

Ladies' Department.

Irrational Women.

It would seem as if there existed a large class of women who are most extraordinarily dull in intellect on some few points, but who are, at the same time, perfectly shrewd and bright in all other matters, those which appear to be beyond their comprehension being such subjects as are in any way intricate, or require a consecutive train of reasoning.

As a commonplace illustration of this lack of reasoning powers in some feminine minds, we will suppose that we have requested our amiable landlady to oblige us with a clean plate, as we have finished our fish, and would like some roast mutton. "Dear me!" she will exclaim (that is, if she belong to the class in question), "a clean plate! Surely you can use the plate you have, for, you know, you're so fond of fish."

Now, here is a woman who utterly fails to grasp the fact that, though fish and mutton are excellent articles when eaten separately, yet mutton with a fishy flavor is decidedly unpalatable. Again, you protest against the overwhelming odor of boiling cabbage which pervades the house, and she meets you with the retort: "Why, Mr. So-and-so, it was only yesterday that you said you were so extremely partial to cabbage." It is useless to argue with such people. Your eloquence is thrown away on them, for reasoning faculties of a certain kind have they none.

Still another example. A lady in speaking to us of the evils of intemperance remarked: "I really cannot pity or feel any sympathy for those people who bring all their troubles on themselves by their own imprudent and reprehensible habits," and yet this very lady is a victim to all the evils that follow in the train of *tight lacing*, and expects her friends to sympathize with her in her afflictions. Is she any more entitled to pity, when she compresses her figure into so small a space that her vital organs cannot but rebel, and cause her internal suffering—knowing full well that she is outraging nature in complying with the mandates of fashion—than the individual who unwittingly gives way to intemperance and its inevitable consequences? We think not. Yet, because tight lacing is not looked upon, generally, as a vice whilst intemperance is, she fails to see why she should not be pitied for the sufferings she brings upon herself, but condemns the poor inebriate for being the cause of his own misery.

An advertisement appeared in a certain paper not very long ago stating that a ring had been found, for which an owner was wanted. The advertiser was immediately applied to by several ladies who had individually lost jewellery. One had dropped a bracelet, another a brooch, and a third something else. Now, these women, though, presumably, sensible enough in most matters, did not possess that quality of intellect which could have told them that one thing is not another—that a bracelet or a brooch was not a ring. Absurd as this incident may seem, it is an excellent example of a want of causality, as phrenologists term it, and yet people, more especially those of the feminine gender, do equally silly things every day of their lives.

Such women as these mentioned, must have, at some time or other, come under the notice of every reader of these remarks. The most charitable conclusion that can be come to respecting them, is that their intellectual faculties have never been made the subject of methodic culture. Unfortunately, until recently, but little attention has been

paid to teaching girls to reason upon anything, and hence the large number of cloudily-minded individuals, upon whom hardly any kind of explanations, however simple, make a sensible impression. Of late, however, this matter has been receiving greater attention, and it is to be hoped that before long young ladies will be found able to offer a more substantial reason for certain effects than the truly feminine and essentially Canadian one, "Because."

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Many children gathered and pressed autumn leaves, and have now forgotten that they did so; so, on a rainy Saturday, when "time and the hour" do not run swiftly for them, remind them of the leaves, and allow them to find solace in printing or copying them; take plain unruled paper, provide them with a little can of printers' ink; and a small leather dabbler, which can be bought for a few cents, or you can improvise something which will answer the purpose; take a very little ink, a drop about the size of a small pen, rub and smooth it with the dabbler, on a piece of glass or a broken slate, until it is perfectly smooth; if it resists your efforts add a drop of linseed oil; give the leaf a thin coating, taking great pains to have the coat of equal thickness; then lay the leaf, ink downwards, upon the paper; put this between the leaves of a thin, old book, and if your children are old enough to do so let them pass the old book through the wringer; if not, let one stand upon the book for a few minutes; if soft book paper is used for taking the impressions, and if it is previously dampened a trifle, it will be an almost certainly successful operation. If the leaf is too dark it may be used for the second time without inking it again, or if any part of the leaf is too thick and so gives an uneven look, it may be shaved down with a sharp penknife. Pretty little books can be made of these after a little practice. Cut pages of uniform size of thin drawing paper and after the impressions are made, and are dry, make two incisions in each leaf and tie all together with a narrow ribbon or bit of bright worsted.

Handsome pin-cushions are now frequently made long and narrow rather than square. A very pretty one of blue satin had one corner of blue plush, on the corner opposite was a bow of satin ribbon of the same color; embroidery may be substituted for the bow. Another pretty one is made of several strips of different colored satin, with gilt cord covering the seams, or has a box pleating of ribbon around the edge with a narrow gilt braid sewed to the upper edge.

"A Constant Reader" asks how to cook beef steak and mushrooms. Several rules are given by authorities on cooking, and the most deserving appears to be this: Broil the steak in the usual way, taking care to have it cooked uniformly—not raw at the edges, and certainly not burned. Just before broiling the steak, if you fortunately have some nice beef gravy, take half a pint of it and put it into a saucepan, flavor it with a tablespoonful of mushroom catsup; thicken the gravy with flour, and let it cook slowly for a few minutes before putting the mushrooms in; add mushrooms to your taste; half a pint will answer for this quantity of gravy. When they have simmered for ten minutes, pour over the steak, which is supposed to have been broiled while the sauce was cooking. If you have no gravy it will be necessary to make some; put a lump of butter the size of an egg into a saucepan, take some small pieces of beef and a little bacon also, if convenient; cut a small onion into small slices, fry these brown in the butter, season with pepper and salt, and add a teaspoonful of water; let it boil until it is a nice brown color; then remove the meat and onions, add another cup of water; let it boil up once or twice, skim and thicken, and it is ready to have the mushrooms put into it. If they are large, it is best to cut them in two or three pieces.

A pretty dish for dessert is made of oranges and bananas; slice the oranges across so that you will have thin, round slices; use an equal quantity of bananas, also sliced; put the fruit into a salad bowl in layers, then pour over them a mixture made thus: to the juice of three oranges and one lemon add four ounces of sugar, one gill of sherry wine, and the white and shell of one egg. Beat this altogether until thoroughly mixed, let it come to a boil, and then set it on the back of the stove, where it will simmer gently for five minutes; strain it and pour it over the fruit; let it stand where it will cool rapidly. If you choose, you may add gelatine to this syrup, and make a jelly which will look well when turned out of the bowl upon a platter. A heaping tablespoonful of gelatine will be sufficient for the quantity of syrup here mentioned.

A good way to dispose of the dressing which is sometimes left after the turkey is eaten, is to cut it into thin slices and fry it until it is a delicate brown; use just a little butter to fry it in.

A delicious pudding is made of crumbs of stale cake, or oven of bread crumbs. Put a layer in the bottom of a pudding dish, and then a layer of jelly; currant or raspberry jelly is best; continue putting in these alternate layers until the dish is nearly full; the pour over it a custard and bake. Serve with a thin wine sauce or a sauce of boiled custard flavored slightly with vanilla.

Sweetbreads boiled and served with canned peas, and with a white sauce, or a cup of cream poured over make an excellent dish. Sweetbreads and mushrooms are also nice; the sweetbreads should be parboiled; about eight to one can of mushrooms is the proper proportion after parboiling, cut them into small pieces and then stew them in a little water; add the mushrooms after slicing them, and let them simmer gently for an hour; add a coffee cup full of cream; a lump of butter the size of a butternut, and pepper and salt to your taste.

"R. S." asks how varnished paint may be cleaned. Save the tea leaves from the teapot for a few days, then put them into a tin pan, with water enough to cover well; let them simmer on the back of the stove for half an hour, then strain and add water enough to go over the paint with use a flannel cloth, and wipe the paint dry. A very bright polish will be given, and all traces of finger marks will be removed.

In Germany certain substances may be legally used for coloring confectionery or eatables. To color red, cochineal, carmine, madder, the juice of cherries and of carrots; yellow may be colored by using saffron or turmeric; green, the juice of spinach. A chemical journal in this country recommends as preferable to spinach for coloring green an acid which is easily obtained by steeping raw coffee, which is coarsely bruised, in the white of an egg.

Economy counts in the course of a year, and the care of the kitchen utensils, the wash tubs, etc., is by no means lost or useless; it is wise also to look after the fruit cans; when the fruit is taken out they should be washed in warm, not hot suds, and should then have a little soda or ammonia put into them and be filled with water, and allowed to stand for an hour or two, then they should be rinsed in clear water, and the rubbers and tops all be taken equally good care of, so that when they are needed, the next autumn no loss may occur.

Scatter a little flour on the pie plates, and there is no danger of the crust adhering to the plate when baked.

Mrs. Langtry's Clothing.

M. Worth has been busy making some dozen or so stage costumes for Mrs. Langtry. The richest materials go to compose them, as beauty unadorned is no longer the rule on the boards, but rather adorned with much splendor and magnificence. There are two beautiful ball dresses among the number. One is composed of white satin and violet velvet; the satin tablier is studded with violets and pansies applique, so that they stand in high relief; the satin panels are lined with violet velvet, while a wide velvet sash crosses the hips and falls on the satin train; the velvet bodice is trimmed with panes. A second ball dress

consists of a skirt of large gold leaves on a white velvet ground; the bodice, train, and sash are pale pink velvet, trimmed with roses and pearl fringe.

There are two outdoor costumes that should be recorded. The skirt of the first is mouse-grey velvet, with lines of gold braid round it, the cloth tunic is likewise trimmed with gold braid, which plays an important part in the velvet bodice, with its jabot of old lace. A green velvet costume is totally different in style; round its skirt there is a wide band of Impeyan pheasant's feathers, the waistcoat and covers being entirely of these metallic plumes, that shine out with such brilliant lustre in blue, purple, and green hues.

A reception dress in pink poplin and satin is extremely original, and is one of those flights of fancy in which M. Worth indulges, and generally succeeds. The trimmings are gold and black passementerie and large gold coins, and there are gold opauettes on the pink poplin bodice.

For the Window.

A very pretty decoration can be made by scooping out a sweet potato, leaving a wall of moderate thickness, suspend it by cords passed through holes in the sides, and fill with water. In a short time sprays will sprout forth, and completely cover with green tendrils this rather homely vegetable basket. Grass growing in pine cones that have been sprinkled with soil gives a cheerful look to a room in winter. Parlor ivy is a very desirable climber for indoors; place in a small pot a few sprays of this plant and set the pot in a wooden or metallic basket, fastened by the side of a window, or near a pedestal, and the ivy, before midwinter, shows a luxurious growth.

"A Pink Dinner."

A pretty fancy called "a pink dinner" was recently given by a young married lady to eighteen guests. The large round dining table was lighted by candelabras holding pink candles. In the centre of the table was a large bed of pink roses, three feet in diameter, that dissolved at the close of the dinner into bouquets for the ladies. At each plate was a knot of pink roses. The menu cards were pink. Even the bread was tied up in pink satin ribbons. The various courses performed did not change color, but the climax of this well-appointed meal was reached when the Roman punch was served in pink pond lilies of enduring shape.

How She Took It

A young man presented to a girl of his acquaintance one of those pretty and elegant little cases containing a nail polisher, scissors, cosmetics and other implements for keeping the hands and nails in good order; and now they do not speak. She returned his gift as an insulting suggestion to her that her nails needed cleaning. He then sent the case to another young lady, who was not so sensitive, for she kept, and made acknowledgment by forwarding him a cake of scented soap. And now, strangely enough, his feelings are very similar to those of the first young lady.

The Color of the Spring Bonnet.

The colors ordered for spring bonnets are six shades of brown, from deep to light Havana, three shades of ecru, several shades of bluish drabs, a decided straw yellow, Leghorn yellow; cardinal, cherry, and coquelicot; a now shade, aboethe, said to be an exact imitation of the intoxicating beverage when mixed with water. The light pinks, blues, and staple shades of spring are included in all assortments.

Wood Baskets.

The wood baskets, now so fashionable to place beside open fires, come in all manner of pretty designs. One seen is made of twigs, intricately twisted and covered with gold varnish; another is of common wicker ware and has a flap of crimson plush placed over one side, on which is embroidered in gold metallic braid, "Heap on the wood; the night is chill." The baskets can be purchased cheaply untrimmed, and may be easily ornamented at home.