

flash of light, followed by a roar from the mountains.

Another heavy summit had crumbled, and the rocks striking together, as they dashed down into the valley, produced the spectral light he saw around him. Though it filled him with alarm, it also rendered him a service. By its aid he saw, a few yards off, the canoe lodged against a clump of trees. Rejoiced at the sight, he at once hurried towards it, and soon had it in his possession.

"Courage!" he shouted to his wife in the doorway. "We're all right now."

But he was long way from right. It was all he could do with his impaired strength to bring the canoe up to the door, and it took him so long to accomplish it that he was fearful the canoe would go tumbling down against Susan before he could reach her. But by persistent effort he succeeded at last, and said, as he struggled to hold it in its place, "Quick, Susan! Leave everything behind. Get in as soon as you can."

She obeyed; and with a stick which he had secured, he turned the prow of the canoe towards a high hill, where he knew they must be safe.

But they were not a moment too soon. When not three canoes' length from the cabin, it fell in with a crash; and in a mingled mass of rubbish their home went floating off down the Branch towards the raging river hardly a mile below.

It was not without further danger that they gained their place of refuge, and took shelter beneath an overhanging rock. Once they were nearly overturned by a boulder, and again struck by a floating tree; but at last, to their great joy, they struck the solid earth, and were saved.

It was indeed a night of horror, and the morning's sun shone over a scene of terrible desolation. Later, they heard of a tragedy in the valley, and theirs were grateful hearts that the same fate had not been meted out to them.

#### CURIOUS WILLS.

Some wills are curious from their brevity some from their prodigious length, some from being in rhyme; some testators bequeath property which they have not, in order to enable them to enjoy, while living the considerate attentions of the expectant legatees. A Welsh gentleman, for the reason, as recited, that he might give way to the unfair importunities of his wife, secretly assigned, subject to his life interest, all his property by deed, and afterwards gracefully gave way to his wife's solicitations and made a will in her favor, which, of course, at his death, turned out inoperative. There are testators who think it necessary that posterity should not be in any doubt as to their religious belief, and accordingly occupy a page or two of their wills with an elaborate statement on the subject; some even think it necessary to get out their pedigree at full length. Some wills are curious only from the method or arrangement of the paper or the document they are written on, and require an inspection to appreciate their peculiarity. There are few wills made without some directions being given either as to the place or the manner of burial; frequently the testator desires to be buried in the same grave with his wife or some other member of his family. We remember one case where the testator directed that he should be buried in the space left for that purpose between the graves of his first and second wives, so that he should lie with one on his right hand and the other on his left. More frequently still, the direction limits the expense of the funeral; in some cases no carriages are to be used, in others, the body is to be carried to the grave by persons employed on the deceased's estate; in one instance the persons so to be employed were laborers, and they were required on the occasion to wear clean white smock-frocks, and were to be paid £1 each for their trouble. Mr. Zimmerman, whose will was proved in 1840, accompanied the direction for his funeral, in case they were not carried out, with something like a threat. In his will he says, "No person is to attend my corpse to the grave, nor is any funeral bell to be rung, and my desire is to be buried plainly and in a decent manner; and, if this be not done, I will come again—that is to say, if I can." The Countess Dowager of Sandwich, in her will, written by herself at the age of eighty, proved in November, 1862, expresses her "wish to be buried decently and quietly—no undertaker's frauds or cheating; no scarfs, hatbands, or nonsense." Mrs. Kitty Jenkyn Pack Reading, although evidently possessed of sufficient means, appears by her will, proved in April, 1870, to have been very anxious that one part, at least, of the expenses attending her funeral should be kept as low as possible. After saying she is to be placed first in a leaden and then in a wooden coffin, she provides that if "I die away from Branksome I wish my remains, after being duly placed in the proper coffin, to be inclosed in a plain deal-box, so that no one may know their contents, and conveyed by a goods train to Poole, which will cost no more than any other package of the same weight, from Poole Station said box to be conveyed in a cart to Branksome Tower." The contrivance of sending her remains in a plain deal box by a goods train, so that it will cost no more than any other package of the same weight, and "said box" afterwards to be conveyed in a cart, sounds rather oddly in connection with the dignified name of its destination, Branksome Tower. Mrs. Reading seems to have

considered the details of her funeral with much minuteness; among other things she states "the easiest way to convey my coffin out of the house will be to take the window out of the dining-room." Some people—we do not know whether they would rather not die—certainly would rather not be buried. Mr. J. L. Grefulhe, of Winchester street and Cornhill, merchant, whose will was proved in October, 1867, thus directs as to the disposal of his body—"I do not wish to be buried. I enjoin my nephew to cause my body to be embalmed and placed in a coffin, the top of which shall be glazed and not nailed down, so that the body be not deprived either of air or daylight. Subsequently to cause it to be burned, if that can be legally done." It could not be from a motive of economy, as the personal property in England was sworn under half a million sterling, and he left 400,000 francs to be laid out in the works of beneficence and charity. Mr. William Kensett, by his will, proved in October, 1855, seems to have been of the same opinion as the members of a recently-formed club, who have pledged themselves for sanitary reasons to have their bodies burned at their deaths; for he recites that, "believing in the impolicy of interring the dead amidst the living and as an example to others, I give my body, four days after death, to the directors of the Imperial Gas Company, London, to be placed in one of their retorts and consumed to ashes, and that they be paid £10 by my executors for the trouble this act will impose on them in so doing. Should a defence of fanaticism and superstition prevent them granting this my request, then my executors must submit to have my remains buried, in the plainest manner possible, in my family grave in St. John'swood Cemetery, to assist in poisoning the living in that neighborhood." Generally the curious wills are home made. The will of Mr. Kensett was made by a solicitor.

#### DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

An authoress of the last century said, "The minute details of household economy become elegant and refined, when they are ennobled by sentiment;" and they are truly ennobled when done either from a sense of duty, or consideration for a parent, or love to a husband. "To furnish a room," continues this lady, "is no longer a common-place affair, shared with upholsterers and cabinet-makers; it is decorating the place where I am to meet a friend or lover. To order dinner is not merely arranging a meal with my cook; it is preparing refreshment for him whom I love. These necessary occupations, viewed in this light by a person capable of strong attachment, are so many pleasures and afford her far more delight than the games and shows which constitute the amusements of the world."

Such is the testimony of a lady of the last century, to the sentiment that may be made to mingle in the most homely occupations. We will now quote that of a modern female writer and traveller, who in her pleasant book, called "Six weeks on the Loire," has thus described the housewifery of the daughter of a French nobleman, residing in a superb chateau on that river. The travellers had just arrived and been introduced, when the following scene took place:—"The bill of fare for dinner was discussed in my presence and settled, *sans facon*, with that delightful frankness and gaiety, which in the French characters gives a charm to the most trifling occurrence. Mademoiselle Louise then begged me to excuse her for half an hour, as she was going to make some creams and some pastilles. I requested I might accompany her, and also render myself useful; we accordingly went together to the dairy. I made tarts à l'Anglaise; while she made confections and *bombons*, and all manner of pretty things, with as much ease as if she had never done anything else, and as much grace as she displayed in the saloon. I could not help thinking, as I looked at her, with her servants about her, all cheerful, respectful and anxious to attend upon her, how much better it would be for the young ladies in England, if they would occasionally return to the habits of their grandmothers, and mingle the animated and endearing occupations of domestic life, and the modest manners and social amusements of home, with the perpetual practising on harps and pianos, and the incessant efforts at display and search after gaiety, which at the present day, render them anything but what an amiable man of a reflecting mind and delicate sentiments would desire in the woman he might wish to select as his companion for life. But it was not only in the more trifling affairs of the household that this young lady acquitted herself so agreeably; in the garden, the farm, among the laborers, their wives and children, with the poor in the neighborhood, and the casual wanderer, everywhere she was superintending, directing, kind, amiable, the comfort of all around, and the delight of her family. She flew up and down the rocks with the lightness of a mountain roe; she sprang into a boat like the Lady of the Lake, and could manage an oar with as much grace and skill. With all this, her mind was thoroughly cultivated. She had an elegant taste in the authors of her own language; understood Latin, Italian, and English, and charmed me with her conversation, whilst she employed her fingers in the fancy work, with which the French ladies occupy the moments which some call idle, but which with them are always sociably and generally carefully employed.

Having now shown that to understand and

superintend all that belongs to domestic economy is the proper vocation for a woman, let her situation be what it may, and that, so far from being ashamed of it, she should dignify it by her manner of exercising it, a caution may be necessary against making its details too prominent in the social circle, and talking too much about them. Honourable as is the performance of those daily duties, it is bad taste to say much about them. A well-ordered house has been fitly compared to a watch, all the wheels and springs of which are out of sight, and it is only known that they exist, and are in order, by the regularity with which their results are brought about.

The time necessarily consumed by these daily cares is considerable; let ladies beware how they add to it by wasting a moment on needless capitulation and useless discussion of domestic affairs. When they have done their household tasks to the best of their abilities, they should dismiss the subject from their mind, and not let the thought of it intrude upon other things; that have their appropriate place in the day's occupation.

The disinterested affection of mothers often leads them to dispense with all assistance from their daughters in their domestic affairs, so long as they are in daily attendance upon school, or, as the common phrase is, whilst they are "getting their education." Where the school hours are diligently employed, and the tasks laborious, and much time is required to prepare lessons at home, it is particularly important that all the leisure a girl has, should be wisely disposed of; but far better would it be for her health, that some of it should be given to the stirring occupation of the household, than that she should be sitting over a frame of worsted or lace work, hurting her eyes, and wasting her time in making bead-bags, or some little ornamental article of dress, not worth a tithe of the pains bestowed upon it.

#### SCIENCE IN THE KITCHEN.

The student of the social economy of this country will encounter no more remarkable anomaly in the habits of our people than that, while we exhaust every possibility achieved by the progress of modern science toward the augmenting of our pecuniary welfare, we as sedulously neglect the teachings derived from the same source and pointing to one of the most important causes of physical health and comfort. When a man undertakes to build himself a house, it is the general rule that he exercises the closest care that every portion of the structure shall be, in design and material, the best. He employs a capable architect, a thorough builder, selects stone, brick, mortar and other components of his fabric with a rigid scrutiny which leaves no doubt in his mind but that his dwelling will be a strong and lasting shelter. Then he decorates, furnishes, searches for ingenious devices of household convenience, and finally enters his new habitation secure in his belief of its excellence. Is it not strange that all his labor is done for a roof which may cover its owner but until to-morrow: for a home which the vicissitudes of fortune may wrest from him in a day, or which of his own choice he may abandon before the mortar is perfectly dry; while to the structure in which Providence has ordained he shall exist for a lifetime, but secondary consideration is given?

Our food has been compared to the fuel which heats a boiler, makes steam, and so drives the machinery. The simile is not only trite but unjust. The substances that we eat play even a greater part. It is as if the fuel, besides heating the water, contributed by its combustion to the existence of the boiler—in other words, we are made of the materials we consume. Clearly then, although we may subsist for a time on substances unsuitable and comparatively non-nutritious, in the end our physical system will suffer, if not break down, from the improper nature of the components with which it is supplied.

Cooking is the proper preparation of food for human consumption. We do not consider that the term means applying heat until the substance assumes any form which is edible, but the causing of the material to undergo certain changes, chemical or otherwise, in its condition, which render it in the most suitable state for the nourishment of the body. Articles for the table, then, are either cooked or ruined—necessarily one or the other. Bad cooking, like bad grammar, is non-existent *ex vi termini*; but as to where the dividing line happens to be between these very opposite conditions, it is odd that few persons can agree. Perhaps it may be safely drawn from the sanitary point of view, as above noted; for a single material, like the common potato, for example, may be nutritious and healthy when properly cooked; while if it be boiled until it be waterlogged and wax-like, its beneficial nature is lost. Theoretically, then, the gauge of cookery should be the healthfulness of its results; practically, however, the standard is simply and purely one of individual taste; and that in this country, where the majority are educated to relish compounds indigestible and worthless as brain and muscle producers, is fallible in the extreme. Hence, while this sense is gratified, we give no thought to the means; in other words, so long as the builder of the fabric is satisfied with the exterior appearance of his stone, mortar, or brick, no matter, if when they are made into a wall, they prove bad within, and weak and insufficient as supports.

Dr. James, in an excellent paper recently read before the American Health Association, upon a topic kindred to that to which we are

referring, points out with much clearness many of the abuses into which the preparation of our food has fallen, and inveighs with special vigor against the general assumption that women are natural cooks. Perhaps it is to the invariable inaccuracy which (our feminine readers will pardon us) is inherent to the gentler sex, more than to any other cause, that the science of cookery has descended to the level of a rule of thumb pursuit. Do we ever need a medicine, we watch the druggists, that he compounds it with scrupulous exactitude. Do we build a machine, we hire talent that will execute the work to hair breath accuracy; in fact, we employ skilled labor to supply us with knowledge, to house us, to dress us, and even to shave us, everything but to feed us. It takes an artist to make our coats, but the most foolish of Hibernian virgins may be installed in our kitchen to prepare the food that makes our body.

If cookery were reduced down to rule, so that a person could follow recipes with the same certainty of success, due to accuracy, with which the student pursues the instructions laid down in his text book of chemical analysis, it is presumable that any individual could produce eatable and healthy dishes; but nothing is further from the truth. Let the reader ask any successful cook how he or she made such or such a compound, the chances are strongly that no satisfactory explanation can be given. "Practice" is probably stated as the reason or "experience," or "luck." Let him turn to any so-called cookery book, and we would be willing to wager that in nine cases out of ten the recipes for the most delicate cake and pastry contain greater margins of inaccuracy than any formula extant for mixing mud concrete. What does a teaspoonful mean, heaped up or level with the rim? Or a teacupful? What size of teacup? How much is a pinch, or a handful, or a pennyworth? There is absolutely no standard system of measures conscientiously followed; and hence a woman will gage her ingredients by the grab with the same unquestioning faith in the accuracy of the combination that she reposes in the fact that the distance from the tip of her nose to the end of her fingers is precisely and infallibly one yard.

The practical solution of the important question, whether the masses can be educated properly to prepare their food, is yet to be determined. It is surely possible that cookery can be taught as a science, as other necessary branches of knowledge, not after the fashion of child's play, as have been most of the previous attempts in this direction, but as a serious study. We do not expect every man's wife to become a *cordon bleu*, or our servants to prepare *entrées* which would not disgrace Delmonico; but we do believe that means might be found of imparting information sufficient to relieve the people of many of the nightmare-breeding compounds of daily consumption. Make practical cookery a part of every woman's education, and the principles of the same a portion of that of every man. Let us, for recipes, have formulae and instructions, clearly couched but as accurate as the physician's prescription, and deduced by scientific investigation. Then with the materials and means which we now have, better than which the world can not produce, the answer to our petition for daily bread will not be food destructive to our health as individuals and as a people.

#### POOR PENELOPE.

"It is an established fact," says the Danbury News, "that an animosity exists between man in a married state and stoves in any state. The case of Mr. Penelope, the cashier of the Slawson National Bank, is an illustrative point. One morning last week he visited his base burner to fill it with coal. He first opened the draft and then the place at the top which receives the coal, and waited until he was quite sure the gas had ascended the chimney. Being thus assured, he next did what might have been pardonable in a woman, or at least what would have been very natural in a woman to do—he put his head in the top opening. With his head thus fixed, his suspenders hanging down behind, and his legs spread apart, he was peering into the darkness and gathering inspiration from its density, when a sudden and most horrible explosion took place within the stove, and as a blinding cloud of dust shot up into the air, Mr. Penelope, cashier of the First National Bank of Slawson, made two back revolutions between the floor and ceiling, and came down very much as if he expected a chair was there to receive him. No such provision had been made, however, and when Mrs. Penelope came in, which she immediately did with a broom in her hand, she found Mr. Penelope sitting on the floor and staring with all his might at nothing. The entire absence of hair from about his eyes imparted an imposing effect to their glare which no pen can describe. Most of the hair from the top of his head was missing; his whiskers were gone, so was his moustache, while the end of his nose—scorched to the depth of an eighth of an inch—looked as if a simoon with spikes in it had swept triumphantly across it. 'Why, Penelope!' exclaimed the astonished lady, in a strong burst of feeling, and then fell to prodding him with the broom. But it was some time before Mr. Penelope became sufficiently collected to get upon his feet even. As soon as possible he had a doctor come to the house and sound him to see if anything was broken inside, and learning there was not, he got together a gun and fishing tackle, and is now abroad resting himself from the fatigues of the late panic."