

Cosy Corner Chats

With Our Girls.

(This department is edited by Cousin Ruth who will be glad to hear from our girl readers. Address all letters, suggestions, comments, questions to "Cousin Ruth," Ladies Pictorial Weekly, etc.)



SOMEHOW, my cousins dear, it seems longer than usual since I had a chat with you last. Perhaps because I have been busy, busy and thinking hard. I know you are just such nice girls that you will say "goodie," when you know that cousin Ruth is going to have a lovely time next month. The leafy month of June! Away across the ocean in a lovely home, there lives a gracious and beautiful lady, she is

watching for cousin Ruth, and her gentle face brightens, framed in its pure widow's cap as she hears the reading of a letter that is there just about now. A big cousin reads it in a rich, manly Irish voice, and he says, "She's coming, the dear old girl!" and round the house he rushes to tell everyone and all the loving Hibernian hearts are glad over it. Do you wonder I want to go pretty badly?

I AM going to tell you lots of things about that visit I hope, and if I can, I shall interview some fine ladies and some noted men and women, just for the pleasure of telling you what they are like, and what they say. So now, you can all wish me a merry time, and a safe journey and though I will miss you sadly, still I shall take a good bundle of letters from the gold hand to answer while I am on the way. About the second week of June, you can look out at the earth and sky and sea, and say, "Good-bye Cousin Ruth," for I shall be saying the same to you!

So you want to come into the corner, Gipsy? Well, you sound nice with your picnic sort of name. that makes one think of tents and canopy wagons and camp fires. Only twelve years old, are you? You and cousin Mabel should write to each other. She isn't very old, either. If you would like to write to her, I will send you her address. I am so sorry you are not strong enough for school, I am sure Lily Pearl will like to have your loving message, she really does live in Africa and she is lonely, just as you think she would be. Certainly you may come again, my dear child, perhaps writing to our corner will cheer away some of the pain. Be sure and try!

WELL, I declare, the children are out to-day sure. Here is Kitty just twelve years old too! I can scarcely believe that a twelve-year-old wrote this nice chatty letter, Kitty. I certainly don't think short dresses would look well on you, my dear, if you are five feet four inches tall. How you made me laugh, Kitty, she is so funny, girls, about her height and her ways! And she would like to go to England! Small blame to you Kitty, just creep into my gripsack and I'll take you along next week. I do hope if you are not able to come and see me here, that we shall meet at the Exposition in 1893. I am going, and Boaz, too, if the weather holds fine. I am afraid, cousins, that Kitty is a bit of a blarney. Listen to her pleasant evening. "I wish that I could go into your study and have a cosy chat with you and see if I could help you in your work." Ah, Kitty, you would soon cut me out with your coaxing ways! and the girls would not want me any more. Kitty wants hints for some tableaux, which young girls can take part in. "Three little maids from school" is funny. They have long pantalettes, and old-fashioned gowns, and their hair is braided in little tags and tied with ribbons over each ear, one has a piece of canvas to embroider letters on, the second has a little spelling book, and the third has a slate with a hideous face on labelled "Teacher," she is laughing, the second is pouting with her thumb in her mouth, the first sits in the middle, sewing. Spring—with wild-flowers; summer—with a hayrake and big straw hat; autumn—with garlands of leaves and fruit; winter—with furs and skates and sleigh; are four little figures that group nicely. The days of the week, are seven in a half circle, Monday is washing, Tuesday, ironing; Wednesday, knitting; Thursday, mending; Friday, sweeping; Saturday, baking; Sunday, sits back on a raised place, with bible and hymn book quietly reading. I have no room for more, Kitty.

Your loving

Cousin Ruth

"I am something of an expert at palmistry, dearest," said the young man, taking her hand. "In the lines of this fair palm I can trace—"

"Oh! no, no, no! I don't want to know the future, Harry. But can you truly read the lines in the palm of my hand?"

"I can da!—"

"Then please turn down the light a little lower, Harry!" she said, with a shudder.

In The Garden.

"And the Spring arose on that garden fair.
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere."

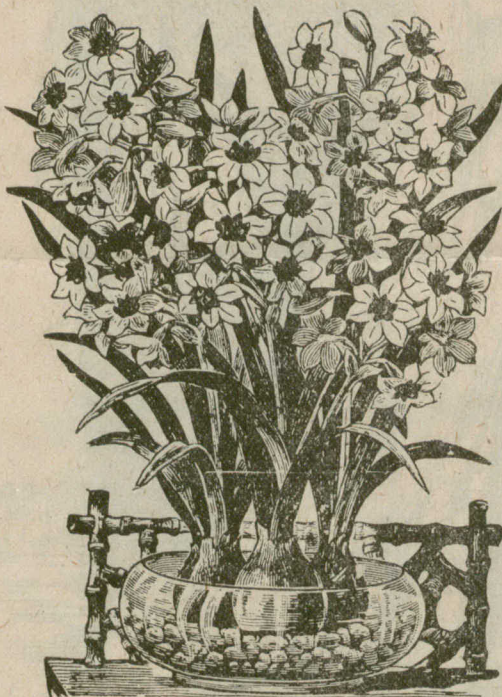
—SHELLEY.

The Editor of this Department will be pleased to receive suggestions and contributions from those interested in gardening.

In an Old Garden.

Down this pathway, through the shade,
Lightly tripped the dainty maid;
In her eyes the smiles of June,
On her lips some old, sweet tune.
Through yon ragged rows of box,
By that awkward clump of phlox,
To her favorite pansy bed,
Like a ray of light she sped;
Satin slippers, trim and neat,
Gleamed upon her slender feet;
Round her ankles, deftly tied,
Ribbons crossed from side to side
Here her pinks, old-fashioned, fair,
Breathed their fragrance on the air;
There her fluttering azure gown
Shook the poppy's petals down;
Here a rose with fond caress
Stooped to touch a truant tress,
From her fillet struggling free,
Scorning its captivity.
There a bed of rue was set,
With an edge of mignonette,
And the spicy bergamot
Meshed the frail forget-me-not;
Honeysuckles, hollyhocks,
Batchelor's buttons, four-o'clocks,
Marigolds and blue-eyed grass
Curt'sied when the maid did pass.
Now the braggart weeds have spread
Through the paths she loved to tread,
And the creeping moss has grown
O'er yon shattered dial stone.
Still, beside the ruined walks
Some old flowers, on sturdy stalks,
Dream of her whose happy eyes
Roam the fields of paradise.

—JAMES B. KENYON.



THE CHINESE LILY.

Shoo-Sin-Fah.

The Chinese Lily.

BY CLARA SPAULDING BROWN.

The Chinese lily is becoming so well-known and liked by American flower-lovers, that the following legend of its origin may be of interest. It was related to me by a Chinaman in Los Angeles, where the lily is very plentiful at the time of the New Year festivities. The bulbs are sent over from China, and planted in a flat dish filled with pebbles, and kept continually moist. From two bulbs given me (for good luck) by a Chinaman, over sixty blossoms were obtained, remaining fresh several weeks and filling the room with their powerful fragrance. The "Shoo-Sin-Fah" is beloved by all Chinamen, and possession of it in bloom at the New Year time is supposed to be a surety of it good fortune throughout the year.

Here is the legend: "Once there was a man in China who had two sons, and who also had two pieces of land. One piece of land was in the valley and was very fertile, the other piece was next the mountain-side and was covered with small stones and pebbles.

"When the father died, one of his sons, who was very sharp and shrewd, said to the other son, 'Now, we don't want to have any trouble about this property, so let one of us take one piece of land and the other take the other piece of land, and then it will be all right between us.'

"The other son was a good-natured fellow, and he found no fault when he was told to take the stony piece and his brother took the rich valley land, but contentedly settled down upon it. By and bye the rains came, and lo! there appeared this beautiful and fragrant flower, springing up in every nook and corner of his barren domain, and filling the air with its sweetness. People came and admired the marvellous thing, and finally the Emperor heard

about it and sent for some of the flowers. He was so delighted with them that he ordered some bulbs for his conservatory and they were given the most tender care, but they would not grow.

"Nowhere in China, but on this young man's ground, would they flourish, and the consequence was he speedily became immensely rich, so that his scheming brother was poor in comparison."

The lesson taught is that contentment has its own reward.

Hints on the Culture of Roses.

Situation.—A place apart from other flowers should be assigned to them, if possible, sheltered from high winds, but open and not surrounded by trees, as closeness is very apt to generate mildew; where they cannot have a place to themselves, any part of the garden best fulfilling these conditions will answer.

Soil.—A most important item in their successful cultivation. That which they specially delight in is a rich unctuous loam, that feels greasy when pressed between the fingers; where this is not to be had, the soil must be improved—if light, by the addition of stiff loam well worked in; where heavy, good drainage is the most essential requisite for success.

Planting. November is the best month, but it may be done anytime when the ground is in good order, during the winter months. In planting budded plants on the Manetti, place the point of junction beneath the soil, as the roses will then make roots, and the plant has a double chance. Mix some loame and well-rotted manure together, open a good sized hole, and fill it with fresh soil; plant firmly. Tea roses should be protected by fern loosely scattered among them. Shorten any very long shoots, and if exposed to wind secure the plant with short stakes.

Manuring.—Roses are strong feeders, and will take almost any quantity of manure; pig manure is the best except in hot soils, when cow dung is preferable; stable manure is generally available and good. Exhibitors generally apply a top dressing in spring, but it does not improve the appearance of the beds. It is a good plan to place dung on the beds in winter, to be dug in in the spring.

Practical Information
for the Housewife

"A hint is often all that is needed."

All questions regarding this department will be cheerfully answered in this column.—Ed.

The Beauty of Cleanliness.

We all have our opinion of the slattern; she who goes about with tumbled locks, gowns from which half the buttons are gone and their places supplied with pins, and shoes which have long since ceased to have use for a button hook. Yet this woman was once a girl, who, with proper training might have been taught to keep herself neat and tidy.

Girls when out of school should never allow the day to pass without changing their work dress for one fresh and clean. The hair should be neatly brushed and special attention given to the hands, nails and teeth. These last items are often over-looked and an otherwise neat-looking girl may be seen with dark lines under the finger tips, and her teeth which should be white as ivory, so discolored as to be disfigurement.

A good preparation to soften and whiten the hands is made of glycerine and rose water in equal parts. A small proportion of lemon juice added is an improvement. Wash the hands thoroughly in warm soft water using some good soap. Wipe, and while yet moist, rub in a few drops of the above mixture. It is also good for the face, used in the same manner.

Most people would have a clearer complexion if more thorough attention were given to keeping the face perfectly clean. I do not mean that we really have dirty faces, but that a good washing with warm water and soap is as essential to the face as to the hands.

For the teeth, a few drops of spirits of camphor in half a glass of water is as good as anything. If this is used every day with a stiff brush nothing else will be needed. When the teeth are badly discolored a dentist should be employed to clean them and they may be kept white by the free use of a brush.

Clean collars or ruffles, fresh handkerchiefs, and neatly kept hosiery and gloves, are the mark of a tidy girl; while the underwear should be nicely made and as elaborately trimmed as circumstances permit. But girls, never wear beruffled skirts and white dresses and leave mother to do the laundrying of them. Wear as pretty clothing as you can, but remember that for long years, while you were a child, mother took pride in having your little dresses and skirts perfectly "done up" and many a hard hour's work has it been. Now relieve her of that, and she will appreciate it.

Perhaps it is not necessary to mention in this connection the importance of regular bathing of the whole body, and still it is one of the most flagrantly violated of all the laws of health, especially among the lower classes. A good bath is at once a luxury and a necessity, and no one can lay claim to habits of cleanliness who neglects it.

Let me call particular attention to your morning toilet. Don't come down to breakfast with disordered dress and hair just any way, because there is no one but your own family present. Father and brother can appreciate a neat appearance. It will not be lost, you may be sure. Always remember that a neat girl makes a neat woman, and that a careless girl develops into a slatternly woman.