

# RANDOM NOTES

## For Busy Households

For garments have never been so fashionable as this year. From head to toe the up-to-date woman proposes to swathe herself in furs to defy the chilling blasts of winter.

Mink and sable vie with each other for popularity in street garments. Silver fox is shown on the most expensive garments. Seal, chinchilla and Persian lamb are all noted.

The milliners' shops are filled with chic toques, fur bordered and befringed with heads and tails of fur. Muffs, boas, fur mittens and shoes for carriage wear all proclaim loudly that the reign of fur is at hand.

Capes are worn more than coats, but if the latter are preferred they must be in three-quarter lengths. Blouses are not worn at all, so last year's fur coat needs remodeling to bring it up to date. Lorge & Co., 21 St. Lawrence street, are especially prepared for such work.

Three-quarter coats are intended for tall, slender women. They should be eschewed by stout women. For the feminine contingent inclined to be embonpoint cords are cut with short backs and long, pointed fronts. This mode produces a most desirable effect, giving height and apparent slimmness to the wearer.

Mink garments, such as our grandmothers wore, are the acme of style. If the old cedar chest contains the wide mink cape with long stole ends then get it out and wear it; you have a priceless treasure.

Boas are too becoming to ever go out of style and are decidedly in evidence. These are intended more for wear with tailor gowns.

The latest muff comes direct from Paris, and is fur within and without. These are not only very dainty, but the fur lining is a vast improvement on the old silk lining for wear and warmth. The muff is not hard and round, but is a "crush muff," and very much easier to carry.

A writer in the Evening Post, N.Y., in the course of a very interesting article regarding the observance of festivals in the household, refers to the celebration of the anniversary of the wedding day. He says:--

"Anniversaries of the wedding-day surely should be carefully marked with very tender expression of rejoicing, and it seems both natural and lovely that the children of a happy union should be taught to be glad over the remembrance of that event which gave to them father and mother and home. It is the pretty custom in some families to instruct the children to offer some gift to their mother on their own birthdays, a little offering of gratitude for the pain and travail which gave them birth, and the faithful care which has thus far guarded

them. Surely it is an equally logical outcome of the realization of what home and paternal love have given them to do what they can to make the wedding day of their father and mother rich with congratulations and loving gifts.

To every woman the recurrence of her wedding-day is an epoch of measurement, a time to sum up the loss and gain of the years. She sees herself again as the mirror reflected her white-gowned figure when she turned away from it to make her vows, and if she has even attained to her threescore years and ten, and sees now but sooty gray hairs and deep-furrowed wrinkles, the fair loveliness of her virgin-youth rises clearly to her remembrance. Surely it is well for her, and feeds the falling wellsprings of her vitality, if she sees in the faces of her children and grandchildren love and gratitude, which tell her that they have come to bless her for her life's work. There is an inexpressible renewal of youth in every wedding-day; it is not the present day that kindles the light of those eyes which have been dimmed by patient watch and tender hours of care; the faded face is reflecting the blush of a bride, and her smile revives her husband's proud memory of that with which she turned from the altar pledged to his service.

Don't light a sick room at night by means of a jet of gas burning low; nothing impoverishes the air sooner. Use sperm candles, or tapers which burn in sperm oil, or a Noxal night lamp.

Don't allow offensive matters to remain; in cases of emergency, where these cannot be at once removed, wring a heavy cloth for instance, like Turkish towelling, out of cold water, use it as a cover, placing over this ordinary paper. Such means prevent the escape of odor and infection.

Don't forget to have a few heans of coffee handy, for this serves as a deodorizer if burnt on coals or paper. Bits of charcoal placed around are useful in absorbing gases and other impurities.

Don't have the temperature of a sick room over 70 degrees.

Don't permit currents of air to blow upon the patient. An open fireplace is an excellent means of ventilation. The current may be tested by burning a piece of paper in front.

Don't give the patient a full glass of water to drink from unless he is to be allowed all he desires. If he can regulate the glass he will be satisfied, so regulate the quantity before handing it to him.

Don't neglect during the day to attend to necessities for the night, that the rest of the patient and the family may not be disturbed.

Don't ask a convalescent if he would like this or that to eat or drink, but prepare the delicacies and present them in a tempting way.

# TALKS TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

Of all bad habits acquired by boys and young men, that of foul language is one of the most detestable. Nothing contributes more to lessen one's character in the eyes of others, because all other vices usually follow in its path. It is to be regretted that this habit is so much in evidence in our cities, and many boys seem to think it is manifold to curse, swear or use dirty language.

If one were to observe the conversation of boys young and old, on the street, in class or at work, he would be surprised at the great number who preface their sentences by taking the holy name of God in vain, and who deem it necessary to emphasize their sayings with vulgar or immoral expressions.

The cause of this, for the most part, is either bad example or bad companionship. I have known boys who, thinking themselves secure in their own innocence, associated with others not very choice in language or actions, and little by little the former fell away from their good habits and through human respect, fearful of being laughed at, soon equalled and sometimes surpassed the latter in this respect.

"He that seeks the danger shall perish therein," has often been exemplified and we cannot handle filth without becoming fouled. Cleanliness in words and acts is the sign-manual of a true gentleman. Therefore never use your tongue for a bad purpose; never tell or listen to the telling of bad stories; never call anybody names; never lie--even white lies leave black spots on the character; and above all, never make companions of boys who are continually doing and saying evil things--a boy as well as a man is known by the company he keeps.

An officer of the English army had occasion when in London to pass over one of the bridges spanning the Thames river. A little poodle dog came running about him and rubbed himself against the officer's well-polished boots, soiling them to such an extent he was obliged to go to a man stationed on the bridge and have his boots repolished.

The same incident occurred several

being aroused, he watched the dog. He saw the sagacious animal roll himself in the mud of the river, and then watch for a person with well-polished shoes, against which he contrived to rub himself.

Finding that the bootblack was the owner of the dog, he taxed him with the artifice, and after a little hesitation he confessed he had taught the dog the trick in order to procure customers.

The officer, being much struck with the dog's sagacity, purchased him at a high price, and took him to York. He kept him tied up in York some time and then released him. The dog remained with him a day or two, and then made his escape.

A fortnight afterward he was found with his former master pursuing his old vocation on the bridge. -- Harry Kendall.

I remembering witnessing, some time ago, the action of two children, which impressed itself upon my mind at the time as an illustration of the well-known fact that we can often learn wisdom from the words or actions of babes.

In one of my walks I met with two little boys, the elder of whom was about five years old and the younger three. They had a little wagon heavily laden with stones, and were trying to draw it along a rough and steep pathway. If they had fewer stones and a smoother road they might have made some progress; but the stones were piled up so high, and were so big, that one or two of them would have been a good load for such a little wagon. The elder boy often stopped to clear away the loose stones which lay upon the path, but he could not remove those which were fast in the ground.

Another difficulty was that the wagon itself was not in good order. When new it had four wheels, and though they were all small ones it could be drawn along beautifully. But two of the wheels were missing. So you will not wonder that, with a rough road and a heavy load, the little boys did not get on well. Scarcely had they started when they had an accident. One of the wheels struck against a big stone, which was too

without willing to let the boys set to work to repair it, and having done so, they started again on their journey.

They had gone but a little way when they had another mishap just like the first. But again they picked up the stones, only laughing at their misfortunes, and happily went on their way. A little more ground was cleared, but soon they had another upset. By this time they saw that the load was much too heavy, so all the stones were put back into the wagon except two big ones. And what did they do with these? Did they leave them behind, thinking they would do without them, or that they would go back for them some other time? No; the boys wanted all the stones they had got, as they were going to build with them in their garden; so the younger boy took these big stones and walked behind the wagon, carrying them on his head. And thus it came to pass that the children at last got all their load safely to the garden.

What a lesson of patience and perseverance these boys teach us-- Let those of our boys who are inclined to say "I can't," when a job by their parents or teachers to perform an action somewhat difficult, say, instead, "I will try." We may have many difficulties to meet with in life, but don't let us fret about them, but try to overcome them.

The principal figure in the following incident, an account of which appeared in a recent issue of the "Youth's Companion," is not too noble to be natural; but it would be safe to say that there are not many boys in the same school who show equally well under the same circumstances.

One morning, before school, Martin Stone and Louis Smith had a little tussle. Louis, who was quick-tempered, was angry at first, and applied Martin severely; but, after all, it was only a friendly tussle, and when the bell rang they were as good friends as ever.

But Martin's bag-strap gave way in the scuffle; his books tumbled out on the ground, and a closely written sheet of paper fluttered out and through the iron fence falling into the middle of the road, there to be trampled out of sight by a great drove of cattle then passing that way.

"Put up your books," said the teacher, when they were once more in the school-room; "I will let you decide who will get the prize for English. I gave Martin and Louis each a composition to write, and I am going to have them read them, and the class will award the prize."

Louis got his paper, and stood ready to march up with Martin. But where was Martin's paper? He was sure it was in his Algebra. No. Well, in his

Algebra, I have it, said Martin. Then the teacher will be less difficult; when is yours, Louis?

There was silence in the school-room. Louis turned red, then pale; then he quietly tore his paper across the middle, and said in a respectful tone: "I have come to hand in, sir."

Instantly the class broke into irrepressible applause.

"Silence," thundered the teacher. Then he said, in a tone they had never heard him use before:--

"Boys, I would rather have seen a generous thing like that among you than to have a prince of the blood in my school."

That is what I call loving your neighbor as yourself, and you know who gave us that commandment and set us the example."--T. W.

OUR LITTLE MERRY GIRL.

Who is it trips along so gay,  
With rapid steps upon the way,  
Who never seems weary all the day?  
Our little merry girl.

Whose laugh rings out those merry peals,  
Which echo forth the joy she feels,  
Who from us our affection steals?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it looks through deep blue eyes,  
As lovely as the azure skies,  
And often looks so wondrous wise?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it bears that dimpled chin,  
Those rosy cheeks, that marble skin,  
Whose smiling sweetness love doth win?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it blooms so young and fair,  
And carries curls of golden hair,  
And sings them on her forehead bare?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it talks in rapid style,  
And Mamma's trouble doth beguile,  
Nor e'er seems weary all the while?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it sings in metres queer,  
Yet oft in notes so sweet and clear,  
That listening angels stoop to hear?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it plucks the flowers so fair,  
And plants some in her golden hair,  
The rest to Mamma's lap doth bear?  
Our little merry girl.

Who is it, when the day doth close,  
Prays tenderly for all she knows,  
Then sings herself to sweet repose?  
Our little merry girl.

# Chats to Aspiring Mechanics.

A writer in the Prison Mirror, a newspaper published by the inmates of the Minnesota State Prison, discusses the important subject of young men entering the mechanical classes. He says:--

Learn a trade, is an advice which all reformers, etc., keep in stock to fling at any one who happens to be down at the heels. It is a mighty good thing--a trade. The artisan can usually secure work at some price, but most any man who is willing to work can usually secure something to do. The main question is not the getting of work--the more important item is the question of pay. The cost of living in the United States is comparatively high. The amount of work required of a workman is at least 50 per cent. more per capita here than in any other country on the face of the globe. All foreign workmen comment on this and frequently complain about the hard driving to which they are subjected in this country. When this and the high cost of living are taken into consideration it is not surprising that the American workman should demand and require a higher rate of wages than is paid in European countries. This he usually receives, although in many lo-

calities in this country wages are not any higher than those paid in the same line in England. Such is the case in the textile industries in the East and South.

But the desirability of having a trade is absolutely great, although some trades are so simple and easily acquired that the name of laborer is more fitting to those who pursue them than artisan.

The more difficult a trade is to learn the higher are usually the wages paid. Some of the more difficult ones are better named arts than trades. Such one, for instance, steel engravers, instrument-makers, (optical, scientific and musical) lithographers, wood and process engravers, glass-blowers, china-decorators (hand), out-glass workers, certain classes of printers, etc. Such trades are highly remunerative. The wages in some branches running as high as \$75 per week.

But no matter how good a trade may be, the man who does not know his well, would almost be better off without one.

I am not going to take any fling at industrial training, but the fact is well known that many so-called industrial training schools are responsible for turning on the labor market a terrible lot of botch workmen.

The reason for this is, of course,

lack of interest on the part of the pupil. It is naturally difficult to get boys to apply their minds to work which is compulsory and for which they receive no compensation. Another advantage lies in the limited amount of experience which can be given in and trade, and, finally, the difficulty, in some trades, of keeping the appliances in such shape that any good results can be accomplished.

But on the other hand, there is the craftsman who is a master of his trade, who painstakingly has learned all its details and many of its tricks. He is always wanted. The employer finds it to his advantage to pay him somewhat above the "scale" in order to keep him and should he desire to leave he will need no other letter of introduction than that which the cunning of his hands will present.

The moral of all this is that it is better to be a master of the poorest trade than a botch at the best.

It is a pity that the old system of indenturing apprentices has fallen so much into desuetude, for under it competent workmen were turned out and the master was to a large extent the moral guardian as well as the preceptor of his apprentice. If this system could be revived it would enable many young men who go out from a training school with a good foundation to build upon to be indentured to some respectable master the scope of whose business would enable them to finish the good work begun in the training school.

Too much praise cannot be given to the work of most of the instructors in the reform schools of manual training, for they have the most refractory material to deal with, and yet the results attained in these institutions are certainly remarkable and in favorable contrast to the work of manual training schools in our large cities, where the teaching of a trade is regarded by most of the pupils as a mere diversion.

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Arctic Circle, Dec., 1898.

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Please excuse me for not writing sooner so as to give you more time to get the 'GROTTO' ready, as I shall want a good deal more room this Christmas. My people have been working very hard all this year making toys and all kinds of things for Christmas Presents for the dear children of Montreal. You had better put this letter in all the newspapers to let the children know that I am nearly ready to start, and shall come all the way by Deer Sleighs. Have more candles than ever before for me to give away to all who call on me. Give my kind love to all the dear children, and to all the ladies and gentlemen in Montreal.

I remain,  
Your Faithful Friend,  
SANTA CLAUS.

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