

of Rhode Island Indians, to think of King Philip and his braves? So my little basket reminds me of my sweet young friend who gave it, of the sea, and of the Pequot war. What a variety of buttons it holds—pearl, horn bone, and silk. They speak to me of the shells of the ocean; the broad pampas of Brazil, whence come the horn and bones; of the silk workers and weavers; and again of the oft missing button that tries men's souls and woman's patience.

Here is my little needle book with Scotch plaid covers, and as I read the royal name of Stuart, the walls of Stirling Castle rise before my eyes, and I recall the wonderful story of Mary Queen of Scots. The little pin ball, with its MacGregor plaid, brings memories of Scott's tales of Highland forays, and feuds. And the pins!—Again ask the question (one of the mysteries of life), what becomes of the pins?

My scissors remind me of the whirr and din of machinery in smoky Sheffield, where they were made, and of the sharp pointed people I have known. Just now, however, they are like a great many others that I have met—very dull.

My emery—the work of a dear Yankee friend—how useful it is! I think society is for us something like an emery for needles, by contact and friction with others, harder, brighter specimens of human nature, we get the rust rubbed off, and our faculties brightened.

As I take my thimble in my hand I see the gold mines of California, the rough, hardy miners in their camps, the romance of their lives, the weary, unsuccessful search of the many for the glittering metal, and the fabulous fortunes of the few who “struck gold.” I think too, it would help us through the world, if, in addition to the emery, we had something like a thimble to push us on.

Then spools of thread, so even, so monotonous, yet so sure to knot or break at a critical moment. Are they not like the affairs of life? How many a long drawn scheme breaks in an unexpected way, or comes to grief because there is knot at the end of the thread!

Alas! I have tipped my basket over, boxes and buttons, scissors and spools of thread, emery and thimble go flying over the room, and as I go moving chairs and footstools, or on hands and knees, diving under sofas and tables, reaching for the lost treasures, my last and most vigorous thought is—Oh! “the total depravity of inanimate things.”

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FAIR MAID (In responses).—As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.—Ah me!