

## A LITTLE ELBOW ROOM.

Good friend, don't crowd so very tight;  
There's room enough for two;  
Keep in your mind that I have a right  
To live as well as you—  
You rich and strong, I poor and weak;  
But think you I presume,  
When only this poor boon I ask—  
A little elbow room?

'Tis such as you,—the rich and strong,—  
If you had but the will,  
Could give the weak a lift along,  
And help him up the hill;  
But no; you jostle, crowd and drive.  
You storm and fret and fume;  
Are you the only man alive  
In want of elbow room?

But thus it is on life's rough path,  
Self seems the god of all;  
The strong will crush the weak to death.  
The big devour the small.  
Far better be a rich man's hound,  
His valet, serf or groom,  
Then struggle 'midst the mass around  
When we've no elbow room.

Up heart my boy! don't mind the shocks;  
Up heart, and push along!  
Your skin will soon grow tough with knocks,  
Your limbs will labor strong;  
And there's a Hand, unseen to aid,  
A star to light the gloom:  
Up heart, my boy, nor be afraid!  
Strike out for elbow room!

And when you see amid the throng  
A fellow-toiler slip,  
Just give him, as you pass along,  
A kind and friendly grip:  
Let noble deeds, though poor you be,  
Your path in life illumine,  
And with true christian charity,  
Give others elbow room,

In struggling on with might and main,  
An altered, better man,  
Grown wise with many a bygone pain,  
And many a broken plan,  
Though bruised by many a luckless fall  
And blinded by the gloom,  
I'll up and I'll redeem it all,  
But give me elbow room!

## The Home Circle.

## HOW A WIFE FELT.

A man at whose house I was a guest, told me that he had been a hard drinker and a cruel husband; had beaten his poor wife till she had almost become used to it. "But," said he, "the very moment I signed the pledge I thought of my wife—what will my wife say to this? Strange that I should think of my wife the first thing, but I did; and, as I was going home, I said to myself, 'Now, if I go home and tell her all of a sudden that I have signed the pledge, she'll faint away, or she'll up and do something; and I must break it to her by degrees.' Only think of it; why the night before, I'd have knocked her down, just as like as not, if she hadn't looked to please me; and now I am planning to break good news to her gently, for fear it would upset her."

As near as I could gather from what he told me, he found his wife sitting over the embers, waiting for him. And coming into the house, said he:

"Nancy, I think that"—  
"Well, Ned, what is it?"  
"Why, I think I shall—that is—I mean to—to—Nancy, I mean"—  
"What's the matter, Ned? Anything the matter?"

"Yes," said he "the matter's just this—I have signed the temperance pledge, and, so help me God I'll keep it!"

She started to her feet, and she *did* faint away. I was just in time to catch her; and as she lay in my arms, her eyes shut and her face so pale, thinks I, she's dead, and I've done it now. But she wasn't dead; she opened her eyes, and then she put her arms round my neck; and I didn't know she was so strong, as she pulled and pulled till she got me down where I had not been before for thirty years—on my knees. Then she said, "O God! help him!" and I said "Amen!" and she said, "Oh God! help my poor Ned, and strengthen him to keep his pledge," and I hollered "Amen!" just as loud as I could holler. That was the first time we ever knelt together, but it was not the last.

## WOMAN'S SMILE.

A beautiful smile is to the female countenance what the sunbeam is to the landscape; it embellishes an inferior face and redeems an ugly one. A smile, however, should not become habitual, or insipidity is the result; nor should the mouth break into a smile on one side, the other remaining passive and unmoved, for this imparts an air of deceitful grotesqueness to the face. A disagreeable smile distorts the line of beauty, and is more repulsive than a frown. There are many kinds of smiles, each having a distinctive character; some announce goodness and sweetness; others betray sarcasm, bitterness, and pride; some soften the countenance by their languishing tenderness; others brighten it by their brilliant and spiritual vivacity. Gazing and poring over a mirror cannot aid in acquiring beautiful smiles half so well as to turn the gaze inward, to watch that the heart keeps unsullied from the reflection of evil, and is illumined and beautified by sweet thoughts.

It is the energy of will that is the soul of the intellect; wherever it is, there is life; where it is not all is dullness, and despondency, and desolation.

## THE BREATH OF LIFE.

There is a significance in this sentence which is hardly appreciated to its full extent by many persons, even among the more intelligent portion of every community. The air we breathe is not only indispensable to corporeal existence; its full benefits can only be realized in the development of healthy bodies and vigorous intellects by full, free and deep breathing. The first requisite for a healthy body is pure air, and plenty of it; with this, and proper nourishment, sufficient exercise and good habits, in a reasonably healthy climate, good health is assured.

It cannot be expected that a diseased organism, or an impaired constitution, can be restored at once by anything short of supernatural power. In the incipient stages of many forms of disease, pure air and a good pair of lungs are wonderful aids to bring the patient back to a normal healthy condition; but chronic ailments yield only to continuous, skillful and judicious treatment, while hereditary complaints and deformities are, in the main, beyond the reach—as far as a perfect cure in a majority of cases is concerned—of the most consummate skill.

Good health is, or should be, the primary consideration in the enjoyment of life. Health, wisdom, wealth—this is the order in which well-balanced minds place the great objects which constitute the earthly interests of mankind, though it is not a comforting reflection that, in a large measure, the first two are subservient to the last. The possession of vast knowledge and immense wealth cannot be properly or adequately enjoyed without there is good health.

A few days since, while travelling over an important line of western railway, we encountered an intelligent gentleman from abroad, travelling in this country for pleasure and observation. The conversation turned upon the health of American women, and he remarked that upon inquiry he learned that American women suffered from ill health and physical disabilities to a much greater extent than he was prepared to believe. In the dryer atmosphere of this country, as compared with England, and physical conditions generally favorable to health, he expected to find the men and women more robust, or at least, not less strong, physically, than in that country, whereas the women, especially, compare very unfavorably, in this respect, with their transatlantic sisters.

The same testimony is borne by our own people who go abroad. Why is this difference? What is the reason that there is such a lack of vitality and health among so large a number of American women? Will the scientists point us out the natural causes, if any exist? We suspect that such causes are mainly artificial, and some of them are not so remote or hidden as to be difficult to find. Most of them are chargeable to the arbitrary behests of fashion, which are often inimical to good health, and are a constant violation of natural laws. These tell upon the vital functions of the body, and hence it is that weakness, and debility, effeminate bodies, and impaired constitutions, are so prevalent among American women.

A fair estimate places the average weight of woman's clothing, supported at the waist, all the year round, at fifteen pounds. Is it a matter of surprise that there is so much complaint of weak backs? And again the injudicious use of the corset to improve the figure—which often results in an exaggerated deformity rather than an improvement—is chargeable with a vast amount of suffering and disease. Women will insist that they do not lace tightly, when their looks, actions and health contradict their statements. The pressure upon the lungs and the heart, which are the vital functions of respiration and circulation, impedes their freedom, obstructs their natural action, producing organic inflammations, unhealthy secretions and vertebral distortions. These are not "natural weaknesses," any more than are the intemperate use of ardent spirits, or tobacco chewing, or a passion for disreputable practices generally.

The pernicious results of violating the natural laws of being, in these respects, do not end here. Physical defects and mental weakness, are the fearful instalments upon thousands of offspring. The first Napoleon said: "You cannot make a soldier out of a sick man." What is true in regard to a soldier held good, in a greater degree, in other directions. As a rule, it is necessary to have a healthy body to develop the highest powers of the mind. To have a generation of men with enlarged brain, of intellectual strength, it is necessary to have opportunities for thought and action. Deep breathing has much to do with thinking. Good lungs are among the primary requisites of perfect development, and the full enjoyment of life and vigor cannot be had without them. When will the women of America learn these important truths, and eschew the criminal follies from which flow a long train of evils attendant only with misery to themselves, and suffering to their children?

## AN OLD DEFINITION OF BABIES.

A writer in an English magazine discourses as follows on a familiar and humorous subject: "Babies are bundles of clothes with yellow heads." Some months ago I received a letter from the Royal Geographical Society, informing me that this definition was inaccurate, as in tropical climates babies had black faces and were frequently found without any clothes

worth speaking of. This I don't believe. I have often seen black men at St. James' Hall and elsewhere, but who ever saw a black baby? I wrote back saying that if Dr. Livingstone, when he came home, brought among his specimens of other insects any black babies, I should have great pleasure in inspecting them and giving them a certificate, that is, provided they don't prove stuffed seals or large cockroaches. There are a great number of babies in the world. Most of them are, however, kept out of sight in cradles, hen coops, attics, and old clothes baskets. A man once told me that the reason of this was because, if they were allowed to crawl about the streets or parks, no one could stir out for fear of walking on them or tripping over them, in either of which case the people so doing would be prosecuted by our friend Lathbury. It was once proposed by a very clever Irishman to try all the babies found at large by the treason felony act; but, as all British subjects are entitled to be tried by a jury of their peers, and as babies can never be depended on to keep their oaths, the idea had to be abandoned. Babies are all nearly the same size. When they are very small, they are called infants, and fed on butter, and brown sugar and turpentine. Sometimes the turpentine rises to their head and they behave in the most outrageous manner. I once saw an infant who had drank too much turpentine, on a pillow on the ground, and yelling with all its might at a most respectable looking old lady who was the infant's grand-aunt, and had a lot of money in the funds. Whenever the grand-aunt pointed her finger at the infant, it yelled louder than ever, and tried to bite the finger. The grand-aunt left the house and settled all her money on an institution for elderly married women. The education of babies is generally in a very backward state; indeed, they do not appear to know much of the English language beyond the words "papa," "mamma," "me," "go," "by." Their attempts at French are even worse; they are continually using such low French as "ajo," "day-day," "baba," and "by-by." A man once told me that there could be no doubt that babies were descended from niggers, for they always say "me," for "I."

Babies do not differ much in temper, size and disposition. They are violent, about the size of a pillow, and covetous. I once saw a baby with a cork-screw, a pair of tongs, a hand bell and a broken hearth-brush altogether down its throat. When you come near a baby it stretches out its hand and clutches hold of your necktie. This is, the mother tells you, a mark of high favor, and a sign that the baby wants to kiss you. When you stoop forward to kiss the creature, it catches you by the flair and every one but you laughs, and says what a precious baby it is. When you sit down you are asked to hold the baby. You take it in your arms, and place it on your knee. Immediately it catches hold of your collar, and tries to stand up on your best trowsers with its tiny boots. If you don't allow it, the mother says:—"Oh, oh, Mr. So-and-so, let him stand up; he is quite delighted at having discovered he can stand, and it won't hurt him." It then lays hold of your shirt studs, and shoots out its finger at your eye, and drives a hand sticky with wet sugar into the bosom of your shirt. Not infrequently it behaves in a manner so inconsiderate that description is impossible. This makes you wish to put it down and stamp on it with your right foot. Babies, like dogs, are not found wild in any country. They are always to be met with in the vicinity of mankind. They are usually the companion of women. In the savage countries, when the men are out hunting tigers with their horses and dogs, the women amuse themselves with feeding babies and washing scalps and drying beef in the sun; in civilized countries, when the men are out shooting pigeons and hunting hares with their dogs, the women look at the babies and sit down till their hair grows down to their feet, put on tight dresses, and learn the names of their children, if they have time after coming in from seeing their friends. The most singular thing about babies is that each one is larger and finer than any that has ever been seen before. The first thing a woman does when she takes a baby is to hold it at arm's length and say, "Oh, dear!" or "Oh, my goodness!" or some other powerful words. "What a fine little fellow, only seven months old, too! Why Mrs. So-and-so's baby is ten months, and this little fellow is twice his weight. Upon my word, Mrs. So-and-so, I have seen many a baby, but this is the finest." Mrs. So-and-so smiles, and takes the baby and shows how it can very nearly stand when it is held up under the arms and has its back against the leg of a sofa. A man once told me that men were descended from babies. What Mr. Darwin said about monkeys was bad enough, but this is really carrying matters too far.

LONG ENGAGEMENTS.—A writer on long engagements says:—"The difficulty of sustaining with appropriate effect the character of an engaged man is sometimes enormous."

"I live by my pen," said a poet, wishing to impress a young lady.—"You look as if you lived in one," was the reply.

What is the difference between a civilized dinner and a person who subsists at the North Pole?—Attention again?—One has his bill of fare, and the other has his fill of bear.

ONE FAULT.—It was wittily said of a beautiful French literary lady, that she had but one fault—her husband.

## MOTHER'S CURTAINS.

"What are you doing in that corner, Josie?" said Annie Grey, coming in to call her sister out to roll hoop, and finding her sitting in the corner of their mother's room, with her bright face resting on her two little brown hands, very quiet and thoughtful.

"Want to earn some money," said the little girl, "and I don't know how."

"Earn money for what?"

"I want to earn enough to buy curtains for mother's windows."

"O, Josie! A girl eight years old to earn enough money for that. What put that in your head?"

"Mother did herself. She wants them so much. And when I asked her why she didn't buy them, she said: 'Because I have so many little mouths to feed and so many little bodies to keep warm and comfortable. We have enough for that, thank God, but we've nothing to spare for fancies, and the curtains are only a fancy of mine.' And I felt so sorry, Annie, 'cause mother did look as if she'd like her fancy very much. But since yesterday I've felt worse than ever about it, for when that telegram came to say that Aunt Clara was so sick, and mother must come to see her, and she was getting ready in such a hurry, I saw her open that box which shuts with a spring and take some money out of it, and she said to father, 'how fortunate it is that I have this money, now that you are so pressed. I have been putting away a dime every week to see whether I could spare it to buy some muslin curtains for our room. There is a dollar here, and it will just take me out to Clara's and back again.' I felt so bad, Annie, that a great big lump came into my throat and my eyes became all wet. It was such a disappointment for mother, and she just tried to look as if it wasn't a bit. Wouldn't it be lovely if we could earn money enough to buy some?"

"Oh! yes, lovely," said Annie; "but then we couldn't you know."

"How hard would you be willing to work for it?" asked a voice from the other side of the room. "Would you give up your whole Saturday?"

Josie sprang up and ran to the speaker, who sat busy making up an embroidered chair.

"Oh! I'd do anything," she said, eagerly, "and give up this Friday afternoon, too."

"Well, that chair must be finished on Monday, and it is to be made over before this new cover is put on."

Josie skipped into the next room—her uncle's shop (he was a cabinet maker), and came skipping back again.

"I see it, Aunt Lottie," said she, all on tip-toe with expectation.

"That chair must be picked over before tomorrow night. I was going to send for a boy to do it, because I shall not have time. It will be a long, tiresome day's work, but if you choose to do it I will give you a dollar."

"And that will buy the curtains, for I saw some with beautiful big scallops on the edge, marked one dollar, in the window, and mother was with me, and she said they were pretty coarse muslin, but they'd do very nicely for poor people's windows. Oh, Aunt Lottie! Dear, good Aunt Lottie!" And Josie squeezed and hugged the "dear, good Aunt Lottie," until she had to cry for mercy.

"It will be very hard work, Josie," she said, as soon as she was released. "Are you sure you will not be discouraged?"

"And so horrid, too," said Annie, turning up her little nose with a look of infinite disgust. "You'll be all dirty, and as hairy as anything. I wouldn't do it, Josie. Mother will save me money enough by and by."

As soon as breakfast was over she asked for her work, and Aunt Lottie, first pinning her up in a great calico apron of her own, and knotting a handkerchief over her brown curls, brought out the first basket and set it before her.

All the forenoon the busy fingers labored diligently, pulling to shreds the matted hair. Lower and lower grew the heap in the basket, higher and higher grew the mound on the floor beside the little workwoman, until at twelve o'clock, when Uncle Reuben came in to dinner, the great basket stood empty, and with a sigh of relief as big as the basket, Josie stepped down from her seat.

"Well done, honey bee," said Uncle Reuben, "and the hair looks prime, too. I could not have done it better myself."

"But how red your face is and how tired you look," cried Annie; "and your hands! Oh, what awful dirty hands!"

"The hands will wash and the face will cool," said Uncle Reuben. "I think that when mother comes home and sees the pretty curtains in the windows, she won't complain of either hands or face."

Tired little Josie looked rested already, as Uncle Reuben lifted her up to kiss her crimson face, and when dinner was over she went to work with great zeal. Aunt Lottie had offered to give her half of the money and let the boy finish the hair, but she would not consent; and although she had to sit alone—for her aunt dared not to bring the delicate embroidery with which she was busy near the flying threads of hair dust—she went bravely on.

Oh, how the little back did ache, and how the little brown eyes did sting! But when Uncle Reuben came in again at sunset, the work was done, and the weary child lay asleep in her chair. He stepped up very softly to

her side and laid a bright new dollar note in her lap.

Never was there a happier heart than Josie's when, after supper, he took her out to walk, and let her buy, with her own hard-earned money, the curtains for mother's room.

Yes, she was happier just once in her life, and that was when her mother, going up to her room, when she returned from her journey, asked: "Why, who put those pretty curtains up here?" And on hearing from Aunt Lottie of her little girl's unselfish love, took her in arms and said: "My own blessed, darling child! I'd rather have these than the finest curtains that ever hung in a palace."

## Household Recipes.

NICE ROLLS.—Rub four ounces of butter in two pounds of flour; rub smooth one boiled potato; and beat the whites only, of six eggs; mix them with the potato and a gill of good yeast or half cake leaven, work all up in the flour and wet with milk, make it stiff dough and let it rise one hour, then make it in rolls and bake in quick oven.

BUTTERMILK BISCUIT.—Take half a pint of buttermilk and one pint of flour; rub into the flour a piece of butter half as large as an egg; add a little salt, dissolve a tea-spoonful of soda, add a little hot water, and stir into the flour. Add flour enough to mould smooth. Roll and cut off like tea biscuit.

STEAM BROWN BREAD.—One cup of Indian meal, two cups of rye, one cup of molasses, two cups of milk; half tea-spoonful of soda, the same of salt. Stir well together and steam three hours, taking care that the water does not stop boiling. Add boiling water as the water boils away. If you wish it hot for breakfast, steam the day before, and in the morning set it in the oven for half an hour to form a good crust.

OMELETTE WITH CHEESE.—Beat six eggs very light; and two table-spoonfuls of cream, butter the size of a walnut, a little chopped parsley, pepper, salt and two ounces of grated cheese. Beat all well together and pour into a pan in which a small piece of butter is melting; let it cook until of a light brown, then fold it over and dish for the table.—Shake the pan while the omelette is cooking.

TO REMOVE FRECKLES.—Cosmetics fold for this purpose are often dangerous. The best plan is to make a lotion of a teaspoonful of sour milk and a small quantity of scraped horse-radish; let this stand from six to twelve hours, then use it to wash the parts affected twice or thrice a day.

WASHING FLANNEL.—Do all housekeepers know that flannel should never be rubbed on a board, but as loosely as possible in the hands. The harder it is rubbed the more does the dirt work in, instead of out. Flannels should be rubbed and rinsed in warm water, and dried where the wind will not strike it much. Anyone following the above directions need have no fear about flannel shrinking.

TO MEND CHINA.—Take a thick solution of gum arabic in water, and stir into it plaster of Paris until the mixture becomes of the proper consistency. Apply it with a brush to the fractured edges of the china, and stick them together. In three days the articles cannot be broken in the same place. The whiteness of the cement renders it doubly valuable.

CLARIFYING WATER.—Two grains of alum to a pint of water that is not fit to drink, render it perfectly clear and pure, and the taste of alum will not be perceived. A little pulverized alum thrown into a pail of water and allowed to stand fifteen minutes will precipitate all impurities, and leave it perfectly clear.

HOW TO SELECT FLOUR.—1. Look at its color; if it is white, with a slightly yellowish or straw-colored tint, it is a good sign. If it is very white, with a bluish cast, or with black specks in it, the flour is not good. 2. Examine its adhesiveness, wet and knead a little of it between the fingers; if it works dry and elastic it is good; if it works soft and sticky it is poor. Flour made from spring wheat is likely to be sticky. 3. Throw a little lump of dry flour against a dry, smooth, perpendicular surface; if it adheres in a lump, the flour has life in it; if it falls like powder, it is bad. 4. Squeeze some of the flour in your hand; if it retains the shape given by the pressure, that, too, is a good sign. Flour that will stand all these tests it is safe to buy. These modes are given by old flour dealers.

A REMEDY FOR THE HEADACHE.—Dr. Warburton Begbie (Edinburgh Medical Journal) advocates the use of turpentine in the severe headache to which nervous and hysterical women are subject. "There is moreover," he says, "another class of sufferers from headache, and this is composed of both sexes, who may be relieved by turpentine. I refer to the frontal headache, which is most apt to occur after prolonged mental effort, but may likewise be induced by unduly sustained physical exertion—what may be styled the headache of a fatigued brain. A cup of very strong tea often relieves this form of headache but this remedy with not a few is perilous, for bringing relief from pain, it may produce general restlessness, and worst of all, banish sleep. Turpentine in doses of twenty or thirty minims, given at intervals of an hour or two, will not only remove the headache, but produces in a wonderful manner that soothing influence to which reference has already been made."