

HOME CIRCLE.

A GRAIN OF COMMON SENSE AND A COOK BOOK.

Jenny was home on the long vacation; and it so fell out one day that there was no one else to get the family dinner. Mother had gone to the village, and the girl had gone to her own home unexpectedly. Everybody thought how lucky it was that Jenny was at home. With a profound conviction of her own ability to do anything she undertook, Jenny proceeded to her task.

"Are you sure you can make out, daughter?" asked father a little anxiously, putting his head in at the door, just before he went to the field. Jenny gave her head a toss at this implied reflection on her ability, and answered with decision:

"Any person, father, with a grain of common sense and a cook book, can get a dinner."

So father walked away tolerably well satisfied, though, perhaps, with a misgiving or two, as he knew cooking was a new art with his learned daughter, on whom he had lavished a great deal of money in the way of an education.

The coast being clear, Jenny proceeded with enthusiasm to prepare her fine piece of veal to roast. She looked over her cook book for the most approved recipe, and prepared it according to science. And it did look appetizing as it went into the oven so nicely stewed and tucked up and seasoned. "Baste it every fifteen minutes," the directions said, and Jenny went by the clock in all her operations. The vegetables were all nicely prepared and set on to cook, at the orthodox moments, and then went into the dining-room and set her table with most exact care and neatness. The pies were all ready for dessert, so she had no anxiety on that score, and there was plenty of bread. But as the hour for dinner crept steadily on, the results were not quite satisfactory. She basted and basted the veal, but it did not progress favourably. She turned to her cook book again, a little flurried and worried, but no directions could she find, but with regard to basting and serving. It would not brown for some reason. She did not bother with the vegetables, for they needed no attention after being put on, and she had given them a full hour to cook. All her anxieties were centred on that obstinate veal. The last quarter of an hour was up, and the punctual harvesters came trooping in, hungry and expectant. Jenny was about ready to cry. All her high notions of woman's ability to do whatever she undertook, so diligently instilled into her mind at school, had taken wing.

"Edward, what shall I do?" she asked her brother privately, as she took him by the sleeve and pulled him into the pantry. "What is the matter with my dinner?"

Edward coolly walked out and lifted a kettle from the stove and looked in. There was not a spark of fire in that stove! Then Jenny cried, and the more the rest laughed the more she cried. But Edward was a good brother, and handy. He had been to the war, and learned a good many domestic arts over the camp fire. He flew around and built a fire in three minutes, sliced some ham and had it on frying, finding time to say comfortingly, "Don't cry, sis; we'll get out of this scrape all right."

Then Jenny caught his spirit, and fried up a dish of cold potatoes, and cooked some eggs and made a pot of coffee as soon as the water boiled; and with plenty of sliced tomatoes, and pie and bread and butter, they made out to keep off starvation until night, when the veal was "done brown."

Father used sometimes to say, with a little twinkle in his gray eyes, that he rather thought, "with a grain of common sense and a cook book," his daughter would make a cook yet.—*Aunt Olive, in Housekeeper.*

DAYS DROPPED OUT.

Fortunate indeed are the people who know nothing, by experience, of days dropped, like beads dropped from a string, out of the swift activities of life. Some of us know enough of them. The world wears the same bright face it had on yesterday. The bees swing homeward heavily laden. The soft wind sighs through the leaves, and the shadows chase each other over the grass. All is full of grace and beauty. Summer reigns, and the earth is robed in bridal garments. But what is it all to her who feels so weary and discouraged that she cannot lift her heart up from the darkness of despondency? She finds herself wishing that a gray sky and gusts of rain were here, to sympathize with her mood, which is mocked by so much bloom and brightness.

In the city, the long, panoramic streets are never so showy, never so attractive, as at this season. The windows fairly shimmer with the display of rainbow-hued ribbons. Fabrics of every description hang in rich folds, to tempt the gazer's eye. Gaily-dressed ladies and elegant gentlemen pass you on the promenade. Everybody is happy and busy, eager and glad. Everybody but yourself, and you are aware of a discordance; you are out of harmony with the spirit of universal good-fellowship which seems to be abroad. All you care for is to get through the listless days, and feel that night has brought you release from care and the need of being agreeable.

It is a day dropped out. And yet, dear friend, conscious of having ever nursed and petted the dismal and dampish and unworthy temper of mind of which such gloomy thoughts are born, do not entertain it any longer with complacency. There is nothing brave in being morbid. There is nothing heroic in self-pity. Rather come out of yourself. Look about for what is to be done, and take hold of the work which comes first to your hand. If you can find no work—if it seems to be your lot in life to stand aside and wait, then try to wait with patience on the Lord. An hour of joy you know not may be winging its way toward you. Think of the happy days you have already had. Hope for happy days to come, and trample on the evil mood which causes you to lose a day.

There are dropped-out days which, however, are very

different from these. They are caused by sheer physical exhaustion; by the despotism of headache, by worn-out nerves, and fever in the blood. How courageous are some good women, who every week or two are obliged to lie by and let illness do its will with them! One or two such we have known, whose voices are always sweet, whose smiles were ever cheery, and whose Christian character was emphasized by rare unselfishness and generous love. Yet, every few days they had to spend long hours in darkened rooms, fighting with pain, and coming forth after the conflict with pale faces and hollow eyes. How thankful should we be who have no such record of dropped-out days.—*Christian at Work.*

MORNING GLORIES.

They said, "Don't plant them, mother, they're so common and so poor,"
But of seeds I had no other, so I dropped them by the door;
And they soon were brightly growing in the rich and teeming soil,
Stretching upward, upward, upward, to reward me for my toil.

They grew all o'er the casement, and they wreathed around the door,
All about the chamber windows, upward, upward, evermore;
And each dawn in glowing beauty, glistening in the early dew,
Is the house all wreathed in splendour, every morning bright and new.

What if they close at midday, 'tis because their work is done,
And they shut their crimson petals from the kisses of the sun,
Teaching every day their lesson to my weary, panting soul,
To be faithful in well-doing, stretching upward for the goal.

Sending out the climbing tendrils, trusting God for strength and power,
To support, and aid and comfort, in the trying day and hour,
Never spurn the thing that's common, nor call these home flowers poor,
For each hath a holy mission, like my Glory o'er the door.

THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA'S RIDE.

At the battle of Jena, when the Prussian army were routed, the Queen, mounted on a superb charger, remained on the field attended by three or four of her escort. A band of hussars seeing her, rushed forward at full gallop, and with drawn swords dispersed the little group, and pursued her all the way to Weimar. Had not the horse which Her Majesty rode possessed the fleetness of a stag, the fair Queen would infallibly have been captured.

Fair Queen, away! To thy charger speak—
A band of hussars thy capture seek.
Oh, haste! escape! they are riding this way.
Speak—speak to thy charger without delay;
They're nigh.
Behold! They come at a break-neck pace—
A smile triumphant illumines each face.
Queen of the Prussians, now for a race—
To Weimar for safety—fly!

She turned, and her steed with a furious dash—
Over the field like the lightning flash—
Fled.

Away, like an arrow from steel cross-bow,
Over hill and dale in the sun's fierce glow,
The Queen and her enemies thundering go—
On toward Weimar they sped.

The royal courser is swift and brave,
And his royal rider he strives to save—
But no!

"Vive l'Empereur!" rings sharp and clear;
She turns and is startled to see them so near,
Then softly speaks in her charger's ear,
And away he bounds like a roe.

He speeds as tho' on the wings of the wind.
The Queen's pursuers are left behind.
No more

She fears, tho' each trooper grasps his reins.
Stands up in his stirrups, strikes spurs, and strains,
For ride as they may, her steed still gains,
And Weimar is just before.

Safe! The clatter now fainter grows;
She sees in the distance her labouring foes.
The gates of the fortress stand open wide
To welcome the German nation's bride
So dear.

With gallop and dash, into Weimar she goes,
And the gates at once on her enemies close.
Give thanks, give thanks! She is safe with those
Who hail her with cheer on cheer!

The above spirited poem, from "St Nicholas" for July, is well adapted for declamation, and we advise the boys to learn it for that purpose.

THE POISON WE DRINK.

A retired wholesale liquor-dealer recently said to an interviewer from the *N. Y. Times*:

More than two-thirds of the stuff sold for brandy in this country is the meanest kind of poison. It is manufactured from an oil of cognac. In most of the gin sold there will be found oil of vitriol, oil of turpentine, oil of almonds,

sulphuric ether, and extract of grains of paradise. You can purchase oils and essences from which "whiskey of any age" can be produced. This style of whiskey when tested will show sulphuric acid, caustic potassa, benzine, and nux vomica and other poisons. This is the sort of stuff that bores into the coatings of the stomach and creates ulcers. In porter you will find opium, henbane, capsicum, cocculus indicus, copperas, tobacco, and sulphuric acid. In beer, alum, opium, nux vomica, green copperas, vitriol, sub-carbonate of potash, and jalap are used. Cocculus indicus is used largely in cheap beer. Three grains will produce nausea and prostration; ten grains will throw a strong dog into convulsions. Fox-glove and henbane are used for the same purposes as cocculus indicus. Oil of vitriol is used to increase the heating qualities of liquor, wormwood is used for its bitter and stimulating qualities, green copperas gives porter a frothy "head."

In astringent wines you find alum, Brazil wood, oak sawdust, lead, and copperas. Sugar of lead and arsenic are also used in wine. In pale sherry, sulphuric acid, prussic acid, and alum are among the "harmless" ingredients used to give colour and the appearance of age.

WOMAN'S INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL LIFE.

Men, as a rule, are attracted by the beautiful face, but it is an internal beauty of character by which a woman can exert the greatest amount of influence. A true-minded man, though first enamoured by the glare of personal beauty, will soon feel the hollowness of its charms when he discovers the lack of beauty in the mind. Inestimably great is the influence that a sweet-minded woman may wield over all around her. It is to her that friends would come in seasons of sorrow and sickness for help and comfort. One soothing touch of her kindly hand would work wonders in the feverish child; a few words let fall from her lips in the ear of a sorrowing sister would do much to raise the load of grief that is bowing its victim in anguish to the dust.

The husband comes home worn out with the pressure of business, and feeling irritable with the world in general, but when he enters the cosy sitting-room and sees the blaze of the bright fire, his slippers placed by loving hands in readiness, and meets his wife's smiling face, he succumbs at once to the soothing influence which acts as the balm of God to his wounded spirits, that are wearied with combating the stern realities of life.

The rough school-boy flies in a rage from the haunts of his companions to find solace in his mother's smile; the little one, full of grief with its own large trouble, finds a heaven of rest in its mother's bosom; and so one might go on with instance after instance of the influence that a sweet-minded woman has in the social life with which she is connected.—*St. James' Magazine.*

IS THERE WATER ON THE MOON?

In a recent communication, Mr. Helmuth Daeborg, of Berlin, presents a new theory of the moon, and argues the possibility of its being inhabited on the farther side. It is well known that the moon always presents the same face to the earth. Because this side of the moon is an airless and waterless desert, we are not justified, Mr. Daeborg thinks, in assuming that the farther side is like it. Since the moon does not revolve so as to change the side presented to the earth, and since the attraction of the earth for the moon is very great, the heavier side, if there is any, must be turned this way. Supposing the moon to possess air and water, these lighter and more fluent elements of her composition would of necessity lay on the farther side. In the absence of any centrifugal force due to rotation on her own axis, the only centrifugal force acting upon the moon must be that resulting from the moon's motion round the earth. This would tend still more to throw the moon's air and water to the "out"-side with respect to the earth. For a practical illustration of this view, Mr. Daeborg suggests a ball swinging in a circle by means of a cord. The ball, like the moon, will always turn the same side to the centre of evolution; and if it be in any liquid, the liquid will be rapidly accumulated on the opposite or outer side. Hence the possibility of water, air, and life on the moon, around the shores of a central lunar sea, on the side always turned away from us.—*American Ship.*

WEIGHING THE EARTH.

One would scarcely think that the world could be weighed in scales, like a package of merchandise; but Herr von Jolly, of Munich, has done so, and finds it 5,692 times as heavy as a body of water of the same size, or about half as heavy as if it was of solid lead. He placed his balance in the top of a high tower, and from each of the scales, suspended by means of a wire, a second scale at the foot of the tower. Two bodies which would balance in the upper scales were out of balance when one was removed to the lower scale, because the latter was nearer the centre of the earth. By comparing this difference with the difference caused by a large ball of lead (1 metre in diameter) in close proximity to the lower scale, he obtained an equation which, with the known size of the earth, gave the density of the latter as above stated.—*Eastern Record.*

A CAMEL'S KICK.

The camel's kick is a study. As it stands demurely chewing the cud, and gazing abstractedly at some totally different far-away object, up goes a hind leg, drawn close into the body, with the foot pointing out, a short pause, and out it flies with an action like the piston and connecting-rod of a steam engine, showing a judgment of distance and direction that would lead you to suppose the leg gifted with perception of its own, independent of the animal's proper senses. I have seen a heavy man fired several yards into a dense crowd by the kick of a camel, and picked up insensible.—*"My Journey to Mecca," by Reuter.*