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About the House

WHEN YOU ASK A FAVOR.

If you want to borrow something from a neighbor, or wish to ask a favor of some sort, state the purpose of your errand immediately upon entering the house. Avoid putting it off and putting it off until you are on the point of leaving. To do so will only spoil your visit. All the time the thought uppermost in your mind will be: "Now, I must ask her about that matter right away." The longer you put off broaching the purpose of your call, the longer your call assumes the nature of a friendly little visit and the harder it becomes for you to state your errand. And your neighbor, for her part, is very likely to have the keen edge of the pleasure she felt because you came to see her, dulled by the knowledge that you came only to borrow something or ask a favor of some member of the family. Had your request been stated at first, and you remained to visit, mutual pleasure would have resulted.

The same is true if you use the telephone or write a letter. If you are calling a friend for some particular reason, state that reason as soon as possible after she answers you! Then have a pleasant conversation. Or if you are writing a letter which is not induced by friendliness, state "the reason why" in your first paragraph. It is, perhaps, a queer little kink of human nature that we do not in the least object to being asked to do a favor if the favor is frankly asked of us, but that we feel resentment if an endeavor is made to veil the request so that it is not at first realized as such.

The call or the letter which until its close has had all the earmarks of being purely friendly and social, seems, of a sudden, hollow, insincere, false, when a selfish purpose is at length revealed. A person who continually puts off her errand until she rises to leave—or until some one becomes impatient for the use of the wire or until she is nearing the end of her sheet of writing paper—soon becomes known for her habit. If she makes a call her neighbor begins to think at once: "Now, what did Mrs. A. come over for, anyway?" She will hardly be credited with having come just to make a call. If she uses the telephone, the person whom she calls will be continually saying to herself: "Now, what will she say next? She must have called up for some purpose: what can it be?"

We all require information at times, desire favors done, may need to borrow occasionally. We like to do things for others; we expect them to be pleased to do things for us. Then why, why try to conceal the purpose of your mission? Out with it! Right from the start! Then both you and "the other party" can enjoy to the full your call, your telephone conversation or your letter.

AN INDOOR SAND BOX.

When winter comes it means that the children cannot go outdoors for days at a time. Fortunately for us we have a hand box in the house. We have known our little boy to spend almost an entire day playing in the sand. Our sand box is really a sand table. It is five feet long, two feet high—just high enough that a child

can be seated comfortably beside it—and wide enough to go through the door readily. The sides are six inches high. In it three inches of sand is kept. We keep the box in a corner of a room that has a comfortable temperature. Underneath we have a canvas to catch spilled sand.

We have purchased some small animals and figures, and little houses and fences can be made. Twigs can be secured for trees. With these aids one can visibly depict in the sand some story that is being told. If it is a Bible story—say Moses in the bulrushes—the whole scene can be laid out. Blue paper or cardboard can be used to represent water. The story of Sir Isaac Brock on Queenston Heights can be shown.

If you are seeking for a device to occupy your children in the winter day, to appeal to their imagination, to aid their creative instinct, to add interest to the story-telling hour, let me commend very heartily the indoor sand box.—H. P.

A UNIQUE BUT SIMPLE STYLE.



4615. This portrays a one-piece straight line model, with a sleeveless overblouse in tunic style. It is a good model for combining two different materials. Velvet and figured crepe, or lace would be a good contrast. Or satin with brocaded silk or chiffon.

The Pattern is cut in 5 Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure. A 38-inch size requires 3 yards of one material 40 inches wide. To make as illustrated requires 2 3/4 yards for the tunic and 3/4 yards for the dress and facings on the tunic. The width of the dress at the foot is 1 1/2 yards.

Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 20c in silver, by the Wilson Publishing Co., 78 West Adelaide St., Toronto.

Send 15c in silver for our up-to-date Fall and Winter 1924-1925 Book of Fashions.

LEMON FOR RUST STAINS.

The following method of removing iron rust has been in use in my family for years. I have never known it to fail of immediate results with rust stains. Often it will remove old stains from fruit and other sources.

Have a flatiron just warm enough to steam if a damp cloth is placed upon it. Lay the stain, with cloth dry, over the iron, and rub with a piece of freshly cut lemon. Then note the instant disappearance of the stain. Wash immediately in clear water.—E. B. W.

COCOA CAKE.

Beat two eggs and one and a quarter cups of sugar together until light and creamy. Add three-fourths cup of butter, half cup of sour milk or buttermilk with one teaspoonful of soda dissolved in half cup of hot water, along with three heaping tablespoonfuls of cocoa. Stir in two cups of flour which has been sifted, with one teaspoonful of baking powder, and frost with a white icing.—Mrs. J. E. S.

Library of British Museum.

The library of the British Museum contains 27,000 volumes in Chinese, 12,000 in Hebrew and 18,000 in other Oriental languages.

For Sore Feet—Minard's Liniment.

Love Gives Itself

THE STORY OF A BLOOD FEUD

BY ANNIE S. SWAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOME OF THEIR HEARTS.

Judith Rankine, sitting at an eastern window in the old house of Stair, was waiting for the dawn.

She had kept a long vigil which had ended at that mysterious moment when night flies, vanquished, before the heralds of the day. They were flaunting their supremacy now, on the gold of the far horizon, their pathway deepening blood-red on the sea.

Judith was tired, with that mortal weakness which comes to a woman-creature on whom a whole household has rested, and who, slackening a moment, knows that the burden has come perilously near the limit of her endurance.

He who companions and shadows the Lord of Life had stepped in, and from the chamber she had just reverently closed, the soul of the Laird of Stair had winged its way beyond the glory of the dawn, to find its innermost heart.

An old man, and full of years, beloved by those of his own household and by neighbors and friends, Claud Rankine of Stair needed no man's pity now. Many mistakes he had made in his life, the mistakes to which a generous and slightly undisciplined nature is prone, but he had never willingly hurt or humbled a human being, even the lowliest. When he gave alms, it was a lesson to all alms-givers whatsoever, by the Laird of Stair, could ever be bitter to the taste!

His daughter had no tears for him as she sat there, resting her elbows on the broad window-sill, her eyes full of a vague wonder which wiped out three parts of her years, and made her look like a little child.

The beauty of the Rankine women had not descended to Judith; even those who loved her admitted that she was plain. Slightly under the medium height, with a narrow, somewhat ungainly figure, with a narrow, somewhat ungainly face, and a wide, kind mouth, no lover of meretricious charm could be attracted by that outward masque; but, from the brilliant yet often melancholy eyes, there looked forth the soul of all the motherhood in the world. Judith Rankine might never have a child of her own at her breast, but she would mother all children to the last day of her life, because she was one of the mothers whom God sends now and again into the world ready for their divine mission, and who, being taught by heaven, are able to teach the ungrateful and the ungracious the elements of their business.

Left motherless at the early age of eleven, Judith Rankine had practically mothered the whole family of Stair, from her father downward. She had been comrade and loyal friend to Alan, the son and heir, then trying to earn a little money in the East to help to fill the empty coffers of his father's house. She had mothered Annette, the beauty of the family, who had made a brilliant marriage and would one day be entitled to wear a coronet. And Claud, "the little one," as he had always been called, the gentle, bookish lad whose sole interest in life was scholarship, to each she had given the necessary care.

Yet now, when she closed her father's eyes, and received the last word of love and benediction which would make her brave for a troubled future, she was absolutely alone in the house. With the assistance of old Ann Christy, who had been nurse for two generations at Stair, she had done all that was needed in the chamber of death; no alien hands had ministered to the Master of Stair, nor touched him after death. And that was as she wished.

Judith was not thinking of the problems she must immediately face, but was trying to picture the meeting which, she did not doubt, had taken place somewhere beyond and within her eyes of gold. No tears were in her eyes; she was glad. For nearly two years her father had suffered from an incurable malady, and the end was peace.

But her loneliness was supreme. About half a mile distant, in a low-lying house she could just see nestling among the sparse trees at the base of Barassie Hill, dwelt kindred of her own, the nearest she had; but she had no desire to break in upon their sleep with the fatal news. The morning, she knew, would bring some inquiry, probably her cousin, Peter Garvock, in person. She would wait till then.

"If only Alan had been in time!" she whispered suddenly, with passion

in her voice. "Then I should have rejoiced to-day, if only he had been in time!"

She crept away with that, for the vision splendid called forth by the dawn, and all its wealth of promise, faded, as all visions do, and the grey reality crept up about her heart. For Alan, the heir, was coming home to a sorry state of things—to grinding poverty, to pressing obligations, to an uncertain future.

Yet when she crept, presently to her bed in a distant wing of the old house she fell instantly on sleep, that heavy, dreamless sleep which follows on long physical and mental toil, and is nature's best restorer.

She was awakened by Ann Christy standing at her bedside—a tall, angular old woman, with a mob-cap stiffly starched, a parchment-like face, and eyes black as the soles.

"Waken up, Miss Judy! Maister Alan has come home!"

"Oh, Christy!" cried Judy, in a choking whisper, and inconspicuously burst into tears, for she had had to stand by and watch the deepening hunger in the old man's dying eyes as his cars were strained for the step and voice of his first-born son, the hope of Stair. "It was cruel of God! He might have let Alan home in time!"

"There was a fog in the Channel, my dear," said the old woman, with the direct simplicity of age, which seldom embroiders facts. "It was better for him to be a day late than to be drowned through the haste of a foolish captain."

"Where is he?—and what o'clock is it?—and has he been travelling all night?"

"He's at his breakfast, and it is now half-past nine, and he has been travelling a' night. Anything else, while ye are at it?"

"Bring me some hot water, Christy, there's a dear!" cried Judy, now fully awake, as she leaped from her bed; "and tell Alan I'll be down immediately."

"He was not for wakenin' ye, but he has a forlorn look, my dear, and I thought ye wouldna mind."

"Understanding old woman!" murmured Judy.

Never was toilet more quickly made. In little more than ten minutes' time, looking trim and neat in her skirt of black serge and white blouse, with the black tie and gold safety-pin, Judy ran down the shabby stairs, and into the little morning-room where, since the family had been so sadly reduced in numbers, the meals had been mostly served.

A very tall figure sprang up from the table at the opening of the door, and a mist swam before its kind blue eyes.

"Hullo, Judy, old girl! There, there, buck up, buck up! Don't cry, Judy. You must not cry—do you hear? You must go on being the buttress and the stand-by of Stair! Never did it need you more!"

But Judy, unabashed, cried on, clinging hard to the big, kind arm. But presently she drew back to an admiring distance, to look keenly into the lean, brown, handsome face, to measure every inch of that noble, well-carried height, to take stock, as it were, of her "pick of the market" bunch.

"It hasn't done you any harm, Alan—three years! It has seemed like all eternity! Oh, wasn't it hard you couldn't be in time?"

"Very hard. But I've seen him, Judy, and he knows, where he is, that I did my best."

Judy bowed her head, for, though the words did not rebuke, they stilled her instantly.

"He looks as if he has got the thing she had set his heart on, Judy, and I believe he has. Our concern now is for you and Stair. You are tired, my dear, but you've—you've done it well. There isn't anybody in the world that could have done it like you!"

"Done what?"

"Bolstered and mothered us all, my dear. Come and sit down, and let us eat and talk. Do you know that I'm so ridiculously glad to get home, Judy, that I can't even be sad? Eternity, you said, I think, a minute ago? It's the right name for it!"

"But you don't regret going, Alan? And it has been worth while?"

Alan Rankine seemed to ponder a moment.

"I don't really know whether it has. I did my best, Judy, but I question whether I have the necessary instinct for success in business. It takes a man like Peter, don't you know? One who can look at both sides of the bawbee or the rupee, the same principle holds good. The commercial instinct of the Garvocks is extraordinary! Why, even Frank, at seventeen, could give me points!"

Judy seemed to grow anxious at these words.

When the affairs of Stair were at the lowest ebb and there seemed no opening of any kind for Alan Rankine, his cousin, Peter, had offered him a post in the Bombay House of Messrs. Garvock, Garvock & Hume. The Rankines, more than any other family in the county, perhaps, had held themselves aloof from the more commercial spirit of the age, and had tried to uphold and cherish all the traditions of Stair long after the substantial means for the purpose had sunk almost to the vanishing point.

It is not necessary here to go into all the causes which are contributory to the decline of a great house. There had doubtless been incompetency, want of foresight, deliberate scattering on the part of some of the Rankines. The family characteristics, certainly, had never been of the careful, prudent, or hoarding order. Then, there were all the economic reasons—the decline of agricultural values, the increased bur-

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How contagions spread

IN the world of school and play all children are equal. Youngsters from homes less clean than yours come into intimate contact with your children.

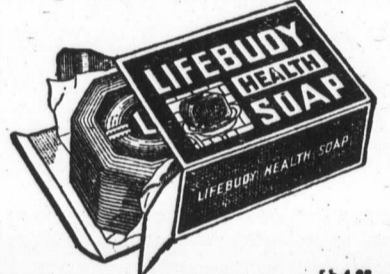
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dens upon the land, foreign competition—all of which have to be combated by qualities which the Rankines certainly lacked. In some respects they had been like the lilies of the field, in that they toiled not nor spun, yet their place in the county was a unique one. They were beloved by all, and sympathy had never been withheld from them even in the hours when they deserved it least.

(To be continued.)

The Curse of Scotland.

Why is the nine of diamonds called the "Curse of Scotland?"

Probably the most satisfactory explanation is that connected with the massacre of Glencoe. The order for the slaughter was signed by John Dalrymple, Earl of Stair, the man who was instrumental in bringing about the union between England and Scotland.

The coat of arms of the Dalrymples bore nine lozenges or diamonds on the shield, and it was because of this, according to many students of heraldry, that the expression arose. It is certain that the phrase goes back to 1745, because on October 21 of that year a caricature appeared showing the young Chevalier attempting to lead a herd of bulls across the river Tweed, with the nine of diamonds lying before them.

Another ingenious explanation is

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connected with the theft of Queen Mary's crown, which contained nine diamonds. To replace these a heavy tax, referred to as "the curse of the nine diamonds," was levied upon the Scots.

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