

## Tales and Sketches.

## Christmas Lilies.

MYRA GOODWIN PLANTZ

"It was rather foolish to ask Lily Harris to join our Y's," remarked the president to a group of girls who still lingered. "What can such a pink and white blossom as she do in the temperance cause?"

"Nothing but to look pretty at our meetings. Think of that child having an arrest of thought about anything," replied Kato, the first vice-president, as she took her departure.

In another part of the city, "the pink and white blossom" sat in a room to match thinking it all over.

"How grand Miss Willard is! I felt like a glow-worm looking up at a star." Then Lily laughed. She never quite saw the point in logic or geometry, but she did in some other things. "So after all we are alike in one thing—we were both made to shine. Her light, I suppose, almost over the world. Whore's my little corner? How nice Miss G. was! I was so glad she did not look superior. She seems just like any other girl. She told me, there in the corner where I hid, that her work was only doing the things that came next. I hope she hates mathematics. Graduated girls think I am a perfect dummy, I know. I can't grasp 'the cause,' and forty-eleven 'departments,' but there must be something for me to do. I will begin reforming our bill of fare. If I'm to be papa's housekeeper, no more wine sauce and brandy in mince pies. Then there's Bert Haven. Papa said last night he feared he was not the pure 'country boy' we admired up among the hills. I'll begin with him. I can find his address from cousin Hal; yes, I see what to do."

After a few plans, imperfectly made, for Lily was in the habit of using other people's brains, she was ready to say her prayers and go to bed.

Now, though the clouds in Lily's oil paintings were never yet seen on land or sea, and though you recognized her horses because they did not have the horns that distinguished her cows, in flower painting she had the real artist touch, so on seeing her roses and pansies you forgave the satire on nature which her father insisted on calling, "My daughter's landscape paintings."

The next day Lily sat down and drew a cluster of lilies resting on an oak and ivy leaf. These she painted, and when finished had an exquisite Christmas card. Under the lilies she painted in blue and gold "Merry Christmas," then added, "Blessed are the pure in heart." Then she wrote in her pretty, delicate hand:

"MR. HAVEN:—Please accept this Christmas remembrance from a friend. The oak represents strength, the ivy tenacity, the lily purity. You may be tempted, sometimes, to drink wine, or do something your mother would feel sorry over if she knew. May God give you strength to resist the wrong, tenacity to cling to the right, and keep your heart pure, like the lily."

Lily did not dare sign her name, but the day before Christmas the gift and note found themselves on the dusty little table in a small upper room in a cheap (!) boarding-house.

"Ah, here's the mail," Bert said, coming into the dreary place soon after the perfumed package did. "A dun from my tailor, no doubt. Oh! a letter from Maggie; how shamefully I've treated that good little sister. What's this? A Christmas card? Not Maggie's writing, either. How natural these lilies-of-the-valley are—for all the world like those by the porch at home. I wouldn't have put in those big green leaves. Ah, I must have dropped out this note," and Bert sat down on the bed and forgot how cold the room was while he read over and over again that little note.

He could almost smell the lilies by the porch, and hear a sweet voice say, "My son, be pure, and true, and strong." That was her good-bye only five months ago, and her last words to him. She was asleep with August lilies on her breast when he saw her next. This would be her first Christmas in heaven.

"Thank God, she doesn't know I am not pure and true," he said, while tears of sorrow and shame fell on the lilies in his hand. "Perhaps she does know, though," but he could not bear to think of that. "I was so young and ignorant, and missed home so," he moaned like a child. "I have done nothing worse than drink a little. Yes, I've seen how plays my mother would be ashamed to have described. To night I promised Ben Parker I would take the only downward step I have yet to make. 'Pure in heart, oh, no, I'm not.' He paced the dreary little room awhile, then he said, 'I will stand by this verse, if I have to go back to the plow to do it.'"

Then, for the first time in weeks, he knelt and prayed. He had been a Christian when they all went to the dear, old country church, but the good

father and mother were sleeping in that same churchyard, the little sister was far away, and he was almost shipwrecked among the temptations of a city life. When he rose, a sadder and wiser young man, he sent a note to Parker telling him, that not only did he break the engagement, but all like it, in the future. Then he hurried to the cheerless basement dining room, and after finishing the uninviting supper, went out into the street.

"Parker will be after me, and I've fallen so low at times, I wanted to go with him. There are no places to go to but saloons and places like them."

Then he remembered the family that boarded with his mother one summer.

"Judge Harris invited me to call. Miss Lily is older than I, and must be a fine young lady. I haven't sunk so low I can't speak to a decent girl. I'll go there," he decided.

Lily was quite surprised to see the young man who wanted to help walk in the parlor where her father was reading aloud to her invalid mother. They all, with that sweet courtesy so natural to a cultured family, soon made him feel at ease, and the home-sick youth felt he was in paradise which too soon would fade into the reality of his dreary boarding-house.

"Come to dinner to-morrow, my boy. I fear we have neglected you," Judge Harris said when Bert arose to go. "We will not soon forget that good mother of yours. You must drop in here like home." At the mention of his mother's name tears started to the young man's eyes and he hurried away.

"He's on the saving side yet, if some one could reach him," remarked Judge Harris. "He shall have one helping hand," Lily said to herself, as she kissed her father good night.

Bert did come to dinner, and what a Christmas dinner it was! But more than turkey and mince pie, or ices and cake, was the blessed home feeling that he felt surrounded him. After the choice viands had been fully discussed, Judge Harris gave himself up to a romp with the younger children, Mrs. Harris went off to rest, and Lily was left alone to entertain their guest. She began by showing him some of her Christmas presents. One was a handsome autograph album.

"Will you write your name here?" she asked pleasantly.

"With pleasure," was the prompt answer.

Lily brought the pen and ink, then stood irresolute a moment. Dared she do such a bold thing? He would know who sent the card. If her light was to shine, could she stop to think what other people would do? These thoughts flashed through her mind the moment she hesitated, then she sat down and wrote on one of the pure, fair pages.

"For my friend Lily Harris's sake, I promise, God helping me, to never touch any kind of liquor, and to be pure in every way."

"I'm going to ask all my gentleman friends, from my brother Freddie up, to sign this pledge," she said, her face crimson with the effort. "We girls are going to try to help our brothers and other girls' brothers to keep from all kinds of temptation. You may not need it, but will you put your name there for little Maggie's sake and mine?"

Bert Haven took the pen and wrote his name. The fair girl at his side did not know what a prayer for help went up as his hand dashed off the signature.

"What made you send me that beautiful Christmas card?" he asked abruptly.

Then Lily told in her simple, child-like way, all she knew about the young women's temperance work.

"I wanted to help some one. I heard you were in danger. I can't make speeches or preside at a meeting, but I want to help at least one person," she said earnestly.

Then he told her how his feet were on the very brink of ruin, and how the lilies and the words held him back, until he was strong enough to meet his tempter.

That night a very happy girl lay down to rest in her pink and white chamber, and surely angels must have written in golden letters by her name. "She hath done what she could," for she had turned a soul away from the lotus flower of temptation with its poisonous breath, towards lilies of immortal bloom. *Oak and Ivy Leaf of the F. B. C. T. U.*

## Tobacco Worms.

Can a good man with a cigar in his mouth talk effectively to a boy with a cigarette in his mouth? A hundred times, no. As to the tobacco nuisance, public opinion is rising both in intelligence and sternness. It is doing this under the progress of scientific investigation, and especially under the impulse of notice which has been turned lately upon diseases caused by tobacco. It is now very well ascertained that delirium tremens may be produced by

excessive indulgence in narcotics. The facts known to the medical profession as to the lip and tongue cancers caused by tobacco are too horrible to be recited before a public assembly, especially over the grave of that great soldier (General Grant) whose death has made Mt. McGregor a sacred height.

In the Massachusetts Legislature a bill for the prevention of the sale of tobacco to minors has just passed the Lower House by a vote of three to one.

A gentleman long in a public position of honor and responsibility sends me in writing a very suggestive illustration. A lady from the country came to Boston to do some shopping. On her way to Boston a gentleman occupied half the seat with her on the car. Half his time was spent in the smoking car and the rest with the lady. When she arrived in Boston she was sick, and was obliged to send for a physician. He examined her case and informed her that she had been made ill by tobacco. She paid the doctor's bill and went home without doing her business, and wondering whether non-smokers had any rights which smokers are bound to respect. Another lady says that she cannot come to Boston to do business on account of the ever present fumes of tobacco in the streets and shops.

No doubt tobacco blunts the sense of propriety. The narcotic nosegay is as unconscious of the odors he exhales as is the eater of onions and garlic. "Indifference or apathy, with regard to the comfort of others," says the *London Times*, "is one of the most remarkable effects of tobacco. No other drug will produce anything like it. The opium-eater does not compel you to eat opium with him. The drunkard does not compel you to drink. The smoker compels you to smoke; nay, more, to breathe the smoke he has discharged from his own mouth."

A lady, coming from the south for her health, was kept in the state-room of the steamer during all the voyage on account of the tobacco smoke on every part of the vessel, and lost the whole effect of the voyage because she could have no fresh air. Her husband, a lawyer, thinks that in equity she could bring a suit for damages against the steamboat company.

The new State House at Des Moines, Iowa, will not allow smokers to enter its portals. An edict has just gone forth that tobacco must not be used in the hall and corridors of the White House in Washington. Our military and naval academies do not allow their pupils to use tobacco. Several colleges in the West prohibit the use of tobacco by their students. Germany has excellent laws forbidding the sale of tobacco to minors. Eighteen States in the American Union are now teaching children to abstain from alcoholics and narcotics, and my proposition is that the churches, preachers, and members should rise at least to the secular level of the State Legislature on both these subjects.—*Joseph Cook.*

## THE PROGRESS OF WOMEN.

## A Revolution of Vast Importance.

It is better to live fifty years now than 600 years at any previous period. When I was a young lady, nothing was provided for girls in the way of education, no high schools were open to them, the idea of a college had not been mooted, women and girls were regarded as intellectually inferior to men and boys. A woman did not even own her own clothing, and at her husband's death she could not claim even what she had spun and woven with her own hands, if her husband had not willed it to her.

All that is changed; 120 colleges in the United States now admit women. She is entering every department of business on the equality with man; but this has not been accomplished without herculean work on the part of the pioneers of the woman suffrage movement, to whom the American women owe an incalculable debt of gratitude. Only seven professions were open to woman in 1840. She was beaten back if she attempted to enter anything else. Now 200 professions are open to women. Presidents of colleges, cashiers of banks, journalists, are women. They organize great missionary societies, by their work, raise much of the money that supports these societies. The women of the Methodist church raise \$500,000 annually.

Two hundred and fifty thousand women belong to the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and they say that they cannot do what they wish until they get suffrage. Before the labor question and the temperance question are settled, the woman suffrage question must be settled, for this question underlies both labor and temperance. We have nothing to fear from the votes of foreign born women. We need not fear the votes of bad women. They are in a very small minority.

I have visited thirteen state prisons and the officers tell me that eight-tenths of the convicts have been brought there through strong drink. The temptations that assault women do not assault men and vice versa. The temptations of the women are the jewelry, dry goods and upholstery stores. Her temptation comes through her attire and overwhelming love for the beautiful. Men say women do not want to vote. The unwillingness of women to vote is gener-

ally because of the unwillingness of the men of their households to have them vote.

In 1880, there were in the prisons of the United States, 83,000 men and 6,000 women. The fact is there are not many bad women. The bad woman scare is a senseless scare. Men and women do not make two classes, but one class. If women does not have logic, she has something that makes up for the deficiency—she has intuition, and one is as likely to come out right as the other.

There is not a question before the people to-day that has not a moral basis. Only one-half the people—the male half—is working at these problems. Call in the other half, the female half, and you have the whole of humanity. If men have done grandly, what will they not do with women to help them? The whole is better than the half, and there is the argument for woman suffrage in a nut shell.—*Mary A. Livermore, in Leslie.*

## Domestic Department.

## Arsenical Wall Paper.

A few years ago, the danger of poisoning from arsenical wall-paper was so thoroughly exposed and so widely agitated that large numbers of persons discarded the use of paper upon their walls, and adopted the more wholesome method of calcimining or painting. Recently, however, public alarm upon this question has been quieted by the assurance of manufacturers that arsenic is no longer used in the coloring of wall papers. If this has been true at any time previous, it certainly is not at the present, as within a few months a number of cases of poisoning through this means have been reported. A case of this kind recently occurred in Springfield, Missouri, an account of which was sent us by a friend residing in that city. We make the following extract from the same:—

"Two weeks ago a lady, with the aid of a servant, papered her room. One week later, she was lying with her muscles as completely paralyzed as one can imagine, except that she breathed, and could talk with difficulty. She could open and close her eyes, but could not raise a finger. Her sensations were similar to those of one borne down by heavy weights; and, indeed, her weight physically was more than double her normal condition. Some small amount of nourishment was given for a few days, but for the past four days, nothing could be taken except by enemata."

Words are inadequate to express a proper opinion of the utter want of conscience shown by manufacturers who will introduce into so commonly a used article as wall-paper a poison capable of producing such baneful effects upon human life. To investigate a case like the above, and trace the poisonous paper to the parties by whom it was made, would be a task requiring very much less detective ability than that often expended in the apprehension of some petty theft; and yet, such is the apathy respecting their duty in this regard, of those in whose hands rests the care of the lives of Christian citizens, that we have yet to learn of a single case in which punishment has been inflicted upon any manufacturer of wall-paper for the criminal offense of converting an article intended for the adornment of a home into a weapon of death. If the difficulty lies in the lack of proper laws, let wide awake citizens everywhere, at the very next meeting of their State or Provincial Legislature, see that such laws are enacted, as will eventually put a stop to the manufacture or sale of wall papers or of any other article of domestic use containing poisonous or deleterious substances.—*Good Health.*

## How to Clean the Cooking Stove

Even in so apparently simple a matter as cleaning and polishing the kitchen stove or range there is scope for the exercise of intelligence and skill. The *American Cultivator* offers some hints on this point which inexperienced housekeepers at least may find helpful. It says: "Once a week is often enough to give it a thorough good cleaning, and this, with a little attention during the week, will keep it looking as clean and nice as any person could wish. The first thing to be done before applying the polish is to see that the stove is clean. With an old knife scrape off all superfluous matter from the stove, and brush off into the dustpan. Scrape from the oven all the burnt matter caused by the running over of pies and puddings, and brush it thoroughly out. If the top of the stove is very greasy it should be washed thoroughly in warm soap-suds, and wiped with a dry cloth. If the time can be given to it, it is much better to wipe both top and front of the stove or any part of it that needs it, and it will polish much easier. The next thing to be done is to put on the hands a pair of old, loose fitting gloves, and never on any account polish a stove without them. No matter how carefully you may handle a brush and blacking, it is sure to make the hands

rough and grimy, and it is next to impossible to remove it when it gets under the finger-nails. Mix a sufficient quantity of the powdered polish with soap-suds to the consistency of cream, and apply to the stove with a brush. Some blacking admits going all over the stove first, when it is wet, and polishes better when thoroughly dry, while other kinds must be rubbed when slightly damp, for if left until thoroughly dry, it will not polish at all, and will have to be reblacked. With the latter kind of blacking only a small part of the stove should be gone over at one time, so that it may not get too dry. If a brush is to be used in polishing, cover mouth and nose so as not to inhale the dust that is sure to arise from the vigorous use of the brush. A brush does, to be sure, give a nice gloss to the stove, but most women do not care for this, claiming that spots show much quicker on such a glossy surface than on a duller one. A woollen cloth is much better to use than a brush to polish the stove, for it makes but very little dust and gives a softer gloss to the surface of the iron, which is much nicer than a high polish. A person with weak lungs should never use a brush for this work on any account. After polishing, rub the nickel-plating with a cloth dampened with ammonia and whiting. Mix whiting and ammonia to the consistency of cream and dip the cloth in it. Around some ranges are bands of polished iron, which many think are nickel. These can be cleaned with both brick and soap. Dampen a cloth, and rub it on a piece of soap until there is a good lather, then dip it into some powdered bath-brick, and rub the iron briskly. Polish with a dry cloth. Some women when blacking a stove, blacken the inside as well as the outside of the oven, claiming that it is very little trouble, and it is kept in better order than if merely brushed. Others will not do this work, not on account of the trouble, but they claim that whatever is cooked in it might taste or smell of the lead dust. A stove cleaned once a week in this way may be kept looking nice all the week by wiping it over after dinner each day, first with brown paper, then with a dry woollen cloth kept for this purpose. If there are many grease spots, which is usually the case where frying has been done, rub them over, when the stove is cool, with a little blacking, and polish with the dry cloth.

## KITCHEN CLIPPINGS.

**RICE CAKES.**—To one and one half cups boiled rice, add three eggs and flour and milk enough to make a batter, adding a little salt. Fry a light brown.

**CREAM PUFFS.**—One cup of hot water, one-half cup of butter, boil together, stirring in a cupful of dry flour while boiling. Drop by tablespoonfuls on a buttered tin and bake in a quick oven twenty-five minutes, being careful not to open the oven door more than is necessary. This makes fifteen puffs. Take care they do not touch each other. For filling, take a pint of cream, a cup of powdered sugar and whites of two eggs, with flavoring of any sort preferred. When the puffs are cold, cut a round piece out of the bottom of each, scrape out the inside, fill the cavity with whipped cream, fit back the piece taken from the bottom, set on a dish and ice.—*The Center.*

**STUFFED POTATOES.**—Wash and peel eight large potatoes; divide them lengthwise through the middle; hollow them out neatly with a knife or spoon till they are the thickness of a dollar piece. Take the insides of two or three baked potatoes, two shallots chopped finely, a piece of butter the size of an egg, a small piece of fat bacon cut in dice, a pinch of chopped parsley and chives, and beat the whole into a paste, with pepper and salt, butter the inside of the potatoes and fill them up with this paste, except just at the upper part, then put the potatoes upon a buttered tin and bake in the oven; in half an hour, if both sides be browned, serve.

**FITTERS.** Put into a stew-pan one pint of water, one tablespoonful of white sugar. When it boils, stir in rapidly one pint of flour. Let it cool a little, while warm beat into it six eggs, each one broken by itself and well beaten before another is added. Have boiling hard and drop the dough, which will be stiff in lumps like a small buckeye nut, into it. Eat with syrup or melted butter and sugar, flavored with vanilla or nutmeg.

**BUTTERMILK MUFFINS.**—Those have but to be tried to become a standing breakfast dish. Beat hard two eggs into a quart of buttermilk, and stir in flour to make a thick batter, about a quart when it is mixed, and lastly, a teaspoonful of salt and the same of soda. Bake in a hot oven in well-greased tins. Muffins of all kinds should only be cut just around the edge, then pulled open with the fingers.