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## Poetry.

### NEARER HOME.

One sweetly solemn thought  
Comes to me o'er and o'er;  
I am nearly home to-day  
That I have never been before.

Nearer my father's house,  
Where the many mansions be;  
Nearer the great white throne,  
Nearer the crystal sea.

Nearer the bound of life  
Where we lay, our burdens down;  
Nearer leaving the cross,  
Nearer gaining the crown!

But lying dark between,  
Winding dark through the night,  
Is the silent unknown stream,  
That leads at last to the light.

Closer and closer my steps  
Come to the dread abyss;  
Closer death to my lips,  
Presses the awful chrym.

O if my mortal feet  
Have almost gained the brink;  
It is but an instant home,  
Even to-day than I think.

Father, perfect my trust;  
Let my spirit feel in-ward;  
That her feet are firmly set  
On the rock of a living faith.

## Miscellany.

### MY FIRST YEAR OF HOUSE KEEPING.

BY ELIZABETH CAMPBELL.

A few days ago my pretty little friend, Laura Harding, came to me in a state of life perplexity. I had long been Laura's confidante, and I knew all about her engagement to handsome Ned Morton, and when the marriage was to take place. I therefore naturally conjectured that Laura's present difficulty was in some way connected with her approaching marriage, and I hoped I might be able to say something that would disperse the clouds from her pretty face.

O, Mrs. Harding! she exclaimed, after she had kissed me and tossed her hat and shawl on a neighboring chair, I am in such a fix. A fix my dear! I suppose that means you are in some trouble about something?

Yes, of course, what else could it mean? Excuse my stupid way of expressing myself. But, in more elegant terms, I am in a dilemma.

What is the matter?

I will tell you, in two words. You see I am to be married next Wednesday—day—you know that—and we go on a short tour for a couple of weeks; and when we return Edward wants to go to house-keeping—at once—and I know nothing at all about house-keeping. Now, what shall I do?

By this time Laura was seated on an ottoman at my feet, and was holding my hand and looking up in my face in a most imploring manner. I smiled reassuringly, for I could afford to. I had once been in a similar fix; while now—well, I will only say that everybody who has been to my house returns a second, a third, and even a fifth time! Let that fact speak for itself and for me too.

I don't wonder you are disposed to laugh at me, Laura continued, somewhat reproachfully. I daresay it seems a very trifling circumstance to you, Mrs. Harding—you are such a splendid housekeeper. But I assure you I cannot contemplate the thought of going to house-keeping at once, without the least preparation with any other feeling than absolute horror.

I understand your feelings and sympathize with you, dear, I said; when I married Mr. Harding, I was in your position exactly. I did not know how to cook a breakfast.

You, Mrs. Harding! she exclaimed, against. Well, you cannot think how it comforts me to hear that. I do wish you would give me a little of the benefit of your experience; I know it would enlighten me very much, and be of so much use to me.

I will Laura. I was blessed with the dearest and kindest of mothers; and owing to the straitened circumstances of my family I was brought up as the only daughter I could receive must be a useful education, should be no liberal as possible.

With this view I was kept very close to my books, my music, my French, and all the accomplishments which could be bestowed on me. Of course I was anxious to profit as much as possible by my advantages, and knowing that I could not enjoy them long I gave up my whole time and attention to every sort of study which required the application of my higher intellectual faculties, wholly neglecting

the humble but useful arts of knowing how to make my own plain garments and superintending the cooking of a dinner. The consequence was that, at the age of nineteen, I was a very accomplished and learned young lady, and competent to accept, without an instant's hesitation, the high post offered to me in a young lady's seminary. But when, at the end of my first year's teaching, Mr. Harding insisted, on making me his wife, I felt that I was not at all competent to give the order for his breakfast, or hardly to sew a button on his shirt, in case it might require one.

I accepted his proposition, however, and looked forward hopefully to the possibility of learning all that would be necessary to make me a useful wife. After the usual insane manner of young married people, we began life by going to a boarding-house; the proposal came from me—Mr. Harding had anticipated the pleasure of going into a nice little cottage, or even a suit of rooms, and having a home; but he did not think for a moment of opposing my wishes. He was then only a clerk in the firm where he has since become a partner; and I readily persuaded him because I fully believed, if myself, that we had not money enough to begin house-keeping on my dear Laura, don't for one moment think of boarding houses; let me be a waitress to you in this respect. Begin your married life, if it should be necessary, with one room and a kitchen, rather than a boarding-house; but fortunately for you, nothing of the sort is necessary. You have a handsome little fortune, and Edward has a comfortable income; you will be the happiest of young housekeepers before the end of your first year of married life.

Well—we went to boarding; we paid an enormous sum (considering our income) for two small rooms, and three extremely spare meals; our gas was extra; every little attention, when we had callers, was extra; our washing bill I am sure would have been enough to board two moderate persons, fuel was extra, meals in our rooms were extra—in short, at the end of the week Mr. Harding's modest salary barely covered our personal expenditures. It was in vain that we attempted to economize; economy was not possible under the circumstances—we could find no sufficiently respectable boarding house, where we could live at a lower rate, and when, at the end of the year, the extra expense of a nurse and a cook's board was added to our customary expenses, it became evident that a change must be wrought somewhere. I felt almost desperate. I reflected on my position day and night, and at last I determined to go to house-keeping.

At about the time of Harry's birth, Mr. Harding's salary was increased; and his employers possibly suspecting the condition of his finances, advanced him the extra four hundred dollars which had been added to his salary. This was such a perfect godsend that I felt it would be tempting fate to hesitate a moment longer. I set about searching for rooms. I was a careful task; but after two weeks' search, I found a pleasant, airy suit of rooms, with a small room, and three extremely spare meals; our gas was extra; every little attention, when we had callers, was extra; our washing bill I am sure would have been enough to board two moderate persons, fuel was extra, meals in our rooms were extra—in short, at the end of the week Mr. Harding's modest salary barely covered our personal expenditures. It was in vain that we attempted to economize; economy was not possible under the circumstances—we could find no sufficiently respectable boarding house, where we could live at a lower rate, and when, at the end of the year, the extra expense of a nurse and a cook's board was added to our customary expenses, it became evident that a change must be wrought somewhere. I felt almost desperate. I reflected on my position day and night, and at last I determined to go to house-keeping.

I took the advice of an experienced matron in my kitchen, appointments, and at the expense of a humble carpet on my parlor and a scanty assortment, I had almost liberal supply of pots, pans, stoves, strainers, kettles, bowls, etc.; and half triumphantly, half doubtfully, we moved into our new home. However, I had less sensibility now about acknowledging my shortcomings to my husband, and he cheered me by declaring emphatically that he knew very well I should be the best of housekeepers.

To begin with, I dismissed the nurse, for I was now strong enough to take charge of the baby myself; and I positively refused to engage a general house-servant till I should learn enough about my own vocation not to appear as an idiot in her eyes; for in this country, at any rate, it is absolutely necessary for the mistress of a household to know more about the management of a kitchen than her servant does; if she does not, they quickly change places, and instead of the mistress ruling the maid, the maid rules her.

And here Laura, let me insert one word of advice, whatever your ignorance on these subjects may be, never let it appear before your servant. When you are at a loss on any matter relating to your dinner or any other subject appertaining to the management of your house, consult me or any other friend; but maintain a manner of profound knowledge concerning every thing when under the eagle eye of your cook or maid of all work, as I felt myself safe to admit a servant to spy the nakedness of the land of house-keeping knowledge; but I was unaccustomed to house work, and the baby required a great deal of my time; so I was at last obliged, with fear

and trembling, to call in the assistance of a stout Hibernian. However, it was a great satisfaction to know that, notwithstanding the many, and in some instances expensive, blunders, which I had made, our expenses at the end of the week averaged just one half during the reign of boarding houses. On one occasion, it was my first Sunday dinner, I had, desirous to celebrate the event, procured a very handsome, plump turkey, of moderate size. The turkey was unusually good—he slept the whole forenoon—and I devoted my entire energies to the dinner. At length, it was ready, and I gently but triumphantly, tinkled the bell to summon my husband, and at the same time, not awoken Harry. Harry slept like a cherub, and Mr. Harding came, very light of foot, and complimented me on the elegant appearance of the table. It was very pretty to look at. The dainty china cups were of a most cunning pattern, glowing cranberry space within the sparkling oval of cut glass dish, two or three little bits of silver, which had been presented to us, glittered and looked quite rich and splendid, the turkey was a most delicate lovely brown, and been so carefully looked with my own hands that it was smooth and unbroken to the end of a perch. I sat down with all the dignity of conscious power, and watched Mr. Harding as he carefully sharpened the carver, with a feeling of elation such as I can never experience again for a similar cause, and then I saw him begin to carve.

He carved beautifully, and I soon forgot the turkey and the dinner in admiring his deft skill and thinking how charming it would be when we came to give little dinner parties. Presently he stopped with a muttered exclamation; then he bent a look of bewildered inquiry upon the bird, then he coughed, and grew so blunderingly red in the face that I started up in alarm. The carver dropped from his hand, and he sank, shaking, into his seat. I was completely terrified, in my perplexity I too, looked at the turkey with an undefined presentiment that the cause of his agitation was there.

O horror! my beautiful turkey!—the pride of my dinner—I had cooked it just as it had come from the market, forgetting that there were certain preliminaries which must needs be gone through before consigning it to the oven in short, I had not drawn it. I, too, sank in my seat. I was covered with confusion, my face burned; and it was some moments before I could turn my husband's eyes; but when at last I looked at him, and saw that he was almost strangled with suppressed laughter, the full alacrity of rebellion burst upon me, and we both laughed heartily and long and boisterously.

Master Harry burst in upon our merriment with a series of discordant yells; but we contrived to enjoy a very comfortable dinner, although we did not partake of the turkey. This was only one of a dozen equally ludicrous blunders, (though the most serious of them all), which I made during my novitiate, and when I engaged my first servant I was not sufficiently versed in the politics of our mistress of the kitchen to conceal my scanty knowledge on the subject of keeping house. The consequence was that she despised me before the end of the first week, and before the end of the first month she had learned all the secrets of my establishment, and my utter ignorance and simplicity, with all the other faults of the street. Of course I was obliged to discharge her. The next one stole and drank and was impertinent, so she went at the end of a fortnight. I went through a perfect sieve of servants before I got one to my mind, but I learned a great deal, too. In utter desperation, at last, I went to Castle Garden, and there I picked out a mild faced, bright-eyed girl, with a kind, gentle voice and very strong brogue; she knew nothing at all; but I undertook her instruction, and in teaching her I taught myself. She is with me still—it is just fifteen years since she first came into my family; and if some sensible fellow does not persuade her to go to house-keeping on her own account, I dare say she will remain with me as long as she lives.

Laura had listened to me with marked attention, and when I ceased speaking she drew a long breath, and said:

Well, you have almost frightened me more than I was before, Mrs. Harding. But then it is a great consolation to know that you were ever so long ago, just as big a goose as I am!

But there is no occasion, dear Laura, to be so frightened, it was really not hard work at all after I had once fairly put my mind to it and then I can warn you of many rocks which I ran against. Only assure yourself, most seriously, that you can never be the mistress of your husband's house, nor fully the mistress of your own heart, either, till you can proudly and confidently take your seat at the head of the hundred and fifty little steps by which the appearance has been made tasteful, luxurious, elegant and thoroughly wholesome and appetizing, and there is no question but you will succeed.

Oh, thank you my dear Mrs. Harding—you are so good! I shall give up my whole mind to the business of becoming an accomplished housekeeper!

And I looked after the smiling face and grateful form as she bade me good-by and hurried away, well assured that a true, modest, gentle spirit, and a loving heart, which I decided will, would soon make her the pride of a happy man's heart and home.

### The Engine-Drivers' Strike.

The chief strength of the drivers, in a strike like this, being a general impression in the public mind to the effect that engine drivers are a highly skilled class and consequently difficult to replace. Such, however, is not the case. A locomotive engine is emphatically a self-teaching machine—a machine that only requires watching, not working. Engine driving is a simple and simple—stopping, starting, and regulating the speed and direction—could be taught to any intelligent man in a couple of hours; and men who now earning less wages in other trades could be made into really efficient drivers in the course of three months. The quadrants that guide the movements of the regulator handle has "shut" and "open" marked on it, the gauge-glass showing the height of the water, and the spring balance, indicating (in plain figures) the pressure of steam in the boiler are constantly before the eyes of the driver on the footplate. Everything else that it is requisite to know is indicated in the same mechanical and unerring manner, and the whole art of engine driving—apart from an acquaintance with the curves and gradients on the road—consists in moving about half a dozen handles in accordance with the registrations of the indicators.

Drivers are not mechanics, as a body they do not know anything—or need they know anything—of the principle or construction of an engine, nor can they do anything in the way of repairing their engines. Many of the oldest and best paid drivers of the present day, were broken down workmen of various trades, who look to engine driving when the mechanic drivers struck some fifteen or sixteen years ago. Such men begin as cleaners, and are promoted from that to firing and then to driving. The complaint that men favoured by foremen or managers are put through these different grades in a few months is in itself evidence of how easily drivers are made, as it is not to the competence of the men promoted but the unjust system of promotion that the general body object. In a word, there is hardly any class of working men above the rank of general labourers who could be more easily replaced than engine drivers.

We understand that if the men on the Brighton Railway had not come on terms when they did, the company would by the end of this week have had a sufficient number of new drivers to carry on the work of the line. They could have got plenty of men before the strike, but they did not care about giving definite promises to the applicants for work, as they did not think their own men would have carried matters to the extreme they did. If any class of directors were really pushed for drivers they would probably try to get them from among the erectors and fitters of the locomotive trade, as they are the class from which the locomotive drivers were originally taken, the man who had charge of the engine in the shop going out with it as driver. Just now there is rather a superabundance of this class of workmen, and in addition to being able to drive they would have the advantage of understanding the principle of the engine.

### FLOWERS.

Have you a flower garden? Do you cultivate flowers? Flowers please the eye; their fragrance is sweet. Their cultivation improves the taste, the intellect, the heart. Neither man, woman nor child can cultivate flowers without being benefited thereby. Flowers in or around the house, reveal to us the spirit of the household. They are never seen where coarseness, ignorance, beastliness, hold their carnival. We associate them with purity, delicacy, cultivation and moral worth. No matter how humble the cabin, or how rude otherwise the surroundings, the sight of flowers at once put us at our ease—we know we are among friends, they are a standing invitation for us to enter the dwelling. We want no formal introduction to the inmates; we know they are worthy our acquaintance; we are sure of a pleasant reception, and of hospitable treatment of every household where flowers are loved and cultivated. It is not now too early to be planning the work and preparing the seed, for the flower garden which is to ornament and grace our premises the coming season.

WARTS ON HORSES.—To cure warts on horses, mix equal quantities of turpentine and sulphuric acid, stirring slowly in a tumbler and afterwards bottle the mixture.—Rub gently around the base of the wart, and then apply the medicine to the wart with a feather once or twice a day; it will gradually eat them off.

**CHILLED RAILWAY WHEELS.**—We have before us a letter written by Mr. Swinney, the General Manager of the Great Western Railway of Canada in which he says that both wrought and cast iron wheels are used upon his line, "but that cast iron wheels are much preferred both in point of safety and economy." These cast iron wheels have no wrought iron tyres but are cast with chilled rims and flanges. They are made at Toronto and are 2 ft. 9 in. in diameter and weigh 450 lbs. each. No accident has happened on the line from any failure of these wheels. [Engineering.]

Nothing new is in this Province.—Ed. STAND.

**FRENCH ORDNANCE.**—The largest gun in the French service is for coast defence. It is a 10 1/2 in. breech loader, throwing a 436 lb projectile with a 50 lb charge. For sea and garrison service the most powerful gun is a 9 1/2 in. breech-loader, throwing a 318 lb shot with 44 lb of powder. [Ibid.]

**The Intercolonial Railway.**—Of which the construction is, we think, now secured, is an interesting undertaking to engineers at a time when new railway enterprises generally are so much impeded by financial difficulties. The new line will sweep the whole of winter success if any attain to Mr. A. L. Light, the Engineer who has so ably reported upon it, and confidently advocated its construction. [Ibid.]

**THE GREAT TUNNEL.**—The Bill of the British Chamber of Commerce, and the London and North Western, and to have two tunnels, one three and the other four miles long, in a total length of 24 miles, has passed the House of Commons on the third reading. [Ibid.]

**COAL TO LONDON.**—In the month of January, February and March last, 1,637,397 tons of coal were brought to London. The arrivals by sea have fallen off 347,688 tons, as compared with the same period of last year, while the railways have gained 128,290 tons. [Ibid.]

**Josh Billings says** it is highly important when a man makes up his mind to become a rascal, that he should examine himself closely and see if he has not been constructed for a phool.

**Josh Billings on Penicillin.**—I always advise short sermons, especially on a hot Sunday. If a minister can't strike it in in forty minutes, he either has a poor gospel or else he is boring in the long place. [Ibid.]

**My son,** if things will wear tight boots there are three things they must inevitably suffer—namely, a bad view, a bad gain, and a bad temper. [Ibid.]

**MAGAZINE.**  
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