

The Inglenook

The Winter "Daisy Field."

BY MRS. M. A. HOLT.

Edna Whiting had a deep love for the common field daisy, and it afforded her great pleasure to go out into the country in "daisy-time." She never tired of walking through the fields that were white with the "pretty country" flowers as she called them. While she loved all other flowers, none seemed to attract her attention as did the white daisies when in their prime. Perhaps their surroundings helped to make them beautiful—for all things connected with the sweet June-time are lovely.

"Daisy-time does not last half long enough," she said to her Uncle Robert, in whose home she visited every June.

"It is long enough to suit my purpose, just long enough to mow them down with the grass. They, the daisies, make nice food for the cows," he answered with a laugh as he noticed the serious look upon her face.

"I mean to take some of their roots back to the city with me and see if they will not bloom in the 'winter-time,'" she said.

"Better take some of our June roses, they are pretty, and worth an effort in such a direction—but daisies, they are good for nothing, only for fodder for the sheep and cows," the uncle replied.

"I think they are just lovely, and I am going to make the experiment anyway," Edna decided.

And she did make it in spite of all that could be said against her plan. A dozen daisy roots were carried to her home and arranged in a large square box. They were placed in the bay window where the sunlight could fall upon them. It was a long time before the little green leaves began to appear, but when they did the daisies developed rapidly. Some grass seed had also been sown in among the daisies, and this also appeared at last, although in slender spires not any larger than needles.

Edna watched the box of daisies with eager interest, and about the middle of January the spiral stems began to shoot up, then buds appeared and slowly began to unfold. There were nearly fifty daisies in full bloom when February came.

Edna was delighted with the success that attended her efforts to produce a "winter daisy field." Every one admired it.

"It only lacks the summer breeze to perfect their beauty, for the crowning beauty is to see them wave and nod in the light wind that passes over the field," Edna said.

But the visitors did not see how they could be more beautiful than they were, and Edna could not quite explain it.

"One has to go to into the country in daisy-time to understand their beauty fully," Edna could only answer.

But yet the "winter daisies" were very pretty and afforded sincere pleasure to all who were fortunate enough to see them.

Thus summer bloom may be produced in the cold mid-winter—just as love and sweetness may glorify the dark place in life.

Opportunity.

Master of Human Destinies am I!
Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and field I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote; and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace soon or late—
I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, awake—if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore.
I answer not and I return—no more!

—John J. Ingalls.

Womanly Tenderness at its Best.

BY MARY R. BALDWIN.

There is a certain sort of soft-heartedness that sometimes passes for tenderness, but which bears no relation to that divine quality which is at the very heart of true purpose and ministry. Every gentle natured woman has a desire to shield loved ones. Sometimes this desire is rooted in weakness and results in harm to those whom she would help from the possibility of suffering. Many a sweet manerred, forbearing mother has made it her purpose to save her children from unhappiness, guarding their ways against trouble as far as she could, pampering their wishes, and when at last at the parting of the ways, when they must take their share of the world's burdens as of its loss, they are strengthless to meet duty or trial.

Those who have had the advantage of training by a mother whose love drew its power from association with honor, have had the chance to learn that real love is no soft thing, bending to the caprice of its object and submitting to mal-adjustments for the pleasure of the idolized or ere.

A philosopher has said that the true friend is one who makes us get out of ourselves the very best of which we are capable, and may it not be affirmed of every man and woman achieving greatness, that some one has influenced them to their farthest and highest effort?

The fact here is not overlooked that the inflexible honor inseparable from the truest love is often in its expression mistaken for coldness and hardness; easy-going persons who find it convenient to use truth, as they say, "with elasticity," are repelled and angered by the woman with the inexorable purpose to speak truth act truth, and live up to her highest ideals.

Husbands and children have many times rebelled at the insistence of the woman whose love was of such noble

order that it compelled them to do their best always; but in after years how blessed becomes the memory of that loving soul who would not spare them the transmuting fire, but always led the way with a tender grasp, though firm in her step to the very end.

The commonplace, ease-loving nature finds it hard to live with the person who has placed her ideals high, but compromise of honor is impossible to one who owns the insight of love; to lower personal standards or to be satisfied with a partial fulfillment for a dear one would seem to such a degradation. She asks of the dear one great sacrifices rather than dishonor of oneself, though her heart may be wrung with anguish at the pain of one who is dearer than her own life.

The woman who came to the great Teacher with her two sons to plead that they might receive eternal honor at His right hand, lacked insight; his rebuke to her and to them for the shortsightedness that held them from realizing the need of great discipline in order to reach the highest fulfillment, is a lesson to weak mothers in all ages.

Love is not the feeble quality that some imagine, and tenderness, bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, is its offspring, when it helps to bear the burdens from which it cannot in honor save the loved one.

The Leaven in the Meal.

A writer in Ainslie's magazine gives a very picturesque summary of South African conditions. To his eye there is a fringe of tropical country where bloom the magnolia and the rose, where flourish the orange, pineapple, lemon, guavo, grape, banana, the cotton and the tea plant; the long stretch of mountains running parallel with the Indian Ocean, the highest peaks of which are capped with snow, and in whose valleys wave tracts of wheat and corn; a vast prairie, dotted here and there with patches of shrub woodland, mission stations and immense farms, with millions of sheep and cattle grazing thereon; a few thousand hamlets scattered like oasis over a great landscape, made black by the native Africans who live in thatched huts and wear but a breechcloth; a dozen large towns where is heard the clang of the trolley car and the clatter of the police patrol, and about which men cluster as flies gather to a jar of sweets; the remnants of a once mighty zoological garden, including many leopards, beautiful and live, baboons, antelope, jackals and crocodiles, a less number of hippopotami and a few herds of buffalos, elephant and giraffes; some iron ore, some coal, some copper and a little silver, forty miles of gold and a hundred acres of diamonds. That is South Africa, and after all one would not have to vary the description much if you made that the description of the world. It is a rough old world full of ignorance and prejudice and sin, and Christ comes into it to leaven the meal and bring about after a while a redeemed humanity that shall be sweet and whole-some. It is a brave undertaking, and courageous and noble souls are needed to carry forward His blessed work in His name and spirit.