

only by seeking more and more the permeation of our whole being by the loving, indwelling Spirit of Christ.

No one will say that this undesigned ministry of good lives is not under God's direction. Though it is not in our thought to scatter the blessings which we may thus unconsciously give out, it is certainly in His thought. Every influence of our lives God uses as He will, to do good to whomsoever it pleases Him to send the blessing.

Part of our every morning prayer should be that God would use our influence for Himself and take the smallest fragments of power for good that drop from our lives and employ them all for His glory and as seeds to grow into beauty in some of this world's desert spots.—*From Silent Times.*

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES,—

Lately the word "Comfort" has been frequently in my mind, so to-day, to find what it really means, I hunted it up in the dictionary, which says it is "a state of quiet or moderate enjoyment resulting from the possession of what satisfies bodily wants, and freedom from all care and anxiety," etc. How very careful the compiler of the dictionary has been to give the exact meaning of the word! (Of course, he gives synonyms and other meanings; but this seems to me the fullest.) *Comfort* is derived from the Latin word *fortis*, which means *strong*; so to be comforted is to be strengthened, to be enabled to go on a little further. That is a nice idea; is it not?

But who among us all takes the comfort which she ought to have; where do we find a really comfortable woman? Do you know anything about it? If so, do you practice it? We live at such a high-pressure rate in this nineteenth century, that many of us feel that comfort—that is, rest and strengthening—must be put aside,—so many duties call us, one little thing after another demands our attention, and we think it wasted time to stop for a few minutes, and so we do not get any comfort at all. Now, if a machine were to go on continually day after day at a very great rate it would soon wear out, something would snap suddenly, and then there would be a collapse. It must be stopped in order to be oiled, cleaned, and kept in a condition fit for work. So with our human machinery. We must stop to rest and keep ourselves in proper trim for our duties, or most assuredly we too shall collapse sooner or later. So the sooner we come to our senses the better.

The housekeeper has had a busy day; she has hurried since early morning to "get through," and now she says, "I am going to take a little comfort." So she takes a book, perhaps, and lies down on the lounge; but presently she finds that she is too tired to read, or her nerves are all in a flutter. She closes her eyes to shut out thoughts, if possible; but her mind is full of the things she has done, and of the things she is going to do when she gets up. She knows she has performed everything faithfully, and omitted nothing. Her conscience does not trouble her. But she has been working all day at such a rate and in such a nervous manner that now she cannot rest, and so she gets up and begins again, not one whit refreshed. Where is the comfort she meant to take? She knows she has earned a little rest, and now when she has the chance she cannot enjoy it. Her duties are not pleasantly performed; she feels that they are a drag, and she does them in a half-careless way just because they *must* be done. If this goes on day after day what will become of our friend?

But every woman is not like this one. There are some philosophers among us who reason the whole thing out, and plan their work accordingly. They do not crowd two days' work into one, so that they may have a little time for something extra. Each day brings its own duties, and each duty is conscientiously performed. When working, they work; and while resting, they really rest. They do not attempt a hundred things at once; but they remember the old couplet—

"One thing at a time, and that done well,
Is a very good rule, as many can tell."

Consequently they are happy in their work and take comfort therein. Even a delicate woman will accomplish more, and will do it more satisfactorily too (if done wisely), than one who wears herself out in doing.

And there is another thing. How many women (and men too) spend their whole time in duties requiring physical exercise? Where is their mental work, their mind-improvement? If we do nothing but cook, and churn, and bake, and sweep, and darn, we are very little above being machines, and not much better than the lower animals. We are blessed with minds and brain, and it is our duty to

improve ourselves mentally as much as possible. We must "keep up with the times," or we shall show dense ignorance of what goes on in the world. We ought, too, to read the experiences of others, their attempts, their failures, their successes. Much profit will accrue to us thereby. For instance, if we are interested in poultry, let us read up that subject at our leisure. We shall soon find, though we may have advanced a good deal already, that there is a vast unexplored field before us yet. Take buttermaking—some may be able to turn out good butter; but a little study of how others do will be good for us, and quite a few hints may be received. We are never too old to learn, and the more we read and study the more proficient we shall become. What others have done we may do; why not? And all this leads to comfort. We shall soon find that to make a success of anything we must be methodical and particular; this produces comfort, and then follows a little leisure, in which we may rest our bodies and refresh our minds, and be greatly comforted and strengthened thereby.

And again, not only shall we receive comfort ourselves, but we shall be able to impart that blessing to others. When members of the household need a helping hand or a word of cheer, we shall be ready to give it. When the unexpected happens,

"Thoroughbred."

This is a beautiful and well-known picture, and appeals to all tastes, for surely there are few people who could not love and admire the noble animal we see here. What a union of strength and gentleness! This fair girl and her attendant doggies could be crushed into nothingness in a few minutes as far as mere physical strength is concerned, yet in her lies the real strength, because "Thoroughbred" loves her and is as wax in her little hands. The all-powerful charm of any picture, *expression*, is well brought out. The sweet, quiet face of the girl and her attitude of entire trust, as she seems to be saying some caressing words, and the strong and gentle look of wisdom on the horse's face as he listens, are both beautiful. He will not snap at that nice apple—not he; but he will eat it in a dignified manner, and not alone to please himself, for I firmly believe he would give it to his mistress if he thought she wanted it. Then look at the dogs. One is rather sedate, and even if he wanted the apple he is too polite to say so, seeing that it is not intended for him. Of the other fellow I am not quite so sure. There is a very eager look in his spirited little hairy face. But, after all, I think the doggies just love to show their sympathy. One could look often at this picture and discover new beauties in it every time. All the figures are interesting, but the magnificent "Thoroughbred" is a grand study and seems to lead one to noble thoughts. Indeed, there are great lessons in self-sacrifice and fidelity to be learned from animals.

Recipes.

CHRISTMAS CAKE.

Four lbs. raisins, 1 lb. currants, 1 lb. almonds (blanched), 1½ lbs. butter, 2 lbs. sugar, 1½ doz. eggs, 1 cup black molasses, 1 wineglass rose water, 1 teaspoon soda mixed in a small cup of sour cream: flour to stiffen.

WEDDING CAKE.

Three and a half pounds butter (creamed), 3½ lbs. brown sugar, 3 doz. eggs, 3 lbs. raisins, 2 lbs. currants, 2 lbs. candied lemon, orange and citron peel mixed, 1 lb. blanched almonds, 1 tablespoonful cinnamon, 1 teaspoonful ground cloves, half pint black molasses, 2 wineglassfuls rose water, 1 dessert-spoon soda stirred in 1 cup of sour cream: flour to stiffen; slightly brown the flour.

ENGLISH PLUM PUDDING.

One lb. suet (chopped fine), ½ lb. flour, 1 lb. raisins, 1 lb. currants, 1 lb. bread crumbs, ½ lb. brown sugar, 5 eggs, ½ nutmeg (grated), ½ lb. mixed peel, ½ cup water.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING.

Three lbs. raisins, 1 lb. currants, 2 lbs. suet, 1 lb. mixed peel, 1 doz. eggs, 2 lbs. bread crumbs, ½ cup molasses, spice, 1 lb. sugar: flour to stiffen.

SHEPHERD'S PIE.

One quart of any kind of cold meat, chopped fine; add 1 small onion, and nearly a pint of stock or gravy, or water; season with pepper and salt, and boil slowly for an hour; thicken with a tablespoonful of flour; put in a deep earthen dish, and cover with hot mashed potatoes, into which stir 1 tablespoonful butter and 1 cup of milk; salt to taste. Bake gently for one hour.

Words of Wisdom.

A man has often more trouble to digest meat than to get it.

A pot that belongs to many is ill stirred and worse boiled.

A man, as he manages himself, may die old at thirty, or young at eighty.

A ready way to lose your friend is to lend him money.

I Shall be Satisfied.

When I shall wake on that fair morn of morns
After whose dawning never night returns,
And with whose glory day eternal burns,
I shall be satisfied.

When this vile body shall arise again,
Purged by Thy power from every taint and stain,
Delivered from all weakness and all pain,
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall gaze upon the face of Him
Who for me died, with eye no longer dim,
And praise Him in the everlasting hymn,
I shall be satisfied.

When I shall call to mind the long, long past,
When clouds and storms and shadows overcast,
And know that I am saved and blest at last,
I shall be satisfied.

When every enemy shall disappear,
The unbelief, the darkness and the fear,
When Thou shalt smooth the brow and wipe the tear,
I shall be satisfied.

When every vanity shall pass away,
And all be real, all without decay,
In that sweet dawning of the cloudless day,
I shall be satisfied.

—Horatius Bonar, D. D.



"THOROUGHbred."

we shall rise to meet the emergency, and shall probably overcome it. It seems to me that we women have a great deal of responsibility to bear. The happiness and comfort of those around us depend very largely on us, and if we are not happy and are not in the habit of taking comfort ourselves, how can we possibly impart those to others?

So you see how good is the definition of *comfort* given in the dictionary, "a state of quiet or moderate enjoyment resulting from the possession of what satisfies bodily wants and freedom from all care and anxiety." Of course no one expects perfect freedom from care. If so, we shall be grievously disappointed. It means a moderate share of freedom from trouble. There is no use in spoiling the present by looking for trouble ahead. Let the future alone. "Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you." Let every one of us insist on taking a little comfort. It will be a hard fight at first. We are creatures of habit and do not like to change our ways; but if these can be improved and our surroundings made brighter, let us hasten to make the change, and most assuredly we shall not only find comfort ourselves, but be the means of giving comfort and happiness to every one we meet. Your loving old auntie—

MINNIE MAY.

Read our important Christmas Number and Premium Announcement in another column.