

Our Basket.

GOOD THINGS.

THE LITTLE BLACK TEAPOT.

I.

When the sky darkens down on a cold winter's day ;
When we long for the sunshine to come and to stay ;
When the angry winds rage, and down from each cloud
Comes the drift that envelopes all things in a shroud—
To warm me and cheer me I have something at hand,
In the little black teapot that smokes on the stand.

II.

And this tea-pot, though tiny, is handsome and bright,
With its mate, the small creamer, gold-bordered and white;
Then the sugar dish has on its handle a bird,
And it makes as shrill whistling as boy ever heard,
And "Forget-me-not ;" this is its golden command,
Both to me and the tea-pot that smokes on the stand.

III.

While a pile of cream crackers suffices for lunch —
I've no longing for wines—am a stranger to punch ;
And I never am called on for bills at the bar,
So my credit is good, and my paper at par,
When I thirst I've a beverage ready at hand,
In the little black teapot that smokes on the stand.

IV.

Let them pile on their silver, their service of plate ;
Let them sit at Delmonico's table in state ;
Let them quaff at the capital Europe's rich wines,
And wring the life-blood from the foreigner's vines ;
I'm content—while I envy no lord in the land—
With the little black teapot that smokes on the stand.

—Philadelphia Press.

Of all poverty, that of the mind is most deplorable.

There are few things in life more interesting than an unrestricted interchange of ideas with a congenial spirit, and there are few things more rare.

If you have a duty to do, stand fast to it, or push ahead in it without fear or flinching. There is no safer place in the world than at the post of duty.

Selfishness is the one great foe to a happy home. If one could overthrow this, all else would fall into order and harmony. When men leave off seeking for enjoyment, and complaining because people and circumstances do not afford it, and aim rather at bestowing it upon those to whom they are bound in the holiest of ties, they will have cut at the root of their domestic troubles. With this spirit, outward misfortunes will be bravely borne, outward joys will be doubly blessed.

QUEER THINGS.

A boy says in his composition that "Onions are the vegetables that make you sick if you don't eat them yourself."

"I never loved but one person," sighed Biggs. "And as a man cannot marry himself," remarked Fogg, "of course it came to nothing, poor fellow!"

No bird is actually on the wing. The wing is on the bird.

A traveller, inquiring at a feudal castle whether he could see the antiquities of the place, received the simple answer from a servant: "I'm sorry, sir; my lady and her daughters have gone to town."

Some one wrote Mr. Greely, inquiring if guano was good to put on potatoes. The venerable agriculturalist replied that it might do for those whose tastes had become vitiated with tobacco and rum, but he preferred gravy and butter.

A London tourist met a young woman going to the kirk, and, as was not unusual, she was carrying her boots in her hand and was trudging along barefoot. "My girl," said he, "Is it customary for the people in these parts to go barefoot?" "Pairtly they do," said the girl, "and pairtly they mind their own business."

A little girl in a London Sunday School, being asked why God made the flowers of the field, replied: "Please, ma'am I suppose for patterns for artificial flowers."

A little three-year old, whose father doesn't use a razor, was recently, while on a visit to an aunt, greatly interested in seeing her uncle shave. After watching him intently for a few minutes, she said "Uncle, what do you do that for? Papa don't wash his face with a little broom, and wipe it with a knife."

"I have been married now," boasted a prosy old fellow, "much more than thirty years, and have never given my wife a cross word." "That's because you never dared, uncle," said a little nephew who lived with them, "if you had, auntie would have made you jump."

A gentleman having occasion to call on Mr. Joseph G——, writer, found him at home in his writing chamber. He remarked the great heat of the apartment, and said, "It is as hot as an oven." "So it ought to be," replied Mr. G——, for 'tis here I make my bread.

An Irish lawyer having addressed the court as "gentlemen," instead of "yer honors," after he had concluded a brother of the bar reminded him of his error. He immediately rose and apologised thus: "May it plaze the court, in the hate of the debate I called your honors gentlemen. I made a mistake, yer honors."

A Chicago husband recently ordered a pair of trousers from the tailor. On trying them they proved to be several inches too long. It being late on Saturday night the tailor's shop was closed, and he took them to his wife and asked her to cut them off and hem them over. The good lady, whose dinner had perhaps disagreed with her, brusquely refused. The same result followed an application to the wife's sister and the eldest daughter. But before bedtime the wife, relenting, took the pants, and cutting off six inches from the legs, hemmed them up nicely and restored them to the closet. Half an hour later her daughter, taken with compunction for her unfilial conduct, took the trousers, and cutting off six inches, hemmed and replaced them. Finally, the sister-in-law felt the pangs of conscience, and she, too, performed an additional surgical operation on the garment. When the man appeared at breakfast on Sunday morning, the family thought a Highland chieftain had arrived.

For Girls and Boys.

LINDY.

"Oh, Daddy!" called a clear, girlish voice.

"Yes, Lindy; what's wanted?"

"Ma wants to know how long it'll be 'fore you're ready."

"Oh, tell her I'll be at the door by the time she gets her things on. Be sure you have the butter and eggs all ready to put into the wagon. We're making too late a start to town."

"Butter and eggs, indeed! As if Lindy needed a reminder other than the new dress for which they were to be exchanged.

"Elmer and I can go to town next time, can't we, ma?" she asked, entering the house.

"Yes, Lindy; I hope so," was the reply. "But don't bother me now; your pa is coming already, and I haven't my shawl on yet. Yes, Wilbur, I'm here. Just put this butter in, Lindy; I'll carry the eggs in my lap. Now, Lindy, don't let Elmer play with the fire or run away."

And in a moment more the heavy lumber wagon rattled away from the door and the children stood gazing after it for awhile in half-forlorn manner. Then Lindy went in to do her work, Elmer resumed his play, and soon everything was moving along as cheerfully as ever.

After dinner Elmer went to sleep, and Lindy, feeling rather lonely again, went out of doors for a change. It was a warm autumnal day, almost the perfect counterpart of a dozen or more which had preceded it. The sun shone brightly, and the hot winds that swept through the tall grass made that and all else it touched so dry that the prairie seemed like a vast tinder box. Though her parents had but lately moved to the place, Lindy was accustomed to the prairies. She had been on them, and her eyes were familiar with nothing else, yet, as she stood to-day with that brown unbroken expanse rolling away before her until it reached the pale bluish-gray of the sky, the indescribable feeling of awe and terrible solitude which such a scene often inspires in one not familiar with it gradually stole over her. But Lindy was far too practical to re-