

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

Chats Upon the Porch—1.

"You women who live in the city have so much:—lectures and concerts, theatres and parties, books and people, and—chances. We have nothing."

Bella uttered the plaint as we sat upon the porch, after the early tea.

"Nothing?" queried the city woman.

"Oh, well," we have food and clothing, shelter, and a certain amount of kindly family affection, of course—but we haven't opportunities."

"For what?" asked her listener.

"For culture, and daintiness, and the cultivation of friendship."

There was silence for a few moments while the evening sounds drifted toward them:—of cluckings in the poultry-yard, a faint 'moo' from the barn, the shrill, full chirp of the field cricket, and the slow creaking of a wagon along the road.

"Are you sure that you have nothing beyond the essentials you have mentioned?" inquired the city woman.

Belle opened her eyes widely. "You see for yourself," she said. "In the morning we are busy with housework and the dairy; after dinner we sew, or tend the garden; after tea, there is the milking,—and then we are tired, and there is nothing left but bed. It is our daily round."

The city woman looked toward the sunset. "You have that," she said, with a gesture sweeping out toward the horizon. "You have those hills and woods, and that great stretch of fields, for your outlook every hour of your day."

"But they are always the same," protested Belle.

"They are never the same," answered her friend. Their beauty varies with every hour, and every passing cloud. From your doorway and window you behold fairer pictures than any art gallery can give. Oh! you want to live in a city house, having doors that open upon stone pavements, and windows that look upon dead brick walls or back sheds, before you can properly appreciate the full sweep of sky and hill and field that is about here."

"But an outlook is not a means of culture," protested Belle, gloomily.

"Isn't it?" queried the city woman, laughingly. "We who are of the city, coming into view of such a landscape, deem it a mighty means of grace. It is the easiest thing in the world to grow irritable and nervous and worn, shut between brick walls. But out here—why, one can send all one's weaknesses and irritations tossing over those green fields or among the hill tops, and grow rested and stilled in the sunshine and sweetness."

"And, then, for music," she continued. "You have the birds, singing as they never sing in the city; and the frogs,—now don't laugh, for we city folks really like to hear their evening chorus—the field cricket and all the hum of insect life; and softer still is the rustle of the tree boughs, the whisperings of the grain, and the little, low stir of the pasture greenness. Your days and nights are filled with a music that we never hear. Your concerts are held in pure atmosphere, your singers are ever in tune—and the admission is free."

"Which is why we do not appreciate them," asserted Belle's brother, in undertone.

"Again, you have a leisure that we have not," pursued the city woman. "Perhaps not in the busiest seasons, but certainly during many months of the year. Time to sew, to make neighborly visitings, to take long hours of sleep; and leisure is also a means of grace to a woman; for we need time in which to pay attention to little daintinesses of person and dress, of manners and ways. It takes a woman time to be dainty and gracious, fresh and sweet. A tired woman is always an irritable and ungracious woman. We who are of the city are often driven from one duty to another, from one engagement to another. We are at the mercy of a city full of people, and between postman and agent, home duties and social life, we are often utterly unable to withdraw into the stillness and repose so necessary for spiritual growth; and that may be yours every day, if you choose."

"But we want something to fill the leisure," said Belle.

"Yes," answered her friend. "You want thoughts, high thoughts and these will come chiefly from observation and from books, carefully read. You women of the country do not read enough."

"Books give new views to life
And teach us how to live."

"You want books to teach you to see, and books to teach you to hear; you want your eyes opened to this beauty of field and hill, and ears made attentive to nature's sweet sounds. You starve yourselves in the midst of plenty; you remain dumb when you might be giants."

Belle looked up from her seat upon the porch steps.

"If we were to read and study, if we took books and papers, and tried to do you really think we could grow as cultured as city folks?" she asked.

"A cultured city folks!" corrected the woman, smiling. "A city contains rougher classes than even the country possesses. Yes, I am quite certain

that country life should be an aid rather than a bar to growth of spirit, as we know it is to the body. Strong bodies and generous souls are born of country living. We recruit the city ranks from the country. Our nation's foremost men come from the fields and hills—for only there can they take time and find pure air in which to grow."

"My little friend,"—and the woman of the city turned with tender look towards the brown-eyed girl—"believe this above all else, that growth must be from within; that neither city opportunities nor country freedom can give to us that knowledge that we are not ready to receive. Let none say, 'Lo here or lo there, for the kingdom of God is within us.'"

"But how shall we cultivate the kingdom?" queried Belle, timidly.

"Live always up to the best that is in you—don't poke too much at the roots; keep in the sunshine; keep clear of drought, and you'll grow," answered the city woman, with her gentle smile.

MINNIE MAY.

DEAR MINNIE MAY:—

"Seeing that article in the ADVOCATE, regarding 'How to Cook Husbands,' I think it would be a good thing for you to offer a prize for 'How to Cook Wives,' as many of the male tribe don't seem to know the proper way to go about it.

I remain,

Yours truly,

A VERY MUCH INTERESTED READER.
Beverly, Man.

The article referred to appeared in April 15th issue, and as the question raised by our correspondent is an interesting one, we will be pleased to hear from any of our readers, on the subject of "How to Cook Wives." Those holding old and tried recipes for the same will be conferring a benefit upon inexperienced cooks by sending in these recipes for publication. Address:—

MINNIE MAY,
Office of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

Recipes.

BEEF LOAF.

Take 3½ pounds of beef, chopped very fine—round steak is best; 2 well-beaten eggs, 6 small crackers rolled fine, 1 cup sweet milk, a piece of butter size of an egg; salt, pepper and sage to taste. Mix well, press into a bread tin, cover with a tin, and bake 2½ hours, occasionally basting with butter and hot water.

SCALLOPED POTATOES.

Four large, cold, boiled potatoes, peeled and sliced; 2 tablespoons butter, 1 pint hot milk, 2 tablespoons flour. Melt butter and add hot milk and flour; when thick, add salt, pepper and parsley. Put a layer of mixture in bottom of baking dish, then a layer of potato, and so on, milk coming last. Cover with cracker crumbs and bake 15 minutes.

LAYER CAKE.

One cup sugar, 2 eggs well beaten, ½ cup butter, ½ small cup milk, 1½ cups flour, 2 teaspoons baking powder. Bake in three tins.

CHOCOLATE CREAM FILLING.

Five tablespoons of grated chocolate, enough cream or milk to wet it, 1 cup sugar, 1 egg, 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring. Stir the ingredients over the fire until thoroughly mixed, having beaten the egg well before adding; then add the flavoring after it is removed from the fire.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE.

For this dish use ½ quarts of strawberries, 1 cupful sugar, 1 pint flour, 1½ teaspoonfuls of baking powder, ½ teaspoonful salt, 2 tablespoonfuls of sugar, ¼ of a cupful of butter and a scant ½ cupful of milk. Slightly mash the berries and sprinkle over them 1 cupful of sugar. Measure 1 pint of flour after it is sifted. Add to it 1½ teaspoonfuls of baking powder, 2 tablespoonfuls of sugar and ½ teaspoonful of salt; then sift again. Rub into the flour ¼ of a cupful of butter. Mix it with a scant ½ cupful of milk. Butter well a Washington pie plate, place the dough upon it, smooth, and press it evenly into the plate with a spoon. Should the dough stick to the spoon, dip a clean spoon in flour and smooth with it. Bake in a quick oven until done—about twelve or fifteen minutes. Remove it to a china plate. Split the cake carefully with a sharp knife. Butter the lower half well and cover with a part of the mashed berries. Place the upper half of the cake on this, the crust side on the berries. Butter this and cover it with the remainder of the fruit. Before serving, heap whipped cream over it, and you have a dish fit for a king.

In the frequent enumeration in our literary journals of striking short poems, it is strange that no one has included Charles Henry Webb's "Revenge":

Revenge is a naked sword—
It has neither hilt nor guard.
Wouldst thou wield this brand of the Lord?
Is thy grasp, then, firm and hard?

But the closer thy clutch of the blade,
The deadlier blow thou wouldst deal;
Deeper wound in thy hand is made—
Is thy blood red as the steel.

And when thou hast dealt the blow—
When the blade from thy hand is down
Instead of the heart of the foe,
Thou mayest find sheathed in thine own!

Sound philosophy, as well as good poetry, in the above!

UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

Puzzles.

PRIZE PUZZLE.

1—RIDDLE.

Never straight you see me.
Yet I'm not awry;
My favorite habitation is
Up in the sunny sky.
Soft and sweet my nature
Unto you may seem,
Yet the fondest words I turn
Into weapons keen.

ADA ARMAND.

2—SQUARE WORD.

My FIRST is "a play," in verse or in prose,
My SECOND is "taxes," as everyone knows.
My THIRD is a book we all study at school,
My FOURTH is "a measure of fish from a pool."
My FIFTH is "an item in any man's favor."
I can't find a rhyme, so I'll cease from my labor.

H. D. PICKETT.

3—CHARADE.

I've got a feeling within my heart
For to do a puzzle great.
But strive as I may this feeling to meet,
I feel I'm FIRST SECOND to perform the feat.

Now, if I was clever and TOTAL like F. B.,
I should be LAST to do it;

But FIRST being built in that style,
I'll quit, before I rue it.

HENRY REEVE.

4—RIDDLE.

A title have I, and good education—
More than some people—no overation;
I'm a medium of teaching good manners and art,
And in the schoolboy's studies I play a great part.
Philosophers, poets, principals, teachers and youths,
All delight to emerge in the midst of my truths;
But the queerest thing about me, and absurd,
Is that, though I tell many things, I can't speak a word.

THOS. W. BANKS.

5—ENIGMA.

A circle I am—you'll think then I'm nought;
You ne'er in your life were more out in a thought,
For whether I'm made of wood, iron or gold,
A circle more precious man's eyes can't behold.
Yet those best informed are said to declare
I am but a name for vexation and care;
Yet let not this knowledge, dear friends, much distress ye;
I think I can promise you'll never possess me.

Answers to May 15th Puzzles.

1—Sin.

2—

P U L P
O T A L G I A
L E A S E R
T I D S O R L I A M
I C O M P E N D I U M
I N G R E D I A B I L E
S U R R E P T I T I O N S
Politicians. Parliaments.

3—There-in.

Corpulency and Its Treatment—How to Get Thin.

The Vegetarian says:—"It is very foolish for persons to live on lean beef and water to reduce obesity, because this is merely starvation; and though they will certainly reduce their obesity by this method, they will also reduce their strength and bring down their constitution. A simple diet of brown bread and fruits will reduce obesity far better than any nostrum, and the good of this diet is that it will invigorate the body and keep up the strength. Of course the diet should be accompanied with proper exercise—walking is the most suitable for fat people, because in it the whole body is exercised, and not one set of muscles at the expense of another. When the dishes are not unduly elaborate, people do not eat too much; when the diet is plain and simple, they will take what they want. Rich and elaborate cookery causes persons to eat more than is good for them, and brings on undue obesity and many other disorders. Of course all fat people tell you they are small eaters, but whatever they do eat they eat more than is necessary to keep them in health and strength, and the extra is packed on as fat that they do not want. Persons should not try to reduce themselves to emaciation; they should have sufficient fat on their bodies to round off their angles and prevent their bones staring people in the face. Fat persons have always a better time of it when they take ill, because if they cannot eat for a day or two their system is supported by their fat, and they will often live through an illness that would kill a thin person. So, although persons should not be so fat that they would be unwieldy or unable to perform their daily duties, they should not use unnatural methods to make themselves thin. If any person finds himself getting too stout he has only to reduce his meals, to eat less at each meal, and to let himself be always hungry for his meals, and to take regular daily exercise."—The Journal of Hygiene.

Wise Knowledge and Wise Ignorance.

As the mind of man is so limited in its ability to receive and retain, there must be a continual selection going on between what to know and what to refrain from knowing. The wise man has discovered that of the vast amount of truths and facts and wonders and ideas with which the universe is teeming, only a small fraction can by any possibility be his; and his intelligence has no more important task to perform than that of deciding not only what to choose, but what to refuse. Thus, wherever there is a wise knowledge there is also a wise and necessary ignorance.