

clever little one, who went to school every day. A friend of her father spoke to her, and began making inquiries about her papa. She answered ten consecutive questions with the single word, "Uh-huh," her manner being quite respectful all the time. Evidently she had never been told that the correct answer is "Yes, sir." The man did not appear to notice anything remarkable about it. Probably his own children also needed training in manners. I am old-fashioned enough to like to hear the "Sir" and "Ma'am" from children tacked upon the otherwise blunt "yes" and "no."

No doubt many of you are in possession of that charming little booklet of musical games, issued by the Bell Piano Co. "Surprised we see new beauties rise" in these old games of childhood's days. "Here we go round the mulberry bush" is a whole course of domestic science in a song. Our grandmothers played that, and what splendid housekeepers they became!

Who could preach a better temperance sermon than the song of "Old Dan Tucker," who lost everything—partner and supper—because he got drunk! If we can impress it upon every boy that decent people will "clear the way"—that is, they will have nothing to do with him if he "plays with the fire (water) and "kicks up a dust," the temperance victory will be won. "London Bridge" was always a favorite game with me. I used to suppose I liked the plaintive melody, but when I saw my own children playing it, it suddenly dawned upon my mind that "London Bridge" is politics. Each leader chooses a policy (or an article (of faith)), each tries to win a majority, and the tug-of-war represents the election. Watch a few players—big or little—and you will see those who like to get on the winning side, whether that is the policy they really like or not; also those who will pull loyally and manfully for their own side, though hopelessly outnumbered. Perhaps I should never have seen the allegory in the game had I not read Emerson's Essays, in one of which he states that large people are most intelligent, and recommends weighing instead of balloting—the heaviest side to win!

These are some old, old favorites in childish plays, but there are many other old ones equally good, and new ones are constantly being written and invented by educational leaders. Closely akin to these are the drill, calisthenic exercises, and the ordinary dances. Surely the most prudish cannot find objection to little girls dancing together, or boys drilling and stepping to music. Some kindergarten songs are lessons in anatomy and hygiene, worthy the attention of a medical expert.

For the little girl alone at home there is nothing equal to making and putting on and off doll's clothes. She will thereby learn the dressmaking trade, which is sure to be useful to her; and here let me put in a plea to allow the small girl to use the sewing machine;—otherwise how can Miss Dollie have a fashionable tailor-made costume?

I would not permit my oldest girl to use the sewing machine till she was quite grown up, fearing she might break it, but my little girl 8 years old does a great deal of work on the machine with infinite pleasure to herself and profit to me; and I'm acquainted with a small boy who was sure "What girls could do he could also," and insisting upon and obtaining his "Man's Rights," can throw the machine out of gear, and "make the wheel go 'round so you can't see it." Incidentally, he sews a good many carpet rags.

Do some of you recall the sarcastic speeches of the woman-hating old school-master in "Adam Bede"? "I tell you there's not a thing under the sun that needs to be done at all, but a man will do better than a woman!" "I tell you a woman will bake you a pie every week of her life, and never come to see that the hotter the oven the shorter the time." "I tell you a woman will make your porridge every day for 20 years, and never think of measuring the proportion of milk and meal."

"And as for cleanliness, my house is cleaner than any house on the common, though the half of them swarm with women!"

Would it not be well, therefore, to let the boys have a hand at the housework they may be so expert at? We may thereby evolve out of existence "the man

who marries to get a cheap cook," along with "the girl who marries to have a comfortable home of her own"; instead, we shall have independent and self-reliant boys and girls, "full summed in all their powers."

Little boys, as well as girls, enjoy cutting out and laying in the pans the cookies on baking day, and who so willing and clever as the small boy at keeping up the fire and watching that they do not burn? Children of seven or eight can, without any help from mother, make patty cakes and drop cakes,—and if they have "a party" with them afterwards, I'll guarantee the boy will not be behindhand at that game. If they can invite a few little friends to their own party, a few sheets of tissue paper will make "beautiful" doilies and other table decorations, besides keeping them busy and happy for hours. Every little girl should have a pair of round-pointed scissors, and there is then no danger of injury to any of the little workers, and a child's set of granite dishes will last for years, and cost very little. So children will do real work that seems play, and as they work they may sing:

"Sweeping and washing the dishes,
Bringing the wood from the shed,
Ironing, sewing and baking,
Helping to make up the bed,
Taking good care of the baby,
Watching her lest she should fall,
We little children are busy,—
Oh, there is work for us all."

Most parents earnestly desire that their children should advance rapidly at school. Well, there is one great help every parent may give, and that is to take an interest in the work. See what part of each text-book your child is studying, how much he gets over in a week, a month, a year. Many will declare that as they have never studied some of the subjects their children learn, they cannot help them in any way. Well, why not learn them now? If it is worth while for the children, it is for the grown-ups. Many eminent men have entered upon new studies in old age. But if you have not really time or inclination to actually learn these unknown sciences, you can imitate the philosophy of Rawdon Crawley, who, when little Rawdon would show him what part of the Latin grammar he was in, would look wise and say, "Stick to it, my boy; there's nothing like a good education—nothing." How can a child be expected to work hard at learning what his father perhaps seems to consider not worth having?

A few years ago in this village there occurred at the entrance "exams." what

seemed to me an amusing instance of the value of a father's interest in his child's school work. On the drawing paper was given the problem, "Draw a Hexagon." Out of nearly forty pupils only one knew what a hexagon is. They were all accustomed to drawing a regular six-sided figure, but did not know its name—except that one lucky boy, who was the son of a minister renowned throughout the Presbytery for his Greek and Latin learning. Probably he had seen the boy drawing the design, and had by chance used the name. The recollection would come like a flash of light in the examination hall. Since then all entrance pupils are carefully instructed in the meaning of "Hexagon," but the question never comes again.

Much harmless amusement and some knowledge of the planetary system may be given by a game of marbles. Have some big striped "alleys," and children will get as good an idea of how the earth turns on its axis as they will ever get by "Words of learned length and thundering sound."

Tops spinning are also interesting, as are many little mechanical toys. There are no fairy tales equal to the fairy tales of science. Natural laws are all fairy godmothers—happy are those wise children who obey them. I know many prosaic people shudder at the very name, "fairy tale." No doubt some fairy tales have neither interest, sense, or moral, but the same may be said of books, and even on occasional sermons. Who ever knew Santa Claus to bring anything but love and kindness to the heart of a child, and what countless numbers of children have delighted in and been benefited by Pilgrim's Progress, Hans Anderson, Aesop, and Mother Goose!

I would not have any think that a child should be kept always at study or play. Every child has need of a certain amount of silence and "aloneness," the more sensitive and poetic the greater need thereof; and here lies a great objection to the modern school system. The tender feeling and refined fancy do not thrive on the "Schoolhouse playing ground," which, however, gives an excellent training for the business man or soldier.

An old proverb says, "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy." Happy they with such a mother, who, as she walked with her little ones in quiet lane or meadow, would clasp their hands in hers, and sing to them Shepherd Psalm, or, as they sat by the evening fire, would show to them, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindles"; who "Consecrated with hymns the simple tasks of her household."

The most noble professions are those

of doctor, minister and teacher, but a single generation of wise fathers and mothers would almost put these three classes out of business. They are so urgently needed, because so many parents cannot or will not do their duty by their own children.

It is impossible this afternoon to even mention the school games of large boys and girls, and the intellectual diversions of their evenings. These all have high training value, but Christmas will soon be here, and those of us who are debating what is best to do with the few dollars left of the proverbial "butter and egg" money would do well to remember that it takes many years for \$1.00 to double itself at bank interest, but if put into books and toys or sleighs for the children, it may bring forth some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred fold, in health and happiness. I know nothing so effectual as the "Swish—walk back a mile"—of the toboggan slide for inducing reflection on the vanity of human pleasures.

"Behold the child, by kindly nature's law,
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw;
Some noisier plaything gives his youth delight;
A little louder but as empty quite;
Scarfs, garters gold, amuse his riper stage;
White beads and prayer books are the toys of age;
Pleased with this bauble still, as that before,
Till tired he sleeps, and life's poor play is over."

Young Girl Questions.

Dear Nookers,—If you will allow us space, we have a few questions which we would be very glad to have answered.

How long should girls of fourteen and girls of seventeen wear their skirts? Could you suggest nice ways for the same two girls to dress their hair? We have just a moderate quantity; neither very long nor very thick. Does plaid make anyone look stout? And if we are not taking up too much room in your precious Nook, could you tell us a few ways for country girls to earn pocket money in the winter time?

We want to thank you in advance for any help you may be able to give us, and wish you all every success.

ARRAH WANNAN AND REDWING,
Peterborough Co., Ont.

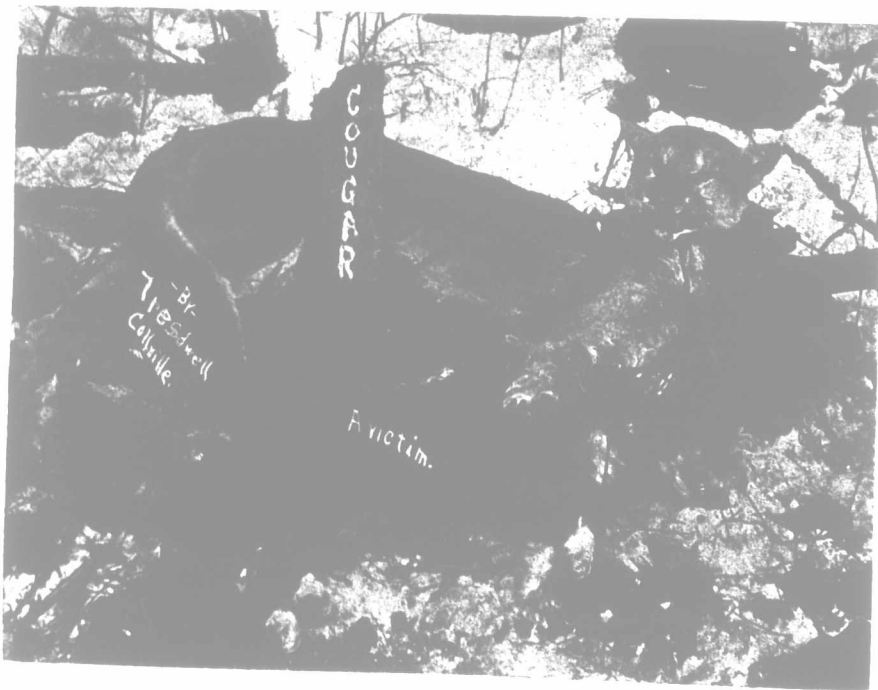
Girls of fourteen, if tall and mature for their age, should wear their skirts almost to their shoe-tops; if small and childlike, they may still wear them just nicely below the knee. Girls of seventeen should have them come to the shoe-tops. Girls of fourteen, and many of seventeen, in this city are at present wearing their hair parted, rolled softly at the sides, and caught at the back of the neck by a large ribbon bow, the end of the hair hanging in one long loose curl down the back. Some of the girls of seventeen do away with the bow and the curl, simply rolling the hair upward and inward at the back to form a sort of "bun" low at the back of the head. The front hair is almost invariably parted and rolled at the sides, a small hair pad being used if the hair is not thick enough to make a good roll.

Plaid has a tendency to make one look stout. I really do not know of any way by which country girls can earn pocket money in winter, except by taking good care of the chickens and learning to make A1 butter. Only A1 butter sells readily and brings a good price in the cities nowadays, you know. Making it is quite an art, too.

Re Furnishing.

Dear Dame Durden,—My sister and I intend furnishing our dining-room next spring, so would like your advice on some points.

The room is 25 feet long, 15 feet wide and 9 feet high. It faces south and west, having four large windows, 2 feet deep and 5 feet high, but not low enough for window seats. These reach to a cornice, 1 foot wide, of the same design as a narrow beading down the wall on each side of the windows. A skirting-board 3 feet high, painted fawn, runs around the whole room. The ceiling is native pine, of a nice rich yellow-brown tone. A walnut mantelpiece extends the length of a chimney-breast, 10½ feet.



Fight Between Dogs and a Cougar.

A homesteader, whose claim is situated about nine miles east of Colville, Wash., among the timbered hills, was awakened at 3 o'clock one morning last fall by what appeared to be a lively fight between his two dogs just outside. He rose and opened the door with the intention of stopping the fight, but was astonished to find an unusually large cougar, who was proving to be more than a match for the two dogs. The man fired a hasty shot from a revolver, the first shot from the animal's left fore foot. This caused the cougar to retreat. The two dogs pursued him about forty rods, when he turned at bay and stretched out dead at his feet. The homesteader by this time arrived with a 30.30 Winchester and soon avenged the death of his faithful dogs. The cougar was taken at this spot some hours later.