought it from Italy. Indeed, it was during the reign of this monarch, and the

subsequent Tudors, that horticulture began to make such progress in England; and no politics made them forget the interests of their gardens, to which, as a family, they appear to have been much attached.

The dried peach we have not yet seen, but it is much used in that way in New Jersey, Delaware, and in the Southern States; but probably canning has rendered drying needless. Dried pears are also of ancient origin, and I find them excellent in the present day, though I consider they need careful doing. Any recipe for the stewing of winter pears will answer for dried ones; and they must be soaked over-night to ensure their being tender. It is well to remember that the less water used, the more flavour in the pear, and the syrup should not be very abundant.

And now we come to that most useful of all fruits—the apple. This has been dried in many forms, and canned as well. The most recent are the evaporated apple rings—the apple cut into rounds horizontally through the fruit. When these first came out they were called “Alden apple rings,” probably from the town or district where they were grown. They are said to be made from greenings—the best of American cooking apples—and one pound of the apples rings is said to represent six pounds of ordinary apples. The best recipe for cooking these is an American one, and in this the food is required to be soaked in a pie-dish in cold water—just enough to cover it—for four hours; then, without pouring off the water, add sugar, a little lemon rind or spice, and then put the dish in a slow oven and stew very gently till sufficiently cooked. If intended for a tart, soak as directed and stew gently in a slow oven for half an hour before adding the crust, or the latter will be done before the apples are sufficiently cooked.

The apples, which are dried whole, must be rather differently treated. Take about a

dozen apples, place them in an earthenware or porcelain-lined vessel, and add about a pint and a half of water, and let them soak for seven or eight hours. Then add sugar, spice, and the rind of a lemon to your taste; put them all together as they are into a porcelain-lined saucepan, and stew gently for an hour. If a more *recherche* dish be required than merely the apples plainly stewed, a little whipped cream may be inserted in the place from whence the core has been taken, and some cream poured round them in a glass dish.

“It is simply absurd,” says a recipe writer in an American paper, “to soak evaporated apples over-night”; so, as this is a case of doctors differing, I must give the directions which follow. Place the evaporated apples in a saucepan, cover with water, and boil till done; flavour to taste, and use for sauce, tarts or conserve. Now this recipe I have also found good; and I know that the writer considers that soaking or leaving the apple rings too long in water renders them tasteless and vapid.

It seems strange that the subject of dried fruits, save and except the ancient pippins of Normandy, should be quite ignored in our cookery books; and yet there can be no doubt of their value as foods, and adjuncts to other things, at a time when fruit is dear and scarce. They are always inexpensive; a pound goes a long way, and, as a rule, if well done, they are liked by the little folks.

But alas, the general remembrance of stewed prunes, apples or apricots is enough to make anyone dislike them, sent up as they generally are in a slop of tasteless, coloured, watery fluid. If we only examine into the ordinary methods of cooking them, we shall see the cook washing them first in one water, and then in another; perhaps letting them remain for half an hour in soak, then putting them into more water, with a

cupful of sugar in a dirty saucepan on the fire, where she boils it violently, and finishes it in half an hour.

Now, from beginning to end, this is all wrong. In the first place, you must remember that the evaporated fruit took a long time to do. The moisture was not removed from it in one hour, nor two, but took a long time. So if you want to restore it to them you must give them time also. Thus, perhaps, you will agree with me that the fruit must be soaked for at least twenty-four hours, especially in the case of apricots and peaches; and the water should cover the fruit to the depth of an inch. When you are ready to stew the fruit, take it out and put it carefully into a porcelain-lined saucepan; then pour the water in which they have been soaking upon the fruit, leaving at the bottom any dregs there may be. If not sufficient to cover it, you must add a little more, then give an hour's very quiet boiling; and a few minutes before you remove it from the fire, add a little sugar, and use a silver spoon to stir it in. I prefer to take the fruit out when I add the sugar, for fear of breaking and spoiling the look of the fruit; and then the syrup is boiled up once or twice, and poured over the fruit. Peaches require rather more cooking than apricots.

Apples and pears need care in the cooking, and also in the flavouring; and the best thing for both is the juice and grated rind of a lemon. But before flavouring, you should taste the fruit after stewing, as you will then judge whether you should add sugar, or the rind of a lemon, and not the juice. The sugar should be put in first and thoroughly dissolved, and then the flavouring. If you flavour first, and sugar after, you will need double the amount of sugar. Prunes, raisins, dates, and figs can all be stewed in the same way; and if you will only remember that haste is not possible in preparing dried fruit for table, you will always be successful.

CENTRE-PIECE EMBROIDERY.



FIG. 1.

THIS centre-piece (Fig. 1) is thirty inches square. You require a straight piece of linen on which the pattern is traced natural-size, the outlines being defined with blue. The work is done in a frame or in the hand with four shades of blue flax-thread. In Fig. 2 is shown part of the embroidery which is carried out in satin-stitch, brick-stitch, French knots and twisted-stitch. The work is completed by a hem an inch wide, and may be edged with pillow or crochet-lace.

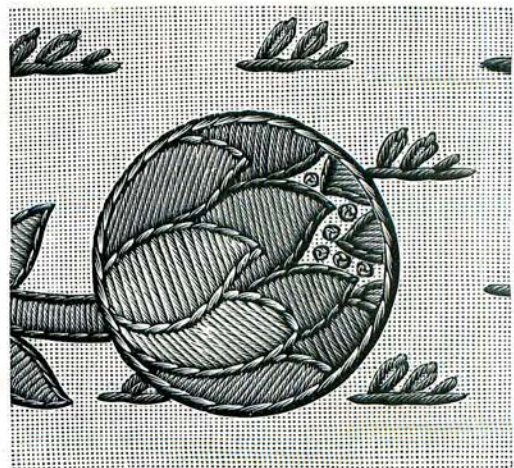


FIG. 2.—DETAIL.

OUR FRIEND THE FOX-TERRIER.



THE fox-terrier pup is undoubtedly the *enfant terrible* of the canine family. To look at him as he sits on the hearth-rug, gravely regarding you with his solemn baby face, you would think him the four-footed equivalent to

the "good little boy" of the Sunday School story book; but when you return home, and find him lying peacefully asleep amidst the *débris* of a sofa cushion, which he has torn to pieces, you no longer fear that, being "specially beloved of the gods," he will die young.

He sows his wild oats in the most lavish and prodigal manner, and only reaps an occasional whipping, instead of a whole crop of ills, such as is the usual result of similar agricultural ventures on the part of a human being.

This is to a great extent due to the artful manner in which he always appears to be perfectly ignorant of his crimes.

You are going out to dinner, perhaps, and leave word for your dress clothes to be put to warm before the fire; this has scarcely been done when the child, waking up and scrambling out of his basket, sets to work to pull them off the chairs; after which he laboriously drags your coat into the coal house, and your nether garments out to the front gate, where he leaves them, and returning to his bed, flops down in it with what is evidently the "pleasing sense of duty done." An hour or so later you enter wrathfully, with the aforesaid N.G.'s in one hand, and a small cane in the other, and the fixed determination in your heart that you will "make that confounded dog sit up." But he gives you such a cordial greeting, and seems so glad to see you, and so utterly unconscious of any misdemeanour, that instead of applying the avenging rod to his podgy little body, you give it him to drag about the room, which he does with intense enjoyment, banging it against all the chair and table legs, and very nearly twisting his head off, and at last settles down and makes a hearty meal off it in a quiet corner.

Except when he is asleep he seems to be the personification of perpetual motion. It is astonishing how much work he gets out of that piebald mouth and those lanky legs; and, as a rule, he spreads ruin and consternation wherever he goes.

Before you are aware of it, his childhood is passed;

he no longer takes delight in eating carpet slippers and chasing pigs, for now his terrier blood begins to show itself in earnest, and goes tingling through his veins, as his heart leaps within him at the sound of that mystic word "rats!"

It is an inheritance that has come down to him through generations of gallant ancestors that he can understand the stirring sound which has moved them to deeds of prowess even before his maiden teeth have been imbued with the blood of the obnoxious vermin.

Now, also, as the adult fox terrier, he goes forth upon that crusade which Nature seems to be always preaching to his race—the destruction of cats!

Why these unfortunate animals should be the eternal objects of his vengeance one cannot understand, but it is certain that no knight of old could have shown more resolute determination in crossing the scorching plains of Palestine than he does in his attempts to climb trees and squeeze himself through impossible apertures when in pursuit of the foe. Nor could the chivalry of old have met with greater coolness the scimitars of the infidel than he does the



"AN HOUR OR SO LATER YOU ENTER WRATHFULLY."

flying broom handles of indignant neighbours. He is of a distinctly warlike temperament, and is ever to be found "seeking the bubble reputation" at the mouth of any dog who feels inclined to "give him satisfaction." Whenever two dogs fight and make a row over it, you may be sure that within five minutes all the fox-terriers within a quarter of a mile who

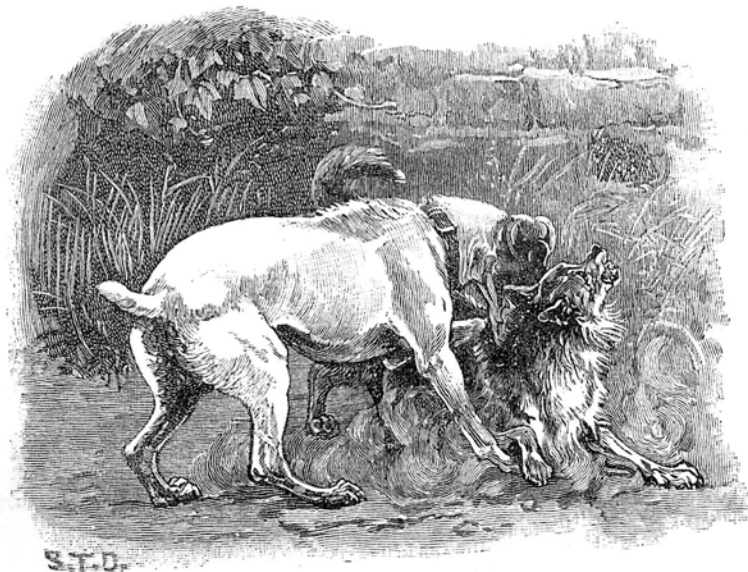
can get loose, will come galloping on to the scene of action, the neck and back of each transformed into a hat brush, and their mouths "full of strange oaths," which they pour forth in low, guttural mutterings.

Who are the combatants, or what the *casus belli* may be, are matters to which they are quite indifferent; but like the seconds in an old cavalier duel, who were often wont to draw their rapiers and exchange a "few friendly passes," by way of keeping the principals company; so these bellicose gentlemen hasten to the front, where they, as a rule, pick up minor quarrels among themselves, fight a few rounds, and then disperse.

There are times, such as when you are walking down the street and he insists on pursuing a cat into the dwelling of its owner, and you listen awestruck to the sound of overturning furniture and smashing crockery; or when you come out of church, and find him dusting the pathway with a cross-bred Pomeranian—with whom he always fights "on sight"—on such occasions, I say, you are apt to think it would be a decided advantage if he became a convert to arbitration, and you long for the time when wars will cease.

The episode of your meeting him as you came out of church, reminds me that he is not very particular about his companions, and generally spends his Sunday mornings at a sort of club which meets at various street corners, and from the tag-rag and bob-tail which are included among its members seems to be a society in which "blackballing" is unknown. On Saturday he has his bath, and comes out of it, his white coat, with its ebony spots, looking like a nice new domino. On Sunday morning he attends his club, where the members apparently use him for a doormat, and on his return the cook, who washes him, is heart-broken.

Yes, he has his faults. But he has many sterling qualities, and in a few years, if you are a lover of



"DUSTING THE PATHWAY WITH A CROSS-BRED POMERANIAN."

animals, you find he has won for himself a large place in your heart.

It is astonishing, too, how much he thinks of you; you, who, perhaps, have never even had your name mentioned in a local paper, and yet to him you are the first man of the day. If it were possible for you to sit in a room with all the crowned heads of Europe, he would single you

out at once as being most worthy of his regard, and would rather have an approving pat from you than from the Czar of Russia.

He is the best of companions—if only he would moderate his language a little when people ring at the front door—and one cannot but be touched with the many evidences he gives of that loving fidelity which has always characterised his race, even as far back as the time when on Ulysses' return home:—

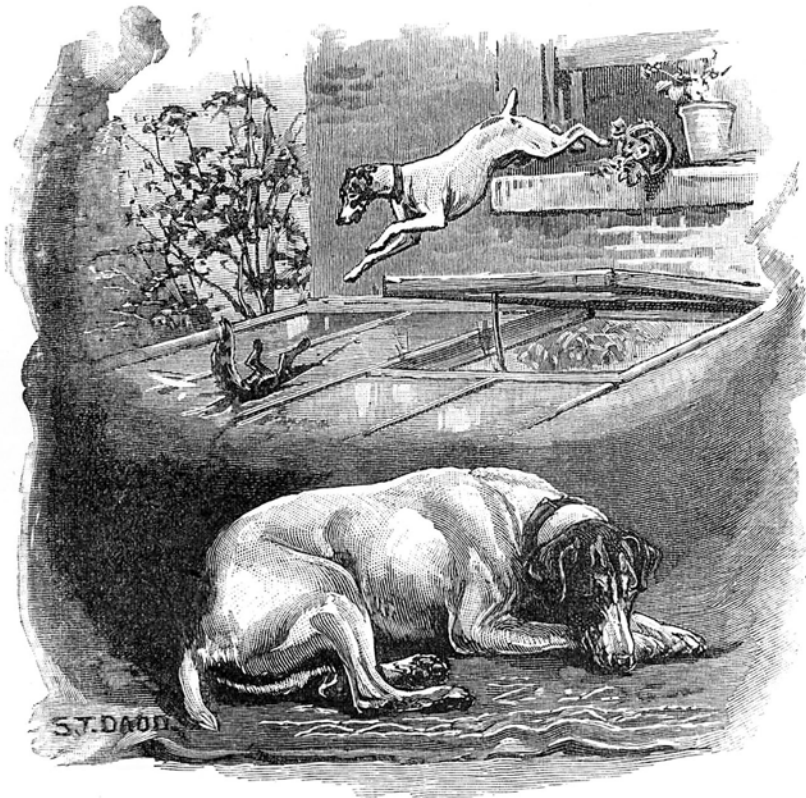
"The faithful dog alone his rightful master knew."

The years pass away, and by-and-by you find he is growing old. He is sober and quiet now, and prefers to stretch himself upon the hearth-rug, instead of scouring the neighbourhood in search of adventures.

You wonder sometimes what he finds to think about during the long hours that he lies blinking at the fire, his ears rising and falling as the coals shift in the grate. Perhaps, as he has no grandchildren to whom he may recount how large and fierce were the rats of "my young days," he is content to commune with himself upon these matters, and once more, in spirit, follows the Jones's cat through the glass roof of their conservatory, or rolls in the mud the cross-bred Pomeranian, who—dear me! can it be possible?—has been dead and gone these five years!

Length of days is not a boon to animals, and it seems to be man's privilege alone to find enjoyments even in old age. In the case of a dog, it becomes, in due time, painfully evident that he has "had his day," and that life is no longer a pleasure to him.

Then there comes a time when a gentle voice remonstrates with love, and pleads the cause of mercy. You go and have a conversation with the groom, who, on the strength of having a brother a kennel man to the North Blankshire, considers himself an authority on dogs; and the upshot of it is



"ONCE MORE, IN SPIRIT, FOLLOWS THE JONES'S CAT"

wave him a last adieu, and say, "Good-bye, old man."

Then you make a bolt for your arm-chair, where you sit for a quarter of an hour and read the paper very diligently. But the compositor was evidently *distract* when he set this type up, or the lines would never have been so crooked; no wonder you do not notice that all this time you have been holding the sheet upside down.

* * * *

In a few weeks, perhaps, you have another little study in black and white, making frantic attempts to scale that as yet inaccessible fortress, your lap; but though you bend down, and put a helping hand at the back of his neck, and assist him to scramble up the "breeches," and allow him to use your watch chain for a "gum-easer," still you find your heart goes sadly forth to a spot at the bottom of the garden, where stands a small stone bearing the laconic inscription, "JACK."

H. AVERY.

that as you turn to go back to the house, you say, "Very well; I'll take him myself to-morrow."

You almost wish "to-morrow" would "never come," but it does, and then something like the following usually takes place:—

You have been wandering about in an aimless sort of way for the last ten minutes, with your hat and coat on ready to go out. At last you open the door and call, "William."

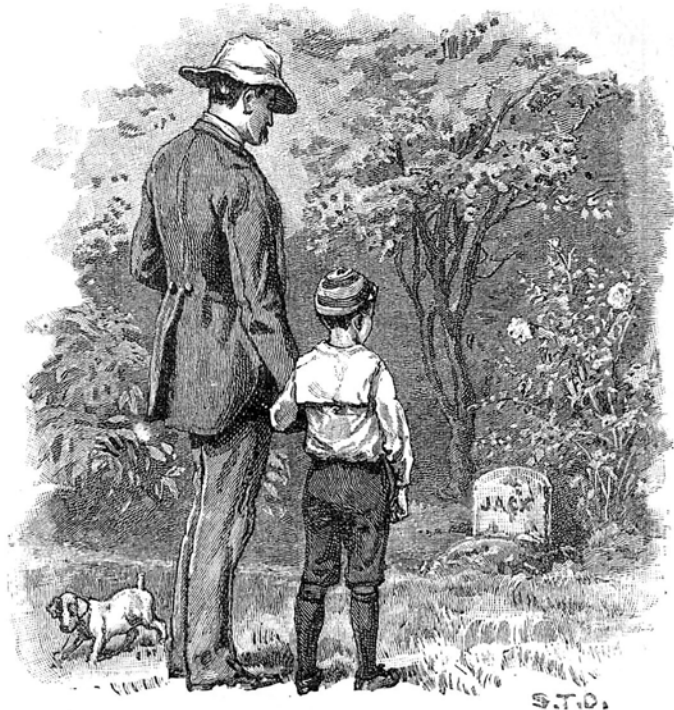
"Yessir."

"William, I—I find I'm busy this morning, and shan't be able to go out, so you'd better take him. And William——"

"Yessir."

"Be sure you see that every care is taken."

Away goes William and behind him trots, quite contentedly, your old companion. He turns just before he gets to the corner, and stands a moment looking back, as though he thought you might be following. I doubt very much if he can see you with those poor old dim eyes, but you raise your hand, and



"A SPOT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GARDEN."



MY SCHOOL-DAYS.

By E. NESBIT.

PART V.

THE MUMMIES AT BORDEAUX.

It was because I was tired of churches and picture-galleries, of fairs and markets, of the strange babble of foreign tongues and the thin English of the guide-book, that I begged so hard to be taken to see the mummies. To me the name of a mummy was as a friend's name. As one Englishman travelling across a desert seeks to find another of whom he has heard in that far land, so I sought to meet these mummies who had cousins at home, in the British Museum, in dear, dear England.

My fancy did not paint mummies for me apart from plate-glass cases, camphor, boarded galleries, and kindly curators, and I longed to see them as I longed to see home, and to hear my own tongue spoken about me.

I was consumed by a fever of impatience for the three days which had to go by before the coming of the day on which the treasures might be visited. My sisters, who were to lead me to these delights, believed too that the mummies would be chiefly interesting on account of their association with Bloomsbury.

Well, we went—I in my best blue silk frock, which I insisted on wearing to honour the

occasion, holding the hand of my sister and positively skipping with delicious anticipation. There was some delay about keys, during which my excitement was scarcely to be restrained. Then we went through an arched doorway and along a flagged passage, the old man who guided us explaining volubly in French as we went.

"What does he say?"

"He says they are natural mummies."

"What does that mean?"

"They are not embalmed by man, like the Egyptian ones, but simply by the peculiar earth of the churchyard where they were buried."

The words did not touch my conception of the glass cases and their good-natured guardian.

The passage began to slope downward. A chill air breathed on our faces, bringing with it a damp earthy smell. Then we came to some narrow stone steps. Our guide spoke again.

"What does he say?"

"We are to be careful, the steps are slippery and mouldy."

I think even then my expectation still was of a long clean gallery, filled with the white light of a London noon, shed through high skylights on Egyptian treasures. But the

stairs were dark, and I held my sister's hand tightly. Down we went, down, down!

"What does he say?"

"We are under the church now; these are the vaults."

We went along another passage, the damp mouldy smell increasing, and my clasp of my sister's hand grew closer and closer.

We stopped in front of a heavy door barred with iron, and our guide turned a big reluctant key in a lock that grated.

"Les voila," he said, throwing open the door and drawing back dramatically.

We were in the room before my sisters had time to see cause for regretting that they had brought me.

The vision of dry boards and white light and glass cases vanished, and in its stead I saw this:

A small vault, as my memory serves me, about fifteen feet square, with an arched roof, from the centre of which hung a lamp that burned with a faint blue light, and made the guide's candle look red and lurid. The floor was flagged like the passages, and was as damp and chill. Round three sides of the room ran a railing, and behind it—standing against the wall, with a ghastly look of life in



death—were about two hundred skeletons. Not white clean skeletons, hung on wires, like the one you see at the doctor's, but skeletons with the flesh hardened on their bones, with their long dry hair hanging on each side of their brown faces, where the skin in drying had drawn itself back from their gleaming teeth and empty eye-sockets. Skeletons draped in mouldering shreds of shrouds and grave-clothes, their lean fingers still clothed with dry skin, seemed to reach out towards me. There they stood, men, women, and children, knee-deep in loose bones collected from the other vaults of the church, and heaped round them. On the wall near the door I saw the dried body of a little child hung up by its hair.

I don't think I screamed or cried, or even said a word. I think I was paralysed with horror, but I remember presently going back up those stairs, holding tightly to that kindly hand, and not daring to turn my head lest one of those charnel-house faces should peep out at me from some niche in the damp wall.

It must have been late afternoon, and in the hurry of dressing for the *table d'hôte* my stupor of fright must have passed unnoticed, for the next thing I remember is being alone in a large room, waiting as usual for my supper to be sent up. For my mother did not approve of late dinners for little people, and I was accustomed to have bread-and-milk alone while she and my sisters dined.

It was a large room, and very imperfectly lighted by the two wax candles in silver candlesticks. There were two windows and a curtained alcove, where the beds were. Suddenly my blood ran cold. What was behind that curtain? Beds. "Yes," whispered something that was I, and yet not I; "but suppose there are no beds there now. Only mummies, mummies, mummies!"

A sudden noise; I screamed with terror. It was only the door opening to let the waiter in. He was a young waiter, hardly more than a boy, and had always smiled kindly at me when we met, though hitherto our intercourse had not gone farther. Now I rushed to him and flung my arms round him, to his immense amazement and the near ruin of my bread and milk. He spoke no English and I no French, but somehow he managed to understand that I was afraid, and afraid of that curtained alcove.

He set down the bread and milk, and he took me in his arms and together we fetched more candles, and then he drew back the awful curtain, and showed me the beds lying white and quiet. If I could have spoken French I should have said:

"Yes; but how do I know it was all like that just now, before you drew the curtain back?"

As it was I said nothing, only clung to his neck.

I hope he did not get into any trouble that night for neglected duties, for he did not attempt to leave me till my mother came back. He sat down with me on his knee and petted me and sang to me under his breath, and fed me with the bread and milk, when by-and-by I grew calm enough to take it. All good things be with him wherever he is! I like best to think of him in a little hotel of his own, a quiet little country inn standing back from a straight road bordered with apple trees and poplars. There are wooden benches outside the door, and within a whitewashed kitchen, where a plump rosy-faced woman is busy with many cares—never busy enough, however, to pass the master of the house without a loving word or a loving look. I like to believe that now he has little children of his own, who hold out their arms when he

opens the door, and who climb upon his knees clamouring for those same songs which he sang, out of the kindness of his boyish heart, to the little frightened English child, such a long, long time ago.

The mummies of Bordeaux were the crowning horror of my childish life; it is to them, I think, more than to any other thing, that I owe nights and nights of anguish and horror, long years of bitterest fear and dread. All the other fears could have been effaced, but the shock of that sight branded it on my brain, and I never forgot it. For many years I could not bring myself to go about any house in the dark, and long after I was a grown woman I was tortured, in the dark watches, by imagination and memory, who rose strong and united, overpowering my will and my reason as utterly as in my baby days.

It was not till I had two little children of my own that I was able to conquer this mortal terror of darkness, and teach imagination her place, under the foot of reason and the will.

My children, I resolved, should never know such fear. And to guard them from it I must banish it from my own soul. It was not easy, but it was done. It is banished now, and my babies, thank God, never have known it. It was a dark cloud that overshadowed my childhood, and I don't believe my mother ever knew how dark it was, for I could not tell anyone the full horror of it while it was over me; and when it had passed I came from under it, as one who has lived long years in an enchanter's castle, where the sun is darkened away, might come forth into the splendour of noontide. Such an one breathes God's sweet air and beholds the free heavens with joyous leaps of heart; but he does not speak soon nor lightly of what befell in the dark, in the evil days, in the Castle of the Enchanter.

USEFUL HINTS.

SHORTBREAD.

Put one pound and a quarter of butter in a pan, and then add one pound of loaf sugar dust; mix them well together, and then add four eggs; mix well in as before, then add two pounds of flour, then roll the dough out, and cut them to the size you want them; put a piece of peel on the top.

MADEIRA CAKES.

Put one pound of eggs in a pan, and add one pound of loaf sugar dust; beat all together with a whisk till it gets a little thick, then add one pound of flour; mix it in lightly with your hand; add one or two drops of essence of lemon; put white paper round, and bottom of the tins or hoops, then lay one

or two pieces of peel and a few currants at the bottom.

TEA MILK SCONES.

Take two pounds of flour, add five ounces of butter; rub it in as small as possible, then add half ounce of carbonate of soda and quarter of an ounce of tartaric acid; rub them well in the flour, then quarter of a pound of loaf sugar dust, and quarter of a pound of currants; rub them in as before, add about half a pint of milk; then mix it, roll the dough out and fold it over two or three times, and then cut them to the size you want them.

JUBILEE POUND CAKE.

Take two pounds and a quarter of flour, then add half a pound of butter; rub it in the

flour very fine, add also one ounce of carbonate of soda and half an ounce of tartaric acid; rub them in the flour as fine as possible, then add one pound of sugar and two pounds of currants, and rub them in the flour as before, and two ounces of mixed peel; then add a pint and a half of milk and eight eggs, two or three drops of essence of lemon; mix them.

LARDED TEA CAKES.

Take one pound of flour, six ounces of lard; rub it well in the flour, then add two ounces of loaf sugar dust; mix it in as before, then half a pint of milk; make it into a dough, then roll it out and fold it three or four times, and cut them to the size you would like them.



THE POSTMEN OF THE WORLD.

BY C. F. GORDON CUMMING, AUTHOR OF "THE NEWSPAPERS OF THE WORLD."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



CHINESE DESPATCH-BEARER, FROM THE ISLAND OF FORMOSA (CALLED "THE THOUSAND-MILE HORSE").

HOW strange to think of the wonderful organisation which insures the regular transmission of every little letter, and its final safe delivery to its owner, at the remotest ends of the world, in crowded foreign city, or in the solitudes of the mountain or the forest! In my furthest wanderings, I have never yet reached any point so isolated as to be beyond the ministrations of the Post-office, but strangely varied have been its emissaries!

I had heard of a settler in a wholly uncivilised island, who, while building himself a boat, required some tool which he had left at home, so he selected a smooth chip of wood and thereon wrote a message, which he bade one of the by-standers carry to his wife. Of course the man, on seeing her look at the chip and then deliver to his care the needful tool, attributed the whole to magic. Nevertheless, he had unconsciously been a letter-carrier of the most primitive type.

Slightly in advance of this, is the system of writing with a sharply-pointed instrument, on long strips of the firm green palm-leaf—a substitute for paper—which is in common use in Ceylon and on the sea-

coast of Hindoostan, and wherever the cocoa-palm flourishes—or still better, the broad-leaved talipot or Palmyra palm. Whole books are thus inscribed, but for letter-writing it is particularly useful, and the missive is folded and tied up with a trail of natural string plucked in the forest, and is slung from a light stick and so carried to its destination.

In my travels in the Himalayas, we found a truly useful friend in the native post-master at Kotghur, which was the furthest limit of the great postal network. Thenceforward, as we journeyed in the wilds,



RURAL POST-RUNNERS, JAPAN.

he forwarded all our letters by a very lightly-garbed special runner, who carried them, as English village children carry sweet violets, in the end of a cleft stick. Thus the letter was perhaps carried for several days, and was at length delivered, as clean as when it started.



PALM-LEAF LETTER AND WRITING IMPLEMENT.
(PROVINCE OF ORISSA, HINDOOSTAN.)

The commonest type of Indian post runner, or "Tappal wallah," wears a long white coat, very tight trousers enclose his lean legs, and his head-dress is a huge light blue turban. His letter-bag is slung on his side, and it is necessary that he should be a good linguist, and be able to read a great variety of strange, crabbed characters, for several of the multitudinous languages of Hindoostan are written in quite distinct characters, all of which are alike incomprehensible to our untutored eyes. The rural letter-carrier of Hindoostan carries a long stick with a sharp iron point, which can be used as a weapon in case of need. This stick is adorned with six little brass bells, which serve to frighten away reptiles and dangerous animals, and also to give notice of the approach of the post. The danger from wild beasts is, in some districts, a very real one, the "tappal" runners through the forest districts in the south of Ceylon having occasionally

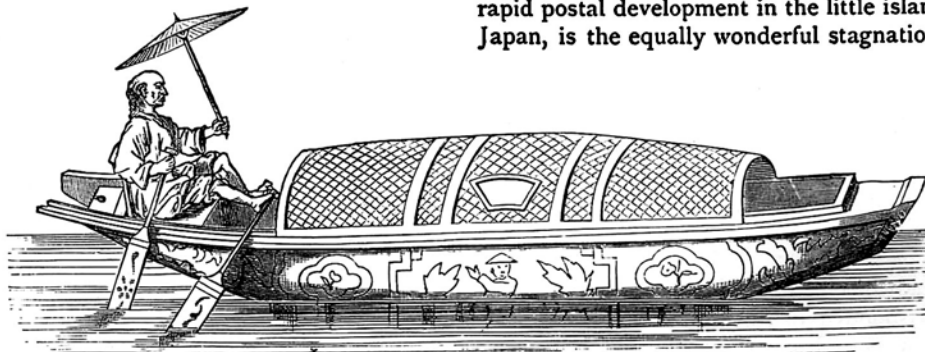
had very narrow escapes from the attacks of "rogue" elephants and other wild beasts.

Of all varieties of Indian letter-carriers, clothed or unclothed, none are so picturesque as the Camel Express Messengers. The men wear a serviceable red uniform, and large green turban embroidered with gold thread. From their girdle hangs a curved sabre in a red sheath. The camels are adorned with trappings of gay cloth and tassels, ornamented with blue beads and cowrie shells, and small brass bells round the neck to give notice of their swift approach. It is said that their rough and rapid trotting, sometimes at the rate of eighty miles a day, is so trying to the riders as to shorten their days. Two heavy mail-bags hang to right and left on each side of the camel, and the saddle is so arranged that a passenger can take a seat behind the postman.

In no country of the world is the postal organisation more wonderful than in Japan; the chief marvel being that, till about a dozen years ago, there was no regular Government institution of posts in the country. In 1871, when Japan awakened like a giant from her long sleep of exclusiveness, and set to work to accomplish changes of every sort, she resolved to establish the European postal system; and with such astonishing zeal has she done her work, that within ten years the British, American, and French post-offices, which had been established at all the open ports, were closed, foreign nations being satisfied with the thoroughness of the Japanese postal system. In that short period mail routes had been organised over 36,000 miles; mail-trains and steamers, post-vans, and runners were all enlisted; 3,927 post-offices and 7,439 letter-boxes had been established; money order offices and post-office savings-banks were in full operation; 7,500 persons were employed on the regular staff; stamps, stamped envelopes, post-cards, and newspaper wrappers were issued at the same rate as our own; letter postage to any part of the empire being at the rate of 1d., and post-cards ½d.; while within the limits of the city of Tokio these postages are respectively only half-price.

Where the Post-office had thus started at full swing, it is needless to say that the telegraph was not forgotten; and by 1880 it was in full working order over a distance of about 10,000 miles, and giving employment to about 15,000 persons.

In very strange contrast with this extraordinarily rapid postal development in the little island Empire of Japan, is the equally wonderful stagnation in the vast



A CHINESE MAIL PACKET.



RUSSIAN MAIL-SLEDGE.

Empire of China, where, even to this hour, there is actually no Government institution for the transmission of posts. As I had occasion to point out in a recent article,* whereas Japan has already developed such a wide-spread system of newspapers as would of itself require an elaborate method of distribution, China, that esteems itself the most literary of nations, is still practically without newspapers. Consequently these do not call for postal consideration.

But as regards letters, a considerable proportion of the 400,000,000 Chinamen do occasionally exchange letters—those who cannot write for themselves hiring scribes to do so. These letters are consigned to firms which have houses in all the large towns, where letters are forwarded to distant ports, to be there distributed by special agents, who generally collect the postage from the receiver. There was certainly something comic in the fact that when China was no longer able to exclude foreigners from Peking, our British postal arrangements were no sooner established than some of the Imperial officials came to ask Sir Frederick Bruce to forward certain State documents for them between Peking and Canton. On the death of the Emperor Hien-fung, which occurred just at that time, intimation thereof was sent from his country palace (a distance of 600 li, which is upwards of 200 miles) in twenty-four hours, which is the highest speed attainable in China. But the placid Celestials, to whom hurry appears a form of vulgar impatience, and to whom telegraphs are an abomination, are content that all ordinary communications should be conveyed either by slow paddling or poling boats, or else by foot-runners, whose high-sounding title of “the thousand-mile horse” does not quicken their pace beyond about twelve miles in twenty-four hours. They carry a paper lantern and a paper umbrella, and their letter-bag is secured on their back by a cloth knotted across the chest.

But though the rise and fall of nations in the outer world of barbarians are topics wholly without interest to these millions, there *are* some subjects which call forth enthusiasm and an eager desire for early information. Foremost among these is the

* See CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE, August, 1884.

declaration of the list of sixty successful candidates for literary degrees in the Confucian classics at the great annual and triennial examinations. So great is the competition for this honour, that sometimes as many as 8,000 candidates present themselves in a single province! Then, when this long-looked-for list is published, the rivers and creeks in the neighbourhood are all astir, and swift, lightly-built boats, each manned by half a dozen strong rowers, start off at full speed to convey the news to anxious relations and fellow-citizens.

Others have made agreement with the owners of



CAMEL-MOUNTED LETTER-CARRIER, HINDOOSTAN.

carrier-pigeons, to whom the lists are immediately forwarded, and the messages, being inscribed on slips of thin stiff paper, are rolled up into the smallest possible compass and attached to the legs of these winged letter-carriers, who straightway start on their respective journeys at a rate of eighty miles in three hours.

Of vehicles we find every conceivable variety pressed in to aid the post-runner in his labour. In Natal the post-cart is a light four-horse vehicle—not much to

look at, but capital as a means of getting over vile roads with very deep ruts. In the mountainous districts of Brazil, a two-wheeled waggon, drawn by oxen, is in use—the wheels being cut out of a solid block and fastened to the axle.

In some parts of Russia, buffaloes harnessed to two-wheeled vehicles convey the postmen on their road, but more frequently mail-sledges are drawn by horses, by reindeer, or, in the far north, by dogs.

The latter we find again in Canada—as, for instance, in the mail service between Selkirk and Lake Winnipeg, where the work is done by trains of letter-sleighs, each dragged by three dogs harnessed in single file.

Passing from Canada to the United States, we find the most gigantic postal system in the world, working with the regularity of first-class machinery, and nowhere has its wonderfully rapid development been more remarkable than in the establishment of communication between the capitals of the extreme East and West—New York and San Francisco.

Twenty years ago, settlers starting for the far West, with their heavily-laden waggons, knew that the journey would occupy six months of hard travel, and might involve many dangers of varied character—chiefly from hostile Indians, prairie fires, and rattlesnakes. Once started on that far journey, many a weary month must elapse ere any tidings could reach them from the home they had left.

Great was the excitement when a company of fearless, determined men, announced their resolution to carry letters from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific in fourteen days. The feat was deemed impossible. Nevertheless, the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express was duly organised, the vast expanse of country right across the Great Continent was divided into runs of sixty miles, and at each terminus rude log-huts were erected as stations and stables for men and beasts.

The latter were strong, swift ponies, selected for their hardiness and great powers of endurance, and the riders were all picked men, experienced scouts and trappers, noted—even in that region of keen, hard-riding men—for courage and good horsemanship; and many a time must both have been tried to the uttermost in the course of those terribly long and awfully lonesome rides across the trackless prairie, continually in danger of attack, by day or by night, by wild Indians or highway robbers.

Once a week an Express messenger started from either side of the Great Continent. From the first moment to the last, not a second must be lost. As long as the pony could gallop, gallop he must; and the eager beasts seemed as keen as their riders, and scarcely needed the cruel spur to urge them on. For sixty miles at a stretch they must keep up their utmost speed; and when at length the goal was reached, where the next messenger was waiting in the saddle, ready to start without one minute's delay, the precious letter-bag was tossed from one postman to the other, and, ere the wearied incomer had even dismounted, his successor had started on his onward way.

Then pony and man might rest and feed, and rest

again, till the return of the messenger with a re-filled letter-bag, which was warranted to accomplish its journey of upwards of 2,000 miles in 240 hours. (The railway on the New York side being already constructed as far as St. Joseph, that station was the eastern point to which the Pony Express had to run.)

This Pony Express was continued for two years, accomplishing its work with amazing regularity, and involving many a feat of splendid riding and wild adventure. It proved, however, a ruinous failure from a commercial point of view, and the company collapsed with a deficit of 200,000 dollars.

The telegraph was by this time complete; so for awhile it was the sole bearer of all overland communication, and letters had to travel from New York to San Francisco *via* the Isthmus of Panama, which occupied just a month. In those days comparatively few steamers entered the Golden Gates (the entrance to the great harbour of San Francisco), so the fortnightly arrival of this steamer, with its precious cargo of letters and newspapers, was a signal for hours of intense anxiety and excitement. Not only were the merchants of the city eager for business letters, but crowds of miners came in from the mountains, in the (too often vain) hope that the mail might bring them some word from home.

Of the enormous amount of labour and thought which has now covered so vast a tract of country with an intricate network of postal arrangements, a faint idea may be gathered from the exceedingly bulky annual report of the Postmaster-General of the United States—a report which fills 800 pages of closely-printed matter, besides a supplementary volume of 454 pages of postal laws and regulations. Beside these imposing volumes, the modest 59-page Parliamentary report of the British Postmaster-General seems quite a small matter. Indeed, on looking over the statistics of postal facilities in the thirty-eight States and eleven Territories, we find that the three which head the list—Pennsylvania with its 3,716 post-offices, New York State with 3,082, and Ohio with 2,620—together possess nearly as many post-offices as Britain in A.D. 1854 could number, including all sorts of letter-boxes and offices, her grand total in that year having amounted to 9,973.

In the thirty years which have elapsed since that date, British facilities have been trebled: there are now 31,700 receptacles for the collection of letters, of which 15,951 are post-offices.

Of the postal statistics of the United States, I will only note that the total weight of mails despatched in 1883 to Postal Union countries amounted to 1,266 tons, and that “the number of pieces handled”—*i.e.*, letters, newspapers, and post-cards collected or delivered—was 1,324,637,701, the average handled by each letter-carrier being 359,955.

In systems so vast and so admirably organised as these, the work of the letter-carrier ceases to have any individuality. It is the work of a chronometer, as faultless as anything human can well be, and possessing as little picturesque interest as does a handsome, solidly-built street in a great new city.

Children's
Page.

MEMORIAL DAY

Children bring
the buds of
Spring-time,
Bring the fair-
est blooms of May,
We will
reverently
lay them
On the
Soldiers'
graves
today.

That
our
dear land
should be happy,
And no man
a slave should be,
That is what
these brave
men died for;
gave their lives
for LIBERTY.

Now for them
there is no
sorrow,
Now for them
all struggles
cease,
Now for them
all strife is ended,
They have won
a glorious peace.

So with bright and
cheerful faces,
We will go from grave
to grave,
On this day when
all the Nation
Loves to honor its dead brave.

While the starry flag they died for,
Floats, entwined with olive branch,
From the proudest Eastern city
To the wildest Western ranch.

Lizbeth B. Comins

A. B. C.

RUSSELL & RICHARDSON SC.

Odds and Ends.

SENORA DE COUSINO, a Chilian widow, bears the unenviable distinction of being the richest woman in the world. She is said to possess a fortune of forty million pounds. Her estates in Chili are the show places of the country, and her entertainments are magnificent beyond description. She is between fifty and sixty years of age, tall and dark and still very handsome. Her immense wealth came to her from her father, her brother, and her husband, all of whom left their entire possessions to her when they died, but the major part of it came from the first, who controlled the copper output of Chili and Peru, which comprises three-fourths of all the copper used in Europe. A prosperous city of 13,000 inhabitants situated on the sea-shore about 200 miles from Valparaiso, is one of Senora Cousino's many properties. Every house, every mill, and every bit of land is owned by the widow, and everyone in the place is dependent upon her industries for their living. Her town house in Santiago is a great marble palace, the total cost of which may be imagined from the fact that the *portières* for the doors alone cost £50,000. It is crowded with the most beautiful works of art, and in one of its galleries hangs a Meissonier for which the French government has repeatedly offered £5000. The Senora has a remarkable capacity for affairs, and by means of an elaborate system of daily reports from her estates, factories and mines exercises a direct personal supervision over all her industries.

ON the estate of Lord de Vesci near Cork is a charming castle, which was built at a cost of fourpence. This extraordinary price was due to the keen business instinct of a woman, Anastasia, the wife of John Archdeacon. During her husband's absence at the wars in 1638 she determined to surprise him on his return by having a castle ready to receive him, and hired a large number of workmen to carry out the building-operations, on the agreement that while engaged on the work they should purchase their clothes and provisions from her, and her alone. She managed the transaction so skilfully that on balancing her accounts she found that she was only fourpence out of pocket.

THE most strenuous upholder of woman's equal capabilities with man cannot say that her inventive faculty is so prolific as his, but it has, notwithstanding, accomplished some very remarkable results. Women are not only sending in thousands of applications for patents or improvements in articles especially useful to their sex, but they are exercising their ingenuity in improving many of the implements with which long usage has led people to believe that only men should deal. The first woman inventor in New York was a Mary Kies, who invented a manner for weaving straw with silk or thread in 1809.

THE harp was the principal musical instrument of both the ancient and the mediæval world. The ancient Egyptians lavished their artistic genius upon its design and decoration. Its tone and pitch were brought to perfection by the Druids of Britain, and in 1810 Sebastian Erard raised it into the front rank of modern musical instruments, from which it has been displaced by the pianoforte. And it has been associated with the Gaelic people from time immemorial.

"IN the pettiest character there are unfathomable depths, which the poet, all-seeing though he may pretend to be, can never analyse, but must only dimly guess at, and still more dimly sketch them by the actions they beget."—*Charles Kingsley*.

"We are always doing each other injustice, and think better or worse of each other than we deserve, because we only hear and see separate words and actions. We don't see each other's whole nature."—*George Eliot*.

"Turn the common dust
Of servile opportunity to gold;
Filling the soul with sentiment august,
The beautiful, the wise, the holy, and
the just."

A VERY rare occurrence recently happened at Copenhagen, where a retired military officer celebrated his second silver wedding. He is eighty-two years old, his second wife being fifty-two.

IN Japan the nose is considered to be the most important feature of the face. According to its size it determines the beauty of its owner, the lady who possesses a large one always being a reigning belle. This is probably due to the fact that difference in noses constitutes almost the only difference in one Japanese face from another, as the eyes are invariably black, the chin receding, and the cheek-bones high.

It is not generally known that seltzer-water takes its name from the village of Lower Selters, in Nassau, where several springs, united in one basin, yield 5000 cubic feet an hour of the sparkling and effervescing mineral water. Over a million and a half bottles are exported yearly, bringing the State a revenue of over £6000. The value of the springs was so little realised, that two centuries after they had been discovered they were rented for four shillings a year.

MRS. CREIGHTON, the wife of the Bishop of Peterborough, has been elected the first honorary member of an "Oddfellows' Women's Lodge" at Peterborough, which has been named the Creighton Lodge in her honour.

A SPEAKING watch has been invented by a clockmaker at Geneva, by applying the phonograph to the old-fashioned repeater, the springs and hammers of which have been replaced by a disc of vulcanised india-rubber, over whose surface the point moves, emitting, as it turns, articulate sounds denoting the hour. The furrows on this disc are the exact reproduction of those produced on the cylinder of a phonograph by the human voice. The utterance is loud enough to be heard in an adjoining room. M. Sivan, the inventor, is developing his idea, and it is said that it may possibly replace the carillon in belfries by part-songs. There are endless combinations possible in the application of what may become something more than an ingenious toy.

BICYCLES have been put to many purposes besides that for which they were originally invented, but it was reserved for the late Sultan of Morocco to use them as a means of punishment. A number of bicycles were presented to him by an official of the French Government, and His Shereefian Majesty immediately used them as instruments of torture for any of the ladies of his harem who had had the misfortune to offend him. The unfortunate women were placed on the machines and compelled to ride round a marked track in the palace gardens. Naturally they fell repeatedly to the ground, their sudden descent causing the Sultan the greatest amusement. When they had rolled in the dust a dozen times the punishment was complete, and they were allowed to return to the palace to heal their bruises as best they might.

"GOSSIP is a sort of smoke that comes from the dirty tobacco-pipes of those who diffuse it; it proves nothing but the bad taste of the smoker."

THERE is in Germany a remarkable woman named Johanna Voigt Ambrosius, who is a poetess. But she does not earn her living by her pen. She works early and late, swinging her flail on the threshing floor, mowing the grass with her scythe, milking her cows, churning her butter, and assiduously attending to all the domestic needs of her little household. Her poems have commanded much attention in Germany, and it is a marvel how she has found time to write them. She is just forty-one years old, and lives in a small village in East Prussia close to the Russian frontier.

"'TIS better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perk'd up in a glistening grief,
And wear a golden sorrow."—*Shakespeare*.

ONE of the very few Christians who have accomplished the pilgrimage to Mecca is M. Gervais Chartellemont, a Frenchman. He posed during his perilous journey as an Algerian who had lately been converted to Mohammedanism, and dressed in the Arab costume. Notwithstanding his perfect command of Arabic, he was looked upon with such suspicion by his fellow-pilgrims that he frequently found it difficult to procure the bread and salt which act as a passport in all Eastern countries. During the journey from Yeddah to Mecca, performed on donkey-back in a single day, M. Chartellemont kept the Mohammedan law in all its rigour, riding with his head shaved and uncovered. His greatest stumbling-block was the Arab custom of refraining from drinking until a meal is ended, and on more than one occasion his excessive thirst nearly led him to betray himself. On entering Mecca, it was with the greatest difficulty that he avoided treading on the sacred pigeons which swarm about the streets. But he performed the necessary rites successfully, and walking round the Sacred Kaabe (cube) seven times, kissing the Black Stone, and drinking at the spring Zemzem, at which, according to the Mussulman, Hagar is supposed to have quenched her thirst, and has returned to Europe alive.

THERE are many every-day phrases which we constantly use, but to whose origin we never give a thought. It is exceedingly interesting to trace some of them to their source. For instance, to "dance attendance" is an expression borrowed from the mediæval custom which compelled the bride at a wedding to dance with whomsoever asked her. No matter how low the condition, or how objectionable the person, she could not refuse. "To put one's foot in it," is an English agricultural expression. After the milk is drawn from the cows it is usually placed in large, flat pans, and set upon the ground to cool, in which position it is an easy matter for any clumsy person to put his foot in the pan. On the other hand, "A feather in his cap" is of Hungarian origin, for during the centuries when the bitter struggles with Turkey and that country were going on, the Hungarian soldiers were allowed to wear one feather in their caps for every Turk they had killed, and so the slaughter of an additional enemy meant one more feather in the cap. How often a saying may be taken for mere slang is proved by "In the same boat," which is commonly believed to be a pure Americanism; it was first used by Clement of Rome in a letter he wrote to the Church of Corinth in the year 100.

TABLE DECORATIONS.

THERE is scarcely anything that better enables a lady to display her taste than does the ornamentation of her dinner table.

It is now very much the fashion to put only one kind of flower, or only flowers of one colour, on table, with, of course, plenty of green; it is much easier to arrange them effectively this way than with a variety of colours.

Unsuitable flowers should never be put together; some, such as iris, camellias, arums, sunflowers, look best alone; again, some from their colours are quite unfit for candlelight, so should not be used.

It is a mistake to put many blossoms with strong perfumes on a table; they make a room oppressive. Hyacinths, daphnes, gardenias, &c., must on this account be used sparingly, but lately none of these flowers have been very much in vogue; sunflowers, daffodils, single dahlias, red berries, white lilies, anemones, and large daisies have been favourites with many people. A short time ago the rage for large yellow daisies was so great that they became as expensive to purchase as hothouse flowers.

I would not advise anyone to decorate their table with a particular flower because it is "the fashion"; there are other things to be considered—the room, the glass, the china, particularly the dessert service; for however pretty a decoration, if not in keeping with the surroundings it must be a failure. Stands of flowers on a table should not exceed thirteen inches in height, save perhaps some flower spikes, light grasses or leaves that stand up, or plants and palms may be used that are over twenty inches high, so that the guests can see across the table under them. In arranging flowers too many are generally used; they are packed together so that the beauty of each particular flower is lost instead of each blossom standing lightly with green about it. It is a good plan to heap wet silver sand in flower dishes, and cover it with common lycopodium, or with picked wet moss, and small glasses can be filled with lycopodium or moss; the flowers keep much better in place, and the green makes a good background.

The following are some of the styles of table decoration now in fashion:—

Fill a large meat plate and two pudding plates with wet sand heaped high and covered with moss; make a border of French ferns round each plate, then fill them with white flowers (the new white corymbosum look very well), and put a width of crimson plush bordered with a narrow tufted fringe down the centre of the table; put the three plates of flowers on it, the large in the centre and the small six inches from either end of the plush, then stand round the table specimen glasses, filled with white and green, and between the plates of flowers glass troughs or glass boats, filled like the specimen glasses, may be placed.

Pale blue satin laid down the centre of a table is pretty, with a border of dark leaves placed on it, and the vases filled with large yellow daisies and maidenhair fern. Daisies arrange best in small things; they look very well in the glass centrepieces that are formed with small glasses, and can be lightly arranged so as not to intercept the view across the table. For this kind of arrangement it is necessary to run wire up the stems of both the daisies and the ferns; they may then, with the aid of a little moss, be arranged to look informal and pretty. Old gold-coloured plush and satin, and black satin embroidered in gold, I have also seen used.

I prefer either a plate glass plateau or the white cloth for the centre of the table to any more fantastical arrangements.

At a party last season I heard a Royal

Academician, who might be taken as an authority in matters of taste, tell his hostess what a relief the simplicity of her table was after seeing many elaborately decorated ones. In his opinion plush and satin centres were unsuitable, therefore in bad taste. The table in question had three elegantly shaped white glass baskets, a moderate sized one for the middle and two small ones for the ends; these baskets were filled with lycopodium, and then had a few Marshal Niel roses with their leaves and some maidenhair fern stuck in them. There were also eight glasses on the table, about seven inches high, with triangular openings at the top filled in the same way; these were placed four on each side of the table, which was laid for sixteen people. A row of dark leaves and maidenhair fern was placed on the tablecloth, as if to connect the eight flower vases.

Flower baskets have not been considered altogether successful for table decorations; the reason is that they have been too large and have had too many flowers in them, so that the effect has been heavy. The table I have just mentioned was not an expensive one to arrange, for though the flowers were good there were not many of them. The *menus* for this table were plain, the dessert d'oyleys were fine white linen, with the edges frayed out; they were very delicately worked in deep gold-coloured silk.

I think the best decorated table I have ever seen was one on which there was not a single flower; foliage was used entirely. It is hardly possible, without hothouses to gather from, to carry out a foliage decoration well; one requires scarlet, crimson, yellow, white, and green leaves. The best plants for the purpose are begonias, crotons (of which the leaves are yellow, red, and green,) the dark leaved aralias, dracenas, caladiums, and colous. Foliage arranges well in low stands, and trails from the stands on to the tablecloth look well; a great deal, too, may be done on the table-cloth itself with leaves of this kind, which last well all the evening. Stands of foliage are more difficult to arrange than any others, for both the form and colour of the leaves have to be considered.

A table looks very well arranged with branches and leaves of virginia creeper when the leaves are changing colour. Some maple leaves are also very pretty. Asparagus Plumosus is elegant for decorations. With a silver plateau water lilies look well on table. They must be arranged in a very low dish; each lily must be well opened with the fingers before it is put in water (water is much better than sand for them), and they must not be left in the dark after they are arranged. In the troughs round the plateau and in the specimen glasses, blue forget-me-nots or small yellow water lilies can be arranged with grasses or ferns.

African marigolds make an effective decoration, but they are best used without other flowers, and require light-coloured fern leaves with them. Hyacinths, if picked from their stems and each single bloom mounted on wire, are most useful with other flowers to stand high and prevent a flat appearance. Jonquils, daffodils, and lilies of the valley look well either alone or with other flowers. In Nice I once saw a little table ornamented with lilies of the valley and large bouquets of violets and maidenhair fern. The stands had borders of fern, then the violets were massed but rather raised in the centre, and the lilies stuck in separately. It was pretty, but I thought rather disappointing.

When much fern cannot be had, feathery grass is very pretty among flowers. A stand of ordinary garden flowers is often much

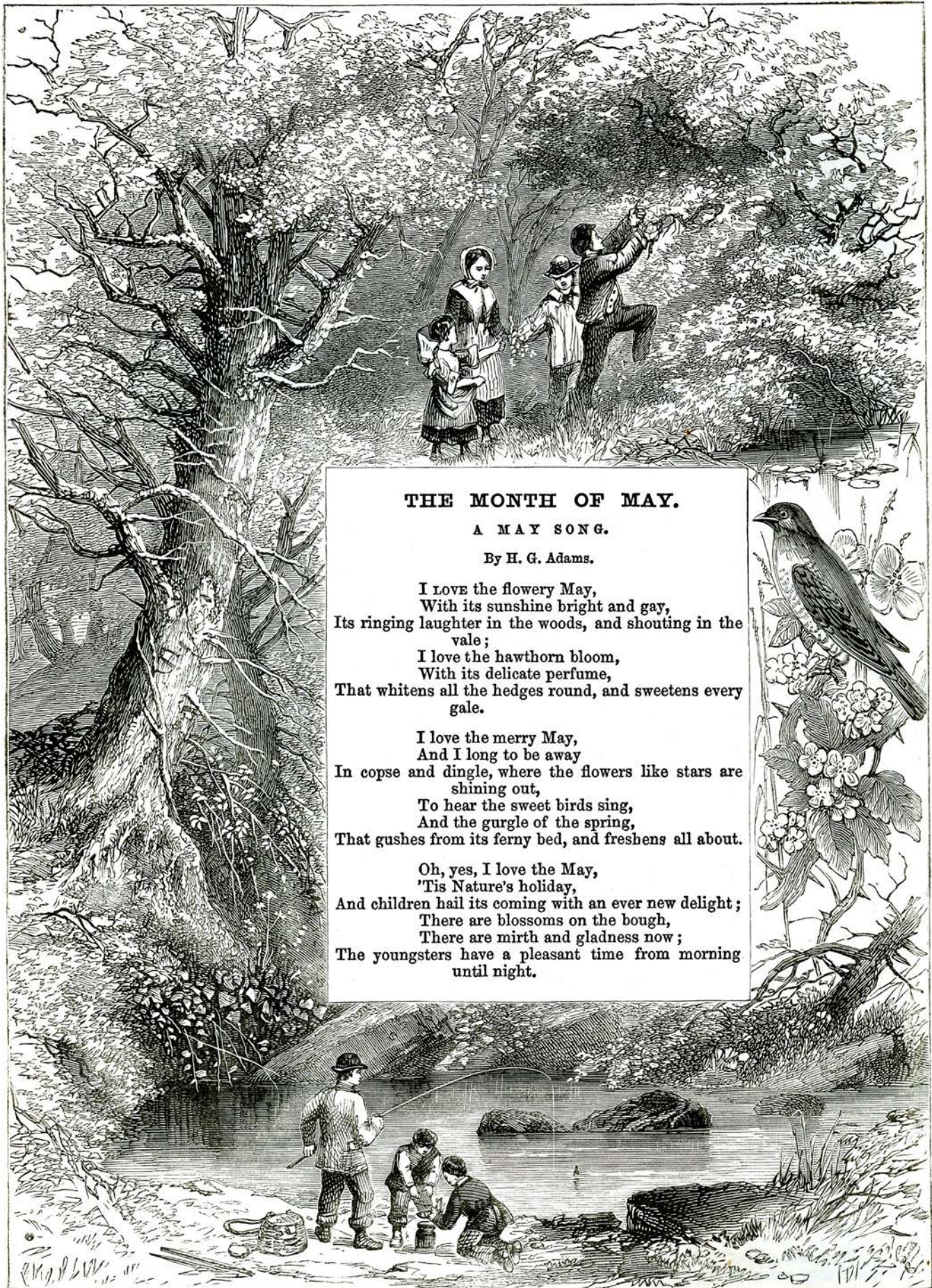
improved by a rice bunch of grass being placed in the middle, and a few pieces being put round the edge of it.

Grasses are particularly useful with field flowers; these are more difficult to arrange than cultivated ones, but well repay one for the trouble. They suit some tables remarkably well. Blue cornflowers, buttercups, and large daisies with grasses and trails of small ivy, make very pretty stands; so do the marsh marigold, purple candytuft, mallows, pleasants eye, honeysuckle, sainfoin, and many other wild flowers and plants, provided they are judiciously arranged; but they must not be massed together, nor must too many kinds of flowers be used in the same stand.

We have as yet only considered cut flower decorations, but many people prefer plants; stands take so long to arrange that one is often tempted to use plants. Palms, stood in suitable pots or bowls, always look extremely well, and are more used than any other plants, for they intercept the view across a table less than anything else of the same size; then, too, they always have a cool look. A long table with a palm of one kind in the centre and two others of a different kind for the two ends, with glass troughs filled with crimson roses and ferns arranged down the table, looks very well. Good palms are expensive, but the umbrella plants (*Cyperias*) make very good centres; they last well, and are not dear to purchase. Ferns in pots are not used nearly as much for table decoration as they used to be. Frequently single cut branches of plants are used; they are stuck in artistic pots or vases, to look as if they were growing. The scarlet amaryllis, the turk's head lily, white or violet iris—all look handsome on table; a stem of corymbosum or of a dahlia, if in a suitable pot, will furnish a table. I have found it a very good plan to preserve ferns (especially maidenhair) for winter use; they can be preserved to look almost as if they were fresh gathered. They are green and pliable if properly done, and I do not think when on table anyone could detect that they were dried. Everlasting flowers are also very pretty for winter use. I buy the plants in the summer when they are in bloom; when the green begins to fade I cut the flowers, tie them in bunches, and hang them up to dry, bloom downwards. I prefer the pink and the white, and find them the most useful. So much green is wanted for a table that it is worth while to grow the common lycopodium in flat pans. Sift some peat, mix a little silver sand with it, mixing it well in the centre, then stick lycopodium all over the peat, and put the pans in a warm place and keep them moist, and they will soon look beautiful; the lycopodium rapidly covers the peat; and if single flowers of any kind are then stuck in, the effect is very pretty. Snowdrops, camellias, winter roses, scarlet geraniums—anything, in fact, looks well in a pan of well-grown lycopodium.

For large dinners, candles are almost invariably used; they have small shades over them; these shades are ornamental, and generally coloured; they may be made at home but require the neatest of work, as every imperfection shows when the light is under them. Rose coloured shades are, I think, the prettiest; very pale green are pleasant on a warm evening, but not generally as satisfactory as any shade of red.

In conclusion I would advise my readers to let the ornamentation of their table be in keeping with the dinner to be served; do not, when you have a comparatively plain dinner, deck your table as if for a large party. I do not mean that the table should be as plain as the dinner, but it should be such as not to disappoint your guests.



THE MONTH OF MAY.

A MAY SONG.

By H. G. Adams.

I LOVE the flowery May,
With its sunshine bright and gay,
Its ringing laughter in the woods, and shouting in the
vale ;
I love the hawthorn bloom,
With its delicate perfume,
That whitens all the hedges round, and sweetens every
gale.

I love the merry May,
And I long to be away
In copse and dingle, where the flowers like stars are
shining out,
To hear the sweet birds sing,
And the gurgle of the spring,
That gushes from its ferny bed, and freshens all about.

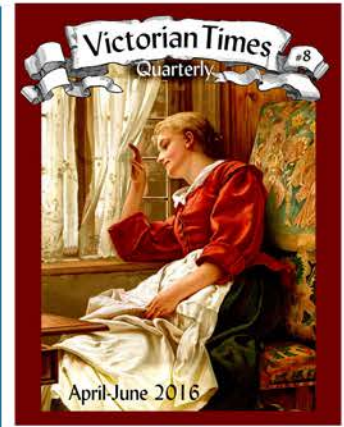
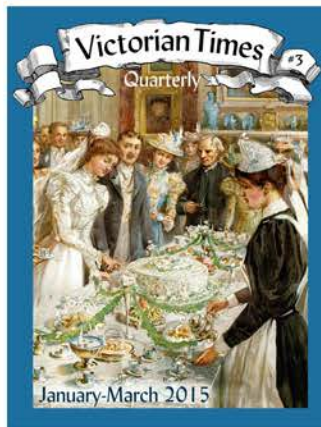
Oh, yes, I love the May,
'Tis Nature's holiday,
And children hail its coming with an ever new delight ;
There are blossoms on the bough,
There are mirth and gladness now ;
The youngsters have a pleasant time from morning
until night.

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