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I should not take any space at all to "talk in" myself this morning, for there's a whole budget of letters waiting; but there's a subject on my mind, and I must get rid of it—that is, in regard to the birds. I wonder if you waited for them as anxiously as I did this spring, or if you have enjoyed them as much since they came; for we have them, at least a few of them, you see, right here in the city, and the robins and song sparrows are not afraid to sing right out, notwithstanding the brick walls and chimneys on every hand.

What I want to say, however, is to urge you, if you have anything whatever to do with children, to teach them to notice and love our little songsters, and to "leave them alone": a boy with an air-gun after a song-bird is no pleasant sight.

Our song-birds are disappearing. Can you realize what that means? What would it mean if we had none at all—woods, groves, swamps, fields bereft of the glad warble of thrush and white-throat, and every and bobolink? Would it not seem as though the very soul of the spring had gone?

Last summer I heard a bird enthusiast lecture on birds. One statement "stuck." That was: "A bird's whole life is marked by continuous fear." Then he went on to speak of the enemies and the hardships the little creatures have to face by day and by night; the weariness of their long flights; often, when the weather turns suddenly cold and the snow falls, the difficulty of finding food; snakes; shotguns; bird-eating animals; a score of things. And, yet, the brave little hearts struggle to us spring after spring, seeking with a sort of homesickness, one may suppose, for the old nesting haunts.

Will you not do what you can to help make their lives a little easier?

Besides, the fact must not be overlooked that it is a positive gain to the farmer to protect the birds. Were it not for their good offices, insect life, injurious insect life at that, would increase tremendously, and every farmer can imagine the result of that. What if Mr. Robin takes a few of your cherries? Remember, he does not live wholly on cherries. Along with them he gobbles up thousands of small pests, which, if unchecked, would render a fruit crop an impossibility. I have heard it said that if wild cherries, elderberry bushes, etc., be planted near a fruit garden, comparatively little harm will be done to the "tame" fruit, the birds invariably seeming to prefer the wild varieties.

Again, don't have a bird or a piece of a bird on your hat. I think I told you before that personally, I have not worn a bird nor any mangled part of one on my head for years. I don't suppose any millinery establishment has become exactly bankrupt because of my abstinence; but I just mention the fact here to emphasize the point that one may have very satisfactory hats without birds. Ribbons, flowers, tulle, silk, malines, etc., make up very prettily by themselves, and if all the farm women of Canada determine to do with these, by just so much will the demand for the dead bodies of birds be lessened.

What about English sparrows? I hear someone say. Well, here, I must confess, one must draw the line. I don't dislike him for himself, but he fights the other birds, and drives them from their nests, thus, doubtless, causing the death of thousands of unhatched birdlings every year. "Keep at them with a shotgun," is the advice of one anxious for the safety of our native birds (the English sparrow is an alien), and I, anxious for them too, can only echo his words. The cow-bird is another bandit, worse still, though he isn't so common. For him, too, one can crave no mercy. But, so far as our native birds are concerned—save them!

Now I must stop. I am afraid I have crowded out quite a number of letters this time; but now I promise to be "good" for a while again, and give others a chance.

DAME DURDEN.

### That Leaky Furnace Pipe.

Dear Dame Durden,—Please, may I come into your charming circle, of which I have long been an admirer? I have thought of writing, but I thought I would wait until someone asked a question I could answer. So now I will try to help "A Banbury Tart" about that furnace-pipe. We had the same trouble with a stovepipe, and oh, what a discouraging sight to get up in the morning and find that black, smoky, smoky stuff all over everything! What I did was to get a piece of heavy tin, and fasten it on the damper so that it could not be shut real tight, and yet be close enough so that the fire would hold in all night. It has been successful in its mission, and I think if Banbury Tart will not close the furnace too tightly, it will work all right.

I do enjoy the letters in the Ingle Nook very much. In fact, I like "The Farmer's Advocate" from cover to cover, and I am very much interested in the Literary Society, and intend to become a member. But the Ingle Nook is just like a friend that comes always, with something very good, and often it has been the very thing I have been wanting.

Now, I hope I have not trespassed on your good nature, and, if I may, I will come again some time. EDNA.

Kent Co., Ont.

Trespassed? I feel positively cheered at so kind a letter. Yes, come again often, and don't forget the Literary Society. It is young yet, and needs all the help and encouragement it can get.

### From "Grandma."

Dear Dame Durden,—I have been a silent admirer of your circle for a long time, so concluded to draw up my chair. I have watched for the cure for the leaky furnace-pipe, as we have trouble in the same way.

I have found many useful and helpful articles in "The Farmer's Advocate," but especially in your "Home Department."

I was much pleased with the letter by Jack's Wife. It is true that a woman can grow wise with her own experience, but she can grow wiser by making use of the experience of others. Might I ask, does she attend the Women's Institute meetings when there is a good, live demonstrator on household economics or home-makers' work? It is true they can reach but few, so need all the help they can get through the press. Will the day come when every wife and daughter will attend as many of those meetings as they can? There is no subject more important than that pertaining to our home life. It is a great mistake not to have some knowledge of the composition of the different foods we are using daily. Lack of knowledge on our part is the cause of a great deal of distress and disease. At times, our diet is not well balanced, and we overtax our digestive organs.

Is she just to the large corps of Institute lecturers to overlook the excellent work they are doing? For the most part, those ladies have not only had practical experience in household duties, but also practical training along some line of Domestic Science. I hope I have not been too long-winded, so that the old cat will get this. I remain,

Yours ever,

GRANDMA.

Hastings Co., Ont.

### A Prize Layer Cake.

Dear Dame Durden,—I enjoy reading the Ingle Nook department so much, and I will send along with this, a good recipe for layer cake. It has taken first prize at several fall fairs. Whites of 4 eggs,

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups granulated sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cornstarch, 2-3 cup sweet milk or water, 2 cups flour sifted, 2 teaspoons baking powder. Trim cake to suit taste.

Coffee Cake.—One egg,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar, 1 cup butter, 1 cup baking syrup, 1 cup strong coffee, 1 cup seeded raisins, 1 cup currants, 1 nutmeg, 1 teaspoon soda, 5 cups flour. I find this equally as good as fruitcake. Hoping I have not taken up too much of your valuable space, I remain,

INTERESTED READER.

Brant Co.

We thank the above writer very heartily for her recipes. She has shown a very generous spirit indeed, in telling how her "prize" things were made, and we appreciate it, don't we?

### Thanks to Several Chatterers.

We have received several letters explaining how to can corn. We shall not publish these now, as two or three recipes have already appeared, but are saving a few for the corn season. Many thanks to those who have contributed. Thanks also to "Nan" and others, who sent songs. Since we have been obliged to rule out poetry from the Ingle Nook, we cannot publish "Nan's" request for another song. We think, however, she will understand that we would do this if we could. "Nan," too, is enamored of Aunt Patsy's meat pie. We must tell the good soul of her appreciation. Write us a letter again, Nan.

### Give More Details.

The following letter, we think, presses home a pertinent point. It is so easy to tell about things, when one is used to doing them, without giving directions clear enough for the out-and-out beginners. Will the chatterers kindly take note of this?

Dear Dame Durden,—I have been an interested reader of the Ingle Nook chats, and found some of the recipes very nice. Still, to a new beginner, I think there are a lot of the small details left out. Was much interested in a recipe by "Farmer's Wife" to can beef in glass sealers; but no mention is made about salt or pepper, and then, when do the rubbers go on, before or after boiling? I know these are silly questions to ask, but when one has had no experience, it's just such little trifles that cause a good deal of worry. Kindly explain.

NEW BEGINNER.

Huron Co., Ont.

### A Wrinkle for House-cleaning Time.

The next time you varnish your stove-pipes, get the asphaltum varnish at the drug store. It is fine to put on a stove or range you are not using. It keeps it from rusting. I have my range all done with it, but the top, and when it gets dirty, I wash it off in clean water. Before I stop, I will give you a recipe for apple shortcake: Peel, core, and slice sour apples as for pie. Put a layer, about one inch thick, of the apples in the pie-tin; have ready a crust, made of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sour cream,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon soda, and thickened with flour. Roll out about half an inch thick, and put over the apples. Don't make any air holes in it. Bake till done, and then turn upside down. Sprinkle sugar and spice over it, and then have some good rich whipped cream poured over it. These will keep for days, only don't put the cream on till you want to use it. Hoping this may not go to the waste-paper basket, I will bid the sisters good-night, and thank them for their kind help.

Hastings Co., Ont. MRS. J. W.

This shortcake "sounds" delicious.

A whole budget of questions are still on hand, but I shall try to answer some of them, at least, next time. D. D.

"What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."—Emerson, in Self-Reliance."