

About the House.

CHILDREN AND DIRT.

The mother who would have her children healthy must not be afraid to have them occasionally dirty. While cleanliness is akin to godliness, there is a clean dirt that comes from contact with the sweet earth that is wholesome. Have the little ones bathed frequently, insist that they come to meals with immaculate hands and faces, but, between meals, have them so dressed that they are free to run and romp as they will.

An over-careful mother of an only child complained to a physician that her baby was pale and delicate. He asked to see the child, and the nurse brought in the two-year-old from the veranda, where he had been seated on a rug looking at a picture-book. His dainty nainsook frock was spotless, as were also the pink kid boots and silk socks.

"What that child needs in wholesome dirt," was the physician's verdict. "Put a gingham frock and plain shoes on him, and turn him loose on the lawn or in the fresh earth. If he is not rosy and happy in a month, let me know."

At the expiration of the prescribed time the baby was transformed. The eyes that had been heavy were bright, the skin had acquired a healthful glow, the arms and legs plump, and the languid, tired little patient had become a rollicking boy. The freedom, fresh air, and clean dirt had, in a month's time, wrought a greater change in the child's system than all the skill of the medical fraternity could have effected.

Mothers who take their little school boys and girls away for vacation should let them romp at will out of doors, fish in the brook, ride on the bay, and wear strong shoes and clothing of which they need not be too careful. A child in much happier if untrammelled by too many "don'ts." And the mother is happier too if she need not say "don't" every hour in the day.

USES OF CORN.

Cornmeal or corn flour mixed with wheat flour makes puddings and pastries more digestible, because it makes them less cohesive—that is, it causes them to fall more readily into minute particles, so the saliva can act on the starch and the gastric juice on the albumenoids, much more readily. Corn meal or flour, lacking gluten, breaks up the stickiness of wheat flour. Likewise, a little wheat flour is always a good addition to corn meal recipes, as it gives adhesiveness.

Corn Flour.—This is a new production, at least to the general public, though it has been made in a small way for twenty years, which bids fair to become very popular. Blended with the wheat flour, it makes delicious bread, cakes, muffins and everything usually made of wheat flour. Corn flour can be used alone in pancakes, but in all other ways it must be mixed with wheat flour.

Corn Pone.—Into two cups boiling meal mix one teaspoonful salt and one teaspoonful sugar; scald with two cups boiling water, and let stand till it swells and becomes lukewarm; then add one-half ounce cake of compressed yeast dissolved in a little cold water; if too stiff reduce it with warm water to a consistency sufficient to retain its form; then put it in the baking pan, let rise four or five hours, and bake in a moderate oven till thoroughly done. Pone should be eaten fresh and warm, but is very nice toasted, after it is a day old.

Hoe Cake.—Into a mixing bowl put four cups white cornmeal and one

Indian Bannock.—Mix one cup boiling milk, one-half pint cornmeal, one teaspoonful each of salt and sugar; when partially cooled, add two eggs, beaten separately; bake in a very hot oven in a shallow earthen dish; serve like a pudding, in the dish it is baked in.

Corn Muffins.—One cup corn flour, two cups white flour, two cups sweet milk, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, a pinch of salt. These muffins are nice and tender without shortening.

Green Corn Patties.—Forevery cup of grated green corn, allow one egg, one-half cup of milk and one cup of flour; one teaspoonful baking powder should be well mixed with the flour. Stir all together until well mixed, then bake in buttered pattypans. This recipe can be doubled, if the family to be served requires it.

Corn Pudding.—This is not for dessert, but is intended as a dish to use in place of meat. It is a favorite with vegetarians. In winter it may be made of Fritterkorn which is grated corn canned. The pudding is made as follows: Yolks of three eggs, tablespoonful melted butter, teaspoonful sugar, pinch of salt, one quart grated fresh sweet corn, one cup milk. Beat all together and then add the whites of three eggs, beaten to a stiff froth. Bake in a covered dish one hour. Remove cover and brown the top.

teaspoon salt; make it to a stiff batter with hot water, stirring it all the time. Have a pan of cold water ready, moisten the hands and then with the hands press a tablespoon of the batter into a round, thin cake. Bake on a griddle over the fire, or on an oak board before an open fire, thoroughly baking first one side and then the other. Pull apart when done, and serve hot.

Corn Dodgers.—Into a mixing bowl

put one pint white cornmeal; scald by adding just enough boiling water to moisten the meal, stirring it all the time; work in one tablespoonful butter or lard, and when cool add one well-beaten egg, one teaspoonful salt, and two tablespoonfuls milk, mix well, put by spoonfuls into a large, well-greased baking pan, and bake brown on both sides.

MUSHROOMS WITH EGGS.

Peel and break into pieces a dozen fresh mushrooms and put them into a stew-pan with a tablespoonful of butter, one-quarter of a teaspoonful of salt; pepper to taste, and a few drops of lemon juice. Cover the pan and simmer slowly for ten minutes. Then add one cupful of cream and a little chicken or veal stock, and cook slowly until the mixture begins to thicken a little. Then stir in six eggs well beaten, and stir until the whole is of the consistency of scrambled eggs. Serve on well-browned toast. This is a delicious breakfast dish.

DOMESTIC RECIPES.

Three-Day Cake.—Work two-thirds of a cup of butter with one and a half cups of sugar till it is a cream. To this add the whites of five eggs, beaten to a stiff froth. Beat this with the butter, and sugar till it is a light foam. Stir half a cup of corn starch dissolved in a little sweet milk; add a scant two-thirds of a cup of sweet milk and two and a half cups of flour in which you have sifted two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Flavor with vanilla. This cake gets its name because it is best when baked three days before wanted.

Dutch Apple Pie.—A good biscuit crust, rolled thin, is used to line a deep pie tin or a shallow pudding dish. Fill in with nice, tart, easy cooking apples that have been pared, cored and cut in eighths. Set these in close, pointed ends down; sprinkle with sugar, spice and a little flour; put some bits of butter in the apertures among the apples and add a little water. Bake till the apples are done and eat warm.

Deviled Eggs.—This is one of the favorite picnic dishes, and often chosen as a main ingredient of the traveler's lunch. Boil twelve eggs hard and throw them into cold water. Take two large tablespoonfuls of butter, and pepper, salt and mustard to suit the taste. Cut the eggs in two, after removing the shells. Take out the yolks and rub them to a paste with the butter, etc. Make into small balls and fit them back into the eggs. Put the halves together, and twist each egg in a square of parafined paper.

BEING A CIPHER.

A good deal is said about women's rights. There is nothing in law to discriminate between man and woman. The trouble is she is content to remain a cipher till her husband dies and then finds that a cipher alone does not represent the same value as the figure one. Let all property be deeded and assessed to John and Julia, and then if John dies, Julia has the same rights that John would have if Julia dies first.

TO TEST EGGS.

Fresh eggs sink when put in water. Bad ones float. Those that are neither real fresh nor thoroughly bad act suspiciously.

MARITAL COMPLIMENTS.

They had been married fully three months and were having their thirtieth quarrel—thirteenth being an unlucky number.

You only married me for my money, he said.

I didn't do anything of the kind, she retorted.

Well, you didn't marry me because you loved me.

I know I didn't.

In heaven's name then, what did you marry me for?

Just to make that hateful Kate Scott you were engaged to cry her eyes out because she had to give you up to another.

Great Caesar! woman! I spluttered, what have you done? Why, I married you just because Kate Scott threw me over.

THE LESSER OF TWO AFFLICTIONS.

Benevolent Individual—My poor man, are you not afraid to be on the crowded streets of a great city and sightless?

Blind Man—Oh, I'm all right. But I tremble for the poor fellows who are a little deaf—always in danger of getting their heads smashed with a club.

Eh? Why?

They can't hear a policeman when he says, "Move on now."

THE SON'S CHARACTERISTICS.

The Photographer—Here, sir, are the cabinets that your son ordered of me.

Father, regarding one—the picture is certainly very like him. And he has paid you?

The Photographer—No, sir.

The Father—That is still more like him.

CHINESE INGENUITY.

An odd contrivance is used in China to protect the carrier pigeons from the attacks of birds of prey. Tiny bamboo tubes are fastened under their wings; and as they fly their air passing swiftly through the tubes makes a shrill whistle, which serves to frighten off the other birds.

Young Folks.

EVERY QUESTION HAS TWO SIDES.

Evelyn was a girl who was bound to do something to make the world better, something great, something that would make people point to her and say, "There goes the girl who has driven all the wickedness out of the world." The trouble was she began in the wrong place. She should have started in on Evelyn.

As she went on her way home from school she was impatient that she could not go to work right away and reform something. All at once a flood of sweet song seemed to soothe her. A bird in a narrow cage poured forth to the world outside its soul of melody through hard iron bars of wire.

The soothing thought which had stolen over the girl gave place to one of anger. Here at last was a chance to do good, even if it were but gaining the freedom of one poor, hopeless bird. And who more suited to the task than she, the President of the Society for the Promotion of Charity Toward Animals! The song that had calmed her now made her soul burn within her. Crossing the road she went into a little shop, over the door of which the bird sang on. It was a shoemaker's shop, she found, crowded as such places are with queer tools and full of the pleasant smell of leather. A little, bent old man, with large spectacles on his wrinkled nose, and lean fingers that moved swiftly over the rough leather, put aside his work and came forward to the counter. He moved slowly, for his old limbs were getting past their work. Pleasantly he bade her "Good-day," scarce hoping for work in his poor shop from so nicely dressed a young lady. Evelyn felt somewhat uneasy at the old man's harmless looks. "This bird," she began rather timidly, "is it yours?"

The shoemaker looked at the cage with pride.

"Yes, miss, my bird, sure enough; and a fine bird, too; not a finer bird in all the town, miss." He rubbed his hands and smiled pleasantly. Evelyn was silent as he went on, half to himself, as old men do.

"Four years it is I've had him, four years, and never a day it doesn't sing. It was my boy's, my Dick's youngest that's gone for a soldier; it seems only yesterday he came in, just as it might have been you, miss, to-day, with the bird in his hand, and says he—

"But, beggin' your pardon, you was sayin'—"

"What will you take for the bird?" she asked, not feeling quite so sure she was right now she had really started her work.

"Wouldn't sell him, miss; wouldn't take \$10 for him, not if I was starvin'."

Evelyn took out her purse and counted its contents—\$2.40. She drew out the money, saying in firm and haughty tones; "Two dollars; not a penny more."

The old man looked at her kindly, and explained gently, as if to a child:

"No, miss, I don't want to sell him. I was sayin', you see, it was my lad gave me the little bird. No, I'm not likely to part with him for that. The bird reminds me o' my lad when I hear him sing so bright; often, when I'm feeling lonesome and low-spirited, he'll sing up so cheery, and set me thinkin' how my boy's coming soon—eh, dear! No, you can't have him, but never mind, never mind."

He nodded kindly, as if to comfort her. Evelyn's patience could stand it no longer.

"Do you suppose I want to keep the poor bird?" she broke forth. "I want to buy it to give it back its liberty, to let it be free in the fields and the blue sky. Surely you know how very, very cruel it is to confine a creature, made to soar and sing at the very gates of heaven, in a narrow cage with scarce room to turn."

This was from her speech at the society, and she thought she said it well.

"Poor, miserable bird!" she said looking at it pityingly.

The shoemaker was a good deal taken aback at this, but he tried to say something in defense.

"Nay, he's not miserable—hear to him sing; would he sing like that if he weren't happy?"

"Yes," cried Evelyn, "he sings because he longs to be free; that is the song of despair, and not of joy."

The old fellow's face fell. Her talking had won him over. Evelyn felt rather heated, and wanted, she didn't know why, to get out of the shop.

"Come," she said, again offering him the money, "take it and let me set the poor thing free."

"No," he said sadly. "I'm not going to sell him. He's like an old friend to me, and he loves me, too, that he does?"

"Keep your bird, then," cried the angry reformer, "keep it, and let it die in its miserable prison. Some day you will perhaps repent your cruelty!"

With which threat she went away with rather more haste than dignity.

That night, settling into bed, Evelyn had an idea that she had made rather a poor show.

A reformer must surely be above losing her temper, and here she had stormed and scolded, and lost by her stupid temper a battle that was, she felt sure, more than half won.

She had also a lurking idea that her motive had not been quite so much the cause of righteousness as the pleasure of reporting progress to her new society.

Her angry words kept coming back to her mind as she lay sleepless half through the night. She wondered if little birds had their duty to do, as she had; whether perhaps, in giving pleasure to a lonely old man's last days, the lark might not be doing its great Maker's bidding in the place for which He intended it. She was, she made up her mind, too young to judge so hastily. And, being a thoughtful

and conscientious girl, she bravely, resolved to go the next morning, humble her pride to the dust, and own herself in the wrong.

About 9 the next morning, walking, with rather a red face, up the narrow street, she saw the old fellow standing at his door, with the empty cage in his hand; he was gazing toward the sky, and she saw a tear trickle down his wrinkled cheek. He turned as she approached, and smiled mournfully in answer to her inquiring glance.

"Maybe you were right, miss," he said, "maybe." He passed into his shop as a sob checked his words.

Evelyn turned away quickly. Never in her life had he been so much ashamed of herself.

THE STARS ARE COUNTED.

The number of the stars which can be seen with the naked eye is very much less than most persons imagine. The "celestial host," which we are apt to look upon as almost countless, dwindles when put to the test of actual enumeration to the size of a small brigade in a modern army division.

The whole army of the naked eye stars is under 6,000, and of these about two thirds are so faint that we can see them only on the clearest nights. Of this number only one half, of course, can be above the horizon at one time, and since the sky near the horizon is always more or less obscured by dust and moisture, so that the fainter stars are blotted out, the number of stars which may be counted at any one time by a person of keen eyesight cannot be much over 2,000.

But if the naked-eye count of the stars is disappointing, let one go over the field again with an opera glass, and he will easily quadruple the number. Thus, within the bowl of the Great Dipper not more than two or three stars can be seen by most persons with the naked eye, but an opera glass will reveal at least a dozen. A still greater force, and the number seen increase rapidly with the increase of the size and power of the telescope. A hundred million is a low estimate of the number which may be seen with the great Yerkes's telescope, and we have no reason to think that the depth of the stellar universe has even yet been fathomed. This means that for every star which can be seen with the naked eye, there are at least 16,000 which are not visible to it.

KENTISH FRUIT PICKERS.

Gathering Together Luscious Things for England's Consumption.

The annual consumption of fruit of all sorts in this country is enormous, says an article in an English magazine. Our markets absorb a vast quantity merely in the supplying of the ephemeral demands of the table; but by far the largest consumption of fruit is that carried on through the medium of the several large jam and preserved fruit factories.

Contracts are arranged between the fruit growers and the jam manufacturer by which the former agrees to supply so much fruit every season. If the crop is a plentiful one, then the grower is able more than sufficiently to meet the demands of the manufacturer, and is able to dispose of the fruit over and above this contract quantity at Covent Garden or other markets in various parts of the country. If, on the other hand, there should be a scarcity of fruit, then the grower may have the greatest difficulty in supplying his contracts, and the result is that the jam manufacturers, by buying up all the available fruit, have scarcely any for marketable purposes; consequently fruit rises in price.

Towards the end of May there is a general exodus from London and other towns of that nomadic population which finds employment in the harvesting of various country products. Many of these summer laborers journey from farm to farm in their caravans searching for employment, while

VASE NUMBERS.

have to be content with "Shanks' pony," spending the nights in barns, out-houses, or under the wayside hedge. The majority of the farmers, however, prefer to employ the hands living upon their estates, assisted by the wives and children, as the lawlessness of this vagabond contingent has become intolerable. Yet they are obliged to utilize the services of a large number of gipsies, for the fruit season is short—it lasts about six weeks in all—and work has to be maintained at high pressure during that period in order to gather the crops in.

The pickers are armed with small baskets, each capable of holding about six pounds of fruit. There is no possibility of the work being indifferently performed, as hands are specially detailed off to see that the bushes or plants are duly stripped of all ripe fruit. When the baskets have been filled the fruit is weighed with an exactitude worthy of Shylock prior to its despatch to the market. The scale of remuneration to the pickers is one half-penny a pound. On the face of it this seems a very "sweating" remuneration, but it must be remembered that in the height of the season, when the fruit is very prolific, it takes an incredibly short time to fill a basket, and many of the pickers by remaining steadfastly at their work are able to earn as much as ten shillings per day.

Of course, as the end of the season approaches the fruit is not so abundant, and consequently it takes longer to fill the baskets, with the result that the daily earnings decrease. Then it is that the inconstancy and unreliability of the nomadic tribe of pickers assert themselves, for when the daily wage only amounts to about three shillings, and this after long and incessant toil, the gipsies suddenly cease work and seek for pastures new.

On the Farm.

SPECIAL CROPS.

It does not require long experience in farming to teach farmers that though manure of every kind is needed to make land rich, there are some kinds of manure that are better adapted to some crops than to others. In this matter practical experience has laid down rules which the amateur farmer can only disregard with the certainty of loss. Few now think of plowing under the coarse manure made in stable and barnyard for spring small grain. That needs all the moisture it can get, and to apply it on land not to be cultivated means that the crop will be ruined by the droughts that occur usually about the time the grain should be filling. Even should the season prove a wet one, the stable manure would be injurious in another way. The fermenting manure would give off so much nitrogen in available form that the grain growth would be mainly straw and rust would strike it and lessen the grain yield.

Yet this coarse manure plowed under in early spring is just what hoed crops need. The surface is kept open by cultivation, and every light rain is not only absorbed, but retained by the soil. The manure has plenty of moisture, and when it ferments it supplies the nitrogenous plant food that the growing crop needs, and this nitrogen being lighter than air, rises through the soil and is absorbed by it. The following spring this manure is plowed up and brought to the surface. It consists of the humus or vegetable matter, with such mineral fertility as the manure contained. It is still better if the manure is turned to the surface in the fall after it is plowed under. This exposes it to so many freezings that the manure and surface soil is worked into very fine tilth. Where manure is thus turned up after rotting a year, there is always a good oat crop if merely cultivated in the spring. On this spring-cultivated land clover and grass seed are sure to make a good catch if sown with the grain.

For oats, wheat, barley and rye, some mineral manure is better than the remains of stable manure that has rotted down the year before. One hundred and fifty or 200 pounds of superphosphate having four to six per cent of soluble phosphoric acid will make a difference of 10 to 15 bushels per acre on all land that has a fair amount of vegetable matter. It will also insure grain of heavier weight. Beans and peas are also crops that are greatly benefited by mineral manures. With only manure from the stable and barnyard these crops grow too much haulm and leaf without much grain. Even the buckwheat crop is greatly benefited by a dressing of potash and phosphate. An application of 200 pounds of phosphate per acre when the buckwheat was sown has been known to secure a crop of 40 bushels per acre, which is fully twice the average yield of buckwheat.

EXPERIENCE IN RAISING CALVES.

I do not think it pays to try to raise calves too economically, writes G. P. F. Lates in life we settled on a small farm. First, came the choice of a cow, and as we had long ago decided on a Jersey we soon found one. When the calves began to come we had no experience to fall back upon and could only work from gleanings obtained from agricultural papers, which were invaluable. At first we warmed the milk for the calf, but only about blood warm, and as a consequence we were badly troubled with our calves bloating. Now we warm the milk to 100 deg. and have never, since adopting this plan, had a calf bloated. I think there is far less danger from overheating the milk than from underheating.

I usually attend to feeding the calves in the first six or eight weeks of their lives, and sometimes much longer, so what I give is from my own experience and is not fine grun theory. We generally leave the calves with the cows for two or three days, after that they are tied or put in a pen in sight of the mother. We feed new milk for the first two or three weeks, then we get them gradually off onto skim-milk, and when the buttermilk is sweet a little of that is added. We also put in the milk a small handful of linseed meal. We like to have the calf learn to suck his milk; it is much better than for him to drink it. As soon as possible we get our calves to eat hay or clover. We cut it fine in the feed-cutter, moisten it slightly with a little warm water and put on a very little bran and middlings. This is fed at noon with perhaps some potato parings, of which the calves are very fond.

We never allow our calves outdoors in summer, as we do not think they can grow well and fight flies at the same time. Even our cows are kept in the stable during fly time in the hottest part of the day. In this way, although we have Jerseys entirely, our calves are large and beautiful, and sell for a high price. We sold heifer calves last winter which were only seven months old for \$20 apiece. And all this because they received good care the first weeks of their lives. I don't care how well calves may be kept afterward, if they have poor care the first two months it can never be atoned for.